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## Development of a Parent Education Program for Parents of Children Enrolled in the Head Start Child Development Center Toppenish, Washington

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DEVELOPMENT OF A PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM  
FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN  
THE HEAD START CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
TOPPENISH, WASHINGTON

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
Margaret Gleason Kulik

June, 1969

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Clifford A. Erickson

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MGK

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

For several decades there has been a dichotomy in education, with the teacher holding forth sacrosanct in the classroom and the parent remaining discretely away from that hallowed "teacher-land" --except, of course, to show up dutifully on invited occasions to view the children's "exhibits" and to respond with proper appreciative comments. Parents were also permitted to "participate" in their children's education by signing and returning report cards, cheering at athletic events, and by giving bake sales when the PTA was asked to supply some item of equipment the school budget could not cover. This situation is, undoubtedly, a hold-over from the "good old days" when schooling consisted of training in the three R's, a bit of singing, and little else. It was not difficult then, for either parents or teachers to decide what was the role of the school and what was the role of the home in the training of children, so the accepted dichotomy became well entrenched in school tradition.

However, with the change in our society from rural agricultural to urban industrial, functions of the home and the school have been substantially altered. The school has tended to take over, or to be given, more and more of what were once the functions of the home. Consequently, the problem of "who is responsible for what, in the education of children" has become a real and difficult one. Some

educators theorize that a child "lives" at home and "visits" school, and that he gets only as much good from his school "visits" as he can carry over into his home life. In other words, he "learns" only what he can relate to his life experience.

In 1965, when the Office of Economic Opportunity was entrusted with the establishment of Head Start Child Development Centers to help disadvantaged children prepare for school, the concept of parents and teachers as a working team was "built in" to the program. This meant classroom doors would be open at all times to parents as aides, observers, volunteer helpers, and policy-making advisors in the education of their children. The ~~team~~ approach forced awareness of the need for coordination or, at least, mutual understanding between teachers and parents, of principles, goals, and even methods of child development. It further emphasized the glaring discrepancy between teacher education and parent education. While teachers have long been required to devote a number of years to preparation for their profession, the preparation for the "profession" of parenthood has been ignored or, at best, given minimal, superficial attention. The problem now is to make up for this deficiency in parent education, especially in the area of "in-service" or "on-the-job training" --for parents who are already parents. The crucial question is: How can this best be accomplished?

#### A. Statement of the Problem

The concern of this study will be to consider the over-all problem: Can planned educational programs for parents help to compensate for some of the deficiencies brought about by the culture of poverty? More specifically will be studied the problem: Can parent education through study-discussion groups help disadvantaged families to a better understanding of themselves and others with resulting changes in attitudes and/or behavior in family relationships and child care and development?

#### B. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to design, carry out, and evaluate a parent education program for parents of Head Start children enrolled in the Toppenish, Washington, Child Development Center. The method to be used will be a study-discussion group approach (See Definitions, P.6) designed for the purpose of improving parent-child relationships within the families participating in this program. This will be attempted through increasing understanding of child development and family relationships and through improvement of self concept in the individual participants.

#### C. Significance of the Study

Numerous experimental studies of parent and family life education programs have been carried out all over the Country. However, from reports available the bulk of the research has been conducted with

either middle class families or low-income families of urban areas. It is possible that a program feasible and effective in a ghetto or crowded inner city area would not fit the needs of a rural, farming community. This study is significant in that it examines the problem of helping disadvantaged families in a small, rural community. Toppenish is situated in the Yakima Valley area of Central Washington, where farming is the main source of livelihood. The population is composed mainly of three ethnic groups: Mexican-American, Indian, and Caucasian. It is of further significance in that it is planned as a pilot study on which other parent education programs in similar communities in Central Washington can be patterned. The study is being conducted at the request and with the help of the Head Start Central Administration, Yakima Valley Council for Community Action, Inc. After the project is completed and evaluated, strengths and weaknesses can be pinpointed and a revised program can be replicated in other Head Start centers or in this same center.

#### D. Limitations of the Study

This study is limited as a research project for several reasons. The director of the study is trained in education, not in research methods and procedures. Therefore, evaluation, while an important part of the study, is not presented as strict research data. Two evaluative instruments are used, one, an objective pre and post test of knowledge and attitudes concerning child development and family relationships, and the other, a subjective evaluation obtained from

participating parents in personal interviews. The validity of the objective test may be questioned as the literacy level of the participant in the study is not known. Moreover, neither the project director nor the Head Start teachers and aides who conduct the interviews are trained in interviewing techniques, thus it also seems inappropriate to present the subjective evaluations in sharply coded and statistical form. Finally, there is no control group with which to make statistical comparisons as would be done in a tightly designed research project. Despite this lack of scientific method, the project director is hopeful that this experimental program of parent education will provide some helpful findings in planning future educational programs for low socio-economic families.

#### E. Definition of Terms

Disadvantaged families and children. This is the term commonly used to refer to members of low socio-economic families who are considered to be culturally, economically, emotionally and psychologically below contemporary standards.

Project Head Start. This is a Community Action Program sponsored and funded by the United States Government Office of Economic Opportunity. Head Start Child Development Centers are established and staffed by professional, non-professional and volunteer workers to help four and five year-old children of disadvantaged families to gain cultural, physical, emotional, and social experiences that will

better prepare them for learning and achievement in later school programs.

Parent Advisory Board. This term is used throughout this report as synonymous with Policy Advisory Group or Committee, which is defined in the Head Start Manual as the structure for providing a formal means for involving parents in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the Head Start program.

Family Life Education. "Broadly speaking, this includes all those educational activities and programs which serve to enrich one's understanding of the complex interplay of family relations." (3:37)

Parent Education. Often this is used interchangeably with the term Family Life Education; however, in this thesis it will designate one aspect of family life education, that involving parent-child relationships.

Study-discussion Approach. In this thesis the term study-discussion approach refers to the educational method involving presentation of subject matter by a consultant or trained leader who is a professional or specialist in a designated field, with discussion of the subject involving all participants either after or interposed during the presentation.

## F. Preview of Organization of the Thesis

The remainder of the thesis will be organized in a format that seems logical for reporting this particular type of a study.

Chapter II will be concerned with presentation of a review of recent literature that will provide a knowledgeable background for the problem under consideration in this study. The first part of the chapter will be devoted to a review of research related to child development and family dynamics, and the way in which Project Head Start puts into action contemporary theories and principles of child care and development as they relate to home and school. The second part of the chapter presents a review of literature concerning similar studies that have been reported.

Chapter III contains a report of the study. This includes reports of procedures for planning the project, training of personnel to assist in the project, selections of participants for the study-discussion program, designing of the program, designing of evaluative instruments and techniques, and finally a report of operation of the program.

Evaluation of the program is summarized in Chapter IV with conclusions and suggestions for future replication.

This thesis is designed for a dual purpose: as partial fulfillment for the project director's Master of Education degree in Family Life Education, and as a guideline for future Head Start parent education programs.

## CHAPTER II

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### A. Review of Related Literature

##### Child Development and Family Dynamics

Dependence of the human infant. Since the dawn of recorded history it has been recognized that the human infant, unlike the offspring of most animals, is born helpless and requires a long period of dependency. His growth, development, and learning are slow processes, requiring many years in which care, protection, and guidance are essential. Without the continuous help and support of others during this long interval of maturation, he could not develop into a self-sufficient, able adult. (16: 740-777)

Socialization of the child: a function of the family. In most societies this essential protection and care for the young child comes most commonly from his parents. In fact, this early socialization or acculturation of the child is considered to be one of the basic functions of the family as a social institution in a predominant number of societies throughout the world. According to Parsons and Bales (1955) "the basic and irreducible functions of the modern American family are (a) the socialization of children so they can become members of the society in which they are born and (b) the stabilization of the adult personalities of the population of the society." (16: 756) Furthermore,



they point out, "the degree to which any given family can do this successfully depends on the cohesiveness of the family group, on the one hand, and the institutional support the family receives from society at large, on the other." (16: 756) In the United States, by the time a child reaches school age, the family is expected to have provided for his care and for certain basic learning experiences that prepare him for the participation in the school program. (22: ix)

Parental influence on child development and socialization. Much of the child development study today is based on the assumption that the child is born "asocial." While extensive research is being carried on in the field of "in-utero" learnings, there is as yet little significant evidence to dispute this generalization. Therefore, socialization, "the process by which the infant learns the ways of a given social grouping and is 'molded' into an effective participant of the group" (16: 743), is considered the function of society, and particularly, the family. Furthermore, it is assumed that socialization is an interactional process. Sewell discusses socialization from the social role approach and social systems theory (50: 320-331) while Orville G. Brim supports this theory and develops it further in stressing the continuing aspect of socialization as also a function of adolescence and adulthood. (9: 360-366) Satir and others stress as basic to socialization the need for self-esteem, as a masterful person and as a sexual person. (47: 29) Self-esteem as a masterful person requires a feeling of competence to play a constructive part in his

life situation, and self-esteem as a sexual person involves a feeling of acceptance and comfort in his sex role as he perceives it in his social situation. She maintains that the only way that a child can have his self-esteem "validated" is through the interrelationship between parents and child. Davis contends that the basis for human security is "balance", which lies in a four-fold concept of reciprocal trust. The parent gives a balance of care and respect and the child responds with a balance of comfortable reliance on the parent and confidence in his own efforts. This reciprocal trust leads to emancipation when the child matures enough to take over management of his own life. (17: 214) Erikson, in outlining his eight epigenetic stages of personality development, designates parents as prime facilitators in the child's accomplishment of each of the developmental stages of childhood and adolescence. (21)

Bowlby (1955), in his report to the World Mental Health Organization, emphasized as essential for mental health the experience of warm, intimate and continuous relationship of the child with his mother or a permanent mother-substitute. He acknowledged that more research has been done on maternal care than on the effects of paternal care, so that conclusions could not be drawn as to the effects of paternal deprivation on mental health. (7: 228)

Adequate development of sex role identity appears to be crucial for normal social adjustment, both in the area of socialization and mental health. Kagan defines sex role identity as "the degree to which an individual regards himself as masculine or feminine." (32: 144)

Satir describes this process as the way the child perceives how "Big Male" (father) and "Big Female" (mother) treat him and also how they treat each other. (47: 48) From studies carried on by Mussen and Distler (1960) and Mussen and Rutherford (1963) Smart and Smart report that

the salience of the father in the family has been shown to have a vital effect on the boy's assumption of his sex role. The more a son interacts with a powerful father, a man who does both punishing and rewarding, the more masculine the boy will be. Girls' sex role learning has been found to be enhanced by fathers who encourage their daughters to take part in feminine activities and by mothers who are warm and self-confident and with whom daughters had satisfying relationships. (51: 409)

English, in "The Psychological Role of the Father in the Family", stressed his belief that fathers are equally important for the sex role identity of daughters as sons. A 1960 study of adolescent boys whose fathers were absent during the three to five-year age compared to adolescent boys whose fathers were present at this age found greater oedipal intensity among father-separated boys. Another study of college boys indicated father-separated boys were more feminine, viewed mothers as more powerful and identified more with mothers than father-present boys. All studies supported the theory that identification for both boys and girls depends on the view of the same and cross sex "parenting". Despite a proliferation of research, there is little empirical information regarding the method or the critical periods of this identification process; however, a Fels Research Institute longitudinal study relating sex role identification with behavioral continuities showed that the six to ten-year age group

behavior is a moderately sensitive predictor of sex-related behavior in adulthood. (32: 154)

Parents play key roles, not only in the primary socialization of the child, but also a vital supportive role in his classroom activities. Smart and Smart cite three studies, Bing (1963) Dyk and Witkins (1965) and Levy (1943) to support the theory that "analytic thinking seems to be related to child-rearing practices, especially in promotion of independence, responsibility, and initiative." (51: 366) Christopher (1967) reported in his study of "Parental relationships and value orientation as factors in academic achievement" that girls reacted as predicted--more responsive to parental attitude than boys. (15) Becker cites numerous studies that indicate that different kinds of parental discipline results in different types of performance and behavior in the classroom. (4: 169-207)

Even from a brief review of studies and theories of parental influence on child behavior and growth it can be concluded that motivation and support for the child's development and socialization is set in the family. Furthermore, since there is as yet little significant data concerning critical periods of social development (such as the "imprinting" of animals) it would seem logical to involve the parents as much as possible in the socialization and education of the child throughout the school years.

Inability of low socio-economic family to provide for adequate socialization. Research in child development has produced enough

significant data and empirical evidence to lead to serious questioning of the ability of low socio-economic families to provide for adequate socialization of their children. (6: 193-200, 15: 921-925, 46: 175-176) Representative of such research is Hunt's "Psychological basis for using pre-school enrichment as an antidote for cultural deprivation" (1964) in which he points out that Freud was correct about the importance of early experience, that experience is the "programmer" of the "human brain-computer", and that many basic experiences are lacking in the children of low socio-economic families. (29: 209-248)

Reissman in The Culturally Deprived Child challenges the "stimulus deprivation" thesis with the suggestion that a "stimulus different" interpretation be substituted. However, he admits that

A child from any circumstance who has been deprived of a substantial portion of the variety of stimuli which he is maturationally capable of responding to is likely to be deficient in the equipment required for learning. (43: 177)

Deutch, in "The Disadvantaged Child", supports this theory by quoting Piaget to the effect that "the rate of development is in substantial part, but certainly not wholly, a function of environmental circumstances." (43: 177)

Not only is the environment of the low income family limited in a variety of stimuli but investigation has also pointed up the concept of "values" as a principal determinant in behavior. Cohen, in postulating the important consequences of parental values in their relationships with their children, presents the sequential model of social class--conditions of life--values--behavior. (43:168) Hilda Taba supports

the above theories with the statement that three main factors, "(1) limited environment, (2) lack of system and ordered interpretation and mediation, and (3) limited motivation" produce cultural deprivation in children of low socio-economic families. She suggests that schools must fill the gaps in social learning left by the home and mend the conflict between the culture of home and the school. (53: 147-159)

These and a proliferation of other studies and research projects dating as far back as Freud's psychoanalytic theory of ego-development provide considerable valid evidence that the early years of childhood are critical in the socialization and development of the human personality, and that lower class parents, far more than middle or upper class parents, tend to bring up their children in ways conducive to serious difficulties in educational achievement, emotional health, and social success. The poverty cycle may well be perpetuated by certain cultural patterns in the way disadvantaged parents rear their children and relate to each other, (12: 201) causing clearly observable deficiencies in the creation of learning patterns, formation of individual expectations and aspirations, and emotional development. (38: 1)

Project Head Start: Intervention strategy.

Head Start: design to help disadvantaged children and parents.

A panel of authorities on child development prepared a report for the United States Government Office of Economic Opportunity in February, 1965, on the basis of such findings and observations as reviewed above. Dr. Robert E. Cooke, Committee chairman, credited the President's Panel

on Mental Retardation with revealing the enormity of the problem of inadequate early childhood experiences and recommended that "preventative steps be taken early--very early to overcome the intellectual, social, psychological, and physical handicaps which, in the majority of disadvantaged children need not and should not exist to the degree they do." (38: 8)

Surveys revealed that

despite America's affluence, about one-fourth of our youngsters live in bleak, barren social conditions that make it difficult--really impossible--for their homes to provide the experiences that add up to a good start. ....approximately 1,193,000 children at every age level--1,193,000 Fives, 1,193,000 Fours, 1,193,000 Threes--live in poverty.

The Civil Rights movement was a strong prod to America's conscience. Without it there probably would not have been a war on poverty or a Project Head Start. But the 1,193,000 Fives (and the same number of Fours, and Threes and Twos and Ones) who live in poverty are not all Negroes by any means. The largest number of our poor are white children, especially rural white children, but there are Negro boys and girls, Indian youngsters and Eskimo youngsters and Spanish-speaking American children in our cities and in our great Southwest. Head Start is for poor children. Only 10 per cent of the youngsters in Head Start may come from families who do not meet the standard set for poverty living. (31: 7-8)

The framework of Head Start was based on research that supported the view that special programs could be devised for four and five-year-olds that would improve both the child's opportunities and achievements. (38: 2) Head Start groups are not called "pre-schools" or "schools" but Child Development Centers. "This name symbolizes one of the unique features of Head Start: It is committed to the development of the whole child--to his intellectual growth and to his physical well-being

and to his emotional health and to his sound social development."

(31: 9) Furthermore, Head Start is committed to the concept that the program "must focus on the problems of child and parent," so as to increase "the child's capacity to relate positively to family members and others, while, at the same time, strengthening the family's ability to relate positively to the child and his problems." (38: 2)

"Head Start exists so that its children will do better in school, but it says explicitly that success in school (and success in life) is not simply a matter of what a person knows, of his intellectual development alone." (31: 9) Successful development is a product of a child's total growth, "of what he knows and how he feels and how he gets along with people and how he looks on himself and how well his body functions." (31: 9)

Head Start differs from traditional school operation both in practice and in principle. Fifteen children is considered a maximum Head Start group: fifteen children for a trained Head Teacher and a paid aide, usually a parent from the poverty area being served. Furthermore, in addition to the teacher, aide, and volunteers, wherever possible, Head Start provides the services of pediatricians, dentists, speech and hearing specialists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and nutritionists. "Head Start recognizes that full development in early childhood requires a multi-discipline team. One teacher working alone cannot do the job." (31: 10)

Family-centered approach to child development. Head Start operates on the premise that the school alone, or the child development center



alone, cannot effect full development of the child. Parents play an important role in this development and, therefore, in Head Start projects. In 1960 the White House Conference on Children and Youth formulated an assumption generally held by social and behavioral scientists today, that "children and youth cannot be seen apart from the larger framework of their families," specifically, that the "most important single factor in the children's world is their parents." (3: 37) A family-centered approach is central to much of social work thinking today, and social welfare is based on the concept of family treatment directed toward the promotion of family strength and stability. (113) Satir (47: 1-5) and others, believe that, "when one person in a family has pain which shows up in symptoms, all family members are feeling this pain in some way." They support this family-centered approach in the field of psychiatry by treating disturbed children through "conjoint family therapy". This involves helping the family as a unit. So also helping the child and his family is one of the basic concepts of Project Head Start.

#### Parent education as part of Head Start Child Development Programs.

Parent participation, parent involvement, as teacher aides, volunteer helpers, members of Policy Advisory Boards and general involvement in child development are written into the framework of Project Head Start, but there persists the problem of bringing about this participation in actual practice. Perhaps the greatest single barrier to parent participation is their own feelings of inadequacy due to lack of education,

both in general education and in the area of child development. Therefore, Head Start Centers throughout the Country are attempting to compensate for lack of parental education and training by providing opportunity for parents to become better educated. Referral to school and community centered classes in general education and vocational training is one way of helping low socio-economic parents to better education and employability, and Head Start encourages parents to support and help each other in such efforts of self-improvement. It also sponsors programs for education in family relationships and child development. The question most pertinent at present is: How can parent education best be accomplished? So far a proliferation of studies seem to have yielded a paucity of conclusive evidence as to what comprises the most effective content, methods, and approaches to this question so vital to helping disadvantaged children and parents to greater opportunity and achievement.

#### B. Review of Literature of Parent Education Studies

##### Parent Education for parents of various classes.

Although much of the focus of parent education has been directed toward the families of low socio-economic class, there has been an growing awareness of this need for parents of all classes. One has only to open the pages of a current magazine or newspaper to find a profusion of articles dealing with child development and family relationships, or to tune in on forums or panel discussions of these topics on

TV to realize that it seems a major concern in the United States today. It seems advisable, therefore, to examine briefly a representative study of a parent education program not limited to low income parents, for there is bound to be some carry-over of principles and objectives based on the common-denominator of parenthood.

Austin, Texas Project. One carefully researched study is that reported by Carl Hereford in a monograph published by the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. (28) This was a four-year project conducted in selected elementary schools in Austin, Texas, over the years 1955-1960. The research project represents an attempt to accomplish two set goals: "first, to develop and establish in a community a workable method of helping parents with their parent-child relations; second, to evaluate this method in terms of the resulting attitudinal and behavioral changes." (28: 8)

The study was planned and partially executed by a group of professionals which became the Research Council of the Project. The educational program consisted of a series of six two-hour weekly group-discussion meetings for parents, organized under the joint auspices of the Mental Health Association of Austin-Travis County and the elementary PTA. An existing study-group framework consisting of about fifteen parents in each group was used. Each meeting was conducted by a trained but non-professional discussion leader. (28: 29)

Hundreds of participants from all socio-economic levels were involved in the discussion programs and in the evaluation. Through the

use of attitude scales and interviews, both pre-measurements and post-measurements were taken of the parental attitudes and behavior patterns of those attending the discussions. The primary hypothesis predicted that the parents' attendance at a series of group-discussion meetings would result in significant changes in their parental attitudes and behavior, and "that the changes would be toward greater confidence in the parental role, more insight into the causation of the child's behavior, greater acceptance of their child's behavior and feelings, more effective communication between parents and child, and a stronger feeling of mutual trust." (28: 111) Final evaluation by the measurement team confirmed the principal hypothesis concerning the effect of the discussion method on parental attitudes. (28: 113)

#### Parent education for low socio-economic parents.

Chilman in Growing Up Poor (13), a publication based upon a review of the most recent and pertinent studies relating to the child-rearing and family life patterns of the very poor, summarized that "more attention should be paid to the families of poverty, not to the children of poverty alone." (13: 84) She further suggested that as an intervention strategy a group approach to parent education might be effective in many cases. (13: 84-85) In attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of this method various studies have been reported. Among these are such studies as Auerbach's Trends and Techniques in Parent Education (3) and her definitive study titled Parents Learn Through Discussion (2). Berger (5) reports an improvement in feelings of adequacy and

self-esteem through participation in a continuous parent education group. Additional studies reporting positive results include Chilman and Kroft (14) "Helping Low Income Parents Through Parent Education Groups", and Whaley's "The Impact of Group Discussions on Parent Attitudes."  
(56)

East Chicago, Indiana Study. Dr. Mary Endres, Professor in the Department of Child Development and Family Life, Purdue University at Lafayette, Indiana, reported on a study conducted in the East Chicago, Indiana School Corporation in 1966-1967. (20: 119-122) This study was based on the problem indicated in earlier research that child rearing practices of the poor differed from those believed to be most conducive to development of good mental health in children and attempted to study the question, "Does parent education make a difference?"

A team from a Mid-Western university and a Mid-West elementary school planned the program by (1) establishing objectives, (2) designing the parent-educators and the leadership training they needed, and (3) recommending content material and methods most likely to achieve the goal. The main objective was "to have parents gain greater understanding of their children and themselves." Selected teachers and laymen participated in a week of leadership training in preparation for the parent education program. Eight groups of 181 parents were organized in the target area under the direction of the trained leaders. While enrollment and attendance fluctuated greatly each group usually had fifteen to twenty members present at each

meeting. In addition to the introductory meeting and the six meetings to study the six concepts set down as focus of study for the discussion groups, there was a final meeting for summary and evaluation.

In her report of the study Endres states, "The responses of those who participated cry out that poor people may be different from the accepted stereotype of being non-verbal and disinterested in child development methods. Even though this is not a report of tightly designed research, even though the reactions destroy the stereotype, parent and family life educators should attend to the responses of the parents in the program." (20: 119) She further suggested that one interpretation of the responses of the parents involved in this study could be that "very poor parents might benefit from nurturing which takes place in small groups, that it may make up for early emotional deprivation of parents by warmth and interest.

The studies of Herford and Endres were briefly reviewed here because it was a thorough study of each of these reports that formed the basic structure of this present study. Some aspects of the Toppenish Head Start Parent Education Program may rightly be considered as adaptations or replications of parts of both of the studies reviewed above.

## CHAPTER III

### REPORT OF THE STUDY

#### A. Procedures for Planning the Study

Preliminary plans for a Head Start parent education program were made early in the Fall of 1968 by a committee consisting of the Yakima County Head Start Coordinator, the Assistant Coordinator, the Yakima County Head Start Supplementary Training Coordinator, the parent education project director, and the Director of the Toppenish Head Start Child Development Center who consented to have the Toppenish Center parent education program serve as a pilot program for the Yakima County area.

The committee studied the problem from the aspect of the needs of the Head Start parents in this area. Since Head Start Centers had been established in Yakima County for several years and, as yet, no parent education programs were in operation, the general need was obvious. However, to determine the specific needs of these Head Start Parents the committee decided to take the problem and the plan to two other concerned groups, the Toppenish Head Start staff, composed of six teachers, six aides, and nurse, and to the Parent Advisory Board of the Toppenish Center, composed of fourteen members, ten of whom are parents of Head Start children.

Both groups gave the plan thoughtful consideration and enthusiastic support. The staff gave suggestions for content and for methods of

presentation of material and volunteered to be the means of contacting parents and extending an invitation to all parents to participate in the program. The policy Advisory Board also suggested subject matter for the course and agreed to assume responsibility for physical arrangements for the meetings. Both groups pledged support for the plan, pledges that were carried out in fullest cooperation throughout the entire program.

After several meetings and discussions with each of the advisory groups, goals were formulated (See Appendix A) and a format of six consecutive parent-classes was adopted. The classes were two hours long, using a study-discussion approach with the director of this project serving as discussion leader.

#### B. Training Personnel to Assist in the Study

Since the staff (teachers and aides) had offered to explain the program and personally to extend the invitation to parents, it was necessary to familiarize them with the plans and procedures that had been drawn up. Incorporated in the Head Start curriculum is the requirement that teachers and/or aides visit in the homes of their pupils at regular intervals. Thus, they were the logical liaison agents to initiate this parent education program. However, since the concept of home-school involvement is relatively new in education, many of the staff members expressed feelings of insecurity and discomfort when making home visits because of lack of experience and skill. With this



need in mind the project director arranged a series of three training sessions. At one meeting the case work supervisor for the Yakima County Office of Public Assistance was invited to discuss principles and techniques of home visiting. Another time the Toppenish Head Start staff met with the Director and staff of "Follow Through" in Yakima, the Government-sponsored experimental kindergarten program, which also emphasizes parent involvement and home visitations. During these sessions staff members discussed experiences and problems, and, in seeking solutions together, became more self-confident of their ability in this vital area of helping parents to become involved in the educational experiences of their children.

### C. Selection of Sample Population for Study

Since the program was aimed at helping all parents of children in this Head Start Center, the invitation to participate was extended to the parents of every child enrolled. The Toppenish Head Start Director, the Head Start staff, and the parent-education project director planned the procedure for inviting parents. One member of the faculty designed a flyer to be left with each family when visited, as well as follow-up flyers as reminders of the meeting dates. (See Appendix B)

Visiting parents and extending invitations took about three weeks preceding the study-discussion program. Although application forms offering transportation and baby-sitting service were used (See Appendix B), there was no definite way of predetermining how many parents would actually participate in the program. However, final tabulation

showed that, of the eighty-four families having children in Toppenish Head Start, sixty parents attended one or more of the six meetings, with the average attendance at meetings ranging from twenty-five to thirty parents. Nineteen of this number participated in five or six of the parent discussions, thus making them eligible for Certificates of Educational Development offered for completion of the parent education program.

#### D. Designing the Program

##### Content: Proposed subject matter.

Since there was a representative number of Head Start parents on the Policy Advisory Committee and on the staff, the planning committee felt justified in drawing up a tentative proposal of topics for study and discussion during the program. Child development and care, family relationships, family finance and consumer education, nutrition and food purchase and preparation, family health-habits and hygiene, and family recreation were considered to be topics most likely to meet the needs and interests of the parents who would be participating in the program. However, all concerned agreed that final selection of topics should be left to the parents who would respond to the invitation and become actual participants in the study.

##### Methods of presentation of material.

The planning groups discussed methods of presentation that would best carry out the general objectives of helping parents gain understanding of their children and themselves, thereby improving their own

self-concept and their behavior toward their children. Plans were made to use a variety of approaches and to keep the meetings on as informal a basis as possible. As an ice-breaker or warm-up for the first meeting members of the staff, since they were acquainted with all the parents, offered to role-play some family skits. These skits, while humorous, were intended to portray scenes of family interaction that would lead to suggestions of need for further study of family relationships and child care. Small group discussions or buzz sessions were planned as a follow-up to help parents meet each other and to stimulate communication on a person-to-person basis. Films, charts, and printed handout materials, as well as resource persons were suggested as methods of presenting topics under discussion.

#### Resources.

Visual aids. A list of appropriate films with sources of distribution was drawn up for possible use in this series of classes or for subsequent programs of parent education. (See Appendix C \*indicate films ordered for this series) Charts and handout leaflets on nutrition and food purchasing were obtained from the County Extension Office.

Persons. A list was also compiled of professional people in the area who might be enlisted to serve as consultants in fields pertinent to the needs and interests of the participant in the program.

#### Arrangements for meetings.

The Policy Advisory Board agreed to take complete responsibility for making all physical arrangements for the program. The pastor of

the Methodist Church granted permission for the use of the church hall, which was centrally located and which provided a pleasant atmosphere for the group discussions. There were also facilities for preparation of refreshments and for baby-sitting accommodations. Head Start aides served as baby-sitters for each meeting and the Policy Advisory Committee provided coffee and cookies. Transportation was offered to any parent who needed it and this, too, was handled by members of the Advisory Committee and the Head Start staff.

#### Recognition for participation.

Recognizing the principle of immediate reinforcement, the planning groups designed Certificates of Educational Development. (See Appendix E) These were displayed to the group at the first meeting of the series and offered to any parent who participated in at least five out of the six scheduled meetings. Plans were also made to provide door prizes for those attending each class. However, after the first two meetings, the participating parents indicated that they felt the discussions themselves were incentive enough, ruling out the necessity of offering prizes for participation. Thereafter this practice was discontinued.

#### E. Community Support of the Program

The news media of the Toppenish area gave valuable and supportive coverage before, during, and after the program. At the request of the Head Start Director the local radio station presented explanations of the family life education series and extended invitations to parents

to participate. Attention was mainly directed toward Head Start parents. However, the planning committee agreed that anyone interested would be permitted to attend. As a result, several persons who were not Head Start parents participated in a number of the meetings.

The news editor of the local weekly, The Toppenish Review, took a personal interest in the program and attended two of the meetings, after which he published sensitive and supportive news stories. (See Appendix E)

Letters explaining this parent education program were sent to other pastors in the community, who supported by urging parents of Head Start children in their parishes to take advantage of this educational opportunity. Such community support and appreciation from various sources proved beneficial in two ways: first, by informing the general public of the need and importance of parent involvement in education and the way in which Head Start is meeting this need; second, by encouraging parents to participate in the project.

#### F. Evaluative Instruments and Techniques

The problem of evaluation of the program seemed a difficult one. Since there was no control group, evaluation would have to be made within the group and mainly on a subjective basis. The project director devised a simple, thirty-six item knowledge and attitude test adapted from a much longer Parent-Attitude Survey Scale used in the Research Project in Community-Education in parent and child relations in Austin, Texas. (28: 45-54) The plan was to use the survey as a

pretest and then as a check test for knowledge and attitude improvement at the end of the program series. The problem of language was recognized, for many of the children in this Head Start Center were from Mexican-American homes, where English was not read or spoken. Therefore, the secretary of Toppenish Head Start Center, with the help of some of the Spanish-speaking aides, translated the survey into Spanish, so that the test could be offered in both languages. (See Appendix D)

The other plan for evaluating the program in terms of expected outcomes was to use subjective evaluations of the parents themselves. These verbal evaluations were to be obtained by direct interview between parent-participants and the director of the study and between parent and staff members who had invited them to participate. A simple set of questions was formulated as a basis for uniformity of information sought in interviews. (See Appendix D)

#### G. Review of Operation of the Program

Preliminary plans and preparations were accomplished, the invitations extended and the six-weeks' series of parent education study-discussion meetings were set to begin. The initial meeting had been planned as an orientation and goal-setting one. The Head Start staff provided the skits and the parents, through small buzz-session groups, came to a consensus as to the topics they would like to study and discuss at the five meetings to follow.

With this topic outline, the project director then proceeded to finalize arrangements for films, consultants, and program materials.

(See Appendix C) Following is the program schedule and topic outline for study and discussion:

- Feb. 13 - Orientation and goal-setting: Skits and buzz sessions. Pretest of parental knowledge and attitude survey
- Feb. 20 - Head Start to understanding HOW children develop: physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially.  
Film: Four Children
- Feb. 27 - Head Start to understanding WHAT children need to develop: affection, approval, freedom to explore their world (within limits of safety), discipline.  
Film: Discipline and Self Control
- March 6 - Head Start to understanding the fundamentals of nutrition and food purchase and preparation.  
Consultant: Home Economist, Yakima.
- March 13- Head Start to understanding the basic essentials of good health.  
Consultants: Staff Registered Nurse  
Medical Doctor  
Children's Dentists
- March 20- Head Start to communication and cooperation in helping children develop: Parents, children, teachers, community.  
Post test of parental knowledge and attitude survey.
- March 27- Parent Recognition Night  
Presentation of Certificates of Educational Development.  
Speaker: Principal of Toppenish Elementary school

Except for the second meeting, at which time the film that had been ordered did not arrive and a longer discussion was substituted, all of the sessions went off as scheduled. Throughout all of the study-discussion meetings there was a noticeable atmosphere of friendliness, acceptance, and cooperation in the group's effort at communication. Above all, the most distinctive characteristic of the entire program was the eagerness on the part of all the participants to learn more about family interaction and child care and development.



## CHAPTER IV

### EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

#### A. Evaluation of the Results of Parent Participation

##### Parental knowledge and attitude survey.

The Knowledge and Attitude Survey test was given at the beginning and at the end of the parent education study-discussion series. Parents were given the option of responding to the check test in the English (Table III) or Spanish version. (See Appendix D) The test was composed of 36 statements selected to test the parents' knowledge of child development and attitudes toward child care. Forty-three parents checked the pre-test but only twenty-one also took the post-test. This attrition of twenty-two persons may have been due to a variety of reasons, some of which will be discussed later in this evaluation.

The tabulated results (Table I), based on the twenty-one participants who took both the pre and the post-test, show an over-all reduction in erroneous answers on the survey test from 260 to 184. Out of a possible total of 756 correct answers for the group, this 10 per cent improvement does not indicate a significant alteration of attitudes or increase of knowledge. Furthermore, of the twenty-one participants responding to both tests, five scored more incorrect answers on the post-test than they did on the pre-test. The range of improvement of the twenty-one respondents was from -5 to +12 reduction in errors, with an average improvement of +3.6. This cannot be considered a significant improvement.

TABLE I  
COMPARISON OF PRE AND POST TEST SCORES OF PARTICIPANTS  
SHOWING DEVIATION OF IMPROVEMENT

Participant Number *	Pre- test Errors	Post- test Errors	Number of Meetings Attended	Deviation of Improvement
1	11	5	3	+6
7	5	1	5	+4
9	20	14	6	+6
10	27	15	5	+12
12	16	18	5	-2
13	9	10	6	-1
14	11	8	6	+3
15	16	9	5	+7
16	6	9	5	-3
17	20	13	5	+7
18	18	16	5	+2
24	7	5	4	+2
27	17	11	6	+6
29	13	5	6	+8
30	13	7	6	+6
33	13	7	5	+6
36	10	8	4	+2
37	5	6	6	-1
39	8	6	6	+2
40	4	5	6	-1
44	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	4	+5
	260	184		

\* At the beginning of the project each participant was given a number which he maintained throughout the series of group study-discussion meetings. The numbers above indicate those participants who completed the pre and the post Parental Knowledge-Attitude Survey test.

Factors that may have affected the validity and the reliability of this objective test should be mentioned here. In the pre-test the survey statements were read aloud to the group in English and Spanish, while in the final survey each participant read and responded to the test individually. Since the reading level of the participants was not known, this factor could invalidate the data because they were obtained under incomparable circumstances. The project director abandoned the plan to read aloud the statements at the post-test period, when the participants verbally expressed their reluctance to use discussion time for another written test.

The project director was cautioned by the social service case worker in the Toppenish area that there might be a resistance on the part of these Head Start parents to the use of a survey test as a measuring instrument. The case worker pointed out that low-income families are beset with filling out forms and questionnaires for local and state welfare agencies. Furthermore, since most of the parent participants were of low educational level, they were apprehensive about any measure that they might construe as "school testing." Although the project director tried to present the test in a non-academic context, it is still felt that it might have been considered a threatening situation by the participants. Despite the fact that no one stated this as a reason, the director questions if this threat of "testing" might have accounted for some parents not returning to participate in all of the discussion series. There is no way of checking out these possibly

contaminating factors in this study so the validity and reliability of the results of this measuring instrument remain open to question.

An analysis of the incorrect responses to the knowledge and attitude survey (Table II and Table III) gives an indication of the areas of family relationships and child care and development in which help was most needed by the participants. Statements for the survey were selected to correlate with the objectives outlined before the program was started (See Appendix A and Appendix D). Statements 1 through 3 were designed to test attitudes concerning relationships with children within the family. Statements 4 through 7 were selected to test knowledge of child development. Items 8 through 19 were devised to ascertain parental behavior toward their children. Statements 20 through 26 tested knowledge and attitudes regarding nutrition and health. Items 27-28 tested attitudes toward family finances. Since this topic was not selected by the group for study, these questions subsequently proved irrelevant to the study. Statements 29 through 36 were designed to test participants' attitudes toward parenthood.

In general the highest incidence of errors occurred in the area of knowledge of child development and of nutrition. Statement 5, "There is no reason why a child should not learn to keep his clothes clean very early in life," evoked 18 pre-test errors and 14 errors on the post-test. The fact that lack of coordination might prevent the child from keeping his clothes clean at this developmental stage was discussed by the class; nevertheless, as final testing showed, most parents did

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF PRE AND POST TEST SCORES  
SHOWING DEVIATION OF IMPROVEMENT  
ON EACH SURVEY QUESTION

Survey Question	Pre test errors	Post test errors	Deviation of Improvement
1	4	1	+3
2	8	5	+3
3	1	0	+1
4	9	4	+5
5	18	14	+4
6	16	7	+9
7	13	9	+4
8	14	10	+4
9	10	9	+1
10	9	5	+4
11	8	7	+1
12	4	0	+4
13	1	1	0
14	1	0	+1
15	7	4	+3
16	7	2	+5
17	1	1	0
18	16	15	+1
19	4	5	-1
20	9	4	+5
21	9	5	+4
22	18	17	+1
23	10	4	+6
24	4	1	+3
25	3	3	0
26	2	2	0
27	4	2	+2
28	3	2	+1
29	11	9	+2
30	2	3	-1
31	4	1	+3
32	15	10	+5
33	3	1	+2
34	6	8	-2
35	3	5	-2
36	3	8	-5
	<u>260</u>	<u>184</u>	

Parental Knowledge-Attitude Survey test adapted from Austin, Texas Study. (28:45-54)

## TABLE III

## PARENTAL KNOWLEDGE-ATTITUDE SURVEY TEST

Mark each statement according to whether you feel it is true or false.

TRUE FALSE

1. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ There's a lot of truth in the saying, "Children should be seen and not heard."
2. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ If children are to grow up and get somewhere in life, parents must keep after them all the time.
3. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ When you do things together, children feel close to you and can talk easier.
4. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ The sooner the child learns to walk the better he is trained.
5. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ There is no reason why a child should not learn to keep his clothes clean very early in life.
6. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Children should be toilet-trained at the earliest possible age.
7. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ A child should be weaned away from the breast or bottle as soon as possible.
8. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ If a little girl is a tomboy, her mother should try to get her interested in dolls and playing house.
9. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Playing with a baby a lot should be avoided since it excites him and he won't sleep.
10. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ If you put many restrictions on a child you will stunt his personality.
11. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ A child who misbehaves should be made to feel guilty and ashamed of himself.
12. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ When a boy is cowardly, he should be forced to try things he is afraid of.
13. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Parents should recognize that children have a lot of things to do that are important to them.
14. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ A five-year-old needs to be picked up and cuddled once in awhile.
15. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Talking with a child about his fears most often makes the fear look more important than it is.
16. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ If you let children talk about their troubles they end up complaining more than ever.
17. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Laughing at children's jokes and telling children jokes and stories helps families get along together.

TRUE FALSE

18.               If children of pre-school age are quiet for awhile you should immediately find out what they are doing.
19.               "Do as I say, and not as I do," is a good rule for teaching children obedience.
20.               If children dislike certain foods, it is often because a parent dislikes these same foods.
21.               Human beings just naturally learn to eat what is best for them.
22.               Milk, eggs, and meat are important for heat and energy in the body.
23.               Hamburger provides the same food value as steak.
24.               Children do not need to be taught how to take care of their health when young because they'll naturally learn that when they grow up.
25.               Children are born healthy or unhealthy and there is not very much parents can do about it.
26.               If children's feet are warm and dry, the fit of their shoes is not important.
27.               Being able to make things at home is sometimes as important as having more money to spend.
28.               If we know what kind of material wears best we can make the money we spend for clothes go farther.
29.               Many times parents are punished for their own sins through the bad behavior of their children.
30.               The way a child grows up is determined by the parents' attitudes and behavior.
31.               Most all children are about the same at birth; it is what happens to them afterwards that is important.
32.               Children don't realize that it mainly takes suffering to be a good parent.
33.               When you come right down to it, a child is either good or bad and there's not much you can do about it.
34.               Raising children isn't as hard as most parents let on.
35.               Problems in children can come out of troubles inside the family.
36.               Parents can do a better job of bringing up children today than they could 30 years ago.

not change their attitude on the value of cleanliness. Similar responses on items 4, 6, and 7 revealed lack of knowledge and/or rigid attitudes toward weaning, walking, and toilet training. However, the single greatest improvement (+9) on statement 6 indicated that some participants in the program had accepted the fact that forced toilet training at the earliest possible time is not always desirable for the child's development.

Another high error question, number 22, concerned the use of specific foods in the body. This was missed 18 times on the pre-test and 17 on the post test. The high rate of error on both tests might have been due to the technicality of the question and to the fact that the only class devoted to nutrition was on a practical level rather than a theoretical one. The value of this practical approach, however, is illustrated in the results of item 23, dealing with the comparative food value of low cost meats and high priced cuts. Errors here were reduced from 10 to 4, indicating that participants were made aware that nourishing foods could be purchased at low cost.

A third high-error item dealt with the necessity of watching a pre-school child constantly. Statement 18 was missed 16 times in the pre-test and 15 on the post-test. This topic was discussed in class sessions, but most parents persisted in believing that children could not be trusted out of sight. The project director learned from later interviews that lack of trust in many parents could be traced to their own inadequate sense of trust, resulting from harsh and inconsistent parental behavior in their own childhood. This lack of trust appeared



again in item 2, concerning the attitude that "parents must keep after children all the time, if they are to grow up and get somewhere in life." This statement scored 8 errors in the pre-test and 5 errors in the post-test.

An improvement of +5 was shown on statement 32, concerning attitudes about the difficulties of bringing up children. Reduction in errors from 15 to 10 would seem to indicate that some parents were encouraged to feel that bringing up children does not necessarily involve suffering. On the other hand the last three statements of the questionnaire, 34, 35, and 36, showed more errors on the post-test than on the pre-test. The responses indicate that more parents felt that it is harder to do a good job of bringing up children today than it was "30 years ago." The project director had included these statements in the survey to check whether parents felt that modern knowledge is helpful in rearing children, so the increase in errors might be considered positive results, for all participants agreed that they need more knowledge, more help, more parent education programs to assist them in rearing their children.

The objective survey test revealed an especially heart-warming characteristic of this group of parents. The least number of errors (1 each on pre-test and 0 on post-test) occurred on item 3, "When you do things together children feel close to you and can talk easier," and item 14, "A five-year-old needs to be picked up and cuddled once in a while." These attitudes of loving family relationships are indicative of the type of parents who responded to the invitation and

participated in this parent education program.

The over-all analysis revealed what the parents themselves and the project director had expected: that there is need for more understanding of HOW children develop, stages of development, and WHAT parental care they need for most successful development at each stage. While the validity of this objective survey may be questionable, it can be considered to have value in pointing out attitudes and areas of knowledge that need attention.

The director of the study, realizing that the survey test was not used effectively as a measuring instrument in this program, envisions more effective use being made of this type of survey by presenting it in sections as discussion starters for future parent education classes. Thus, parents could benefit from immediate discussion of knowledge and attitudes concerning child care and development rather than having to rely on possible discussion of these problems at a later time in the program. Furthermore, it is possible that group discussion of specific attitudes might prove more effective in bringing about desirable changes in parental attitudes toward child care, since presentation of knowledge and expecting a spontaneous carry-over into attitudes is not realistic.

#### Parent evaluation interview

The subjective parent evaluation interviews carried on by the project director and the members of the staff appeared to be a less-threatening evaluative device. In home visits the staff members interviewed those parents who attended one to four discussion meetings to

ascertain what value they thought they received from the meetings attended and the reasons for lack of participation in the full program. The project director interviewed parents who had completed the program. Both groups were asked basically the same questions about the value of the program from their personal viewpoint and needs.

Since the evaluations were not done by trained interviewers it was not possible to code the answers with statistical accuracy; however, several significant findings became evident. Based on the five interview questions (See Appendix D) the following summaries can be made:

1. The topics that all parents interviewed valued as most helpful to them were the discussions of HOW children develop (See Appendix C) and WHAT parental care children need to develop. Discipline was mentioned most often as the single aspect of child care that was of most concern. All parents further agreed that more study and discussion was needed and that they would be interested in participating in future group meetings for this purpose.

When questioned as to which discussion topics were of least value most parents stated that they felt all topics had been of some value. Only one parent stated that the topics of nutrition and health had been of little interest.

Concerning the type of study-discussion meetings or approaches to parent education there were two responses: the majority felt they liked the discussion with a trained leader and/or a consultant. Some said that they thought the program would have "fallen apart" had it not

been for a leader to keep it together. Only a few indicated that they would prefer a discussion with no designated leader, but they also felt that the discussions could not be completely unstructured or the program would disintegrate.

All respondents felt that more time was needed for this kind of educational experience. It was also generally agreed that weekly meetings were more conducive to continuity of the program than would have been a more extended program of meetings at longer intervals. The majority also indicated that more than six weeks of study and discussions would be more beneficial. Many made the suggestion that the program should begin late in the Fall, after the harvest, and continue until late February when farm work generally resumes. Those who made this suggestion said they would look forward to participating in a similar study program next Fall if it can be arranged.

This aspect of frequency and duration also tied in with the responses of those parents who had attended one to four meetings, as working late in the fields was a most common reason given for not completing the program.

2. Regarding the question of change in feelings towards children and family since the program, all respondents indicated that they had noticed some change in feelings about their children's behavior. Some said that they tried to be "more relaxed," some reported that they tried "not to yell at the kids" and many stated that they tried to understand their children better and "not to expect too much." Here it was frequently mentioned that there was still need to learn more about how

children develop so that they would know what they ought to expect or could expect. Several parents said that it helped them to hear other parents discuss their children so that they could realize that their own were not the only children who were "hard to handle." This supportive aspect of the program appeared to be one of the major values of the project.

3. Family life education in the broad sense (See Definitions, Page 6) was considered as one of the prime objectives of this study; therefore, question 3 concerned the effects of the program on family relationships. Of those who completed the program, most respondents felt that participation in the study-discussions had resulted in better communication, between themselves and their children, and between husband and wife. This was especially true of the couples who attended the meetings together. Of the nineteen persons completing the series, there were five couples. However, several wives reported that they brought the material discussed home to talk over with their husbands who could not attend. The few who said that they had not noticed any change in communication also stated that their spouses either were not interested or resented such a program of parent education.

4. Self-concept was an important consideration in setting up the objectives for this study and the question concerning any change in self-concept brought positive results and some interesting answers. The majority of respondents stated that they felt the course had helped them feel more self-confident. One person said, "I feel better about myself now because some of the things I thought were right have

been true and I have learned some new things I didn't know before." Several of the wives whose husbands had also attended the program said that they thought their husbands had gained confidence from the program, especially where the educational level was low and this was a cause of low self-concept. It is interesting to note that, in commenting on the husband's improvement through the program, one wife smilingly said, "I suppose he would say the same thing about me." The intrinsic value of the program seemed to enhance self-concept in many of the participants but was strongly supported by extrinsic reward. The Certificates of Educational Development served as a very real source of stimulus to improved self-esteem, especially for those who had never before received any diploma of educational achievement.

5. In response to the question: "What was the greatest value you derived from this program?" by far the most-mentioned answer was the pleasure of the sociability of meeting with a group of adults. Other answers concerning the value of the program to the individuals included: gaining new knowledge about children, sharing opinions and problems with others, having a chance to compare and examine own attitudes, and getting out of the house. This bears out Endres' opinion that "parents can profit from the nurturing that takes place in a small group" through the warmth and friendliness of the group and the leader. (20:121)

The home visitations and follow-up interviews proved rewarding and educational for the project director. Here, casual acquaintances developed into deeper, more meaningful personal relationships. All

visits revealed infinitely more than answers to the five questions sought for evaluation of the program. In almost every visit respondents volunteered experiences from their own childhood or earlier family life that cast clearer light on their present attitudes, behavior and family relationships. Talking about their feelings and experiences to an interested listener seemed to have a comforting, almost therapeutic, effect on several parents, and many expressed better understanding of their present life situations after these conversations. The common denominator among the majority of these Head Start parents appears to be a history of violence, of harsh treatment, of hardships due to poverty in earlier years of their lives. The director of this study has come to realize more fully that the great need for nurturance and for parent education among these parents is due to deprivation of satisfactory parenting in their own childhood.

Personal interviews further revealed that the greatest single need of the parents participating in this program was for improvement of self-concept. The need for feelings of adequacy as marriage partners, parents and persons was expressed to the project director again and again. Some parents were able to verbalize their feelings about themselves; others communicated their need for self-esteem in different ways. The most common way that many low-income parents expressed need for status was by struggling to accumulate household equipment and furnishings. The possession of extravagant material items seemed to reflect an effort to compensate for feelings of inadequacy due to low educational level, or material and/or emotional deprivation in earlier years of

their lives. Everywhere the project director observed signs of the effects of mass advertising and mass media--from hair styling and clothing to home furnishings and automobiles. This is understandable, because the most frequent status-symbol possession in all the homes visited was a colored TV set. This factor sharply increased the project director's awareness of the tremendous effect TV has on low-income families and its equally tremendous, untapped potential as an educational media. While some parents accumulated material possessions others appeared to express their need for improvement of self-concept by dominating or controlling either friends or other members of their families. Thus, home visits and personal interviews emphasized the variety of ways and the intensity of effort that persons of low self-concept use to gain feelings of status and adequacy.

The emulation of middle class values proved an incentive for some parents and a barrier for others participating in the program. The project director learned through interviews that the efforts of some of the Advisory Board members (Head Start parents) to provide attractive and somewhat elaborate decorations and table appointments for service of refreshments at the parent education classes were resented by some of the participants. These parents reported that they felt uncomfortable and "down-graded" by what they considered unnecessary "show of fancy table setting." On the other hand those who made the arrangements explained to the director their pleasure at being able to express their appreciation of the program and their creative ability in a new experience. The variety of responses to so simple a thing as table-



setting reveals the fallacy of stereotyping any social class into a single category of values and behavior. It also emphasizes the need for a program leader to respect and respond to each person on an individual basis and then to try to help the members of the group arrive at a satisfactory level of understanding and agreement.

The desire and the warm response to the personal interviews by the project director indicate that need for nurturing and "being accepted" by the leader of the group is a very important consideration in such a program as this experimental study. The responses to personal visits also confirms the program director's theory that no program of parent education for low socio-economic families can be effective without a "we" attitude toward all participants. Program directors and leaders must eliminate an attitude of "we people" and "those people" and relate to all parents as persons of equal dignity and worth. Only on this basis, in the opinion of the writer, can worthwhile programs of family and parent education be carried out. Possibly the most significant findings of this project are: (1) the need for family and parent education and for nurturing for disadvantaged parents, (2) the need for a program director and leader who is accepting, supportive, and caring for members of the group as valued individuals.

The evaluations summarized above are concerned mainly with those parents who participated in a number of the study sessions. While it is not possible to tabulate the reasons for more of the parents not attending the whole series, some significant factors can be summarized from information obtained by staff members in their home interviews.

As stated before, one reason for some parents not attending was the time element, for most of the parents in this area are field workers and had already begun their spring work. Another crucial factor is that of the language barrier. This is a circumstance in the Toppenish area that poses a very real problem. Although it was recognized in designing the study and some adjustments were made, it was not possible to find a completely satisfying solution. In some cases members of the group tried to translate the conversation into Spanish as it went along but this proved confusing and distracting for all concerned. It can be noted that one person who did not speak English did complete the series. Apparently this was possible because she understood some English even though she could not speak it well and because her husband, who speaks English attended the meetings with her and was able to help her to comprehend the topics under discussion. It is hoped that in future programs more effort will be made to help overcome this language barrier in order to help more parents to the education all need.

#### B. Suggestions for Improvements in Future Studies

Implicit in the above evaluation summary are many indications of factors that might be changed in order to increase the effectiveness of this approach to the problem of parent education. In the interest of contributing to future studies it seems advisable to present these suggestions for improvement in concrete form.

1. In a farming area parent education programs should be planned for the late autumn and winter months, since these months are those in

which employment is lowest and parents are more available and amenable to such activities.

2. Refreshments for meetings should be kept as simple as possible so that some members of the group will not have to be preoccupied with preparation and serving thus missing out on the group discussions.

3. A Parent-Education Committee selected from the Policy Advisory Board might be appointed to plan and implement a study-discussion program rather than an outside Planning Committee as was used in this pilot study.

4. A leader from the local Head Start Center could be appointed for the program series with professional consultants invited when the group feels the need.

5. A minimum of eight weeks for such a program series seems advisable with a longer series if the group desires it.

6. Complete cooperation of Head Start Director, staff, and Parents Advisory Board is necessary for an effective parent education program. This pilot study could not have functioned at all if such supportive cooperation and interaction had not existed throughout the entire program.

### C. Implications for Related Studies

The door to a new era in education, an era of home and school cooperation and, more importantly inter-relationship, having been thrown open, it is to be hoped that the concept of parents and teachers working together as a team for the betterment of all children will be

perpetuated. Furthermore, it is to be hoped that the problem of adequate parent education to make this team approach more effective will continue to demand and receive attention and effort at solution until it is resolved. This hope for the future is held for all parents, that all children may benefit.

Special concern for the needs of low socio-economic families was the focal point of this study. The director of the study, however, held the hypothesis that parents of any social class, given the opportunity, are interested in becoming better parents. The responses of the parents enrolled in this experimental parent education study-discussion group seem to support this theory. Their participation and response throughout the study also contrast with some of the stereotyped notions concerning poverty people that they are non-verbal, non-cooperative, inconsistent, and present-oriented. In this study they were found to be verbal and eager to communicate with other parents, with teachers, and with consultants in the interest of their children's welfare and future. The warmth and spontaneity of the meetings was due to the willingness of individuals to interact in a group setting.

The responses and the eagerness for more such programs on the part of the participants suggest that a group study-discussion method of parent and family life education can be satisfactorily used with parents from disadvantaged areas. However, this pilot study also suggests--almost cries out for--more effort and experimentation in this vital area of parent and family life education. For the question still

remains unanswered: What is the most effective approach to parent education?

Dr. Ira Gordon, Director of the Institute for Human Development of Human Resources, University of Florida, at a Conference on Early Childhood Education in Yakima, Washington, April 2, 1969, expressed the hope for "the involvement of parents in the education and socialization of their children from cradle through graduate school," and stressed parent education as the key to successful involvement. It is hoped that this study may shed some light on the solution to the problem of effective parent education so that Dr. Gordon's vision may someday come to reality for the betterment of individual persons, families, and the whole of society.

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## APPENDIX A

### OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

- 1) initiates his sense of autonomy and self-esteem.
- 2) promotes his sense of initiative so as gradually he can assume personal responsibility (the ultimate aim of all child rearing practices)

c. Approval:

- 1) supports his sense of autonomy and initiative
- 2) stimulates and motivates his sense of industry.

6. To understand the nutritional requirements that children need to develop normally.
  - a. basic foods needed for growth
  - b. daily amounts needed of basic foods
  - c. economy in purchasing and preparing these basic foods.
7. To understand the health requirements that children need to develop normally.
  - a. daily health habits - sanitation, care of teeth, etc.
  - b. proper clothing - fit of shoes, etc.
  - c. medical and dental check-up
  - d. symptoms of ill health.
8. To understand that family security brought about by wise use of resources contributes to a child's sense of well-being, therefore optimum development. Use of resources includes:
  - a. ways of stretching food money
  - b. selection, construction and care of clothing as a means of making income go further
  - c. knowledge of use and misuse of credit.
9. To understand and appreciate the importance of the family as the prime contributor of the child's developmental needs.
10. To achieve, through the above understandings, attitudinal changes that will result in improved self-concept and improved family behavioral patterns, and improved family communication.

## OBJECTIVES FOR PARENT EDUCATION PROJECT

### GOALS:

#### For Discussion Leader (Director of Project)

1. To promote an atmosphere conducive to fullest participation of the parents involved in this program by being non-judgmental and sensitive to individual differences, needs, strengths and weaknesses.
2. To provide opportunity for participants to exchange ideas, questions, concerns and opinions with others in the group and with consultants.
3. To act as a guide in constructing concepts and principles of family functioning which can provoke theory-building and attitudinal changes.
4. To provide specialists in fields of nutrition, family finance, and health, who can act as consultants in promoting basic understandings in each of these fields.

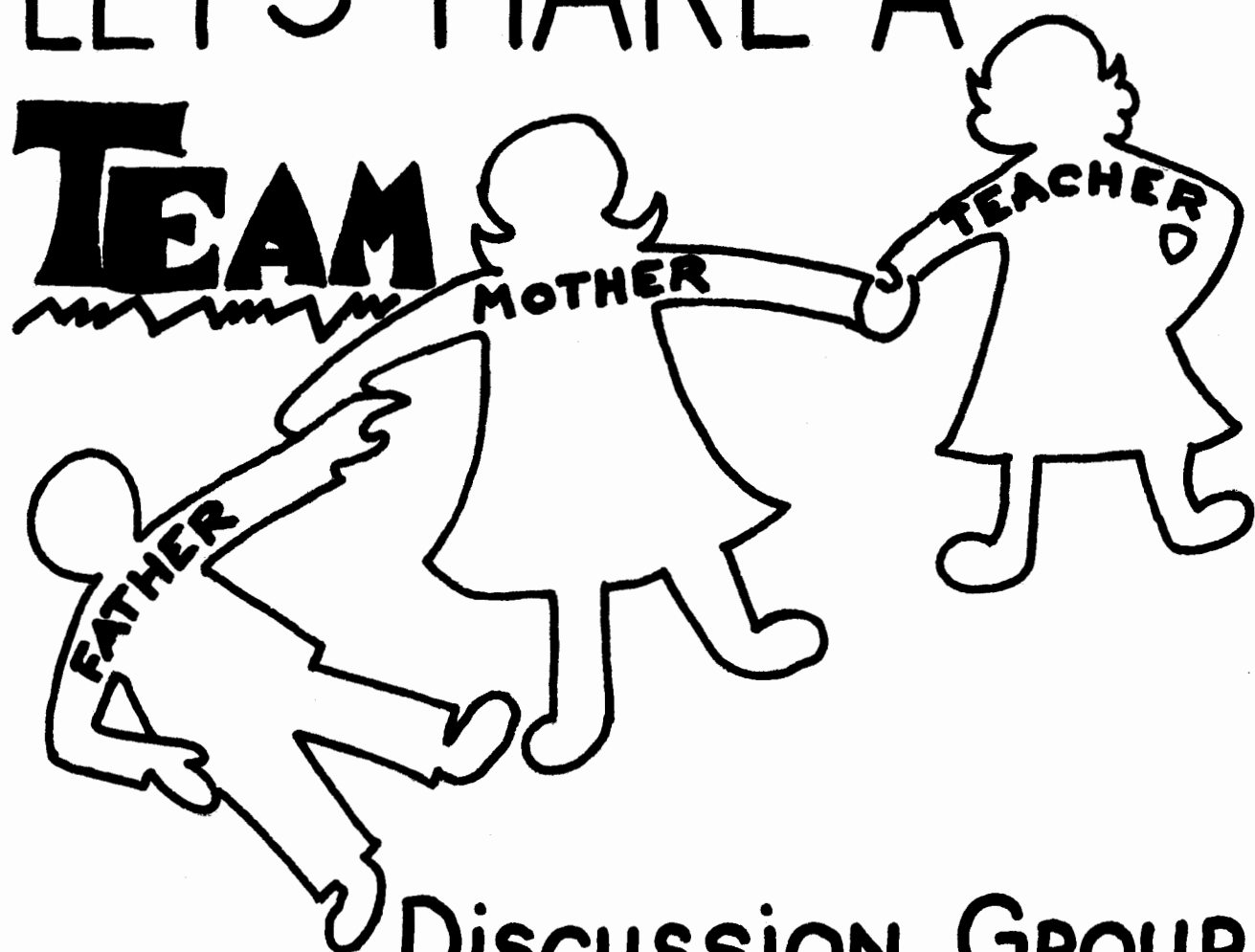
#### For parents participating in study discussion program.

1. To understand that children develop physically, mentally and emotionally according to specific developmental stages.
2. To understand that every person has unique physical, mental and emotional characteristics and each individual his own rate of development.
3. To understand and recognize normal patterns of play, work, self-help and obedience behavior in the developing child.
4. To understand that children learn by imitation, conditioning and cognition.
5. To understand that children have psychological needs that must be met if they are to develop normally. Some of them are:
  - a. Affection:
    - 1) first learned by sensori-motor contact in infant and child care-"mothering"
    - 2) learned by observing and imitating other members of family in affectional relationships: mother-father, sisters-brothers.
    - 3) establishes a sense of trust in his environment and himself as a person of worth.
  - b. Freedom to explore his universe (within limits set for his safety)

## APPENDIX B

### RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

# LET'S MAKE A **TEAM**



## DISCUSSION GROUP PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS

FIRST MEETING  
**FEB. 13 1969**  
**7:00- 9:00**

**THURSDAY NIGHT**

**METHODIST CHURCH**

*BEECH and CHAHALIS*

**NO CHARGE**

*Refreshments  
SERVED*



# LET'S MAKE A TEAM - TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN

WHY? Because children are in school only part of a day and  
 Because teachers can only do part of the job of teaching children  
 Because children mostly need parents-fathers and mothers- to help  
 them grow up in the best way  
 Because parents want to learn more about what children need to help  
 them grow and develop.

What? Toppenish Head Start Parent-Advisory Board is sponsoring a series  
 of study-discussion programs in family education on:

How children develop

What children need to develop

How families can supply these needs

A family study-discussion group is one in which fathers, mothers,  
 and teachers share experiences, ideas, and knowledge about  
 bringing up children. (It is not a class, like in school, but  
 a "talk it over and learn" group.)

At the end of the series all who participate will receive a  
 certificate of merit showing that they have completed this  
 course in child development and family life education.

When? Six Thursday evenings from 7-9 O'clock, starting February 13, 1969.

Where? Methodist Church Hall, Beech and Chahalis, Toppenish.

We invite YOU - both father and mother- to join our group.

---

President, Toppenish Head Start  
 Parent-Advisory Board.

Please note:

Signature has been removed due to security concerns

## TOPPENISH, WASHINGTON, HEAD START PARENT EDUCATION

## Application form

Please enroll us in the 6 weeks Head Start Family Study-Discussion  
Program starting February 13, 1969 at the Methodist Church Hall.

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We need: Baby sitter\_\_\_\_\_

Transportation\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### RESOURCES AND PROGRAM MATERIALS

## FILMS AND SOURCES

These films are available through Modern Talking Pictures, Inc., 2100 North 45th Street, Seattle, Washington 98103, and the Regional Head Start Training Office, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98105.

Head Start to Confidence (20 minutes) This is an excellent film showing how children began to gain self-confidence through their experience in a typical Head Start center. It is particularly good in showing specific examples which help to build confidence in young children.

\*Four Children (20 minutes) This film reveals child behavior in a sensitive way. Gives parents an insight into what their own children are really like.

Patterns for Health (14 minutes) Early health habits for the pre-school child develop patterns found in the well-adjusted adult.

Parents are Teachers Too (18 minutes) Parents learn that they are the child's first and continuing teacher. Learning comes easier with a flow of understanding between school and home.

Talking Together (20 minutes) Discover why an exchange of ideas between parent and teacher is essential to the child's development.

With No One to Help Us (19 minutes) In unity there is strength. A group of mothers, on their own, bring about needed changes in the community.

\*Discipline and Self-Control (25 minutes) This film discusses the problem of discipline as one of teaching and living with young children.

When Should Grownups Stop Fights? (15 minutes) A discussion and typical examples provide for audience participation.

When Should Grownups Help? (14 minutes) A discussion and typical examples provide for audience participation.

## HEAD START TO UNDERSTANDING HOW CHILDREN DEVELOP

To help children grow and develop we need to understand:

EVERY CHILD IS AN INDIVIDUAL AND THEREFORE DIFFERENT FROM EVERY-ONE ELSE. CHILDREN DEVELOP PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY ACCORDING TO DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES, BUT EVERY CHILD DEVELOPS AT HIS OWN RATE.

Here are some stages of development - a "stage" is a period when certain changes occur.

Birth - 2 years: Infancy

0-6 months - Baby is self-centered - Getting used to the world.  
Learning to be loved and to love. Sucking a strong instinct.

6 mo.- 2 yrs-Learning to live with others:

Loving and being loved  
Trusting and being trusted  
Weaning from breast or bottle to cup  
Eating soft foods - then regular family food  
Toilet training  
Sitting, crawling, standing, walking  
Learning about the world around him by:  
seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, feeling.

2-4 years- Toddler - Learning to be on his own - the beginning of independence

Eating - feeding himself  
Walking - more steady on his feet  
Talking - learning by imitating parents and family  
Playing - simple individual play  
Imitating - parents, brothers, sisters, and others  
Exploring - finding new things in his world.

4-6 years - Play-age - Learning to adjust to a larger world - developing initiative.

Running, jumping, climbing - developing more control of his body

- Playing - learning to get along with other children  
learning to use his hands better
- Pretending - developing his mind and his imagination  
(Playing and pretending are a child's  
best tools for learning and developing  
at this age)
- Imitating - learning more "grown-up" ways by imita-  
ting older people
- Communicating - learning more words  
learning to understand and be under-  
stood
- Discovering - finding new things and ideas outside of  
his own home.

6 years --- School-age - Learning to get along in the world away  
from home  
Developing a sense of industry - personal  
effort  
Learning to cooperate and compete with  
others his age.

## CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

- If a child lives with criticism  
He learns to condemn.
- If a child lives with hostility  
He learns to fight.
- If a child lives with ridicule  
He learns to be shy.
- If a child lives with shame  
He learns to feel guilty.
- If a child lives with tolerance  
He learns to be patient.
- If a child lives with encouragement  
He learns confidence.
- If a child lives with praise  
He learns to appreciate.
- If a child lives with fairness  
He learns justice.
- If a child lives with security  
He learns to have faith.
- If a child lives with approval  
He learns to like himself.
- If a child lives with acceptance and friendship  
He learns to find love in the world.

## NINOS APRENDEN COMO VIVEN

- Si un niño vive con crítica  
El aprende a condenar.
- Si un niño vive con hostilidad  
El aprende a pelear.
- Si un niño vive con ridículo  
El aprende a ser tímido.
- Si un niño vive con vergüenza  
El aprende a sentir delito.
- Si un niño vive con tolerancia  
El aprende a tener paciencia.
- Si un niño vive con fomento  
El aprende confianza.
- Si un niño vive con aprecio  
El aprende a apreciar.
- Si un niño vive con honradez  
El aprende justicia.
- Si un niño vive con profesión  
El aprende a tener fe.
- Si un niño vive con estimación  
El aprende a estar contento con el mismo.
- Si un niño vive con aceptación y amistad  
El aprende a amar amor en el mundo.



APPENDIX D

EVALUATIVE INSTRUMENTS

Chequen cada question a como a como usted greie si es verdad o falso.

V. F.

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1. \_\_\_\_\_ Es verdad cuando dicen "los ninos no se deben de oir no mas ver".
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Si los ninos van a tener una vida buena, los padres deben de decirles todo el tiempo.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Cuando hacen cosas juntos, los ninos se sienten mas cerca de usted y pueden hablar mas facil.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Lo mas pronto que un nino se ensenya andar es mas mejor para ir al escusado solo.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ No hay ningun razo de que el nino debe de ensenarse ha que tenga su ropa liempa ha un ano chieb
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Los ninos deben de ensenarse ir al escusado lo mas pronto posible.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Un nino debe de dejar la botella y el pecho lo mas pronto que es posible.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Si una muchachita es mas como un muchachit su m mama debe de interrarla con mujechas o jugar otros juegos para ninas.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Jugando con un bebito no es bueno porque luego no pueden dormir en la noche.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Si les ponen muchas reglas en un nino le pueden asustar su personilidad.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Un nino que no le hace caso lo deben de hacer que se se sienta mal y con verguensa.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Cuando un muchachito tiene miedo lo deben de hacer que haga cosas que tenga miedo.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Los papas deben de saber que los ninos hacen cosas que son de importancia para ellos.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Ninos de cinco anos tambien necesitan que tener afecion como los otros.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Hablando con un nino de las cosas que le tienen miedo ha veces hacen que lo hagan mas importante.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Si dejan ha sus ninos que les digan sus problemas ha veces les dicen mas.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Reriendose de los chistes de los ninos y diciendoles chistes y estorias ayudan ha la familia estar mas cerca de todos.

18. Si los niños están en silencio por un tiempo deben de ir inmediatamente para ver lo que están haciendo.
19. "Hagan lo que yo diga y no lo que yo hago," es una buena regla para enseñarle a los niños.
20. Si los niños no les gustan una clase de comida es porque uno en la familia no le gusta tampoco.
21. Es natural que la gente se enseñe a comer la comida que es bueno para ellos.
22. Leche, huevos, y carne son importante para el cuerpo.
23. Los niños no necesitan que enseñarse a cuidar su salud cuando están chicos, porque es natural enseñarse cuando ya crezcan.
25. Niños cuando nacen están en buen salud o pobre salud pero no hay nada que los padres pueden hacer.
26. Si los pies de los niños están calientes y secos no es importante que les queden los zapatos bien.
27. Haciendo las cosas más como una casa es tan importante como tener más dinero para usar.
28. Si nosotros sabemos los fabricantes más mejores para ropa nosotros podemos usar el dinero para eso.
29. Muchas veces los parientes castigan a sus niños por lo mal que ellos hicieron.
30. El modo que el niño crece es como los padres les enseñaron.
31. Casi todos los niños nacen igual, lo importante es lo que les pasa después.
32. Los niños no saben cuánto sufren los padres para ser buenos con ellos.
33. Al fin los niños son buenos o malos y no hay que más para hacer.
34. Creciendo niños no es tan duro como dicen los padres.
35. Problemas con niños resultan por otros problemas en la familia.
36. Padres ahora pueden hacer crecer sus niños más bien como 30 años pasados.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- I. What discussion topics were most helpful to you?  
What topics were least helpful?  
On which topics would you like more study and discussion?  
What was your opinion of the study-discussion methods used in this program?  
Other suggestions.  
  
What was your opinion of the timing of the program?  
Weekly meetings? Length of the series? Time of the series?
- II. How, if at all, have your feelings toward your children and your family changed since this program?
- III. What, if any, changes have you noticed in family communication as a result of this program?
- IV. How would you say that the course has affected your confidence in yourself?
- V. What do you feel was the greatest value derived from the program?  
Other values?

APPENDIX E

MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS

## From worms to teeth

# Headstart Adult Study Sessions: A better foundation for children

By LARRY R. VOSHALL

Their backgrounds are as diversified as America itself. Some are natives of this area; others immigrated from Mexico; they came from all points of the compass. Though their backgrounds are varied, each has one fact in common. Each is the parent of a child presently participating in the Toppenish Headstart Program.

Just as most parents everywhere, they are interested in providing their chil-

dren with the best start possible — many times it is an infinitely greater start than they had as youngsters. With the concern for their children, they know that they must improve their own understanding of child raising as part of the overall desire for bettering their son or daughter's chances in life.

So they congregated last Thursday night in the basement of United Methodist Church, Toppenish, as they have done for the past five Thursday nights and will do tonight. They are participants in a pilot program to help the parents of Headstart children to better understand the challenge each child represents.

They listen to the very basics of life itself. They hear about child development, nutrition, the importance of discipline, dental and medical hygiene and a child's need for love. They listen . . . and they ask questions . . . and an air of congeniality prevails throughout the meeting place.

Guest speakers for the fifth session in the Family Study-Discussion Program were Dr. Ray Shearer, MD, Toppenish; Dr. Donald Dietz, DDS, Yakima, and Mrs. Hugh (Rosemary) Fate, RN, Wapato. It was their challenge to present dental and medical facts to the parents, to reduce the technicalities to generalities that each parent could grasp and later use in their homes in a meaningful way.

From Dr. Shearer and Mrs. Fate they heard about immunizations for their children. He talked about the various diseases, their symptoms and dangers. The parents watched intensely. Many were hearing explanations they never had known before. They were taking knowledge in huge gulps, and their faces showed they wanted more.

Then the questions came. It was in the questions that an observer could see the need for what was happening. Some showed a fairly good background in child rearing — "Doctor, could you explain the reactions children have from shots?" or "What should I do if my child eats poison?" But some showed a basic misunderstanding resulting from no or little education in health and hygiene — "What can I do if my child gets 'sugar worms', you know, the little white worms from eating sugar?"

The doctor explained that 'sugar worms' were the result of "old wives' tales" and not of eating sugar. "It could be pin worms," he said, "but they result from unclean children, dirty bedding, unwashed underwear, and the result of several children having to sleep together in one bed." His emphasis was on cleanliness and preventive hygiene throughout . . . and what parents could do to give their children healthy, happy bodies.

Nearly every parent asked questions, some more than others. All the parents were involved and there was an attitude of cooperation and a mutual desire to learn more and more. Following a short break for refreshments, more teaching came.

This time it was Dr. Dietz, a Yakima dentist, who told the parents why their children should take care of their teeth and how it best could be done. He talked about a proper diet, when and how to brush the teeth, when and why to see a dentist, and the importance of fluoride.

Again there were questions and more questions. And his carefully worded answers enlightened everyone.

"Steer your children to what is best for them," he charged the parents, and that seemed to sum up the total effect of the meeting. Where many parents had little to steer with when they came, none could deny that they had much more when they left.

Though parental involvement is a requirement of the Headstart program, this experiment in education goes beyond the

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## More about Headstart

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

tokenism found in some areas of the War on Poverty. From this start in a church basement may come a whole new concept in adult education -- parent oriented.

Acting as moderator-consultant for the program was Mrs. Margaret Kulik of Yakima. She is a lecturer in family life problems at Central Washington State College, Ellensburg, and Yakima Valley College, Yakima. Mrs. Kulik, mother of seven children, is excited about the potential of the program.

It centers on the theory that the whole purpose of Headstart is necessitated by many children's lack of home education during the most important learning period of their lives. It is during this infant stage that the child will learn more than during any other comparable period. He will learn to walk, talk, reason, and, essentially, develop a foundation on which to build the rest of his life.

The pitiful truth in the theory is that many parents actually are not equipped to help their children build a strong foundation. This Family Study-Discussion Program serves to bridge the gap, to alter the foundations of parents whose own childhoods when no one cared were sadly lacking in the basics, to give other children not yet born a better chance and to give those struggling now hope for a better tomorrow.

The series will end tonight (Thursday) with a discussion on how parents, teach-

ers and the community can work as a team to obtain desired objectives. This sixth discussion again will be held in the basement of United Methodist Church from 7:00 to 9:00 p. m.

Though the parents of Headstart children are particularly urged to attend, observers who wish to contribute, participate or just watch are invited. Once a program of this type is witnessed by even the most casual observer, it is no longer possible to ignore the need. It screams above the murmur of discussion, begging for fulfillment.

It becomes obvious that some ill-equipped parents do want to give their children a better foundation, and many are taking advantage of this opportunity.

At a later date parents who have attended at least five of the six study sessions will receive an Educational Development Certificate, a tangible recognition of their earnest efforts. The real significance of the EDC's, however, is that they symbolize a possibility that many more children will be healthier and happier with hope displacing despair thanks to the few hours when their parents cared enough to try to learn more.

The experiment is another example of why in the Lower Valley the Headstart program seems to be the most popular of War on Poverty efforts -- it gets at the roots of the problems, and the progress is nearly instantly observable.

'That's my mommy'

April 3, 1969

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# Family Study commencement held

By LARRY R. VOSHALL

Several neat rows of tiny chairs were in the rear of the room. Sitting quietly with intensely concentrated eyes were several small children. Suddenly an arm and hand were directed to the front of the room, and an excited youngster said to another child, "That's my mommy." Tiny hands applauded, and smiles broke across every face.

That child's mother was one of 20 persons who received Certificates of Educational Development last Thursday night during the climax of a unique

seven-week experiment called Family Study-Discussion Program, sponsored by Toppenish Head Start.

During the six weeks preceding the commencement exercise, parents of children in Head Start had gathered at Toppenish Methodist Church to hear volunteer speakers discuss with them subjects ranging from nutrition and health care to discipline and love.

The parents "gave of their time for the betterment of their children" is the way Mrs. Don Stoops, an Head Start Advisory Board member, put it last Thursday before introducing

John Brearley, Garfield Grade School principal, who was guest speaker.

"Parents and teachers must do everything we possibly can to make children's experiences successful," he told the group. "We (teachers) have had professional experience in teaching children, and you know your child very well. Together we can make their experiences meaningful," he said.

Brearley urged the parents to visit their children's schools and teachers, to be interested in their children's activities, to appreciate child accomplishments and to encourage each child's interest in the world that surrounds him.

"You people - your interest makes the program go," he said. "We need your help."

He reminded parents that a six-week pre-first grade orientation will be held this summer for any child who will start the first grade this fall. He urged them to register their children for the program.

Following Brearley's short speech, several officials in Head Start expressed their praise of the program and the parents involved.

"You have really done things the way Head Start was meant to be," remarked Mrs. Eileen Munson, Yakima Valley Head Start coordinator. She called the Family Study "a wonderful program" that "I hope you people are not going to let stop."

She urged the parents to work as a group to enlarge the program and reminded them that "you can have anything you want if you'll go after it".

The program was developed by Mrs. Margaret Kulik, a Central Washington State and Yakima Valley College instructor from Yakima. And Mrs. Betty Narboe, Yakima Valley Head Start assistant coordinator, had glowing words both for Mrs.

Kulik and the program she developed.

"It was her dream to work with you and to develop within you a desire to continue the program," Mrs. Narboe said. "We want to give you the confidence to do it without our help."

In response Mrs. Kulik brought the focus of attention back to children, the youngsters who may benefit the most from this experiment.

"We want your children to grow up to be good, happy and productive citizens," she said. "There is so much we can do, but I hope you 20 can be the nucleus" of an enlarged program to help adults to be more capable parents.

In a final word to the parents before they received their certificates, Mrs. Kulik remarked, "You are the most important persons in the world to your children."

One glance at the smiling, proud and excited faces in neat rows at the back of the room left no one doubting her remark.

One wonders how much lessons gained in this program will enable these same parents to wear on their faces the same expressions of pride when the same children several years from now wear their caps and gowns at commencement exercises leading to a life of good, happy and productive citizenship.

That is the goal.



# TOPPENISH HEAD START

## CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AWARDED TO

*Lynne Stoops*

In recognition of participation in Head Start  
Family Study Discussion Program.



Date Mar. 27, 1969

Director

Moderator/Consultant