

Arizona District Withdraws Grandfather Card

The Scottsdale School District has removed a controversial "grandfather card" from use in a curriculum on child sexual abuse awareness called C.A.R.E. In a letter to parents dated February 8, Assistant Superintendent Glen Turner wrote that the card is no longer being used in the public school program. The C.A.R.E. program is part of the current curriculum in Kindergarten through second grade.

In the accompanying instructions signed by Barry Weiler, school principals were told to "remove the 'grandfather card' (discussion card #7c) from the C.A.R.E. kit" and to "cut pieces of paper to cover each of the areas of message card #3 from the C.A.R.E. kit, which list or refer to the exact anatomical terminology for 'private body parts.' Those portions of the card are to be taped over in such a way that the added paper will be very difficult to remove."

Parents objected that the "grandfather card" taught little children to be afraid of possible sexual abuse from their grandfathers. The parents asserted that the genitalia terms used in the discussion of card #3 were not age-appropriate for 5- and 6-year-olds.

The picture on the grandfather card shows an older man with an obviously embarrassed little girl. At the time the large picture on discussion card #7c was to be displayed to the children, the teacher was supposed to read the following from the back of the card: "SOMEONE MIGHT TRY TO TALK YOU INTO TOUCHING THE TEACHER: 'DESCRIBE to the children what is happening in this picture, using the following description as a guide. Susan's grandfather liked to give her a big hug and kiss whenever she came to visit. But Susan didn't like the way Grampa always patted her bottom over and over again when he hugged her. It made her feel confused and upset. So one day when Susan went to her grandfather's for a visit, she said politely, 'Grampa, I don't like you patting my bottom when you hug me.' Susan's grampa looked hurt and said, 'What's the matter, Susan,

don't you love me anymore?' Susan felt very embarrassed, as if she had done something wrong or silly. She didn't want to hurt her grandfather's feelings. Discuss the situation with the children."

The Scottsdale controversy started in December when parents discovered that the sexual abuse awareness program was starting. Parents were concerned that the course, which is sometimes referred to as an "incest" course, would frighten small children into worrying about or resisting affectionate touchings that are normal within most families.

Repeated efforts by parents to have access to the C.A.R.E. curriculum kit were rebuffed. Parents were not permitted to buy a copy, to take home a copy, or to make a copy. Parents even offered to leave a cash deposit to guarantee that they would return it, but were informed by Lu Ann Richardson that the school's decision against taking the curriculum home was "not debatable."

Parents then distributed copies of an address by psychologist Dr. James J. Krivacska at a national education conference last April in which he warned of the negative effect on both the behavior and the emotions of children exposed to sexual abuse prevention curricula when they are too young to handle the material.

Secrecy About C.A.R.E.

The secrecy connected with the program challenged one parent, Mrs. Carol Marter, to pursue the matter. On February 7, she telephoned the publisher of C.A.R.E. — Child Abuse Research & Education Productions Association of B.C. — in Vancouver, British Columbia, where a spokesman readily agreed to send her a kit with a bill for \$166 plus \$11 shipping costs. In the course of the conversation, the spokesman more than said that 40 C.A.R.E. kits had been sold to the Scottsdale schools, but that C.A.R.E. "does not have a home base in the United States because we are not very well received there. People tend to shy away from this sort of thing."



A few days later, Mrs. Marter received a handwritten letter from Linda LeBrun, on the Association's letterhead, refusing to ship the C.A.R.E. kit, "as the kit is a school-based program to be used by trained professionals and not designed for home use." The letter told Mrs. Marter to contact Lu Ann Richardson, the Scottsdale school's C.A.R.E. coordinator, the same person who had already refused to allow Mrs. Marter to have a copy.

Finally, Mrs. Marter discovered a state law permitting parents to have any school curricula for 48 hours. As supplied to her by Governor Rose Moffard's office, the statute reads: "School personnel designated by the governing board shall permit parents or guardians access to instructional materials currently used by or being considered for use by the school district by making available at least one copy of the instructional material for review by the parents or guardians. Parents or guardians may take printed textbooks, printed supplementary books and printed subject matter materials from the school district premises for a period of not more than forty-eight hours."

On January 10, Mrs. Marter was finally

permitted to take home the C.A.R.E. kit for a couple of days.

At the school board meeting on February 7, the question was raised about Lu Ann Richardson's affiliation with the Sex Education Advisory Council (SEAC), since she is listed on the organization's printed letterhead. SEAC appears to be a Phoenix-based group lobbying for sex education to start in Kindergarten. In Arizona, sex education now starts in the 6th grade and parental consent is required. Mrs. Marter says that the C.A.R.E. program "appears to be an attempt to evade the law and start sex ed in Kindergarten."

The C.A.R.E. kit is an elaborate box of materials including 12 colored "message cards," 7 "discussion cards," a children's book called *Trust Your Feelings*, a cassette with a song to be sung every day called "Trust Your Feelings — Your Body Belongs to You," three puppets, two colored posters, and a 50-page Lesson Planning Guide for teachers. ■

C.A.R.E. Stirs Canadian Controversy

The child abuse awareness program called C.A.R.E. has fostered much controversy in the area of its home base, British Columbia. In the spring of 1988, C.A.R.E. was piloted in two Catholic schools in Vancouver, with the anticipation that it would be introduced into all Catholic schools there in September. After a protest meeting in June, at which parents registered their complaints with the curriculum director and the clergy, it was removed and an announcement made that C.A.R.E. henceforth would not be used in any Catholic schools.

C.A.R.E. has been used in a few Canadian public schools at the option of the principal. Many letters have been written from parents who complained about the behavioral changes in their 5- and 6-year-olds as a result, they contend, of being exposed to the program.

Parents claim that the course confuses children as to whom they can trust, arouses a curiosity about their bodies which is unnatural at their ages, and above all is not suitable for such young children. They also fear that C.A.R.E. may have long-term negative effects that would prevent them from having a normal sexual life because it presents sex as dangerous and frightening. ■

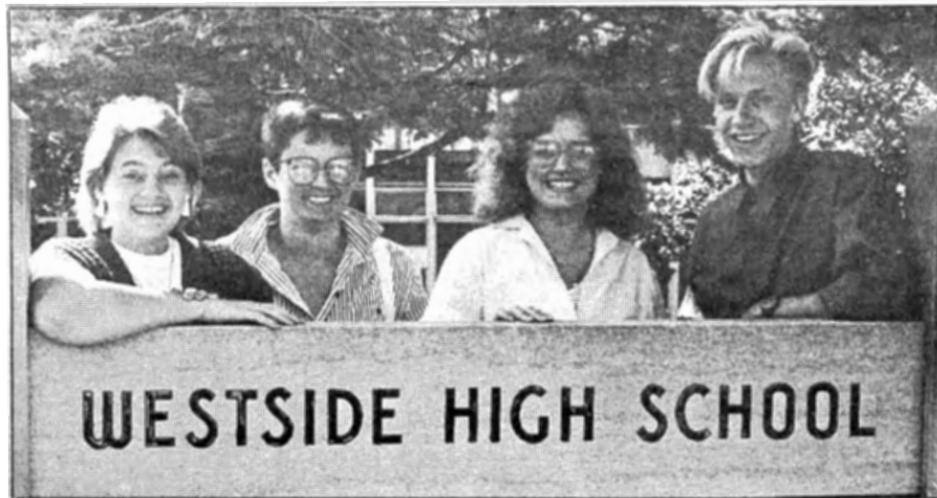
Court Decides Bible Club OK

A federal court of appeals ruled on February 8 that an Omaha, Nebraska high school cannot deny students the right to meet voluntarily as an after-school club for fellowship and Bible study. The court held that, under the Federal Equal Access Act, the Westside High School cannot deny the Bible club the same school rights as other school clubs.

The dispute began in 1985 when a group of Westside students asked permission to form a Bible club. The school denied the request even though some 30 other clubs voluntarily meet at the school. The students filed suit with the legal and financial support of the National Legal Foundation (NLF), a Virginia Beach legal advocacy group.

The case came to trial in 1987, and a decision against the students was handed down by the Federal District Court in Nebraska in 1988. The court ruled that the Bible club could not meet at Westside High School because all the other student clubs were curriculum related. The court did not explain how the Chess and Scuba Divers clubs related to the curriculum.

The National Legal Foundation appealed



Plaintiffs Kendra Kellison, Michelle Harris, Bridget Mergens, and Bryan Rensing

and argued the case, *Mergens v. Westside Community Schools*, before the Eighth Federal Circuit Court of Appeals on October 17, 1988. NLF asserted that high school students should have the same right as college students to meet together for prayer, worship and Bible study on a voluntary basis in the public schools, a right which the U.S. Supreme Court upheld in *Widmar v. Vincent* in December 1981.

This appellate court decision on February 8 was hailed by the NLF General Counsel, Doug

Davis, as a landmark decision which means that Bible clubs can now meet in public high schools without violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and that "students holding religious beliefs are no longer second-class citizens."

All the original plaintiffs in the case have graduated, but the club had no problem in adding current Westside students to the case. The school board has not announced if it will appeal the Circuit Court decision. ■

EDUCATION BRIEFS

American students scored badly on another comparison with foreign students, according to a new federally-funded study released last month. Only 40 percent of the U.S. students tested could do two-step math problems, while 78 percent of South Korean students demonstrated those skills. The test was conducted by the Educational Testing Service (with funding from the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation) and given to 24,000 13-year-olds in Canada, Ireland, South Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The new assessment, called "A World of Differences," is available @ \$10 from the Center for the Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service, Rosedale Road, Princeton, N.J. 08541.

Five times as many public school teachers "moonlight" or hold a second job as other people, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. 26% of the 2 million full-time teachers in public elementary and secondary schools hold a second job, in contrast with only 5.4% of all employed workers holding down a second job. The report on "Moonlighting Among Public School Teachers" is available from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 555 New Jersey Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20208.

The University of Washington will require a minimum of a half year of high school in fine or performing arts for admission, beginning in the fall of 1992. This is part of an effort to bolster the arts in public education because, "in the state of Washington, whenever there are budget cuts in the public schools these days, the arts are the first to get the ax," according to Association Dean Arthur Grossman. The university becomes the third major university in the country to require arts for admission.

Final figures just released by the National Center for Education Statistics show that the American taxpayers spent \$159 million on public elementary and secondary schools in 1987.

Undersecretary of Education Linus Wright has resigned government service to become an education "headhunter" in a Dallas firm. The former Superintendent of the Dallas public school system spent 13 months as the second-ranking education official of the Reagan Administration. He will head a division of Paul R. Ray & Co. in Dallas to bring a "more focused approach" to the recruitment of public-school superintendents, college presidents, deans, and other educational managers.

Colorado state legislators have introduced a bill to revoke drivers' licenses of teens who drop out of school or fail to maintain adequate grades. The bill would require 16- to 18-year-olds to obtain a letter from school officials saying they are making progress toward graduation in order to obtain a driver's license. Dropouts would have their licenses revoked.

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Texas Board Tackles Evolution

The Texas State School Board is expected to vote on March 11 on whether to accept, reject, or modify a recommendation by State Commissioner of Education William Kirby that the biology textbooks for the 1991 school year present the "scientific theory of evolution," plus the "scientific evidence of evolution, mechanisms of evolution, [and] processes of evolution."

A subcommittee of state School Board members, called the Committee on Students, is now studying Kirby's proposal and will present its own recommendation to the Board on March 11. A crowded hearing was held on February 10 at which dozens of citizens testified for and against Kirby's proposal. The proposal is contained in Proclamation 66, which lists items that should be included in textbooks adopted by the state School Board. Most of the opponents of Kirby's proposal are asking that the word "theory" be made plural, so that textbooks will teach the "scientific theories of

evolution" (instead of just one theory), and that the words "for and against" be added to the phrase "evidence of evolution" (so that it would read "evidence for and against evolution").

Civic leader Donna Blumer of Dallas urged that "the Board should give a balanced view and not censor out the evidence against evolution."

Kirby is an appointee of the Board of Education. He has been under steady pressure from People for the American Way (PAW) to require the teaching of evolution in textbooks. PAW spokesman Mike Kirby alleges that the current practice of skirting the topic of evolution is "contributing to scientific illiteracy."

A public opinion survey taken by the *Dallas Morning News* showed that 70 percent of Texans believe that creationism should be taught in school. The poll was conducted November 7-20 by the Public Policy Resources Laboratory at Texas A&M University.

The Texas School Board decision is recog-

nized as nationally important because Texas adopts its public school textbooks statewide and is the second largest purchaser of textbooks in the nation. Publishers write their texts to follow the Texas guidelines and offer the "Texafied" books to schools across the nation purchasing new textbooks.

The textbook guidelines adopted by the Texas Board of Education on March 11 will affect books bought for the 1991-92 school year and for the succeeding five years. The current biology textbooks were approved in 1984. Prior to 1984, a state rule required equal coverage of the theories of evolution and creationism in those science textbooks that dealt with the origin of man. That rule was declared unconstitutional by Attorney General Jim Mattox, and the Board of Education subsequently repealed it.

Seattle Group Publishes Rebuttal to City Report

The Public Education Committee on Children and Youth (PEC), a private group, recently released a 60-page report which analyzes the Draft Report on Gay and Lesbian Youth released in July by the City of Seattle Commission on Children and Youth. That commission's report urged utilization of "health" and "family life" courses in public schools in order to make sexual orientation "an acceptable topic of discussion in both the counseling and classroom setting." (*See Education Reporter, November 1988.*)

The PEC report, called "Should the Seattle Public Schools Teach Homosexuality as a Normal Lifestyle in School Curriculum?," commends the city's commission, chaired by Randy Revelle, for its attempt to address this problem affecting a segment of school youth. However, the PEC contends that the city commission's findings lack scholarship, objectivity, and credibility and notes that the commission report leads the reader to believe that a large segment of Seattle students struggle with homosexuality.

The PEC report's major conclusions are:

- The commission's findings were "biased and created sensationalism" and "omitted opposing testimony given by several people."

- The report "distorts data and clearly omits substantial scientific findings dealing with transformation from homosexuality to heterosexuality."

- "According to current Kinsey statistics, only 4% of men and 2% of women are homosexual. Seattle School District psychologist, Dr. Jim Moore reports that far less than 1% of middle school and high school students may be struggling with homosexual feelings."

- "Once gay, always gay" is a lie perpetuated by those who desire politically to exploit the system. There is a notable LACK of authoritative, consistent research which scientifically demonstrates a biological basis (genetic and hormonal) for homosexuality."

- "The preponderance of scientific data identifies the cause of homosexuality to be psychological. . . . (Successful treatment of homosexuality in the 1990s will be what successful treatment of alcoholism was in the 1970s and 1980s.)"

- "Youths in middle school and high school are developing and exploring their sexuality. Endorsement of homosexual behavior can lead from exploration to recruitment and from vulnerability to exploitation."

- "For those youths who are struggling

emotionally with homosexuality, the PEC emphatically opposes those persons who harass, demean, or exclude youth. Showing concern, support, acceptance, confidence, and inclusion are important ways to build self-worth and personal identity. Accurate information concerning the successful treatment out of homosexuality should be provided to our youth . . ."

- "The commission's recommendations violate the State Board of Education Guidelines and the AIDS Omnibus Bill" and "fail to include parents in the educational planning process. The report fails to reinforce or strengthen the family . . . nor does the report 'give emphasis to the importance of sexual abstinence outside lawful marriage.' (AIDS Omnibus Bill, 1988)"

The Seattle Commission on Children and Youth report offered recommendations for Seattle public schools to introduce training about homosexuality into the public school classroom and provide "positive role models" for homosexual youth. In response, the PEC report offers seven recommendations. They are:

- "1) Establish Seattle School policy prohibiting discriminatory behaviors toward persons who look or express themselves differently from teen-age 'norms.'

- "2) Develop accurate information for school personnel regarding the causes of homosexuality and the successful treatment from homosexuality to heterosexuality."

- "3) Develop faculty workshops providing accurate information."

- "4) Provide a list of knowledgeable EX-homosexual speakers."

- "5) Develop school policy to work closely with parents in matters of homosexual orientation."

- "6) Identify sensitive heterosexual faculty role models who can work with students in areas of sexual concerns."

- "7) Work with youth groups and social service organizations."

The PEC report addenda cover articles "relevant to homosexual curriculum," enacted legislation which affects this curriculum, samples of "current pro-homosexual materials available/used in public school," and a report on "Project 10" in the Los Angeles schools.

The PEC includes public health workers, parents, ex-homosexuals, and counseling professionals. The PEC report is available from the P.E.C., P.O. Box 33039, Seattle, WA 98133-0039.

Book of the Month



Our Children & Our Country: Improving America's Schools and Affirming the Common Culture, by William J. Bennett, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988, 237 pp., \$19.95.

This volume, called *Our Children & Our Country*, is the distillation of the best of William



Bennett's nearly four years of speeches as Secretary of Education under Ronald Reagan. A collection of 24 speeches by a government bureaucrat is hardly the sort of volume that one sits down and expects to read from cover to cover. But you might just do

that with this book because the speeches contain a lot of helpful common sense about a subject of many people's primary concern: their children.

Part 1, What Works in Education, lays out Bennett's "three C's": content, character and choice, as essentials in elementary schooling, along with the traditional three R's. Part 2, Let Us Now Praise, tells about good schools, good teachers, and why recent immigrants excel in U.S. schools.

Part 3, The Nurture and Protection of Our Children, states Bennett's views about moral education, sex education, AIDS education, and drug education, and why it is unrealistic to say we can't teach values. The question, according to Bennett, is whose values will our schools teach. Part 4, Higher Education: Promise and Reality, includes Bennett's address at Harvard, in which he told the faculty some unpleasant truths that he felt they needed to hear.

Part 5, Our Common Culture, contains an inspiring lecture on James Madison, whose study, scholarship and statesmanlike ideas made him the father of the U.S. Constitution. Part 6, In Defense of the West, explains why he maintains that the West is better by every test than what lies beyond the Berlin Wall.

William Bennett quotes George Orwell as saying that the first duty of intelligent men is to restate the obvious. That's precisely what Bennett does in this book, and he does it in a way that is interesting, provocative, and altogether refreshing.

FOCUS: Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Programs

By W. Allan Garneau

W. Allan Garneau is an elementary school principal in the city of Vancouver, British Columbia. The father of five sons, he has been in education for 25 years and a principal for 12.

Programs to deal with the prevention of child sexual abuse, generally accepted by parents and educators 'til now, are beginning to experience a backlash. Increasing numbers of parents are pulling their children out of programs at school, and along with others whose children have participated with negative results, they are calling for an end to the programs. Objective consideration of the programs is essential for everyone in a position of responsibility in our school system.

Why were the problems developed in the first place? First of all, our attention was drawn to the problem of child sexual abuse by what seemed to be a proliferation of cases, many of them quite repugnant to our sensitivities. Reaction quite naturally included an interest in seeking some means to avoid such events from reoccurring. Since the actual rate of incidence was somewhat obscure, "experts" began to guess, projecting figures from the known to the unknown. Once some of these guesses were revealed, they took on a legitimacy that was probably quite unwarranted.

Well-meaning people, motivated by fright and having their fears reinforced by the overwhelming media coverage of a few cases, continued to encourage development of programs they hoped would rid us of this horrible situation for our children. It seemed natural to want the school, with its captive audience, to take on the task. Not surprisingly, every child was seen as a potential victim, overlooking the fact that using the broadest definition of abuse, about three-quarters of our children would never be sexually abused. With the victim in mind, no thought seemed to have been devoted to how the innocent, non-victim might react to the program.

The initial thrust was based on the touch continuum, that is a range of 'touching' from good to bad, along with another unwarranted assumption that children would automatically sense that abusive touching would feel bad, and that appropriate touching would feel good. Did no one realize that the young, rejected 14-year-old might actually accept the attention from an exploiter as a "good" touch, since it could be perceived as affection? Or that the mushy kiss from a dear aunt at the airport would be warded off by the ten-year-old boy armed with the knowledge that if you don't like it, it must be abusive? A pioneer in the field who developed this concept has changed her mind about the value of programs based on her good-bad touch ideas. Cordelia Anderson (Kent), from Minnesota, now wishes she hadn't thought of it, since it oversimplifies the concept and makes it an easy answer to give kids; the majority of touch is, she now accepts, confusing.

There is no indication that anyone did any prior research into outcomes that might be experienced by the child who cannot relate to program information because he/she is not, nor would likely ever be, in a sexually exploitive situation. Young children have difficulty dealing with abstract thought, and consequently, their imaginations can be quite unpredictable. One immediate reaction among children is the surprising number who engage in play-acting and demonstrating situations with each other.

The most serious reaction to the programs, though, is the confusion created over what constitutes normal family affection and interaction. The emphasis placed by most programs

on the lack of trust that can be placed on family members has caused an untold number of children to shun their parents', particularly father's, normal affection. Several quite tragic occurrences have become known to the writer; the worst feature of these events is that the normal family relationship that pre-existed has been unalterably destroyed.

Parents concerned about these and other reactions have withdrawn their children from the school program (or the school). Yet, even though some of them are told that this is a legitimate option, an immediate suspicion is cast upon any parents who do so. After all, there must be something to hide. In literature which accompanies some of the programs, teachers are told of this possibility, so that parents who decline participation are suspected or even being reported and investigated for child abuse on the sole evidence of their refusal!

Even a child who has been abused can be a victim of the programs. The programs anticipate that a sexually abused child will acquire the skills to blow the whistle on the situation. What is the probable effect on a girl who has been through an abusive situation, and is now well into the healing process? What is she to think when a teacher tells the class that one can just say NO, when that was not likely the case involving her?

Another unwarranted assumption is the idea that a child can deter sexual abuse by becoming assertive and just saying NO. Who would even suggest that tactic for the child who is regularly physically or verbally abused? Why would we think that sexual abuse is any different? Not only does it likely create a false sense of security, but is it really a practical alternative for the young girl to deal with an older, physically superior male?

Returning to families, one must question the emphasis on incest found in most programs. The way in which statistics about the incidence of sexual abuse are thrown around would lead one to think that incest is quite a common form of abuse. In fact, the teachers' guide to the C.A.R.E. program makes that very statement. If sexual abuse is experienced by one in four, what portion of those are incest? The field at the moment is somewhat vague on this, but the general rate agreed to by researchers is about one per thousand. That seems hard to believe, given the attention paid to abuse by family members in programs. Further information suggests that two-thirds of the cases involving "father" mean someone other than the biological father — mother's boyfriend, stepfather, etc.

One other interesting statistic given by researchers in this field, is that any intervention program puts participants at some risk of unintended, damaging reaction. The acknowledged rate of such damage is said to occur to about 3 percent of the participants. It might be concluded from this that programs which focus on incest risk damaging 30 children per thousand, in an effort to reach a target of one.

While many outcomes are possible, the most serious damage that can occur is that of the destruction of the family through the mere suspicion of abuse. Normal relationships are at risk, putting fathers, grandfathers, uncles, cousins and brothers in a suspect position.

Where is the child encouraged to seek help? In other words, who can the child trust? Well naturally, programs emphasize teachers, police, and social workers, and so on. Parents are rarely seen as useful allies in these programs, implying that parents are the majority abusers. The number of cases that end up in court, however, seem to involve the trusty caretakers as much as if not more than the untrustworthy parents.



W. Allan Garneau

The effect these programs have on family integrity is something that will only show over time, but my guess now is that it will be quite significant. Do schools have the right to put children through a program that causes them to question their family's beliefs or traditions? Dr. James Krivacska puts it this way: "The imposition of a value system that changes a child's interpersonal interactions with family members is an infringement on family privacy, the right of a parent to inculcate their child with their family's value system."

Aside from this, one must not overlook the effect on any typical child. At the outset, I suggested that we often treat children as more sophisticated than they really are, and in the process, deny them a real childhood. The loss of innocence is something all of us should be examining in the light of recent evidence. Most young children are not capable of the abstract thought and ability to use adult virtues in their reactions to the training in the programs. We might then expect the results to be not just different from what is intended, but harmful as well. Research has shown that scare tactics, or instruction in preventative techniques beyond the child's level of understanding or ability to implement, actually increase the child's vulnerability. Children have a basic right to grow up believing that their world is fundamentally a nurturing place, to be free from undue worry or anxiety. Young children need security above all; most teachers know this. So why do they engage in a program designed to supplant this necessity?

Children need to be given sound and reliable information. One of the concepts of abuse prevention is to convince the child of body ownership. However, the concept of body ownership belies the reality that we do not allow children the right to control access to their bodies on many occasions. They must go to the dentist, wash behind their ears, which, by the way, they cannot poke full of holes at will. We understand the difference; do they?

In the long range, can we be certain that the introduction to ideas now will not have long-lasting negative effects on them as adults? Several researchers are concerned that the young child's first exposure to any discussion of sex being solely within the extremely negative context of abuse will lead to warped sexual relationships as adults.

One other question that occurs to me, and I am surprised that not many have brought it up, is the amount of time devoted to the topic in school. With the demands on the school day increasing, and time for the basic curriculum at a premium, why have teachers not been more verbal in their objection to this? Just how much time is needed for anyone to get the message across to children about their right to protect their "private parts"? It sure doesn't take ten formal sessions at home to accomplish the task.

One unintended outcome of the programs is to give children a vocabulary with which to fabricate stories about abuse. Once it was said,

and probably with some truth, that children do not lie about these things. That, as several visible, and not-so-visible court cases (over child custody) have shown, is no longer the situation.

As a school principal who takes seriously the responsibility we have for the well-being of our young children, and as a parent who has high regard for the integrity of the family, I cannot justify the undertaking of an activity which threatens both. The victims are children, but the responsibility is ours. Children send a variety of signals that something is going on, even if the message is obscure. Why cannot we spend what resources we have to better equip parents, teachers and other adults how to read the signals?

In the meantime, who can really measure just what damage is caused to any child who suffers some form of sexual abuse? For some, it is tragic and long-lasting; for others, the healing is quick. But how do we compare that to the damage possible among normal children because of a well-meaning attempt to protect them? To continue the proliferation of some of the programs we subject our children to is a betrayal. The loss of trust and closeness among a happy family cannot be justified on the basis that someone had good intentions. As G. K. Chesterton has observed, "we have this modern and morbid habit of sacrificing the normal to the abnormal."

The onus is on those who feel that these programs are safe and effective to produce sufficient evidence. Any research that purports to demonstrate the positive effect of the programs seems limited to measuring gains in knowledge, but the researchers fail to demonstrate how that knowledge is of any benefit.

In the meantime, the only reasonable step that school systems can undertake in the wake of the rapidly building file of negative reaction is to place an immediate moratorium on all such programs (even though I believe enough evidence exists to cancel them altogether). It is my opinion that, not only will evidence justifying the programs not materialize, but that any attempt to "fix" them will not succeed. When something is fundamentally wrong because the inherent philosophy is faulty, then tinkering with the parts will get nowhere.

In spite of the indicators which merit some attention, many teachers and parents will still believe that the way to deal with the serious problem of sexual abuse of children is to continue and expand the "prevention" programs. If, with the evidence accumulating, some are not compelled to change the approach, then the information available must be made known to parents and teachers before any program begins (the concept of informed consent). Then, those who still wish their children to participate should be given the option of doing so, but only on an "opt-in" arrangement.

David Finkelhor, one of the proponents of such programs for children, acknowledges that reasonable questions have been raised about the effectiveness of these programs and possible negative side effects. He admits that the present positive effects are measured merely by "enthusiastic response," and makes this incredible statement: "sexual abuse prevention promises to be one of the great social experiments of the decade." How can we continue to make guinea pigs out of our young children?

The resources spent on the programs for children must be turned toward programs which increase the awareness of adults, to better interpret the messages children send, and to bring about effective prevention. With what is at stake for our children and their families, it is vital that we change our focus soon. ■

Minnesota Survey Arouses Parents' Protest

A questionnaire to be administered this month to thousands of Minnesota public school students has aroused a storm of opposition from parents who find it objectionable because it is privacy-invasive, encourages children to inform on their parents, and asks questions which assume that illegal drug use and promiscuity are normal teenage behavior.

The 149-question survey is being given to 6th, 9th and 12th grade pupils all over the state in mid-February. According to a Minnesota Department of Education spokesman, 114,187 survey booklets had been mailed out as of February 13, and 86 percent of the schools in Minnesota are participating.

Parents particularly object to the questions that induce children to inform on their parents' illegal or socially unacceptable behavior. Those

administering the questionnaire respond that the survey is anonymous and that no one will know how any particular child answers the questions. Parents are not so sure about this, since the questionnaire starts out with asking the child's sex, grade, age, race, height and weight, which, taken together, would enable a teacher to identify any child in her class.

District Community Education Director Sharon Paulsen acknowledged to the *Winona Post* that the survey goes well beyond questions related to chemical abuse, but she said that the district "could make good use of this additional information in developing and monitoring family life and other curricula."

Parents are being told that participation in the survey is voluntary, and that, if they wish, they may come to the school and read it in

advance. Prior parental consent is not being asked, as the Pupil Protection Amendment requires for federally-funded materials that ask privacy-invasive questions. If parents want to opt their children out of the survey, parents must take the initiative and send written notice to the school.

Some of the questions which parents find objectionable are printed on this page. Mrs. Susan Roehl of Winona, Minnesota is filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education under the Pupil Protection Amendment, since the survey was admittedly financed with federal funds.

Those involved in the giving of the survey assert that it is made necessary by the provisions of the Drug-Free Schools and Communities

Act of 1986, which requires the schools to describe the extent of drug and alcohol use in the school in order to receive funding for drug education, and also to track what the school is doing in order to continue to receive the funding. The law, however, says nothing about using a privacy-invasive questionnaire.

The questionnaire was written by Patricia Harrison and Norman Hoffman of the CATOR/Ramsey Clinic in St. Paul, with money provided by the Federal Government. Some parents assert that this survey, which was financed by U.S. Department of Education funds, is just a rehash and modification of the very controversial Minnesota survey of 1986, which was financed with \$408,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ■

Sexual Abuse Program's Purpose Questioned

Child sexual abuse programs, which are being widely used in public schools in kindergarten, first and second grades, seem to stir controversy wherever they are introduced. Often referred to as "incest" courses, critics feel they seem to focus on training a very small child to be worried about the possibility of sexual abuse from his own family members.

Many families feel it is not only unnecessary but wrong to inflict such a subject on little children who have no reason to fear abuse from their own families. Those promoting the programs assert that they are trying to prevent child sexual abuse and feel that this is the best tool to combat the problem.

A scholarly paper on this subject was presented by school psychologist Dr. James J. Krivacska at a conference of the National Association of School Principals in Chicago in April 1988. He pointed out that, whereas Child Sexual Abuse Programs (CSAP) are "promoted and encouraged as prevention models, in reality they represent attempts at identification of abused children." He said that the programs do not comport with any recognized strategies that could be accurately described as "prevention" and there is no evidence to support the contention that they are preventative.

Krivacska warned that the "desire to educate children about sexual abuse cannot be allowed to override concerns for their developmental readiness to process certain types of information." The child sexual abuse programs, he said, "tend to present a genitalized view of sexuality and ignore an understanding of childhood sexuality. They tend to provide very strong negative messages associated with the genitals."

Dr. Krivacska reported that one study found that "20 percent of the students exposed to a CSAP program suffered some negative effects." He said these were of two types: behavior (withdrawal from certain types of physical contact) and emotional (heightened levels of worry or anxiety)."

Even more serious negative effects, according to Krivacska, are the desensitization of children to the issue of child sexual abuse and the use of a false allegation of abuse by the child in a manipulative way. Krivacska noted the findings of Richard Gardner, a well-known psychiatrist and author of children's books on divorce, who reported a significant increase in the number of false allegations in divorce cases.

Dr. Krivacska then discussed the concept of "body ownership," which is a key part of the CSAP curricula. Telling the small child that he owns his own body and has the right to control

access to it by others creates problems, Krivacska explains, when parents instruct the child to take a bath, receive an inoculation, or go to the dentist.

The school psychologist pointed out other concepts in the course that are confusing, such as that all secrets are bad, that the child should say NO when he does not like what is done to him, and that the child should "trust his feelings" about whether touching is appropriate or not.

He concluded that, given the problems with the available programs, and the absence of any evidence to demonstrate that they are preventative, "the wholesale introduction of these programs in schools is a source of great concern."

In another paper circulated privately, Dr. Krivacska referred to the C.A.R.E. program of Vancouver saying: "There is at least one commercially available program which does not allow its training materials to be viewed by non-professionals, supposedly because of the sensitivity of the materials. Such a prohibition should be an immediate red flag to a school board."

Dr. Krivacska is a school psychologist and private consultant in program development and evaluation. He is currently reviewing CSAP programs used throughout the country. He has been a member of the Milltown Board of Education in New Jersey for the past ten years. Recently, federally-funded research conducted at the University of California at Berkeley reached similar conclusions. News reports stated that the researchers concluded that child abuse prevention programs are ineffective and should be eliminated and that efforts to teach very young children the difference between "good" and "bad" touches confuses children and may frighten them away from normal affection.

Parents' questions about the purposes of these programs are heightened by the schools' refusal to allow them view the material or attend the class. One Florida parent viewed the child abuse prevention play to be shown to elementary students on the parents' viewing night. She felt that her child could watch the play but that she should be present to help her child deal with any questions which rose due to the program.

The school refused to allow her to sit in on the coed class, saying that her presence would "confuse the children." Since other adults, the teachers, would be present, this mother did not see how her presence would be disturbing. She and other parents did not give permission for their children to view the play. ■

Excerpts from Survey

20. How often do you attend religious services?
 Never
 Once or twice a month
 Rarely
 About once a week or more
21. How important is religion in your life?
 Not important
 A little important
 Pretty important
 Very important
34. Sometimes I think that I am no good.
 Disagree
 Mostly Agree
 Mostly Disagree
 Agree
36. I feel that my life is not very useful.
 Disagree
 Mostly Agree
 Mostly Disagree
 Agree
42. Have you felt so discouraged or hopeless that you wondered if anything was worthwhile (during the past month)?
 Extremely so, to the point that I have just about given up
 Quite a bit
 Some, enough to bother me
 A little bit
 Not at all
46. Have you ever tried to kill yourself?
 Yes, during the past year
 Yes, more than a year ago
 No
50. Has drinking by any family member repeatedly caused family, health, job or legal problems?
 Yes No
51. If yes, who? (Mark all that apply.)
 Parent who lives with me
 Parent who doesn't live with me
 Brother or sister
 Other relative
 Other person who lives with me
52. Has drug use by any family member repeatedly caused family, health, job or legal problems?
 Yes No
53. If yes, who? (Mark all that apply.)
 Parent who lives with me
 Parent who doesn't live with me
 Brother or sister
 Other relative
 Other person who lives with me
61. During the last 12 months, how often have you run away from home?
 Never
 Once or twice
 3 to 5 times
 6 to 10 times
 More than 10 times
63. If you use marijuana, how old were you when you started?
 Never
 check age on the list of numbers
64. If you use any other drug, how old were you when you started?
 Never
 check age on the list of numbers
65. If you smoke cigarettes (or use smokeless tobacco), how old were you when you started?
 Never
 check age on the list of numbers
66. How often do you use the following?
 Cigarettes
 Chewing tobacco or snuff
 Alcohol
 Marijuana
 Cocaine (coke/toot/snow)
 Crack or rock cocaine
 Inhalants (glue/poppers/gas/paint)
 Speed or amphetamines
 Sedatives or downers
 Other illegal drugs
 Other people's prescription drugs
 Steroids to build muscles
 Daily
 About Weekly
 About Monthly
 Less than Monthly
 Over a Year Ago
 Never
71. How often do you get drunk?
 Never
 Less than once a month
 Once or twice a month
 About once a week
 Several times a week
76. Where do you get the drugs you use? (Mark all that apply.)
 I don't use drugs
 From dealer
 At parties
 From same-age friend
 From older friend
 From an adult
 From brothers or sisters
 Other
 From prescriptions for someone else in family
111. Do you think it is okay for teenagers to drink at parties if they don't get drunk?
 No Yes
112. Do you think teenagers should be able to drink as long as they don't drive afterwards?
 No Yes
138. Have you ever had sexual intercourse ("gone all the way")?
 No
 Yes, once or twice
 Yes, three times or more
144. If you have sexual intercourse, how often do you and/or your partner use any birth control method?
 I don't have sexual intercourse
 Never
 Rarely
 Sometimes
 Quite often
 Always
147. Have you been pregnant?
 None
 One time
 Two or more times