

For example the matter of pride. There is one boy in a community I know who dropped out of school because of the sheer reason he had only one pair of pants and the more middle class urban children teased him.

That is a perfectly dreadful reason for dropping out of school, but it does not make any difference, this was the real one for that boy. If that boy through a Headstart program at a young age can be taught how to see and get along with other children, the education that he will be able to absorb I think can be enormously increased.

I would say that getting the children at that young age when they are so totally scared, we did not have an Operation Headstart program in part of our county, in one county on one side of the river in our county. In our program we started one of our own. The road commission blamed it on the board of education, the board of education again blamed it on the road commission. In other words we did not get an Operation Headstart program.

On the self-help program the people started their own. We found, for example, a 5-year-old girl when she came to school—

Chairman PERKINS. In other words, you had considerable parental involvement, in your Headstart?

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Tremendously. And the mothers themselves volunteered to help. We found if a 5-year-old girl came to school she often came holding the leg of her 10-year-old sister because she had never been with other children before.

She might spend a first 2 weeks holding on the leg of her sister because she was so scared. If we don't have a chance to break her of that early, when she goes to a consolidated, more urban school she is not going to be able to hear any of her class much less absorb because she will be so afraid.

So I again say, as I guess most of the people do, an effective Operation Headstart program, call it what you will, at an early age is of a priority nature as far as my experience is concerned.

Chairman PERKINS. You, with your educational background, are quite aware that it would be impossible to have all of the parental involvement if Headstart was transferred under the so-called Opportunity Crusade to HEW.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Sir, I am not an expert on the bills, but I certainly would question whether an Operation Headstart could have come from HEW, had it not had special emphasis.

Chairman PERKINS. You feel, in other words, there has been so much come out of this demonstration on Community Action Headstart, that we should continue it the way it is now operated?

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Yes, sir. As a matter of fact, I strongly believe that where you have a board of education and, say, Headstart, there will be a regional conflict but that conflict will resolve itself into better programs. I personally would be very much against having Operation Headstart cut off or absorbed into another entity, because I think part of its special nature and success—

Chairman PERKINS. You think part of the great gains you are now receiving would be lost if it is ever transferred; we ought to at least let it get through a demonstration period and get off the ground, so that we can see some of the real conditions?