

CHILD WELFARE ?

The vitality of any society can be measured by the way it treats the children on whom its own future health depends. Adults who in childhood have failed to receive the physical and emotional nourishment necessary for their own best development become, in their turn, inadequate parents, poor citizens, and economic misfits, incapable of the adaptations required by our technological society.

HEW Advisory Council on Public Welfare

Among the needy groups, children have suffered most from lesser Federal financial support.

CURRENT FORMULAS for Federal financial participation provide an inadequate base for achieving the twin goals of adequate and comprehensive public welfare programs:

The formulas provide more favored Federal financial support for some than for other groups of needy people. Children are the most disadvantaged.¹

As a result, while public assistance programs are rarely adequate for any needy group aided, the program likely to be most inadequate—often grossly inadequate—is Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

¹Maximum amount subject to Federal sharing: for children and parents—\$32 (AFDC); for aged, blind, and disabled—\$75.

An examination of public assistance medical care programs shows clearly that they have not provided adequately for financing health and medical care for the neediest of all children—those who are dependent on public assistance. In 1965 more than \$1.3 billion were spent on all public assistance medical care. Yet, the AFDC program, whose recipients comprise 60 percent of the entire assistance caseload, received only 12 percent of the medical benefits, and 10 States did not provide any vendor medical care programs at all for such children.