

## Role of Government in Valuing and Strengthening Families

Parents are their children's most important teachers and strong communities are needed to support families in this role. Government cannot and should not serve as a substitute for a child's family and community. At the same time, too many families struggle to provide the nurturing and stable home environment all children need. Through poverty, parental stress, depression, addiction, or mental illness, too many children are vulnerable to a host of poor child outcomes and an ability to themselves become contributing adults and parents as they develop. Increased mobility and family stress also have produced what some have called a "breakdown of the family" in America. The media and negative role models among some celebrities has contributed to risky and negative youth behavior. Government cannot solve these issues, but leaders within government can set a vision and direction for government in strengthening and supporting families and family life.

*As Governor, what leadership role will you take to strengthen families and family life in Iowa?*



**BRANSTAD:** A key component to strong families is to make sure the family breadwinners are employed. My goal to create 200,000 new jobs in Iowa, jobs that can be obtained by those

already in our state and those coming from other states. With the current unemployment rate of 6.8%, many families are approaching or have reached poverty. This puts undue strain on a family. My proposals to reduce property taxes on commercial property and to cut the corporate income tax will spur existing and new businesses to bring more jobs to Iowa.



**CULVER:** As a father I know that parents and other family members are a child's first and best teachers. But as a former teacher and coach I also know adult role models can come

into a child's life many ways. While parents are and should remain the people primarily responsible for raising their children, society can play a role in strengthening and supporting those families and assisting children who fall through the cracks. We must use creative programs that incorporate public/private partnerships, partnerships with community nonprofits and faith-based partners to address child poverty and safety issues. While personal responsibility has always been a strong Iowa value, the people of Iowa have no desire to stand aside and allow children to go without a quality education or essential medical care.