

Today's Families...

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"The Family as Educator"

Dr. Susan McDaniel, Professor of Sociology at the University of Alberta, spoke about "The Family as Educator." She said the idea that families are in trouble is not new. And that a crisis has grown out of conflicts between traditional ideas of what the role of the family should be, and the realization of what the modern family is and how it functions.

"The Family as the Primary Learning Environment"

Four panelists spoke about families as the building blocks of society and about how important it is for a child to learn confidence, responsibility and enthusiasm within his or her own family. One panelist emphasized that families need to listen to each other, say what they think, and express how they feel. Another stressed the prevention of problems between parents and children through education and intervention, and above all, spending time together.

Friday, October 14, 1994

"The Work of Families:Renewing and Remaking Societies"

Reiho Kashiwame, a Professor from Shokutoku University in Japan, is a world authority on child welfare. He said the Japanese believe that up to the age of three years, a child's full development depends on the constant presence of the mother. He spoke about the government's recommendation to stick to a 40-hour work week, and generous child and emergency-leave programs instituted to encourage parents to stay home and take care of their families. "Without a stable family unit," he concluded, "there can be no stability in society as a whole."

"Families at the Heart of the Community"

Elsie Boulding, an author and Professor Emerita of Sociology from Dartmouth College in the U.S., spoke about her book, *Families at the Heart of the Community*. Boulding said there is no such thing as economic development, only human and social development that has an economic dimension. In spite of the stresses on families, she believes that there is such an incredible drive to create, care, love and nurture that families can exist in settings where it would seem virtually impossible to survive.

Saturday, October 5, 1994

"Crossing the Bridges:Our Commitment to Tomorrow's Families"

The closing plenary sessions of the conference identified many overall themes: first, that families do take different forms, and this should not be seen in a negative light; second, the family is the common denominator that brings together all cultures throughout the world, but at the same time it is isolated; third, everybody wants a form of sustainable development which is acceptable to family life; fourth, people like to help each other and often succeed better without professional intervention; and, lastly, a family's priority should be to make sure that children are always a joy.

In conclusion, speakers expressed that the family will do well in the future because what they do best is cope, survive and thrive. They likened the family to a tall oak tree with roots buried deep to allow it to withstand the winds of change and, ultimately, to survive.

The conference concluded with the presentation of the Montreal Declaration - the unveiling of an action plan for national and



Joyce Glover (second from left) and Peggy Knapp (far right) are pictured above with other delegates to the Conference in Montreal.

international follow-up to the International Year of the Family.

To obtain copies of Selected Proceedings from this international conference, contact the International Council on Social Welfare, 2435 Lucerne, Suite 101, Ville Mont-Royal, Quebec, Canada, H3R 2K5, Phone: (514)731-2112, Fax: (514)731-7010.

Joyce Glover, a member of the White School Women's Institute in Northumberland East District, attended this International Conference in Montreal with Peggy Knapp, ACWW Area President for Canada.

Perth North District Receives Year of the Family Award



Executive members of the Perth North District Women's Institute accepted an International Year of the Family Award from the Federal Government on behalf of its members. The presentation was made in recognition of the Institutes' volunteer service to their communities and support of family values. Pictured above from left to right are John Richardson - Perth/Waterloo/Wellington MP, Winnifred Mann - District Secretary, Vola Purcell - District President, and Helen Dittmer - District Public Relations Officer.

Photo Courtesy of The Listowel Banner.