



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 11, 2016

Feds Seek Home Visits, Calling Parents “Equal Partners”

Big Brother wants to be an “equal partner” with American parents in the raising of their own children, starting before they are even born. He wants to send his agents to your house for “home visits,” too. Believe it or not, two powerful arms of Obama administration, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), explicitly say so themselves.



In a [draft policy statement](#) on “family engagement,” the two unconstitutional bureaucracies openly state their joint position: families are “equal partners” in everything from children’s “development” and “education” to their “wellness across all settings.” Virtually no area of family life, including the health and “mental health” of parents, as well as a family’s “attitudes” and even its “housing,” would be free from government intrusion under the government’s Orwellian vision. Even vague notions of “family wellness,” as defined by bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., would be put under a government microscope. “[Parenting interventions](#)” will be used to ensure compliance.

“It is the position of the Departments [of HHS and Education] that all early childhood programs and schools recognize families as equal partners in improving children’s development, learning and wellness across all settings, and over the course of their children’s developmental and educational experiences,” reads the draft policy. And it gets even more bizarre: As defined in the document, family means “all the people who play a role in a child’s life and interact with a child’s early childhood program or school.”

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To advance the “goal” of turning families into “equal partners,” the joint policy statement by the two federal bureaucracies provides “recommendations” to, and highlights resources for, state and local governments. The document argues that Big Brother needs to know about essentially everything, for the supposed benefit of the child it wants to “partner” in caring for. Citing “research,” the policy statement claims that “the institutions where children learn cannot ignore family wellness if they want to ... fulfill their mission to prepare children for school and academic success.” In other words, every aspect of family life is now fair game under the pretext of checking “family wellness.”

While government usurpation of parental rights and responsibilities is hardly a new phenomenon, the Obama administration has pushed the agenda hard. Citing Obama’s so-called “My Brother’s Keeper” scheme, the document also touts ensuring that “children are learning across settings and that all adults who teach and care for them are strong partners with shared expectations and aligned strategies.” Thinking that Big Brother is going to align its “strategies” and “expectations” to those of parents — rather than the other way around — is naïve at best.

The “principles” underlying the agenda are spelled out explicitly, including “equal partnerships between families and professionals.” In fact, the paper calls for promoting “shared responsibility” between government “professionals” and families “for children’s healthy development, learning and wellness.” The paper also calls for “jointly” developing and monitoring goals for the children at home



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and the classroom, with government employees told to “engage parents as capable, competent partners.”

[Big Psychiatry](#) will also play a major role. “Ensure constant monitoring and communication regarding children’s social-emotional and behavioral health,” the document demands. “Ensure that children’s social-emotional and behavioral needs are met and that families and staff are connected with relevant community partners, such as early childhood mental health consultants and children’s medical homes.” In the policy statement’s “recommendations” for states — much of which will be imposed through federal bribes — state governments are told to “expand early childhood mental health consultation efforts.”

There are lots of “recommendations” — nudge nudge, wink wink — for local governments, too. If parent “partners” are not partnering in a way approved of by Big Brother, for example, local officials should “identify supports that will be offered to parents such as evidence-based parenting interventions.” By interventions, they mean exactly what you think they mean. Local arms of Big Brother should also seek out “community partners” that can “provide comprehensive services, such as health, mental health, or housing assistance to meet families’ basic needs,” the document explains.

The Obama administration also wants to make sure that Big Brother’s “partners” are being regularly checked up on — even at their homes. The document calls for various government programs to visit your house. Seriously. “To support ongoing relationship building with families, programs and schools should conduct periodic home visits so that teachers and families can get to know each other and communicate about children’s goals, strengths, challenges, and progress,” the policy statement says, adding that if home visits are not possible for “all families,” other requirements should be imposed.

The document also calls on schools to “assess families’ needs and wants,” and even to provide training for parents on how to raise their children. Indeed, every aspect of parents’ lives is in the crosshairs. “It is important that LEAs [local education agencies], schools and programs have a strategy for supporting family wellbeing,” the Obama administration argues. “LEAs, schools and programs can support family wellbeing through school social workers, by implementing community schools models or approaches, or using family support staff and mental health consultants.”

The [Obama-backed community schools](#), dubbed parental-replacement centers by critics, are already in full swing, and set for a massive expansion, thanks to support by most Republicans in Congress. Indeed, as *The New American* reported recently, [these “full-service community schools” are set to play a key role in the broader agenda](#), overseeing every aspect of children’s lives ranging from dentistry and nutrition to “wellbeing” and mental health. The [recently passed “Every Student Succeeds Act”](#) also contains provisions for deploying “mental health” programs against parents and even community members. Obama’s recently retired Education Secretary Arne Duncan, who [boasts of turning your children into “green” and “global” citizens](#) with UNESCO using the “weapon” of education, even [called for government to have “some kids” 24 hours a day, seven days per week](#).

At first glance, the Obama administration policy document appears to be merely about “engaging families” in the raising of their own children. Indeed, there is much in the document that, if it were not coming from a federal government that is increasingly out of control and cannot even balance a budget, much less raise children, might sound innocent enough. For instance, the policy statement refers to parents as the children’s “first and most important teachers, advocates, and nurturers.” What it implies, though, is that Big Brother is also going to play the role of “advocate” and “nurturer” to your children. Perhaps Big Brother can provide hugs and bed-time stories soon, too.



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In fact, throughout the document, it becomes brazenly clear that federal bureaucrats are starting from the false assumption that Big Brother is in charge of raising children, and that parents may be called upon to help out as “partners.” It also purports to provide justification for governments to pry into every aspect of family life — an extraordinarily dangerous proposition that is a hallmark of totalitarian governments. The mindset evidenced throughout the document is beyond paternalistic and condescending to parents.

So far, the joint policy statement by Obama’s HHS and Education Department has flown largely under the radar. But as word spreads, critics are expressing outrage about Big Brother’s accelerating intrusions into family life and child rearing. E-mails blasting the scheme have been spreading rapidly among education researchers. In a post about the policy headlined “Marxist Nanny State Coming for the Family,” education researcher Betsy Kraus noted that with “Early Childhood Education” now written into the recently approved Obama-GOP “education” bill known as the Every Student Succeeds Act, the American family is in the government’s crosshairs. She also cited [various extremist quotes by prominent psychiatrists](#) illustrating just how dangerous the agenda truly is.

One furious mother, meanwhile, citing her Catholic faith and the U.S. Constitution’s limits on federal power, compared the proposed governmental usurpation of parental authority in children’s “development” to what occurs under communist dictatorships. “I am a Catholic and my rights and duties as a Catholic parent are to educate my children and that I am only a cooperater of that education with the love of God the Creator, NOT with the government, federal or state,” wrote the mother, Sara Wood, in a letter that has been widely circulated among education researchers and activists via the Internet.

Also blasting the joint policy statement was The People, LLC, a constitutionally focused activist and watchdog group that has dealt extensively with education and parental rights at the state and local level and has been successful in drafting laws recognizing and protecting parental rights in education. “Grants such as those related to this policy have been incentivizing states since the inception of the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant,” said co-founder Angela Alef. “Up to now, the effect of these grants has been realized within the population receiving childcare vouchers/assistance. With the continued expansion of the ‘money-following-the-child’ policies of Education Reform, such interference in parental authority will be realized across all populations unless a state-level fight is waged by citizens.”

In a statement provided to *The New American*, Alef cited a 2011 meeting of the Louisiana Department of Education’s Early Education Supervisors to illustrate the point. She said that “concern was expressed there” that there would be “insufficient monitoring of children” whose parents decided against enrolling their pre-K-aged children in school. “The solution posed by the session leader was that, ‘at some point, obviously, parents will have to be assessed,’” Alef recalled. The latest policy statement by the Department of Health and Human Services, she added, “can only be viewed as continuing the effort to standardize our families — one child at a time.”

It was not immediately clear when the policy draft was released, nor what the current status of it is. The document [remains online at the federal government’s website](#). It appears to have been put out during or after the fall of 2015. Nobody answered the phone at the agency when contacted by *The New American* on Wednesday to ask about the policy. In its press section, though, the department was [boasting of federal agencies “joining forces” to create a new “center”](#) that will “support the Obama administration’s goal of expanding access to high-quality early care, education, and home visiting for *all*



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young children.” (Emphasis added.) It said the goals would be accomplished through, among other means, providing “help” to states as well as “child care centers, preschools, and home visiting programs.”

Admittedly, a major part of the problem is that many parents have bought into the notion that they can, or even should, hand over their children to government “professionals” and “experts” to be raised, monitored, tracked, manipulated, and “developed.” But Big Brother has certainly played a giant role in encouraging that dangerous idea, most recently illustrated in the policy statement referring to families as “equal partners” in child rearing. Even setting aside the fact that the federal government has zero constitutional authority to meddle in child rearing or education, history suggests the results could be tragic. The American people must resist Big Brother’s unwanted and unconstitutional advances at every level of government.

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