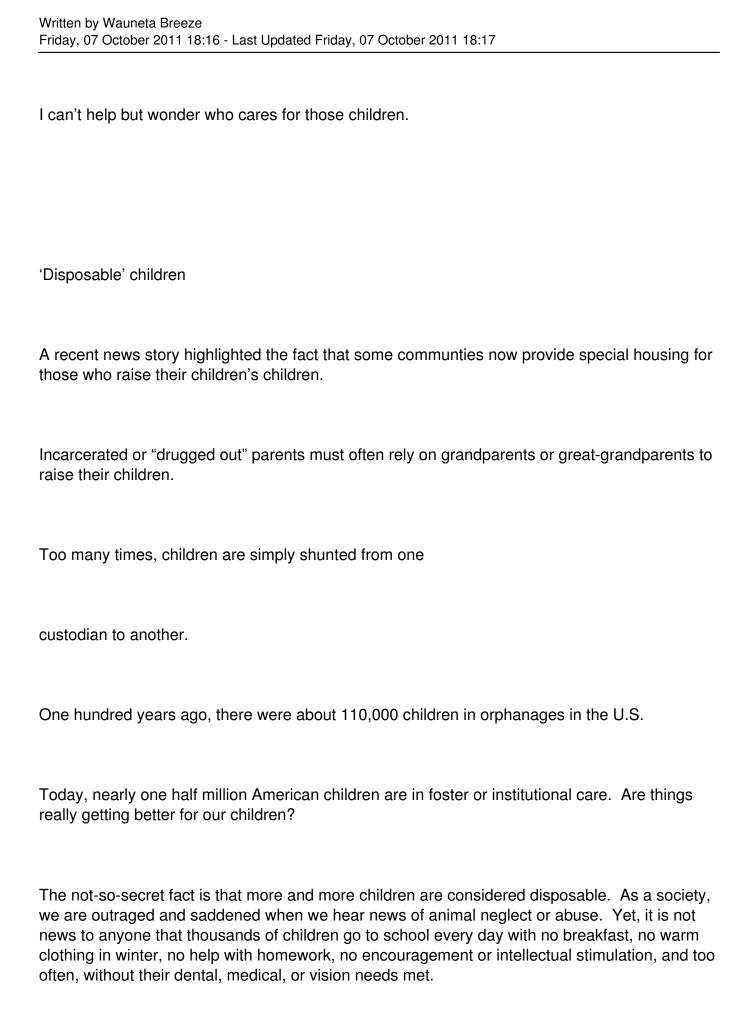


be improved if there were a similar exercise for every child. Yes, I know there would be cries of intrusion into the rights of parents and the home. But I also know that there are simply too many children in this country who do not have the level of routine medical care, nutrition, quality time, exercise, social environment, or just plain attention that my dog gets.



Written by Wauneta Breeze Friday, 07 October 2011 18:16 - Last Updated Friday, 07 October 2011 18:17

It matters. Young children who do not have proper nutrition are twice as likely to need special education or to be significantly behind other students in their later grades.

# Ironic challenge

Schools and teachers are attacked every day for failing to ensure high achievement for all students. Some criticism is legitimate. Our education system needs to continually improve. But the problems of significant low achievement may be simply too late to address for those students who show up at school with so little parental attention that they do not know the colors, the alphabet, how to count to 10, simple nursery rhymes or songs, or sometimes, even their own names.

They have been raised by television or electronic games.

Yes, student achievement matters. Good schools and teachers matter. And, not surprisingly, good parenting.

The prospect of high student achievement begins long before the student ever sets foot in school. It begins with the decision by our society... and by the parent of every new-born child...that no child in America should ever get more love, more care, more attention, more time, more food, or a warmer bed by trading places with somebody's pet.

We all know people who treat their pets like children. The ironic challenge for America is to make sure that our children are treated at least as well as our pets. But until that is a reality in every community in America, we will continue to fail miserably at ensuring high achievement for every child.

Written by Wauneta Breeze Friday, 07 October 2011 18:16 - Last Updated Friday, 07 October 2011 18:17

Craig R. Christiansen is the Executive Director of the Nebraska State Education Association Founded in 1867, the Nebraska State Education Association is the state's oldest professional association and represents more than 28,000 teachers, education support professionals, higher education faculty and staff, retired education employees and students preparing to become teachers. NSEA is an affiliate of the 3.2 million-member National Education Association.