

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, May 5, 1965

MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON'S STATEMENT
IN CONNECTION WITH NATIONAL
HEAD START PROGRAM

Of all the ways to celebrate Mother's Day, this is perhaps the happiest I have known.

For today I join with those who rejoice in the fact that more than 2,000 communities will take part in Project Head Start. Over half a million children will be in Child Development Centers this summer throughout the United States. Every mother in every stratum of society will be thrilled to hear about the program. There is now a way all of them can help either in encouraging a child to attend or in giving volunteer time at the projects.

Head Start is the program organized and administered by the communities which will give the preschool child, who has been taught nothing of the art of living a chance to catch up -- a chance to find a door into another way of life. When he enters school in September, he will not be unteachable. He will not be afraid. Fear itself creates its own problems.

We extend our hand to those thousands of children who have received no teaching or discipline of any sort, who find themselves in a strange world where the simplest requests are frightening because they are not understood. "Sit at the desk." "Stand in line." "Wash your hands" are familiar terms to us but not to the thousands of children who have never been taught to do anything.

This is a great bold step our government is taking and I like to think that mothers in every community will keep pace with it and see that no child will miss the opportunity he deserves which is now within reach.

My heart soars at the thought of the wonderful things that can be done. I am thrilled by the idea of giving children a Head Start toward the future -- a future which is bound to be better because everyone will have a greater part in it.

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