

say, wait a minute, why do you study all these up? We already have a system through the public schools for screening and identifying children who have handicaps and providing those services; we already have a program through VNA that will address parent-child information and parenting issues, so one of the things that unfortunately happens is that we get stuck inside our own four walls of our agencies and we don't pay any attention to what anybody else is doing and that's how we get into wasting our dollars by duplicating. The other key factors is prevention. One of the things that happens in families who have children with disabilities is a lot of players come into the lives of those families. It's not unusual for a child who is born with Down Syndrome to leave that hospital five days after they're born and have involved with that family a neurologist, a cardiologist, a pediatric, developmental pediatrician, a geneticist as well as an ENT. So they already have five or six medical care people. Then they get involved in the school program and they will have a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a speech therapist and a teacher, another four or five people. Now we're up to nine or ten people working with this family. Then if they try and get involved in support groups such as parent groups, they can have two or three more people involved. If they need some financial assistance they then get involved with the Department of Social Services. They need an intake worker, they need somebody who can help them SSI, they need somebody that can help them with Medicaid waiver programs. It is not unusual for even uncomplicated cases to have 10 to 15 different professionals working with the family, and the tragedy of the system the way it is working now is that none of those 10 or 15 people talk to each other. And so all the information is coming to the parents and it's not always information that is in sync with each other and sometimes it is even conflicting and parents have to try and sort it all out. What happens when we have a fragmented system is that we fragment the families and we put unbelievable pressure on them. It is not unusual to find in families of children with disabilities, a much higher incidence of divorce, a much higher incidence of abuse and a much higher incidence of such problems such as alcoholism. All of those issues cost our society a good deal of money and we're talking about putting together a system that does a much better job of using the resources that we already have in place, helping families to access those resources and coordinating them in a way so that we don't force the family into disintegration. The other thing that is happening more and more often as we save children through