

# Statement of Purpose

**T**he primary purpose of *The Future of Children* is to disseminate timely information on major issues related to children's well-being, with special emphasis on objective analysis, evaluation, translating existing knowledge into effective programs and policies, and promoting constructive institutional change. In attempting to achieve these objectives we are targeting a multidisciplinary audience of national leaders, including policymakers, practitioners, legislators, executives, and professionals in the public and private sectors. This publication is intended to complement, not duplicate, the kind of technical analysis found in academic journals and the general coverage of children's issues by the popular press and special interest groups.

In this issue of *The Future of Children* we provide an overview of the complex proposal for schools to play a significantly increased role in the coordination and/or provision of health and social services to children and their families. We have attempted to do this objectively from multiple perspectives in a format that is accessible to a broad readership.

The special attention currently focused on our schools is in part due to a desire to improve education in this country to allow us to better compete among nations. There is increasing recognition that, for many children, health and other social services are important prerequisites to academic achievement. Therefore, in some parts of the country school-linked services are being debated; in other places planning for such services is under way; and in some locales programs are in full operation.

It is hoped that the articles presented here will provide an overall summary of the knowledge and experience that has been accumulated on this issue, identify where gaps in both remain, and suggest reasonable policies and program strategies to pursue at this time. The individual perspectives, descriptions, and analyses that follow were collected to provide a point of departure for a better understanding of the various issues involved in the school-linked service approach. The Analysis, authored by the staff of the Center for the Future of Children, draws from these articles as well as from our own research and deliberations. It is hoped that this issue of *The Future of Children* will provide useful information for those who are considering implementing school-linked services as well as suggest specific strategies for those who have decided to proceed with this approach.

We invite your comments and suggestions as you read this issue of *The Future of Children*. Our intention is to encourage continued study and debate regarding the merits of proposals for school-linked services for children and their families. To this end we invite correspondence to the editor. We would also appreciate your comments about the approach we have taken in presenting the focus topic and welcome your suggestions for future topics.

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Editor