

Test curriculum on relations presented to school board

An obvious need for children to feel good about themselves has kept a Simcoe County Board of Education writing team busy since last October.

On Monday night, Jean Mockford, program advisor, human relations, and the writing team presented their test curriculum to board trustees and other interested groups, such as public health nurses and representatives of the Simcoe County Children's Aid Society.

The program, which will be offered in a sampling of Kindergarten to Grade 12 classes next school year, was developed because of the "many changes in society which have increased the need for improved human relations", Ms. Mockford explained.

Among the changes are the long periods of time spent in front of the television set (the average child spends one-

quarter of his time watching TV), an increased number of single parent families, children young adults leaving home at an earlier age and increased family mobility, with the average family moving every four years.

"Along with this there is much evidence of growing discontent," said Ms. Mockford, citing instances of increased vandalism, use of drugs and suicide at lower ages. "Children are showing a need for more adult contact or guidance."

One of the main concerns of the human relations program is to develop a "positive self image".

Writing team member Donna Mains of Mt. Slaven Public School explained how she treated the self image problem in the primary division.

"Jimmy", one of her students, spent play periods with his nose pressed against the fence,

watching the others play ball, she said.

A shy, intelligent child, he seemed to have no self confidence with sports. But, Ms. Mains gave him some private coaching in ball handling and games began to be a pleasure for him.

"Self concept is learned, not inherited," she said. "Teachers can affect self concept."

For the primary level, Ms. Mains suggests the use of easy to relate to pictures, showing sensitivity, loneliness and other human aspects the child can learn to talk about. She also uses cassettes, books and silhouettes which show the individuality of each student.

Terry Olaskey of Tecumseh South Public School explained the program as it relates to junior pupils.

At this age, children have heard "a lot about themselves from other people", he said. "It's

important that the junior student becomes more aware of his worth."

The program is designed to make him think about things he can do well, has done well and will do well.

Mr. Olaskey suggested the value of picture collages, role playing and various written and oral assignments.

At this age, the students will take a close look at friendships, and the quality of relationships in the program.

He believes that students can learn how to make others "feel good".

Discussing the program in the intermediate level, Mike Gyokery of Park Street Collegiate in Orillia pointed out that the students were going through two big changes at this age.

Not only are they entering adulthood, but they are moving from one school phase to another. "They're the low person on the totem pole,

starting all over again," he said.

At this level, students can take a close look at the "makeup of self" and study the factors affecting their self concept.

They can learn that conflict with adults is natural part of maturing. He uses overhead projections and slide presentations among other things to initiate discussion with his classes.

After showing a slide film to the Grade 10s, he could "have talked to students for weeks about some of the problems they'd been having," he

said. At the senior level, students are a "complex group", according to Dave Moore of Banting Memorial High School.

Not adults and not children, the students face a variety of problems.

"With so many problems, there is a lack of communication involved," he said.

He deals with communication and with the perception of "self and others".

"Sometimes we only see we expect to see," he said, pointing out that that is the basis for

prejudice. In his classes, how to avoid prejudice is one of the topics dealt with.

Through the use of games where students are forced to make choices, such as do they prefer Volkswagens or Cadillacs, and then be prepared to defend and discuss their choices, students are made aware of what values are.

At this time in their lives, students are facing "some critical choices in life, such as what to do with their lives, he explained.

"Hopefully through this

program, students will become more aware of himself and others and perceive without prejudice."

Ms. Mockford pointed out that the writing team has developed teaching units based on these teaching methods, along with suggested methodology.

The ideas contained in the units can be applied to other subjects, such as art and social studies and do not necessarily have to be taught separately, she explained.

The three other main concerns of the course,

besides the need for a positive self image, are understanding, human growth and development, appreciation of self and others (which also delves into sexuality) and appreciation of family and community life.

All four members of the writing team discussed how the program handles sexuality from Kindergarten on.

One of the topics handled by Mr. Moore's classes is death and dying, "an area that we as a North American society are avoiding."

Trustee Mary

Erichsen-Brown said she was impressed with the program, but concerned with how effective the teaching would be.

Ms. Mockford agreed that it was a genuine concern, but that the teachers will be properly prepared for teaching through four school day sessions and four Saturday sessions.

One hundred and fifty teachers have agreed to field test the program during the coming year. The teachers will represent all schools in the county and a cross section of grade levels.



Scrutiny

Miss Midland Centennial Jenny McIntaggart scrutinizes a contestant's beard at the CKMP beard growing contest Saturday at the Midland Centennial arena. Clifford Ward won the scruffiest beard award.

while Bev Roy was voted the man with the best shaved beard. John Desroches was chosen as the contestant with the most unique beard.

Staff photo

Smith wants holiday named for Simcoe

Simcoe East MPP Gordon Smith introduced a private member's bill into the house calling for the August Civic holiday to be renamed "Simcoe Day."

Mr. Smith said he felt the holiday should be named after Lord John Graves Simcoe the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada and the man who convened the first legislative assembly.

"The name Civic Holiday doesn't mean anything to the people of Ontario," Mr. Smith said adding, "people should recognize John Graves Simcoe."

Mr. Smith said this is the third time he has introduced the bill in the house. On the two previous occasions it got second reading and died on the order paper.

However, under the new rules and regulations of the house a private member's bill can get to third reading more easily.

The bill is scheduled to be debated on June 15. Mr. Smith says that he would like to hear from any historical societies, individuals or other groups who support his bill.

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Christian Worship, 11 a.m.

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7:30 - CORNERSTONE
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Rectorry - 322-2115 Church - 322-2712

Wycliffe Church, Elmvale
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11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist, 1st and 3rd
Morning Prayer, 2nd, 4th and 5th
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
St. John's Waverley
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist, 2nd and 4th
Morning Prayer, 1st, 3rd and 5th
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Morning Prayer, 1st, 3rd and 5th
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