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A FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM

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In April of 1968, the initial work of the Marshalltown Family Life Education Program began. Parents, concerned citizens and various civic organizations made their requests known to the Board of Education that they believed there was a need for the school to improve and study the present Family Life Program in the Marshalltown schools. Selected staff of the schools working very closely with interested citizens on the Family Life Lay Advisory Committee: parents, clergy, doctors, dentists, P.T.A., probation officers, social welfare, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., mental health and school administrators, worked for two years to plan a well-defined program acceptable to the citizens of the community. The philosophy, purpose, objectives, content and materials evaluation committees were formed and made up of local teachers. In the spring of 1969, the committees' reports were given, a summer curriculum writing team was formed and a curriculum guide was prepared. In September 1970, two elementary schools were selected to pilot the K-6 Family Life Program. Staff orientation for committee members and some lay advisors included a two-day workshop in Cedar Rapids on human sexuality. Large group meetings for elementary teachers and one half-day inservice was held in the spring of 1970 for the teachers in the local school system.

The objectives were to help each student:

1. Acquire adequate information about his own physical, mental and emotional maturation processes related to sexual development to insure self-respect;
2. Discuss sex in a positive manner;
3. Maintain understanding attitudes toward sex in all of its various manifestations, in the individual and others;
4. Make a satisfactory adjustment from childhood to adulthood and develop a personal code of behavior in keeping with the changing mores of the society;
5. Assume responsibility for one's actions and for utilizing their sexuality effectively and creatively in several roles — as a child, youth, spouse, parent, community member and citizen;
6. Acquire enough information about the misuses and deviations of sex as to protect oneself against exploitation and against injury of one's physical and mental health;
7. To gain information and guidance about the emerging social problems that affect family in our society — birth control, population explosion, illegitimacy, early marriage, venereal disease, solo parenthood and divorce.

The Marshalltown Community Schools believe that the parent, church and school share a responsibility for personal and family life

education. Since the function of the school is to share in the education of youth and since the school reaches most young people, it is a proper role for the school to provide family life education. It is also the role of the school to aid in the development of attitudes and social behavior that will enable youth to accept themselves and their responsibilities as individuals, family members, and members of society.

Although family life education is shared by the home, church and school, it begins in the home and is the parents' privilege and responsibility. In cooperation with parents and churches, the Marshalltown Community Schools are expanding their curricula for those courses of study which will strengthen character and contribute to the development of well-balanced, responsible citizenship. Our over-all purposes are:

To aid in the developing of emotionally stable children and adolescents who will feel sufficiently secure and adequate in solving problems in the light of their own goals and philosophy within the context of the community's goals and values.

To provide sound knowledge of the psychological, sociological and physical aspects of behavior so that all three will be viewed as a part of the total personality of the individual.

To encourage wholesome attitudes and standards which will assist young people and adults in determining their sexual and other conduct by considering its long-range effects on their own personal development, the highest good of other individuals and the welfare of society as a whole.

To create, sustain and reinforce an awareness in boys and girls of the various qualities on which successful family life depends.

References

K-6 Family Life Education Curriculum Guide, Marshalltown Community Schools.
Junior High Health Education Course of Study, Marshalltown Community Schools.

Home on the Clone

Oh, give me a clone,
of my own flesh and bone,
with a Y chromosome changed to an X.

When it is grown,
then my own little clone,
will be that of the opposite sex.

Isaac Asimov