

## Colorado District Upholds Parents' Rights To Exempt Pupils from Psychological Classes

### Education Secy. Alexander Supports Parental Choice

WASHINGTON, DC — "Parents should have the ultimate say in how their children are taught," writes U.S. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander in an August 8 letter to Phyllis Schlafly.

"There is no reason," the Secretary says, "in our free country that parents should be told which school their children will attend and which values in which they will be steeped, any more than they are told where to live, what church to attend, what car to buy, or whom to marry." He commends Eagle Forum for organizing parents at the grassroots level to reclaim authority over their children's education, recognizing that the success of AMERICA 2000 depends on public support.

Mr. Alexander adds that even parents who do not have a range of schools to choose from should still have a choice in curriculum alternatives and teaching methods in their particular school. "Schools that offer [parents] reasonable alternatives to methods or course materials that concern them," he writes, "create an environment of accountability, trust and respect."

Secretary Alexander makes it clear that he is well aware of the fact that many parents "want their children taught to read by the phonics



Lamar Alexander

method rather than by the whole-word method, taught abstinence in family living classes, assigned traditional elementary school readers, and educated with academically rather than psychologically oriented curricula."

Throughout the letter, he stresses the importance of parental involvement, stating that, "Choice is especially helpful when parents find a particular course offensive to their religion, morals, or values." He appears to be open to the idea of a Parents Bill of Rights saying that it is "an intriguing idea that we might need to think about." (Full text on page 2) ■

Parents of children in Boulder Valley (Colorado) School District won a landmark victory in September when the superintendent mailed to every family a 17-page pamphlet entitled "Students' and Parents' Rights." The publication of this pamphlet capped a two-year campaign by Boulder parents led by David Reed to protect school children from intrusive psychological procedures in the classroom such as hypnosis, psychodramas, psychological fantasizing, and nosy questionnaires.

Section C on Student Psychological Services affirms that "only those persons holding relevant certificates or licenses . . . may expose students to a psychiatric or psychological method or procedure." The pamphlet states that "parents can exclude a student from any psychological service by an advance written notice" and that "all procedures may only be performed after acquiring written permission from a student's parent or guardian."

Section A on Health Education assures parents that they have the right to be "notified in writing, prior to the student's attendance in a health education course, of topics to be taught." They also have the right to "inspect all health program materials during school hours upon request" and to "exclude their child from all or part of health instruction by submitting an approved exclusion form."

The right to exclude their children from "all or part" of sex education is particularly important to parents because the entire course may be objectionable to some, but only a small part may be objectionable to others. Many public schools now have a policy called "infusion" under which they integrate psychological or explicit-sex materials with academic work and then tell the parents that it is "impossible" to separate the one from the other. (See form elsewhere on this page.)

The booklet sets up accountability about materials used in sex education classes. It states that "all audio-visual and supplementary classroom instructional materials related to human sexuality shall be reviewed regularly by a committee of teachers and administrators."

Parents believe it is important not only that they have the right to exempt their children from any or all of the school's health education programs, but also that the school must make full disclosure of all health education curricula to parents and students. The exemption and disclosure requirements together help to achieve a friendlier relationship between parents and school administrators.

The Boulder Valley school policy is the result of a state law that went into effect July 1, 1990 (Colorado Revised Statute 22-32-109.2) requiring all boards of education "to formally adopt a policy concerning the delivery of all educational programs and courses of instruction or study which expose pupils to any psychiatric or psychological methods or procedures involving the diagnosis, assessment, or treatment of any emotional, behavioral, or mental disorder or disability." (See *Education Reporter*, 8-90.)

The law required the state department of education to "prepare model policies to provide guidance to boards of education" about this policy. David Reed served on the state task force that helped the Colorado Department of

Education to prepare model policies. In addition, the law requires that all boards "provide adequate opportunity to allow review by and receive recommendations from" parents.

Reed stated that "an incredible amount of work" over two years went into the effort to make sure that local school boards implement this law, writing hundreds of letters to their state

**"Parents will be involved when they are informed about what is going on."**

legislators and to the Colorado state department of education. "One of our obstacles," he recalls, "was convincing officials that the target of their complaints was not academic courses but psychiatric techniques masquerading as academics. Once I got that point across, the campaign moved right along."

Parents generally don't know what rights they have in relation to their local public school, and school systems often conceal or try to evade parental rights laws. The new Boulder Valley booklet opens with a message from the superintendent encouraging "parent involvement in the educational programs of their children" and inviting parents to call the superintendent or principal "if you have questions."

Since the publication of the booklet, the Boulder Valley schools have been much more open about curriculum. Materials sent home to parents now provide a good overview of courses that contain psychological or health content, a list of the dates on which controversial topics will be discussed, instructions about how to find out more information, and an easy form for parents to use if they want to exempt their children from any or all of the course.

As a result, there is now a routine and simple procedure for parents to exempt student from courses in self-esteem, stress, suicide, death and dying, sex, and experimental courses in AIDS.

The "Students' and Parents' Rights" pamphlet also incorporates into the Boulder Valley policies the entire federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, which requires prior parental consent before a student can be subjected to psychiatric or psychological examination or treatment by materials funded through the U.S. Department of Education.

Reed believes that the publication of "Students' and Parents' Rights" establishes the precedent "that every parent has the right to be kept informed" and "to have a more effective say in their children's education."

Reed believes that this two-year process explodes the myth of "parent apathy," which is a frequent excuse given by the public schools to justify their use of psychological and behavioral courses. The Boulder Valley experience shows that parents will be involved when they are informed about what is going on and when the school receives parents with an open door policy instead of with hostility. "After all," Reed says, "they are our children -- and our schools." ■

See text of "Rights" on page 4.

#### BOULDER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-2 HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

##### Parental Notification of Instruction and Exclusion Request

As part of the School District's comprehensive curriculum, students are instructed in age-appropriate components of the approved health curriculum.

During Health, instruction in your child's classroom will include the following topics of the health curriculum:

1. Self-Responsibility for Wellness
2. Stress Management
3. Mental Health
4. Suicide
5. Death and Dying
6. Skills for Life - HIV Education (includes Stay in Control Skills and Human Sexuality Information) This is a pilot unit.
7. Nutrition and Fitness
8. Substance Abuse
9. Family Crisis - Date Rape, Battering, Incest
10. Diseases and Disorders - Cardiovascular Disease, Cancer, Communicable Diseases
11. Human Sexuality - Endocrine and Reproductive Systems, Relationships, Parenting, Contraception, Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Please feel free to call \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ if you wish to discuss any of the above topics.

You may exclude your child from all or any part of the above topics by indicating your desire to do so and by returning this signed form to your child's school before \_\_\_\_\_.

I wish to exclude \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_ the following topics \_\_\_\_\_ of the health curriculum units described above.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

\*Please be aware that teachers receive specialized training in health education topics.

## EDUCATION BRIEFS

Missouri Attorney General William Webster on Oct. 12 asked a federal judge to declare the St. Louis schools "unitary" and to return control to the St. Louis School Board. For the last 20 years, St. Louis public schools have been run by the courts, which has meant 20 years of forced busing. Webster said Missouri taxpayers have paid \$760 million in these school desegregation costs since 1972. Thomas Bugel, leader of the anti-busing faction which was defeated in the April school board election, said Webster's motion was a "vindication of our position all along," namely, that "unitary status" could be achieved immediately. The April school board election is a local scandal because of evidence of fraudulent ballots and failure to disclose how large sums of money were spent.

The same day, an angry teenager fired at least four shots into a school bus, making it the third incident in three weeks in which children have been injured on buses in the St. Louis city-county school desegregation program. When the driver stopped the bus to call police, 4 students jumped off, armed themselves with handguns and a shotgun, went to the house of the 16-year-old who had shot at them, and fired two shots into the house. On Oct. 2, 10 children were taken to the hospital after their bus was pelted with bottles. "School buses seem to get pelted by bricks and rocks every day," said Lou Ann Wachter, bus company manager.

The School Board in Shelby County, Tennessee voted 4-3 on Sept. 26 in favor of the abstinence-based sex education program, *Sex Respect*. Because of its high teen pregnancy rate, Shelby County was required by the Tennessee Family Life law to implement a sex education program. Over 400 people showed up at the Public Forum to discuss which sex education program would be chosen. Of the 30 people who spoke up at the forum, only 5 were against *Sex Respect*, and 3 of those 5 were not parents but Health Department Officials who advocated giving contraceptive information to students.

*Choosing a School for Your Child* is the title of an excellent 30-page booklet available from the U.S. Department of Education. It contains simple, helpful information on why you should choose your child's school, what kinds of schools are available, collecting information on schools, visiting a school, and getting your child into the school you choose. For a single free copy, send your name and address to Choosing a School, Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009.

*Education Reporter* (ISSN 0887-0608) is published monthly by Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund with editorial offices at Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002, (618) 462-5415. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the persons quoted and should not be attributed to Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund. Annual subscription \$25. Back issues available @ \$2. Second Class postage paid at Alton, Illinois.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE SECRETARY

August 8, 1991

Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly  
President, Eagle Forum  
Suite 203  
316 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Mrs. Schlafly:

Thank you for your letter and for your unflagging efforts on behalf of parents across the country. I apologize for the delay in replying to your letter. It was a pleasure visiting with you.

The success of the Eagle Forum in organizing parents at the grass-roots level to reclaim authority over their children's education is a model of the populist call to action that AMERICA 2000's own success will depend on. I appreciated your comments on choice of curriculum as an important component of parental choice in education. I cannot agree with you more that parents should have the ultimate say in how their children are taught.

As you know, parental choice is a central component of the President's AMERICA 2000 strategy to move the Nation toward educational excellence. President Bush and I share your commitment to empowering parents to make the most important decisions about their own children's education. There is no reason in our free country that parents should be told which school their children will attend and which values in which they will be steeped, any more than they are told where to live, what church to attend, what car to buy, or whom to marry. And if parents want a particular approach taken in the education of their children, our schools should do everything reasonable to enable them to get it.

Ideally, of course, parents will have the opportunity to select a school that fits their philosophy and their child's learning style. But, as you suggest, even when they do not have a range of schools to choose from, they can still exercise a degree of choice if the school their child attends is flexible and responsive enough to offer them alternatives on curriculum, teaching methods, and other matters. Schools that encourage dialogue with parents and offer them reasonable alternatives to methods or course materials that concern them create an environment of accountability, trust, and respect in which the child's education is treated as a cooperative, rather than a competitive, endeavor.

I know that many concerned parents--not just Eagle Forum members--want their children taught to read by the phonics method rather than by the whole-word method, taught abstinence in family living classes, assigned traditional elementary school readers, and educated with academically rather than psychologically oriented curricula. Similarly, parents should be able to choose among disciplinary approaches, forms of classroom instruction, dress codes, and methods of teaching English to minority language-speaking children. As you suggest, choice is especially helpful when parents find a particular course offensive to their religion, morals, or values. In such a case, a school that offers parents a choice of reasonable alternatives, or at least of "opting out," is more likely to earn the loyalty of the parents and encourage their involvement in their child's education and in the school.

Parents are the keys to their children's education, and there is no part of the AMERICA 2000 strategy in which they do not have an important role. I assure you that I will continue to speak out as an advocate for parents and their rights. The reform we are calling for in AMERICA 2000 endorses school accountability, flexibility, and respect for the beliefs of parents. I appreciate any help you can give us in rallying the grass-roots American support we need to restore autonomy to our parents and excellence to all our classrooms.

You mention in your letter a Parents Bill of Rights. That's an intriguing idea that we might need to think about. I would like to hear more from you about what such a document would include and how it would be implemented.

I commend you and the Eagle Forum again on your active commitment to families and specifically to parental choice and look forward to working together for the cause of excellence in education.

Sincerely,

Lamar Alexander  
Lamar Alexander

400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20202-0100

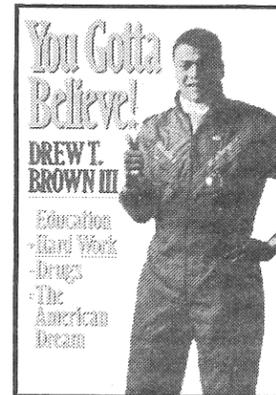


## Book of The Month

**You Gotta Believe!** by Drew T. Brown III, William Morrow and Co., New York, 1991, \$19.95.

The story of Drew T. Brown III is a true success story. Coming from the projects of Harlem in New York City, he beat the odds and achieved the American Dream.

Brown is a unique individual. Every month he travels around the country telling his story to high school, college, and adult audiences. His story inspires people to believe in the American Dream and to aspire to get off drugs and off the street — and to get degrees and jobs.



Brown is the founder and president of The American Dream — a program to combat the use of illegal drugs and to confront education issues that currently threaten our nation. He says, "This organization is my vehicle for igniting students with low levels of self-confidence and self-esteem to get smoked. Not on drugs or mediocrity. But on this nation's time proven values. My formula is simple: Education + Hard Work - Drugs = Success and the American Dream."

He stresses the importance of knowing how to read, saying, "How did they keep black people down 200 years ago? You think it was with some whips, or with chains, or by making us pick cotton? No. They kept a whole nation of people slaves — some who used to be kings and queens -- just 'cause they wouldn't let us read."

He also emphasizes a college education. He says, "Some of you might say, 'I'd like to go to college, but I can't afford it.' . . . You get a loan. You get a grant. You work nights. You work days. The fact is: You can't afford *not* to go to college."

He explains in his book how an increasing number of kids no longer dream. His book can help change that. He wants kids to be hopeful about their futures — to dream and work hard to make those dreams a reality. He strives to make kids realize that they, too, can be a proud and productive citizen of the United States.

As a youngster, finding himself drawn into the fringes of the drug culture, Brown looked to college as his escape. After he received his degree, he joined the Navy and became a carrier jet attack pilot. Today he is a lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve and a pilot for Federal Express.

*You Gotta Believe!* is about trying hard and doing your best, and Brown has reached millions with his powerful message. He has received thousands of letters of thanks from people who found that his simple formula works for anybody anywhere. This book is inspiring for anyone needing answers to making it in high school, college, or a career. His casual, entertaining, and often humorous writing style meets people where they are, but encourages them to go farther.

## Teen Sex Survey Defunded

WASHINGTON, DC — Funds originally marked for a nationwide teen sex survey were reassigned to Title XX for use with abstinence programs under an amendment sponsored by Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) which passed the Senate in September. The legislation subsequently survived a motion to table in the House, by a vote of 34 to 66.

The survey, cancelled by Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan in response to public outrage, would have asked explicit questions about the sexual practices (including unnatural and illegal acts) of 24,000 teenagers in grades 7 to 11. The five-year survey was to be conducted by the University of North Carolina at a cost to the taxpayers of \$18 million.

The project, initiated by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, had been approved by Assistant Secretary for Health James Mason and Director of the National Institutes of Health Bernadine Healy.

The importance of reassigning the funds even

after the survey was cancelled was stressed by Helms' spokesman John Mashburn. "Even if the Administration proposes nixing the survey now, there's no guarantee it won't come back," he explained. "The money was still in that bill for the survey; and as long as the money was there, there was a chance that it could somehow be finessed and used for that purpose."

According to Mashburn, the best way to ensure that the funds would never be used for the survey "was to take that money and use it for something else. And since Title XX hadn't been funded, that was the best project we could do."

Title XX, which provides funds for abstinence-based sex education, "is the only program that makes sense," said Mashburn. Among the abstinence programs that receive Title XX funds are *Sex Respect* of Golf, Illinois, *Teen-Aid* of Spokane, Washington, and *R.S.V.P.* of Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

# FOCUS: What We Can Learn from Sweden

by Dr. Eric Brodin

As state legislatures and state boards of education meet throughout our country, we frequently find programs on the agenda which involve new and often radical social legislation intimately affecting the school child and his family. Such proposals often include whether to require parental consent for an abortion, the installation of school-based clinics, or the inclusion of sex education in the regular school curriculum. The proponents of such social legislation often seek to justify their programs because they are needed to stem the growing tide of illegitimate births, sexual crimes, venereal disease, and divorce.

These are real problems in many societies, and the United States is no exception. In order to provide an antidote to these social ills, America's sociologists, legislators and others look to other countries to provide some solutions. Sweden's welfare state is a prime example of advanced and progressive social legislation in these areas, so it should be possible to judge the fruits of sex education in Swedish schools by the results it has had in Sweden's society.

The Swedish society made a radical turn-around in this century. In the early decades industrialization took root, but not until the 1930s did some of its economic benefits reach the working class. By 1932 the Swedish Labor Union Movement and the Social Democratic Party had reached a position of political strength and won a socialist majority in both chambers of the Swedish parliament.

The socialist program showed a great distrust for the three institutions which the socialists said were associated with the evil forces in a class-bound society: the monarchy, the bankers, and the state church. They viewed with suspicion the emphasis on the middle-class values governing the family. Discussions began in the 1930s about the introduction of sex education into the Swedish public school curriculum. The first teacher's manual on sex education was published by the Royal Board of Education in 1940. Its program of instruction was introduced into most schools during the 1940s and became a compulsory subject in 1956.

The teachers were instructed to teach with "a pronounced ethical basis" and were told that, while some may feel that the restrictions are oppressive, "it should be made clear that this is better in the long run than giving in to the desire of the moment."

## "The child is part of the collective."

It was not long, however, before these "moralizing" intentions came under attack. By 1963 the Royal School Board, in a memorandum to the Minister of Education, proposed that the handbook be rewritten "in view of the changes which have arisen regarding values and ideas in the area of sexual life." The Stockholm newspaper *Aftonbladet* called for reforms of the sex education goals in order to make the school "not as a norm-giver, but as one of moral neutrality."

Sex education in Swedish schools reflected the radicalization of the social debate in Sweden. In the mid-1960s, various radical proposals were put forth by the socialists and communists, which effectually changed the position of the family in Swedish life. The legacy of Gunnar and Alva Myrdal's important books, *Crisis in Swedish Population Policy* (1934) and *Nation and Family* (1941), found favor in the radicalized climate of Sweden's political life after Olof

Palme became Minister of Education in 1968. (He served as premier in 1969-1976 and 1982 until his assassination in 1986.)

One of the most perceptive analyses of the impact of the Myrdal views is Dr. Allan Carlson's *The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics*. Based on his doctoral dissertation, it was published in 1990. In a challenging chapter entitled "The Use and Abuse of Social Science," he points out that the decade of the 1960s was important in radicalizing Swedish family policy.

## "Sex education was compulsory in Swedish schools."

In 1961 the editor Eva Moberg wrote her influential "The Conditional Emancipation of Women." In 1968 the Report to the United Nations of "The Status of Women in Sweden" was issued. In 1969 a working report was issued entitled "Toward Equality: The Alva Myrdal Report to the Swedish Social Democratic Party." All these publications reflected a view of the family very different from traditional Western concepts.

In 1971, the Commission on a New Marriage Law established new social priorities with utmost clarity. It reported: "There is no reason to refrain from using legislation on marriage and the family as one of the instruments in the struggle to shape a society in which every adult takes responsibility for himself without being economically dependent on another and where equality of the sexes is a reality."

Sex education in the schools was a necessary preparation for a society in which the family, as it was traditionally known, was to be eliminated. In 1977 the National Swedish Board of Education issued new and more radical guidelines in which marriage was viewed as totally irrelevant to governing sexual relations.

Sex education was made compulsory in Swedish schools for what appeared to be very good reasons. These were: To teach equality of the sexes, thereby eliminating strife in the family; to bring down the rate of divorce; by instruction in the use of contraception, to eliminate unwanted pregnancies, abortions, venereal disease, and sexual crimes. Let us take a look and see if these goals have been achieved.

Professor Neil Gilbert visited Sweden in 1986 as a Fulbright Scholar. On his return he wrote, *inter alia*, in the *Wall Street Journal* of June 27, 1987: "Nourished by all these social provisions one would expect the Swedish family to be stable, secure and flourishing. This is not the case. With four divorces for every seven marriages in 1984, Sweden registered one of the highest divorce rates in the Western world. At an average of 1.8 children per family, the birth rate is considerably below the level necessary to sustain the Swedish population. In 1984 almost 25 percent of all pregnancies ended in abortion. Beyond the high divorce and low birth rate, an astounding 46 percent of the births were out of wedlock. . . . Over 50 percent of the population living with partners in the 20-to-30 year old group is unmarried, preferring what has come to be termed consensual unions."

Since Gilbert wrote that in 1987, the number of illegitimate births has climbed to more than half of the total. Despite the easy availability of contraceptive devices (free from the school nurse, or in convenient automats across the street from the school), out-of-marriage pregnancies still take place. Abortions still take place: 7,747 were performed on teenagers in 1985. Unfortunately, there has been no decline

in venereal disease or sexually motivated crimes.

During the author's month-long visit to Sweden in August 1990, a conference of the International Academy of Sex Research took place in Stockholm. One of the early advocates of sex education, Maj-Brith Bergström-Walan proudly pointed out that "Sweden was the first in the world with obligatory sex education already during the 1950s. We saw it as an important step in the fostering of the youth." By 1969 sex education was changed and teachers were told not to "preach abstinence during the teens," but to "present different alternatives and let the pupils choose for themselves how they wanted to live."

Indeed the society created in Sweden (which some call "the contraceptive society") is hardly a society which, as Bergström-Walan puts it, "sexuality is a source of joy and happiness to the people." Rather to the contrary.

The Swedish professor and conservative party leader, Staffan Burenstam-Linder, points out in his introduction to the recently published book *The Heartless Welfare State*: "In the midst of the welfare state, with its enormous expenditures and programs for social security, there is a prevailing misery. Increasing criminality, misuse of drug and alcohol, stress, suicide, mobbing, child-abuse, violence against women, splintered families, anonymity, loneliness, estrangement, vandalism and ruthlessness characterize our every-day life. . . . We are surprised at the social problems in our midst, because the power of the welfare state to create happiness has been overestimated. In reality the problems of the welfare state are, to a large extent, brought on by the nature of the welfare state itself." (p. 9).

## "Sweden is a model for us to avoid—not imitate."

Swedish sex education was a part of the whole pedagogical picture where the child was seen as a part of a collective, where individualism was discouraged, and the school should serve as a protector of the children and a protagonist against the parents. Swedish education was also part and parcel of Sweden's family policies. These were found in almost all aspects of Swedish governmental decrees and legislation, including housing, medical care, social services and even pension programs.

The sex education programs in Swedish education formed the first thrust into an educational and social system ideology in which the family as a unit was to be continually denigrated. In his important work *Disturbing the Nest — Family Change and Decline in Modern Societies*, David Popenoe concludes that, "In Sweden, the family as an institution has declined more and become weaker than in any other advanced society. The Swedish family has moved farther from the traditional bourgeois nuclear form than has the family in any other nation in the world."

An increasingly large portion of the Swedish people ask whether they can change the society in another direction, or at least divert it somewhat from what appears to be an increasingly totalitarian collectivism. Many who once believed it is impossible to arrest the welfare state, have left Sweden; others have remained, thinking that there is still hope.

In his thought-provoking book *The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics*, Dr. Allan Carlson of the Rockford Institute concludes: "Coming full circle, the Swedish vision now flows back to the United States. Ideas born through contact

with progressive American writers in 1929-30 have evolved into a model society now celebrated by the American political left. The Swedish regime based on state-protected gender equality, social parenting, individualized morality, central guidance and collectivized housing is held up in the United States today as the solution to the work-family conundrums posed by modern post-industrial life. Some advocates even label their proposed program of state daycare, paid parental leave, gender-role engineering, and socially conscious housing a 'family policy' and urge its adoption on behalf of 'society's children.' In short, the Myrdal influence remains active in our day, still defining and fueling the fundamental domestic policy contest of the twentieth century." (p. 204).

## "Socialism brought neither prosperity nor happiness."

It is high time for those who urge the United States to imitate the many socialist and collectivist social policies of which Sweden was a pioneer, to take a close and critical look at the Swedish welfare state.

In the final analysis, it has brought neither economic prosperity nor social happiness. Laws, regulations and restrictions have reinforced a socialist ethos in which the individual has value only as a harmonious part of a collectivist whole. The family has hardly any function to perform because an overweening welfare state provides the services and functions of the family.

Sweden is certainly a model — but it is a model more to avoid than to imitate. Those who are unwilling to learn from the lessons of history are bound to repeat their mistakes. Our country and its youth deserve a better fate than that which has befallen Sweden.

Dr. Eric Brodin is a professor, author, lecturer, and world-traveler. He is a native of Gothenburg, Sweden and has personally observed the effects of European governmental policies on the family. He is the director of the Foundation for International Studies. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science and International Studies at the University of Geneva in Switzerland. Requests for speaking engagements should be sent to: Dr. Eric Brodin, Foundation for International Studies, Box 219, Buies Creek, NC 27506-0219, (919) 893-8786.

### Available Items by Dr. Eric Brodin

SWEDEN'S FAMILY POLICIES: LESSONS FOR AMERICA . . . . . \$4.50

This booklet contains two major addresses given at the Eagle Council conferences in 1981 and 1985 plus the article "Sweden: The Contraceptive Society" and the essay "Why I Left Sweden."

SWEDEN THE BANKRUPT WELFARE STATE . . . . . \$4.50

Analyzes the effects of almost half a century of the socialist welfare state in Sweden including a hard look at economic, political and social consequences of "cradle to grave" welfarism.

SWEDEN'S PARADISE LOST . . . . \$17.00

50 articles (135 pages) on the nature and failure of the Swedish Welfare State written 1968-1985.

Foundation For International Studies  
Box 219  
Buies Creek, NC 27506-0219  
(919) 893-8786

## DUSO Removed from School

JEFFERSON CITY, MO — Chuck Rosenkoetter and Larry Reed were not prepared for the uproar that erupted when plans to introduce the DUSO self-esteem curriculum as part of a comprehensive counseling program at Blair Oaks Elementary became public. Rosenkoetter, principal at Blair Oaks, and Reed, superintendent of the Cole R-2 district to which Blair Oaks belongs, express amazement that DUSO provoked such opposition. After all, self-esteem courses are cropping up in public schools all over the country.

### The Dolphin who is an imaginary guide.

DUSO is an acronym for Developing an Understanding of Self and Others. DUSO is also the name of a friendly Dolphin who is introduced to the children as an imaginary guide who takes them to a secret place where they can "float" underwater while a musical tape is played.

"I was not aware of any of the literature" critical of DUSO, Reed insists. "I feel like the material in DUSO is appropriate," he says. "It's widely used and widely respected."

"A couple of people had some real legitimate concerns" about the DUSO material, Rosenkoetter concedes, "but those people's statements got exaggerated and blown out of proportion." He points out that Blair Oaks Elementary had a counseling program six years ago that included DUSO, and no parents complained at that time. Rosenkoetter says he was merely reinstating that program at the request of a citizens advisory committee.

Nevertheless, Rosenkoetter and Reed decided to remove DUSO from the Blair Oaks counseling program. Rosenkoetter concluded that DUSO wasn't worth fighting a battle with parents. "It was simpler to remove it," he explains, noting that DUSO was "just one of the resources we were planning to use." Reed concedes that DUSO was dropped "primarily for public relations purposes." He points out that "there are other sources we can turn to that can do the same thing."

Shirley Bernskoetter, president of the Blair Oaks Home and School Association, was perhaps the most vocal critic of the new counseling program. "I knew enough to be suspicious of counseling programs," she says. As soon as she heard that such a program was to be implemented at Blair Oaks, she paid a visit to the school to find out what it would consist of. Another concerned parent, Reverend Randy Rainwater of the Liberty Road Baptist Chapel, accompanied her.

Principal Rosenkoetter assured Bernskoetter and Rainwater that there would be no "New Age stuff" in the program (though he later asked at a public meeting what the term "New Age" meant). Both parents became concerned, however, when they reviewed course materials provided by the school.

"I was concerned about DUSO with its guided fantasies and intrusive questionnaires," Rainwater recalls. Bernskoetter reacted even more strongly. "When I reviewed the DUSO curriculum and the other counseling/guidance material," she relates, "I became angry!"

Objecting not only to the content of the counseling program, but also to the fact that her children — and everyone else's — had been enrolled without parental permission, Bernskoetter began calling other parents to alert them. She and Rainwater both removed their children from the program before the school term began. So far, some 20 of the 200-plus students at Blair Oaks have been exempted from the program by their parents.

Dr. Alan Braun became aware of the proposed counseling program while serving on a committee established to solicit citizen input on the school system's finances. He, too, withdrew his child from the program before the term began and alerted other parents at a cub scout meeting. Dr. Braun was personally familiar with the unfortunate effects of New Age materials, having "taken care of a couple of kids who got real messed up from New Age things," including one who attempted suicide as a result of his involvement with the game Dungeons and Dragons.

Dr. Braun consulted three local psychiatrists and described the techniques employed in the DUSO program. All three "felt it was dangerous," warning that guided fantasies can "mask a depression" and make its treatment more difficult.

Concerned parents succeeded in having the counseling program placed on the agenda of the next school board meeting and arrived in force to present their objections, only to discover that DUSO had already been withdrawn! Among the objections raised, Rainwater recalls, were the possibility of psychological damage to students exposed to the material, the incorporation of New Age techniques among the activities, and the contention that the program was not what the citizens advisory committee had intended.

Superintendent Reed concedes that members of the citizens committee may have had a "reactive" guidance program in mind when they made their recommendation. The program adopted at Blair Oaks, however, is "proactive."

With a proactive program, Principal Rosenkoetter explains, "you go into the classroom and present lessons" to all the students, rather than waiting to respond only to those students who request counseling. While insisting on the superiority of the proactive approach, Rosenkoetter concedes that Blair Oaks has "no more disciplinary problems than any other schools," and in fact has an extraordinary low drop-out rate (2% versus 25% nationally). Rosenkoetter and Reed now agree that DUSO could be dangerous *if misused*. "DUSO has more of a tendency to get you into the psychiatric area," concedes Rosenkoetter, noting that parents have a legitimate concern that "you can take it into deeper areas where damage can occur." The principal does not share their fear of guided imagery, however, noting that "Saturday morning cartoons are forms of guided imagery."

Although DUSO was withdrawn just prior to the meeting, the school board voted to form a committee to study what remains of the Blair Oaks counseling program. Rev. Rainwater, Dr. Braun, and Shirley Bernskoetter's husband, Marvin, a school board member, are among those named to the advisory panel. "We're trying to solicit input," explained Superintendent Reed.

Reed passed out a list of terms at the first meeting, specifying methods, such as guided imagery and role-playing, that will be excluded from the counseling program. At their second meeting, the committee reviewed state recommendations for guidance programs and discussed ways to implement them without, in Rev. Rainwater's words, "getting into problem areas."

Overall, Dr. Braun is pleased with the effort of the new committee so far. After the first meeting, school officials "had a better understanding of where we were coming from than they had before," he observes. "They were willing to listen to us." For the time being, however, Braun intends to keep his children out of the program, as do Bernskoetter and Rainwater.

## Students' and Parents' Rights

### A. Health Education (Policy IGAE)

The Board of Education believes that the goal of health education in the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) is to promote in all students the desire and ability to be healthy — physically, mentally, and socially. The health education policy generally outlines curriculum topics that are addressed in health education and identifies parent rights regarding health education issues. The following are the rights of parents or students who are eighteen years old or older as they pertain to the health education policy.

- Parents/guardians/students (18 or older) shall be notified in writing, prior to the student's attendance in a health education course, of topics to be taught.
- Parents/guardians may inspect all health program materials during school hours upon request.
- Parents/guardians may request a conference with the instructor and/or principal for assistance in determining whether to request an exemption for the student from the planned instruction.
- Parents/guardians may exclude their child from all or part of health instruction by submitting an approved exclusion form. You will receive this form from your school.
- Exclusion records shall be maintained in student files.

Teachers who provide instruction in health education shall have preparation in the subject area, either at the preservice or inservice level.

\* \* \*

### C. Student Psychological Services (Policy JHD)

The Boulder Valley School District is committed to providing responsible psychological services to students under appropriate conditions. The Student Psychological Services Policy outlines important safeguards provided for all students. Rights under this policy are highlighted below.

- Only those persons holding relevant certificates or licenses, or facilities defined by law, may expose students to a psychiatric or psychological method or procedure involving diagnosis, assessment, or treatment of any emotional, behavioral, or mental disorder or disability.
- Allowed procedures may only be performed after acquiring written permission from a student's parent or guardian or from the student in those circumstances in which federal or state law allows the student to obtain such services in confidence without prior notice to the parent or guardian.
- In case of a crisis or trauma that affects many students, or in an emergency affecting an individual student, psychological support can be offered without prior written permission. Efforts will be made to notify parents before meeting with the student unless impractical.
- Parents can exclude a student from any psychological service by an advance written notice to the school principal.

\* \* \*

Boulder Valley School District  
Boulder, Colorado  
September, 1991

## Tax Funds Used for Gay Outreach

WASHINGTON, DC — Federal funds intended to prevent drug and alcohol abuse among teenagers were used by homosexual groups to recruit adolescent members, according to Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC). Helms' office is currently investigating the misuse of such funds by homosexual groups in New York City and San Francisco, and preparing legislation to make guidelines for use of the funds more specific.

Helms' spokesman John Mashburn explained that federal funds granted under the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 are intended for use in drug and alcohol abuse education and prevention programs for school-age youth. "It's clear, however, that in both San Francisco and New York federal Drug Free Schools and Communities Act money has been used to support homosexual outreach programs in the schools," he said.

According to Mashburn, federal funds were distributed to the states in two ways. Those channeled through Governors' offices, he said, were intended for use with "high-risk" youth, and were thus "subject to federal definitions of what constitutes a high-risk youth." Other funds were funneled directly to the state education agencies without restrictions.

Mashburn emphasizes that homosexuality was not included in the federal definition of "high risk." Targeted youth were those considered at "high risk of substance abuse, not high risk of HIV infection," he said.

The rationalization of turning such funds over to homosexual groups, said Mashburn, "seems to be that the homosexual community is saying that being a homosexual youth makes you disproportionately at risk of substance abuse. If that's the case," Mashburn argued, "as

part of your substance abuse education you ought to be discouraging kids from being homosexual."

The only way to justify turning drug abuse prevention funds over to homosexual groups, Mashburn reiterates, "is to make some esoteric argument" that homosexuality constitutes high risk. That seems to be what New York State officials are doing.

In New York, federal funds intended for use with youths at high risk of drug abuse were channeled through the New York State Task Force on Integrated Projects for Youth and Chemical Dependency to fund the Youth Enrichment Services (YES) program of the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center of New York City. In May, YES sponsored a "Bridge the Gap Intergenerational Play Day," during which homosexual youths as young as 13 were feted by adult homosexual activists (including transvestites).

In response to an inquiry from Christopher Ruddy of the New York *Guardian* about possible misuse of federal funds, Richard Chady of the New York State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse insisted that the YES project is "providing innovative community-based programs of coordinated services to high-risk youths." What makes them high-risk? Their homosexuality. According to Chady, rates of alcoholism "in the gay and lesbian community may be twice what they are in the general population."

In response to Ruddy's suggestion that transvestites might not be the most appropriate role models for teenagers, even high-risk ones, Chady advised the journalist to "be careful not to impose your value judgments about sexual preference."