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ABSTRACT

This manual, to be used in child development centers, presents guidelines for working with families of handicapped children. Reasons for initiating a family program are given to include fostering coordination of the child's training and keeping the program relevant to needs of families within the community. First contacts with parents are said to be improved with communication techniques that involve the positive view, an attitude of giving, perception of parents' feelings, recognition of each child's differences and parents' expectations, and ability to interpret the program. The guide suggests the kinds of information the School might use to build family profiles. Guidelines are given for the following parent involvement strategies: family members as volunteers, the newsletter, observation of school activities, home followup reports to parents, sharing the learning accomplishment profile with parents, informal verbal feedback, individual conferences, individual home programs, materials-making workshops, group meetings, ideas for brothers and sisters, and information and referral services. A list of resource materials includes books, periodicals, films, and pamphlets (source and price are given). Appendixes contain materials such as forms for parents, definitions for program planning, sample newsletter articles, sample home followup sheets, and interviewing techniques. (MC)

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN HEAD START SERIES

WORKING WITH FAMILIES: A MANUAL FOR DEVELOPMENTAL CENTERS

HEAD START INFORMATION PROJECT
THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
1920 ASSOCIATION DRIVE
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WORKING WITH FAMILIES

A MANUAL FOR DEVELOPMENTAL CENTERS

by
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Chapel Hill Training-Outreach Project
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface

1. Why Have a Family Program? 1

2. When Do We Begin? 3

3. Who Are the Families? 8

4. What Strategies Can We Use 10
   - Family Members As Volunteers 11
   - The Newsletter 14
   - Observation of School Activities 16
   - Home Follow Up Sheets 18
   - Sharing the Learning Accomplishment Profile with Families . 20
   - Informal Verbal Feedback 22
   - Individual Conferences 24
   - Individual Home Programs 25
   - Materials Making Workshops 28
   - Group Meetings 30
   - Special Ideas for Brothers and Sisters 33
   - Information and Referral Services 35

5. Where Can We Find Help? 37

Appendices

1

Why have a Family Program?

The rationale for a family program in the child development center might best be stated in terms of its benefits for child, parents and community. Family programs can achieve the following benefits:

1. Foster more continuity and coordination of the child's training. Faster progress will usually result for the child who has parents continuing the same or appropriate supplemental training at home. Common goals, cooperative planning with parents, and similar home training techniques for the child will eliminate parent competitiveness with or sabotage of the developmental center's program. It will also positively reinforce the child's daytime learning at the center.

2. Permit greater individualization for the child and parents. Parents know their child better than teachers or other professionals. Information exchange with parents can permit the maximum degree of individualization in formulating appropriate objectives for the child. Also, the increased exposure to each set of parents can permit the individualization of strategies and participation depending upon the needs and assets of different families.

3. Give parents knowledge and specific skills for child training. People with needs always feel better about themselves when they begin to do something toward meeting their needs. As parents are helped to acquire knowledge in child development and competence in handling their child, they can feel more adequate as parents. Also they can begin to focus on their child's accomplishments, rather than on his handicap. In this way parents can begin to see both themselves and their child in a more positive view. As parents feel adequate and take pride in their child's progress, they will usually experience some relief from the anxiety, guilt and despair that is often present in parents of the handicapped.

4. Form a supportive community for the families of handicapped children. Understanding the chronic sorrow, stress and daily challenge of caring for a handicapped child is an experience that families can share most meaningfully with each other. The emotional support they give each other can be enhanced by their learning, socializing, and

working together in groups. This benefit is often overlooked by professionals who feel they should have all the answers. Often the understanding word or practical advice from another parent can give the support or specific answer that is most needed by a parent.

5. Keep the center program relevant to the needs of the families and the community. As parents participate in information exchange around the program for their own child, the alert director or staff member will recognize the needs and expectations of parents. Moves should be made to help meet those needs through the center program or mobilization of other community resources. Parents can also help the center maintain a high degree of relevance and consumer satisfaction by participation on boards, committees or councils that determine policy and programs for the center.

6. Provide a base of community knowledge and support for the center program. Advocacy is often overlooked by conscientious professionals who feel that it is sufficient to do a good job. If the care and training of handicapped children is a needed service in the community, the program will continue to need knowledgeable advocates to go before aldermen or county commissioners, and participate in local fund raising. Committed parents who know what you are doing can be the most effective spokesmen for the program. In addition to the support for the developmental center program, parents will begin to recognize their important role in initiating, securing, or maintaining other community services their maturing child may need.

While not exhaustive, the above list of benefits may serve to indicate some important reasons for every child development program to incorporate parents in as comprehensive a way as possible. For some directors and staff, opening the door to a partnership with parents may initially seem threatening. In the long run, however, the parent, child and staff experience will inevitably be enriched by the parents' contributions.

2

When do We Begin?

In working with parents of handicapped, it is imperative to recognize the importance of the first contacts. The person(s) with whom parents have the early communication may well set the tone for the ensuing relationship and thereby seriously affect the attitude and cooperativeness of the parent. In turn, the parents' feelings and support will have significant bearing on the child's progress.

I

THE POSITIVE VIEW

Parents appreciate a positive staff member who accepts their child with his/her handicap. It is important to convey neither pity nor denial of the disability. If you are a self-confident person who believes in your program and its positive contribution to the child's developmental progress, you can give enormous support and reassurance to a parent whose child's needs have often perplexed the parent and been unmet by community resources. The parent's recognition of the child's handicap and his frequent experiences of failure and frustration have often left both parent and child lacking in self-confidence. Often the parents have been so concerned about the developmental deficiency that their attention has been solely directed to his disability. In the first contact, the worker can redirect their thinking by saying, "Let's begin by looking at the skills your child has already developed so that we can build on his strengths." How meaningful it is for a parent to encounter a positive and constructive person who says, "You've come to the right place and together we can accomplish significant gains in your child's training."

II

ATTITUDE OF GIVING

The staff member who initially conveys an attitude of giving can help the parent relate to the program in a positive way. Interest and understanding are two of the first gifts that you can give to parents of the handicapped child. It is gratifying to the parents

to find that someone understands their needs and is interested in meeting them. Some printed matter about the program or child's special disability, a community resource directory, or any appropriate handout that you can give is an initial and tangible sign of your willingness to give and serve. The message of your willingness to give sets the tone for all the days and months ahead.

III

ASSESSING THE FEELINGS

The perceptive staff member will be alert to the feelings of the parents and respond appropriately. The trauma of having a handicapped child is not quickly resolved. Most parents move through a cycle of three stages in the acceptance of the child. The sensitive worker will recognize how far in that process of acceptance the family has moved. The following brief descriptions may assist you in determining the parents' stage and your response.

Stage 1-Denial. When parents are first informed or confronted with the fact of the handicapped child, they often seek to deny the fact, or to find another professional with a different diagnosis. Some parents may deprive the rest of the family while they spend an inordinate amount of time training the handicapped child. They attempt to eliminate the developmental lag and thereby prove the diagnostician wrong.

If the parents are in the first stage, you can be most helpful if you accept the denial and simply suggest that "we begin to focus on ways the program and parents together can accelerate the child's progress." The "you've got to face your child's limitations" approach will only result in defensiveness and rejection of the staff and program.

Stage 2-Intellectual acceptance of handicap but emotional reactions of anger, guilt or depression. Parents in this stage are often so caught up in their own emotional needs that they are unable to focus on positive helps for the child. They may be either overtly rejecting of the child or fostering excessive dependency by not permitting the child to learn to do things for himself.

When parents have moved to the second stage and have accepted the fact of the handicap intellectually but are still struggling with the anger or guilt, their feelings may sometimes come out as rejection of the program and staff. At this stage, the acceptance and recognition

of the anger with an empathetic "it must be very frustrating at times to have the constant care of a child with special needs" may facilitate the parent in acknowledging the source of his anger. On the other hand, the parent with guilty feelings may need the simple reassurance that progress can be made and that the full potential of a child cannot be known until a training effort is made over a period of time.

Stage 3-Intellectual and Emotional Acceptance. At this stage most parents are able to achieve realistic expectations and give appropriate help to their child in his learning. They are able to use themselves constructively both for the handicapped child and for the other family members. They are also able to move into the community and become a positive support for programs and groups that work for handicapped persons.

These parents will quickly and eagerly learn new training techniques. Lots of praise for their child's progress and their participation in his learning will be appropriate. It is a sound approach, however, in whatever stage parents are functioning to try helping them focus on training the child. All parents feel better about themselves and their child if they are able to use constructive options.

It should be noted that all parents do not follow the same sequence of feelings or time schedule in moving through the stages. Some parents continue denying the handicap or become depressed and never arrive at stage three. Others may not experience a denial stage and respond directly with a period of anger which is quickly followed by acceptance of the child and his limitations. Often father and mother are not in the same stages simultaneously. The important point for the staff member to remember is that correct assessment of the feelings and sensitivity to their presence can permit an effective beginning relationship.

IV

INDIVIDUALIZATION

In the early contacts with parents, the staff member will want to convey the importance of individualization of each child's and parent's needs and program. All children's needs are different. Parent endorsement and cooperation will be facilitated by the knowledge that their child's uniqueness is adequately recognized, assessed and accommodated within the program plans for him. If the Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP) is used, parents should be informed about the Profile and its usefulness to both parents and program in assessing the child's developmental level. Its function in defining

appropriate individualized learning objectives will need to be interpreted to parents. Encouraging their use of the LAP at home will also give them a sense of participation in the child's program.

As you work with each family, you will begin to assess their unique needs and the level of involvement you can anticipate initially. Though you will work toward an increasing participation, not all parents have the same needs or capacity for involvement at the beginning. Your work with them can be facilitated by giving generous praise for their participation and offering them new and expanding options for working as a team member.

V

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Parents will appreciate an opportunity in an early contact to voice their own expectations for their child and the program in general. This permits the staff to recognize how realistic the parents' expectations for their child may be, as well as to interpret the program's assets and limitations more appropriately. Furthermore, if such an interview is handled with sincere openness to the parents wishes, it can give the parents a real sense of participation and involvement from the beginning. It can be the early recognition that they are in an integral part in the ongoing process of their child's training.

At this time many parents will often push the worker for a prediction of the child's progress. It is best to give an honest evaluation on the basis of the present evidence. It should be stressed to the parents, however, that you can only suggest a probable range of progress and that the child's learning is affected by many factors which cannot be predicted for certain.

VI

PROGRAM INTERPRETATIONS

Lastly, but most important, is the spoken and printed interpretation of the program's philosophy, goals, content, and policies. Parents want to know how the staff members view their work, what their objectives are, what program the child experiences each day, and what is expected of parents. A vague unspecified "we'll try to help your child" can be more anxiety producing than helpful.

What do you view as helping? What are you trying to achieve? How will you do it? What role will the parents play? All these questions and more may leave the parents uncomfortable, uncertain and uninvolved unless you anticipate and answer them in an early interview. You will also want to give ample time for the parents to ask questions and clarify ambiguities. The written statement given at this time covering essentials of the program and policies can give additional security to the parent who may need to reread at later times as there are questions. Clarify with the parents the school program's expectations of them. Schedules, fees, attendance, transportation, records, and participation in the parent programs should all be understood and accepted. Preferably this should be done before the child is officially enrolled.

In summary, it should be noted that the attitude, approach and content of the early interviews with parents will have significant bearing on the effectiveness with which a program can interpret its methods, elicit parental involvement, and give parental support.

3

Who are the Families?

An effective family program must be based on information about the needs, resources, and interests of the families. The building of a family profile begins with the first contacts and continues throughout the time of the child's enrollment in the developmental center.

Here is a partial list of information needed in planning for maximum family involvement in the child development team:

- names of persons living in home and their relation to child
- address, phone at which family can be reached during school day, at night
- ages of children in family
- language spoken in home
- names of persons who work outside the home, which days and shifts they work, work address
- special interests, skills, hobbies
- parents' interests and priorities for the child's learning
- child's behaviors that parents would like to see changed
- information families would like about child development, family living, teaching techniques, developmental center operation
- areas of the school program in which they would prefer to assist
- other community agencies with which families have contact

Build your family profile using a combination of methods:

* Gather information informally as you listen to families in group meetings or individual contacts. For example:
  - What likes or dislikes about the teaching program do they express?
  - What questions do they ask?
  - What are their expectations for their child's future?
  - What worries do they express?

* Use questionnaires or forms to assess needs and interests. For families who cannot read, the questionnaire may be completed by a parent volunteer or staff member in an interview. (For examples of needs/interest questionnaires, see Appendices I and II.)

* In group meetings, have families meet in buzz groups to develop suggestions for improvement in center operation, topics for group training, or ideas for services to families. Have buzz groups share reports with total group. Determine priorities. Refer suggestions to steering committee or advisory board for action.

The family profile, continuously updated, forms the basis for the policy-making team to set objectives and choose activities to implement a family program.

4

What Strategies Can We Use?

The first and most important strategy in working with families is to involve parents as partners in planning center services to children and to the parents or other family members. Just as you set objectives and continuously evaluate the teaching program for children, systematically plan and evaluate the family programs. Parent involvement in identifying needs and interests must be followed by specifying family program goals and objectives, choosing activities or strategies to reach the objectives, and evaluating the success of the plan in meeting family needs.*

The strategies described in this chapter are by no means the only ways to work with families. They are intended to stimulate your ideas and those of the families you serve as you plan together for meeting their needs. Adapt and combine the strategies to meet those needs. Ensure that there are many different ways families can be involved at any one time. They may then participate in the planning or implementation of the children's training program at a level comfortable for them. If a strategy does not seem effective in involving families, do not assume that they are uninterested. Look instead at the strategy, and develop new possibilities for family participation.

The family program should reflect...

a positive approach,
individualized to families' needs,
with various options for involvement.

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* For definitions useful in planning the family program, see Appendix III. See Appendix IV for techniques for evaluating the family program.

FAMILY MEMBERS AS VOLUNTEERS

Many family members, including parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, can participate in a child's training program. Their contributions should be encouraged at all levels. Family input in planning program and forming policies is essential. Their assistance in teaching and helping implement the program will also enable them to become enthusiastic and knowledgeable advocates.

WHY have a family volunteer program?

* Families usually want to work toward providing the best possible program for their child's development; their assistance can expand the school's services.

* Research indicates that parents can be good teachers.

* Prescriptive educational programs emphasize individualized teaching and therefore offer numerous opportunities for one-to-one assistance with children.

* A positive volunteer experience can give families increased confidence in training their own child.

* Volunteering can stimulate new career interests.

GUIDELINES:

I. Plan ahead - before recruiting volunteers.
   A. Involve parents and staff in determining volunteer opportunities. Those who believe a volunteer program will be helpful are more likely to work hard to make the volunteer program successful.
   B. Make sure that there is a wide range of volunteer opportunities so that varied skills and interests can be accommodated.
   C. With staff and families: establish procedures for volunteer recruitment; define which tasks volunteers may do and which tasks will be staff responsibility; decide how volunteers will be supervised.

II. Recruit volunteers carefully.
   A. Use the newsletter, parent meetings, and the parent bulletin board to inform families of volunteer opportunities.
   B. Find out what families are interested in doing and what special skills they have. (The family profile, discussed in Chapter 3, may be helpful here.)

III. Assign volunteers to specific responsibilities.
   A. Make sure assignments fit both the needs of the program and skills and interests of the volunteer. Involve the volunteer in choice of assignment if possible.
   B. Give volunteers something specific to do.

IV. Orient and train volunteers so they can feel helpful and successful.
   A. Give them a chance to observe the classroom. If they are to work with the children, this is helpful training. If they are to work in other areas, this lets them know that they are important in helping fulfill the primary function of the school.
   B. Provide a simple handbook with such information as volunteer schedules, school hours and holidays, what to do if volunteer is to be absent, location of lounges, grievance procedures for volunteers.
   C. Classroom volunteers need different and sometimes more training than volunteers in other areas. All volunteers should be assigned tasks in a sequence that will ensure their success.

V. Maintain the volunteer program. The task of staff and volunteer coordinator is to see that volunteers are not merely used, but that their experience is a meaningful one.
   A. Give volunteers adequate supervision.
      1. They may need a great deal of help at first. Later, access to supervision may be sufficient.
      2. Make sure there are planned times for volunteers to meet with staff, other volunteers, and/or supervisors to discuss procedures, new ideas, and concerns. Encourage evaluation of the volunteer program through use of questionnaires and suggestion boxes.
   B. Reward volunteer contributions.
      1. The most significant reward is satisfaction with the task. Provide a way to change assignments if volunteers discover they are dissatisfied with their work.
      2. Publicize volunteer contributions in the school newsletter and local newspaper.
      3. Consider holding awards dinners and sending thank-you letters and certificates.
      4. Encourage staff to express frequently their appreciation to volunteers.

Here is a partial list of opportunities for family volunteers:

- serve on advisory council or other policy-making body
- make presentations to community groups about the developmental center program
- make special presentations to the children about family members' own interests or professions. (For example, a carpenter may show the children how to build a doghouse.)
- provide transportation or babysitting services for other parents who are observing classroom activities or teaching children
- staff a center lending library of books, toys, and teaching materials
- make instructional materials or decorate the center
- write, type, edit a newsletter
- greet center visitors and interpret the program to observers.
- assist on field trips or during special parties for the children
- solicit funds or materials for improvement of center program; coordinate fund-raising projects
- teach children.
- coordinate the volunteer program

THE NEWSLETTER

A school newsletter can serve several PURPOSES and should include varied CONTENT:

* A newsletter can help inform families and friends about the activities of the school. It may include reports of children's learning experiences, opportunities for parent and staff training, and announcements of group meetings.

* The newsletter can give suggestions for helping children at home and print instructions for making inexpensive toys or teaching materials.

* Information concerning community services and organizations for families can be included, as well as discussions of local, state, and national issues related to handicapped children.

* A "Meet the Staff" section can help parents know the persons working with their children.

* The newsletter can extend recognition and thanks for parents' contributions to the school program.

* Recruitment of volunteers can be aided by descriptions of specific tasks offering volunteer opportunities.

* Descriptions of books and toys available in a lending library can encourage family use of such a service.

* A "Parent Exchange" section can help families locate others interested in exchanging services (such as child care or transportation) or goods (such as outgrown clothing and toys).

* The newsletter can be a tool for improved public relations. The mailing list can include program advisory council members, school board members, other agencies, and political figures.

GUIDELINES:

* Select content carefully and on the basis of the needs and interests of the readers.

* Mention children by first name or initials. Families usually enjoy specific references to their own children.

* In gathering articles to give suggestions for helping children at home, solicit parent and staff contributions, or adapt ideas from published materials.

* Keep it simple. Do not write down to parents, but do not over-use technical language.

* Make the newsletter a team effort. Involve parents and all levels of staff in producing it - suggesting topics, writing, editing, typing, and mailing. Designating one parent or staff member for coordination of content and distribution may be efficient, but the newsletter should not be the <u>total</u> responsibility of one person.

* Invite representatives of community agencies or local parents' groups to be interviewed or to write about issues relevant to families' interests.

See sample newsletter articles: Appendix V.

OBSERVATION OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Classroom observation, though often overlooked and sometimes even dreaded by staff, can be extremely helpful in building family-staff communication. Observation through a one-way screen or mirror is ideal. When a special observation room is not available, family members can sit in on classroom activities. Indirect observation, through photographs, slides, or videotapes viewed at school or in the home, provides another option.

WHY is observation a helpful activity?

* Observation can help alleviate parents' natural apprehensions and answer their questions about their child's training program. (For example, when parents see that their children are busy and happy in the classroom, they can feel better about "leaving" their children in the care of others. Parents of normal children in a program that also serves handicapped children can see for themselves that rather than depriving their children of appropriate learning experiences, the presence of the handicapped children may enrich the program. Parents of handicapped children in such a program can see that their children participate in activities with classmates and are not isolated.)

* Observation facilitates learning about classroom methods that can be used in follow-up at home. After observing, parents and siblings often express an interest in receiving training in teaching techniques.

* Observation can enhance parents' understanding of teacher contribution to their child's growth. Sincere appreciation for teachers can be positively reinforcing for teachers and build better communication with families.

* Observation gives family members a concrete basis on which to make suggestions for changes or improvements in the teaching program.

GUIDELINES:

* Help teachers prepare for being observed . Good teacher-training and access to support through supervision can make teachers more comfortable with observers.

* Involve teachers and parents in planning policies and procedures for observation. Consider seating space for observers, availability of staff or parent volunteers for interaction with observers, and classroom schedule in deciding on these issues:
  - Will classroom be open to observation at all hours of the school day?
  - Will families be issued standing invitations to come any day? Special invitations at regular intervals?
  - How will families know when field trips or other special events would prevent in-school observations?
  - Who must families notify at the school before coming?
  - Will persons other than family members be allowed to observe, and what procedures must they follow?
  - Will visitors be encouraged to interact with the children or to remain as observers only?

* Invitations and policies for observation should be printed and distributed to all families.

* Utilize the newsletter, parent meetings and instructions posted on classroom door to clarify instructions and schedule of classroom activities.

* Encourage parents' early observation of classroom activities, (ideally, before their child is enrolled) and frequent visits thereafter.

* Should your policy maintain that visitors remain observers while seated within the classroom, teach families how to react when children initiate interaction. Family members can learn to say, "I'm watching the children who are working," or to ignore attention-seeking attempts.

* It is helpful to have interpretation of program content, teaching techniques, and methods of behavior management as parents observe. This may be done by well-informed parent volunteers or staff members. It is important for the interpreter to be able to maintain confidentiality when appropriate, and be warmly receptive to questions, concerns and constructive criticisms about classroom operation.

* Evaluate observation procedures. Keep a record of observations. Provide methods for observers to evaluate what they see, either through written forms or feedback during interpretation.

HOME FOLLOW-UP SHEETS

The home follow-up sheet is a one-page weekly or biweekly report to parents. It should include:

* concepts their child is presently learning
* skills the child exhibits
* home follow-up ideas

Home follow-up sheets serve both as continuous, simple progress reports and as guides for families to help their children learn.

GUIDELINES:

* Be practical. Suggest the kind and number of activities that are easy for the family to do within the normal daily routine.

* Suggest activities at which you know the child and family are likely to be successful, so that families will be rewarded for their efforts.

* Use words that the family can easily understand.

* If there are other children in the family, try to suggest some activities that they can enjoy with the handicapped child.

* Keep a copy of each follow-up sheet in the child's folder so that you will have a record of the suggestions you have made to families.

* Request suggestions from the families about how to make home follow-up sheets most helpful. You may wish to attach a reply form to the follow-up sheets so that parents can send written comments and suggestions back to you.

* Inform parents of their contribution to the child's progress. Show appreciation for their efforts.

* Send sheets regularly.

* The lead teacher can oversee the project, but teacher assistants, speech therapists, physical therapists, or others working directly with the child should be encouraged to have input.

Here are a few examples of suggested activities. Try expanding the list.

* using a rolling pin
* pouring cake batter
* snapping beans
* naming shapes of round biscuits, square napkins ...
* counting eggs to go in the cake, plates at table ...
* stirring mixtures
* naming smells
* naming and discriminating hard, soft, warm, cold ...
* dusting furniture
* sorting laundry
* picking up paper and cigarette butts from the yard
* helping look for particular items in the grocery store
* naming pieces of furniture, clothing, tools ...

For sample sheets see Appendix VI.

SHARING THE LAP (LEARNING ACCOMPLISHMENT PROFILE) WITH FAMILIES

The Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP) is a tool for assessing a child's skills, measuring rate of progress, and setting up a prescriptive program of sequenced learning activities.** Families can become partners in assessing their children's progress through understanding why and how the LAP (or other tool for developing appropriate instructional objectives) is used.

WHY share the LAP?

* Understanding that their child grows at different rates in different developmental areas gives parents a picture of the child that is more encouraging and realistic than a single label of "slow" or "handicapped."

* Knowledge of the steps and usual sequences in acquiring skills gives parents more realistic expectations of the child. Such knowledge may also enable parents to have more appropriate expectations for the teacher. (For example, one parent commented, "I couldn't figure out why you didn't teach him to write at first. But you are teaching him that. Now I understand that drawing circles and squares is a first step in learning to write.")

* The LAP and its accompanying charts serve as positive, concrete bases for progress reports and evaluation of the child's skills.

* Understanding of the LAP can stimulate the parents' suggestions for the child's learning at school and give ideas for utilizing informal learning expereiences at home.

* Understanding of the LAP is good preparation for parent volunteering in the classroom.

* Use of the LAP can help parents develop better observation skills.

GUIDELINES:

* Some parents like to have a copy of the LAP for themselves so that they can follow the child's progress with you. (Provide a shortened form of the LAP as a reference if parents prefer it to the more complete form.)

* Use parent group training times or individual conferences to interpret the LAP.

* Using words that families can easily understand, share with them the rationale for assessing children in different skill areas (differential rates of development), what are the areas of assessment, how to interpret charts showing developmental progress, and how and why the LAP is used to develop individualized instructional objectives.

* Be prepared to discuss with families their questions about the meaning of IQ scores and what "normal" does and does not imply.

** The LAP, written by Anne R. Sanford, is available at the Student Stores, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, N. C. 27514.

INFORMAL VERBAL FEEDBACK

The beginning and the end of the school day and chance meetings in the community offer opportunities for teachers to talk briefly and informally with family members. Teachers can utilize these times to share specific information with families on the child's most recent accomplishments in school. Such frequent positive comments are encouraging and supportive to the families. When the child is present, the teacher has a chance to model appropriate interaction with the child.

Informal, positive contacts are always to be encouraged, but there are times when this is the single most helpful strategy. WHY use this approach?

* A parent who cannot read or understand written comments and suggestions may benefit from frequent but brief, informal contacts at the school or at home.

* Informal verbal feedback can sometimes enable a shy parent, or one who seems angry, distrustful, or disinterested, to become increasingly receptive to interaction with school personnel. The informal contact requires no other behaviors on the part of the parent than that he or she listen.

* A gentle, specific reminder of what their child can do will provide cues to more realistic expectations for parents. It can be espeically helpful for those who either overprotect the child or deny problems.

* Parents who are realistic but extremely anxious about their child's handicap can sometimes better absorb frequent, brief examples of the child's achievements than lengthy, comprehensive evaluations.

GUIDELINES:

* Be brief. One or two positive examples are enough.

* Be specific. Rather than "He did well today!" say, "We're proud of Johnny; today he said his full name."

* Be genuine in your enthusiasm, but do not overwhelm the parent.

* If the child is present, avoid the appearance of competing with the parents for the child's affection.

* Be willing to listen also if parents are responsive; it may be the beginning communication you've wanted.

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Staff conferences with individual family members provide a time for information exchange and shared problem-solving. Conferences are usually pre-arranged, in contrast to informal contacts.

WHY have individual conferences?

* The individual conference allows flexibility; it can be held at school or in the family's home at any time convenient for both family and staff member.

* Content can be kept confidential and highly specific to individual needs.

* For parents who cannot read, conferences can substitute for written feedback on the child's progress and suggestions for home follow-up.

GUIDELINES:

* Hold conferences on a regular basis - and when requested by parent or staff. A conference three to four weeks after a child's enrollment enables a teacher to share specific learning objectives with families. These should be based on the LAP or other assessment tool. In regular conferences, interpret progress reports and year-end evaluations.

* Prepare adequately for a conference. Gather relevant materials such as the child's LAP, examples of classwork, or information on other resources needed by the family. Plan your objectives for the conference, but be flexible if the family indicates a different kind of need.

* When there is a problem to be solved, engage the family member with you in <u>mutual</u> decision-making. (For steps in the problem-solving process, see Appendix VII.)

* Work for improvement of your interviewing skills. (For "DO's" and "DON'Ts" of interviewing, see Appendix VIII.)

INDIVIDUAL HOME PROGRAMS

When parents agree to implement individual home programs, they take responsibility for training the child in specific skill areas or for modifying certain of the child's behaviors. Although the total focus of some projects serving handicapped children is that of home visitors training mothers to work with their own children at home, this discussion will concentrate on rationale and guidelines for using individual home programs as a supplement to the training a child receives in a developmental center.

WHY develop individual home programs? There are two common interpretations of "home program", both of which will be discussed:

* Family members can learn techniques for general infant or child stimulation in all areas of development or in particular areas of deficit, such as speech, fine motor, or self-help.

* When the child exhibits a particular behavior that is identified as a problem (such as temper tantrums or bed-wetting), a behavior management program may be developed to remedy the problem.

GUIDELINES:

* If the parent can read, provide simple written instructions for the parent to keep.

* Demonstrate techniques for working with the child, such as ways to achieve and maintain eye contact, how to prompt and give cues, and use of rewards.

* After demonstrating the procedures, let the parent practice either with the child or with you role-playing the child.

* Demonstrate how to adapt materials for the individual child (such as making a soft newspaper ball for child to catch if he shows fear of the harder rubber ball).

* Involve the parent in suggesting adaptations of materials or procedures for his or her own child.

* Analyze the tasks the parent must learn, and program for success by training the parent one step at a time. (For example, make sure that he or she can demonstrate ability to get the child's attention before trying to teach the parent to give instructions to child.)

* When there is a behavior problem, take an experimental approach. Recognize with the parent that while there are some behavioral principles that work, there are no pat procedures for automatic use or success in every case. Let the parent know that if a particular plan for behavior management does not work, you will assist in finding another more workable one.

* Seek supervision or suggestions from resource persons knowledgeable in behavior modification procedures if you have questions.

* Maintain regular contact with parents implementing home programs. Each time you meet for discussions, let the parent report how the program is working. Is the parent comfortable with the procedures? Is the child responding the way you and the parent expected?

* Provide support. It is hard to be consistent when the home program recommends procedures such as ignoring tantrum behavior. Recognize with the parents that the process of change can be long and hard. Small groups of parents who are simultaneously working on home programs can provide suggestions and mutual support for one another.

* Reinforce parents' efforts. When the child shows realistic gains, commend the parents on their fine work.

* Watch for signs that the program is becoming burdensome to the family. Is the parent spending so much time with the handicapped child that other children's or parents' own needs go unmet? Is the parent too anxious about carrying out the home program?

In summary, make the parent's experience one of errorless learning, if possible. Give the parent cues for performance; model the techniques; program the tasks in an appropriate sequence; and reinforce the parent's efforts.

The following books can be used as RESOURCES for planning home programs:

Caldwell, Bettye. Home Teaching Activities, Little Rock, Arkansas: Center for Early Development and Education, University of Arkansas, 814 Sherman, 72202. $3.00.
Useful as a guide for home visitors or as a hand-out for parents, this book includes descriptions of activities and materials (free or very inexpensive) that families can use at home with children of a 0-36 month developmental age range.

Forrester, Bettye; Hardge, Beulah; Outlaw, Doris; Brooks, Geraldine; and Boismier, James. Home Visiting with Mothers and Infants. Nashville, Tennessee: DARCEE, George Peabody College, 1971, 100pp.
This book gives suggestions for planning a home visitor program to serve low income families.

_____, et al. Materials for Infant Development. Nashville, Tennessee: DARCEE, George Peabody College, 1971, 83 pp.
This is a manual for making and using materials to stimulate infant development.

Giesey, Rosemary, Ed. A Guide for Home Visitors. Nashville, Tennessee: DARCEE, Georgy Peabody College, 1970, 192 pp.
This is a manual for training paraprofessional home visitors.

Marshall-Powenshiek Joint County Department of Special Education, Home Stimulation of Handicapped Children. 9 Westwood Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa, 50158. 331 pp. $3.50.
This manual contains many concrete suggestions for home stimulation of the preschool child. An accompanying guide is available for professionals working with parents in groups.

The following books offer resources for planning behavior management programs. All may be used with families individually or in groups:

Baldwin, Victor, Ed.D.; Fredericks, H.D. Bud, Ed.D., Brodsky, Gerry, M.A. Isn't It Time He Outgrew This? or A Training Program for Parents of Retarded Children. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1973. 206 pp.

Becker, Wesley C. Parents are Teachers, a Child Management Program. Champaign, Ill., 61820., Research Press Co., P. O. Box 3377 County Fair Station, 1971. 194 pp.

Patterson, Gerald R., & Gullion, M. Elizabeth. Living with Children: New Methods for Parents & Teachers. Champaign, Ill.: Research Press. 1968. 120 pp.

MATERIALS-MAKING WORKSHOPS

Family members frequently enjoy making instructional materials for home or school use. Making materials can be an individual or group activity, a volunteer project and/or a training strategy.

WHY have materials-making workshops?

* The informal atmosphere can allow parents and staff to become better acquainted.
* When a group of families is especially varied in educational level, cultural background, or socio-economic status, making items for children can be a common basis of concern and conversation.
* Workshops provide an opportunity to convince the staff of the value of working with families. Teachers also appreciate the tangible help with preparing instructional materials.
* Discussion of materials stimulates parents' and siblings' questions about methods for working with the child at home.
* Workshops provide a time for informal training, fun for both staff and families.

GUIDELINES:

* Call on staff, families, community agencies and/or businesses in locating raw materials; make sure there are enough supplies available before the date of the workshop.
* Gather suggestions from parents and teachers about specific items and adaptations of materials for individual children.
* Enlist parents' help in coordinating or conducting workshops.
* Plan ahead for good use of workshop time. Initially, provide simple items that may be completed within a single workshop. Families should be able to spend at least part of the time making items for home use.

Suggested RESOURCES for ideas on materials to make:

* I Saw a Purple Cow. (See Chapter 5)
* Recipes for Fun (See Chapter 5)
* catalogues of commercially produced instructional materials
* art and crafts books

GROUP MEETINGS

Parent or sibling group meetings provide a time for information exchange, training, policy planning, informal social interaction, and problem-solving within a supportive environment. Both parents and school staff tend to think first of the traditional "PTA" meeting upon hearing "parent group meeting." The large group meeting does indeed have a place in effective family programs, as does the small group meeting of persons who have similar needs.

The large group meeting is efficient in transmitting information to many persons. Large groups frequently have more resources with which to attract experts as speakers than do small groups. Another advantage is that shy individuals may attend and listen quietly while remaining anonymous. Less personal than the small group, the large group can give less attention to individuals.

In contrast, small groups of up to about ten persons allow greater attention to individual needs of members and more opportunities for participation in discussion. The less formal social structure often facilitates greater sharing of emotionally laden content. Serving families in small numbers is usually more time-consuming for teachers or family program workers. Some small groups do meet, however, without the presence of staff.

There are actually many variations in group sizes, goals, and functioning rather than just two clear-cut categories of "large" and "small". Plan to take advantage of the special benefits of each type of group. Offer a variety of group experiences to families, so that they may choose a comfortable level of participation.

WHY offer group services?

* Group meetings offer an efficient means of information exchange. The group members can have exposures to experts that they would not otherwise have.

* Problem-solving is often more effective when groups are brainstorming.

* Group meetings permit families to establish mutually supportive relationships with each other.

GUIDELINES:

* Involve the family members in all stages of planning and conducting group meetings.

* Ensure that baby-sitting and transportation are available, if needed.

* Publicize group meetings far enough in advance; send reminder notes or calls; let absentees know they were missed at meetings.

* Ensure the physical comfort of the group. Room size, seating arrangements, and refreshments affect the warmth of the environment.

* Plan number and frequency of meetings based on group goals and families' needs, interests, and schedules. The continuity of small group discussions is aided by meeting frequently, usually weekly. The large group meeting is usually better attended if not held more often than monthly. (An exception to this arises when there is a need for immediate action on a social issue of vital importance to group members.)

* Provide opportunities for personalizing the large group meeting. Informal refreshment breaks and question-and-answer periods are helpful. Division into buzz groups after a presentation, or team practice after a demonstration help participants understand and apply information.

* Provide for continuity of meetings. A single coordinator should be present at each meeting in a series of meetings with different outside speakers. The coordinator's awareness of members' common concerns allows him or her to encourage interaction within a warm, friendly atmosphere.

* Involve participants in continuous evaluation of the group experience. Is it meeting the needs of members? Are members at ease in the group? What changes are needed?

Special GUIDELINES for coordinators of small groups:

* Clarify during intake members' expectations for the group. Compose groups on basis of similarity of needs and concerns so that members can help each other. (For example, if the purpose of a parents' group is to train members to teach their children self-help skills, the children should be at fairly similar stages of development.)

* Help group decide on rules for confidentiality.

* Help the group clarify goals. Encourage goal-oriented work, but be flexible. Allow group to change and develop according to member needs. (A sibling group formed to "learn to get along better with our handicapped brothers and sisters" may become a group for training to assist in a summer classroom program.)

* Participate in, but don't dominate, group meetings. Be a resource person, not "the expert." Support desirable group behavior and stimulate group cohesiveness by encouraging sharing of ideas and concerns and helping each other with problems.

* Support each individual within the group. If a member's growth or the nature of his or her concerns lessen the appeal of the group for that person, help him find other, more appropriate experiences. Support the right of each member to speak, and ensure that no single member or clique dominates too much group time.

* Seek help from resource persons in your community knowledgeable of group dynamics.

SPECIAL IDEAS FOR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Siblings of handicapped children have numerous, sometimes unspoken, questions and concerns about their handicapped brothers and sisters. (See Appendix IX). Sometimes a lack of skills in caring for or playing with the handicapped child leads to frustration on the part of the "normal" sibling. Schools serving handicapped children have the privilege and the responsibility to offer opportunities within their family programs for siblings to ask their unanswered questions, meet other young people with handicapped brothers or sisters, and develop the skills necessary to enjoy to the fullest their relationship with the handicapped child.

Siblings enjoy many of the same kinds of activities, adapted to their age, that their parents do. Here is a partial list of activities that can be offered to siblings:

* observation of the classroom, directly or through videotape or slides (particularly helpful in encouraging informal discussion in a non-threatening environment)
* playdays and picnics with other siblings
* playdays and picnics with other siblings and with the handicapped children
* older siblings invited to attend parent meetings
* games and movies especially for siblings while parents attend meeting (not just baby-sitting with the handicapped child)
* participation in developmental center field trips
* during summer program, opportunities to volunteer in classroom activities - art, games, snacks
* materials-making, decorating the center for holidays
* workshops on "Games to Play with Your Brother or Sister That You Both Enjoy"; "How to Baby-Sit and Still End Up Loving Your Brother."
* individual and group talks with staff members
* special section in the school lending library on "Books for Brothers and Sisters"
* informal meeting with an attractive and happy teen-age or college-age sibling of a handicapped person

GUIDELINES:

* Recognize siblings as important persons in their own right, not just as having a handicapped brother or sister. The role of sibling of a handicapped child is only one of their roles.

* Be prepared to refer siblings to other service agencies or organizations, such as counseling services, Youth Association for Retarded Citizens, Youth for Easter Seals.

* Help siblings and their parents become aware of other activities for young people, not just those related to having a handicapped brother or sister.

* Encourage parents not to force their children to participate in sibling programs.

* Pay attention to age groupings. Make sibling programs appropriate to age levels, and group siblings with others their age.

* Include time for both activities and discussion in planning workshops.

* Help siblings and their parents realize that it is normal to get angry sometimes at a brother or sister - handicapped or not. Help them find healthy ways to express that anger, as well as the love they feel for the handicapped child.

* Help parents understand needs of siblings.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

Families sometimes seek help from the school with problems that school personnel are not trained to handle. Frequently, staff or parents may discover that the child needs services the school does not offer. In these instances it is necessary that school personnel have basic information about services available within the community, and that they be able to extend this information to families in a usable way.

GUIDELINES:

* Prepare for making referrals by gathering information on
  - services that are available in your community
  - agencies that offer the services
  - agencies' locations
  - procedures for applying for services
  - criteria for receiving services
  - persons to contact
  - fees for services

* Record the information in a community services file or directory. Update file frequently, and encourage parents and all staff to contribute information. Parents or other volunteers may wish to undertake total responsibility for the file or directory as a group project.

* The following list of agencies and resource persons may assist you in developing your file or directory:
  - Local Mental Health or Public Health Coordinators
  - Community Mental Health Center
  - County Health Department
  - Association for Retarded Citizens
  - Easter Seal Society
  - Developmental Evaluation Clinics
  - University Medical Centers
  - Specialized Hospitals or Clinics (hearing, speech, cerebral palsy, epilepsy)
  - Infant programs, Day Care, Preschools
  - Public Schools
  - Rehabilitation Programs
  - Family Service Agencies
  - Child Guidance Clinics
  - Social Service Department
  - Social Security Offices
  - Recreation Programs, Scout Troops, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A.
  - Residential and Respite Care

- Home Care Programs
- Baby Sitting Services
- Education and Training Programs for Parents and Professionals
- Pediatricians

* Utilize a variety of strategies to educate families about available services:
  - School newsletter articles
  - Presentations at parent group meetings
  - Notices on bulletin boards
  - Community services handbook (for a sample page from one community's printed guide, see Appendix XI)
  - Parent volunteers staff phone lines designed to share information
  - Cooperate with other agencies in providing services and share public relations tasks. (One school for handicapped children held its weekly mothers' materials-making group in a meeting room at the community Mental Health Center. Some of the mothers were surprised that the center provided so many services and that people did not "have to be crazy to come here.")
  - Information can be provided in individual conferences.

* In suggesting that families seek the help of another agency, take responsibility for the fact that you are unable to help, and avoid implying that the family is just "too sick" for your agency to help. One helpful way of stating this is to say, "I'm sorry that I can't be as helpful to you as I'd like to be. Perhaps you would be interested in talking with . . .! **

* Avoid taking over the families' responsibilities. In most cases it is better to let families make their own appointments with other agencies. When families are in great need of support, or when information exchange with your program is important (such as in a visit to a Developmental Evaluation Clinic), it may be helpful for you to accompany families to other agencies. In order to prevent having families become too dependent on you, remember that your actions should, in the long run, free the families to help themselves.

** Hilde S. Schlesinger and Kathryn P. Meadow suggest such an approach in Parent Programs in Child Development Centers, ed. by David Lillie (Chapel Hill, North Carolina : TADS, 1972), p. 17. For ordering information see Chapter 5.

5

Where Can We Find Help?

I. Suggested Books and Pamphlets:
* Items that are appropriate for parent use.

Adair, Thelma, and Eckstein, Esther. Parents and the Day Care Center. 281 Park Ave., S., N.Y. 10010: Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, 1969. 36 pp. $1.50.

* Baldwin, Victor; Fredericks, H.D. Bud; and Brodsky, Gerry. Isn't It Time He Outgrew This? Or a Training Program for Parents of Retarded Children. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, Publisher, 1973, 206 pp.

* Becker, Wesley C. Parents Are Teachers, A Child Management Program. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press Co., P.O. Box 3377, County Fair Station, 1971. 194 pp.

* Blanton, Elsie. A Helpful Guide in Training of a Mentally Retarded Child. National Association of Retarded Citizens. Publication No. H28. 1968, [illegible] p. 35 cents.

* Caldwell, Bettye. Home Teaching Activities. Center for Early Development and Education, University of Arkansas, 814 Sherman, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72202. $3.00.

* Cole, Ann; Haas, Carolyn; Heller, Elizabeth; and Weinberger, Betty. Recipes for Fun. 464 Central, Northfield, Illinois: Parents as Resources, 1970, 42 pp. $2.00 per copy, $1.25 per copy for 10-24 copies.

____, et al. PAR Presents: Workshop Procedures, 464 Central, Northfield, Illinois: Parents as Resources, 1970, 28 pp. $2.00 per copy or $1.25 for 10 or more.

* ____; Haas, Carolyn; Bushnell, Faith; and Weinberger, Betty. I Saw a Purple Cow. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1972, 96 pp. $2.95.

* Egg, Maria. Educating the Child Who Is Different. New York: John Day Company. 1968. 192 pp. $4.50.

* Kirk, Samuel A.; Karnes, Merle B.; and Kirk, Winifred D., You and Your Retarded Child. Palo Alto, California: Pacific Books, 1968. 164 pp. (First Edition, 1955) Paperback $1.95.

Lillie, David, Ed. Parent Program in Child Development Centers. Chapel Hill, N.C.: TADS, 1972, 85 pp. Available from the Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc., 1401 K St. N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C., 20005. $1.75 plus $.50 postage and handling.

* Marshall-Powershiek Joint County Department of Special Education. Home Stimulation of Handicapped Children. 9 Westwood Drive, Marshalltown, Iowa 50158. 331 pp. $3.50.

Noland, Robert, Ed. Counseling Parents of the Mentally Retarded - A Source Book. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, 1970, 404 pp.

* Patterson, Gerald R., and Gullion, M. Elizabeth. Living With Children: New Methods for Parents and Teachers. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press, 1968. 120 pp.

Rood, Larry A. Parents and Teachers Together: A Training Manual for Parent Involvement in Head Start Centers. Washington, D.C.: Gryphen House, 1971, 84 pp.

Ross, Alan O. The Exceptional Child in the Family. New York: Grune & Stratton, Inc., 1964, 230 pp.

* Spock, Benjamin, M.D., and Lerrigo, Marian O. Caring for Your Disabled Child. Riverside, New Jersey: The MacMillan Company, 1965, 373 pp. Paperback $1.95.

Williams, David; and Jaffa, Elliott. Ice Cream, Poker Chips, and Very Goods: A Behavior Modification Manual for Parents. College Park, Maryland: The Maryland Book Exchange. 1971, 62 pp. $2.75.

Wolfensberger, Wolf; and Kurtz, Richard A., (Eds.), Management of the Family of the Mentally Retarded. Chicago, Illinois: Follett Educational Corporation, 1969, 542 pp.

II. Periodicals (For parents or professionals)

The Exceptional Parent: Practical Guidance for the Parents of Exceptional Children. Published six times per year. Subscription rate: $2.00 per copy; $12.00 per year. Address: P. O. Box 101, Back Bay Annex, Boston, Mass. 02117.

Challenge: Recreational Fitness for the Mentally Retarded. Published bimonthly by Project on Recreation and Fitness for the Mentally Retarded, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

Mental Retardation News. Published monthly except July and August. National Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc., P. O. Box 6109, 2709 Avenue E East, Arlington, Texas 76011. $1.00 for 1 year.

Rehabilitation Literature. Published monthly by National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults. 2023 West Ogden Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60612.

III. Film Resources:

1. IMC/RMC Network Professional Film Collection
   CEC Information Center
   The ERIC Clearinghouse on Exceptional Children
   1920 Association Drive
   Reston, Virginia 22091

2. Mental Retardation Film Guide
   Division of Mental Retardation
   Social and Rehabilitation Service
   U. S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare
   Washington, D. C. 20201

3. Modern Talking Pictures
   503 N. College St.
   Charlotte, N. C. 28202

Note: Most states have film libraries in their Departments of Health. This may be a valuable source of films.

IV. Pamphlet Resource Addresses:

Most of the following agencies or associations provide free or inexpensive pamphlets.

1. American Association on Mental Deficiency
5201 Connecticut Ave. N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

2. Child Study Association of Americas, Inc.
9 E. 89th St.
New York, N. Y. 10028

3. Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

4. Epilepsy Foundation of America
1828 L Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

5. Family Service Association of America
44 E. 23rd St.
New York, N. Y.

6. Maternal and Child Health Services
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 12A-17
Rockville, Maryland 20852

7. National Association for Retarded Citizens
P. O. Box 6109
2709 Avenue E East
Arlington, Texas 76011

8. National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children & Adults
2023 West Ogden Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60612

9. The National Foundation - March of Dimes
800 Second Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10017

10. Project on Recreation and Fitness for the Mentally Retarded
1201 16th St. N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

11. Public Affairs Pamphlets
381 Park Ave. South
New York, N. Y. 10016

12. U. S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare
Office of Mental Retardation Coordination
Washington, D. C. 20201

Appendices

APPENDIX I

PARENTAL CONCERNS

The purpose of this form is for you to give us some idea of what you feel is important in planning a program for your child. Beside each area please check the box which best describes your concern.

	NEEDS NO WORK	NEEDS SOME WORK	NEEDS A LOT OF WORK
1. Self-help skills such as dressing, toileting, and eating.			
2. Gross motor skills such as walking, jumping, climbing, and throwing a ball.			
3. Receptive language skills (understanding what others say) such as following simple commands like "Wash your hands."			
4. Expressive language skills such as speaking clearly, stating wants, and naming objects.			
5. Social-emotional skills such as getting along with others. Appropriate expression of wants and feelings such as controlling temper and not biting, hitting or hurting others.			
6. Fine motor skills such as tying shoes, buttoning clothes, using scissors, and writing name.			
7. Thinking skills such as understanding numbers, remembering objects, symbols or events, and using information to solve problems.			

What specific things do you think your child needs to learn?

Prepared by: Toby Klein
Don Bailey

PARENT RATING OF NEEDS FOR SERVICE (PRNS)

Please rate all the following areas of service according to their importance for you.

	Please Check: not important	some importance	very important
1. Training in classroom activities and teaching methods.			
2. Interpretation of test results.			
3. Counseling for family problems.			
4. Suggestions of other available services in the community.			
5. Help with managing behavior of children (temper tantrums, toilet training, eating habits, etc.)			
6. Transportation.			
7. Suggestions for home activities for the preschool child.			
8. Training for brothers and sisters of the preschool child.			
9. Meetings for groups of parents.			
10. Suggestions for inexpensive or homemade learning and play materials.			

Please make any comments or suggestions for other services you feel are important.

APPENDIX III

DEFINITIONS FOR PLANNING THE FAMILY PROGRAM *

GOAL	General statement about the expected end results of a program.
OBJECTIVE	Specific statements written in measurable behavioral terms giving expected end results and expected completion date.
RESOURCES	Aids for meeting goals and objectives (examples: funds, staff, parent volunteers, space available for meetings, cooperating community agencies).
CONSTRAINTS	Restrictions on getting the job done (examples: limited funds, limited staff experience in working with families, limitations on use of funds, limited time).
ACTIVITIES	Steps to be followed - who will do what.
EVALUATION	Measurement of the success of the plan.

To ensure a well-rounded family program, consider including the four dimensions:

PARENT PARTICIPATION	Parents are involved in planning and implementing the children's training program.
INFORMATION EXCHANGE	Parents and staff members share information about the child, the child's training, and the developmental center program.
PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION	Parents have opportunities to increase their skills in relating to the handicapped child - whether in daily routine, work, play, or teaching.
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT	Families are given assistance in dealing with their feelings about their child and his or her handicap.

* These definitions and dimensions are drawn from Parent Programs in Child Development Centers, ed. David L. Lillie. (See Chapter 5 of this manual for ordering information.)

Below are sample questions which could be used in questionnaires or interviews to assess family members' attitudes or interests and evaluate the family program. Note the differences in kinds of information received depending upon the way the questions are presented.

. . . . . .

I. Write in the letter which fits your feelings:
Strongly Agree - SA Agree - A Strongly Disagree - SD
Disagree - D

_____ In preschool education the main thing my child will learn is to get along with people.

_____ Preschool education has made me more aware of my child's learning difficulties.

_____ I would rather have my child play than have him sit and learn his colors.

_____ I feel that I need more contact with the teaching staff of the program.

_____ I feel at ease in talking to other people about my child's program.

II. What topics would you like to see included in parent meetings?

III. What are some of the things you dislike most about the developmental program for your child?

IV. Circle one:

yes no Were your responsibilities as a developmental center parent explained adequately (parent meetings, transportation, conferences, etc.)?

yes no Did you get enough information about your child's progress?

yes no Do you feel the developmental center experience has helped your child in his expressive and receptive language skills?

V. What changes have you noted, if any, that you feel may be at least partially due to the preschool program? (Please be specific and give examples wherever appropriate; i.e., language, self-help skills, social adjustment.)

VI. Do you know the cause of your brother's or sister's handicap?
yes____ not sure____ no____

Would you like to know more about this?
yes____ not sure____ no____

Do you know how to explain your brother's or sister's handicap to your friends?
yes____ not sure____ no____

Would you like to know more about this?
yes____ not sure____ no____

Do you ever help your handicapped brother or sister make things, like games or toys?
a lot____ some____ a little____ no____

Do your parents have to spend too much time with your handicapped brother or sister?
a lot____ some____ a little____ no____

How often do you play with your handicapped brother or sister?
a lot____ some____ a little____ no____

VII. Since beginning to attend the sibling group meetings, has your child demonstrated increased knowledge about how to play with his handicapped brother or sister?
yes____ no____

Does your child talk with you about his sibling's handicap or problems related to it?
often____ some____ occasionally____ never____

More often than before the group experience?
yes____ no____

VIII. This past week, Monday through Friday, how many times did you play with your handicapped brother or sister? ____

Did you play with him or her yesterday?
yes____ no____

In addition to using questionnaires and interviews to evaluate the family program, remember to consider attendance at parent meetings, records of contacts with the developmental center, observation of family interaction, and letters or comments from parents.

APPENDIX V

SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

WRITTEN BY CHAPEL HILL PRESCHOOL PROJECT TEACHERS

Frank Porter Graham Class - September

Rain, rain, go away, little children want to play! Yes, it's been raining most of the time that we've been in our new school, but it is still bright and cheerful inside. If you haven't had a chance to see our classroom, please come to visit us soon.

Since school began we have been studying units on fruits, function of body parts, fall leaves, pumpkins and circus animals and clowns. We've also been learning the days of the week and what the weather (cloudy, rainy, sunny, etc.) is each day.

In addition to RUSTY, we have two more new friends, LINDA and MARGARET, in our class. LINDA is a graduate student in recreation and MARGARET is a graduate student in speech.

Each of us has been working very, very hard in our individual and small group lesson sessions each day. JOHN, DOUGLAS and TONY have been studying big letter "A" and little letter "a", and geometric shapes of oval and rectangle; and reading pictures. They've all been practicing writing A, a, ovals and rectangles, too. JOHN has also been learning to draw triangles. TONY and DOUGLAS have been learning to write numbers one and two.

ROBERT has been studying the color red and the shape round. He's also learning to sit for a long time while in a group lesson - that's terrific!

RYAN has been studying the colors red and blue, tracing and drawing triangles, and matching geometric shapes.

All of us are learning to recognize our names when they are written. JOHN, DOUGLAS, and TONY are learning to give their addresses.

Our thanks to Style Craft Rug Department for donating carpet scraps to cover our new table and stools. Thanks also to the Tennis Club for giving all of us some tennis balls and for allowing us to play at their playground. They have swings and a merry-go-round -- jeepers, what fun!

HELP! We need your assistance, parents. Following is a list of items we could use if any of you would like to contribute to the cause:

* 1. Storybooks
2. Old toys (car, trucks, etc.)
3. Old electric clock (can you believe our classroom doesn't have one?)
4. Small plastic pitcher for pouring
5. Old dustpan

Thanks!

See you next month!

--Kay Cansler and Eva Caldwell

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D.D.D.L. Class - February

Hello again! February has been an energetic and profitable month at the DDDL. We have several new faces in our class. First, DOUGLAS has come to us from the Frank Porter Graham class. He has adjusted quickly and we are glad to have this new friend. Secondly, our class has two new graduate students: MARGARET in Speech Therapy and MAGGIE in

Sample Newsletter Articles

Special Education. All of us are happy to have them aboard. We are looking forward to their contributions and good work in the upcoming weeks. You will also see MRS. SNOW occasionally working in our class. She will be teaching and assisting too. Her experiences in the classroom will top off the training she has received in the PATS (Parents Acquire Teaching Skills) Project. Other parents who would like to come and work in the classroom are very welcome.

SALLY has been missed greatly. She has undergone a hip operation, and has come through all like a champ! She's been such a great sport throughout that we couldn't be prouder of her. We're hoping she will come back to class soon and show off her cast!

GREG has been sick recently and we want him to come back soon. GREG can remove his shoes and socks and is working on putting them on again. He's doing a great job on putting his coat on and learning to button it!

KENNY is learning to cut with a knife and fork, and does it quite well! He too is learning to put on his coat independently, and to take his shoes and socks off as well as put them on again. KENNY has just acquired a new skill - he can pull the wagon with a passenger in it!

ALECIA is making tremendous strides. She's sewing - using a real needle and yarn; drawing a face and putting in the correct place eyes, nose, mouth, ears, hair and hands; and working on the number two. She's continuing her excellent work in writing her name, and she also helps set the table.

We are studying "things we clean with", and want to help at home. We know how to sweep, vacuum and mop. We also like to help wash and dry the dishes. Let us also help in making salads (tearing lettuce, peeling bananas) and snacks (spreading butter on crackers, making instant pudding and kool-aid, toasting Toastems.)

We will be finishing up our parent conferences soon. Pat and I feel they have been quite helpful to us and we do like to keep you posted on your children's progress. We especially appreciated your questions and suggestions.

--Jane Findlay and Pat Miller

. . . . . .

Lakeview Class - May

The end of school is near and we are all working so well. We have been very busy. We have been studying zoo animals - elephant, giraffe, zebra, alligator and monkey. Stop in and see our great worksheets where we all marked the giraffe. We are now working on meats and vegetables. We had ham sandwiches and hamburgers for snack; had a lesson with real fried chicken, and learned to tell the difference in pictures of steak, hamburger, and hot dogs. We cut up a tomato, tasted it, and looked at real corn, carrots, potatoes, and green beans and peas. We did worksheets on corn and carrots, and took a field trip to buy french fries. Next we plan to have a store with canned vegetables and play shopping. We have all been working very hard on naming these things.

MARCIA and RACHEL are working on left and right, reading "boy" and "girl", writing their names and counting four objects. In language lesson the girls and JEFF are describing the action in stories and telling their address and birthday. MARCIA can tell "I Saw It on Mulberry Street", and can read all the days of the week. WILLIAM, TERRY and JAMES have been working on the "B Book", naming animals and house-

Sample Newsletter Articles

hold objects in language lessons. We also sing do-re-me. CHARLIE loves this - you should see the look on his face! MARCIA, RACHEL, and JAMES are working on drawing faces and men, while WILLIAM, TERRY and CHARLIE learn body parts. We have been working on "around" and "behind." CHARLIE and WILLIAM are doing well at following the directions in, under and on, and the other group has learned in-front-of.

We are all doing a great job in fine motor lessons. CHARLIE is painting some wild pictures and has really learned to handle a crayon well. WILLIAM has improved so much and JAMES is doing great on following dots to make a J. Rachel follows dots to write her name, numbers and shapes. JEFF is really having a fantastic program. He does a worksheet every day at school and one at home. He is improving already on following dots. MARCIA does a very difficult worksheet with no help at all, and is learning to keep her letters sitting on a line.

We are now starting to review our best songs and activities so we can really show off for all our parents and brothers and sisters. Our covered dish supper for all should be lots of fun. See you Monday, May 22 at 6:00 for fun and food.

-- Pat Duncan and Mary Thompson

PROGRAM FOR HOME FOLLOW-UP

This week Alecia has been working on . . .

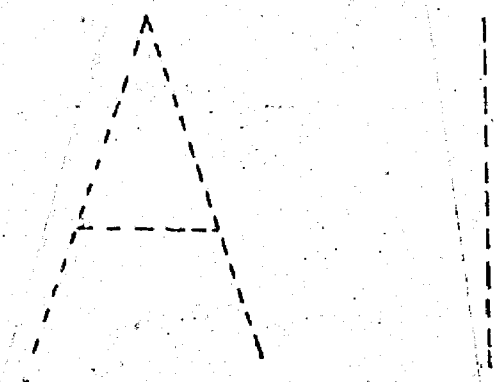
① writing
② jumping, kicking
③ numbers 1, 2

Alecia can do these things:

① Alecia can trace the letters A I
② She can jump down from a step one foot high.
③ She can kick a large ball.
④ She can count one object. She is beginning number 2.

Here are some activities to try at home with Alecia:

① Make letters A I 2" high for her to trace:



② Have her step up on stool or other object close to floor (10" to 12") and jump down by herself.

③ Roll a large ball to her and ask her to "Kick the ball."

④ Ask Alecia to "point to one" object, or "give me one" object. (example: one book, one cup).

PROGRAM FOR HOME FOLLOW-UP

This week John has been working on . . .

clothing, cross shape, and path tracing.

John can do these things:

1. Traces a path with a pencil or with his finger.
2. Traces a cross.
3. Makes a cross shape with blocks.
4. Makes or draws a cross when we say "John, draw a cross."

Here are some activities to try with John:

1. On old scrap paper, in sand or loose dirt outside, have John draw a round shape or a cross. Ask him — "John, can you draw a cross?" If he has trouble doing it, you may want to help him.

2. Ask John to name different pieces of clothing, such as dress, shirt, pants, coat, hat, raincoat, boots, and umbrella. These are the clothing words that we have studied this week. If he names each piece each time, tell him how smart he is.

PROGRAM FOR HOME FOLLOW-UP

This week Anthony has been working on . . .

① Self-help skills
② Big - little

Anthony can do these things:

① He is practicing washing with a knife & fork.
② He can sweep.
③ He can touch "big" objects and pictures and say "big" when asked to do this.

Here are some activities to try with Anthony:

① Using play dough, which you and Anthony could make together, Anthony could use a knife and fork and practice his cutting skills at home. He loves this and is doing well! (Play dough recipe: 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 tablespoon oil, and 1/2 cup water). Roll play dough around into shape of hot dog and put it on a plate to cut.

② Let Anthony help you sweep. He's so good at this, - I know he's had good training there at home!

③ A game can be played by you and other members of the family - brothers and sisters - to remind Anthony of "big." It goes like this: Say, "Look, look and see, find the big one and give it to me!" Use blocks of the same color, or pictures from sears catalogs or cards. For example: a big red dress and a little red dress; a big blue suitcase and a little blue suitcase.

Steps in Shared Problem-Solving

Families sometimes bring their problems of child management or family interaction to the school staff for help. Most of us are not mental health professionals. We can, however, help families come to their own decisions about coping with these problems or help them contact other community service agencies. A shared problem-solving approach recognizes the dignity and abilities - the positive characteristics - of the clients.

I. DEFINE THE PROBLEM AND THE OBJECTIVE

A. Open the interview in a way that encourages problem-solving activities.

1. Use a question if the client requested the interview.
2. If you requested the interview, state why you wished to meet. "As I mentioned on the phone..."

B. The first problem presented may not be the one of most importance to the client.

A helpful question may be "Are there other things you would like to discuss?"

C. Give the client enough information so that he can decide with which problems you can be of help.

Example: "None of our staff members are trained marriage counselors, but I have a list of counselors in this county which may help."
"We have been working here at the school, just as you have at home, on teaching Susan to tie her shoes. Perhaps we can agree on a way to do it that will be helpful at home and at school."

D. Define the problem and the objective in specific terms which describe behaviors.

"When Jimmy has these temper tantrums at home, Mrs. Smith, what does he actually do?"
"What does the rest of the family do when Jimmy cries and bangs his head?"
"You would like to reduce the time Jimmy spends crying?" (possible objective).
"You would like to learn about the ways the teachers react to discipline problems in the classroom?" (possible objective).

II. CLARIFY THE ALTERNATIVES

A. Give the client relevant information.

"Yes, we do allow parents to observe in the classroom."
"I am not sure what the fees are in that clinic, but here is their phone number if you would like to call from here to check with them."

B. Help the client discover and examine all alternative solutions.

"What else do you think might be done?"
"Is there anyone else who could take care of Anthony until you get home?"

C. Help the client explore the possible results of each alternative.

Examine each option to see...
Will it work?
Will it create new problems?

III. DEVELOP PLAN OF ACTION

A. Based on the alternative chosen, decide with the client the plans for follow-through.

What will the client do?
What will you do?

B. Restate the action plan, including plans for future meetings.

C. Close the interview in a warm, positive manner.

APPENDIX VIII

ON INTERVIEWING

An interview is a serious and purposeful conversation between two or more people. The prime goal is to help the interviewee. Help is an enabling act...enabling the interviewee to recognize, to feel, to know, to decide, and to choose his own course of action. The interviewer must give his time, his capacity to listen and to understand, his skill, his knowledge, and his interest.

. . . . . .

DON'T be unfriendly or indifferent. The setting for the interview should be conducive to the creation of a warm and friendly atmosphere.

DON'T interrupt. In addition to its rudeness, this cuts off the interviewee's thoughts.

DON'T ask a question beginning with "why". This puts the interviewee on the defensive.

DON'T intimidate or threaten. This confirms the lack of respect for the interviewee and tells him/her that you see yourself as the authority.

DON'T ridicule or be sarcastic. This hardly enables the interviewee to be anything but angry with you, and justifiably so.

DON'T use cliches. They usually do not convey sincerity.

DON'T show disbelief. You are questioning the validity of the interviewee's statement.

DON'T ask two questions at once. The interviewee will not know which one to answer.

DON'T use leading questions. Try to use questions which avoid getting the interviewee on the defensive or putting words in her mouth.

DON'T convey the idea that the interviewee's ideas and thoughts are unimportant by rejecting them.

DON'T scold.

DON'T tell the interviewee what to do. Instead, help the interviewee arrive at his/her own decisions.

DON'T use a double question. "Now is there something else, or can we talk about it when you come back some time to observe the class?" This places the interviewee in an "either-or" position.

DON'T avoid the reality of the situation as the interviewee sees it. That is why he or she came to you in the first place.

DON'T allow other things to seem more important than the interview that you are engaged in at the moment. If you do, you are telling the interviewee that you are not really interested in her.

DO be cordial and receptive.

DO create a setting conducive to establishing a good relationship. Chairs that face each other convey a feeling of openness and equality. A desk can be a barrier to communication.

DO employ open-ended lead-in questions as a means of allowing the interviewee to begin at his or her own starting point. Take your cues from that point.

DO be aware of body languages. Neatness of dress, posture, and facial expressions all send messages concerning what you and the interviewee really think and feel about the situation.

DO return to central themes or problems of the interview. This can be done by the use of an open-ended restatement. "You mentioned that you are not sure that James should be in this class..."

DO move into the interviewee's internal frame of reference - help her tell you how she genuinely feels about the situation.

DO use silence when appropriate. In effect you will be saying, "I am waiting and giving you time to develop your ideas more clearly."

DO be supportive. Reinforce the interviewee by letting her know that her thoughts, feelings and opinions are important.

DO be emphathetic. Be natural. Be yourself.

DO repeat some of the interviewee's phrases exactly in order to explore more fully thoughts or feelings that the interviewee has begun to express.

DO ask direct questions in order to obtain specific information about the situation.

DO assume an appropriate share of the responsibility in carrying out agreed-upon goals.

DO be honest. Do not be afraid of admitting that you do not know.

DO demonstrate that you believe in the interviewee's capacity to use his/her own resources.

DO make the tasks to be accomplished a joint effort.

DO refer to other resources when appropriate.

DO summarize the highlights of the interview with emphasis on the explicit action each will take in meeting the mutually agreed-upon goals. Preferably, the interviewee states her part in the action and the interviewer states her part. This confirms with clarity the contract between you.

DO make a definite statement of the plans for your next meeting.

DO be sincerely interested. Every word, gesture and mannerism sends the message.

. . . . . .

This handout was adapted for the Outreach Project from a handout written by Division for Disorders in Development and Learning students Lura Deaton, Charles Grubb, and Elizabeth Thaxton. The original handout was based on Alfred Benjamin's book, The Helping Interview (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1969).

SOME CONCERNS OF SIBLINGS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Siblings wonder about the cause of their brother's or sister's handicap, and sometimes fear that something may be wrong with themselves.

Siblings sometimes feel that having to help take care of the handicapped child interferes with their own activities.

Siblings may want to talk with their parents about the handicapped child's problems but not know how to bring up the subject.

Siblings may feel upset and angry when parents have to spend a lot of time with the handicapped child. Sometimes siblings try to get attention from the parents by acting like the handicapped child.

Some siblings feel that they have to work extra hard (in school, sports, etc.) to make up to the parents for the handicapped child's deficiencies.

Siblings worry about how to tell their friends that they have a retarded brother or sister and wonder if their friends will make fun of them or their family for being different.

Siblings wonder if they will be able to get married and have children.

Siblings may worry about whether or not they will have to take care of the handicapped child in the future; they may wonder if they will be able to take care of him or her if anything happens to their parents.

Siblings may want to know how they can get along better with their handicapped brother or sister at home - how to help him/her learn to do things, how to play with him/her, what to do when babysitting.

SOME CONCERNS OF PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Some parents fear the unknown - the lack of specific expectations in terms of the child's ultimate abilities.

Parents may question their own ability to cope with the problem.

Parents may fear rejection by neighbors and peers, both for themselves and for the child.

Parents often wonder about causes; may blame themselves or spouse; and may also fear additional pregnancies if problem is considered to be hereditary.

Parents are often concerned about effect of handicapped child on siblings and about their own possible neglect of siblings.

Parents may feel resentment that it "had to happen to them", and fear their own rejection of the child.

Some parents dread extended dependency of retarded child.

Parents may worry about what will happen to their child after they are unable to care for him.

Parents may feel they are defective because their child has a defect.

Parents frequently receive conflicting information and recommendations regarding such questions as possible institutionalization of their child.

Some parents worry about the adequacy of the schools, day care centers, and the treatment their child may receive from the staff.

Parents are sometimes anxious about the sexual abuse by others or misconduct of their retarded children.

Parents sometimes worry about finding the money to pay for special medical or other services needed by the handicapped child.

Parents may want to know how to work with the handicapped child at home and how to provide appropriate activities for the child.

The Council for Exceptional Children

Head Start Information Project

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), founded in 1922, is a professional organization which promotes the advancement and education of handicapped and gifted children. With a membership of over 50,000, the CEC serves the educational community through publications, governmental relations, convention activities, information services, and special projects.

The Head Start Information Project (HIP) develops resources and provides training for Head Start personnel working with handicapped children. Purposes of the Project are to:

- Facilitate efforts of local Head Start centers serving handicapped children through the preparation and delivery of information and training products;
- Provide consultative services to Head Start staff regarding services to handicapped children; and to
- Mobilize existing resources in the handicapped services field aiding Head Start in implementing a comprehensive program for handicapped children.

We welcome <u>your</u> suggestions for new Head Start products to be developed and invite your assistance in identifying existing products suitable for HIP reproduction and distribution.

Address inquiries to:

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