



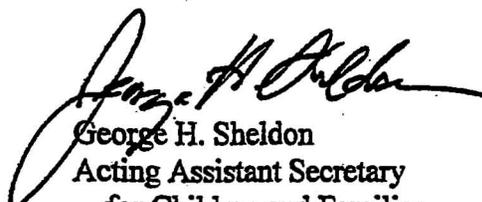
MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY

I am pleased to present the FY 2013 President's Budget request for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF programs strive to promote the economic and social well-being of children, individuals, families, and communities.

The FY 2013 ACF budget invests in efforts to support families and communities and promote economic opportunity in the context of a fiscally responsible budget. For example, the Budget targets funding to early childhood education by increasing the investment in Head Start and Early Head Start and dedicating an additional \$825 million to child care -- including funding to expand access to child care assistance for low-income families and a \$300 million quality initiative that will train teachers and help states improve their efforts to inform parents about the quality of care available and to monitor child care programs' compliance with critical health and safety standards. Taken together, this Budget continues President Obama's commitment to our youngest learners and invests in early care and education that can put children on a path to school success and opportunity.

The Budget also seeks to ensure that programs are responsive to the needs of America's most vulnerable families by: (1) proposing a package of child support enforcement investments that support family self-sufficiency and responsible fatherhood, and that recognize the essential role of both parents in providing financial and emotional support for children; (2) proposing child welfare improvements that build on evidence-informed practices by incentivizing states to bolster outcomes for children in foster care and others who are receiving child welfare services; and (3) providing a range of strategic, targeted investments to improve services for vulnerable children and families.

Finally, the budget responds to the President's call for a government that is accountable and transparent. In this vein, we will employ rigorous program integrity mechanisms, and judiciously target staff resources to safeguard the investments sought in this budget, and we will set tough performance standards and closely monitor their achievement.


George H. Sheldon
Acting Assistant Secretary
for Children and Families