

**An Open Letter to The ABPsi:**  
***Let's Take Action to Support Early Childhood Development and Education***

By  
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Washington, D.C.

Dear Members of The ABPsi:

Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund has brought to my attention that President Obama recently announced plans for an historic investment in early childhood development and education. Many more children will benefit from the expansion of home visiting programs, high quality child care, Early Head Start and Head Start, and preschool for all low and moderate income 4-year-olds. President Obama's plan also recognizes the importance of full-day kindergarten. Research shows that these investments in early development and education have lasting positive benefits, both for the success of children and our nation's economic success.

Experts within the National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc. (NAADPC) have also stressed the importance of the nurturance a child receives in the first three years in molding values and developing a thirst for knowledge. It is the time that the foundation for success in life is established.

We are bombarded with news about how many of our children are truant, teen pregnant, or fail to graduate from high school. The dropout rate of Black youth has reached a crisis level and has led to massive incarceration of Black males.

As African American people we should speak with a united voice in support of the goals and objectives established by President Obama in this initiative.

Thus, I urge each of you to "take pen to paper" or "computer to e-mail messaging" and advise the President that you strongly support this initiative. Also, write to your Congressional Representative and to your respective Senators regarding the importance of this initiative. We no longer can rely on talking to each other in the kitchen, or in barber shops or beauty parlors, or on street corners. We must speak up and make a difference.

The Children's Defense Fund has mounted a campaign to have 10,000 letters to be forwarded to the President. You may send such a letter to the Children's Defense Fund, but I urge that you to send your letter directly to the President and to your Congressional Representatives and State Senators.

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