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A DESIGN FOR A FAMILY-CENTERED NURSERY SCHOOL
AFFILIATED WITH A COLLEGE HOME
ECONOMICS PROGRAM

BY

RUTH KLEIN KRANZLER

A thesis submitted*
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master of Science, Department of Child
Development and Family Relations, South
Dakota State College of Agriculture
and Mechanic Arts

June, 1959

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This thesis is approved as a creditable, independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Science, and acceptable as meeting the thesis requirements for this degree; but without implying that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

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R. K.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There has been an effort in recent years to enunciate more clearly the philosophy of Family Life Education. The fundamental point in this statement of philosophy is the respect for the inherent worth and dignity of the human individual and the belief that the individual gains his greatest fulfillment through meaningful relationships with other people. The most significant of these relationships is to be found in the family. Traditionally, much of the rationale for family life and parent education has been based on what happens to the child. In all phases of this education, programs were designed to be "child-centered." Although today we are just as concerned as ever about what is happening to children in our society, we are also broadening the scope of our concern to include the parents. There is a recognition of the fact that parents cannot give their children psychological security and support unless they have found some meaning in life and can feel right about themselves. Their own needs for feelings of adequacy, security, and worth must be met.¹

To put this philosophy into practice, it is obvious that all phases of family-life education, including the laboratory nursery schools which are associated with Divisions of Home Economics, ought to be "family-centered" rather than either "child-centered" or "adult-

¹Owen Morgan, "A Philosophy for Family Life Education", Merrill-Palmer Quarterly of Behavior and Development, Vol. 5, 80-84, The Merrill-Palmer School: Detroit, Michigan, 1959.

centered". The American Home Economics Association, in its statements of philosophy and objectives, recognizes and endorses the "family-centered" approach.²

It is the opinion of the writer that this is an extremely difficult philosophy to convert into practice in the area of laboratory nursery schools connected with schools of Home Economics. It is for that reason that this study has been undertaken.

The problem, then, is to design a nursery school program that is family-centered; that is, one that not only meets the needs of the child, but also is cognizant of the needs of the other family members. The result of such a program should be an improvement in the quality of the family life of the families involved.

The hypothesis that was tested in the study described here may be stated as follows: The nursery school program presented in this paper is an improvement over the traditional program in accomplishing the goal of better family living.

In order to determine whether laboratory nursery schools have or have not been family-centered in the past, it is necessary to examine the literature which describes this area of education from the time of the establishment of the earliest schools of this type in the United States until 1947, when the National Society for the Study of Education made its last comprehensive report on Early Childhood Education. This will be done in the second chapter of this essay.

²American Home Economics Association Sub-committee on Philosophy and Objectives, Tentative Statement of Philosophy and Objectives of Home Economics, pp. 8-9, American Home Economics Association: Washington, D. C., 1958.

The third chapter will deal with the current status of the laboratory nursery schools which are associated with Home Economics Divisions in schools of higher learning. This information was derived from pertinent publications in the field of pre-school education. The material reviewed was published between 1950 and 1958.

The criteria used to classify programs as being or not being family-centered, and the design of a family-centered nursery school program are presented in the fourth chapter of this paper.

In order to verify or negate the hypothesis, the program described in Chapter IV was put into operation at South Dakota State College at Brookings, South Dakota. This was done under the auspices of the Department of Child Development and Family Relations in the Home Economics Division. Twenty-four children were enrolled in the nursery school. The parents of these children were professional people, skilled laborers, and college students. At the end of two college quarters the parents were asked to evaluate the effect of the nursery school program on their family lives. They did this by filling out a questionnaire and returning it to the nursery school teachers anonymously. The results of this evaluation are described in Chapter V.

The sixth and last chapter will be a summary of this research and the conclusions that may be drawn. The writer also will present recommendations for further work to be done on the basis of this study.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PRACTICES AND PHILOSOPHY OF LABORATORY
NURSERY SCHOOLS ASSOCIATED WITH COLLEGE
HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS

Pre-school education in the United States has been greatly influenced by the infant schools of Europe. John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) was among the first to suggest that social conditions could be improved by the establishment of a "School of Infancy". In the eighteenth century, Jean Frederic Oberlin, a Lutheran minister in France established an infant school whose objective was religious and moral training for the children of the very poor. John Pestalozzi in Switzerland and Robert Owen in Scotland reacted against religious and moral teachings as the primary objectives of the infant schools. They stressed habit formation through an organized scheme of educational procedure. Although the McMillans established the first nursery school in England, it was Charles and Elizabeth Mayo who were responsible for the introduction of Pestalozzi's methods in that country, by founding an organization which specifically trained teachers according to the Pestalozzi theory of habit training. The early infant schools were philanthropic in purpose, planned chiefly as a substitute for the home rather than as a supplement to the home. Only very poor and underprivileged children were enrolled.

However, Frederic Froebel of Germany in 1848 conceived the idea that the home education of rich and poor alike should be supplemented. He called upon the state to provide institutions for the education of

all young children, parents, and prospective parents. This idea resulted in the kindergarten system in Europe.³

Nursery schools and kindergartens have had a common origin. In this country the distinction between them usually has been in terms of the type of program planned for the children and in the age of the children. Nursery school pupils most often were under five years of age, whereas the "over-four but under-six" age children were thought of as the kindergarten group. In nursery schools, children did individual work and play except for very short periods. In kindergartens almost all of the activity was done in groups.⁴

Early educational experiments in Europe had a tremendous influence on the progress of pre-school and parental education in the United States. Related social forces which developed in this country, largely since 1890, also gave the movement great impetus. For instance, following the emphasis on religious and moral training came the "health movement," which gave great importance to the establishment of proper health habits. Growing interest in child study, the mental hygiene movement, and organized parental education programs all were forces which eventually culminated in the establishment of the pioneer nursery schools in the United States. Chief among the organizations which were active in promulgating this interest in pre-school education were the Child Study Association, The American Child Health Association, The National

³"Pre-School and Parental Education". Twenty-eighth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Vol. 14, 7-13, Public School Publishing Company: Bloomington, Illinois, 1929.

⁴Rhoda Kellogg, "What is a Nursery School?", Nursery School Guide, pp. 2-3, Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1949.

Committee for Mental Hygiene, The National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Children's Bureau, the American Home Economics Association. Unlike the early infant schools and the English nursery schools, the earliest nursery schools in this country were primarily for educational experiment, for demonstration of correct methods, or for purposes of research, and not for the relief of working mothers or neglected children.⁵

The first laboratory nursery school associated with Home Economics in a school of higher learning was opened at the Merrill-Palmer School of Homemaking in Detroit in 1922. Its program was closely patterned after the English nursery schools which were associated with the public school system. Dr. Edna Noble White, first director of the Merrill-Palmer School, was the chief architect of the plan for this laboratory school. This was followed by similar laboratories being set up at Iowa State College in 1924 and at Cornell University and Ohio State University in 1925. From then on, the movement grew very rapidly. The function of these nursery schools was three-fold: to educate young girls in the care and training of children, to do research in child development, and to provide habit-training for the young children enrolled. The relationship of the schools with the parents was in accordance with the Montessori principles, which stated that one of the aspects of studying child development in a nursery school was to develop, demonstrate and disseminate the best methods of child care.⁶

⁵"Pre-School and Parental Education", Twenty-eighth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Vol. 14, 7-13, Public School Publishing Company: Bloomington, Illinois, 1929.

⁶Ibid., pp. 28-43.

The age of the children enrolled in the early laboratory nursery schools ranged from seven months to five years. Since one of the basic purposes was to study child growth and development, it was considered desirable to have the children at the school over as long a period as possible. Many of the schools operated on the basis of an eight-hour day five days per week. The daily programs were carefully planned to meet the social, emotional, mental, and physical needs of the child. The formation of good habits in each of these areas was emphasized.⁷

From the time of the establishment of the very first laboratory nursery school, it was recognized that home and school would have to cooperate in order that the child might receive maximum benefit from his nursery school experience. Virtually all nursery schools inaugurated some form of parental education. The basic educational philosophy continued to be habit training, and it was considered detrimental to the child to have to adjust to one type of habit training at home and another at school. It logically followed that the school, the experts who studied child development, should instruct the parents in proper methods of child rearing. Parental education was accomplished through parents' meetings at which there were discussions and lectures on specific problems encountered in child-rearing, individual conferences with parents, and distribution of pamphlets and brochures. In addition, parents were urged to come to school and observe as the teachers demonstrated correct methods in dealing with various kinds of behavior, and the staff nutritionist sometimes visited the homes to help mothers

⁷Ibid., pp. 137-243.

plan more nutritious meals for their children. Parents were invited to come to the nursery school and, under proper guidance, study their own children objectively and comparatively. The laboratory nursery schools considered the education of parents as an integral part of their program.⁸

The interest in pre-school education and the establishment of laboratory nursery schools in universities and colleges progressed very rapidly after 1922. By 1928 there were thirty-six such schools in the United States. Most of them carried on a whole-day program five days a week, providing education for young children and their parents, training future teachers and parents, and doing research in child development.⁹

The growth of the movement came to a virtual standstill during the depression, but the war years brought a rekindling of interest in the education of the young child. By 1942, there were one hundred twenty-two nursery schools associated with colleges and universities in this country.¹⁰

The educational emphasis of the nursery schools paralleled the emphasis in general education. Thus, there gradually was less concern

⁸Ibid., pp. 275-343.

⁹Ibid., pp. 238-240.

¹⁰Bess Goodykoontz, "Recent History and Present Status of Education for Young Children", Early Childhood Education, Forty-sixth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, pp. 44-51, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1947.

with a strict program of habit training and more attention to the adjustment of the child to his environment. An effort was made to de-emphasize content of the educational program and to stress adjustment and mode of attack on problems. The concepts of the "whole child" and the "child-centered" school flourished. These concepts merely meant that ideally the school should make an effort to meet the emotional, social, mental as well as physical needs of the child. John E. Anderson of the University of Minnesota defined the "child-centered" school as one that was "evaluated in terms of its effect upon and values for the child, and not in terms of its contribution to outside agencies or remote purposes".¹¹ This became the measure of a good school.

The relationship with parents continued to be on the basis of demonstrating correct methods, giving professional help with child-rearing problems, and bringing to the parents scientific information regarding the needs of children.¹²

At the close of the war years, Elizabeth Mechem Fuller of the University of Minnesota summarized the nation-wide practices in early childhood education. The basic and most important practice of all she stated as follows: "All other considerations (those of teacher, parent, research worker, and student) are subordinated to child needs, and all persons connected with the school understand this system of

¹¹John E. Anderson, "The Theory of Early Childhood Education", Early Childhood Education, Forty-sixth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, pp. 70-100, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1947.

¹²Bess Goodykoontz, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

values and plan their work accordingly."¹³

Thus it may be seen that, though pre-school education had its roots in the child-care institutions of Europe, the laboratory nursery schools associated with schools of higher learning in the United States rapidly developed an educational philosophy and purpose. This philosophy and purpose was oriented to the social, emotional, physical, and mental needs of the child, without much regard for the feelings of the family. For instance, most schools operated whole- or half-day programs without considering the guilt feelings that the mother might have because she was sending a very young child away from home for a portion of every day. No one seemed to consider that it might be quite damaging to a parent's self confidence or feelings of adequacy to have an "expert" point out his "faulty practices" in dealing with his own child. In other words, the nursery laboratory schools at the close of World War II were definitely "child-centered".

¹³Elizabeth Mechem Fuller, "Practices and Resources in Early Childhood Education", Early Childhood Education, Forty-sixth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, p. 105, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1947.

CHAPTER III

CURRENT AIMS AND PHILOSOPHY OF LABORATORY NURSERY

SCHOOLS ASSOCIATED WITH COLLEGE

HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS

Although nursery schools have been operating in this country for about thirty years, there is still a great deal of confusion and disagreement about what a nursery school is and what its contributions are to our modern life.

One way to see the areas of agreement and disagreement is to examine the definitions and objectives of nursery schools as they are stated by various leaders in the field of pre-school education.

Moustakas and Berson define a nursery school as an

educational center that furthers the full development of the young child and the successful functioning of a group of young children. Its goal is to maintain a balance between spontaneous behavior and conformity to society's standards. It is concerned with the feelings and attitudes of young children and their developmental skills. It seeks to help children realize their potential and at the same time aids them to accept the limits of life in a democratic society. . . . The nursery school must be concerned with the enhancement of the child's individuality, and the development of attitudes, interests, understandings, and beliefs which will enable the child to be a happy, secure, contributing member of society.¹⁴

In her book The Nursery School, which is used as a text for college students working with children in laboratory nursery schools, Katherine Read states that a nursery school

¹⁴Clark E. Moustakas and Minnie Berson, The Nursery School and Child Care Center, p. 17, Whiteside, Inc. and William Morrow and Company: New York, 1955.

is a school serving the needs of two-, three-, and four-year-old children by offering them experiences adapted to what is now known about the growth needs of these age levels. It shares with parents the responsibility of promoting sound growth in a period when growth is rapid and important, just as the elementary school shares this responsibility with parents of the elementary school age child.¹⁵

Rhoda Kellogg, who advocates that nursery schools should be a part of our public school system, defines them as schools

whose program and environment are primarily suited to the educational needs of pre-school children. Stating this more elaborately, we can say that a nursery school is a place with indoor and outdoor space, which cares for a group of children from two to five years of age for not less than two hours a day, and wherein a supervised program is conducted by teachers who promote educational objectives through the use of well planned equipment and materials.¹⁶

The major similarity in these definitions is the emphasis on the child and his needs. Not one of these authorities mentions that a laboratory nursery school might possibly be a tool for the improvement or maintenance of healthy family life.

In further exploring current beliefs concerning home-nursery school relationships, it becomes apparent that widely divergent views are held by the writers on pre-school education. Leavitt recognizes that young children feel very close to their parents and that therefore the parents need to be closely associated with the school and

¹⁵Katherine H. Read, The Nursery School, p. 17, W. B. Saunders Company: Philadelphia, 1950.

¹⁶Rhoda Kellogg, Nursery School Guide, p. 5, Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1949.

its teachers. He feels, however, that a good nursery school program should be based directly on what is known about children's development and needs, and that close association with the parents serves the purpose, chiefly, of interpreting the work of the school to the community. His very excellent and detailed suggestions for the daily nursery school program include the educational values that can be gained from each activity, but these are all stated in terms of how the child benefits.¹⁷ No mention is made of how the family is affected.

Moustakas and Berson, in summarizing current practices and trends in the laboratory nursery schools of this country, feel that parents are contributing increasingly to the school's understanding of the children enrolled through supplying records, opening their homes to students for home visits, and cooperating in research. These activities also result in benefit to the parents because it stimulates them to become students of child development, eager to participate in group meetings where such things as child feeding, discipline, sleep, toilet training, social development, etc., are studied under the leadership of the nursery school staff.¹⁸ Here, again, the child, his needs and problems, and how the home and school can deal with them is the major concern.

Kellogg believes that children suffer when the nursery school tries to take any responsibility for a parent-education program; and that, even though most parents fail to understand the educational

¹⁷Jerome E. Leavitt, Nursery-Kindergarten Education, pp. 10-11, 83-93, McGraw-Hill Book Company: New York, 1958.

¹⁸Moustakas and Berson, op. cit., p. 106.

approach of the nursery school, it is impossible for the school to make them understand. She advocates that home and the school, therefore, ought to operate in separate spheres. In the nursery schools, according to Kellogg, "the children should always come first, and they cannot when parents' problems and worries get equal consideration."¹⁹

Read, on the other hand, recognizes the fact that parents may find it hard to accept the experience of having the child enter nursery school, may resent the teacher's influence with the child, or may feel guilty about the "mistakes" they have made in child-rearing. She therefore considers that one of the teachers' goals is to help the parent gain confidence in himself.²⁰

Moore and Richards also are aware of the importance of the parents' feelings about their children's attendance at nursery school. They approach home-school relationships from the point of view of achieving the best possible educative experience for the child through mutual understanding.²¹ Here, again, the effect of parental feelings on the quality of the family life is ignored. However, they do recommend that parents' meetings be planned to "increase their feelings of confidence and ability to solve their own problems."²²

¹⁹Kellogg, op. cit., pp. 318-319.

²⁰Read, op. cit., pp. 240-248.

²¹Sally Beth Moore and Phyllis Richards, Teaching in the Nursery School, pp. 299-302, Harper and Brothers: New York, 1959.

²²Ibid., p. 364

It seems to this writer that there is a definite trend among pre-school educators to recognize the feelings of parents regarding their child's enrollment in nursery school. Yet these feelings are viewed as they affect the child and the child-centered nursery school, and not as they affect the total family life. As early as 1928 the authors of the Twenty-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education wrote, "A less spectacular consideration of childhood in its relation to family life and a shifting of the child as a center to the home and family would be a wholesome change in the present situation."²³

This shift has not yet been made. Notable exceptions were the nursery schools operated by the Home Economics Divisions of Michigan State College, Pennsylvania State College, and Iowa State College. In a true sense, these were not laboratory nursery schools, since they were operated for veteran students and their families. An Iowa State College staff member summarizes their benefits in this manner, "I consider the most outstanding contribution to the program to be the improvement of the family life of the patrons of the school by (1) constructive play experiences offered children under supervision, (2) an increase in parent's understanding of child behavior, (3) an increase in parents' security as parents, and (4) the relieving of home tensions that arise when young children must play in too limited

²³"Pre-School and Parental Education", Twenty-eighth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Vol. 14, 804, Public School Publishing Company: Bloomington, Illinois, 1929.

space."²⁴

Even when laboratory nursery schools are willing to change from a "child-centered" to a "family-centered" program, and when the proper administrative officials are convinced that there is value in such a shift, there still is considerable difficulty in putting such an ideal into effect. In order to bridge the hiatus between the theory of a "family-centered" nursery school program and actual practice, this writer found the following practices valuable: (1) to keep in mind the concept of the family as the prime educator of the child, fully realizing that the nursery school's contribution to the improvement of family life is only one factor in an exceedingly complex situation;²⁵ (2) to plan each nursery school activity, not only with a goal for the children in mind, but also to think through the possible effect of the activity on the families of the children. This practice tends to keep family values in the foreground of the planning.

The following chapter will include a laboratory nursery school program planned to take into account both the families and the children.

²⁴V. Messenger, "Veteran's Families Go to School", Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 42, 433-434, American Home Economics Association, Washington: D. C., 1950.

²⁵Daniel Miller and Guy Swanson, The Changing American Parent, p. 202, John Wiley and Sons, Inc.: New York, 1958.

CHAPTER IV

THE FAMILY-CENTERED NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM

The family-centered nursery school program is one which is cognizant of the feelings and needs, not only of the nursery school child, but also of the other family members. In 1958, the Department of Child Development and Family Relations at South Dakota State College established a family-centered program by: (1) the inauguration of two separate sections of nursery school children, each group enrolled for two half-day sessions a week, (2) the planning and constant evaluation of the daily nursery school activities in terms of the resultant family values, (3) the encouragement and strengthening of positive feelings of the parent toward the child in the day-to-day informal parent-teacher contacts as well as in the more formal contacts such as individual conferences, and (4) the orientation of parents' meetings to the exploration of their own feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and practices in regard to family living, and the reinforcement of their knowledge and understanding in regard to themselves and their families.

Implications of the Two-Day Program

There are certain implications of the two-day program for the parents and for the child. First of all, the two day program implies that the family is the prime educator of the child. There is evidence that some parents feel guilty of shirking their duty as prime educator

of the child when he is enrolled in a five-day nursery school program. (See Chapter V p. 55) This feeling of guilt is alleviated in the two-day program, and the mother is better able to rationalize her need for personal growth and her interests other than child-rearing. She is also able to resolve her need to give special time and attention to younger children in the family. The two-day program makes it easier to recognize and accept the necessity of granting the child his independence. The gradual enlargement of the child's horizon is a gentle preparation for the emotional weaning necessary when the child is ready for public school. Quite frequently, the physical chore of getting the child to the nursery school is easier in a two-day than in a five-day program, particularly when there are other children in the family.

The two-day program heightens the child's interest and eagerness in coming to school, whereas the five-day program, at times, interferes with the child's other interests at home or makes him feel he might be missing out on some family activities.

The fatigue experienced by a pre-school child toward the end of a five-day week at nursery school evokes an increase of behavior difficulties at home as well as at school. Family life is not at its best when parents have to deal with a cross, exhausted child. This fatigue is not as likely to occur when the child is enrolled for only two mornings a week.

Implications of the Type of Planning Done

The purpose of carefully thinking of and planning each nursery school activity in terms of the resultant family value is to keep the teacher always aware of the fact that each child is a member of a family. In a family-centered program this awareness permeates the teacher's whole outlook and influences her constantly as she interacts with the children. There is then present an intangible quality of feeling which helps the child to adjust more smoothly to his enlarged social environment, the school.

Implications of Casual Parent-Teacher Contacts

It appears that when parents have feelings of inadequacy regarding their child-rearing practices, interpersonal tensions may result which have a negative influence on family life.²⁶ In the family-centered nursery school the teacher, who is less emotionally involved with the children than are the parents, attempts in her contacts with the parents to emphasize the positive aspects of the children's behavior and personalities. In any informal contacts of the staff with the parents, a conscious effort is made to build parental confidence. The reports of the morning at nursery school, which are sent home with the children daily, also carry this positive emphasis. This does not imply that the staff is unrealistic concerning the children, but rather that an attempt is made to focus attention on

²⁶Owen Morgan, "A Philosophy For Family Life Education", Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, Vol. 5, No. 2, 81-82, The Merrill-Palmer School: Detroit, Michigan, 1959.

desirable characteristics and accomplishments instead of on negative aspects of behavior or personality. This is believed to be one way of aiding parents to strengthen their self concepts as adequate fathers and mothers, and to create the kind of atmosphere which will, as Morgan expresses it, "enable parents to sense their own potential adequacy for living their parenthood role."²⁷

Implications of the Parents' Meetings

Parents' meetings which are oriented to the exploration of the parents' own feelings, attitudes, beliefs and practices regarding child-rearing imply that a knowledge of techniques and methods is not as important as other factors in successful child-rearing. LeMasters, in attempting to analyze the reasons for the difficulties which parents have in dealing with their children, notes that lack of knowledge of "correct" practices is not the cause of the trouble since parents seem to have adequate information on good child-rearing practices. He suggests that personal problems, social pressures, marital conflict, the nature of the children, high standards, and economic pressures are the factors which keep parents from putting into practice what they know about child-rearing.²⁸ Thus, it follows that the parents' meetings of the family-centered nursery school are planned to help parents understand and accept their own feelings toward themselves,

²⁷ Ibid., p.

²⁸ E. E. LeMasters, Modern Courtship and Marriage, pp. 549-553, The Macmillan Company: New York, 1957.

their marriage partners, and their children. LeMasters states this philosophy very well when he says, "The major job in helping parents will have an indirect focus: helping them understand themselves, helping them resolve marital problems, reducing societal pressures and strains, etc."²⁹ This is a departure from the usual parents' meeting which Moustakas and Berson say focuses the parents' attention on "learning about child feeding, discipline, sleep, cleanliness training, toilet training, language development, social development, and motor development. . . ."³⁰

The Program

In presenting the program for a family-centered nursery school, no description of physical facilities, equipment, play materials, teaching aids, or techniques of play supervision will be attempted. This study is primarily written for professional readers who are well acquainted with such details and their variations.

The plan for the nursery school curriculum for three quarters, each consisting of a ten-week period, is outlined briefly in this paper. Three aspects are included: (1) the activities in which the child may participate, (2) the goals that the child can be hoped to achieve through his participation, and (3) the values which could

²⁹Ibid., p. 553.

³⁰Clark E. Moustakas and Minnie Berson, The Nursery School and Child Care Center, p. 106, Whiteside, Inc. and William Morrow and Company: New York, 1955.

conceivably result to the family. It will readily be noted that the distinctive feature of this plan is not the nature of the activities themselves, but the fact that an effort has been made to assess their possible effect upon the total family life. The implications of such planning were mentioned earlier in this chapter.

In order to interpret the program plan presented in the following pages, certain persistent factors will be identified and elaborated, and certain terms must be defined.

It must be understood that the daily routine is very flexible. The typical day at nursery school includes nurse's inspection, free indoor play, "sit - drink - listen - talk" time, free outdoor play, toileting and washing, rest period, and mealtime.

Free indoor play consists of making available a wide variety of play materials from which the child may choose as his interest indicates. These materials include large and small blocks, water paints, clay, paste, collage materials, dolls and housekeeping equipment, crayons, scissors, puzzles, sand, toy cars and animals, soap paint, finger paint, etc. Musical instruments and books are also available at any time.

"Sit - drink - listen - talk" time, which will be referred to hereafter as "circle time", is a period of ten to fifteen minutes when the whole group is brought together for a drink of juice, conversation, simple games, meeting a visitor, hearing an instrument, or a similar activity.

Outdoor free play again gives the children opportunity to choose their activities. Tricycles, wagons, slides, swings, jungle bars, see-saws, sand, large building blocks, etc., are provided. The teachers and college students offer a minimum of direction; they give suggestions only when it is necessary for the children's safety or for the improvement of their social functioning.

The goals which are enunciated in the program plan are considered to be long-range objectives. Each activity is expected to accomplish some progress toward the specific goal mentioned; but since the objective is never completely achieved, it is carried forward as a persistent factor each week after the initial emphasis. This is true for the children's goals, and for the anticipated values resulting to the family.

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
First Week. Health inspection.	To think of the nurse as a friend and an aid to the family in maintaining good health.	Stimulation of family conversation through extending the child's range of experience.
Free play.	To explore play materials in a new setting and to feel free in using them.	Widening of the circle of friendship to include members of other nursery school families.
Midmorning juice served to the group gathered in a large circle.	To learn to wait his turn.	Providing extra time for the mother to spend with other children at home.
Outdoor play.	To learn to taste a new thing served in a new way.	Lessening the necessity for mother's help in washing, toileting, dressing.
Toilet, wash, rest.	To learn self help in dressing to go outdoors.	Providing extra time for the mother to spend on activities for her personal development and enjoyment.
	To learn that self help in washing and toileting can be enjoyable.	
	To learn to accept help from an adult other than his parents.	
	To extend his trust in his parents to the adults in charge at school.	
Mealtime.	To learn to serve himself at mealtime.	

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

25

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Second Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Circle time juice served with conversation about names of pupils and about their families.	To learn the names of the other children.	Increased understanding of the importance of families.
	To feel the importance of his own family.	Increased respect of the nursery school child for the rights of other family members.
Emphasis in all phases of the program to "Leave things in good condition for the next person."	To feel respect for the rights of others at home and at school.	
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Third Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Circle time conversation about parades.	To learn to listen while others speak.	Introduction of new songs and games to the family by the nursery school member; thus aiding the family with recreational resources.
Clapping rhythm to the song, "I Can Play on the Big, Bass Drum."	To learn the satisfaction of cooperative effort through a rhythm experience.	
Playing "I'm a Funny Jumping Jack."		
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Fourth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.	To increase his ability to play cooperatively.	Nursery school family member contributes more toward keeping things in place in the home.
Midmorning juice.	To assume increasing responsibility for putting away play materials after using them.	Nursery school child contributes interesting items to the family conversation.
Nature study.	To become more aware of the world about us.	
Setting up a science table display of vegetables which are commonly found in the home. Examination of this display with a magnifying glass as the children indicate interest.	To learn simple science facts.	
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Fifth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Soap painting and clay made available.	To become acquainted with clay and soap paint as play materials.	Provision of outlets for the nursery school family member's feelings and tensions, through the medium of clay and soap paint.
Midmorning juice.	To learn an acceptable way of being messy.	Increased enjoyment of Halloween as it is celebrated in this community.
Conversation about Halloween pictures and masks which are hung in conspicuous places.	To be prepared for the way Halloween is celebrated in the community.	Help in preparing the young family members for the costumed visitors who will be calling at the home.
Conversation about what happens at home on Halloween.	To feel free in various types of dramatic play and in group participation.	
Music and dramatic play about Halloween.		
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Sixth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play including experimentation with drums and bells which are made available.	<p>To increase sound sensitivity.</p> <p>To experiment with producing various sounds with drums and bells.</p>	<p>Growing interest in music as a source of family pleasure through participation of all family members.</p>
Hearing a flannel board story as a group.	<p>To learn the need to keep in such a position in the group that he does not interfere with others' enjoyment of the groups' activity.</p>	<p>Stimulation of the family's interest in reading and story telling as activities to be enjoyed as a family group.</p>
Participation of children in story telling.	<p>To increase his imaginative abilities.</p>	<p>Increased awareness in the nursery school child that when he is a part of the family group he must not interfere with another family member's enjoyment of a common object of interest, such as a television program.</p>
Outdoor play.	<p>To respect the rights of others on the outdoor equipment by learning to wait his turn without pushing.</p>	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Seventh Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play including fingerpainting.	To become more adept at cooperative play.	Improved relationship of the nursery school child with other family members.
Midmorning juice.	To enjoy a socially acceptable way of getting messy and cleaning up again.	Material for family recreation through the learning of new games and songs at school, which also can be used at home.
Playing singing games which provide an opportunity for dramatization.	To learn to enter into very simple group games with a feeling of confidence.	
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.	To learn to relax after hard play.	
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
<p>Eighth Week.</p> <p>Health inspection.</p> <p>Free play.</p> <p>Midmorning juice.</p> <p>Conversation about traffic signs and safety.</p> <p>Conversation about Thanksgiving as it is celebrated by various families.</p> <p>Outdoor play.</p> <p>Toilet, wash, rest.</p> <p>Mealtime.</p>	<p>To gain self-confidence by taking his turn serving the juice.</p> <p>To become increasingly responsible for his own safety.</p> <p>To begin to understand the significance of Thanksgiving.</p>	<p>Increased confidence and willingness in the nursery school child to do small tasks for the family.</p> <p>It should be easier for the family to go on short excursions as the nursery school member becomes more responsible for his own safety.</p> <p>Increased enjoyment of the family's own way of celebrating Thanksgiving due to the better understanding of its nursery school member.</p>

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

32

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Ninth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Conversation about turkey pictures.	To learn some facts about the turkey as an interesting bird and a source of food.	Interesting contribution to the family conversation by the nursery school member.
Preparation for a trip to the poultry farm with emphasis on the need to obey safety rules.	To put into practice some simple traffic safety rules.	Increased responsibility of the nursery school family member in matters of his own safety.
Trip to the turkey farm.	To gain first hand acquaintance with turkeys.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Fall Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Tenth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Conversation about evergreen trees, comparing them with those that have lost their leaves.	To increase his awareness of the changing beauties of nature.	Enrichment of family experiences through the increased sensitivity of the nursery school member to the world about him.
Hearing stories about how different animals' families spend the winter.	To learn some interesting nature facts.	Stimulation of such family group activity as bird watching through development of interest of the nursery school family member.
Putting out crumbs and seeds for the birds who stay here all winter.	To assume some responsibility for the preservation of wild life.	
	To become more efficient in putting on his outdoor clothes.	
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term

Resultant Family Values

Activities

Child's Goals

First Week.

Health inspection.

Free play.

Midmorning juice.

Circle time conversation about Christmas in the family.

Increased understanding of differences in the way families do things: acceptance of this difference.

To learn to listen to what others have to tell.

To contribute to the conversation of the group.

Outdoor play.

To appreciate that all families do not do things in the same way.

Toilet, wash, rest.

Mealtime.

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Second Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Introduction of feeding station for squirrels, and preparation for feeding them by shelling corn and putting out apple peeling.	To learn to be kind to the animals and birds that are here in winter.	Growing awareness of the nursery school child as a family member who can contribute to the expansion of family interests.
Midmorning juice.	To realize that each group member has to do his part so that all may have the enjoyment of watching the squirrel.	Increased cooperation of the nursery school family member to place family goals above his own.
Talking about what to do when a squirrel comes to the feeding station.	To appreciate various kinds of natural beauty. (Sunflowers, ears of dry corn, squirrels.)	
Conversation about squirrels.		
Learning about a head of sunflower seeds through direct examination.		
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Third Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Conversation about Indians, their arts and crafts.	To appreciate the positive contributions of Indians to art and music.	Help to the family as it tries to give its members a realistic concept of various racial groups in our society.
Midmorning juice.	To identify himself with Indians in a sympathetic way.	
Introduction of a visitor who shows examples of Indian beadwork and the weaving loom.	To enjoy a rhythm experience.	
Free interpretive "Indian dancing" after listening to a typical Indian rhythm.		
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Fourth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Reading and telling of stories.	To get acquainted with a wider variety of books and stories.	Stimulation of reading as a family activity.
Fingerpainting.	To learn how to handle books properly.	Aid in caring for the family's books and magazines.
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.	To appreciate and enjoy poetry.	Provision of a socially acceptable outlet for the child's desire to be messy.
Mealtime.	To appreciate the rights of others in the group through sharing books and staying in place in the group.	
	To learn to feel comfortable about being messy and then being able to clean up.	

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

38

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Fifth Week.		
Health inspection.	To enjoy coming to school with clean hands.	Increased responsibility of the nursery school family member in maintaining good standards of cleanliness of his own person.
Free play, which includes the opportunity to saw wood, pound nails and drill holes.	To get acquainted with woodworking as a creative activity and a release for energy.	
Midmorning juice.	To experience pleasure in the feel of water.	Clarification of family roles through the identification of boys with "men's work".
Water play with bottles, cans, "boats" in a large tub.	To learn simple science facts concerning air in water and the properties of water such as buoyancy.	Increased responsibility of the nursery school family member in wiping up his "spills", and in learning where water play is acceptable and where it is not.
Experimenting with sinking and floating objects.	To learn to pass food at the table without spilling.	
Outdoor play.		Lessening the need of parents to assist the nursery school member as he shares in the family mealtime.
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Sixth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play, including collage making with scraps of material, paper, old postcards, string, yarn, and beads set up on a low table.	To learn techniques of entering a group. To realize that he must have something to contribute to be a member of a group.	Growing interest and developing ability of the child in the type of play materials that are relatively easy to provide at home.
Block play with various types of small blocks.	To enjoy the feel of many different materials.	Relieving the mother or other family members of the necessity to pick up after the nursery school member, through his learning of his responsibility in this regard.
Midmorning juice.	To appreciate the color and design of ordinary things.	
Outdoor play.	To learn concepts of weight, size, shape, distance, and number.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.	To learn to enjoy making the area where he plays neat after he is through playing.	

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Seventh Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Going for a walk across the campus to discover winter beauty.	To become more aware of nature's changing beauty.	Enrichment of family life by helping the child to be more observant and appreciative of things about him, and to be able to share them with other family members.
Midmorning juice.	To learn to leave that beauty undisturbed for others.	
Conversation about safety rules, and about the things seen on the excursion.	To practice safety rules in crossing the street.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
<p>Eighth Week.</p> <p>Health inspection.</p> <p>Free play including easel painting, crayon work, and sponge painting.</p> <p>Midmorning juice.</p> <p>Outdoor play in the snow.</p> <p>Toilet, wash, rest.</p> <p>Mealtime.</p>	<p>To discover pleasure in working with color and design in a social situation.</p> <p>To experiment with various media of self expression.</p> <p>To enjoy active outdoor play even in winter.</p> <p>To learn to judge the correct amount of clothing to wear in severe weather.</p> <p>To learn to sweep snow off clothing before coming in.</p> <p>To learn to care for outdoor clothing that has been wet by snow.</p>	<p>Improvement in the ability of nursery school family member to share play materials with siblings.</p> <p>Lightening of the mother's work by increased responsibility of nursery school family member in dressing to go outdoors, caring for his wet mittens, and brushing off snow before coming in.</p>

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Resultant Family Values

Child's Goals

Activities

Ninth Week.

Health inspection.

Free play.

Learning a new song which has possibilities for dramatization.

"Oh, Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?"

"Galloping Ponies."

Midmorning juice.

Visiting the music department to see percussion instruments.

Toilet, wash, rest.

Mealtime.

Acquaintance with new materials to be used in family recreation and singing.

More understanding and appreciation in the nursery school child of the musical efforts of other family members.

To get emotional satisfaction through the use of fantasy.

To be willing to contribute to group experience both by singing and dramatizing a song.

To experience the joy of singing with others.

To become acquainted with the variety of tone, pitch, rhythm possible in percussion instruments.

Nursery School Activities for the Winter Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Tenth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Examining seeds, bulbs, tubers.	To learn the responsibilities of the individual in a group situation.	Increased cooperation from the nursery school child in caring for family plantings and in being appreciative of the results.
Planting quick growing seeds in small cups to take home and observe as it sprouts.	To get firsthand experience with details of plants and seeds.	
Midmorning juice.	To appreciate the work that goes into gardening.	Introduction of a conversation piece to the family by the nursery school member (the planted seed).
Hearing record "Carrot Seed".	To enjoy the beauty of growing things.	A sharing of the activity of watching the growth of the seeds.
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term

44

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
First Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Group conversation about Easter as celebrated by various families.	To gain experience in listening to what others have to tell and in contributing to conversation in a group.	Nursery school family member increases his appreciation of his own family's traditions, and learns to accept any difference of his family from other families.
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		Clarification and acceptance of the roles of the other family members by the nursery school child.

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

45

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Second Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Hearing a story about "litter bugs."	To learn individual and group responsibility in keeping yard and street neat.	Increased feeling of group responsibility within the family.
Cleaning up play yard.	To learn to work together.	Increased family safety through the child's better knowledge of safe practices with fire.
Burning the sticks picked up.	To learn some simple rules about fire.	
Conversation about fire safety rules.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Third Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
planting flowers in the play yard.	To gain an appreciation of the effort involved in having a beautiful yard.	Improved ease for families to have plantings at home.
Midmorning juice.		
Conversation about caring for flowers.	To become more observant and appreciative of nature.	Help in maintaining good neighborhood relationships through the understanding and interest of the nursery school child.
Conversation about signs of spring.	To appreciate how fathers and mothers plan and care for their homes and families.	Increased understanding of mother and father roles.
Outdoor play.		
Watching robins and mourning-doves build nests.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Fourth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.	To increase experience in cooperative play.	Increased ability of the nursery school child to cooperate with other family members in work or play.
Midmorning juice.	To learn to share play equipment with others.	Development of responsibility in nursery school member which makes him more dependable in small tasks at home.
Outdoor play.		
Caring for plantings.	To learn to take responsibility for a small task which must be done each day. (Watering plantings.)	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Fifth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Conversation about the work fathers do.	To become increasingly aware of the distinct roles of men and women in our society.	Clarification of the father role in the family.
Trip to the post office.		
Caring for plantings.	To develop an appreciation of the many workers who contribute to our well being.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Sixth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play including collage making, sponge painting, woodworking.	To enjoy the aesthetic pleasure of painting and collage making.	Awareness that many ordinary materials and "scraps" in the home can be used in a creative way to offer enjoyment to the young members of the family.
Outdoor play.	To experience the satisfaction of creativity.	
Midmorning juice.	To gain in self-confidence.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Seventh Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play, indoor and out.	To learn to enjoy a long walk.	Increased ability of the nursery school family member to be responsible for his own safety.
Conversation about traffic safety rules.	To be observant and to find interesting things to talk about on the walk.	Enrichment of family conversation and interests through the experiences that the nursery school child can tell about.
Midmorning juice.	To learn safety rules as they apply to individuals and to groups.	
Visit to the poultry farm to see baby chicks.	To learn to cooperate in the group so that each person can see the object of the trip.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

51

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Eighth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Music: Playing rhythm instruments, singing and dancing.	To learn the satisfaction that can come through group participation in very simple games and music.	Material is provided for recreation and music in the family group.
Playing musical games.	To enjoy moving his body rhythmically to music.	Encouragement of story-telling as a family activity.
"I'm A Little Teapot."	To develop ability to use his imagination.	
"Looby Loo."	To learn to tell a story.	
Making up stories from pictures.		
Outdoor play.		
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

52

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Ninth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.		
Midmorning juice.		
Conversation about farm babies and how their mothers care for them.	To learn caution without being fearful.	Increased appreciation and understanding of the mother role in the family.
Outdoor play.	To learn how to make friendly gestures to others.	through observation of animal mothers and their young.
Trip to the farm to see baby pigs and lambs.	To enjoy farm animals.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

Nursery School Activities for the Spring Term (continued)

Activities	Child's Goals	Resultant Family Values
Tenth Week.		
Health inspection.		
Free play.	To enjoy a wide variety of activities.	Increased awareness of the concept of one world.
Midmorning juice.		
Conversation about different languages, and about pictures of people from other lands.	To learn that other languages and cultures exist.	Growing feelings of adequacy and confidence in the knowledge that each family has a positive contribution to make to American society.
Hearing French, German, and Scandinavian songs.	To learn an appreciation and tolerance of people who speak, look, and act differently.	
Seeing examples of art objects made in France, Germany and Norway.	To identify sympathetically with others.	
Toilet, wash, rest.		
Mealtime.		

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

After the family-centered program had been in effect for a period of two college quarters, it was deemed advisable by the staff of the Department of Child Development and Family Relations to evaluate the plan in terms of the goals that had been formulated. The staff decided that the parents themselves were the people best qualified to assess the effect of the family-centered nursery school upon total family life. Therefore, the writer devised an instrument to ascertain the effectiveness of the program.

The questionnaire was made up of four parts. Part I, consisting of twenty-one true-false items, was concerned with the feelings and wishes of the mothers in regard to the ²two-day program as contrasted with the five-day program. The items were designed not only to secure data on the preferred length of the program, but also to discover the reasons for the preference.

Part II consisted of twenty-five statements of possible effects upon the home of having the child attend nursery school. Both negative and positive effects were included in the list, which the parents were asked to check in reference to their family.

The true-false items comprising Part III were concerned with the influence which the parents' meetings had had on the parents' feelings of confidence and adequacy, and on their understanding of themselves and their families. An effort was also made to determine if the parents preferred exploration and discussion of their own feelings, or if they

thought specific information on problems of child-rearing such as thumbsucking or temper tantrums would be more valuable.

Opportunity was provided in Part IV for free response to the question of whether the family's association with the nursery school had had any apparent effect on the quality of the family life, either favorable or un-favorable.

Twenty-four questionnaires were sent to the parents to be answered anonymously and returned by mail. There was 100% response.

Part I of the questionnaire was answered by the mothers. Two thirds of them preferred two half-days a week at nursery school for their children. Almost half (42%) of the mothers indicated they would feel that they were shirking their maternal duty if they sent their pre-school children from home five mornings a week. A slightly higher percentage (45%) felt that most children under five years of age should not be away from their homes as many as five mornings a week. Half of the mothers felt they would miss too much of their children's growing up if they were enrolled in a five-day program. A large number (42%) felt that their children would get too tired physically from a five-day school. The possibility that their children might be bored with school if they attended nursery school every day was indicated by 42% of the mothers.

Although five of the twenty-four mothers were employed outside the home, only two of the five indicated a preference for a five-day program. A possible explanation for this was found in the comment

written by one mother stating, "I feel my child needs more contact with other members of the family than would be possible under the five-day program". Another explanation might be found in the high percentage who felt that their children might get too tired from daily sessions.

On the other hand, 25% of the mothers said they would like five half-days per week better than two. The reasons most often given were that they felt their children forgot too much between the two sessions, would develop better social skills if more time were spent at school, and could get better acquainted with the other children and the teachers if the school had daily sessions. Variations of daily routine, ability to get more work done at home and convenience in getting a baby sitter were not considered important factors in these mothers' preference for the five-day program.

The findings of Part I indicate that the majority of parents prefer a two-day a week schedule for their children though they differ in their reasons for their preference.

In tabulating Part II, it was found that all of the parents indicated there had been certain definite changes in the family life due to their children's enrollment at nursery school. The median number of changes in the homes, as indicated by the check list, was twelve. Examples of the items on the check list were "Gets along better with brothers, sisters, and playmates" and "Is more difficult to manage."

All of the parents indicated that the nursery school child contributed more interestingly to family conversation. It was found that 75% of the parents felt their children had become more independent in

such things as dressing themselves, washing, toileting, and eating, thus relieving the mother of some routine chores. The same number also felt their children showed more interest in music at home, and almost as many (66 2/3%) stated that other family members had learned new songs and games from the nursery school child. It was indicated by 70% of the parents that the other family members listened more attentively to what the nursery school child had to say. This implied that there was some change in his status within the family group. Half of the parents felt that there had been a definite improvement in the child's ability to get along with his brothers and sisters. The child's increased willingness to try new foods at home was noted by 54% of the families. Children of 42% of the families had asked that their parents get some of the same play materials to use at home that they were using at school. The materials most often mentioned were paints for easel paintings.

There were very few negative effects of a child's attendance at nursery school as observed by the parents. Those most often checked on the questionnaire were "Wants more adult attention" (20%) and "Seems to feel more competitive" (16%).

In summarizing the data from Part II, the writer found that the parents felt there had been certain definite changes in the nursery school child's interaction with other family members as a result of his experiences at school; that his enrollment had had beneficial results for the family.

Part III of the questionnaire indicated that 70% of the parents

had been helped to accept their feelings, both good and bad, for their families. The same number stated that their parental morale had improved, and that they had an increased awareness of the importance of good family relationships as a result of attendance at the meetings. Over half of them (58%) stated that they were strengthened in their feelings of adequacy as parents of their particular family. A relatively small number (16%) thought that parents' meetings would be more helpful to them if they dealt more specifically with problems such as thumbsucking, nailbiting, masturbation, and headknocking.

Among the 79% of the parents who expressed themselves by free response in Part IV, there was general agreement that association with the nursery school had had a favorable effect on family living. The positive aspects of this relationship most often mentioned were the increased understanding of the child's need for independence, and the acceptance of the child by the other family members as an emerging individual personality. Also mentioned was the enrichment of family experience by the child's expanded interests and growing awareness of the things about him. One parent summed up the influence of parents' meetings thus: "I've become more decisive in dealing with the children and don't worry so much about my methods now. I come away from the meetings with a different attitude."

In summary, the findings of Part III and IV illustrated that the parents' program had been effective in aiding parents to reinforce their understandings and strengths in regard to themselves and their families.

In conclusion, the total findings of the instrument have shown that the family-centered nursery school program has been successful in aiding families to enrich and strengthen their total family life.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An attempt has been made in this paper to identify and describe the major emphasis of pre-school education as carried on in laboratory nursery schools associated with Home Economics over the period of years since its early beginnings until the present time. It has been shown that even though Home Economics professes to be concerned with improving the quality of the total family life, it has been difficult to put this concern into actual practice in laboratory nursery schools, and consequently these schools tend to remain child-centered rather than family-centered.

The writer has designed and presented a nursery school program which endeavors to take into account certain related needs of the whole family of the enrolled child. The program was put into effect in the laboratory nursery school of South Dakota State College for a period of three college quarters. The third quarter after the plan's inception, it was evaluated.

The design for a family-centered program differs from the traditional child-centered program in the length of time spent in school each week. The South Dakota State College program was conducted on the basis of two half-days per week for each child. Two sections, each with twelve children enrolled, made it possible, incidentally, to provide a nursery school experience for the children of twice as many families as the usual five-day program. The reason for planning only two half-day sessions for each child was the belief that many

parents have feelings of guilt at sending a small child away from home every morning; that they feel they are shirking their parental duties. It was also hypothesized that parents have difficulty reconciling their wish for a social experience for the child with their desire to keep him at home so that they would "not miss so much of his growing up". Furthermore, it was thought that parents, as well as children, frequently encounter great difficulty in separation from each other when the child enters school on a five-day basis. It seems the tragic end of an era to some mothers, and even though they want their child to grow up, it is a painful experience to turn over the matter of his guidance to someone else.

In evaluating the data from the questionnaire which was answered by the parents, it was found that some of these difficulties were present in the majority of the parents who had children enrolled in the South Dakota State College nursery school in the 1958-59 school year. The parents also indicated that these feelings were alleviated in a two-day program. Thus, in the matter of consideration for parental feelings, it can be concluded that the program design presented in this study is an improvement over the traditional five-day program.

Another distinctive feature of the family-centered program is to be found in the curriculum itself. Free play is provided as in any laboratory nursery school, but this activity is constantly evaluated in terms of its effect on the family. Each child is continually recognized as a member of a family, rather than as an isolated entity with whom the teacher deals for a certain number of hours each day.

The structured part of the program was planned to have definitely related family values. That these benefits actually do result was borne out by the parents' evaluation. It should be pointed out that such values are not restricted to this program, but the writer believes they are more likely to be present when there has been definite planning for them. Conversely, it ought to be easier to prevent the undesirable effects that the child's nursery school experience may have upon the home, if those effects have been anticipated. Thus it may be concluded that this type of planning for the weekly activities relates the nursery school curriculum more closely to the home than does the traditional program plan.

Because there seems to be a tendency in our modern culture to blame parents for the failures and faults of the child, the writer hypothesized that many parents feel very inadequate in their parental role. In casual contact with them, one becomes aware of the anxiety that parents have regarding their own child-rearing abilities. Included in the family-centered nursery school program is a definite plan to try to make the parents feel more adequate in their role. This is accomplished by stressing the positive aspect of their child's personality, behavior, and accomplishment. This is done whenever there is an occasion for casual contact of staff and parents, as well as in the daily reports sent home to parents. There is full recognition that people who send their children to a laboratory nursery school are very concerned about their children's well-being and are serious in their child-rearing efforts. Any effort of the staff to make them feel more

adequate in their parental role should have a salutary effect upon their families. Perhaps some nursery school teachers in any program will intuitively practice this positive approach, but when the staff and the student teachers plan to make a concerted effort to maintain such an attitude in relation to the parents, it is more likely to be present and to result in strengthening the parents' feelings of adequacy.

A fourth unique aspect of the family-centered program at the South Dakota State College nursery school is the type of monthly parents' meeting. The staff plans the meetings to help parents face and accept their feelings toward themselves, their mates, and their children, rather than to destroy the parents' confidence in themselves by posing as experts who could give formulas for dealing with specific behavior problems. An effort is made to help them understand why they often find it difficult to put into practice what they already know about good child-rearing practices. The responses to the questionnaire indicated that the parents' meetings had been helpful in building morale and feelings of adequacy. An improvement over the usual type of parents' meeting was indicated by the parents' request that future meetings be continued with the same emphasis.

Using the criteria of Morgan to define a program as "family-centered" it may be concluded that the basic hypothesis of this study -- that the family-centered nursery school program is an improvement over the traditional "child-centered" program in accomplishing the goal of enriching and strengthening family life ---- is correct. Added weight

is given to this conclusion by the data collected from the parents' response to the questionnaire which they were asked to answer.

Certain limitations are inherent in this plan for a family-centered nursery school program. In the first place, it was planned with the particular setting of the South Dakota State College nursery school in mind. This implies that any findings would apply only to this particular setting. It is fairly certain that changes would have to be made if it were to be adapted to another situation.

It is entirely possible, too, that the announcement at the inauguration of the program that it was to be a two-day a week schedule, had the result of being selective of the patrons who applied for admission of their children to the school. Perhaps only those who preferred a two-day program even applied. If this is true, generalizations cannot be made for any except the particular families involved in this program.

Another limitation of the study is the fact that information of the practices of other laboratory nursery schools had to be gleaned largely from the literature on the subject rather than from first hand observation of such schools in action. In many instances, this required rather subjective judgements as to shades of meaning. Time and funds for first-hand observation might have resulted in different conclusions as to basic emphases in some programs.

Although the education of student teachers is an integral part of a laboratory nursery school, this aspect of the program has not been discussed in this study. Setting up student goals and planning the re-

source materials and teaching techniques which would give the student teachers an understanding of the philosophy of a family-centered program would constitute another problem of considerable proportions. Careful analysis of the differing professional needs of the majors and the non-majors in Child Development would be needed. The methodology employed would of necessity also be concerned with preparation of the student teachers for parenthood. It appears to the writer that the role of the student teacher in the family-centered program would constitute a fertile field for another study.

Since a limited number of families were involved in this work, and the study was of only one school year's duration, the writer recommends that the program be refined further, in accordance with suggestions from parents, staff, and other professional people, and that it again be put into effect and evaluated by the parents involved in the next term. Repeated refinement and evaluation over a period of years should result in more valid conclusions and make it possible to generalize for a greater population.

It seems that at the present time, many writers, particularly in the fields of sociology and education, believe that, beyond purely hereditary factors, the influence of the family on the children is rapidly decreasing; that we are caught in an era of "anti-familism". An organization which shows evidence of enriching and strengthening family life at a time when many disintegrating forces are exerted against the home appears well worth supporting. The laboratory nursery school with a family-centered program seems to qualify as such an agency.

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APPENDIX

Brookings, S. Dak.
March 2, 1959

Dear Parent,

Will you take a short time from your busy schedule to fill out the enclosed form? We are attempting to determine how your child's enrollment in our Laboratory Nursery School has affected the total family. This information will be used to evaluate the nursery school program as it now stands and to make the changes that seem necessary to be of greater service to the families involved.

Your frank and honest opinions will be very useful to us. We will appreciate all helpful suggestions. It will not be necessary for you to sign your name.

Will you please mail your return promptly in the envelope provided?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Ruth K. Kranzler
Department of Child
Development and Family
Relations.

Survey Questionnaire - The Nursery

School-Home Relationship

PART I

Directions: Circle T if the statement is true as applied to you.

Circle F if the statement is false as applied to you.

- T F 1. I think that most children under five years of age should not be gone from their homes as much as five mornings a week.
- T F 2. I feel my child could get much more out of nursery school if he could attend five days a week instead of two.
- T F 3. I think I would sometimes feel I were neglecting my duties as a mother if I sent my three or four year old to nursery school five days a week.
- T F 4. I feel that sending my child to nursery school two mornings a week will make it easier for me to adjust to his being away every day when he enters kindergarten.
- T F 5. I think my child forgets too much between sessions when nursery school is only two days a week.
- T F 6. I think my child would get bored with nursery school activities if he were enrolled on a five-day basis.
- T F 7. I think it is difficult for my child to really get to know the other children when he is with them only two days a week.
- T F 8. I think it is difficult for the teachers to know and understand my child as well as they should, when they see him only two days a week.
- T F 9. I think it would be much more difficult to get my child to nursery school five mornings a week than two.
- T F 10. A five-day nursery school would be more convenient for our family because of baby sitting problems.
- T F 11. On some days my child enjoys staying home and playing with his own things instead of going to nursery school.
- T F 12. I think my child would resent missing out on some things the family does at home, if he had to be at nursery school every day.
- T F 13. I would prefer to have my child in nursery school five days a week so that I could get more work done at home.

PART I (continued)

- T F 14. I feel that my child could develop better social skills if he had opportunity to attend nursery school five days a week instead of two.
- T F 15. I would prefer to have my child in nursery school five days a week so I'd have more time to do the things I want to do.
- T F 16. I think my child would get too tired physically from a five-day nursery school program.
- T F 17. I am employed outside the home.
- T F 18. I would prefer to have my child in nursery school five days a week so that my routine would not vary so much from day to day.
- T F 19. I think I would miss too much of my child's growing up if he were at nursery school five mornings a week.
- T F 20. I enjoy having extra time for myself on the two mornings my child is in nursery school.
- T F 21. I think my other children need the extra attention I am able to give them when my three or four year old is at nursery school.

PART II

Directions: Put a check (✓) before the statements which apply to your child, at least partially as a result of attendance at nursery school.

- ___ 1. Has more interesting things to talk about to the family.
- ___ 2. Is more independent in such things as dressing himself, washing, toileting, etc.
- ___ 3. Expects to be entertained more.
- ___ 4. Wants more adult attention.
- ___ 5. Gets along better with brothers, sisters and playmates.
- ___ 6. Plays better by himself than before.
- ___ 7. Wants more help with everything he does.
- ___ 8. Is less shy of strangers.

PART II (continued)

- ___ 9. Is more difficult to manage.
- ___ 10. Gets along better with parents.
- ___ 11. Has developed new interest in some of his old playthings.
Specify _____
- ___ 12. Has asked for different things to play with at home.
Specify _____
- ___ 13. Seems more interested in music.
- ___ 14. Quarrels more with other family members.
- ___ 15. Seems more self-confident.
- ___ 16. Compares himself unfavorably with other nursery school children.
- ___ 17. Seems to have more difficulty sharing his playthings.
- ___ 18. Seems to feel more competitive.
- ___ 19. Has an increased consciousness of the need to "take turns".
- ___ 20. Is more inclined to leave his things for others to pick up.
- ___ 21. Other family members listen more attentively to what he has to say.
- ___ 22. More frequently calls attention to things in nature about him.
- ___ 23. Seems more aware of what other children think of him.
- ___ 24. Seems more willing to try new foods at home.
- ___ 25. Other family members have learned new songs and games from him.

PART III To be answered either by the parent who has attended the greatest number of parents' meetings or by both parents together.

Directions: Circle T if the statement is usually true when applied to you.
Circle F if the statement is usually false when applied to you.

PART III (continued)

- T F 1. I feel that the parents' meetings have been too theoretical in nature to have any real effect on the quality of our family's home life.
- T F 2. When I have been at a parents' meeting, I feel bad about having done so many things wrong in our family relationships.
- T F 3. It gives my morale a big boost to talk with other couples as we do at parents' meetings.
- T F 4. I have been helped to accept my feelings for my family, both good and bad, through our discussions at parents' meetings.
- T F 5. I feel that too few of the matters discussed at parents' meetings apply to our family.
- T F 6. I think I have a better understanding of the feelings of my (husband, wife) as a result of attending parents' meetings.
- T F 7. As a result of parents' meetings, I am strengthened in my feeling that what I do in my family is all right for my particular family.
- T F 8. Parents' meetings have made me more aware of the importance of good family relationships.
- T F 9. Parents' meetings have helped us to have better family life.
- T F 10. Parents' meetings should deal more specifically with problems like thumbsucking, head knocking, nose picking, nail biting, masturbation, etc.

PART IV

Directions: Underline your preference.

We prefer a (5 day, 2 day) per week nursery school program for our child.

Reason:

Has your association with the nursery school through parents' meetings, personal conferences, or your child's participation had any effect on the quality of your family life, either favorable or unfavorable? If so, would you please comment briefly?

TABLE I. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF ANSWERS
TO PART I OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Item	Number		No Answer	Percentage	
	True	False		True	False
1. I think that most children under five years of age should not be gone from their homes as much as five mornings a week.	11	12	2	45 5/6	50
2. I feel my child could get much more out of nursery school if he could attend five days a week instead of two.	7	15	2	29 1/6	62 1/2
3. I think I would sometimes feel I were neglecting my duties as a mother if I sent my three or four year old to nursery school five days a week.	10	14		41 2/3	58 1/3
4. I feel that sending my child to nursery school two mornings a week will make it easier for me to adjust to his being away every day when he enters kindergarten.	15	9		62 1/2	37 1/2
5. I think my child forgets too much between sessions when nursery school is only two days a week.	4	20		16 2/3	83 1/3
6. I think my child would get bored with nursery school activities if he were enrolled on a five-day basis.	10	12	2	41 2/3	50

TABLE I. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF ANSWERS
TO PART I OF QUESTIONNAIRE (CONTINUED)

Questionnaire Item	Number		No Answer	Percentage	
	True	False		True	False
7. I think it is difficult for my child to really get to know the other children when he is with them only two days a week.	8	16		33 1/3	66 2/3
8. I think it is difficult for the teachers to know and understand my child as well as they should, when they see him only two days a week.	7	16	1	29 1/6	66 2/3
9. I think it would be much more difficult to get my child to nursery school five mornings a week than two.	14	10		58 1/3	41 2/3
10. A five-day nursery school would be more convenient for our family because of baby sitting problems.	3	21		12 1/2	87 1/2
11. On some days my child enjoys staying home and playing with his own things instead of going to nursery school.	10	13	1	41 2/3	54 1/6
12. I think my child would resent missing out on some things the family does at home, if he had to be at nursery school every day.	9	14	1	37 1/2	58 1/3
13. I would prefer to have my child in nursery school five days a week so that I could get more work done at home.	2	22		8 1/3	91 2/3

TABLE I. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF ANSWERS
TO PART I OF QUESTIONNAIRE (CONTINUED)

Questionnaire Item	Number		No Answer	Percentage	
	True	False		True	False
14. I feel that my child could develop better social skills if he had opportunity to attend nursery school five days a week instead of two.	8	16		33 1/3	66 2/3
15. I would prefer to have my child in nursery school five days a week so I'd have more time to do the things I want to do.	2	22		8 1/3	91 2/3
16. I think my child would get too tired physically from a five-day nursery school program.	10	14		41 2/3	58 1/3
17. I am employed outside the home.	5	19		20 5/6	79 1/6
18. I would prefer to have my child in nursery school five days a week so that my routine would not vary so much from day to day.	2	22		8 1/3	91 2/3
19. I think I would miss too much of my child's growing up if he were at nursery school five mornings a week.	12	12		50	50
20. I enjoy having extra time for myself on the two mornings my child is in nursery school.	14	10		58 1/3	41 2/3
21. I think my other children need the extra attention I am able to give them when my three or four year old is at nursery school.	9	13	2	37 1/2	54 1/6

TABLE II. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF RESPONSES
TO PART II OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Item	Number Checking Item	Percentage Checking Item
1. Has more interesting things to talk about to the family.	24	100
2. Is more independent in such things as dressing himself, washing, toileting, etc.	18	75
3. Expects to be entertained more.	2	8 1/3
4. Wants more adult attention.	5	20 5/6
5. Gets along better with brothers, sisters and playmates.	12	50
6. Plays better by himself than before.	9	37 1/2
7. Wants more help with everything he does.	0	0
8. Is less shy of strangers.	10	41 2/3
9. Is more difficult to manage.	1	4 1/6
10. Gets along better with parents.	6	25
11. Has developed new interest in some of his old playthings.	7	29 1/6
12. Has asked for different things to play with at home.	10	41 2/3

TABLE II. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF RESPONSES
TO PART II OF QUESTIONNAIRE (CONTINUED)

Questionnaire Item	Number Checking Item	Percentage Checking Item
13. Seems more interested in music.	18	75
14. Quarrels more with other family members.	0	0
15. Seems more self-confident.	17	70 5/6
16. Compares himself unfavorably with other nursery school children.	1	4 1/6
17. Seems to have more difficulty sharing his playthings.	0	0
18. Seems to feel more competitive.	4	16 2/3
19. Has an increased consciousness of the need to "take turns".	11	45 5/6
20. Is more inclined to leave his things for others to pick up.	0	0
21. Other family members listen more attentively to what he has to say.	17	70 5/6
22. More frequently calls attention to things in nature about him.	11	45 5/6

TABLE II. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF RESPONSES
TO PART II OF QUESTIONNAIRE (CONTINUED)

Questionnaire Item	Number Checking Item	Percentage Checking Item
23. Seems more aware of what other children think of him.	4	16 2/3
24. Seems more willing to try new foods at home.	13	54 1/6
25. Other family members have learned new songs and games from him.	16	66 2/3

TABLE III. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF ANSWERS
TO PART III OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire Item	Number		No Answer	Percentage	
	True	False		True	False
1. I feel that the parents' meetings have been too theoretical in nature to have any real effect on the quality of our family's home life.	8	15	1	33 1/3	62 1/2
2. When I have been at a parents' meeting, I feel bad about having done so many things wrong in our family relationships.	1	23		4 1/6	95 5/6
3. It gives my moreale a big boost to talk with other couples as we do at parents' meetings.	17	7		70 5/6	29 1/6
4. I have been helped to accept my feelings for my family, both good and bad, through our discussions at parents' meetings.	17	7		70 5/6	29 1/6
5. I feel that too few of the matters discussed at parents' meetings apply to our family.	5	19		20 5/6	79 1/6
6. I think I have a better understanding of the feelings of my (husband, wife) as a result of attending parents' meetings.	9	13	2	37 1/2	54 1/6
7. As a result of parents' meetings, I am strengthened in my feeling that what I do in my family is all right for my particular family.	14	10		58 1/3	41 2/3

TABLE III. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF ANSWERS
TO PART III OF QUESTIONNAIRE (CONTINUED)

Questionnaire Item	Number		No Answer	Percentage	
	True	False		True	False
8. Parents' meetings have made me more aware of the importance of good family relationships.	17	6	1	70 5/6	25
9. Parents' meetings have helped us to have better family life.	9	12	3	37 1/2	50
10. Parents' meetings should deal more specifically with problems like thumbsucking, head knocking, nose picking, nail biting, masturbation, etc.	4	19	1	16 2/3	79 1/6

TABLE IV. NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE TABULATION OF
PART IV. INDICATING PARENTS PREFERENCE

Number and Percentage Preferring Two-Day Program	No Response	Number and Percentage Preferring Five-Day Program
16 66 2/3	2	6 25

TABLE V. REASONS GIVEN FOR PROGRAM LENGTH PREFERENCE

Two-Day Program Preference	Five-Day Program Preference
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two days provide adequate group experience. 2. Child enjoys staying home on some days. 3. Child doesn't need outside companionship every day. 4. Child avoids being over tired. 5. Child is with the family more. 6. Inconvenient to transport child to school every day. 7. Don't like the child gone every morning. 8. Like my daughter "helping" me cook, bake, clean, and feel these activities are worthwhile, too. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater influence on the child. 2. Child could get better acquainted with other children and teachers. 3. Missing a day wouldn't be so serious as in a two-day program. 4. More trouble to send the child two days a week than if it were a daily program. 5. Child enjoys two days so much that he would like more. 6. Child loses continuity of instruction in two-day program. 7. Too much lapse of time in the two-day program.

TABLE V. REASONS GIVEN FOR PROGRAM LENGTH PREFERENCE (CONTINUED)

Two-Day Program Preference	Five-Day Program Preference
9. Children are little such a short time.	8. Misses companionship of other children when he can't be in school.
10. My child is more eager to attend than if it were a daily occurrence.	9. Mother has little time to devote to child at home because of the baby brother.
11. I would miss too much of his growing up in a five-day program.	10. Child feels it unfair to have two days of school when older siblings have five.
12. Gives child more time to enjoy other family members.	
13. Gives child a chance to share in the work of the family.	
14. Mother and brother would miss the child too much in a daily program.	
15. Child would feel left out of some family experiences if he were in a five-day program.	
16. Child stays more interested.	
17. Child might tire of kindergarten if he had a five-day nursery school experience first.	

TABLE V. REASONS GIVEN FOR PROGRAM LENGTH PREFERENCE (CONTINUED)

Two-Day Program Preference	Five-Day Program Preference
18. Children grow up and leave home too early anyway.	
19. Would rather not have him gone so much from home.	
20. Less incidence of disease.	
21. Feel it is wrong to send child away every morning at such an early age.	

TABLE VI. LIST OF COMMENTS BY PARENTS CONCERNING THE
EFFECT OF THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH THE NURSERY
SCHOOL ON THE FAMILY LIFE

1. Nursery school has brought us closer together.
2. We share another mutual interest.
3. It has had no effect.
4. It has affected our family life a great deal through the fundamentals we have learned.
5. The whole family recognizes the nursery school member as more of an individual.
6. Parents' meetings could be of more benefit if they were more varied.
7. It takes a lot of talking and learning about family life before it makes a visible change in one's habits. I've found it valuable to discuss my problems with other parents and I've found that I come home with a different attitude -- that it doesn't matter as much what you do if children sense love and security in the home.
8. I've become more decisive in dealing with the children and don't worry as much about my methods now.
9. Parents' meetings have helped me to understand and accept some of our common family conflicts.
10. Nursery school has helped our child overcome his shyness a great deal.
11. We're all interested in what he (the child) does at school and learn much from it.
12. After attending parents' meetings, I feel calmer about our little daily problems.
13. It's comforting to know that other parents have problems, too; it minimizes your own.

TABLE VI. LIST OF COMMENTS BY PARENTS CONCERNING THE
EFFECT OF THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH THE NURSERY
SCHOOL ON THE FAMILY LIFE (CONTINUED)

-
-
14. It is becoming easier to accept the children's independence.
 15. Discussions have helped me be more realistic about the ups and downs in family life.
 16. I don't expect perfection of parents and children.
 17. We've become more conscious of our child as a growing individual - not a baby.
 18. Family eating habits have improved.
 19. We've learned things that do help us in certain home situations.
 20. We enjoy our contacts with teachers, other parents and their children.
 21. We have interesting things to talk about with our child and we've been helped somewhat to improve our family life.
 22. The whole family has become more observant.
 23. It has helped us to prevent and overcome eating problems at home.
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-