CONSUMER COMPETENCE  
FAMILY RELATIONS  
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County _________________________________________ Home Economics Extension Agent ________________________________
CONSUMER COMPETENCE SERIES
TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

INVESTING IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

1. This program will be more meaningful if the "handout," "Investing in Family Relationships" is given as a reading assignment in a previous meeting.

2. If the participants have not read the "handout" the program leader may wish to give the participants a few minutes for this purpose.

3. Divide the participants into three groups and give each group one of the cartoons that are enclosed with this teaching outline. Be sure that each group has paper and pencils.

4. Ask each group to quickly do two things:
   a. Relate the cartoon to the teaching point in the handout.
   b. Try to draw a cartoon illustrating another point in the program. (if they can't draw it, have them write down an idea for a cartoon.)

5. Bring the groups back together and have reports from each group on:
   a. The enclosed cartoon and the point it makes.
   b. The group's cartoon or idea.
   c. Other points we consider very important.

6. The leader will want to summarize and bring out important points that the groups may have missed.

7. Pass out evaluation sheets and allow time for each participant to mark his answers.

SUMMARY OF POINTS

1. Family members have basic emotional needs that are just as essential as food, clothing, and shelter.

2. Too much stress within the family on economic needs may cause unfortunate results, such as excessive spending on luxuries.

3. Our society puts excessive stress on quantified rewards, and this value has become harmful to human relationships, especially within marriage.

4. Men must stand with their wives in making a wise investment of time and energy as well as money in family relationships.

5. Parents make a great mistake when they use money as a substitute for love or as approval or disapproval.

6. Many couples use money as a weapon by which to attack each other and actually hide the real problems of childish selfishness.

7. Every family member has a unique role to play in making the family a healthy place for the growth of human personality.

Prepared by Leo F. Hawkins, Family Relations Specialist, N. C. Agricultural Extension Service, USDA and NCSU Cooperating, Raleigh, N. C. 4/68
How would you like to make an investment in one of the best bargains you will ever be offered? No, we're not talking about stock, a new house or a car. The greatest bargain of all is to invest yourself in family relationships. In the long run you may reap a vast reward of human maturity for you and the others in your family.

Let's think about it. Most families rightfully invest a great deal of thought, time, and money in food, clothing, and shelter. Unfortunately, many of these same families overlook the basic needs for affection, emotional security, and a sense of achievement. One result is that they begin to invest in more and more unnecessary luxuries. Such luxuries do not meet basic needs, and in the long run these families are caught short on both money and human maturity.

The first big step in making a wise investment in family relationships is to realize that we Americans put a money value on almost everything. This value permeates our human relationships so much that our young people carry it with them into dating. A prevalent idea is to invest as little as possible of personal responsibility and to get as much personal pleasure as possible in return. Many young people take the same attitude into marriage. The result of such marriages is continual conflict or a general lack of vitality.

The question to ask is, "Am I investing in a marriage and a family and expecting some kind of reward that is greater than my investment?" Or "Am I ready to invest everything I have in order to bring about human growth and maturity in every family member?" An honest "yes" to this question means that you are learning to value human beings for themselves alone.

The second big step is for both members of a married couple to make the
important decisions together. Too often the man is investing in cars and business while the woman is trying to wrest all she can for house furnishings and for the children. In general, fathers need to become more interested in the products of their own personalities, their children, and less interested in the products of their factories.

A third step is to use money to meet budget needs, never as a weapon, a means of punishment, or a bribe. When married people try to see which can spend most of the income the problem is childishness, not money. The same may be true when parents use money to show approval of their children or to mete out punishment. Money should never become a substitute for love or a bribe for cooperation.

The fourth suggestion is that the wise investor in family relationships gets the information he needs from time to time. For parents that may mean getting into a discussion group with other parents or getting professional help. For children it may mean reading a suitable book or talking to a youth leader. For in-laws and grandparents it may mean learning the difficult task of listening to family members without taking sides or giving advice.

One final reminder. Research studies seem to show that most of those who try diligently for human maturity within the family gain happiness as a by-product.

Perhaps a large investment in human relationships within the family is really worth it.

Prepared by Leo F. Hawkins, Family Relations Specialist, N. C. Agricultural Extension Service, USDA AND NCSU Cooperating, Raleigh, N. C. 4/68
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Prepared by Leo F. Hawkins, Family Relations Specialist, N. C. Agricultural Extension Service, USDA and NCSU Cooperating, Raleigh, N. C. 4/68
INVESTING IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

OBJECTIVES:
Program participants to learn:

1. That emotional needs of family members are just as essential as physical needs.
2. At least two better ways of meeting emotional needs than spending money on unnecessary luxuries.
3. Why money should not be used to show parental approval or disapproval.
4. That money should be used to meet the physical needs of the family, not as a weapon by which a man and wife may attack each other.
5. That the greatest purpose of investing in family relationships is the development of maturity in each family member.

BACKGROUND PAPER

Every family invests a lot of time, money and energy to meet its needs for food, clothing, and shelter. These needs are basic and essential. But it is easy to forget that the family members have other needs that are just as important. Affection, emotional security, and a sense of achievement are examples of such needs. We are learning that a man needs to be sure of his manhood, that a woman needs to be seen by the family members as a feminine person, and that a child needs a basic sense of trust. Thus we see that every family has emotional needs that are also basic and essential.

All of us would like to have homes that are healthy places for people who are growing toward maturity. If possible we would like to have families that are exciting and creative. But no family can travel on this road of happiness when only physical needs are met.

Meals in a family setting should provide a great deal of communication and security as well as the satisfaction of hunger. Many Americans would be healthier if mealtime conversation could be increased and food decreased.

A family at home on a winter evening may satisfy deeper needs than that of shelter. (Emotional warmth, security, intimacy, etc.) And consider the basic sexual needs. If sex meets only a physical need those who engage in sexual activities are missing its greatest satisfactions.

EVIDENCE OF EMOTIONAL NEGLECT

What happens when families center almost all their attention on economic and physical needs to the neglect of growing relationships?

One result that all of us can see is that families begin to invest more and more money in various luxuries. Eating at a very expensive restaurant can be a
conversation piece and make a couple feel important. A new car might make a man feel more masculine at the time. An expensive wig may help a woman to feel attractive or even feminine.

Most of our unnecessary luxuries meet a great variety of smaller needs or desires. But usually there are far more adequate satisfactions at a fraction of the cost. Learning to show sincere appreciation for each other may take some self-discipline and a little time, but it won't cost money. Active membership in a good volunteer service agency may make a man really feel like a man, and it will cost much less than a new car. One expensive wig may pay for several courses by which a woman and her husband together may enter a program of continuing education. Both may gain a deeper sense of achievement at a fraction of the cost of luxuries that are purchased for the same purpose.

Incidentally, the more adequate and legs expensive satisfactions may have ten times the social influence in the long run.2

THE DOLLAR VALUES IN OUR MINDS

Before we can learn to invest more time and effort in relationships we probably need to realize that our American society is very preoccupied with the money value of almost everything. There is evidence that the desire for "quantified rewards" has become so pervasive that it permeates almost all human relationships. Children and older people are often looked upon as less valuable because they do not "produce" in the economic sense.

Young people are taught investment-return values very early. This value shows up in their dating. A prevalent idea is to invest as little as possible of self in the relationship and to get as much personal pleasure as possible in return. These habits over an extended dating period mean that many young people enter marriage with utilitarian motives. The feeling is, "I expect this marriage to bring me more happiness than I am willing to invest in time, effort, trust, etc. After all, it's a poor investment if I don't get more than I give!" Such marriages result in continual conflict, passivity, or a general lack of vitality.3

Basic changes are not easy to make. However, a first step toward a wise investment in relationships may be to ask, "Do I invest myself in family relationships for some kind of reward that is greater than my investment? Or, do I invest in family relationships to help bring about the growth and human maturity of each family member, including myself?"

If we look carefully at the last question and finally answer, yes, we are making a decision to invest all our money and all of ourselves. We make this decision with the full knowledge that there is no assurance of gain in economic position or in social status. We value human beings, ourselves and our family members, and we are willing to invest all we have to see them grow.

INVESTING IN MARRIAGE

A wise investment in a marriage cannot be made by just one member of a married couple. Too often we see the man investing in business, real estate, or cars while
the woman is trying to wrest all she can for house furnishings or for the children. A decision by both to make a constant investment in marriage should come first. One author says that many American husbands develop a feeling that society has roped them into marriage. Their feeling toward the wife is, "This was really your idea. You make it work." These men desperately need a greater investment of time, energy, money - all of self - before they can expect any kind of emotional returns.

**USING MONEY AS A WEAPON**

Very often when there is a conflict in marriage, the couple will automatically attach their emotional feelings to money or economic problems. The real trouble may be many habits of basic immaturity or childishness. Such immaturity causes couples to use money as a tool or a weapon of attack. Here we name a few of these ways of hurting each other with money matters.

1. One person may spend much more than the budget can stand, feeling inside that he is making the other do without.

2. An insecure man may control his wife with a very rigid allowance.

3. A man may spend money where neighbors and friends will see him. Such spending helps him prove masculinity.

4. A wife may cut her husband deeply by comparing his income with other men she knows, especially a former boyfriend.

5. Both the couple may find themselves in competition, much like brothers and sisters, to see which is getting to spend most of the family income.

In all these situations a couple needs to take time for being honest with each other and seeing that their excess attention on money matters is only hiding their real difficulties. It may take professional help and a lot of time for such a couple to learn how to invest themselves in the purpose of human fulfillment through helping each other. But the necessary time and money will be more than worth it in the long run. Their only other choice is to remain emotional children wasting their resources in fighting each other.

**INVESTING IN PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS**

The great value that our society places upon money causes considerable strain on families with growing children. Even when the family income is lowest, the couple feels under considerable pressure to measure up to neighbors.

One encouraging indication from research is that children of poor parents can "understand" and accept "money" insecurity as long as their parents have a good relationship. But when parents are at odds with each other, the children feel both economic and emotional insecurity.

One of the great mistakes of middle class parents is to use money to show approval or to mete out punishment. Money may then become a substitute for love or a bribe for cooperation. Such a mistake will cause children to develop an extreme exaggeration of the meaning of money as a symbol of love or hate.
For the sake of children, we need to learn how to separate our interest in money and gain from our investment of self (interest, time, love, etc.) in children. Such matters as allowances, school needs, and money for entertainment should be decided on the basis of actual need and the family budget. Getting such matters mixed up with rewards and punishments can only cause misunderstanding and strife.

Parent-adolescent relationships may get stuck on money because adolescents sometimes use money to express a healthy amount of rebellion. They may spend money for things that they know are the opposite of the parent's wishes. By such actions they are measuring their parent's values and standards as they seek to find their own identity and independence. The difficult task of parents here is to stick together in giving a young person a reasonable amount of control and support at the same time. For example, a high school girl came home saying that she just must go on a trip with her class to a distant city! Her father's immediate reaction was that they couldn't afford it, period. Later the couple agreed that if their daughter would save part of her allowance and some baby-sitting money, the parents could pay half the cost of the trip. Thus the parents gave some support as well as some control. Their daughter gained some experience in planning as well as the experience of the actual trip.

**A MAN'S INVESTMENT**

Fathers in general need to become more interested in the products of their own bodies (children) and less interested in the products of their factories. A lack of male investment in relationship with sons may cause the boys to be hesitant, timid, quarrelsome, and irresponsible. The father's lack of interest in his daughters may cause them to be emotionally at loose ends, contemptuous of men and yet too anxious to please them, and undecided about their own relationships in marriage.7

One author describes the many social changes that have made the role of the American male very uncertain by using a cycle of five parts.

1. A son is reared in a family where the mother is the stronger or more dominant person, the father playing an ambiguous role.

2. The son does not have a clear model of what he should be.

3. The son marries to show himself and the world that he is a man in the way society expects. Social pressure forces almost everyone to get married in our society.

4. Within marriage the son is apathetic, rejecting much of the responsibility of fatherhood.

5. He rears a son to perpetuate the cycle.8

Clearly it is time for husbands and fathers to examine where they are investing their time and emotional energy as well as their money. They are needed for discipline in the sense of making devoted disciples of their children. They are needed for responsibility in the sense of standing with a woman and making the most important family decisions together.
Each family member makes an investment

Each person has a unique role to play in making the family a healthy place for the growth of human personality. Whether we are parents, children, in-laws, or grandparents we need to learn how to make our best contribution. For parents it may mean getting into a discussion group with other parents or getting professional help. For children it means realizing that they have the ability to help themselves by helping to make the family stronger. For in-laws and grandparents, it may mean learning the difficult discipline of listening without taking sides or giving advice.

The basic question is, "What is human maturity worth?" Are the members of my family worth the investment of time and interest that must be made in order to develop them closer to fulfillment?

One final reminder from the findings of research. A great many of those who invest diligently in human maturity within the family gain happiness as a by-product.

Perhaps a large investment in human relationships is worth it after all!

Prepared by,

Leo F. Hawkins
Family Relations Specialist

References


5. Feldman, op. cit.

6. Ibid.


8. Ruitenbeek, op. cit.
CONSUMER COMPETENCE
TEACHING OUTLINE

HOW TO SHOP FOR CHILD CARE

Objectives

Parents and other adults to know:

- What every child needs,
- Special needs of children requiring substitute care,
- Community responsibilities for group care

Procedures

Distribute the bulletin How to Shop for Child Care. Ask members to read the first section about Ann, Bertha and Cora.

Choose from the following points those which you think your particular audience needs to discuss.

1. Talk about some reasons mothers work. Talk about our changing attitudes toward working mothers. Be sure to stress the fact that working mothers are here to stay and the number will increase.

2. Have the group list who in their community cares for someone else's children. If your community is large, you may want to list only categories like grandmothers, other relatives, maids, neighbors, day care homes, church and other nurseries, other women who take care of children.

3. Ask what kind of person is a good one to take care of children. Then discuss some points made in the bulletin about what these people need to know.

4. Ask what kind of care children need. Discuss some points made in the bulletin. For instance:

   - What can we do to show children we care about how they feel?
   - What is a safe place for preschool children? What are some hazards in this community?
   - Why is it not good for a child to be with only adults all the time?
   - What are some things a five-year-old should be able to do for himself?
   - What useful things can a three-year-old do?

5. Talk about some advantages children of working mothers have. In addition to more family income for necessities, education and recreation, children of working mothers seem to have more important responsibilities at home. They feel more useful and independent. As long as society does not give homemaking such status, children may perhaps feel prouder of the mother who has a job with status.

6. Talk about some special needs of the children of working mothers, or mothers who spend much time away from home. For instance:

   - When is a good time for a busy mother to take time out to talk with her children? What difference does age of the children make?
What are some things children ought to do at home to help when mothers work?

At what age should a child be given responsibility for the care of a brother or sister under three years of age?

Why should the family make extra effort to do some things together if the mother has a full time job?

Should a working mother have to use vacation time to take care of a sick child? Should the father use some of his vacation time to take care of a sick child?

7. What is your community's greatest child care problem For example is it:

Lack of abilities or training for people who are taking care of children?

Lack of education for parents of young children?

Lack of arrangements for care of sick or handicapped children who don't need to be in the hospital?

Lack of understanding on the part of employers of working mothers?

Lack of understanding on the part of working mothers of employers' problems?

Lack of group child care facilities?

Unsafe places?

Talk about what this group can do to help. Check the bulletin for some ideas.

Evaluation

Distribute an evaluation sheet to each member. Ask them to check the correct answer. After about five minutes, read the sheet with them and tell them the correct answers.

Prepared by:

(Miss) L. Frances Jordan
Family Relations Specialist
In Charge

Ann's husband, Alan, wasn't interested in college when he had a chance to go. Instead he took a job with the local hatchery. Now after marriage and two children he realizes that he has gone as far as he can with the company. What they can pay him isn't enough to provide for his family as they grow up. He knows he has the brains to finish college. Now he has the will power to do it. Ann is happy that he has made this decision. She is willing to go to work to support the family for a few years. But who will take care of the children?

***

Bertha took a business course in high school and got a good job which she loved. After three years she met Ben and decided she loved him too. Bertha became a fulltime homemaker and mother. At first everything was fine. She and Ben were thrilled to have a Junior. But Donna, Billy and Pat came soon. Her whole world has become one big pile of diapers, crying children, three meals to cook, and a tired husband. It is too much. Bertha has begun to take it out on the children and Ben. She spends lots of time and money going to the doctor for her nerves. Yesterday the doctor said that going back to work might help her. Bertha is willing to try anything. So is Ben. But who will take care of the children?

***

Cora's family has always lived in Faith Community. Through hard work and cooperation Cora and all her brothers and sisters got a college education. Very few others did. Her parent taught their children to be good citizens and help wherever they could. After graduation Cora has married her high school sweetheart and is settled again in Faith Community. She does lots of church work and helping the neighbors when trouble comes. Of course she thinks of her family first and tries to have meals ready on time. She tries to be at home when the children get out of school. Yesterday the school superintendent called and said the second grade teacher had to resign. It is a week before time for school to start and he is desperate. He wants her to accept the job. Cora and Carl, her husband, feel that she should say yes. But who will take care of the children?

Does a mother like Ann, Bertha or Cora live in your community? Probably so.

Today two of every five women are employed.
In some North Carolina counties over half of all the women are working.
North Carolina has 360,000 working mothers and the number is going up every day.
One of every nine working women has preschool children and a husband at home.
Our attitudes about working mothers are changing. Some of us have daughters or know others who are employed. We know and accept why they work. People used to think that women's place was in the home. But that was a time when most jobs required hard physical labor. Today it is different. Most jobs a woman can do as easily and sometimes better than a man. If we want all the goods and services we enjoy now, we will have to accept the fact that many women must work outside the home. There aren't enough men to fill all the jobs.

We are also beginning to realize that being a mother doesn't necessarily make one a good mother. Some women are poor mothers because they have never learned what a good mother is. Others have emotional problems that make it impossible for them to do the right things for children. Which is better for the children - to be in the care of a poor mother all the time or to be with someone else who can give better care for part of the day?

Who will take care of the working mothers' children in your community? Probably a relative or a maid.

Three of every four preschool children of working mothers are cared for in their own or someone else's home.

Only six of 100 preschool children are cared for in group day care centers.

In North Carolina about 300,000 preschool children have working mothers.

In North Carolina only 10,000 children are in licensed day care centers.

Are relatives and maids good at taking care of children? Yes and no.

Some are too young or too old.
Some are too strict or too easy.
Some are too busy or too bored.
Some are just right.

People who take care of somebody else's child need to know:

1. That they do not take the place of the parents, just help them,
2. How children grow and develop,
3. How to help children grow up safely and happily,
4. What the parents want their children to be like,
5. What special rules the parents have for the children,
6. How to find the parents, doctor, or other person who can take over the child when something happens.

We should ask, can they provide what children need? Check and see.

Every child needs these things:

1. A safe place and a chance to grow and develop in good health,
2. To be with people who love him and care about how he feels.
3. To learn to like and trust people.

4. A chance to play make believe with music, games, toys, art and talking with other children.

5. To learn about the world around him.

6. To learn to do new things for himself.

7. To learn how to choose right and wrong.

8. To be useful.

We usually expect parents to see that their children have these things we have mentioned. But not all parents do. Some parents have never learned what children need. Some don't have time. Other parents don't have enough money.

Children of working mothers need some extra things. Do you know some mothers who do not work but spend a lot of time away from home doing church activities? Or they may be doing other volunteer work in the community. They should think about this list, too.

Every child whose mother is away a lot of the time needs:

1. To know why mother cannot be with him all the time.

2. Time to talk with his parents when they get home.

3. More planning with parents ahead of time about use of time and money.

4. To know what extra things he is expected to do because his mother cannot be there all the time.

5. Responsibilities that fit his age and abilities.

6. To learn to do more things for himself.

7. To be wiser in deciding things for himself.

8. Extra chances to do special things, take trips and have fun with the family or friends.

9. Somebody he can trust to look after him who cares where he is all the time.

10. To know somebody he can go to if he needs help.

11. Somebody to stand in for the parent to go with him to the dentist's office and other places, to talk with the teacher at school.

12. Somebody to take care of him when he is sick if his mother cannot be at home.

What can you and the community do to help mothers find somebody to take care of their children while they work?

What would mothers like Ann, Bertha and Cora find in your community?
Do relatives and maids caring for children know what they need to know? Do they know what every child needs? Can they give these things to children? Do they know what special things children of busy mothers need? Can they give what these children need?

How can you help? Here are some ideas:

1. Help those who care for other people's children to keep up to date on what children need.
   - Help your Extension agent write a newsletter for these people, talk about it on radio, and write about it in the newspaper.
   - Ask the librarian to display some books and pamphlets on how children grow and develop. Tell the child workers, maids and baby-sitters about these reading materials.
   - Help your Extension agent arrange for some classes for people who care for children. Tell the people about the classes.

2. Help parents to learn what care is needed for preschool and school aged children.
   - Help your Extension Agent send newsletters, write news articles, and talk about it on radio.
   - See that young parents, both mothers and fathers, learn about the library, how to use it, and what books are there on child care.
   - Arrange for classes for parents. Baby-sit so the parents can go together.

3. Organize an emergency baby-sitter service for working mothers whose children get sick and need somebody at home with them.
   - Work with Extension agent and Health Department to train the sitters.

4. Talk with business men and industrial managers who hire working mothers about special arrangements for mothers.
   - Encourage more part-time jobs so mothers can be at home when children get out of school.
   - Encourage some arrangements for mothers when children are sick. A few businesses do this, but most working mothers have to give up vacation time to care for sick children.
   - Encourage factories to consider some good group child care near the plant.

5. Encourage people in your community to care for school children in the afternoon until their parents get off work. This may be a good job for a mature high school boy or girl.

6. Encourage people in your community to qualify for day care homes.

7. Work with community groups to remove hazards that may be harmful to young children.

Prepared by Miss L. Frances Jordan, Family Relations Specialist. N. C. Agricultural Extension Service. USDA and NCSU Cooperating, Raleigh, N. C. 8/68
CONSUMER COMPETENCE
BACKGROUND PAPER
HOW TO SHOP FOR CHILD CARE

WORKING MOTHERS AND CHILD CARE

WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY

The changing times are good times. The "good old days" are 1968. We have more money and more things to buy with it than at any time in the history of our country. In the past ten years the gross national product increased 40%, while population increased only 15%. How do we account for these good times?

The report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women says "one of the ironies of history is that war has brought American women their greatest economic opportunities."1 In our generation it was World War II that created the need for women in the labor force. While some returned home after the fighting ended, many did not. For the last 20 years we have continued to spend far more for national defense than any other expenditure. We still live on a wartime economy. We still need women workers. Many items researched for the military find their way into the public market. So we are able to enjoy certain new food concentrates, fabrics, building materials, and electronic gadgets in our daily living. A wider market means more jobs.

In addition to "things" which working women help to produce in order to earn the money to buy them, women are working to provide "services." It is in this area that we have had the biggest increase in jobs. We work to make more money in order to pay other people to do the things we don't have time to do ourselves because we are working. It's really not all that vicious. We do play more than we used to. And it is only human nature to want to get somebody else to do what you don't want to do yourself or just be waited on.

If we want all these things and all these services, we'll have to accept the fact that there aren't enough men to go around. There aren't enough old maids to go around, either, when it comes to filling all the jobs. We must either admit that women workers are a necessity or do without some of our luxuries. People forget that some women have always had to work outside the home. Did you know that as early as 1920 women workers numbered 8¼ million?2

Today two of every five women are employed, more than 27 million of them. One of every nine working women has preschool children and a husband living at home.3 According to Dr. Ellen Winston, we have in North Carolina 360,000 working mothers and expect the number to reach one-half.

Nationally the family income has increased by 250% in the last 20 years. Today one of every four families has an income of $10,000 or over. Having two wage earners in the family has helped to account for this increase.4 On the other hand, one of every seven families in the United States lives in poverty. In North Carolina one family out of every four is poor. Even in many of these families both parents are working.

Sixty percent of the state's non-white women are in low-paid service occupations; only two per cent are in white-collar positions.5 The men aren't doing much better, though, in our state.
In per capita personal income by states, North Carolina ranks sixth from the bottom. Those jobs filled primarily by undereducated people pay the least, of course. In the South nursing homes and rest homes pay 90¢ an hour. If she works in the dime store or laundry, she earns an average of $1.14 per hour. Motion picture theaters pay $1.25. Eating places and motels pay 80¢ to 85¢ per hour plus tips. Girls in the cheap places don't make any tips. Most maids are making less than 80¢. According to the report of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women: "At all operational levels in the state, women earn less than men. As operatives, female workers earn $680 a year less than men."8

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD CHILDREN

The changing times have pointed out another striking indictment of our values. It is our attitude toward children. In a recent Raleigh account of an organization to train servants, it was reported that when training was completed, maids who served cocktails would earn more than four times as much as those in child care.

We can't put all the blame for this poor attitude about the importance of child rearing on these dear ladies organizing servant training. For generations the men have been telling the women that women are inferior. Not only are women supposed to be inferior as people, but also what they do is beneath the dignity of men's consideration. The strange thing is that the specific job or responsibility that is inferior varies from place to place. In Kenya "women's work" is farming, which we consider "men's work" here. In India bookkeeping is still "men's work," which has become "women's work" in North Carolina.

Unfortunately women have believed what men told them. They, too, consider women's work not so important. Married women who stay at home say, "I'm just a housewife." If that's all she is at home, maybe she is inferior! What woman can get by with it? Most married women assume a hundred important roles in the course of their daily lives.

In terms of day care, as long as mothers themselves do not recognize and actively support the fact that little children and their care are important, mothers will tell you they cannot afford to pay for someone to take care of their children. We must go to the headwaters to solve the problem. We've got to convince the men first!

This detrimental attitude is changing for the better. President Johnson's message to Congress in February last year marked the first time in the history of the country that a President has devoted an entire speech to the concerns about children and youth. Those of you who are involved with agencies handling Federal monies know that Congress authorized almost everything the President asked for that day. Those people who are not closely involved with any of these Federal programs would be astounded by the amount of Federal money North Carolina is getting each year for programs for children and youth. A good proportion of this money is not limited to programs for the poor.

Research on all sides is telling us that the first six, and especially the first three years of life are even more important than we realized. Somehow we have to convince the parents. If we really believe that the early childhood years are crucial and determine success or failure in the rest of life, we will recognize that
this is true not only for the poor child, but the child of middle class and rich parents as well. In community planning for child care, we must consider all the children and their needs. This includes normal children, children with special handicaps and those with special gifts.

CHILD CARE IS BIG BUSINESS

Child care is big business. The small privately operated programs for group care of children are just as doomed as the small privately operated corner grocery stores. The real reason is economics. The small operator simply cannot make ends meet if he is limited to the number of children the license allows under present regulations. Mandatory licensing is a threat to the small operator. But not requiring mandatory licensing is a far greater threat to the lives of our preschool children. What do we do about it? Children's health and safety must not be jeopardized. Help the small day care operator to see the facts and help him or her to get into some other business.

By small group care operators, we do not mean the day care home program, which is the care of up to six children in one's own home. We assume those operating day care homes do not depend entirely on child care earnings for their livelihood. Especially in rural areas. Day care homes can be one immediate answer to the problem of minimum day care for communities.

Remember that minimum care must not be poor care. Poor child care in the child's own home is better than poor child care in groups. We can excuse the individual mother by saying she never had an opportunity to know better. But when we organize a program for a group of preschoolers we ought to know better. In effect a poor group child care program teaches the mother that what she sees is the right way. We do an injustice not only to the child in care, but also to the parent whom we are educating.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY CAN DO

How are we going to move child care into big business? We will have to organize and coordinate our efforts. Take a look at what needs to be done, who ought to be concerned and who can do which jobs the best.

You need some facts to back up your concern. Read state and national materials on child care that are brought to your attention. Talk with the local groups and agencies.

Next comes public awareness. We already know some of the problems. But do even we who are professionally involved have the whole picture? And to whom are we going to sell the story of the importance of child care? Who are we going to call and say, 'Let's have lunch together. I want to know what you think about child care and see how it fits into my understanding of the situation.'

The Extension Service should be able to help solve the problems. As associate faculty of N. C. State University, Extension agents have access to up-to-date information and research. The Extension agents have some training and experience in teaching through mass media. In regular contacts with organized clubs, radio and
T.V. programs, and newspaper articles, Extension workers can help teach the public
the facts and what ought to be done.

The Extension Service has been active in community organization, particularly
in rural areas and small towns. These Community development groups have an interest
in the needs of children and youth. In the associations which have set up a family
living or home economics committee within its organization this group might recom-
mand and coordinate projects relating to group child care. Counties in the Northern
Piedmont Area Development Association seem to be moving faster in this direction than
some of the others, perhaps because it is more industrialized.

Extension Advisory Boards need to be made aware of the child care situation in
their county. Help them to see the long range relationship of child care to
education, industry and potential leadership in the next generation.

Where are you going to get the money to put child care into big business?
Support legislation to raise the minimum wage levels, and to include more 'women's
work' jobs under minimum wage laws. Support legislation to add more job categories
under the equal pay laws so women doing equal work will make as much as men. This
way the individual mother can contribute more for her child's care.

We are making progress in efforts to provide relief for working mothers
through income tax exemptions, though the President's Commission on the Status of
Women pointed out several areas that need to be improved. Provisions for families
with only a father is one example. What can we do to change the N. C. income tax
laws?

Welfare personnel have been fighting a long time to get the laws changed so
the family would not be penalized for what little initiative the family members had
for increasing their income. It looked like a break when Congress passed the law
saying AFDC mothers could work. But they overdid it. They said all AFDC mothers
have to work. Who's going to tell Congress that many AFDC mothers are too mentally
ill to work? Support for the Harris & Kennedy amendments should be considered.
This Public Law No. 9248 may be a blessing in disguise in the long run, however. It
is the best chance we have ever had to reach the children of the poor with a pre-
school educational program. This may be our chance to break the cycle of poverty.
It may force local communities to do something about group child care. It may force
the early childhood education experts to dream up new ways of caring for children,
and spokesmen for children may take another realistic look at what is minimum and
what is optimum care.

Consider other various Federal grants and loans. Consult with your local
school personnel, health and welfare departments, and community action program
directors for more information. Ask them to let you read a copy of the guidelines
for the various Titles under their jurisdiction. Then see what fits into your
community's needs. Help them develop a proposal. Urge local and state agencies
and groups to include in their next budget some funds to set aside for matching
purposes should a grant become available. Look to business and industry for
financial help. Generally industry has not been very concerned about child care
unless they find they need to provide it in order to get the women workers. The
Kaiser program and the Lanham Act schools of World War II are good examples of what
can be done when industry needs it. It seems that industries in North Carolina are
not yet that desperate or do not see the relationship between available workers and
available child care. We need to educate the officials to see that we must act before
the situation gets out of hand. If mandatory licensing goes into effect before other schools are set up, we will definitely have a difficult time getting women workers. We also need to educate industry to see that in the long run they benefit by children's getting a good boost in early childhood.

What about labor unions? In other states they are interested. We have only a small number of union members in North Carolina yet, but this number will grow. Less than 7% of the workers are now unionized. Now is the time to help the unions to see their responsibility in the problems of child care.

Churches are beginning to wake up to the needs for group care. Among recent developments in the establishment of the Child Development Center as part of the Baptist Children's Homes program in North Carolina. This center was set up as an experiment and example to churches to see what children need and how local churches can offer group day care. Contact Mr. or Mrs. W. R. Wagoner at Hills Home in Thomasville for more information, consultation service, or appointment to visit their center. The Western Conference of the Methodist Church has a consultant available to churches.

Perhaps other denominations in North Carolina are doing something similar to urge local church action. A big expense of child care programs is the physical plant. That is why churches with existing facilities are a good group to get committed and interest in group child care programs.

Consider parent cooperative child care programs. They have been most effective in other states: why not here? One good thing about cooperatives is the education that parents can get through active involvement in a preschool program. If we could campaign for a policy of part-time employment, more of the mothers could participate as assistant teachers and learn about child development through this experience. Having parent volunteer assistants will help cut the costs of group care, too. Some titles under ESEA could fund such parent groups.

The community colleges are a potential resource. You should be familiar with the new curricula they are offering in training child care workers. The training of staff must move as fast as organizing child care programs.

Men and women's civic and volunteer groups have in the past supported local child care programs. We assume they will continue to help with whatever they see that needs to be done.

Perhaps these local organizations can contribute scholarships for child care training.

So public agencies, industry, private organizations, and groups of parents are a source for improving child care. But as long as we depend upon these as a means of carrying on a program, that program will remain limited. If we really want good group care and education for young children, we'll have go have support through local and/or state taxation, like our public schools and health departments.

Do you care about child care? Maybe you are the person who can change the course of events in your county.

Prepared by:

(Miss) L. Frances Jordan
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REFERENCES
2. Ibid, p. 64.
4. Ibid.
"North Carolina's children are its greatest resource." Do you agree with this quotation from the Charter for North Carolina's Children? If children are our greatest resource, what are we doing to develop it? Our forefathers knew that educating children is one way to make the most of their potential. They established public schools and colleges for children over six. Now the researchers are telling us that children need educational opportunities long before six years of age. When children spend the first six years of their life with people who know what children need in order to grow and develop, the children have a much better chance.

We all know that children need something to eat besides soda pop and hamburgers, and something to wear besides bikinis, and a roof over their heads. Is this all children need? Is providing food, clothing, and housing for children developing our greatest resource? That helps, but is not enough.

Children need to be with people. They need to be with adults who love children and care about how they feel, people who can be trusted.

Children need to be with other children, some older and some younger. Learning to get along with each other at four or ten or sixteen helps in getting along with others in marriage, in a career and even in retirement. Children need some supervision though. How else does the child learn there is a better way than biting people?

Children need a chance to explore the world around them by going to see the museums, hearing different kinds of music, drawing a picture like they want to, and even playing in the mud puddle. (Now if you're a mother who doesn't approve of this last idea, then get your child some wet clay.)

Children need to do new things for themselves, But be sure they are ready for the experience. The ten year old child isn't ready to take on the job of being a substitute mother by herself. But she can help an adult care for that little
brother if the adult is around.

Children need to feel useful, not used. There is a difference. When a child has to do the same boring job at home day after day just because nobody else wants to take out the garbage, the child doesn't feel very useful. On the other hand, if he is given a new kind of job every now and then, is shown how to do it and told why it is needed, then the child feels like an important person.

How what do we need to provide for children if we are going to develop them as our greatest resource?

1. Children need to be with people -- trustworthy adults and children to play with.

2. Children need a chance to explore the world around them, to learn by going places and trying things for themselves.

3. Children need to learn new responsibilities as they get old enough to do them. They need some jobs to do that we think are important, not just the chores we don't want to do ourselves.

Children are one generation's gift to the next. What kind of gift are you creating?

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Raleigh, N. C. 8/68
CONSUMER COMPETENCE

EVALUATION KEY

HOW TO SHOP FOR CHILD CARE

Circle T if you agree and F if you do not agree.

1. All women who work do it for the money they earn.  T  F
2. Now that the husbands make more money fewer women are going to work.  T  F
3. Most working mothers' children are cared for in their own or a relative's home.  T  F
4. People who take care of somebody else's children do not take the place of the parents.  T  F
5. Every child needs to learn to like and trust people.  T  F
6. The child of the working mother needs home chores that fit his age and abilities.  T  F
7. Children of mothers who do a lot of volunteer work in the community have many of the same needs as children of working mothers.  T  F
8. The job should come first and sick children second.  T  F
9. One of the biggest problems is too many day care centers.  T  F
10. Seeing that children have proper care is a community responsibility.  T  F

NOTE: THIS IS A KEY SHEET. LEAVE THE CIRCLES AROUND THE ANSWERS OFF WHEN REPRODUCING FOR MEMBERS.
SUGGESTIONS TO THE AGENT FOR SCORING AND SUMMARIZING

1. Make enough copies of the evaluation sheet (other side of this sheet) for each participant. Be sure to leave off circles.

2. Send this sheet back to the Family Relations Department with the following information:
   a. Name of agent and county______________________________.
   b. Total number of persons receiving this lesson______________.
   c. For each question or statement on evaluation sheet, enter the percentage of correct answers for the total county. (Use the key)________________
   d. What do you recommend for improving the teaching of this lesson?
FAMILY RELATIONS

This Packet Contains Teaching Materials For:
* How To Shop For Child Care
* Investing in Family Relationships