

**BENEFITS** For employers: 1) reduced turnover; 2) reduced absenteeism & tardiness; 3) strong recruiting tool; 4) increased productivity; 5) higher morale; 6) enhanced company reputation.

For employees/parents: 1) reduced on-the-job stress; 2) convenience; 3) increased participation in child's schooling; 4) highest quality education for child; 5) additional time with child.

For community: 1) reduced capital outlay for new schools; 2) reduced overcrowding; 3) reduced transportation costs; 4) increased parental involvement; 5) enhanced community image.

**SUPPORTING DATA** American Bankers Insurance Group: 98% of its employees with children in the school cite it as an important reason to stay with the company; it reduced absenteeism of the employee/parents by 50%; 2nd grade students tested 225% higher academically than their school system counterparts.

**Hewlett-Packard:** Turnover rate among employee/parents is 99% lower than the general employee population; for '95-96 academic yr, standardized test scores were 43% higher than the district average, & 2nd & 3rd grade math scores were the highest in the district.

**Communities:** Dade County, Fla, estimates a partnership work-site school with as few as 70 children saves the school system as much as \$1 million in capital costs.

(More info: Corporate Family Solutions, 209 Tenth av so, Suite 300, Nashville 37203-4173; 800-452-2111; www.corporatefamily.com)

#### PR's KEY ROLE IN THE CONCEPT

In '95, Mary Ann Ward began consulting with corporations to help them implement work-site schools, calling her firm Schools At Work. Her goal was to build awareness among corporate, legislative & education audiences -- for her firm but also for the concept of work-site partnership schools.

PR consultant Jennifer Bisbee was hired to develop a pr program designed to build awareness of the concept & its benefits, & to position Ward as a leading authority on the topic. Program included a speaker's bureau, direct outreach to targeted audiences & an aggressive media relations campaign -- which yielded stories in national consumer & trade print & broadcast media. **To date, awareness has been built solely by pr; no money has been spent on advertising.**

As a result of her success, Ward & her firm have been bought by Corporate Family Solutions (a publicly traded company with annual revenue of \$75 million & the nation's leading provider of workplace family services). Ward will stay on as president of the new division & "pr will continue to play a vital role in its success."

## DEMOCRACY THWARTED: STUDY FINDS MEDIA & POLICYMAKERS DEAD WRONG ON WHAT PEOPLE WANT & HOW PUBLIC FEELS

In a significant & broad 2-yr study that confirms a trend practitioners have long noted, new research shows a disconnect has occurred between policy makers -- especially Congress & the media -- & the public.

According to "The Foreign Policy Gap: How Policymakers Misread the Public," a sharp gap exists between the US foreign policy community's perceptions of public attitudes & people's actual beliefs about what role the US should play in the world.

- Congress & media claim the public is going thru a phase of wanting to disengage from the world. Thus, e.g., US failure to pay UN dues bill.
- However, a comprehensive analysis of all available polls, a series of focus groups & a series of new polls to test the hypothesis shows that the majority of Americans support a foreign policy of broad global engagement. This gap persists even when polls include questions proposed by skeptical policy practitioners.

Report says everybody in Washington is wrong -- some more than others. Most off base were representatives in Congress. Next, staff members who serve the policymakers. Followed by journalists -- who are paid to find out what people think, but are failing to do so. Somewhat more in tune is the exec branch -- but even they were off by 2-to-1 or more.

**WHY IT OCCURS** 1. "It's a closed loop. Members of Congress have a great interaction with the squeaky public -- those people who call or write & who are considerably less supportive of international engagement. This forms these members' impressions."

*Implication:* Grassroots efforts to influence policymakers are vital.

2. **Mutual reinforcement, or the blind leading the blind.** "Journalists say they pay attention to what Congress does because they believe that Congress is a good mirror of what the public is thinking. Then members of Congress read the newspapers & think that the newspapers know what's going on." In short, both believe their own news as printed!

*Implication:* Media clearly don't influence readers/viewers/listeners ... but Congress doesn't know it, so it is influenced -- erroneously.

So explains Steven Kull, dir of Program on International Policy Attitudes which issued the report, noting that Congress & the press listen to each other but not to the public.



**WATCH OUT FOR THE MEDIA**

Their never-ending search for negatives causes local communities to become disenfranchised by misinformation -- data that's wrong, as this study shows.

- A USA Today story last week headlined the one negative finding in what the copy stated was "an otherwise clean report" on the Social Security Administration -- & covered nothing else. What about the *good* findings?
- The supposed crisis in schools has been a media theme for years. Using this reportage as a guide, one would conclude schools everywhere are bad. BUT -- Sept. Gallup Poll found *local* education earned an A or B from 46% of respondents. Confidence in education now ranks in the top 3 of all institutions! But media say it's in terrible shape.

**RECALLS KETTERING STUDIES**

Citizens are angry that 3 groups conspire to control decisions, found its research (pr 9/2/91). They are politicians, special interests & media. This explains the skepticism & mistrust so prevalent today.

**Some examples from the new study:** A) Contrary to policymakers' view that Americans want foreign policy tied strictly to national interests, a strong majority supports taking into account humanitarian concerns.

- B) Contrary to policymakers' view that the UN is unpopular, most Americans support it, want it to be stronger & favor paying US' dues in full.
- C) Candidates say that despite this evidence, voters support the ones who favor international disengagement. In fact, majority prefers candidates who take positions in favor of international engagement.
- D) Congressmen who oppose the UN say they do so because their constituents do. Polls in districts of 4 House members who introduced bills to get US out of UN found only 20% of voters favored withdrawal; and only 1 in 12 backed eliminating foreign aid.

(Copy of report from Program on International Policy Attitudes, 202/232-7500; executive summary from pr)

**INSIGHTS ON DIVERSE LATINO COMMUNITY OF 32 MILLION**

"The operative words in describing Latinos are 'mixture,' 'misunderstood,' & 'invisible,'" write Patrisia Gonzales & Roberto Rodriguez in Sept '97 *News Watch Project*.

- "To think of all people of Latin America as the same is akin to thinking all people of South Africa are one people."
- "It has been said that when reporting about Latinos, it is better to speak about communities -- such as Puerto Ricans, Argentineans, Mexican Americans -- as opposed to a single community. But it is even more complex than that. Each nationality has its own mix of races, ethnicities, languages & cultures. Latinos are not monolithic."

- "Most US Latinos are racially mixed or mestizos -- an option not available in the Census. Within these groups, many are indigenous, black, Asian & white. When people ponder why Latinos don't think or vote as a bloc, they miss the obvious: **like other diverse groups, Latinos are not a bloc.**"
- "About 3/4ths are of Mexican or Mexican American & Central American origin, & most of these are indigenous or indigenous-based mestizos. In other words, generally not white. The next largest groups are from the Caribbean, such as Puerto Ricans, Cubans & Dominicans -- populations that are a mix of African, Spanish, & to a lesser extent, indigenous cultures. Those from South America -- about 10% of all Latinos -- are a mixture of Spanish-European, indigenous & black."
- "Latinos are being treated socially -- as evidenced by the vicious anti-immigrant campaigns of the past few years -- as anything but 'white.' We have long referred to these campaigns as 'Indian removal,' because they don't actually target immigrants, but rather dark-skinned populations, specifically Mexican & Central Americans."
- Officialdom -- from government to corporate America -- seem to prefer the term 'Hispanic.' Because of the power of these institutions, the term is in widespread use. 'Latino' appears to be used more as a form of rebellion or self-definition, particularly by those from immigrant communities. In determining which label to use, however, studies show it is better to use the name of the group or individual -- e.g., Puerto Rican, Guatemalan, Mexican American, Peruvian -- not a generic term."
- "For many people, how they are identified is less important than being invited to the decision-making table."

"The terms 'Latino' or 'Hispanic' are generally & primarily terms of convenience for media, government & corporate America rather than terms people themselves use."

(Info or copy from: 942 Market St, San Francisco 94102; 415/398-8224; e-mail, newsproj@sirius.com)

**A NEW WAY FOR BIZ TO AID PUBLIC SCHOOLS -- & ITSELF**

Satellite learning centers (SLCs) are public schools on company property which serve the children of employees. They are joint ventures between school systems & corporations. School contributes teachers, books & curriculum. Business contributes physical space & utilities for classrooms.

With 70% of 2-adult households also dual-worker households (DoL stat), SLCs are gaining in popularity. Companies with SLCs include: Orlando Regional Healthcare System; Twin Towers Hotel (Orlando); American Bankers Insurance Group (Miami); Barnett Bank (Jacksonville); 3M (Mpls); Target (Mpls); Hewlett Packard (Calif); a 19 company joint venture in Des Moines.