

Child Survival

February 2004





Background

This report is based on two focus groups conducted by Lake Snell Perry & Associates in December 2003 and one-on-one telephone interviews conducted in January 2004 for the US Coalition for Child Survival.

December 8, 2003 – Washington, DC

6:00 pm – Republican Hill Staff

8:00 pm – Democratic/Independent Hill Staff

Staffers were recruited based on their work for Members of Congress or Congressional Committees that in some way affect child survival issues.

January 2004

One-on-one interviews were conducted via telephone with a political appointee at the CDC and an advisor to President Bush.



Background

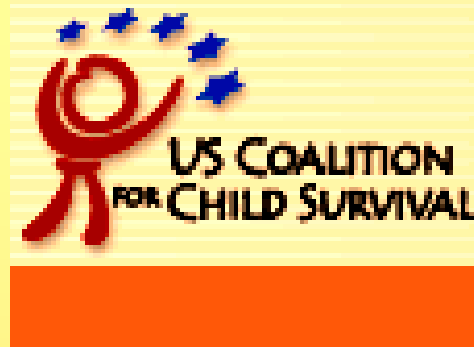
There were several goals for this research:

- Learn the level of awareness of child survival issues among policymakers, their advisors, and political appointees in relevant agencies.
- Discuss their knowledge of the challenges facing children worldwide.
- Determine the degree to which these issues are a concern for their Member/Committee/Agency.
- Learn how child survival issues relate to recent efforts to confront HIV/AIDS.
- Test messages and facts designed to raise awareness among policymakers, their advisors on Capitol Hill, and political appointees in government agencies.



Overview

- Republican staffers are an important group to engage on child survival issues. If the focus group participants are any indication, Republican staffers are willing to seriously consider arguments on this topic and are hungry for more facts about child survival. It may be that President Bush's Global AIDS initiative has put global engagement and humanitarian assistance firmly on the map for his political party.
- Democratic staffers are generally supportive of child survival issues. However, they seem less engaged than their Republican counterparts. They tend to give higher ratings to most of the messages tested but to some degree this seems reflexive – their reasons for support appear vague and less thoughtful. Since they may represent Members of Congress who are already supportive of child survival issues, targeting these staffers with messages may make less sense. However, they need to be kept up-to-date on facts, figures, and success stories about child survival. They seem to be long-term supporters who need to be reminded why this is such an important issue.
- With the political appointee interviews incomplete it is difficult to make statements about this group at this time.



Views on Child Survival



On Capitol Hill the global focus is currently on the War in Iraq and Afghanistan, the President's Global AIDS Initiative, China currency. There was mention of a few programs that might affect children such as immunizations.

- “We have tracking now that we didn't have before. We have some history now. There is also some discussion about tuberculosis and it relates to diseases in general, but AIDS, of course, is the biggest epidemic they're involved with.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “Global AIDS really not just Africa. HIV AIDS the Global Fund is a new hot topic and an education for all initiative.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “I think the China currency and issues like that, but not as much, obviously, in foreign policy issues, but in terms of the financial end of things.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “Basic immunization programs for developing countries” *Female Democratic Staffer*



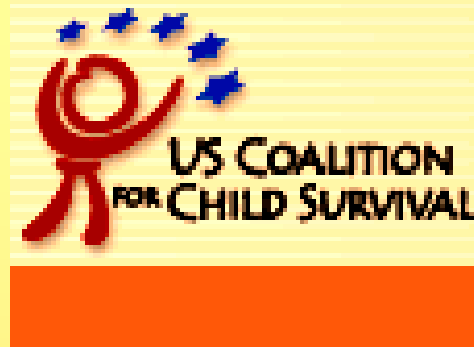
“Child Survival” is not a familiar term or topic for Hill Staffers. Most are unsure what it means, although they assume it has to do with infant mortality rates, hunger, disease, vaccination, and global maternal and child health. Agency staff are more likely to be aware of these issues.

- “What is child survival? I mean, what’s the definition of child survival? Initially, what my response would be to this would be, ‘Well, what do you mean by that?’ ... There’s obviously a definition here that I’m not privy to.”
Female Republican Staffer
- “[I] want to know what it is.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “Well, HIV, AIDS, TB, malaria. And, to a certain extent family planning.”
Male Republican Staffer
- “I guess AIDS but there are a growing number of orphans because of these diseases.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “Vaccines and disease, which indirectly affects mortality rate.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “And USAID programs, food.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “The core problems that come to mind are diarrheal diseases, acute respiratory infections, malaria, measles, neonatal mortality, and so on.”
Agency Staff



Hill staffers and Agency Staff have a strong sense of US efficacy in terms of improving child survival. They do not believe the problems are too big for the US to effect. However, they say that the US alone cannot solve these global problems but that we can be effective working with other countries.

- “The real success story is that you have orphans that are actually being cared for in countries where you’ve got literally millions of orphans... The success is ... there are a lot of people who used to be starving who are not starving.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “I think we have been successful with the education like breaking into countries like India and convincing them that there are these problems and they are now starting to acknowledge them.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “I said vaccines because of the fact that we have some of the best pharmaceutical research, R&D, in the entire world. We come up with all the breakthrough technology and all the breakthrough vaccines and drugs.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “I think by both our example and by our foreign assistance we can have a good impact on all of these areas.” *Male Agency Staff*



Motivations for Improving Child Survival



Helping children is the right thing to do. Both Republican and Democratic staffers offer morality based reasons for why the US should be involved in child survival issues.

- “Well I think there is more than one reason. Part of it should just be out of the goodness of our collective national heart but realistically we should also do it as nation giving more foreign aid to different countries so that people will take our claims of high moral purpose seriously.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “This is something that is consistent with the values of the people of this country.” *Male Agency Staff*
- “I think if our leaders from either party are going to go around claiming that America has a high moral purpose then we have to be credible on that.” *Male Democratic Staffer*



Moral arguments are not likely to be persuasive with Members or Committees. Morality arguments have been used so often and for so many topics that it has become a cliché to which no one responds.

- “The people that I talk to day in and day out are so jaded that anytime you bring up and argue that we’re doing it for the children, they tune out. They say we can argue any policy based on, it’s for the children.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “Some of these things may be the right thing to do, but how you sell it in this particular political environment is tricky. I mean, it’s tricky. So, I mean, I was kidding when I said it’s all in the spin. But it is all in the spin.” *Male Republican Staffer*



Improving child survival will increase global stability and US security. Republican staffers feel that the most compelling argument for investing in child survival is to help stabilize countries and regions. Stable countries also make good trading partners and markets for our products.

- “I think stability should be our number one priority. And after that it should be hunger.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “Without a legal system you can’t have business transactions. You can’t have a lot of things unless you build a stable economic environment for things to thrive. And so stability is extremely important.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I think it is in our national interest ... If you don't do things to promote goodwill to make sure that people around the world are healthy you are going to have a breeding ground for terrorism.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “We also benefit economically by stability in these countries because every country is a potential trading partner.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I think there is both a humanitarian reason and a national security reason... ultimately the United States is engaged in an international economy.” *Male Agency Staff*



We need to protect the future. Both Republican and Democratic staffers understand that children are key to the future success and self-sufficiency of developing countries and worry about “losing generations” of children to disease, malnutrition and war.

- “The problem right now in Africa is with the HIV/AIDS epidemic because they have so many orphans. And as those orphans grow old without any adult caregivers there’s a lot of problems with respect to national security issues because they’re vulnerable to terrorism recruitment, gang recruitment or just lack of national defense on the part of the country.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “There’s a fear that ten, 20, 30 years down the road you’re going to have Lord of the Flies. There won’t be anybody over the age of 30 or 40 so it’s going to be the young 20-somethings who have no discipline, no sense of order.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “Sometimes we forget we have to inculturate [sic] children. We don’t grow up and be nice to people.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I think there’s more practical arguments in terms of ...children are the future of any country.” *Male Agency Staff*



We need to build friendships with other countries.

Democrats say there appears to be a lot of resentment towards the U.S. especially in third world countries. One way to counteract that is to reach out and show that we are the humanitarians we claim to be

- “I think we should be very involved but I also think that we should learn to go out and try to find more partners. A lot of people in this world right now are very skeptical of us and if we just walk in and take over and start handing out medicine they are like going to reject you so you have to incorporate other countries and you have to incorporate the people that live there.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “You need to take in local cultural elements as well just so it doesn't look like it is the big imperial hand of the United States the only superpower left in the world forcing its role.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “When you are talking about the rest of the world I think you are talking about people that are concerned about us dropping bombs on people. But when you are talking about improving child survival with vaccinations and what have you I think the rest of the world would love to see us get into those types of initiatives.” *Male Democratic Staffer*



Reaction to Facts



One fact caught their attention due to the word “preventable.” It is new information to many staffers that children are dying from diseases that we already know how to prevent and treat. However, this same fact begs the question, “what is a preventable disease” which suggests this statement would be more powerful if it included examples of the preventable causes.

FACT: *Of the 10.8 million children that die each year, 6 million children die from preventable causes.*

- *“It’s totally believable, yet sad. But it’s totally believable.” Female Republican Staffer*
- *“I don't think people realize that they are not dying of AIDS but because they are drinking dirty water and they get sick and they can't go to the doctor.” Female Democratic Staffer*
- *“What is a preventable cause?” Male Democratic Staffer*
- *“What’s a non-preventable death?” Male Republican Staffer*
- *“If you go to almost any of these third world countries, Nepal and others, a woman will have ten children and only three of them will survive. That is just simply the way they live.” Male Republican Staffer*



This fact seems plausible to Republicans. It was not tested with Democrats.

FACT: *Of the 10.8 million children that die each year, 3.9 million die in the first 28 days of life.*

- *“That sounds right to me.” Male Republican Staffer*
- *“I thought it would have been higher.” Male Republican Staffer*



Most also found the fact that more children die from malaria than AIDS in African to be compelling. Because AIDS is getting so much attention now, they were initially surprised that malaria was a bigger killer. But when they pondered that we were discussing children, it made sense to them.

FACT: *In most sub-Saharan countries children are more likely to die from malaria than AIDS. Only 3 of the 42 countries in sub-Saharan Africa does AIDS account for more than 10% of child deaths.*

- “People hear about HIV -- I hate to call AIDS a sexy issue but just in terms of foreign disease it is out there on people's radar screens more than Malaria.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “CDC has been doing TB and malaria and telling us how important malaria is for a lot of years. It isn't until we have recently discovered the homeland security problem with malaria that we are really, really starting to focus.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I didn't know that and now that I listened to it, it makes a lot of sense. I kind of tend to agree with you all that AIDS is the poster child, but that certainly, makes sense.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “You hear so much about AIDS. And that is partly because the administration has highlighted that as a major initiative on their part. There's a lot of attention on that. You see this happen when a particular disease in the United States gets a particular amount of attention. Everybody starts focusing.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “*That one is the one that people may think that AIDS is more directly involved in infant mortality than it is.*” *Male Agency Staff*



Similarly, the fact that most childhood deaths are attributable to three causes was compelling. Most feel that it makes sense that these conditions and diseases are causing so much death among children.

FACT: *Three-quarters of all preventable childhood deaths fall into three categories – neonatal (including infection, premature birth, asphyxia, and tetanus), diarrhea, and pneumonia.*

- “That’s what I’ve heard before so I’m thinking it’s believable.”
Female Republican Staffer
- “The diarrhea surprises me. I never really thought of that as a life threatening thing but I guess under extreme circumstances it could be with the dehydration and things like that. The neonatal if every place in the world had the same benefits of modern medicine in developed countries then you would probably have a lot of diseases that were preventable that could be easily addressed before they exponentially grew out of control.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “Most of them just need clean water.” *Female Democratic Staffer*



However, they note that these causes indicate larger issues, both infrastructural and cultural, that may go beyond getting medications to an area. These would require investing in building water treatment plants, or providing Western quality neo-natal care for children.

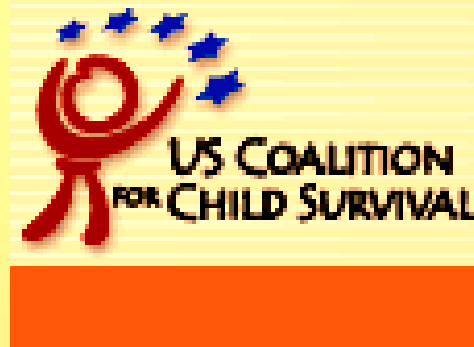
- “I don't think they can just throw money at a problem and hope that it is going to go away. I think you need to provide training, if you are going to clean the water, on how to keep the water clean. You can't just clean it once.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “I think a lot of these problems have a more cultural barrier... I was told once that part of the reason why the AIDS drugs have a hard time in Africa is that people don't wear watches and a lot of it is you need to take them three times a day, six hours apart and the schedule that you have to take the cocktail it is hard to implement in a culture that doesn't abide by time. It is a lot more of the cultural barriers.” *Male Democratic Staffer*



The fact that did not work so well with staffers focuses on the cost to save lives. Some participants thought this type of fact was an attempt to make people feel guilty for not spending the money to save these children. Also, they point out what is going to be the ongoing cost to keep these children healthy if they survive beyond their first years

FACT: *It would cost about \$7.5 billion (US) per year to save the lives of these 6 million children. That is for vaccinations, treating illness, and malaria prevention and treatment.*

- “I don't buy it. I think maybe \$7.5 billion in sunk costs in one country and then who knows to maintain that. It has to be much higher than that.”
Male Democratic Staffer
- “It's one of those things that they do it to make you feel guilty, you know.”
Male Republican Staffer
- “I think that's an unrealistically large number. And the reason is, is that, it's all in the how.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “Part of it is education. We can't just give these kids immunizations from Malaria we need to educate them how to clean up their environment and their living conditions so that Malaria is not a problem for the next generation. I just don't think you can have an accurate measure of all the costs.” *Male Democratic Staffer*



Reactions to Messages



Both groups found the “numbers message” compelling. They find the facts in this message strong and are struck by the argument that simple steps could make a big difference in terms of saving children’s lives.

[Numbers] Each year 10.8 million children die, and of these 6 million die from preventable causes. For example, access to safe water for drinking and hygiene could prevent 1.5 million childhood deaths each year and reduce the risk factor in 88% of all cases of diarrhea. Millions more children under age 5 die from infections that are easily treated with inexpensive antibiotics, but these countries are too poor to afford the treatments. We are not talking about heroic efforts we are talking about getting very basic needs met and providing basic healthcare. It is time to make a commitment to these children and end this wasteful loss of life.

- “These are basic issues. I mean, water safety, water quality. And so I think that it has a relatively simple message that, just by addressing water safety issues, as well as inexpensive antibiotics you could address a variety of problems.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “I like that it paints a very plausible scenario of how we can solve the situation. It does not seem like it is insurmountable. It is a credible argument that provides a realistic way to achieve the goals.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “It didn’t sound like it would take too much from us to do this. It wouldn’t be a huge sacrifice on our part.” *Female Republican Staffer*



Indeed, the measures suggested in the text initially seem doable to staffers, because the needs are “basic.” However, several participants pointed out that the last two sentences in the messages sounded “preachy” or like “rhetoric.”

- “It’s relatively factual but I think some of the stuff we’ve been hearing about AIDS is the horror stories are so great that it makes you wonder why even bother. This is doable.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I like the repeated use of the word basic. It seems like this is just something that should be so easy to do that it is within our grasp.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “These are exactly the kinds of statistics my boss is looking for so I thought it was excellent. The last two sentences seem like a little rhetoric but they are great statistics in the other sentences and I gave it a five. I think it is very powerful.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “I thought the last two sentences were a bit preachy.” *Male Republican Staffer*



The national security message works for both groups, but is strongest with Republicans. While both groups quibbled with some of the language in the message, overall they like the focus on national security.

[National Security] Now more than ever, investing in programs that improve the social and economic well being of the most vulnerable groups in the world should be viewed as a fundamental component of our national security. Assist poor countries in their efforts to improve child survival is a proactive, constructive and necessary part of any comprehensive and effective foreign policy and national security framework. By helping these mothers and children obtain basic needs and healthcare we help them find hope for the future and teach them how to care for themselves. Caring for children in other countries protects the future of America and the global community.

- “I really liked this statement. I thought this was the most cogent statement of all of them.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “Proactive, constructive, necessary part and the fact that you are teaching them to care for themselves.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “It was great and I gave it the highest score I’ve given any of them, mainly because of the first half of it. But if you could connect how helping mothers and children actually helps our national security...” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “I like the part about helping our national security.” *Female Democratic Staffer*



The message about expanding and building on the President's AIDS initiative is the top message for Republicans while it comes in last with Democrats. Perhaps the reference to the President's plan, a source of pride for many of Republican staffers, helps explain their high rating and conversely the Democrats' low ratings.

[AIDS] The efforts that the United States will be undertaking in the next five years to address the global HIV/AIDS pandemic are important. But, it is equally important that we continue to improve and expand the global efforts to address child survival and maternal health issues. As countries and organizations continue their work to expand the response to HIV/AIDS they will be relying on the health infrastructure that was developed to address child survival issues. This child survival infrastructure is the mechanism that will make the President's AIDS Initiative work. Therefore, we must continue to provide increased funding for both HIV/AIDS and child survival programs if we hope to reach the targets outlined in the President's Emergency AIDS Plan.

- “Nothing really jumps out at me to pick apart other than the only people who might oppose this are somebody who really hates Bush. But if we're talking for a Republican audience, I think that would grab a lot of people.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I liked it but I thought maybe it could actually get a little more specific, like the child survival infrastructure mechanism programs. It doesn't talk about what any of that is.” *Female Republican Staffer*



Democrats criticized this message as being too theoretical. They liked the messages that used statistics to make the case. Staffers from both parties were concerned that this message assumed a high level of knowledge about the President's AIDS program and health infrastructure.

- “Somebody who does not have the familiarity with the issue will read this paragraph and still have no clue of what child survival is.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “The last paragraph we read had good numbers and facts and this one is too theoretical.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “I was just looking for more statistics and more facts.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “It’s almost like one person’s opinion not backed up by any facts, figures, numbers, statistics. This is one person’s point of view on how we should be dealing with this.” *Male Republican Staffer*



While all groups saw some truth in the maternal health message, the words “family planning” set off alarms about abortion and reminded them of other battles over family planning issues.

[Maternal Health] Educating women in developing countries about family planning serves several important functions. It keeps women and their children healthy. Families are more stable when the mother is healthy and able to care for her children. Stable families lead to stable societies and greater economic growth and opportunities. And when countries are stable and offer opportunities they are less likely to give rise to dictators and terrorists that will threaten other peaceful societies.

- “It is that buzzword family planning. It taints it. Everything I read about it makes sense and it is true but if you could give it some other title except for family planning. When you hear family planning you automatically think about abortion and handing out condoms. I know it has very little to do with this but...” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “It’s not logical, but that’s what they believe and so to a lot of conservatives they’d say, put the brakes on. This ain’t going nowhere.” *Male Republican Staffer*



Participants like the ideas about education, but would prefer the focus of the message be on healthcare or specific issues such as spacing pregnancies, maternal health, or neonatal health. They also do not feel that the responsibility should be solely on women to address these issues.

- “I think that one is a decent argument.” *Male Agency Staff*
- “I am bothered by that phrase educating women in developing countries because educating men has such an important function as well. It is not just the women who are having sex and giving AIDS and having abortions. Men are involved” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “I almost think if you could jettison these first two sentences and just start out, ‘Families are more stable when the mother is healthy and able to care for her children.’ That is a true statement.” *Male Republican Staffer*



The message that child survival programs are being sidetracked by focusing on AIDS did not work well with Republicans (it was not tested with Democrats). Republican staffers feel that this message was attacking funding for AIDS instead of making a case for child survival funding.

[Focus] Many child survival programs are now honing in on AIDS, which is the cause of only 3% of under-five deaths. Rather than being sidetracked by new programs, more deaths could be prevented by focusing on what we know works—that is, vaccinations, treating illness, better nutritional practices, and malaria prevention and treatment. We must commit to making these known solutions universally available and prevent the deaths of 6 million children each year. In doing this we will build the infrastructure that will make it possible for more complex or targeted treatments to be successful.

- “It basically almost comes across as attacking the AIDS thing. And it’s not something you want to attack because that’s good in it’s own right. Instead, why don’t you talk about why it’s important to focus on this. *Male Republican Staffer*”
- “Rather than getting sidetracked funding programs, let’s focus on what you can do.” *Female Republican Staffer*
- “To me, this actually sounds less preachy than the other one.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I think it’s important to focus on also funding the other programs and don’t focus at all on AIDS. We also need to make sure we focus on the other programs.” *Male Republican Staffer*



The partnership message received midrange scores from Democrats (it was not tested with Republicans). Democrats like the idea of partnerships and that there needs to be a renewed commitment to child survival.

[Partnership] Through partnerships among nations, funding organizations, and communities, the world is fighting to increase child survival. But despite what many people may think, over the last decade we have not made steady improvement. This is partly due to funding levels that have remained stagnant for much of that time while mortality rates have risen or shown no improvement in many countries. If we want to improve child survival then we need to commit to adequate funding for fundamental needs and health care. Then we can make the kind of progress that we have envisioned, but have yet to realize.

- “Maybe along the lines of ... establishing public and private partnerships to sort of get governments working in concert with private charities or the Red Cross and international groups to sort of attack these problems from multiple angles and make sure you have enough expertise in funding and getting it dedicated to these problems.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “I think we should be very involved but I also think that we should learn to go out and try to find more partners.” *Female Democratic Staffer*



The Funding message was rated highly by Democrats (2nd) but low by Republican (6th). Republicans feel it is too broad and not clear what is included in the funding. Democrats find the wording strong and compelling.

[Funding] Contrary to what most Americans believe, funding for child survival has not increased in the past 10 years, and overall foreign aid is much lower than people think the U.S. is investing. Throughout the 1990s funding for child survival was stagnant. Consequently we are losing ground in this fight. It is time to revisit our commitment to child survival and providing adequate funding for programs that give children clean water, basic healthcare, and a chance at life.

- “I liked that it was more assertive and it gave facts. It took a partial truth and made it stronger.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- “Are you talking about the USAID child survival account? Because that has more money in it now than it ever has. If you take that definition, you could show this statement to be factually inaccurate very quickly.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I like it at the end where it finally gives me an idea of what child survival is when it is talking about giving children clean water and basic healthcare.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “Another thought invited in this statement that if you’re not always increasing funding amounts, you’re therefore losing ground.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I don’t think that’s accurate [that funding is stagnant].” *Male Agency Staff*



The Gap message came in third with Democrats (not tested with Republicans). Democrats like the concepts in the message, but they are critical of the lack of facts.

[Gap] The gap between what can be done and what is actually being done to reduce child mortality is growing. Child survival programs are not reaching the children that need them most. Yet we know that higher levels are possible, because we have achieved them in the past. In many countries the health infrastructure has not developed to provide basic care. One step toward universal coverage of the most basic treatments is rebuilding the health care system, including training healthcare workers. Another step is engaging the communities to create a demand for health care programs. Only then will it be possible to provide basic care, as well as more complex care for diseases such as AIDS.

- “I think it is okay. Using the criteria that you just laid out I think that my boss would generally be sympathetic to something like this backed up by facts.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “This one I did not like as much because it is basically talking about rebuilding healthcare systems in other countries and my boss is going to be like, ‘Okay, so you and I are going to go talk to the head of all these corrupt countries and change their healthcare infrastructure?’” *Female Democratic Staffer*



Hill and Agency staff say they would use a mix of moral/humanitarian arguments, economic benefits, and foreign policy benefits to craft a message to convince others to support child survival initiatives. Also, seeing the problems in person is very powerful.

- “I think I would focus on both the moral obligation that a country like America has to help other people, and also the foreign policy and the economic benefits for the United States of helping other countries grow their economies and provide more stable societies.” *Male Agency Staff*
- “The issue is competing demands... The angle I like [is] to try to have some demand from the people on who the CDC needs to respond to.” *Male Agency Staff*
- I follow these issues ... I now have a lot more faith in what I am fighting for because I did see these programs at work and they do work. Even though that country is upside down, there are certain villages that told me they would not exist had it not been for Dr. David.” *Female Democratic Staffer*
- Child Survival programs are cost effective ways to stabilize developing countries, promote democracy, and save lives. *Male Republican Staffer*



Sources of Information



As information sources Republicans say they prefer the CRS (Congressional Research Service), because they trust them to be impartial on topics they are asked to research. They also look to NGOs for information on some topics, but are wary that the NGO has an agenda and their information may be biased toward that.

- “And those people [CRS] know stuff about the most obscure things.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “It’s as objective as you’re ever going to get.” *Male Republican Staffer*
- “I think you can see by the comments that people have made on these things in this room that pretty much everybody here wants facts and they want the arguments to be cogent and factual and not preachy. And you’re less likely to put a document down if it’s giving you the facts. That’s why we go to CRS because you get the facts rather than preaching to me ... and then the other thing is to tell me where everybody is going to be if I take that position.” *Female Republican Staffer*



Democrats and Agency staff look to an eclectic mix of information sources. The Economist, The United Nations, governmental agencies e.g. Centers for Disease Control, universities, and NGOs are all mentioned as possible resources on child survival and similar issues.

- “I got my information from government agencies, from NGOs, from universities. I had access to just about everybody who’s involved in this field.” *Male Agency Staff*
- “It depends. I think maybe the Centers for Disease Control, UNICEF and the United Nations on these types of issues would certainly be credible to me.” *Male Democratic Staffer*
- “In a general sense something that is like a journal that doesn't have a stake in the issue. Someone you feel very confident that you are going to get an unbiased unvarnished approach to it. Like rhetoric that we get from an NGO coming in that works on those issues I might think that they are trying to bias the argument to favor them so something like that would be more convincing to me.” *Male Democratic Staffer*



Implications



Reach out to Republicans. Don't forget Democrats.

- Many Republicans Staffers seem to be engaged in topics like child survival for the first time. Because of the focus that President Bush has put on HIV/AIDS, Republicans are now an involved audience that needs and wants to learn more about these issues.
- Do not forget to keep Democrats, who have been long-term supporters, apprized of the issues, feeding them relevant facts and success stories so that they stay engaged.



Use Facts. Define Child Survival.

- All Staffers are hungry for information, especially Republicans. The Republicans still have a learning curve on this issue and need and want to know more about it. While it may seem like an old issue to advocates and Democrats it is a newer issue for Republicans.
- All messages could be improved by defining what child survival means. Staffers feel that child survival, while the best term available, is still vague and needs to be clarified in the messages.



Target messages.

- Focusing on the large number of children dying from causes that we already know how to prevent or treat may be the strongest message currently. It works well with both parties and does not seem to be divisive.
- Use messages selectively. National security messages for being involved in child survival may work for both groups, but will ultimately work best for Republicans. Also, messages about expanding the current efforts on AIDS in Africa will likely work best for Republican staffers.
- Talking about stagnant funding levels for child survival may work with Democrats. Republicans in these groups did not like this message at all.



Appendix

Messages – ratings and rankings



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<p>[Numbers] Each year 10.8 million children die, and of these 6 million die from preventable causes. For example, access to safe water for drinking and hygiene could prevent 1.5 million childhood deaths each year and reduce the risk factor in 88% of all cases of diarrhea. Millions more children under age 5 die from infections that are easily treated with inexpensive antibiotics, but these countries are too poor to afford the treatments. We are not talking about heroic efforts we are talking about getting very basic needs met and providing basic healthcare. It is time to make a commitment to these children and end this wasteful loss of life.</p>	<p>3.11 out of 5 (rank: 3rd)</p>	<p>4.14 out of 5 (rank: 1st)</p>
<p>[National Security] Now more than ever, investing in programs that improve the social and economic well being of the most vulnerable groups in the world should be viewed as a fundamental component of our national security. Assist poor countries in their efforts to improve child survival is a proactive, constructive and necessary part of any comprehensive and effective foreign policy and national security framework. By helping these mothers and children obtain basic needs and healthcare we help them find hope for the future and teach them how to care for themselves. Caring for children in other countries protects the future of America and the global community.</p>	<p>3.64 out of 5 (rank: 2nd)</p>	<p>2.57 out of 5 (rank: 3rd)</p>
<p>[AIDS] The efforts that the United States will be undertaking in the next five years to address the global HIV/AIDS pandemic are important. But, it is equally important that we continue to improve and expand the global efforts to address child survival and maternal health issues. As countries and organizations continue their work to expand the response to HIV/AIDS they will be relying on the health infrastructure that was developed to address child survival issues. This child survival infrastructure is the mechanism that will make the President’s AIDS Initiative work. Therefore, we must continue to provide increased funding for both HIV/AIDS and child survival programs if we hope to reach the targets outlined in the President’s Emergency AIDS Plan</p>	<p>3.68 out of 5 (rank: 1st)</p>	<p>1.86 out of 5 (rank: 6th)</p>



Messages – ratings and rankings

<p>[Partnership] Through partnerships among nations, funding organizations, and communities, the world is fighting to increase child survival. But despite what many people may think, over the last decade we have not made steady improvement. This is partly due to funding levels that have remained stagnant for much of that time while mortality rates have risen or shown no improvement in many countries. If we want to improve child survival then we need to commit to adequate funding for fundamental needs and health care. Then we can make the kind of progress that we have envisioned, but have yet to realize.</p>	<p>_____</p>	<p>2.40 out of 5 (rank: 4th)</p>
<p>[Funding] Contrary to what most Americans believe, funding for child survival has not increased in the past 10 years, and overall foreign aid is much lower than people think the U.S. is investing. Throughout the 1990s funding for child survival was stagnant. Consequently we are losing ground in this fight. It is time to revisit our commitment to child survival and providing adequate funding for programs that give children clean water, basic healthcare, and a chance at life.</p>	<p>.79 out of 5 (rank: 6th)</p>	<p>3.36 out of 5 (rank: 2nd)</p>
<p>[Gap] The gap between what can be done and what is actually being done to reduce child mortality is growing. Child survival programs are not reaching the children that need them most. Yet we know that higher levels are possible, because we have achieved them in the past. In many countries the health infrastructure has not developed to provide basic care. One step toward universal coverage of the most basic treatments is rebuilding the health care system, including training healthcare workers. Another step is engaging the communities to create a demand for health care programs. Only then will it be possible to provide basic care, as well as more complex care for diseases such as AIDS.</p>	<p>_____</p>	<p>2.57 out of 5 (rank: 3rd)</p>



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<p>[Focus] Many child survival programs are now honing in on AIDS, which is the cause of only 3% of under-five deaths. Rather than being sidetracked by new programs, more deaths could be prevented by focusing on what we know works—that is, vaccinations, treating illness, better nutritional practices, and malaria prevention and treatment. We must commit to making these known solutions universally available and prevent the deaths of 6 million children each year. In doing this we will build the infrastructure that will make it possible for more complex or targeted treatments to be successful.</p>	<p>2.14 out of 5 (rank 4th)</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>[Maternal Health] Educating women in developing countries about family planning serves several important functions. It keeps women and their children healthy. Families are more stable when the mother is healthy and able to care for her children. Stable families lead to stable societies and greater economic growth and opportunities. And when countries are stable and offer opportunities they are less likely to give rise to dictators and terrorists that will threaten other peaceful societies.</p>	<p>2.0 out of 5 (rank: 5th)</p>	<p>2.0 out of 5 (rank: 5th)</p>