SAMPLE LESSON PLANS of
UNIT 3: EARLY CHILDHOOD -
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 TO 6 YEARS)

LESSON PLANS FOR GRADES 7 & 8

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PARENTING EDUCATION FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
A CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES K THRU 12

LESSON PLANS for UNIT 3, for Grades 7 and 8

CONTENTS

Physical Development 4 Lessons 3
The Child’s Abilities to Adapt -- Part I 1 Lesson 18
Sleep-Wake Patterning, Dreams and Night Terrors 2 Lessons 22
Affects 2 Lessons 29
Review (of above) 1 Lesson 36
Cognitive, Play and Fantasy Activity 2 Lessons 38
Self and Human Relationships 2 Lessons 47
Beginnings of Sexual (Reproductive) Life 4 Lessons 56
Aggression 4 Lessons 76
The Child's Abilities to Adapt -- Part II 94
Dependence and Self Reliance 2 Lessons 95
Psychic Defense Mechanisms 2 Lessons 101
Other Important Adaptive Abilities 2 Lessons 109
Conscience Formation 2 Lessons 114
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
**PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:**
Lesson Plans for **GRADES 7 and 8**.

**UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS**

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: ADAPTIVE CAPABILITY AND DEGREE OF HELPLESSNESS -- Part 1**

**Reading for Teacher:** Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 6 - 10.

**Objective**

To trace the developmental changes which occur between the ages of 3 and 6 years in the areas of size, motor skills, speech, independent functioning, behavior controls and emotional relationships.

**Class Discussion**

Although most of us remember very little about our first five years, the fact is that we learned more then than we shall in any other five year period of our lives.

Ask three students to come to the blackboard, to record the class discussion about the progress of the development of human beings.

(An example of such a progression of development follows.)
An Example of a Human Being's Development During the first Six Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Areas</th>
<th>Newborn</th>
<th>2 Years Old</th>
<th>6th Birthday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight (est.)</td>
<td>7 lbs.</td>
<td>28 lbs.</td>
<td>48 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Cries</td>
<td>Words (especially No!), some short sentences</td>
<td>Can carry on a long conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeding Self</td>
<td>Can suck and swallow</td>
<td>Holds spoon and feeds self messily</td>
<td>Can feed self, with occasional help in cutting meat and with table manners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet Training</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Probably in progress, with occasional accidents</td>
<td>Completed, with almost no accidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Skills</td>
<td>Can kick and wave arms</td>
<td>Walks, runs, climbs stairs, plays with toys and simple games</td>
<td>Can ride tricycle, perhaps 2 wheels; increased skill at catching a ball; climbs on playground equipment; puts puzzles together; plays games with peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helplessness</td>
<td>Almost total</td>
<td>Still needs help in dressing self; needs protection (from eating toxic substances, from running into the street, etc.)</td>
<td>Needs help in organizing his day to go to school and in understanding what is required of him there; needs help in adhering to health habits, brushing teeth, washing, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Insists on doing things for himself; resists help</td>
<td>Can dress, feed self, go on errands within the home, play by himself, and with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Will soon begin to observe and wonder about his surroundings; soon learns that crying brings help</td>
<td>Learns from observing and exploring his environment; from what his parents show and tell him and from books they read to him</td>
<td>He has learned how many things work (stereos, TVs, etc.) He may have begun reading; he has a large vocabulary. He has developed a sense of humor; he can fantasize and play make-believe games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of Behavior</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Resists, but gradually accepts controls. He has to be helped many times a day to know what he is and is not allowed to do. May need physical restraining (e.g. when grabbing another child's toy)</td>
<td>Knows basically what is wrong and what is right, and wants to please by cooperating. He may go through a period of having tantrums, when his behavior gets out of control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Does not know who is who, but has a feeling of comfort when being held by mother or father</td>
<td>He is clear about the family members, and is attached to them, and possibly to some others. He realizes that he is a person separate from his mother. This awareness causes more or less anxiety when he is separated from his mother.</td>
<td>He is attached to both parents, and is able to verbalize both love feelings and hate when they frustrate him. He has developed a preference for his mother (a girl does the same for her father). The child now is developing a relationship with peers, and is learning to play with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Summary

This remarkable development in human beings, whether they live in New Jersey or New Zealand, South Africa or Alaska, follow the same patterns in all. Children babble before they talk, stand before they walk, and become attached to family members before making friendly relationships with others.

All of this development depends upon two things: (1) The loving care given by the family (which we shall discuss in the next lesson) and (2) The physical maturing of the child's brain and nervous system. The chart we have just made shows us this clearly. When the child is born, he cannot understand words; very gradually understanding comes as his brain matures. The reflexive and seemingly random movements of the newborn give way to the ability to use his arms and legs purposefully. Speech begins in meaningless syllables, then single words, and by six, the child can tell stories and carry on a complicated conversation. During these important years, he achieves a clear sense of himself and of his family. He reacts with strong emotions and can communicate what he is feeling. All of these things happen because the human being has an inborn thrust to grow, and the brain and nervous system mature to make all these developments possible.

Outcome

The students will have increased understanding of the developmental milestones of the first five years of life.

Assignment

Do some research on your own past. Write a page in answer to the following questions:

1. Ask your parents at what age you spoke your first word, spoke a sentence, walked alone, dressed yourself, rode a tricycle.

2. When did you start in a pre-school program? How were the first days there for you? (Ask your parents if you don't remember).

3. Describe the worst misbehavior you ever got into between the ages of 3 and 6 years.

4. Do you remember a time when you strongly preferred one parent over the other? Explain.
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: ADAPTIVE CAPABILITY
AND DEGREE OF HELPLESSNESS -- Part 2

Objective

To understand how parents can support the physical and emotional development of the three to six year old child.

Class Activity

1. Several volunteers will read reports of their developmental schedules, not including the episodes of early misbehavior.

These points may be stressed: (1) All reports showed the same sequence of development; (2) Not all students walked, talked, etc. at the same age. There is a wide range of normal development when milestones occur.

2. Other volunteers will read about their episodes of misbehavior. The readers may be asked such questions as:

   If you can imagine being three years old again, what do you think you were trying to do when you got into that trouble?

   Is it bad for a child to explore?

   How can he be helped to explore safely?

   Do you think at the time of the episode that you understand what your mother was feeling? Was she angry at you? Were you angry at her?

   Do you think it is normal for children and parents to get angry at one another sometimes? If they do, does it mean that they don't love one another?

   Do you think a parent should tell a child why she is saying 'No' to something he wants to do? If you think so, should she start doing this when the child is five? or three? or before three?

3. Issues of independence are very important in these years. Parents have to make careful judgments about when to encourage a child's independence, and when to protect him. The following questions may be discussed:
If a three year old insists on dressing himself, but takes five times as long as if his mother helped him, should he be allowed to do it? Why or why not.

If a three year old climbs the stairs to the top of a slide, then panics, would you insist that he slide down anyway? Why or why not?

Would you send a four year old to the Deli to buy milk, if he had to cross a busy street to get there? Would you send him if the Deli were half way down his own block?

If a four year old cries the first day of attendance at a pre-school program, what should a parent do?

If a five year old disappears from his own yard, because he has suddenly decided to visit his friend two block away, what should his mother do (after she finds him)?

4. Relationships both widen and deepen during these years. They widen to include relatives and family friends, and children of his own age. Within his family his attachments are very deep to both parents, but there is a shift in the balance of feelings. The child develops romantic feelings toward the parent of the opposite sex, and at times exhibits jealousy toward the other parent. Here is a question to consider:

If a four year old declares that he is going to marry Mommy some day, would you think he is being cute and funny? Do you think the little boy is serious about it? What would be the most helpful way for his parents to handle it?

5. Thinking about the physical care the three-to-six year old needs, to develop well, what do you think parents should do about it:

   a. The child's need for sleep?
   b. The child's need for a good diet?
   c. The child's need for medical care?
   d. The child's need for opportunities for play and exercise?

Summary and Review

In these years the child has many developmental tasks: to grow out of toddlerhood; to become nearly independent with respect to feeding and dressing himself; to develop judgment about things that are dangerous and things that are safe; to prepare to enter a pre-school program and to adjust to being away from home for several hours; to achieve skills with his large and small muscles. He attains a clearer sense of who he is, and develops romantic feelings for the parent of the opposite sex, while retaining his attachment to the other parent as well. The child learns during this period to speak his parents' language in sentences, and can use his vocabulary to express his feelings, both loving and hostile ones. He uses his vocabulary also to ask thousands of questions.
because he wants to know all he can about the world into which he was born; after all, it's a big, complicated, exciting, new world for him.

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Their job requires a great deal of time and effort. But it also offers very great rewards.

**Outcome**

The students will have considered constructive ways to handle the behavioral thrusts toward independence, re-organization of attachments and the development of verbal and motor skills of this period.

**Assignment**

Spend a half-hour with a child who is between the ages of 3 and 6 years. Write a paragraph, giving the youngster's name and age, and describe what he was doing during the time you were with him. What did you notice about the use of his muscles? How much did he talk? Did he ask questions? Could you tell how he was feeling toward you? Toward his parents? Toward any other people who were there?
Objective

To gain an understanding of how the development of physical skills is dependent upon the gradual maturation of the brain and nervous system and upon the supports provided by the child's parents.

Class Discussion

Ask several students to report on their visits with a preschool age child. What did the interviewers observe about the physical development of "their" children? About their ability to express their feelings in words? Did the children use make-believe during the visits? Could they go to the bathroom independently? How active were they in using their muscles in play? What did the interviewers observe about the children's attachment to their mother and other family members? Were the children friendly or shy with the interviewers?

Since these children would have varied in age, the differences in developmental accomplishments of the 3, 4 and 6 year olds can be emphasized.

Teacher Presentation

When you stop to think about it, the development of a human being from birth through old age is amazing. Many psychiatrists, psychologists, educators, as well as parents and others have given and are giving a great deal of study to this. Human development has not always been thought of as a subject of great value and interest. In earlier times in some cultures children were valued not so much for themselves, as for the work they could do. In rural areas, a child might spend lonely days watching a flock of sheep; in the cities of Europe and the United States before there were Child Labor Laws to protect them, many children of six or eight spent ten or twelve hours a day in factories to add to their families' income. Of course, these early hardships hampered the development of their personalities. (The class might be asked to imagine what the long-range effects might be of a twelve-hour work day for a 6 year old -- e.g. stunted physical growth, stunted ability to play and develop the imagination, no formal school education, poor social skills, because there had been too little time or experience in making friends.)

However, in our day, we have come a place a very high value on the individual human being and that includes children. Not all children are treated as they should be, but the
principle of human rights is accepted by our country and by the United Nations, and life for children is improving.

Along with this increased awareness of the value of infants, new knowledge has come to us about how they develop. In the old days people thought that an infant came into the world as a kind of blank notebook on which parents would write. Now we know that the baby starts out with her brain and nervous system already well in action. Of course, this equipment is very immature and the development which began before birth keeps right on:

1. The cerebral cortex, the largest part of the brain, continues to mature, and
2. The circuits of nerves within the brain and the networks of nerves to and from the brain to the rest of the body, and
3. The myelinization (a process that builds a protective sheath around a nerve), or increase in the protective covering of the nerve, all lead to the growth of amazing abilities in the child.

By the time she is three, the child can talk in sentences and can ask thousands of questions. Although these may become tiring to the parent, they do show that the child is observant, is thinking, and is trying to figure out answers to the things that puzzle her without having to study grammar, the three year old forms her sentences in the way her parents do. She knows how to put questions in question form, and how to make a statement or fact or fantasy. As she gets a bit older she shows an increasing ability to explain something that actually happened, or to make up stories with her imagination. Both real and imaginary stories show increasing understanding of events and relationships between people.

"Make-believe" play is very useful for several reasons:

1. It helps a child picture herself in different roles and situations and given her practice in solving problems.

2. She can pretend to be grown up like her parents and in imagination practice their feelings and activities.

3. In her imagination she can do anything she wants, while her now-developing conscience helps her sort out what is acceptable in real life, and what is only for make-believe.

In addition to the great advances in communication and imagination, the maturing brain and nervous system enable the child of 3-6 years to use her muscles purposefully. The child who at birth could only wave her arms and kick her legs now has skill in the use of her small muscles in learning to draw, to print, to build with toys; some even learn to play musical instruments. Her large muscles also show great development. She is steady on her feet, can run and climb, may even do gymnastics and dance.
Child Rearing Considerations

We have used some complicated work -- cerebral cortex, circuits and networks of nerves and myelinization -- to point out that the infants' brain and nervous system have a lot of maturing to do, and that the normal child goes right ahead with all those tasks without realizing that she is doing them.

It does make a great difference in the success of these maturing efforts whether or not the child receives the supports she needs from her parents or substitute parents. What supports would a young brain and nervous system need for healthy growth and maturing?

(Responses from the class should include nourishing food, adequate rest, adequate clothing and shelter, medical care as needed, family members who talk to, play with, teach, and above all give love to the child; and a home atmosphere in which family members basically love and respect one another. Teacher should emphasize that the child's emotional well-being is a great promoter of healthy physical development.)

Assignment

It would be desirable if every child could have all the support we have been discussing; but the world is not perfect, and many families have big problems. Consider the following situation:

After many quarrels, Mr. & Mrs. K decided to separate when Billy was four. Mrs. K took a job outside the home; Mr. K lives nearby, and has visiting rights, but he does not feel very welcome when he comes to the home.

When things began to get more and more tense between his parents, Billy became frightened and lay awake nights worrying. He seemed to feel that in some way he was to blame for the fights. When the separation occurred, Billy lost his appetite and began to pick at his food. He cried when his mother left him at pre-school every morning. The teacher said that Billy had begun sitting by himself and sucking his thumb, not wanting to play with other children as he used to do.

Both Mr. & Mrs. K. love Billy very much, and they see that their problems are making him unhappy and slowing down his development. For the next class, analyze their situation as best you can from these few facts, and write down any suggestions you can think of that would help these parents help Billy.

Outcome

The students will have gained an appreciation of how physical, environmental and emotional factors collaborate in the child's development of verbal, imaginative and motor skills.
Objective

To introduce the students to the importance of body maturation and readiness for toilet training and for the beginning of sexual development in the 3-6 year old child.

Class Discussion

Ask the class to give their suggestions about ways that Mr. and Mrs. K can help Billy feel better and be able to process with his physical and social development. (Suggestions might include: both parents reassuring Billy that they love him, emphasizing that he is not to blame for their being angry at each other. When they argue, which is expectable because they both feel very hurt and are angry with each other, they should control themselves and not be too hostile; they should not hit each other. When alone with Billy one parent should not criticize the other parent. Mr. K should visit regularly and Mrs. K should do her best to make him feel comfortable. Mr. K should take Billy out occasionally for "fun times" together, so Billy will continue to feel that his father cares about him. If Billy stays with his father overnight, Mr. K must take care of him and spend time with him.)

Teacher Presentation on Sphincter Control -- Developmental Aspects

In the previous session we talked about how the gradual development of the cerebral cortex and the nervous system lead to amazing developments of speech, comprehension, fantasy and motor skills, such as running and climbing. During this 3-6 year period, there are developments not only in the cerebral cortex part of the brain, but also in the cerebellum. These allow increasing control of bodily movement, improved coordination, and the achieving of new muscle skills.

Up to 18 months or 2 years, the young child usually has neither the desire nor the ability to control his bowel and bladder output. He actually finds pleasure in producing his warm bowel movements, and the odor of them does not bother him at all. It is only as the child realizes gradually that Mom and Dad have the strange idea that he should learn to use a hard toilet seat for this purpose that he becomes willing to try. He senses that this will please them, and win approval for himself.
However, it is not until he is around two years of age that his sphincter muscles are mature enough for the child to be able to control and to postpone his urination or B.M.s until his mother can respond to his signals and take him to the toilet. If a mother says that her child is trained at nine months of age, this means that she, not the child, is trained. She has observed when and how often the infant usually needs to urinate or have a B.M., and she sets him on the potty chair and keeps him there until he does it. It would be quite impossible for a child of that age to be "trained" because his muscles that control the openings of the bladder and the large bowel are still too immature to control urination or bowel movements.

Even when a child has enough maturation in his sphincter muscles, and a desire to please his mother by using the toilet, he is likely to go through a period of occasional bedwetting, or pants-wetting accidents because he gets busy playing and forgets about going to the bathroom. Or an illness or upsetting incident may cause him to regress temporarily. In some families the child is made to feel ashamed of accidents; other families handle accidents in a casual, accepting way. If bedwetting continues after the age of five, there may be a physical or psychological reason for it, and a doctor should then be consulted.

Child Rearing Considerations -- Toilet Training

Do you see any problems for the infant if his training is started when he is a few months old? Doesn't this help him get used to the idea of a potty chair, even if his muscles aren't ready to control urination and bowel movements. It may get the child used to the potty chair, but this method has disadvantages: He may have to sit as long for the expected movement that his back tires, and he comes to associate pain with the process of elimination, pushing him to achieve control before he is ready may lead to failure and make him feel discouraged and ashamed, especially if his mother is not able to be relaxed about it.

Assuming that a child is old enough for training to begin, how would you go about trying to get his cooperation? (Encouragement, praise for successes, no issue made about failures.)

If a 3 year old wets his pants while playing in the sandbox, would you tell him that he is a bad boy? Or, would you change his pants and say nothing about it? Or would you change his pants while saying that he usually does a good job of remembering, but that most kids have accidents once in a while.

How would you go about helping a child feel that he can go to the bathroom independently?

Teacher Presentation on Sexual Development -- Developmental Aspects

Another important normal development of the 3 to 6 year age period is a new awareness that "I am a girl," or "I am a boy." Along with this new realization, the young
child experiences some sexual feelings. Many parents are surprised that children this age become so aware of sexual issues and that they experience sexual feelings. If a child demands to know where babies come from, most parents can handle the question, but if a four year old touches his genitals or explores those of his little sister, his parents may be worried that his behavior is not normal.

Sexual feelings and behavior are triggered by the joint action of the brain, the nervous system, and sexual hormones.

Like the development of speech and of the muscles that permit toilet training, sexual development begins very early in life. It is important to understand that sexuality, a very important part of our human experience, develops just like so many other aspects of ourselves.

All the systems we see in an adult person are present in their earliest forms in the infant and small child. It is obvious to everyone that the respiratory and digestive systems are in place, that eyes, ears and noses operate well and that small feet learn quite soon to run. It should not be really surprising, then that the sexual system, in its infantile form, is in place too; or that it finds expression in ways appropriate to the thinking and feelings and curiosity of the small child. These feelings and expressions of course are very different from those of an adolescent or adult, but they are real, are important to the child, and need to be dealt with in growth-promoting responsible ways.

**Child Rearing Considerations -- Sexual Development**

Do you think it is normal for children to be curious about their own and other people's bodies?

If you were a parent and found your four year old boy and a four year old neighbor girl exploring each other, would you (1) Scold them? (2) Spank your son, and send the neighbor home? (3) Tell them that they are too young for this kind of play, they'll know better about all this when they are older, but that you understand their curiosity and will answer their questions? Or (4) would you call in the other mother and have a four-way talk about it? (Number 3 is the most constructive thing to do.)

How can a small child's sexual development be handled responsibly and in a growth-promoting way? (He should not be shamed or laughed at if he expresses romantic feelings toward his mother; he should not be over-stimulated by excessive attention to his behavior, or by showers with or sleeping with his parents; his questions should be answered simply and truthfully.)

In addition to these child-rearing suggestions, review the basic supports of good physical and emotional care discussed in the previous lessons.
Outcome

Students will have learned that both sphincter control and sexual development are tied in with brain and nervous system maturation; and that as with the other systems, they should be given the supports of affectionate handling and respect, along with adequate provision for physical needs.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

THE CHILD’S ABILITIES TO ADAPT
Reading for Teacher: Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 11.

Objective

To review the psychodynamic models of early child development we have used so far and to expand the developmental theory of Eric Erikson for the first six years of life.

Teacher Presentation

You will recall that in an earlier lesson we discussed the great interest there is these days in human development. Many child development specialists have done much research, and have come up with various theories to explain how a newborn infant gradually makes his way into adulthood.

We cannot consider all the theories about child development, but if you learn several theories, you will be able to pick up on your own, other theories that you come across that make sense to you. Now we will learn more about the psychoanalytic (psychodynamic) models we used in the earlier Units, including Erikson's Psychosocial model.

First, let us be clear about the terms: psychoanalyst, a psychiatric physician, psychologist, or other mental health professional, a clinician or researcher who has had many years of training in the field of Psychoanalysis. Psychoanalytic, refers to the theory and method he or she uses to understand and explain not only our conscious (what we are aware of) experiencing but especially our unconscious (what is out of our awareness) goings on. Before Psychoanalysis began as a field, psychologists already knew that each of us is motivated, in our goals, actions and behavior, by unconscious forces ("psychodynamics", as these forces are called). A psychoanalyst uses this method to understand and explain both important aspects of normal psychological-emotional development, and what in his or her patients may be causing them difficulties in coping with everyday life.

From your courses on The First Year of Life (Unit 1) and The Toddler Years (Unit 2), you are already familiar with the earliest steps of emotional development, according to the Psychoanalytic models we have used. Erik Erikson's Psychosocial model, Rene Spitz's, John Bowlby's, and Margaret Mahler's models of how the infant attaches to his mother and how the infant adapts early in life, and Sigmund Freud's model of how the child develops as a sexual being propose that during the:

PEG-U3-LPs for Grades 7&8.doc
First year: the main goal is to develop a loving, confident relationship with parents (or substitute parents), as a basis for later good relationships with others.

Second and third years: the goals here are to achieve awareness of the self as a separate person from mother, and to develop confidence in one's ability to do certain things independently.

Third to sixth year: the major goals of this period are
(1) to continue to develop competence in independent activity (e.g. ability to separate from parents to go to school).
(2) to highlight the development of the self as a boy or a girl, and become clear about one's gender, and to gain some awareness and control over one's normal sexual fantasies, explanations, and feelings and to deal with them appropriately;

All of these stages you have heard about before; and you also have thought about what parents can do to encourage good development. During the next five minutes, jot down every way you can think of that parents can help a child in these stages. Then set your papers aside until the discussion at the end of the lesson. (This is the first of two sets of recommendations the students will be asked to make.)

Erik Erikson psychosocial model, like the other models, looks at a particular aspect of the child's complex emotional-adaptive development. We have talked about the first two phases of this development in Unit 1 (The First Year) and in Unit 2 (The Toddler Years). Let's quickly review these.

During the First Year: The main goal to achieve is the development of Basic Trust. For good emotional health, the infant should come to believe that those on whom he is totally dependent for survival, and whom increasingly he values really will be there when needed for feeding and comforting. As the child gradually develops this confidence, he also begins to sense that he himself is worthy of being cared about and valued. When the one year old does not have enough good experiences to attain Basic Trust, he is likely to develop Basic Mistrust. Basic Mistrust means that those who take care of you cannot be counted on to help you, and that you are not deserving of being cared for and valued. This has a profound influence on the child's gradually developing self-esteem (how we feel about ourselves).

During the Second and Third Years: Assuming that the child has developed a good sense of Basic Trust in the first year, he will build on the assurance that he is worthy of love by reacting actively to the large push within him toward attaining a Sense of Autonomy (a sense of "I can do things myself"). Attaining a good sense of autonomy goes along with an increasing good sense of self, a person who will be able to separate from his parents or caregivers, gradually become capable of being self-reliant, and with a will of his own.
The better Basic Trust was built during year one, the better will be the development of a Sense of Autonomy during year two. If parents or caregivers can handle a child's normal push toward Autonomy, including occasional tumbles and spills and breakages, the stronger and healthier will be his progress toward self-reliance. If, however, caregiving was not reliable in year one, so that Basic Trust did not develop sufficiently, or if parents or caregivers cannot deal helpfully with a child's need to explore and do things independently, rather than a Sense of Autonomy the child will develop an unhealthy Sense of Shame.

During the Third to Sixth Years Period: The major goal of this phase of development is developing an inner Sense of Initiative. If the two earlier stages have been well established, the child will be filled with the desire to master things in his environment. He has the feeling "I can plan things, decide what to do, and make them happen." His motivation, energy and confidence help him to develop skills during this period, and to be prepared for the beginning of his school experience.

Erikson tells us that if a child does not develop a good Sense of Initiative, there may be several reasons for it: (1) Failure to have developed well in the Basic Trust and Autonomy stages; (2) Parents' or caregivers problems in handling the child's initiatives; (3) A Sense of Guilt the child now develops which interferes with the freedom to initiate plans and projects.

During the next five minutes write down ideas that occur to you about how a parent could support the development of a sense of Basic Trust, or of Autonomy, or of Initiative in a child.

(This is the second set of recommendations.)

After the writing has been done, ask the students to compare their two sets of recommendations. How are they similar? How are they different?

Outcome

The students will have become aware that development can be looked at from different points of view, each enriching the others.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

SLEEP-WAKE PATTERNING, DREAMS AND NIGHT TERRORS
**PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:**
Lesson Plans for **GRADES 7 and 8**

**UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS**

**SLEEP-WAKE PATTERNING, DREAMS AND NIGHT TERRORS**
-- Part 1  (Human Development Aspect)

**Reading for Teacher:** Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 12 - 16.

**Objective**

The students will learn about the basic emotional aspects of bedtime problems.

**Class Discussion**

As you know, you spend about one-third of your life sleeping. Do you ever feel that that is a waste of time? Why, or why not?

Even though it might be fun to have eight hours more a day to play ball, be with your friends, watch TV, or enjoy your hobbies, the fact is that you wouldn't live very long if you never slept. For everyone, old and young, sleep is a time for body repair and mental rest; and the dreams that come during sleep help us to work out problems (in the unconscious part of our minds). For infants, children, and adolescents sleep gives the body time for rest needed for growth and development.

At times the 3-6 year old may protest about going to bed. Can you think of any reasons why that might be? (Answers may include the child's not wanting to stop playing, not wanting to miss out on what her parents are doing, being anxious about separating from her parents and being alone in her bedroom).

Have you seen a child resisting going to bed? What happens? (Crying, asking for drinks, wanting to go to the bathroom several times, clinging to the parent, begging for more and more stories.)

**Teacher Presentation**

After a child is tucked into bed, she usually has a good night's sleep. However, it can happen that her sleep will be disturbed by bad dreams, or even worse, by night terrors.

Sleep occurs in cycles that go from light sleep into deep sleep back into light sleep back into deep sleep, etc. Each cycle from light sleep into deep sleep and back to light sleep lasts about 90 minutes.
A "bad" dream, or nightmare, happens during the lightest level of sleep. This is called the REM level, the letters standing for Rapid Eye Movements. If you have an opportunity to observe a sleeping person, you may catch him in the process of having a dream. His eyelids will be closed, but you can clearly see his eyeballs underneath them moving rapidly back and forth for a new moments. He may or may not remember the dream later; if it is a frightening dream, he probably will.

Night terrors are different from bad dreams. They occur when the child is in deep sleep. It is difficult to immediately waken from deep sleep without going through a period of light sleep. Therefore, although the child may be screaming in terror, she is not awake. She does not realize that her parents are there trying to comfort her, and she is so deeply asleep that it is very difficult to waken her.

A bad dream (or nightmare) or night terror is caused by some stress a person is experiencing. In the case of the 3-6 year old he may be having a problem with her preschool; e.g. there may be tension with her mother because Mother needs to go to work in her office and the child is having difficulty tolerating the separation; the child may not only experience anxiety but may also feel shame because she is not pleasing her mother by co-operating without difficulty. Because she is not ready for the separation, anxiety builds up, and is showing up in her sleep disturbance. There are other common experiences that cause stress at this age; we shall talk about some of these in later lessons.

Whatever stress is behind the bad dream or night terror, the experience is extremely frightening for the child because it feels so real to her. At your age, you know that a bad dream is a bad dream, but a 3-6 year old does not. That is why it is most important for parents to do everything they can to help their child recover from these experiences.

**Assignment**

Write a page, describing a bad dream you have had either recently or some time ago. Include answers to these questions: Do you remember having any special worries just before you had this dream? If so, after waking up, did you make any connection between the stress you were having and the dream? Were you very frightened on first waking up? Did the fear go away as soon as you realized that it was only a dream? Did you tell anyone about your dream? If so, what did that person say?

**Outcome**

The students will understand the reasons why the 3-6 year old may resist going to bed; they also will be aware of the major reasons for nightmares and night terrors.
UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

SLEEP-WAKE PATTERNING, DREAMS AND NIGHT TERRORS
-- Part 2 (Child Rearing Aspect)

Objective

The students will learn ways of sorting out and try to understand a child's bedtime problems, and how to deal constructively to them.

Class Discussion

In the homework you did, how many of you found that there was some connection between the bad dream you described and a worry you were having at the time? (From the students who did identify a connecting stressor, see if some are willing to share their experiences.)

Since a young child does not know that dreams are not "real," it is more complicated for him to recover from the effects of a dream disturbance, than it is for an older person.

What would you do if you were a mother or a father, and were wakened by three year-old Tommy's crying at 2 a.m.? Answers may include:

Go to him if the crying continues for more than 30 seconds (not easy, if you have been in a deep sleep!)
If he is awake, comfort him. Do as little as is necessary to comfort him, so that you do not fully wake him up (so that he can go right back to sleep when comforted).
If he is still asleep and crying, decide whether he is having a bad dream or a night terror.
If he is having a bad dream, wake him, comfort him, tell him that he was having a dream, ask him, if he can, to tell you about it. If he shows fear that something bad was going to happen, reassure him that you will protect him. You would calm and comfort him, and then encourage him to go back to sleep.
You will know that Tommy is having a night terror, if he is in a panic state when you reach him. He will seem to feel that something terrible is happening and most likely will be creaming. Even though he is crying and may mumble or scream something about his fear, he is not fully awake. A parent should pick Tommy up, hold him, listen to what he is trying to say, reassure him even though he seems not to hear or take in what you are saying. If the panic state does not lessen quickly, waken the child gently but strongly
enough to wake him up, and continue comforting and reassuring him until he drops off to sleep again.

If a child has night terrors often in spite of his parents' efforts to help him with whatever stresses he may be having in his life, he may require professional help.

Whether a child is experiencing occasional bad dreams or night terrors, it is important for the parents to listen carefully to what he is trying to say. He may give some clues as to what daytime problems are troubling him. Then the parents can talk with him about these things at a later time, too, such as dinner time well before the next bedtime. If the child sees that the parents are listening sympathetically and really want to help, that in itself is reassuring. It also encourages the child to confide in his parents when he has worries.

**Teacher Presentation**

A very common problem, of course, is resistance to going to bed in the first place. Do you recall the reason for this behavior that we discussed in the previous lesson? (Not wanting to stop playing, not wanting to miss out on family activities, separation anxiety.)

Here is one example: Four year old Jennifer didn't like to have to go to bed when her 7 year old brother Mike didn't. She wondered what he, Mom and Dad talk about and do without her. As she has done before, Mom again explained that Mike is older than she is and will go to bed 1/2 hour later than she does. You know this very well, Mom said. Now it simply is time for you to go to bed! Then Jennifer said she wondered what Mom and Daddy are going to do later. Mom said that she and Dad have a lot to do, a lot to talk about, and they have the right to have private time together as a Mom and Dad. And now it's time for you to go to bed! But Mom, argues Jennifer, I can't go to sleep yet, it's too early. No more discussion about it, Jenny, let's go up now. You don't have to like it; but we're going up now.

You will notice in this story that Mom, after explaining to Jennifer why she had to go to bed before Mike, took a firm "no nonsense" stand. Why did she do this? (J. was not resisting because of fear of going to bed, she just wanted to stay up. She has to learn that she needs enough sleep to be well rested, and that there are things grown-ups talk about and do that are private, that Moms and Dads need time to themselves, and that Mom and Dad have to decide about the time for her to get to bed.)

Sometimes resistance is based on a deeper problem. Here is a story which illustrates one: It is September 21 and 4 year old Johnny started preschool again 2 1/2 weeks ago, going from 8:30 to 3:30, 5 days a week. Mother and Father had made good efforts to prepare him reminding him of the nice things about the school, things he enjoyed last year, reassuring him that Mrs. Nell seemed to be a very nice teacher who likes children, and that his friends Doug, Jane and Dave will be there too. Johnny seemed very cheerful about going, but mother said, when she dropped him off he seemed to try not to cry and
had clung to her for about a minute 2 days ago. He seemed to make himself separate from her bravely.

For the past week though Dad had noticed that getting him to bed seemed to take forever. He resists going upstairs, dally's taking off his clothes, tries to make a game of every step toward going to bed, like wanting Dad to chase him to get his teeth brushed and wash up, wanting more than 3 stories read to him, needing to go to the bathroom again, needing a drink of water and now says he's afraid of the shadows on the wall. He's getting to be a pain. Mom said that he does the same with her lately. And, she said, he gets really upset when Mom gets irritated and annoyed with him. And he seems scared when Dad yells at him. Talking about it, Mom and Dad agree that he really seems scared of something. They agree they should talk with Johnny about this. Dinner would be a good time to talk with him, so that he might have time to digest the family talk before bed time.

At dinner Dad asks Johnny how school was today. Johnny says he doesn't like school anymore; Doug isn't nice to him and Mrs. Nell doesn't like him! Mother is surprised, she said, because Mrs. Nell got a warm smile on her face when she saw Johnny this morning and as soon as Doug saw Johnny he came over and wanted Johnny to build a big tower with him again (using blocks). Well, Johnny said, I don't like it when you leave in the morning. Mom asked if maybe being away from Mommy and Daddy worried him? Well, I don't know, Johnny said.

Talking briefly together while clearing the dinner table, Mom and Dad agreed that maybe starting school again was causing Johnny an increase in separation anxiety. Dad suggested starting bed time 15 minutes earlier so that Johnny could have a bit more time getting to bed. As she helped Johnny get off his clothes, washed and into p.j.'s, Mom reassured him that she and Dad love Johnny a great deal, that they think he's a great kid. She read only one story and said she'd rather talk with him for awhile instead. She reassured him he'd be fine in school even if it didn't feel good when she dropped him off, she is sure that Doug likes him and so does Mrs. Nell. And she told him she and Dad, as usual, would be downstairs, that of course they would not leave him while he was asleep. Mom asked if he needed to go to the bathroom again. Mom stayed a bit longer repeating her reassurances, patted his head, gave him a kiss on the cheek and said goodnight. A few minutes later, when he called and said he needed to go to the bathroom again, Dad called up, said there really is nothing to be afraid of and to go to sleep.

It may not always work this easily, but anxiety is best dealt with by reassurance, comforting and loving but moderately firm limit setting.

What did you learn about parenting from this story? (The importance of listening to the child; the importance of thinking about what may be worrying the child that he can't quite put into words; the importance of knowing when to comfort and when to set a limit as the father did in saying "It's time now to go to sleep.")
Outcome

The students will have learned the importance of listening to children's problems, and about appropriate ways of responding to bedtime resistance, bad dreams and night terrors.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

AFFECTS
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:  
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

AFFECTS -- Part 1 (Human Development Aspect)


Objective

The students will learn about the different affects (feelings), positive, negative and mixed which the child of three to six experiences. They will also learn that affects tell us a great deal about how the child is feeling about himself or herself and his or her life.

Teacher Presentation

Before we start today's lesson, we need to learn the meaning of two words, which are great favorites of psychiatrists and psychologists, but which we need to know, too.

The first is affect, used as a noun. You probably use it very often as a verb. You might say "A thunder storm will affect our picnic plans." (The students may think of other examples.)

As a noun, the word affect has a different meaning. An affect is an emotional feeling, in professional language. What are some of the different emotional feelings or affects that people of your age have? As we go into this subject further, you will see that the affects you have today are basically the same as the three year old has, except that yours are expressed in a more mature way.

The other word we need to learn is ambivalent. This word may look strange to you, but perhaps you know the word ambidextrous. In both cases the "ambi" means "two." If you are ambivalent, it means that you have two opposing kinds of feelings about something or someone. When mental health professional use the word ambivalence, they mean "hating someone one loves". Feelings of ambivalence are very uncomfortable, but fortunately we usually can settle our feelings before too long. For example, you may get very mad at your parents for not allowing you to go to a movie on a school night, but well before the next morning when you are enjoying the breakfast Mom got ready for you, the good feeling you have for your parents will have come back.

Just as your affects are more developed than the three year old's, his are more developed than the infant's. This is because the three year old has achieved a solid emotional attachment to his parents, and a sense of himself as a person.
The most important thing to understand about a child's feelings is that they tell how a child is feeling about things, about specific things and about things in general, about himself or herself and about his or her life. This is why the affects children show are very informing for parents. Feelings often speak louder than words. Even though a 5 year old may say she is not angry or upset, her face may tell you that she is. Often, children will not be able to talk about feelings they have; parents who look at and listen to their children well will be able to see how they may feel even when children cannot say so.

Class Discussion

Ask for three volunteers to record at the blackboard the class discussion on the different types of affects experienced by the 3-6 year old. What types of situations might cause the child to feel positive, negative, or mixed feelings. If any of the following are not suggested by the students, they should be added.

**Positive Affects:** love feelings; affection; desire to please; romantic feelings; excitement; happiness; pleasure in being able to do things; sexual feelings.

**Negative Affects:** hate feelings; anxiety about separation; jealousy; shame; sadness; guilt.

**Situations that Produce Ambivalence:** essentially any feelings of hostility or hate toward the parents to whom the child is attached will produce ambivalence. Thus

- Parents making fun of the child;
- Shaming him;
- Abusing the child in any way;
- Saying "No" when he really wants to do something (even if the "No" is for his own good.)

Having hostile fantasies toward a parent will all produce ambivalence (i.e., hating someone one loves.)

It is a pleasure to see a preschool child enjoying the happy feelings on our positive list. Even the happiest child will have times of ambivalence when he is frustrated, and may have episodes of any of the negative affects listed. Such episodes are normal. However, if a child has negative affects for quite a long time (say for weeks), because such a prolonged state of feeling badly can cause significant problems for the child, parents would help the child well by seeking professional consultation.

Anger, for example, is to be expected. However, if a child's temper tantrum which were quite severe at two, show no signs of lessening when he gets to be three or four, he needs some help. Depression in a child is most commonly caused by a feeling (real or imagined) of having lost a loved person. Or it may be caused by guilt which is a feeling of self-criticism and self-attack. Shame is a feeling of being worthless.
A careful observer can see these affects in a child who is suffering from them, even if the child cannot put into words what he is feeling. A solemn look in his eyes, no smiles, no spontaneity, clinging when faced with separation, timidity or resistance about trying something new, over-reacting by going into rages -- all these are warning signals that something is not going well.

**Assignment**

Observe a child for thirty minutes, and write up what you see, noting the child's age. List all the affects you see him or her expressing during that length of time. What is your overall impression of the child? Is he/she basically positive in the affects you noted? Did you see any problems? Any ambivalent feelings?

**Outcome**

The students will have become familiar with the affects experienced by the preschool child, the normal positive, negative and ambivalent feelings, and the problems which may occur; they will have learned about the non-verbal affective expressions which signal the presence of problems.
**PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:**
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

**UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS**

**AFFECTS -- Part 2 (Child Rearing Aspect)**

**Objective**

The students will learn how a parent's ability to tell what a child's affects are will guide the parent toward constructive child rearing, and how their attitude toward the expression of affects may help the child's emotional growth, or on the contrary, cause significant problems for the child.

**Class Discussion**

As a few students to read the accounts of their observations of a child's' affects, listing them on the blackboard. Consider the following points:

How could you tell how the child was feeling?

If an adult was present, did he or she recognize and respond in any way if the child was happy or excited? How did the adult respond if the child was having negative or ambivalent feelings? And how did the child respond to what the adult said or did?

**Teacher Presentation**

Our feelings normally show on our faces, in our voices, in our attitudes, and in our gestures. Of course, we also express them in words. It is most important for all of us to understand that our affects (emotional feelings) reveal how we feel inside; they are a window into our being, into our souls. So it is very important for parents to know that if they want to try to understand what is going on in their child's being (or soul), they must learn to look for their child's expressions of feelings.

A little child, we all agree, has feelings, just as you and I do. Like ourselves, it is important that her feelings be recognized by those who care for her, and also that she be entitled to have her feelings respected.

A few simple-to-remember guidelines will be useful to parents in order to better understand and help a child with her feelings:

1. **Observe** the child's mood and facial expression.

2. **Listen** to what she is trying to say; if she is searching for words to express her feelings, patiently help her find them.
3. **Accept** her feeling, even if it is anger about something you did. Bear in mind that it is not wrong to feel angry, hostile, or even hate, although sometimes a child (or an adult) has to be restrained from acting out such feelings in destructive ways. Never tell a child that she really is not feeling mad at you, that she does not hate you even though she just said she does, or that she is not jealous, or whatever she may be expressing. (To deny what a child is feeling will make her feel that you don't understand her, or else it will give her the message that she is a terrible child if she has such feelings.) Never make fun of a child if her feelings seem inappropriate to you, for example if a little girl tells you that she wants to marry her father.

4. **Talk** with the child about his feelings. Once she sees that you are listening to her, she will become calmer and, furthermore, she will be more likely to listen to you. If she is angry at you, express understanding that (for example) your "No" made her really mad; let her know that all parents and all children now and then get angry at one another. The important thing is that they don't stay that way, because after they talk about the problem they remember that they really love one another very much. Everybody has mixed feelings, but in caring families, love always is always greater than anger or hate.

5. **Reassure** her that even though her feelings and behavior get her in trouble sometimes she is still a good kid, and Mother and Father think she is very special.

If a parent does all these things when a child is upset -- observes, listens, accepts, talks to and reassures the child, we say the parent has empathy with the child. **Empathy** means tuning in with how another person is feeling, and responding in a way that conveys understanding and readiness to help. Empathy is very important for growth-promoting parenting.

Sometimes in the heat of anger, it is hard for parents to be empathetic. For example:

Jennifer's mother had much trouble dealing with 4 year old Jennifer's being angry with her. Because when she was a child her family strongly disapproved of any expression of anger, let alone hate, Jennifer's mother too came to believe and feel that these feelings (anger, hostility, hate) are unacceptable. Good people, decent people don't feel hate! she believed. Of course, many people believe this.

For the past year and a half, Jennifer and her Mom just did not get along as they had before. Jennifer was not as easy and pleasant to be with as she had been during the first 2 years of her life. Recently, when Mom again told Jennifer that she cannot just go into her 7 year old brother Mike's things and play with the erector construction he built without his OK--she had already broken two he had built before--, in a fit of anger and with much feeling Jennifer half-shouted: "I hate you! You always like Mike more than me. I hate you!" Shocked, hurt, and very upset, Mom said: "I know you don't mean that. That's a terrible thing to say to your mother. Wait till I tell your father."
But what does it do to a child, when Mom (or Dad) says as Jennifer's Mom did, (1) You don't mean that; (2) It's terrible to say that; and (3) Wait till I tell your father.

Answers to the questions should include these thoughts:

1. Mother's saying that Jennifer "didn't mean that" made the child feel that this may not be what she is feeling, or that her mother didn't believe she could feel such a bad feeling, or who knows what! It may even have confused Jennifer.

2. Her mother's telling her "that's a terrible thing to say" made her feel that she was a terribly bad child.

3. "I'll tell your father" made her feel humiliated and afraid of punishment.

If mother could have talked sympathetically with Jennifer about anger, about hating, and about her jealousy of Mike, she would have been able to help Jennifer well with these very worrisome feelings. Her being able to empathize would tell her that anger, hate and jealousy were very painful feelings to Jennifer. Mother could have said something like this: "I guess there are times when you feel I love your brother better than you. But that's not true, Sweetheart, Dad and I have plenty enough love for both of you. Even though you can't yet build things as well as Mike, you can do other things very well, like saying the alphabet, and when you are Mike's age, you will be able to build all sorts of things well too.

Outcome

The students will understand the concept of empathy, how very important it is for understanding one's child, and how it can be so useful in a parent's efforts to help her or his child deal with troubling negative affects; unhelpful ways of approaching the child have also been considered.

Assignment

Review the notes on the lessons we have had so far, for a test next time.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

REVIEW -- PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, SLEEP-WAKE PATTERNING, AFFECTS
**Objective**

To review and consolidate the information learned in the previous lessons.

**Written Test**

1. Name three important ways a child five years of age is different physically from a two year old.

2. Is it wise to start a child's toilet training when he is six months old? Why or why not?

3. How would you respond to a child who has recently become aware that he is a boy, and who declares that he wants to marry his Mommy?

4. Name two reasons why some children have bad dreams or night terrors.

5. Should a child be allowed to tell his mother that he hates her? Why or why not?

6. Define the words Ambivalent and Empathy.

7. What is the most surprising thing you have learned in the class so far?

**Class Discussion Of Answers To These Questions**

**Outcome**

Areas that have been well-learned, and gaps in the learning will have been identified.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

COGNITIVE ACTIVITY, PLAY AND FANTASY ACTIVITY
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

COGNITIVE ACTIVITY, PLAY AND FANTASY ACTIVITY --
Part 1 (Human Development Aspect)


Objective

To learn what a 3 to 6 year old child's abilities to think and to play are; and to learn about the remarkable adaptive role of fantasy.

Teacher Presentation

You will recall that in an earlier lesson we learned about the many ways a preschool child develops in the use of his muscles, and in his use of speech. From toddling to riding a tricycle, or even a two-wheeler; from making short sentences to quite detailed and even elaborate make-believe stories, what a child accomplishes in three short years is remarkable.

There are also some other ways that a child's brain is active during this time. If introduced to books at a very early age, a youngster will become attached to them. He will want the same story read to him over and over. The parent may become tired of the story, but not the child.

Why do you think a child often asks for the same story instead of a new one? (Perhaps because the story deals with things the child likes, has experienced himself, or is afraid of; about things the child himself has thought about or even imagined, or about relationships with family members -- or perhaps the child associates the story with the cozy time he is having alone with the parent. Also, repetition increases understanding, makes what happens in a story predictable, gives the child a chance to master things of which the child is afraid. And more.)

In addition to the pleasure of being read to, the child enjoys the pictures, and likes to re-tell the stories connected with them. A child of four or five may develop a desire to learn to read. If encouraged, he may learn the alphabet, and to read simple words and even to write his name. He likes to imitate the adult reader and has a great sense of accomplishment when he, too, can read a little.

During these years, the child's ability to play with toys increases greatly. Learning to manipulate toys so that they work, or fitting parts together will help a child manipulate tasks when older. Often a child will spend a long time in a concentrated effort to make a
toy work properly. If an older person intervenes the child may be pleased with the help; or he may be upset because he may feel the adult is not giving him a chance to do it himself; or he may be frustrated and disappointed that he could not succeed in it himself.

Table games as well as movement games may be introduced during these years. Here also, although the youngster may be delighted to be included, he may feel inferior at not being able to do as well as the older ones, and hurt and upset with them for winning. Also, most children of this age do not quite understand the purpose of rules, even when explained. He may make up his own rules, and he may be frustrated when they are not accepted by his opponents. Playing games by regular rules is usually not successful until the child is over six. However, playing with other children in both a non-structured way, and in simple structured games has a special value. It helps a child build important social skills, as he struggles to learn to take turns, and play fairly.

Another evidence of intellectual development of this period is the child's increasing ability to fantasize. Fantasy develops as the child tries to cope with the pleasures and the pains of life. Fantasy is the product of imagination, a most important tool for adapting, solving problems, and planning the future, for instance.

Before the age of three, a child could imagine in a simple, straight-forward way -- e.g. he could imagine Mommy's coming home. By the age of six, on the other hand, the child is able to construct elaborate, quite detailed fantasy stories or games. He can play make-believe games, either by himself, or with others.

In contrast to the two year old, the six year old's fantasy play:

1. Tells about make-believe persons and what they are doing, and what happens to them.

2. The six-year old's story may describe things in much greater detail than the two year old can.

3. The six year old's fantasy may be a long story while the two year old's will be very brief.

4. The six year old will use fantasy very often in his play; the two year old will not.

5. The six year old will dramatize real and meaningful events in his fantasy play.

6. The six year old can use fantasy play to help him work out some of his worries and problems. Sometimes a child may appear to be off in a daydream, when he is really working on something that is troubling him.
Do you have any idea about how engaging in fantasy play can help a child work out a problem? (e.g. a child afraid to sleep in a dark room might have a fantasy that she has a big dog sleeping at the foot of her bed, to protect her; or a child having some problem accepting Mother's "No's" may work out her feelings by pretending that her doll is a child and she is the mother and she is doing the disciplining; or a little boy who feels small and weak in contrast to his big brother may be comforted by a fantasy that he has magic powers.)

**Assignment (Choose one)**

1. Play for half an hour with a pre-school child. Suggest that you play a make-believe game. Write down what he tells you. Do you see in his story any connection with his own experience? Or,

2. Think back to your own pre-school period. Do you recall any of the fantasies you had then? Can you remember how they may have helped in problem-solving? Write a paragraph explaining this. Or,

3. Write your thoughts about the following: With all the programs there are on television, do you think it is necessary for pre-school children to have books? What are the advantages and disadvantages of reading books to little children, compared with the advantages and disadvantages of having them watch TV.

**Outcome**

The students will have learned about the vital growth in the child's ability to think, to play and fantasy, and to have some idea of their importance in the mental development of the child.
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

COGNITIVE, PLAY AND FANTASY ACTIVITY -- Part 2 (Child Rearing Aspect)

Objective

The students will learn that the parent is really the child's first teacher and what is involved for parents in their roles as teachers of their children.

Class Discussion

Ask those in the class who chose the third assignment option, TV. versus books, to share what they have written. (Response might include the idea that both can be helpful, provided that parents select the TV program, choosing educational ones e.g. Sesame Street and avoiding programs with themes deeply dosed with violence and family conflict; if children do happen to see the latter, parents should tune in on the youngster's reactions and talk with them about what they have seen. Advantages of reading to children, e.g. the pleasure a child has in the parents' closeness, the sharing of the excitement of the story, the opportunity for the child to express his reactions and ask questions and the interest in reading which books awaken in the child, should be discussed. Most important in reading to children is their valuing what they enjoy doing with their parents, and thereby, they will value and possibly enjoy learning to read themselves.)

Ask those in the class who wrote about some fantasy they remembered from their pre-school years to share their experience. Do the students reporting feel that their fantasies helped them to figure things out, or to solve any problem.

Ask the students who spent time with a pre-school child to report the child's make-believe game. Did the students see any connection between the child's story and his real-life experiences?

Teacher's Presentation

Think back over your own life -- who was your first teacher? You may remember that nice Miss Jones from Kindergarten or first grade, but she was not your first teacher. That honor belongs to your mother and your father, from as early as the first few months of your life.

A child of three to six has a thousand things to learn, and she is eager to learn them. Her parents are the ones who can best help her, and it is very important that they have
some good ideas about how to go at it. It is important also that they enjoy teaching their child; and of course, having a whole lot of patience helps!

We have just been talking about the fantasy life of children. Do you think it is a good thing to encourage a child's imagination? Why or why not? (It helps a child play out some of the things that puzzle or bother him; it encourages him to be creative -- in adult life it is the people with creative imaginations who become our writers and artists, our inventors and scientists.

How can a parent help a child to make best use of his ability for fantasy? (Listen to her, sometimes join in a make-believe game with her; help her to be clear about what is make-believe and what is reality -- e.g. if a child pretends she is a big bird, she must face the reality that she cannot fly out of the bedroom window!)

Most fantasy play, by both girls and boys this age centers around family life: parents taking care of children, or going to work, or shopping. This is still the case during the early school years, especially among girls. Children 3 to 6 years of age may also pretend to be a nurse giving shots, or a doctor giving a physical examination. Would you encourage or prevent a small "doctor" from undressing another child and examining him? (Actual undressing should be prevented, but examination while dressed need not be. It is useful to try to understand what the young "doctor" is trying to master. If it is how the other child's genital are made, the "doctor" should be told that it is natural to be curious about how another child is different, but this is something he can ask parents about; the idea of respecting the other person's privacy can also be taught.)

Suppose a child had a frightening fantasy that there is a witch in her bedroom. Would you tell her that that is nonsense, she is not afraid, she just doesn't want to go to bed? Would you make fun of her for having such an idea? If not, what would be a helpful way to handle this? (Talk with the child to see if anything had happened to upset her during the day; tell her that you know being afraid is no fun, but you are certain that there are no witches around; stay with her a few minutes for reassurance; provide a night light; let her know that parents will not let anyone hurt her.)

When it comes to helping a child learn a skill, a parent needs to be very tuned in with a child's interest and readiness to learn. If the child does not seem interested and ready to learn, a parent will be wise to wait a bit longer.

Six year old Sidney has a good mechanical sense. He can take anything apart, and put it back together in a flash. He doesn't care much about books, or make-believe games. His sister Emily, age four and a half, on the other hand does not have a feeling for how things are made. If she takes something apart, it is broken completely; but she has a rich fantasy life, loves story books, and already knows the alphabet.

Would it be a good idea to point out to Sidney that he should take more interest in books or Emily will be smarter than he is? Or to tell Emily that girls are just dumb about
mechanical things, so it is no wonder that her toys are always getting broken? (Children should be given a sense of self-worth and achievement by encouraging them in what they can do well, and offering to help with the things that come harder to them. Making comparisons between siblings is never helpful. One or the other is bound to feel "put down." Although he may be mistaken, a child usually senses quite accurately which achievements his parents value most.)

Although the pre-school child asks thousands of questions about why things happen, and how things are made, there are times when a child wants to figure things out on his own. He may struggle a long time to tie his shoes, for example, and he may feel frustrated and incompetent if the parent comes to do it for him; or, on the other hand, he may very much want the parents' help. It takes a parent with a great deal of empathy to be able to sense when to keep hands off and when to help. When it is time to help, parents should explain things simply, with a "let's figure it out together" attitude.

Should a mother let her three year old daughter help her make cookies, when there is a good chance that she may spill flour on the counter and floor? Should a father let his three year old son help him wash the car, when father can do the job better in less than half the time by himself? (Yes, helping a parent, and sharing in what the parent is doing builds self-confidence, self-respect, as well as teaching the child something about handling tasks of every day living.) Suppose it is the son who wants to cook and the daughter who wants to wash the car. Would this mix up their beginning gender awareness? (No, gender awareness comes about by built-in factors in the child and by the way the child is treated by his or her parents, and it can be encouraged in many other ways. These days, home tasks are shared by both genders.)

**Class Activity:** Dramatizations

1. **Should Doug Be Dunked?**

A play in one scene; the action and argument to be made up by three volunteers, one to play the role of Mother, one of Father and one of Doug, age 4 1/4 years. When the scene opens, Doug is splashing contentedly in the toddler end of the swimming pool. Mother wants him to learn to swim; she did at his age; Doug is frightened if he gets in water above his knees. Father doesn't want to force Doug to get into the deep water; he remembers his own father pushing him into the pool to make him learn, even though he was afraid.

He has never forgotten how terrified he was and how angry he was with his father.

The characters will have a heated argument, in which everyone will express his/her feelings about swimming, and about one another.

The class discussion following the episode should include speculations about what the effect would be on Doug if he were forced to learn to swim before he was ready. What would his feelings be toward his mother? About trying other new things? If his
parents were to decide not to force him, how could they reassure him that it is O.K. to wait, and that learning to swim will be easier when he is a bit older?

2. **Bernie Blows Up**

   A play in two scenes. The characters are Bernie, age 5, his two neighbors Susie 5 and Tom 4, and Bernie's mother.

   In the first scene, Bernie and his friends have been playing happily in Bernie's back yard. Something goes wrong and Bernie's mother who is preparing lunch in the kitchen hears Bernie screaming "You can't play with my toys." Mother didn't see what happened, but she has always tried to teach Bernie to share and be polite. She rushes out and starts scolding Bernie. Dramatize this interaction, showing how everybody feels.

   The second scene will be played by another cast of actors. It will have a different outcome because this time when mother rushes out, she will try to understand what happened, try to help her son share his toys reasonably, and then try to help the children deal with their angry feelings, and get back on a friendly footing with one another.

   The discussion following the scene should include the points that getting along with others is one of the important things children have to learn; that getting angry is bound to happen now and again; that learning to talk things out when angry is a difficult skill to learn and that parents help in this is needed. The Golden Rule is helpful, and should be used by children and parents alike.

**Discussion**

What recommendations would you make to parents who want to be good teachers to their pre-schoolers?

1. The parent should enjoy the opportunity to help his child learn about his world. If the parent likes teaching, usually the child will like learning.

2. The parent who sets time aside to spend with the child and answer his questions, will find her or his child more likely to want to learn than when the parent does not do this.

3. The parent should focus on the child's natural interests, not push him to learn something the parent likes, but the child doesn't.

4. When a child has to learn something he doesn't want to, for example, to tie his shoes, at this age it often is due to the child's fear of failing; give him a little extra time to develop the small-muscle coordination needed for this task.

5. Praise him when he accomplishes a new skill.
6. If he fails at something, reassure him that this happens to everyone, and he will succeed if he keeps at it.

7. Never make fun of a child, whether it is his awkwardness, fearfulness or whatever.

8. Do not compare siblings' accomplishments.

9. Learn to sense when a child needs help, and when he needs to accomplish something independently.

10. Introduce him early to the rewards of reading.

11. Remember the Golden Rule.

**Outcome**

The students will have learned what parental attitudes and approaches foster the development of the child's abilities to learn and to play and what attitudes are counterproductive.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

SELF AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

SELF AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS -- Part 1 (Child Development Aspect)


Objective

To understand the process of "selfhood" development during the first five years of life, and the simultaneous growth of relationships inside and outside of the family.

Class Discussion

In this class there are (number of students and teachers) unique persons. Did you ever think of yourself as unique? You are. There never has been a person exactly like you in the world, and there never will be. Even what we call identical twins are not really identical. This gift of uniqueness is quite a responsibility when you come to think of it. It challenges you to make the most of the special person you are.

The assortment of genes with which we are born and the many experiences we have from the first days of our lives makes each one of us unique from very early on; certainly long before a child is 5 years old, she or he is quite unique. We have to emphasize that the "self" that develops from the day of birth on is very much affected not only by the "givens" we are born with, but also by the support, teaching, encouragement and love our parents provide.

Let us review how the child's awareness of being a self begins and develops.

Does the newborn realize that he/she is a person? (No, she has feelings such as hunger and she ably lets you know about it, but does not know that that empty stomach is hers. For a number of months she has the feeling that she and her mother are part of each other. That is not really an odd idea, since they were part of each other for nine months.)

Have you ever seen a 4 month old baby holding up her hand and staring at it? What is she doing? (She is becoming aware of her own body "geography," which gradually leads to the astonishing discovery that she and mother are different persons.)

Do you think this is a happy or frightening discovery? (It is both. The child is excited by the feeling that she can toddle around by herself and explore the things she wants to; but it frightens her to realize that if Mother is not part of her, how will she cope with things on her own; she might even fear that Mother might go away and not come
back. This is why an eighteen month old child may be super-independent one minute, and clinging anxiously to Mother the next.

At about what age does a child become comfortable about being a separate person, confident that mother loves her and is available to her, even if she and mother are different people? (Usually between 30 - 36 months. By that time the child has a sense of security in mother's and father's love; also the child has developed the ability to love not only her parents, but also her siblings, grandparents if near at hand, and other people who are close then.

**Teacher Presentation: The Development of One's Gender-Self**

A child of two already has some sense of being a girl or boy. "Good boy!" Good girl!" Bad boy!" Bad girl!" already have been said to the child many times. The way a child is dressed, the toys that are provided, and the way he or she is talked to and played with, give the child a good sense of being a boy or a girl. In addition, there is a biological tendency for even two year old girls to show a special interest in infants that is not often found in boys. Some 2 year old boys, on the other hand, already begin to show a distinct preference for engaging in full body muscular activity. Also, if a two year old has observed other children undressed he or she may well already shown surprise and interest in the fact that there is a difference in how boys' and girls' genitals are structured.

The age range of 3-6 years shows a further development in all this. Now the child becomes very much interested in these anatomical differences. Most children have pleasure, pride, and good feeling about being male or female. This depends, in part, on the parents feeling happy about the child's gender and conveying this to him or her. Many gender-related fantasies and much gender-related play occur during these years. Although it is normal for a child to take both parents as role models, we often find a preference in playing for a girl to pretend to be a mother, a nurse or a teacher, or a boy to be a father, a mechanic or a fireman.

There is an old saying "The path of true love is never smooth." This is just as true of the love of parents and children, as it is in romance. The child who now has settled two big issues--that he is a separate individual from his mother and that he is a boy, not a girl--, finds that his feelings toward his parents have become quite complicated. He has strong love feelings for his mother, likes to feel close to her and touch her; he may well daydream about marrying her when he grows up. He becomes uncomfortable when he sees his parents kissing each other, even angry at mother for this, and jealous of father. At the same time, he adores and admires his father, so his feelings are, to say the least, ambivalent.

With the little girl, the situation is reversed. She deeply loves and needs her mother who loves and nurtures her, but she gets upset and disagreeable especially toward mother when her adored father pays attention to mother instead of to her--even though father has a lot of love for her, too. Many a girl has ideas of marrying her father some day, and as
with the little boy toward his father, her ambivalence toward her mother is very uncomfortable.

By the age of six or so, the child normally has worked through much of his/her jealousy and competitiveness with the parent of the same gender. The little girl is well on the way to accepting the fact that mother and father are each other's mates, and that she will have a mate of her own when she grows up; and the same with the little boy. Each child will take the same-gender parent as his/her role model.

**Relationships with Others**

Think about the life-span of the average person. If you live to be 80, with whom will you have the longest relationship of your life? (Your siblings -- they probably will live twenty or thirty years longer than your parents.)

The relationships you establish with your brother and sisters from babyhood on, can be of enormous importance. In some families the siblings aren't very close, and they may drift apart as they grow up. These young people lose a great deal. A family where siblings are close and love one another, (even though normally they are competitive and may even have fairly frequent fights when young) will have one another as life long friends. A woman of 80 who was mourning the death of her only sister said "Now there is no one left who knows about my childhood." This woman lives in the United States, her sister lived in Germany, but through fifty years of separation they were each other's friend and link to the early years which meant so much to them.

During the early years, a 3-6 year old will admire and imitate and depend on a sibling who is a few years older. He may also get into his sibling's "hair" by messing up his toys, or by hanging around when the older one wants to play with his friends. It is well known that an older sibling experiences some jealousy when a younger one comes along, and claims a lot of the parents' time and attention. If parents handle this wisely, the older one can be assured that the parents have as much love for him as ever; and he can be helped to take the role of valued and admired big brother. He can be a substitute for his parents, when needed, teaching and protecting the younger one. Without perhaps realizing it, the older one is gaining experience that later will be helpful to him when he is a parent. However, unless it is really necessary an older child should not have to take major responsibility for the younger ones, because she needs free time to develop her own interests.

When might it be necessary for an older child to take major responsibility for a younger one? (E.g., in a single parent home, a mother might not get home from work until 5:30 or 6:00. A 10 or 11 year old may have to collect his little sister from the kindergarten, and supervise her until Mother's return.)

Along with the all-important relationships with parents and siblings the child of 3-6 is busy developing other important connections. If he is fortunate enough to have grandparents in the home or nearby, the relationship with them can be very meaningful.
Grandparents usually can be counted on to offer the child playfulness, affection, relaxed time together, a sympathetic ear and help with problems.

If a child goes to pre-school, he may develop a close relationship with his teachers and find some friends among their peers. These relationships although distinctly secondary to those in his family can provide a social "laboratory." They offer opportunities to learn about the given and take of relationships, sharing with peers and cooperating with teachers. The same can be said for the widening circle of relationships among aunts, uncles, cousins, family friends and neighborhood children.

Assignment

Write your thoughts about these situations:

1. Mr. & Mrs. Brown were parents of three little girls, and when Mrs. Brown was expecting again, they greatly wanted a son. But the baby was another girl whom they named Sidney. In conversations with relatives, the remark was often made "Sidney should have been a boy." When Sidney gets a little older and senses her parents' disappointment, will this affect her self-image? Explain.

2. Mr. & Mrs. Ross are the parents of Jane, 4 and Sara, 6 months. Soon after Sara was born, Jane confided to her Uncle Jack "Sara stole my Mommy." How could Mrs. Ross help Jane to change her feeling about this?

3. Joey is 4 years old and has no siblings. Think of three ways his parents can help him to learn to share, and be considerate of the feelings of others.

Outcome

The students will have reviewed the steps of the development of the awareness of self and gender; they will have learned how primarily relationships within the family, and secondarily those outside the family contribute to the child's emotional development.
**Objective**

To consider parental attitudes which encourage, and others which discourage a healthy sense of self, and the formation of good relationships with others.

**Class Discussion**

Review with the class the steps in attaining gradual awareness of being a self, in infancy and toddlerhood.

What is the problem for the child in giving up his sense of oneness with mother, and becoming aware that he is an individual, himself? (Anxiety about separation, fear of abandonment, sense of helplessness.)

How can a parent help a child feel comfortable, even happy about being a separate person? (By giving assurance of parents’ continuing love and availability; by teaching the child to do things for himself, and sharing pleasure in his accomplishments.)

How does this little individual now become aware of being a boy or a girl? (There is an inborn biological tendency to be and know that one is either female or male. But before this biological knowledge becomes really felt by the child from the third year of life on, during the first two years the words parents use in speaking to the child, the toys they provide, the activities they encourage, and what the child has observed, all help the child develop the sense that she is a girl or he is a boy.)

Ask several students to read their thoughts about Sidney whose parents said "She should have been a boy", followed by a discussion in which other students will give additional points. (The ideas offered should include: 1. That Sidney will feel that it isn't as good to be a girl as to be a boy. 2. She will feel that she let her parents down by being a girl. 3. She may feel ashamed about this, even though she had nothing to do with being born a girl! 4. She may feel that her parents don't love her as much as they would if she had been a boy. 5. She may feel angry at them because of this. 6. She may try to "make up" for being a girl, by turning to boyish interests, and looking down on girlish ones.)

Suppose Sidney's parents, even though they had hoped for a son, were prepared to welcome their child, whatever the gender. How could they help Sidney "feel good" about
being a girl? (Answers could include: 1. Loving her as a person. 2. Telling her they are so happy to have another girl and really enjoying being with her. 3. Praising her for the things she does well, whatever they are. 4. Showing love and appreciation for Sidney's sisters, thus conveying the idea that it is pretty nice to have girls in the family. 5. Father's attitude toward mother is important. She is after all "a grown up girl," and if he shows love and appreciation for her, this gives a message to all his daughters, that his girls are special to him.)

Sidney, like her sisters, between the ages of 3 and 6 will experience the "family romance," when she will wish she could marry her father, and at times will feel jealous of mother. This should be treated respectfully, letting Sidney know, as her sisters had to learn, that father is Mother's mate, and Sidney will have her own when she is older.

How many students in this class have ever had a quarrel with a brother or sister? It is safe to say that the only people who have never quarreled with siblings, are those who never had any siblings. Rivalry among siblings is very natural, and provides a kind of laboratory in which children can work out problems and learn to interact with others as caring human beings. The reason this laboratory is so helpful is that there are love feelings as well as competitive ones as the children grow up together.

Sibling rivalry begins very early -- usually with the birth of the second child. (Ask some students to read their thoughts about Jane's feeling that "Sara stole my Mommy," and how Mrs. Ross could help Jane feel differently. The discussion should include these ideas:

1. The reassurance that both Mom and Dad have plenty of love and Jane will have as much as she ever did.

2. Recognize that sometimes Jane may want Mom to help her do something when Mom has to feed or diaper Sara, and it is hard to wait; but Mom feels she can count on Jane to wait a little, and to understand that Mom, really, will help her as soon as she can.

3. Let Jane watch as Mom takes care of Sara and encourage her to help when she shows an interest, by holding Sara a few moments, handing mother a diaper, etc.

4. Talk with Jane about how she will become a Mommy some day, if she wants to, and that it is a wonderful thing to be, especially when there are daughters as great as Jane and Sara.

What do you think are some of the other frustrations in having siblings? (Older ones can stay up longer than you can; if younger; younger ones may have to wear hand-me-downs; older ones may feel that parents are "practicing" with them, and that they treat the younger ones less strictly; older ones may sometimes have to baby-sit, when they would rather visit a friend; younger ones may feel that they can never keep up with the older ones, and can never win a game; both younger and older ones sometimes feel that the parents prefer the other, even if that is not true.)
What are the advantages of having siblings? (Everyone enjoys being admired, and the older ones are looked up to by the younger; the older ones can teach skills to the little ones, who enjoy learning from them -- if the older ones are patient; the younger children can look to the older ones for protection and can, especially if the parents are absent; the older siblings can get some early lessons in parenting, which will be useful later. Even if it is difficult to learn to share, having siblings provides opportunities to share, and to learn consideration in interaction with others, and to settle disputes fairly. In a normal family, there are feelings of love among siblings which survive all quarrels. As siblings grow older, their ties of friendship grow stronger, and they remain friends for life. Regrettably, this is not true in every family, but usually it is.)

Now consider the situation of Joey, age 4 who has no siblings. Discuss the reports of some of the students who wrote suggestions about how his parents could help him learn to share and consider the feelings of others. (Ideas offered should include:

1. The example of the parents, who share, e.g. candy, with each other as with him.

2. Pointing out to Joey that he has to share Mother's time with Daddy, for instance if he needs her to sew a button on Daddy's shirt and Joey wants her to help him with a puzzle.

3. Listening to Joey, and expecting him to listen to the parents.

4. Having a pet and showing Joey that pets have feelings, and should be treated considerately. 5. Showing Joey how to be welcoming and courteous to visitors, including grandparents.

6. Making opportunities for Joey to have some play contacts with other children and helping him understand the concepts of taking turns and sharing.

7. Helping him talk about, instead of acting out his angry feelings if he gets into fights when playing. 8. Teach him some of the skills -- e.g. throwing and catching a ball -- that other children may have learned from their siblings.)

These days when many mothers work outside the home, many children are sent to day care or nursery school, perhaps for two or three years before kindergarten. If the mother did not have to work, and could stay home, which do you think would be better for a three year old -- to go to nursery school or stay home? (There are many things a child can learn in nursery school, and he will have the experience of making new relationships with peers and teachers. It should be remembered, however, that the main developmental job of the 3-5 age range, is to continue the formation of good, stable relationships within the family, especially with his parents. It is these relationships which have the most to do with the formation of the child's personality. All children throughout their development identify with the people they value emotionally and to whom they are emotionally attached.)
For most people these primary relationships -- these character forming relationships -- are with the parents; in some cases where parents are not available, grandparents, aunts and uncles, or other caregivers take their place. Children identify with both the positive and negative qualities in both their parents (or substitute parents.) Much as they might like to, parents cannot influence which aspects of themselves the children will select for identification. They can expect, however, that children are more likely to identify with what the parents do, than with what the parents wish their children would do.

Since the parents play such a major role in the character formation of their children, you can see that even a good nursery school cannot be expected to be that important to a child's development. However, if a nursery school, or a day care center has caring and understanding caregivers and/or teachers, it can do a great deal to supplement what the child is getting at home. Parents who do send their children to pre-school or day care need to be careful to select one which fosters the child's emotional growth. They will also need to monitor how the child is responding to the school. After the adjustment to the separation from home, does he appear happy at the school, or anxious? What is his reaction to teachers and caregivers? Is he interacting with the other children in a reasonably comfortable way? Taking time with the child for real communication through talking and playing together is very important, especially for the working mother who cannot be with the child all day.

All this being said, a child can form some very meaningful relationships with a caring teacher, and with peers at pre-school. Of course, cooperation between parents and teachers is of great importance, so that the child will receive the similar messages from home and school.

Outcome

Helpful parental attitudes in supporting a child's gender identity, have been defined; the values and complications of having siblings explored, and the advantages and disadvantages of pre-school attendance have been considered.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

THE BEGINNINGS OF SEXUAL (REPRODUCTIVE) LIFE
UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

THE BEGINNINGS OF SEXUAL (REPRODUCTIVE) LIFE  --  
Part 1 (Human Development Aspect)

Teacher Preparation: Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 47 - 70. Teacher should decide whether this material should be given in more than one class session; there is a lot of it.

Objective

The students will understand (1) that sexual development is a normal and very important part of human growth; (2) that it begins much earlier in life than most people think; and (3) that the young child communicates his interest in sexual matters by clear signals, often in words, and in behaviors.

Class Discussion

Did you ever stop to consider why there are two kinds of people, male and female? (Answers should include the following ideas: 1. So that babies will be born, and 2. so that life on earth will continue on and on. 3. So that people won't be lonely. 4. So that people will have mates and families to love them.)

Even though family life has been based on the two sexes loving and caring for each other for thousands of years, some ideas about sex and families have changed quite a lot during this century. Two things stand out:

1. How do you think family life may be different now than it was a hundred years ago? (Many mothers now work outside the home, some doing work that only men used to do; more fathers help with house work and child care, than they did a hundred years ago. More children grow up now with only one parent in the home. And, most welcome is that more parents talk reasonably with their children at an early age about sex, instead of making up stories about storks that only ended up confusing children).

2. People used to think that children's sexual development began in adolescence. But we now know that it begins from about 2 1/2 years of age on. (There is much evidence now that parents knowing this can make them help their children cope better with the anxieties sexual development causes children.)
Teacher Presentation -- Part 1

The main reason why children now are told the "facts of life" at an earlier age, is that mental health professionals have taught us that the better children understand what sex is, the good and the harm that can come from it, the better children will be able to deal with their own sexuality in a healthy way as they grow. It is very helpful that we now know much more than earlier generations did about normal child development. In the old days, it was believed that young children had no interest in, or awareness of sexual matters until they were thirteen or fourteen. Then, suddenly they were expected to be adults. Girls especially would marry at fourteen or fifteen, and ready or not, would become parents. In part this rush was because people didn't live as long as they do now. Many died in their 20's and 30's whereas now many people in this country live into their 80's and 90's.

Therefore, in today's world, it is much to the advantage of young people that they wait to become parents until they have begun to emotionally be adults, have become educated and are on their way to being established in jobs, have taken time to find a mate they love and want to spend their lives with. As we know, some young people do not wait until these things have been sufficiently accomplished, but this is the route which is most likely to lead to a happy family life for them, and their children. If parenthood is undertaken too early, it proves to be a very stressful and difficult task for the young persons, and for the infant as well.

The other major thing that has changed is this century is the discovery that sexual life does not begin at age 13 or 15, but from 2 to 3 years of age on. It is, of course, a different thing at 2 or 3 than at 13 or 15, but it is there. A newborn, as you know, has a brain, a heart, a digestive system, and all the other organs of a complete human being. True, the digestive organs of a newborn are not ready to deal with hamburgers and french fries, nor is the brain of a newborn ready to cope with decimals and fractions, but these organs are getting ready day by day to move toward these and other developments. Similarly, the newborn's sexual organs are in place, tiny though they are. Although the infant of course is unaware of their purpose, he/she does experience a pleasant sensation when the organs are touched during diapering and cleaning by mother or other caregiver. Later on, a two year old toddler, especially girls, begins to show a marked interest in babies; she will stare in fascination, some even in awe, at an infant and want to hold it. Both boys and girls show this interest, but researchers have found it to be especially strong in girls and only occasional in boys.

During the years of 3-6, sexual concern and curiosity become more clearly and strongly expressed. Between the ages of 6-12, this interest gives way for the most part to those of school, sports, hobbies and friends. Then at 12 or 13, the young person goes through remarkable physical changes getting ready for adolescence. And at adolescence the interest in the opposite sex becomes very strong, and then begins the process that someday will lead to the choosing of a mate and eventually to becoming a parent.
Class Discussion

How many of you have a brother or sister in the 3-6 age range?

How many of these little people realize "I am a girl," or "I am a boy"?

As your answers indicate, children of this age have the fact of gender differences clearly in mind, in a general way. But they also have some very specific feelings and questions.

What questions have you heard them ask? (E.g., Where do babies come from? Can I have a baby now? Why don't I have a penis? What happened to it? Will my penis break off?)

In what ways have you noticed your young brother or sisters showing an interest in the opposite sex and parenting? (E.g., saying "I'm going to marry Mommy or Daddy," playing house, mothering dolls, or real babies, imitating Mommy or Daddy's activities, wanting to see the genital organs of others in the family, showing an interest in and touching their own, wanting to be close to, and often in some, less often in others, showing preferences for the parent of the other sex.

What is your opinion: is this kind of behavior normal? Is it wrong for little children to have an interest in their own genital equipment, and in that of other children? On the other hand, do you think that it may be a good thing for them to be interested in sexual questions, and to feel they can ask questions about this (and other things) of their parents. Why or why not?

Teacher Presentation -- Part 2

Questions like these have been debated for hundreds of years; but this is what doctors and child development specialists and many parents now understand to be the normal course of development in young children:

Just as the tiny infant examines his own hand in fascination, and the toddler is interested in how he makes a B.M. and where it goes, the child of 2 1/2 or 3 becomes very interested in his genital organs. He is aware of pleasant sensations when they are touched; and he becomes very curious about why, as he first sees it, girl children don't show a penis like he does. Since he is coming to value his penis very greatly, he now imagines that, since his little friend Jane doesn't have a penis, penises can break off; and then, he makes the mistake of thinking, that if his penis broke off he would be a girl. Anxiety develops about this, which he may express in being upset about anything, even toys, being broken, or by going into a panic over the smallest scratch anywhere on his body, or by clutching his penis if he is being scolded.
Although he has a special concern for his penis, a little boy may have the fantasy that he, like his mother, is able to have a baby. He may be puzzled by this, and may be very upset when told that this is a wonderful thing that only women can do.

While all this is going on, the little boy's behavior is becoming more "macho" every day. He may strut around showing off his arm muscles. He may imitate activities of his greatly admired father, or pretend to be a policeman or a fireman. Gradually his feelings of baby-like attachment to his mother take on a different quality.

The sexual feelings the 3 year old child now begins to have are naturally a part of those wonderful feelings we call "love". When they first come out, they seem to come from the same source as the feelings of love the 18 month old has toward his or her mother and father. In fact, it is quite normal and understandable that his/her emerging sexual feelings would first be attached to those the 3 year old already loves. These are precious feelings; he/she will not have them just for anyone, but only for the most special persons in her/his life. Interestingly researchers have found that very soon after these sexual feelings begin to show in children's behaviors, they most commonly become attached especially to the parent of the other sex. The girl most loves her Dad this way; the boy most loves his Mom this way. This make for the beginning of what we call the child's "Family Romance", a normal and very positive development that leads to important psychological-emotional growth.

The Family Romance (and The Conflict it Creates in the Child's Mind)

It is so then, that the 3 year old boy becomes attached to his mother in a romantic way. He may even say that he wants to marry Mom when he is older. He means this quite seriously, and the more deeply he becomes romantically attached to his mother, the more he begins to feel jealous of his father, and to have moments when he actually hates the father. You remember the problem of "ambivalence" which we discussed in an earlier lesson. That distressing feeling enters the picture now. The boy's jealousy and hate are mixed up with his feelings of love and admiration for his father. Then the child has feelings of guilt. He feels that he is a bad boy for wanting harm to come to the father he loves and that he deserves to be punished. There are two punishments he fears most: (1) that he will lose his father's love, and (2) that he also may lose his own penis. This is what is called "castration anxiety." For both reasons the boy feels very conflicted within himself.

In a later lesson we shall think together about ways to help a child with his sexual feelings, but now it is enough to say that if he is dealt with understandingly, this whole experience can lead to a great deal of important emotional and personality growth. It will help him develop his conscience, and more, including further growth of his abilities of empathy, altruism, and sublimation (which we shall talk about in a later lesson). In addition, it fosters the further development of his self-respect hand in hand with healthy and respecting attitudes toward girls and women. A well worked-out family romance will give him a pre-view of the loving relationships in store for him when he will have his own mate later.
The sexual development of little girls is similar but a bit more complicated. When she becomes aware of gender differences, she does not know that her sexual organs are wonderfully developed inside her body. When she looks at her genital area she cannot see what is inside her body. She cannot see a body part like her hands or feet or, like with the boy, a penis. Noticing that she has no penis, many a 3-4 year old girl believes either that she will grow one any day soon or else that she did have one, but lost it. With no reasonable outside information and her age-adequate way of thinking, this is quite reasonable thinking for the 3-4 year old who is discovering yet another new thing she tries to understand as best she can. Children do really try to understand what they see and hear, because not knowing something in which one is very interested makes us all feel uncomfortable if not outright anxious. Most girls go so far as to blame their mothers for having taken their penises away from them. In spite of this worry, the girl will experience pleasure when she touches her genital area, or presses against a rocking horse or other object.

Behaviorally she may show a wide range of interests, romping around with her brothers, imitating her mother's housekeeping activities, and especially showing a tender and constant interest in babies. She may talk about wanting a baby, and gradually she enters into the period of the family romance. She may speak of wanting to marry her father, and will become flirtatious with him. She may show signs of jealousy if Father kisses Mother first when he comes home, instead of her. As her preference for her father increases, she is likely to become stubborn and often be disagreeable with her mother. Again, ambivalence enters the picture. She resents and hates the mother she loves and admires which creates a painfully felt conflict within her mind. And she, like the little boy, feels guilty and deserving of punishment, and she fears worst of all, that she may forever lose her mother's love.

She indeed then, feels very conflicted.

How the Child Tries to Get Over the Family Romance Conflict

Both boys and girls try many ways to become more comfortable with these distressing feelings. The first thing the 5 year old or so does is to begin to accept that she/he can't have what she/he so much wishes for. The girl knows she can't marry her Dad; the boy knows he can't marry his Mom. For now they begin to try to put all of this aside. And they decide that when they grow up, they'll both find somebody else to love this way.

Most important is that this very difficult normal experience, because it gives rise to so troublesome a conflict within the 3-4 year old child's mind, leads to some of the most remarkable humanizing and socializing developments. To want to harm or even do away with someone the child loves so much, the conflict that the feelings of ambivalence cause, leads to the child's organizing his budding conscience in a dramatic way. Although earlier life experiences already are making the child begin to develop a sense of "do's and don'ts", of responsibility and concern for others, the family romance conflict dramatically enlarges and more fully organizes the child's conscience. We shall discuss this in the last lessons of this course.
This conflict in the child's mind also calls upon the child to learn to control and tame his/her feelings of hate and hostility. This is so because the child himself/herself dreads losing control over wishes to harm so loved and needed a parent. We shall talk about this in the lessons on aggression.

It also leads to a large spurt in growth in what we call sublime adaptive abilities:

(1) in **sublimation**, which is to put one's troublesome emotional energies into creative activities such as sports, art, hobbies, writing stories or poems, etc.

(2) In **Empathy**, which is the ability to emotionally perceive and feel what another person is feeling. And

(3) in **Altruism**, which is the ability to consider another person's needs more than one's own.

In addition, the troublesome feelings are most commonly also dealt with by the use of some psychological defense mechanisms (which we shall talk about in a later lesson). Some of these defense mechanisms are:

1. **Repression**: pushing troublesome feelings or thoughts out of our own awareness (to making them unconscious), to our "forgetting" them.

2. **Reaction Formation**: changing feelings that are difficult to deal with into their opposites, for instance, saying to oneself when jealous and frighteningly angry with Mother "I don't hate my mother, I love her."

3. **Regression**: to feel and act like a younger child. The aim is to go back to a level of development where the child felt "safe", usually meaning to a time when whatever difficulties or troublesome feelings the child now has didn't exist.

4. **Identification**: the attempt to be like a person one admires; this could also be a person we envy. Along with developing inner controls over one's hostility and hate toward others, the dramatic development of conscience, and the sublime adaptive abilities, **identification** contributes importantly to the remarkable developments of this 3 to 6 years period.

With both boys and girls, it is important to remember that their early sexual feelings, as well as their strongest feelings of affection are directed to the people they love most dearly, their parents. This puts upon the parents the very big responsibility to deal with the honest feelings and strange imaginings of their children in an understanding way.
**Outcome**

The students will have become aware that sexual development begins normally to unfold at the age of two and a half; that both boys and girls experience sexual feelings and strong curiosity about sexual matters, and will ask questions about them.

They will also will have learned that the development of the "family romance" complicates relationships temporarily with both parents. They will understand better that the great emotional difficulty the conflict of the family romance and these feelings of ambivalence cause the child, especially in children who are well loved and respected by their parents, also leads to dramatic greater developments of several very important human features. These are important because they increase the child's abilities to love, be responsible in human relationships, be considerate of others, develop a sense of morality (a conscience), and all in all, develop a much more developed sense of himself or herself.

**Assignment**

Write a paragraph about each of the following questions:

1. Which of the ideas about sexual development discussed in class were already known to you? From whom did you learn this information?

2. Which of the ideas were new to you? Does this new information make sense to you? Why or why not?
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

SEXUAL (REPRODUCTIVE) LIFE -- Part 2 (Child Rearing Aspect):
ANSWERING CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS ABOUT SEXUAL MATTERS

Objective

To understand why parents may find it difficult to recognize and respond to the early sexual development of their children.

To consider helpful and unhelpful ways of answering children's' questions on sexual matters.

Class Discussion

Ask for volunteers to share their homework write-ups. Regarding the responses to the "new" information question, encourage discussion of any aspects of sexual development that may have impressed some students as strange, because it was unfamiliar to them.

Teacher Presentation

In very many families, for very many years sex was a subject not to be discussed. Children weren't supposed to know anything about it, and if, at age 3, their behavior showed that they did, the parents either thought there was something wrong with their child or they turned deaf ears and closed their eyes to what was there. Then, when a child got to be 12 or 13, and the subject couldn't be put off any longer, an embarrassed parent would have a private talk about "the birds and the bees".

Now the young person would pretend great surprise at hearing information he or she already had some ideas, if not theories, about for years!

Of course, for many 12 year olds it did seem to be new information because, since they repressed much of their family romance feelings and fantasies, they indeed did experience what their parents told them as "new" information. But then, why is it that for so long it has been so difficult for most 12 years olds to talk about "the birds and the bees" with their own parents whom they love and trust?

Why do you think it was so hard for parents of earlier times to talk with their children about sex? (Here are some factors: Their parents handled it that way with them. Or, they grew up thinking that there was something wrong or dirty about sex, and they never quite got over that feeling. Very important again is that, because of the repression their family romance conflict caused in them when they were children, they "forget" that they,
when they were children, were very concerned about sexual matters too. Also, some parents fear that their young child will become too interested in the subject, and he or she will talk outside the home about sex or experiment with sex play. Also very common, because they are not comfortable with sexual matters, parents may feel embarrassed and fear that they may not know how to approach the subject with their children. There are other factors too.)

Assuming that a present-day parent says he or she is ready to answer his or her young child's sexual questions, let us consider some of the questions children ask, and possible answers to them.

Three year old Suzy has just become aware that her five year old brother Danny has a penis, and she asks her mother where hers (Suzy's) is. Suzy is feeling very hurt, because Danny had just said to her in a nasty way, "You're just a girl! Girls don't have penises!" Mother doesn't realize how serious this matter is to Suzy, and not recognizing Suzy's feeling hurt, she finds Suzy's question amusing. She answers, "Oh your penis must be around here somewhere. Take a look in my purse."

Why is this answer unhelpful? (It teases Suzy when she is feeling hurt and anxious, and may be feeling that something is wrong about the way she is made. It does not give her the information she needs. It shakes her confidence in her mother's willingness and ability to help her.)

What would be a helpful answer? (You are a girl like me, and we are made in just the right way. We girls don't have a penis; we have a different type of genitals (or "private parts"). We have a vagina and a lot more wonderful parts inside us. At this age, on these issues, it is wise to not answer more than seems to satisfy the child's interest. If Suzy asks why, she can be told that that's how nature (or God, depending on the family's convictions) needs for women to be, so that when she is older, because of her vagina and another special place inside her, her uterus or "baby sac", she can have a baby and be a Mother.)

Suppose, on the other hand it was Danny who came to his father, and said that he was worried that his penis might break off the way Suzy's did. If father answered "If you're a good boy, it won't." Why is that answer unhelpful? (It makes an anxious little boy even more anxious. Danny may wonder how good he has to be, to be safe; should he always, always do what Dad says. He may feel that his father knows about Danny's romantic feelings for his mother and his wishing he could be the father, and that Father someday will punish him. Furthermore, Father's answer does not tell Danny the truth -- that body parts like hands and feet don't just fall off, and so too a boy's penis does not fall off.)

What would be a helpful answer? (Many boys have worries like this, especially when they think that maybe they have done something naughty. But the truth is that penises don't fall off. Penises, like hands and feet, are normal body parts we have for keeps.)
Five year old Mimi, who is in the Family Romance stage said to her mother one night at bedtime, "It's not fair; I'm a little girl and I have to sleep in a room by myself. You and Daddy are big and you can sleep together in the same room. Why can't I sleep with you and Daddy too?"

Mother laughed and said, "OK, you can sleep with us tonight." Why is that answer unhelpful? (It adds tension to the Mimi-Father-Mother triangle. Mimi has to learn that her parents are married to each other, and that married people have their private times together; that they love each other in a different way than they love Mimi.)

What would be a helpful answer? (If Mimi seems to be afraid of being alone, parents should try to reassure her, tell her she is safe at home, read her a story to help her become sleepy, and offer her a night light. On the other hand, if Mimi is curious about what goes on in the parents' bedroom, and perhaps jealous of Father's special attention to Mother, both parents could help explain that they love Mimi very much but that Mother and Father have a special time together because they are married to each other. Mimi, too, will have a nice mate of her own when she grows up.)

Three year old Robert asked his father where his newborn sister Ellen came from. The wrong answers father might have given include:

(1) A stork brought her in the night.
(2) We ordered her from a catalog.
(3) A doctor at the hospital gave her to us.

These answers are wrong ones, not only because they are not true, but because untrue answers give false information, lead to misunderstanding and, most important, threaten a child's trust in his parents.

What Robert's father did answer was, "You remember we told you that Mommy had a baby inside her? Well, it was time for that baby to come out, and that baby is Ellen!"

If Robert were five instead of three, he might also ask "How did the baby get inside Mommy?" Poor answers would be "It just grew," or "Don't ask silly questions!". A good answer would be "Daddy helped Mommy by giving her a seed, and that seed with Mommy's seed (a very little egg) together grew into a baby." If the child asks more specifically, and Father is uncomfortable or at a loss for words to explain to his five year old, he can say he will get a good book this week end that will help him tell Robert how that happens and that they'll read it together. If father feels comfortable talking about it himself, he can tell Robert that to make a baby a seed from the mother (called an egg) and one from the father (called a sperm) have to be brought together and these then grows into a baby in the mother's uterus (or "baby sac"). So, when Daddy and Mommy lie close together and love each other, his penis can put the seed into Mother's vagina to start the baby.
There are a few important rules about answering questions:

1. Consider the child's age -- you would answer a question much more simply for a three year old than for a six year old.

2. Answer questions truthfully.

3. Do not over-explain. Especially on the subject of babies, a child may be asking only about where the baby came from, and not about how it got there. Try to find out how much the child really wants and needs to know at this time. He will come back later for additional information when he is ready for it.

4. Never make fun of a child if his questions seem "far out."

5. Treat the child respectfully and encourage him to bring his questions to you.

6. Treat the subject respectfully. A respect for sex leads to sensitivity in relationships, and to a good family life.

**Outcome**

The students will understand that it is not an easy matter for many parents to discuss sexual issues with their children; that handling their questions lightly or insensitively can not only give the child wrong information, but that it may diminish their children's trust in them. Sympathetic and respectful answers are always helpful and growth-promoting. The students will have learned some helpful guidelines in responding to children's tough and most important questions.

**Assignment**

1. Observe a child of 3-6 for half an hour, and record his activity. Did he do or say anything during that time that indicated an interest in sexual issues? Was his play gender specific? (Do not be afraid to say "No," if that is the case; he or she wouldn't necessarily have been focused on that during the time of your observation.)

2. Write a paragraph describing what you think would be the long range effects of a child's being lied to, or pushed aside when he asks questions about sex.
Objective

To consider helpful and unhelpful ways of responding to a small child's sexual behavior. To summarize the long range benefits of empathetic listening, sympathetic and respectful communication, and constructively setting appropriate limits.

Class Discussion

Ask for volunteers to read their observation records, and note on the blackboard the evidences of sexual activity observed, both directly expressed and in play fantasizing the roles of mother or father.

Ask other students to read what they wrote about the long-range disadvantages of poor handling of children's questions. (Among others should be included the possible loss of trust in the parent, unwillingness to confide sexual worries, development of a burden of guilt over sexual thoughts and wishes, distorted ideas of how babies are conceived and born, development of belief that sex is "dirty", and possibly fear of the opposite sex.)

Teacher Presentation

Answering questions is hard enough for many parents, but dealing with sexual behaviors is even harder. For example;

Ronnie, age 3, has discovered that he gets a very pleasant feeling when he straddles and rocks on his huge plastic dinosaur, and that he gets the same feeling when he touches his penis with his hand. For a short time he did this quite openly. At first his mother pulled his hand away, but he kept doing it. Finally she began slapping his hand, saying "That's a dirty, nasty thing to do." Was this helpful? Why or why not?

What would have been a helpful response? ("I know this feels good to you, and it's O.K. to do it; but its like going to the bathroom, it's something to do when you are alone.") Occasional masturbation gives relief to tension, but if the child does it a great deal, he or she may have an anxiety or other adjustment problem, and consulting a child psychiatrist or psychologist about it could be very helpful.

Five year old Nora, and Larry, also five were next door neighbors and playmates. One day when Nora and her mother were visiting, the children went upstairs while the
mothers were having coffee. Things became very quiet upstairs, and Larry's Mother went up to investigate. She found that the children were busy inspecting each other's genitals. She was shocked. She spanked Larry, and pulled the half-undressed Nora downstairs, saying angrily "You are wicked children; we'll see that your fathers know what you did." Was that a helpful response? Why or why not? (Although one certainly wouldn't encourage this kind of exploration, Larry's mother over-reacted to their sex play. Their curiosity was normal and natural even if this was not the best way to satisfy it. Her calling them wicked made them feel that curiosity and interest about the other sex were wrong, that they were bad people to be curious. Spanking and threatening to tell their fathers made the children feel they were indeed very bad.

A more helpful response would have been: "Heh, listen kids, this kind of play is not allowed. Your body is private, Larry, and so is Nora's. I know you are very interested in how each other is made, but that is something to talk with Mommies and Daddies about. You'll know better what to do about private body parts when you're older. Play games that are reasonable for your age, like . . . ." This kind of answer acknowledges their curiosity as natural, but sets limits on the inappropriate behavior.

Six year old Chris has a thirty year old Uncle Michael, when he admires greatly. Michael has been coming by on Saturdays, taking Chris on trips to the zoo, or to a Little League game, and sometimes to his house, where they build things in the basement. At first Chris couldn't wait for Michael to come for him; but recently Chris hasn't seemed to want to go. Mother and Father wondered why, but Chris would never say why -- he would just say "It's O.K." and go off with Michael, with a rather anxious expression on his face. One Saturday Chris complained that he was sick, and couldn't go with Uncle Michael. Chris' parents know he really wasn't sick. What would be an unhelpful response to this situation? ("You know you aren't sick, now get dressed and go!" "Uncle Michael has done so many nice things for you; is this the way to show him you appreciate them?") These responses would not get at the problem, and would make Chris "clam up" even more. What would be more helpful?

Mother and father could tell Uncle Michael that Chris didn't feel like going today. Then, they would talk to Chris, saying that his not feeling well may be because he has some worries about going with Uncle Michael. If the parents' suspicions are right, that some sexual abuse may be going on, Chris at this point might either deny worries, begin to cry, or say that he doesn't like to be with Uncle Michael anymore. It is very difficult for children to reveal sexual activity outright because they fear that their own Family Romance related sexual fantasies may be revealed or guessed by the parents. Parents would reassure Chris that it is O.K. to talk with them about anything. They might inquire whether there are any special secrets which he and Uncle Michael have, which Chris has promised not to talk about. If Chris indicates that this is the problem, parents can explain that it is almost always good to keep secrets, but there are times when you should share them with parents, especially if they are worrisome secrets. Encouragement of this kind will help the child talk about the abuse if it is happening. Needless to say, the visits would have to stop, and the child helped with his upset feelings about the way this valued relationship worked out.
Why is sexual abuse so damaging to the child and so hard for a child to talk about? For one thing, although children have sexual feelings and fantasies, they are too immature to know how to cope with them reasonably, and as a result sexual play by an adult tends to frighten and may overwhelm them emotionally. But more important is this: because the child's Family Romance fantasies make the child feel guilty and threatened, sexual activity by an adult is likely to tap into these fantasies. This then will make the child feel that what happened was due to the child's wishes that he made it happen. This will intensify the child's feelings of guilt, self-reproach, and feelings that he is bad. This will also make it more difficult for the child to grow out of his family romance and it very likely will interfere with the wonderful developments that come with the gradual, normal giving up of the family romance. In addition, because children sense that parents would say it is bad for children to be sexually active, it makes the child feel ashamed. It is important that parents (and all adults) know that sexual abuse is known to be emotionally very harmful to most children, generally, the younger the child, the greater the harm.

In addition, sexual abuse is very upsetting to children, because it may be physically hurtful. It is also harmful in that it destroys the child's trust if the abuser is a relative, a friend of the family or a person who is supposed to help children like a doctor, teacher, etc. And, children are extremely frightened if the abuser is a stranger. Further frightening to them is that children commonly are forced to promise not to tell, and this leaves them feeling alone with the problem, and very anxious. On top of it all, it generally gives children a totally negative idea of sex. It should be known that problems that arise from the sexual abuse of children may last a lifetime.

Children should be protected from even mild sexual play by adults and older children. This is most easily done by encouraging the child to confide in parents about all subjects, including sexual ones. To obtain this trust from their children, in addition to loving and respecting them, parents need to talk to their children about everything that is part of the family's life, except what is private between the parents. Children need to be taught clearly that no one has a right to touch their bodies in a sexual way.

What are the benefits to the child of a confiding relationship with his or her parents?

1. The child feels that he can trust his parents to be understanding.

2. She feels her parents will respect her and not consider her questions silly.

3. He feels his parents will give true answers about sexual matters.

4. Especially if the parents have a loving relationship with each other, she will form a healthy idea of mating. This will help her work out her complicated feelings during the period of the Family Romance.
5. This working out will enable the child to accept the idea that Mother belongs to Father as her mate, although she loves the child very much as a son. The child will be able to identify with his father (use him as an ideal) and will help the child look forward to being grown up when he will have a mate of his own.

**Outcome**

The students understand that empathic understanding along with reasonable limits will help a child to be appropriate in his sexual behavior.

The connection of helpful parental attitudes with future healthy sexual and family life, has been emphasized.
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

SEXUAL (REPRODUCTIVE) LIFE -- Part 4 (Child Rearing Aspect)
HANDLING FAMILY ROMANCE ISSUES

Objective

The students will learn how to deal helpfully with problems arising during the "Family Romance."

Class Discussion

The Family Romance is an important enriching contributor to a child's personality and emotional development. It is, therefore, important to respond to it helpfully. Can you suggest why? (Because it has a great influence on how a child's feelings will develop toward members of the opposite sex, toward members of his own sex, and very importantly, about himself.)

Jerry, age 4, was having supper with his father and mother when his mother said, "What do you think Jerry said to me today, Dan? He said he is going to marry me!" Father answered "What! a little half-pint like you, hardly out of diapers -- that's a crazy idea!" How do you think Jerry felt? (Angry at his mother for telling his secret, humiliated and put down by his father; ashamed, and probably frightened that Father might punish him for having these feelings about mother.)

How could Mother have handled this situation more helpfully? (She could have told Jerry when he confided his feelings to her that she loves him a lot as her son, but that she can't marry him because she is married to Daddy and she loves Daddy a lot too. She also could have told him that when he is older, she is certain that he will have a really nice wife of his own. Instead of bringing the subject up at the table, Mother could have told Father about this in private so that he could understand what Jerry is experiencing.)

Since she did make the mistake of telling Father in front of Jerry, how could Father have responded more helpfully? (He could have said that he can understand Jerry's feelings; after all, who wouldn't love Mommy and want to marry her? But Mommy fortunately is married to Daddy, and Jerry is very special, because he is their son. And when Jerry grows up, he will have a very special wife too.)

Diane, a four-year old displayed her Family Romance feelings by being coy, and Father felt she was being flirtatious with him. He was also surprised by her pouting when he bought Mother a dress, and she was very upset she said that he did not buy one for her! In addition, she wanted Father to kiss her first when he came home from work.
Toward her Mother, to whom she previously had shown a strong loving attachment, she began to be quite angering in her behavior. And to top it all, she asked her father to take her to the movies while Mother was at work, and she clearly was very disappointed when Father said that they would probably would all go together, with Mom he said, soon. Diane then dumped some of Mother's perfume down the toilet!

What would have been an unhelpful approach to this little girl? (To punish her without trying to talk about what feelings made her do this.)

What would have been a helpful approach? (Mother could recognize that Diane feels angry at her, and she could try to help Diane express what she is angry about. Diane probably would not be able to admit that she is jealous of Mother, but Mother could help her by recalling that Diane was disappointed that she couldn't go to the movies alone with Daddy. It is important that Mother tell Diane that she really is angry that Diane threw out her nice perfume, and to let her know firmly that it is O.K. to feel mad at Mother, but she is not allowed to destroy Mother's things. Father should make it clear that he knows Diane was upset and mad at both Mother and him. Just the same, she is not allowed to destroy things. She should try instead to put her feelings into words.)

Let us think about the long-range effects of poor and good handling of the Family Romance.

When Jerry's father ridiculed him, Jerry's reaction at the time was to feel that his mother let him down, by telling Father about his feelings; what Father said made Jerry feel inferior and ashamed. Suppose this type of interaction between Jerry and his parents happened quite often, what would be the effect on the development of Jerry's personality? (Strong hate feelings would be mixed in with his love feelings for his father. He would have a hard time identifying with his father as a model or he might identify with his father's meanness and become mean himself. He would have a hard time developing a good feeling about himself as a male person; these inferiority feelings would get in the way of establishing good relationships with other people.)

Of course every mother wants and likes to be loved by her son. But what if Jerry's Mother was so pleased with his romantic attention that she encouraged him in this behavior? (Jerry would fear his father's reaction and would feel that he deserved to be treated badly by Father for having such feelings and wishes toward Mother. Also, he would eventually feel let-down when he came to realize that he never could marry Mother anyway. It is also likely that he would have difficulty later in developing a relationship with a mate, because of his too-strong attachment to his mother.)

How would a girl feel if her mother treated her harshly during this period and her father was encouraging of her romantic feelings toward him? (She too would feel guilty about her feelings and wishes, would fear Mother would stop loving her and maybe even hurt her badly. She would also have a hard time identifying with her mother as a model.
and her strong attachment to her father would make it difficult for her to relate well and fully to other males later)

If parents can view the Family Romance period as a developmental milestone in a child's life, and deal with it with patience and understanding, they will see gratifying results. After a number of months of rough riding, the road will become smoother! The little boy will accept the reality that he cannot marry Mother, but is loved by her as her son. He will work through most of his rivalry and hostility toward his father, and will be more aware than before that his father loves and values him as a son. Then the boy increasingly will turn to his father as an admired model, who is ready to teach him the skills and behaviors appropriate for a male. Gradually, the child will respect himself as a male, will have a sense of well-being about it, and will look forward to becoming a grown up man.

The little girl goes through the same process, developing gradually a sense of well-being as a female person, and increasingly using her mother as her most important model. These developments in both boys and girls free them to make friendly relationships with their peers and quite later, during adolescence, to feel confident as they begin the long process that eventually, during young adulthood leads to the search for a mate.

During the bumpy road of the Family Romance period, a child may worry his parents because he does not seem to be making an identification with the parent of the same sex, but is showing more interest in the activities of the opposite sex parent. It is entirely normal for little boys to show an interest in playing house, helping their mothers in the kitchen and for little girls to barge into their brothers' games, and to want to help their father wash their car. However, if these opposite gender activities appear to be a child's strongest interest, parents should accept this, but gently encourage the child to try boy-type activities (if a boy) and girl type activities (if a girl.) Parents can help the child see that he will feel better as a boy, if he learns the games and skills his boy playmates know. The same approach will help the girl. If the parents keep their own attitudes healthy and helpful during the Family Romance ups and downs, the child will move to a good adjustment to his or her own gender.

In dealing with the feelings arising from the Family Romance, it is very important to

1. Never ridicule the child for having these feelings.
2. Treat him/her with respect.
3. Remind the child of the facts -- that parents are married to each other and that the child will have a husband or wife later.
4. Be realistic in setting limits on the behavior. The "beloved" parent should not encourage the romantic behavior and the same-sex parent should be understanding but set appropriate limits on the "ornery" behavior the child displays toward him/her.
5. In all this difficult period, it is important for the child to be reassured that both parents love him/her, even when, as is at times unavoidable, they have to say "No".
Summary

The goals of this period of development are:
1. To develop a sense of well-being about oneself as a male or female person.
2. To attain realistic information about the basic facts pertaining to one's own sexual organs and about the origin of babies.
3. To work through a romantic attachment to the parent of the opposite sex.
4. To work through the ambivalent feelings toward the parent of the same sex.
5. To accept emotionally that sexual activity and one's mate is to be in the future.
6. To attain a parent-child type of love with both parents, and to develop a desire to model the self after the parent of the same sex.

Outcome

The students will have learned helpful and unhelpful ways parents may guide their children through the Family Romance, and the long-range impact of these approaches on the child's development.
AGGRESSION
**Parenting for Emotional Growth:**
Lesson Plans for Grades 7 and 8.

**UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS**

**Aggression (Hostile Aggression and Nondestructive Aggression)** --
Part 1 (Child Development Aspect): HOSTILE AGGRESSION

**Teacher Preparation:** Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 71 -86.

**Objective**

The students will learn: 1. The characteristics of positive (nondestructive) and negative (hostile-destructive) aggression, and 2. How negative (hostile-destructive) aggression develops.

**Class Discussion**

Ask volunteers to define what they understand the word "aggression" to mean, and to give examples of "aggressive" behavior.

Most students will define aggression as acting or being angry, hostile, destructive. Some may add that it also means to be forceful in sports or in doing something that is hard to do. In fact, the dictionary defines "aggressive" broadly, meaning, "advancing toward, assertive", as well as "angry, hostile, hateful, destructive". What does "assertive" mean? Give some examples of assertive behavior. Emphasize that assertiveness does not include hostility, but does imply the ability to take initiative, or to put energy into working toward one's goals, or to stand up for one's rights. Does anyone have any trouble understanding what we mean by angry, hostile, hateful, destructive? Can one be destructive without being hostile? (Yes, one can destroy an old building in order to build a new one. Here the destruction is not of a hostile kind; it does no one harm.) Give some examples of being hostile-destructive.

**Teacher Presentation**

All of us in our personalities have a mixture of the two kinds of aggression: the hostile-destructive kind, which surfaces when we are very hurt, and which we have to learn to express in a controlled and reasonable way; and the nondestructive kind, which gives us self-confidence, and enables us to achieve what we set out to do.

Do you think that babies are born with both kinds of aggression? (No, babies are not born hostile; but they are born with some ability to make their needs known, to assert themselves on their caregivers.)
If infants are not born with hostility, how and when does this develop? Let's go back to the baby as he lets his caregivers know he is hungry. At first, he just whimpers or makes sounds that alert the caregiver that he needs something. If the caregiver delays, as he feels increasingly stronger hunger pain, the sound and the signs of his aggression will change. He will cry more and more loudly, and as the hunger pain gets stronger, his feelings will become more and more hostile and he may even get into a rage, which certainly makes his needs known. If the delay is too long then, that is, as it becomes too painful for the infant, his assertiveness (nondestructive aggression) will gradually change to anger, hostility, and even rage (all different grades of hostile destructiveness) which will bring the parents to him in a hurry!

Even the most loving parents cannot provide a perfectly smooth and happy life for their children, with no problems or frustration. If parents could, would this easy life be good or bad for their children's development? (While it is best for good emotional development that children have mostly good and happy experiences, having some unavoidable problems and frustrations enables a child to learn to cope with challenges, to prepare for the realities of life. He is bound to encounter situations that upset and frustrate him, and working out conflicts with his parents when he is little will help him develop the ability to work them out with classmates and others later.

The important thing to remember about the development of hostility is that what creates hostility in us is experiencing sharp or prolonged physical or emotional pain -- or as the psychiatrists put it, when we experience "excessive unpleasure." Can you think of some experiences that would be so painful to a young child that he might lash out at someone in an angry way? (E.g., falling down stairs, being given a needle by the doctor, being pulled away from a dangerous attraction, such as a hot stove).

As the child goes through the 3-6 year range, there are many experiences of excessive unpleasure which lead to the development of hostile feelings. Among these are:

1. Physical deprivation: being too hungry, too cold, too tired (being kept up too late.)

2. Emotional deprivation: not enough affection or encouragement; being criticized and "put down"; not being paid enough attention, talked to, played with and taught.

3. Frustrations: not being able to do what he wants; when he is held back too often when he attempts to do things for himself (e.g. tie his own shoes).

4. Anger toward the parent of the same sex, arising out of his Family Romance fantasies.

5. Insulting the child, by making him feel that he is unworthy of love or respect. Ridiculing his feelings and things he says, from 3 to 6 especially as he is going through the Family Romance.

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6. Painful accidents or illnesses.

7. Battles of wills, often unavoidable when a child insistently wants to do what he cannot be allowed to do.

8. Physical or mental illness in a parent; alcoholism or drug addiction.

9. Problems between parents, fights, separations, divorce.

10. Rivalries with siblings or playmates, if the child feels unfairly treated.

11. All in all, whatever causes the child to feel excessively hurt, physically or emotionally.

Feelings of hate that arise from any of these experiences are most unpleasant to the child. You may recall how you felt, when you got very angry with your best friend. When a young child feels anger at the parent he loves, he becomes very upset. Along with the anger, he feels ashamed, that he is a bad person; he feels that his parent may punish or reject him.

Some of the experiences of excessive unpleasure we have listed fortunately do not happen to every child -- e.g. abuse, emotional or physical deprivation, parents' separations and divorce. Some other experiences are part of the growing up process and are unavoidable. Among these during the 3 to 6 years period is the hostility the child feels toward the parent of the same sex resulting from the Family Romance fantasies, which we discussed last time. If wisely handled, the tension the hostility now felt causes can become an experience which helps the child develop a healthy relationship with his parents now and with his peers later.

Another unavoidable source of hostility is the battle of wills when the child wants to do something dangerous, or which for some other good reason is forbidden. If a child were a doll with no mind of her own, parents would have no problems -- but not much parenting pleasure either. A bright, active three year old has many ideas of what she wants to do, but has not developed the judgment to know which of her ideas might be dangerous or unacceptable. He or she has an urgent need to try new things. One occasionally reads of a five or six year old falling down two stories of the house they live in because he wanted to try to fly. His sense of adventure is well developed, but his sense of danger is not. Feeling very frustrated by his parents' frequently telling him to be careful can arouse hostility in the child. In a later lesson, we shall consider how to deal with battles of will.

Class Discussion

Children who have caring parents can survive temporary experiences of unpleasure. They feel an upsurge of hostility, and may shout "I hate you," at a parent. Or they may act destructively such as throw their food on the floor, kick the cat, or may even have a
tantrum. But if the parent can control his own feelings, and help the child work through these crises, the youngster gradually will learn to handle angry and hostile feelings in a civilized, reasonable way.

What happens to a child whose parents have big problems of their own, with the result that they cannot give the child the care he needs, or help with his hostile destructive feelings. (He will feel "mad at the world, as well as at his parents; he probably will turn much of this anger against himself and become depressed; he will then have a low opinion of himself; or he might become delinquent.)

A young man who was in prison having injured a store employee during a robbery attempt, surprised the lawyer who asked him why he did it by answering "Why should I care! Nobody ever loved me." Do you see a connection between his feeling unloved and his robbing a store and hurting an employee? (He was angry at being too deprived of love; he hadn't developed the ability to care about another human being so he just shot the person who was trying to prevent the robbery; since he felt that he had no one who was good to him, he was trying to give something to himself, by grabbing money but in his effort he only hurt himself more.)

A basic thing to remember is that a person who is too deprived of love as a child will have a problem letting himself love anyone else and will most likely not love even himself. The enormous pain that being too deprived of love causes leads him to have a large load of hostile feelings which, in turn, are likely to lead him into destructive behavior.

In the next lesson we shall consider positive aggression (assertiveness or nondestructive aggression).

**Outcome**

The students will have learned that human beings have aggressive feelings of both positive and negative kinds, and that negative aggression (hostile destructiveness), hostility and hate, arises from experiences of excessive unpleasure.

**Assignment**

Observe a three to six year old child for half an hour. Write a page on your observations, giving:

The child's first name, sex, and exact age (years/months/days).
A description of what the child was doing.

Note any activity that you would call positively aggressive (non-hostile, nondestructive, assertive). How did the adults or other children present react to this aggressiveness of the child? Did the child seem to gain some satisfaction from his/her assertiveness?
Describe any activity that you would call negatively aggressive (angry, hostile, hateful, destructive). How could you tell that the child felt angry, hostile, or hateful? What painful or frustrating experience brought on this hostile aggression? How did the parent, or others present deal with this? How did the child seem to feel when the episode was over?

If it is not possible for you to observe a child, search your own memory, and write about your own experiences between three and six.

1. Who helped you to learn to do things that were new, and perhaps frightening?

2. What kinds of things upset you and made you angry? What made you more than angry, that is what made you feel hostile? Or hateful? How did you show it when you were angry? Hostile? Hateful? How did your parents respond to you with each?
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

AGGRESSION -- Part 2 (Child Development Aspect):
NONDESTRUCTIVE (POSITIVE) AGGRESSION

Objective

To learn how nondestructive (constructive or positive) aggression develops, and its value to the person for adaptation.

Class Discussion

Ask for volunteers to read their observations of a child displaying nondestructive (positive) and/or hostile (negative) aggression. Other students may share their memories of their own experiences. The discussion should underline the developmental value of nondestructive aggression (assertiveness), the problems which arise from hostile-destructive aggression, and the child's need for help when hostile feelings are strong.

Teacher Presentation: Nondestructive (Positive) Aggression

A four year old boy asked his older sister "Was there any world before I was born?" While this question may seem amusing, it does point out the sense a small child has that he is important in the world. We can picture this little boy as feeling quite confident about his place in it.

A well-cared for child has a lot of energy that he or she is eager to use to learn new skills and to explore the world. For the well-cared for child, no encouragement to explore is needed. Of course his ideas are bigger than his abilities or his judgment, so he will at times need encouragement to persist in trying to do something new, but he also needs the help of teaching and of limit setting as he dashes into new experiences. Some quite normal children, on the other hand, may want to try new things but feel intimidated by them and anxious; they will need extra encouragement and help, given in a patient manner which respects their slower pace.

Aggression develops in somewhat different ways in boys and girls during this 3 to 6 years period. During this period, boys go through a process called Masculinization. For the first time now, they can be seen at times showing off their muscles, and strutting around pretending to be powerful guys. Their play with their friends has a distinctly "rough house" quality, even when it is perfectly good-natured. They want to see themselves as big, strong, and powerful. They are assertive in a very direct "aggressive" way.
Many a girl, on the other hand, at this age becomes lighter in her body and muscle movements. Her nondestructive aggressiveness may become less directly expressed than before; in some girls it may become quite inhibited giving a shyness to the expression of her wishes; she may rely more on requests or argument to express her needs. While some may like to play with boys and their toys at times, girls are more likely to spend time on feminine activities, e.g. playing house, dressing up in mother's clothes, taking care of dolls.)

Why is it good for people to be able to be reasonably aggressive in a non-hostile way, to be assertive? Think about it for people your age. (You can stand up and answer a question when asked by the teacher, without feeling too scared. You can make yourself ask the teacher to explain something you don't understand; you can tell a friend that he is out of line at the water fountain without getting angry; you can greet a new neighbor or classmate without feeling too shy; you can feel confident about taking a part in a game; you can use your energy to learn something new; or to stick with something (like practicing a musical instrument or shooting baskets) even when you are tired of it; you can compete in sports; you can stand up for your rights; you can take initiative in planning a project; you can speak out when a friend is being insulted or put down; you can take responsibility for supervising your small brother or sister when your parents are away; you can set a goal for what you want to do later on, and do whatever will help you move toward that goal.)

To be comfortably assertive at age 12, 16, 20 and beyond, a person from early childhood on should be allowed or even encouraged to say what he thinks (in reasonable ways) or ask reasonably for what he needs. Sometimes families encourage boys to be assertive, but feel that girls shouldn't be. They may criticize a little girl when she reasonably says what is on her mind, or gets a bit pushy in her play. If these restraints are put on too often, the child being told "Little girls should be seen and not heard," she may become timid and not be able to speak up, or to take initiative, when the situation calls for that. Of course, no one wants her to grow up to be a timid woman, any more than one wants a little boy to grow up to be a domineering overly controlling man. It takes caring empathetic parents to know how to encourage a child to be assertive, and when to put on proper limits if his or her assertiveness turns into angry or hostile aggressiveness as is the case with being overly controlling of others.

In summary we can say that the bottom line for the development of healthy nondestructive aggression (that fuels assertiveness) is this: A child who feels valued and loved by his parents, encouraged to voice his needs and his opinions, helped to learn new skills, and to put on the brakes when his assertiveness is too strong, such a child will develop the self-confidence he needs to be successful in his life as a child, and as an adult.

In the next lesson, we shall consider specific ways parents can help a child develop healthy nondestructive aggression and with it, appropriate assertiveness.
Outcome

The students will have become aware of the characteristics of nondestructive aggression as it develops in boys and girls, and the ways that it is useful in everyday life.

Assignment

Write a paragraph or two about each of the following stories. Give your opinion about how the situations were handled. If you had been the parent would you have done the same? Or something else?

1. Mr. and Mrs. Smith have two children, Andy, age 3 and Lisa, age 5. They are sitting down to their meal. Andy is at the age when he asks ten questions a minute, and Lisa is eager to tell what happened at kindergarten. Father thinks that children should concentrate on eating at meals, should not dawdle and should not talk. Anyway, he is tired, and besides, he wants to get through the meal in time to watch his favorite program on TV. He tells the children in a no-nonsense tone of voice that meal-time is for eating, not for talking. Is this a good idea? Why or why not?

2. Mrs. Sanders went to the basement to take the laundry out of the dryer. While she was gone, four year old Eleanor pushed a chair to it and climbed up on the counter in the kitchen, reaching up to the top shelf for a chocolate cake mix. Eleanor had seen her mother do this and she had the idea (not realistic of course), that she would make a cake and surprise Mommy. Before she knew it, a fair portion of the cake mix was all over the counter and on the kitchen floor, pans were pretty well scattered on the floor too when Mother appeared at the top of the basement stairs. One look and Mother was furious. When Eleanor saw Mother's reaction she burst into tears. Seeing her daughter's reaction, Mother calmed some and said somewhat sternly "What in the world are you doing, El? Lord, what a mess you've made!" Mother put down the laundry she had brought up, "OK Eleanor, what were you doing, you know very well you're not allowed to climb on counters!" Eleanor almost stammering said "I was making . . ." and she burst into tears again. Mother now quite upset by the mess and her daughter's genuine distress, got down to Eleanor's level, put her arms around her and said "Look, it's not really terrible. I'm sorry I got so upset. Help me clean up and you can tell me what you were doing, OK", and she hugged Eleanor who buried her head in her neck. What do you think of Mother's way of handling her 4 year old making such a mess. Was it good, bad, or what? Explain why you think what you think.
**PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:**
Lesson Plans for **GRADES 7 and 8**.

**UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS**

**AGGRESSION -- Part 3 (Child Rearing Aspect):**
HANDLING POSITIVE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR CONSTRUCTIVELY

**Objective**

Students will learn how to support the normal thrust which children have to be aggressive in nondestructive ways, such as to be assertive, to be self-protective, goal-directed, and to overcome obstacles to get to their goals.

**Class Discussion**

Several students will read their responses to the Smith story. The discussion should include these points among others:

- Meals are for eating, but they can also be a close family time, when events of the day, and thoughts and feelings can be shared, and when understanding can grow among family members.
- Andy learns by asking questions and Lisa by telling of her experiences.
- They can learn also to take their turn, and let others have their turn to talk.
- They can learn to listen and to interact with other family members.
- If they feel free to talk at the table they may at times share a problem that is bothering them, because they know their parents will listen and want to help. All this can take place while they are eating, and dawdling with one's food beyond a reasonable point, need not be permitted.

When the students read their reactions to the Sanders story, it may be pointed out that Mrs. Sanders' first reaction of feeling furious was a normal one. She had to make a quick decision whether to express her anger by spanking or scolding Eleanor, or whether to de-emphasize her naughtiness in climbing onto a kitchen counter when mother was absent and to comfort her child whose project didn't work out well at all.

If she had punished Eleanor, the child might well have thought "It's no use trying to do something nice for Mommy, I only get punished." This might also have the effect of discouraging what in fact was a wonderful initiative. It was Eleanor's judgment that was wrong, not her feeling of self-confidence nor her generous heart. As it was, Eleanor was given consolation and the opportunity to help repair the damage by cleaning up the mess with her mother. Her sense of initiative was not undercut, but she was reminded to do things safely next time, by waiting to climb onto counters until her mother was there, and that she really has to think, and maybe talk things over with Mom before she undertakes a very difficult (for her age) project.
If you were a parent who wanted your child to feel good about himself, to feel "I'm a person who can do things", what could you do to help your child? (Answers may include the following ideas:
1. I could show him and help him learn how to do things, like riding a bike.
2. I could read to him, and ask him to tell me stories.
3. I could praise him when he does something well; if he doesn't do it well, I could tell him to keep trying and it will be easier next time. I would always compliment good efforts.
4. If he is afraid to do something, like climbing up on a slide, I could encourage him, but not push him until he is ready.
5. I could give him responsibilities, e.g. taking a paper plate of Christmas cookies to the neighbor next door, after explaining exactly what to do and say.
6. If I saw that he really wanted to do something himself, like buttoning his coat, I would not insist on doing it for him, but would encourage him in his own initiative.
7. I would encourage him to put his feelings, both good ones and bad ones, into words.
8. I would encourage him to ask for what he wants, if it is not possible to give it to him, I would explain why, and acknowledge his disappointment.
9. I would encourage him to try new things that are safe, and help him understand why other things he might like to do, are dangerous.
10. If the child is shy, I would encourage him, but not push him, to talk with people, and help him think of things to say when meeting new people.
11. If the child is over-active, I would help him to slow down when he needs to do this.

Teacher Presentation

All of these ideas would offer support to a child, in his good use of nondestructive (positive) aggression or assertiveness. However, sometimes parents have big problems themselves and cannot do these things. What then? Will the child end up as a failure? Here is a story to think about.

How many of you are familiar with the name Ludwig van Beethoven? Who was he? What difference does he make to our lives, this person who was born more than two hundred years ago?

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in 1770 in the city of Bonn in Germany. His father was a singer in the court of the prince. His mother was a very sad woman because, as was common in those days, four of her seven children died when they were very young. Ludwig's father was not a very successful musician, and he also had a serious drinking problem. He discovered when Ludwig was three, that the child had an interest in the piano, and quite an unusual talent. The father determined that his son would be a prodigy, like the famous Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who several years before, had gone on a European concert tour at the age of six. Herr van Beethoven gave his little son piano lessons, but he was not an easy teacher. It is said that at times Herr van Beethoven and a drinking companion would come home drunk at midnight, pull the shivering child out of
bed, and make him practice for two or three hours. In his sleepy state, if he made too many mistakes his father would beat him. For some reason, his mother could not, or would not protect him. At a very early age, Ludwig wanted to compose his own melodies, and when he would play them for his father, he would be told to stop that nonsense and to spend his time practicing. When Ludwig started school, the other children made fun of him because he appeared in untidy clothes, was too shy to play with the others, and he was a poor student, especially in arithmetic.

Here was a child who did not have the home supports we have been discussing, yet his initiative and assertiveness were not destroyed by the treatment he had. Why do you think that was?

We have to assume that Ludwig had a very strong will, combined with an inborn deep understanding and love of music. In another child, his father's forcing him to sit at the piano and practice might have killed any wish to play, but to Ludwig the music was worth it.

All that being said, we human beings cannot survive emotionally without the support of other human beings. Ludwig's father and mother did love him even though both were very troubled persons. Then at the age of eight, a wonderful thing happened. Probably seeing that he was not a good teacher, his father arranged for Ludwig to have lessons with the Court Organist. Herr Neefe became Ludwig's friend as well as his teacher. He quickly saw Ludwig's talents, encouraged him to compose music, and taught him so well that at the age of 12, Ludwig was given a job as assistant court organist. Through Herr Neefe, Ludwig met other people who admired his talents, and who accepted and liked him as a person. Nonetheless, Ludwig had pretty serious emotional scars as a result of his early family experiences: he had a bad temper that often set him at odds with his friends, and he never had the self confidence to get married, although he was several times in love. But his creativity and genius were great. He composed some of the world's most remarkable and best known music, and he is more famous today, two hundred years later, than he was even in his own lifetime.

What is encouraging in this story is that even living in painful life conditions, a child with remarkable talent and strong determination (made possible by a good load of nondestructive aggression fueling his push to reach his goals in composing great new music), could achieve greatness and make a great contribution to society. Early family or other support is enormously important. Ludwig's parents' love for him, even though they were very troubled people themselves, and a very important later loving, constructive and encouraging relationship with a teacher, we believe made it so that his strong initiative developed, even if his parents' emotional support had been mixed, encouraging but unreasonable. Many a child has found a rescuer in an older brother or sister, a teacher or a friend, or an aunt, an uncle, or a grandparent.
Outcome

The students will have learned that encouragement, teaching but not pushing the child, helping him with difficulties, and respecting his efforts, lead to the development of appropriately constructive aggressive, assertive behavior.

Assignment

In the next lesson, we shall consider ways of helping children develop reasonable ways of controlling negative aggression. In anticipation of this important subject, think of it, and bring to class in writing three ideas which you believe would help a 3-6 year old child control his angry, hostile, and hate feelings.
**Objective**

The students will learn how parents can help their children to handle their hostile-destructive (negative aggressive) feelings in reasonable ways.

**Class Discussion**

It is important to remember that every person has times of feeling angry, hostile, or hateful and destructive. We become **angry** when we have an experience that causes us a **moderate amount of unpleasure**, when it causes us annoyance and irritation. We feel **hostile-destructive** and **hate** feelings when we have had many experiences of **excessive unpleasure**, especially when we have been hurt badly repeatedly, for a long time, by those from whom we expect love and considerateness, our parents. It is not wrong that good human beings can have hating and destructive feelings, but it is very important to learn how to control them. If a child begins to learn some control of anger at 2 or 3 she will be "in the driver's seat" with her anger when she is a teen-ager and adult.

During the 3-6 year period, children get angry at, hostile with and hateful toward their parents for several main reasons.

1. The continuation of being poorly treated by the parents in any of the ways we talked about in an earlier lesson;

2. Parents reasonably preventing the child from doing something she very much wants to do; and

3. The complications of the Family Romance.

In your home work, did anyone make a suggestion about dealing with the hostile feelings of the Family Romance? What do you recall from our study of this a few weeks ago? (The parent should understand that there will be jealousy and difficult behavior toward the parent of the same sex, as well as of attachment to the parent of the opposite sex; misbehavior toward the same-sex parent should not be permitted, but the child should be treated with understanding, not teased or humiliated.)

Let us discuss now the ideas you have about how to deal with the hostility a child feels when prevented from doing something she wants to do.
Limits are hard for children to accept and often a battle of wills will result. Four year old Jennifer resists going to bed, kicks and cries and insists that her big brother can stay up, why can't she? Should her parents give in to Jennifer, which would make things easier for them? Why or why not? Should they bribe her to go to bed? Should they say firmly that when she is as old as her brother, she'll be able to stay up longer; but now this is her bedtime, so come along?

Sticking to a limit is important, even if it makes the child angry at the time. The limit may be made easier to accept, if the parent can be loving, respectful, and firm about it.

Why is sticking to a limit important? It will help a child learn to accept frustration. Life at all ages has its frustrations. We read all too often in the newspaper about drive-by shootings, when a driver cannot stand the frustration of another driver cutting in front of his car, and the offended driver pulls out a gun and shoots the other. When this kind of tragedy happens it usually is caused by a person who was terribly hurt emotionally as a child, was not helped well to cope reasonably with his hate and rage, did not have reasonable limits from babyhood on, nor was he helped well to develop internal controls.

Sometimes one sees a four or five year old rambunctious child running around wildly in a shopping mall, without limits being set. His parents do him no favor by calling him a "holy terror" and not stopping him when he gets too wound up and wild. A high school girl was heard to say to her friend, "My parents don't really care about me -- it doesn't matter to them how late I stay out." This girl realized that limits are a protection and that if her parents cared enough about her, they would use them. Jennifer's mother had much trouble dealing with 4 year old Jennifer's being angry with her. Because when she was a child her family strong disapproved of any expression of anger, let alone hate. Jennifer's mother too came to believe and feel that these feelings (anger, hostility, hate) are unacceptable. Good people, decent people don't feel hate! So she believed.

For the past year and a half, Jennifer and her Mom just did not get along as they had before. Jennifer was not as easy and pleasant to be with as she had been in the first 2 years. Recently, when Mom again told Jennifer she cannot just go into her 7 year old brother Mike's things and play with the erector constructions he built - she had broken two of them already --, in a fit of anger and with conviction Jennifer said: "I hate you. You always like Mike better than me. I hate you!" Shocked, hurt and upset, Mom said, "I know you don't mean that. That's a terrible thing to say to your mother. Wait till I tell your father."

But what does it do to the child, when Mom (or Dad) says as did Jennifer's mother, (1) you don't mean that, (2) it's terrible to say that, and (3) I'll tell your father.

Suppose a child gets so angry that she goes into a tantrum. What should a parent do?

Usually a parent can sense when a tantrum is building up, and some advance work can be done. The parent can say that she can see that the child is upset. Can she tell Mother
why? The child can be asked to use her newly developed counting skill to count to 10, and try to control herself. If that doesn't head off the tantrum, the child can be taken to her room, where they will talk more with her to help her deal with whatever is upsetting her. If the youngster is four or older, she can be left alone after a while to calm down. It is not advisable to leave a child younger than four years alone in her room at such a time because it may cause separation anxiety and be more harmful than useful. It is best then for the parent to remain with the younger child until she has gained control. Similarly, it is never helpful to walk out of a store leaving behind a child who is having a tantrum. It will leave the child feeling abandoned on top of what hurt the child sufficiently in the first place to cause her to have a tantrum. This way of handling a child's tantrum is detrimental to the child, the parent, and their relationship.

Suppose a parent gives a child a limit and the child does not accept it, but does the same thing again. Did any of you write ideas about the use of punishment? When do you think it might be appropriate, and what kind?

Remember four-year old Diane, who threw her mother's perfume down the toilet? Three times mother had explained to Diane that she understood that Diane was feeling angry at her, but just the same Diane was not allowed to throw out mother's things, but Diane did it anyway, three times. It appears that punishment in sometimes necessary to convince a child that the parent means business. What kind of punishment would be appropriate in this case? (The withdrawal of a privilege such as the child's favorite TV show for 3 times, one for each offense. One swat on the clothed bottom could strongly help to emphasize the point. More than one swat does not work well. It would only humiliate her and make her feel more resentful and hostile; it may even cause her bodily harm which we all define as physical abuse. Emphasize that physical abuse is extremely detrimental to the child -- because it is emotionally very harmful --, to the parent, and to their relationship)

Here is an even more serious instance. Five year old Eric always looked interested when his mother lit the gas range, and he begged her to let him do it. She told him several times that matches were for older people, and that he could not light the stove. One day when mother was talking on the telephone Eric went into the kitchen, got the matches out of the drawer, turned the gas way up, and lit the burner. The flame flared up, igniting a paper bag on the counter by the stove. Mother rushed in, turned off the burner, and put out the fire. To punish Eric, and to teach him a lesson, she forced him to touch the still hot burner. Was this a suitable punishment? (Understandable as it was that mother's feelings were upset, this punishment was much too severe, in fact, it was totally unreasonable. It most likely would make Eric feel that his mother just wanted to really hurt him. His own fright at seeing the flames taught him the needed lesson, which Mother could have emphasized by saying that this is exactly why she told him that he wasn't old enough for matches, because he could have gotten badly hurt, and she certainly did not want that. And mother could have given herself a lesson, by keeping the matches out of reach. (Note: An occasional child has a persistent fire-setting problem. This requires professional help.)
How should a parent deal with her own angry feelings when a child's behavior is hostile -- e.g. when a child is hostile about a limit, and says "I hate you, Mommy!" Should mother pretend that she isn't angry? Why or why not? (Although a parent's anger is frightening to a child, it usually is best to be honest about it, in a controlled way. Mother could say something like "I know you are very mad at me just now, and I'm feeling kind of mad at you, too. But we'll both get over it, because down deep, we do love each other a lot."

Did anyone write about helping a child handle his hostility to brother and sisters or friends? What ideas do you have?

Sometimes when a youngster is frustrated and angry about a limit a parent has set, he will take his anger out on a sibling, especially since as often happens he is jealous of his siblings anyway. It is very usual for a child to think that parents favor an older or a younger sibling. If he feels that way, he may lash out at the supposedly favored one. How should this be handled? (Parents need to set limits, again! The child may not mess up or break the sibling's toys; he must settle arguments in a reasonable, fair way; when the child feels jealous he needs reassurance that he is as loved and valued as the other.)

In the case of hostile behavior toward playmates, parents need to try to find out what brought on the behavior, and to try to have the children settle the fight in words, not blows. Rules of fair play need frequent repetition. As a "referee" it is important for the parent to listen well to both children, in trying to help them settle the problem fairly.

Using the notes you brought to class, let us summarize the ways parents can help a child manage his hostile aggression. Contributions may include:

1. They can encourage him to put into words what is bothering him.
2. They can listen sympathetically and explore understanding of what is upsetting him.
3. They can help him think about other ways of handling the problem, rather than striking out or breaking something.
4. In a quarrel with another child, if your child seems ready for it, you can help him picture how the other child may be feeling.
5. Parents should set limits on hostile aggressive behavior, explaining clearly why they are doing so.
6. Parents should be patient if the child breaks the limit on occasion and re-explain with increasing emphasis why the limit is necessary. If the child continues to refuse to obey the limit, punishment should be the mildest that will convince the child of the necessity of obeying the rule. It is best to punish by privilege withdrawal. Physical punishment should be avoided.
7. In setting limits or giving punishment, the child should not be humiliated or shamed. He should be treated firmly, but with respect. He should be given reasons for the limit or punishment.
8. Limits should be reasonable, and once set, parents should not back down. (An exception to this would be if a parent were to discover that she made a mistake, such as
blaming the wrong child for something that happened; then the parent should be big enough to admit that she was wrong.)

9. Parents should recognize that their child will at times be angry with them, and that they will be angry at the child, but that these feelings pass because they love one another.

10. Parents should help the child put his feelings into words, so that they can work things out together.

**Outcome**

The students will have learned how wisely set and adhered to limits help a child develop control of hostile aggressive feelings and behavior.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- PART II
DEPENDENCE AND SELF RELIANCE
PSYCHIC DEFENSE MECHANISMS
OTHER IMPORTANT ADAPTIVE ABILITIES
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- Part 1 (Child Development Aspect):
DEPENDENCE AND SELF RELIANCE

Teacher Preparation:  Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 87 - 90.

Objective

The students will learn that dependence in certain degrees, and in certain ways is an appropriate aspect of life at all ages; that the 3-6 year old child has the task of gradually replacing some of his dependency needs with abilities to self-reliantly fulfill these.

Class Discussion

Is there such a thing as a totally dependent person?  (No, the nearest thing to it is the newborn, but he can do some things for himself -- breathe, digest, eliminate, and signal when he is uncomfortable.)

Is there such a thing as a totally independent person, of any age?  (We all probably know someone who prides himself on being independent, who even gets annoyed if you offer to help him do something.  But even he is not totally independent.  Why?  He depends on the man at the service station for gas for his car; if he breaks a leg, he depends on a doctor to set it for him; and most importantly, whether he admits it or not, for his emotional health, he depends on someone to really love him and to love, and he needs approval from probably more than one person).

In a good marriage there is love, of course, but also a large degree of inter-dependency.  The husband and wife depend upon each other for everyday things, such as, she makes the pancakes, he washes the car.  They depend on each other for comfort and support when things aren't going well, and for help in deciding what to do if a child's behavior is puzzling to them.

In your own experience here at school you know that it is important for team members to be able to depend on one another to do their assigned job on the team, and to encourage one another on; they also depend on the coach to give the instructions that will improve their game.

Putting our focus now on the 3-6 year old child, what dependency needs does she have in:
Physical needs? (1) Food; however she can feed herself by now, so she has made some steps toward self-reliance. (2) Clothing; and during this period she will accomplish the task of dressing herself. (3) Shelter; (4) Medical Care.

Adaptive needs? For instruction and encouragement in learning all kinds of new skills and improving already acquired ones.

Emotional needs? She needs to feel valued, respected and loved, even when she gets into trouble due to her angry feelings, or disallowed behaviors. She needs to be supported in her growing belief that she is a person who can accomplish things.

Summary

The child enters this period just out of toddlerhood with very large dependency needs. By the time she is six, she will have made many moves toward self-reliance being able to take care of herself in the areas of eating, dressing and toileting; she can communicate well in words, and can play with peers; she has learned to accept leaving home to go to preschool and school and has learned to turn for help to others when her parents are not available. She has also learned to depend on herself for some decisions.

In earlier lessons, we discussed the task the child has during these years of working through the problems of the Family Romance. Another big task for the 3-6 year old is to work toward self-reliance in the ways we have discussed. In doing this, she has two allies: her own inner growth-push which make her want to feel ably self-reliant, "like grown-ups," and the encouragement she receives from her parents to do things for herself. Of course the parents have to use good judgment as to when to encourage a child, and how much and that is not always easy.

Assignment

For the next lesson, interview one or both of your parents, or another person who helped bring you up. Write a page about the following: (choose any four questions)

1. As your parents remember it, at age three or four were you a very adventurous child, a very dependent child, or average in your development of self-reliance (independence)?
2. Did your parents feel that they more often had to restrain you from doing possibly dangerous things, or that they more often had to encourage or even push you to try to do new things?

3. If you have brothers and sisters, were you similar or different in the pace with which you moved toward self-reliance (independence)?

4. As you remember yourself at age 6, were you a person who wanted to do things your parents said you were too young to do? If so, give an example.

5. Do you ever remember feeling that you were being pushed to do something you were afraid to do?

6. Ask your parents to describe your first experience in going to day care or preschool. How did you accept that? Do you have any memory of how you felt about being separated from your parent(s)?

7. Recall something that you struggled to learn to do (e.g. riding a two-wheel bicycle) and then finally accomplished. Tell how you tried and how this success made you feel?

**Outcome**

The students will have learned that the attainment of an appropriate degree of self-reliance is a major task of the 3-6 year age range, fueled by the powerful inner growth-thrust of the child, and supported by the help of the parents. The students will also have learned that normal human beings retain a significant degree of dependence on a number of others for a variety of needs, throughout life.
Objective

The students will learn how parents can help a child gradually to move toward appropriate areas of self-reliance (independence).

Class Discussion

Volunteers will report on their interviews with their parents. Teacher, based on the students' reports, try to see to it that the following points come to light:

The progress toward self-reliance is a gradual thing. A person's progress toward self-reliance may be different from that of his siblings.

Sometimes a child and his parents have different ideas about his readiness to try something new.

Conflict may arise if a child feels pushed to do something he is too afraid of, or if he feels held back from doing something he feels very pressured from inside to do.

The first experience away from parents in a day-care or preschool setting puts a great strain on a child's dependency needs. It may even cause a child to regress to babyish behavior for a time.

When a child struggles to do something on his own, and accomplishes it, it gives him a feeling that he is a person who can succeed at what he is undertaking.

Teacher Presentation

During the 3-6 year period, as earlier, the child turns primarily to his parents for the meeting of his dependency needs. His parents are the persons who feed, clothe and take care of him, who love, comfort and protect him, who teach him the behavior and skills he needs to have, in order to live age-appropriately competently and successfully in his world.

One of the big jobs parents have is to learn to read their child's readiness to undertake new projects, and to the degree to which he can become more and more self-reliant. Reading a child's readiness is not always easy for a parent to do. If a 6 year old wants to
climb a tree and his mother prevents him, how will he feel? How can the mother decide whether his strength and coordination are ready for this? If a 5 year old is pushed to try a two-wheeler when she doesn't want to, how will she feel?

There are some guidelines a parent can use in judging when a child is ready to undertake something new:

The parent should observe the child, to see if she has an interest in learning to ride a bike, to read, to swim.

Offer to help, and see if the child (1) continues to be very anxious and resist or (2) he goes along but is shivering with fear or, on the other hand, (3) he is eager to use the help.

Tell her that you are confident that she can learn this, but be willing to put the project "on hold" if the child retreats from it; resume it later, when she seems more ready.

For something the child has to do, ready or not, such as entering preschool, the parent should talk with her about it ahead of time, help her to picture what it will be like, and arrange a visit before entering. Taking a small "transitional object" (a "comforter") such as a favorite stuffed animal may help. The parent should stay for a while the first day until the child feels less anxious and reassures her of her return at a specified time (with a child 4 to 6 the specific time, such as 4:30 p.m., should be stated). The child should know that while the parent is away, the teacher will help her with anything she needs (and, with an extremely anxious child, if absolutely necessary, the school nurse will call Mother).

Some children are very adventurous and eager for new experiences. For this type of youngster the parent often has the job of putting on the brakes, while not discouraging or frustrating her. The child needs reassurance that you respect and admire her wanting to do things, and that there are many things she can do, but also there are others she will have to wait awhile to do, because they are projects for older kids.

During the 3-6 year period children tend to gradually increase the number of their relationships, though the parents continue to have first priority by a very wide margin. Of course, if they have siblings, and if grandparents, aunts and uncles live near them, they already will have made some meaningful relationships in addition to those with their parents. For instance, 3 1/2 year old Victor was very fortunate in the array of people he had who not only loved him, but were available to help and teach him in many ways.

His mother was good at asking him what he thought a particular item is, and what it is for; his father was good at playing with him and showing him how things work; his grandmother who had been a teacher often helped him learn to pick things up, clean up the messes he made, and asked him about letters, numbers, colors, animals and pictures. His grandfather was helpful in a loving, respecting and understanding way. He was Victor's most security-giving caregiver next to Victor's mother. He was, like Mom, able
to wait and see what Victor could do until he lost patience, and then grandfather would help him and encourage him to try again. He "read" Victor's abilities and limitations very well.

Most parents have much pleasure in seeing their children develop coping skills; during this period many parents continue to actively be their children's teachers.

Those who teach their children with patience, who try to read the child's abilities and pace in learning, who enjoy the child's successes, are sympathetic with and tolerant of failures and then encourage trying again, those who facilitate the task when needed, these parents can virtually be assured of success in helping their child learn to adapt as best as the child can. And this is the added benefit: that a child like Victor will find learning to be feasible and worth while, and will be likely to accept and adapt better to learning in school.

We discussed earlier the strain it is on a child's dependency needs, when he first separates from his parents to enter preschool. Once he has overcome his first anxiety about this, he does find that there are many opportunities there to learn the give and take of play with peers, and to learn new skills. When he needs an adult to depend on, the teacher is there. This relationship is not the same as the one he has with his mother, of course. Here he is expected to get used to a time schedule, to fit into the activities of others in the group, to take care of himself as far as he can, with the teacher being available to show him how to do things, and to help him when he needs it. The school experience gradually helps him to become more self-reliant and it is most successful in doing this when the parents and teacher support each other in their approach to the child.

**Outcome**

The students will have become aware of the importance of assessing their child's readiness to take steps toward self-reliance, and timing their help to this; of the importance of encouraging but not pushing the child; and of the increasing role played by the secondary relationships the child develops outside the home.
UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- Part 1 (Child Development Aspect):
PSYCHIC DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Teacher Preparation: Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 91 - 98.

Objective

To acquaint the students with the psychic defense mechanisms used by children in dealing with overly painful feelings such as anxiety, fear, depression, hostility and hate, shame, and guilt.

Class Discussion and Teacher Presentation

Children differ greatly from one another in their biological "givens" -- the tendencies they inherit which gives them their particular personality temperament, and which, along with the experiences they have, shape their personalities.

Some children are born feeling shy; they feel things more intensely (are very affect sensitive), and are very cautious about new experiences. Others are eager and outgoing, both toward people and new experiences.

The students may describe the behavior of some children they know who are very shy or very outgoing.

Two brothers show a clear contrast in how they approach new experiences:

Charles, from the age of one, has been very responsive, not only to his family, but to others as well. He has always seemed to feel that the whole world is his friend. At nine years of age, his family went on his first airplane trip. He looked forward to it with great excitement and said "Oh great, I'm gonna meet some new people."

In contrast, his brother Jim, two years younger, has always been very cautious about reaching out to people outside the family. However, when given time to really get acquainted with someone, he becomes quite friendly. He seems to have mixed feelings about new experiences, such as riding on an airplane. He was excited, but a little bit fearful. He definitely wanted to sit with his parents.

These two children have the same parents, but their biological givens and personality temperament, especially in the area of shyness and outgoingness are quite different.
Realizing the differences in temperaments helps us to understand how individual children deal with the fears, anxieties, hostilities, depressions, and other painful feelings they are, like everyone, bound to experience in life.

Does anyone know the difference between fear and anxiety?

A person experiences fear when faced by a real danger in the world. What kinds of things might make a child of 3-6 fearful? (For instance, a strange dog running toward him, a fear of jumping into a swimming pool, a fear of being punished for breaking a window). These are all real things that are outside of the child himself which he finds frightening.

There are also frightening feelings that are inside the child's mind, and usually are not real. Important among these are the fear that the parent may stop loving the child, or may abandon him. These inner feelings of danger lead the child to experience anxiety. This feeling gives a sense of helplessness, in the face of an imagined danger. This feeling may range in intensity from mild anxiety to panic. In any degree, it is a painful and disturbing feeling.

Depression is the feeling that something terrible really has happened. For example, a child may get the feeling, realistically or unrealistically, that his parents have abandoned him, or no longer love him. If his parents divorce or are considering it, a child may go through a time of depression, feeling that he is at fault, and is no longer loved by one parent or both.

The amount of anxiety or depression a child (of any age) experiences is the result of both his personality givens combined with the intensity of the unpleasurable (painful) experiences he has already experienced in his young life. To protect against these feelings, children of two or younger use the following forms of internal defense (Psychiatrists call them "psychic defense mechanisms").

Defenses are commonly used in clusters; they commonly do not operate just one at a time. But one can often find one defense being used more dominantly than the others that are also being used at a given time.

1. Denial: the child will tell himself that what he is afraid of didn't happen, or won't happen.

2. Avoidance: turning away and staying away from what is painful or threatening.

3. Displacement: taking out feelings, such a hate, one has toward one's mother or father -- feelings the child himself does not approve of -- and expressing them toward another person or thing felt to be much less important than the parent toward whom one is feeling the hate.
4. **Reaction formation**: turning what one is feeling into its opposite, such as "I am not upset, I feel fine."

As the child grows during the **3-6 years** period, newer defenses are developed and added to the old ones:

1. **Neutralization** of hostility, hate, and rage (all degrees of hostile destructiveness). When the child feels hostility and hate because of painful experiences she has had during the first 3 years and then during the 3 to 6 year period as well, or now because of the hurts that come from her family romance, she suffers feelings of fear, of anxiety, and of guilt. To feel hate toward the persons we love -- to feel high levels of ambivalence -- is one of the experiences that most produces intolerable feelings. This sets in motion an effort to change these feelings of hate (hostile destructive aggression) into non-hostile aggression that can be used in adapting to the tasks of daily life and into creative activities -- into the nondestructive aggression we discussed in an earlier lesson.

Two and a half year old Jane was becoming so oppositional as a result of her family romance that her mother, who loved her dearly half-jokingly said that she would like to lend Jane out to a friend for about a year. Jane, of course, in spite of her stubborn behavior, was experiencing a lot of guilt over the hostility she was showing toward the mother we knew -- we had seen much evidence of it -- she loved dearly. In time, she worked out much of this hostility, some with the help of neutralization of hostility, and put this energy into constructive activities with her siblings and at preschool.

2. **Identification** was another defense that helped Jane decrease her hostility constructively. Identification has already been used by the 3 year old child but now will acquire a new important role: to be like the parent one loves who is of the same sex. At the height of her family romance Jane asked her father to take her camping with him, with no one else from the family. In this and with other such demands, she was saying in effect, that she wanted to take her mother's place. No where was this clearer than when she told someone quite spontaneously that she was going to marry her Daddy. Gradually as she worked through her family romance, she replaced the wish to take her mother's place, with a wish to be like her mother. She admired her mother, learned some of her mother's skills, and expressed the wish to be like her mother when she grew up. She came to accept the idea that she would have someone of her own, not father, but someone like father, when she was older.

3. **Reaction formation** which the child began to use earlier becomes further developed during the 3-6 period. In this, the hostility the child feels is converted into a feeling of love. The child does not just pretend, he or she actually psychologically converts the undesirable feeling into a desirable one. A boy, for instance, who at four, sometimes hates and fears his father, will as if remind himself and assert that he is not mad at his father, or scared of him, that quite contrary, he really loves and admires him. This defense can work only if side by side with the feelings of hostility there is a large load of loving feelings that have accumulated there all along.
4. **Repression** is an important new defense. By repression psychoanalysts mean "to push an unacceptable fantasy (thoughts and feelings) out of awareness into the unconscious region of one's mind." By doing this a child protects himself against the hate, anxiety and guilt that his unacceptable fantasy (due to the thoughts and feelings it contains) create in him.

Repression has the tendency to put whatever fantasy is repressed into "cold storage." For this reason, most of us have little, if any, memory of our family romance, or of much else of the many experiences we had during our preschool years. With all the defenses we have mentioned, many people still may still not have fully enough worked out the problems their family romance created in them. Consequently, they may have later problems in dating and marrying. They then may consult a mental health professional for help in unearthing from their unconscious mind some of the fantasies and conflicts brought over from childhood, which still are interfering with their adjusting well to adult life. Re-visiting one's early childhood conflicts and working them out, are very difficult if not impossible to do, without professional help.

5. **Regression** is still another defense the child has used before which now again helps a child deal with difficult feelings of anxiety, hostility and hate. The four year old may go through a time when he or she displays clinging behavior. It is as if in this way the child is saying to her mother during the family romance, "I am not a big girl who feels like your rival, I am just your little baby." Similarly, the little boy seeks to be close to his father, in a babyish way. This reaction is all the more likely to occur if there is a new infant in the home. Feeling displaced by the newcomer, due to all the care the new baby requires, adds to the child's feeling very hurt which lead him to feel hostility and hate.

If the parent responds to the older child's need for holding and closeness, it reassures the child of the parent's love, and helps to diminish the child's hostility, and his guilt over feeling this hostility. However, the child cannot stay long in this regressed state because he/she is "programmed" to move ahead in development. Nevertheless, this very normal and commonly used defense, regression can be thought of as a rest stop the child needs now and then when the growing gets a bit too tough.

An occasional child may show an overly-strong attachment to the parent of the same sex. If this goes along with a seeming lack of attachment to the parent of the opposite sex, it may indicate a problem in the child's gender development. This should be watched, and may require professional help.

**Assignment**

1. Study the definitions of the defense mechanism.
2. Write a paragraph, explaining what you understand is going on in the following situation:

   Andrew, age 4, one day astonished his grandfather by flatly refusing to hand him a book from a table across the room. Normally Grandfather and Andrew were great friends, but something was wrong on this day. After Andrew refused three times to bring
the book to Grandfather, he got up from his chair and gave Andrew three or four spanks on the behind. Andrew burst into tears and said "I don't love you any more." What defense was Andrew using here? How would you have handled this situation if you were the grandfather?

**Outcome**

The students will see how children use psychic defenses to help them cope with inner thoughts and feelings they find very difficult to deal with. For instance, that the normal child will be able to neutralize much of the hostility and hate aroused by unpleasurable life experiences and by the conflicts of the family romance period.
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- Part 2 (Child Rearing Aspect):
PSYCHIC DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Objective

To understand how parents can respond helpfully to the child who is utilizing the defense mechanisms discussed in the preceding lesson.

Class Activity -- Test

(Before starting the test, the teacher ought to remind the students that defenses are commonly used in clusters; they commonly do not operate just one at a time. But one can often find one defense being used more dominantly than the others that are also being used at a given time.)

Name the defenses most prominently being used by the child in each of the following situations:

1. Three year old Susie has just been left by her mother at the Day Care Center. She is handling her abandonment anxiety by saying to herself, "Mommy didn't leave me, she just went to the bathroom." This defense is ________________ (Denial).

2. Daddy is in the pool trying to teach five year old Stan to swim. Stan is dealing with mixed feelings. He is very attached to his mother, and he feels rivalrous and hostile, but also admiring of his father. He is guilty about his hostile feelings, and therefore scared that his father may not take care of him in the water. However, he defends himself by feeling "I love Daddy, and I know he will take care of me, so I'm not afraid." This well reasoned defense is ________________ (Reaction Formation).

3. Janet, at three and a half used to say "I'm going to marry Daddy when I grow up." At that time she showed jealousy of her mother, pushing herself in between her parents when her father returned from work and kissed her mother. Now at five and a half, she wants to help her mother bake cookies, set the table for her Mother and wants to have her hair cut just like mother's. What defense is operating here? ________________ (Identification).

4. Joey, age five, quite clearly is very angry with his father these days. One sees it in his saying that Father is stupid -- for which his mother quickly reprimands him -- or that his father is wrong about something Joey knows very little about. Of late Joey seems to be having more difficulty with his 3 year old brother. He will hit him -- which he had
not done before -- and complain that it's because Mom loves him more than Joey. Mother's telling him this is not so doesn't seem to convince Joey at this time. What defense is causing Joey to have become mean to his little brother and to believe Mother loves him more than Joey? ______________ (Displacement).

5. Maria, age four, has always been a bit timid, but did adjust well to her preschool where she is well-liked. Now suddenly she cries and protests about going to school, seems to always want to be held when at home, and has resumed sucking her thumb. What defense is she using? ______________ (Regression).

6. Kevin, age thirteen, is known for his good memory. Ask him dates of historical events, or the capitals of countries and he is pretty sure to come up with the right answers. Yet he can remember almost nothing that happened to him before the age of five. What defense mechanism is this? _______________ (Repression)

Exchange papers, check answers, and address any questions.

Discuss the Andrew story assignment. If Grandfather had understood that Andrew's feelings were displacements from the problems Andrew was having with his father, how would he have handled the situation? Were the spanks a good idea? Could Andrew's defiance have been limited in any other way? What could Grandfather have said that might have softened Andrew's anger? What could Grandfather say that would be helpful when Andrew said "I don't love you any more?"

Teacher Presentation

As we know, defenses are set up by the inborn characteristics of the child combined with his mental response to the many stresses and conflicts he experiences during his young life. His defenses will be turned to throughout his life, to a greater or lesser degree. They are clearly in evidence during the 3-6 year period. It is important to know that we cannot control which defense mechanisms we use, and there is not much parents can do to influence which defenses their child will use. However, parents can be very helpful by understanding that the defenses exist for the purpose of helping the child to cope with upsetting conflicts and fantasies, and with intense feelings of anxiety, hostility and hate, depression, shame, and guilt.

If the parent does understand this, it will help in dealing with the child's behavior in the following ways:

1. If a child is clearly using regression, the parent who understands that the child needs to cling temporarily while working on a problem, will be sympathetic to the seeming babyish behavior. E.g., Jane's mother was helpful when she would allow Jane's clinging, and would reassure her that she really loved her. Parents should adopt the view that a child never regresses unless he needs to. Regression provides a child with a degree of protection that will enable her to regain her equilibrium, and then return to her age-appropriate level of activity, as she makes further efforts to work out her difficult
feelings. Sometimes a child needs gentle encouragement not to cling too long. Encouragement can be helpful, while shaming or pushing a child to grow up will not be.

2. The parent who understands the defense of displacement will not be shocked if a four or five year old attacks a sibling or the family dog, seemingly out of the blue. Knowing that the child's real anger is toward the loved parent, the mother or father will step in to set limits with this hostile child, and then try to help him talk about what is making him feel so angry.

3. The parent who knows about the defense of reaction formation will keep an eye on a child who is just always so sweet, never angry, never displeases a parent, and if by chance does so, becomes extremely anxious. Such a parent will help a child to understand that sometimes feeling and expressing anger (in reasonable ways) toward one's mother or father is not a terrible thing. The parent may then be able to free the child from his self-imposed prohibitions against feeling any hostility whatsoever, and to help him cope with these feelings in acceptable ways, the best of which is to talk about what is causing them.

4. The parent who sees identification happening will realize that it is a very healthy defense for the child to turn to, especially to seek to model oneself after the parent of the same sex. However, some children between the ages of three and five show a stronger than usual preference for the parent of the same sex. Present day thinking is that homosexual gender development is the result of inborn tendencies combined with traumatizing stresses and unsolved conflicts of the first three years of life and/or of the family romance.

If, over a period of 6 to 12 months, the three or four year old girl exhibits no special love interest at all in her father, or the boy exhibits no romantic feeling whatsoever toward his mother, it may mean that a homosexual adaptation is in progress. The boy who persistently over a period of over six months directly expresses the wish to be a girl, or the girl who persistently rejects being a girl and painfully wishes to be a boy, warrants professional consultation. However, many normal girls express a wish to have a penis, in addition to what they have, and many normal boys want to be able to have a baby. These children are not expressing a wish to be other than what they are. They just want everything!

Outcome

The students will have learned the importance of parents being able to identify the defenses their children are using, and of understanding the feelings with which the defenses are coping. The students will have recognized how this understanding can enable parents to help their children deal with the emotional conflicts of this period of life.
**Teacher Preparation:** Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 99 - 102.

**Objective**

To introduce the highly socially and personally desirable adaptive abilities **empathy**, **altruism** and **sublimation**.

**Class Discussion**

Write the words empathy, altruism and sublimation on the blackboard, and ask any students who are familiar with them to explain what they mean. Encourage students who have seen examples of empathic or altruistic behavior in either children or adults, to describe them. Can anyone talk of an example of sublimation in the case of an historical person, in fiction, or in someone you know (e.g., as historical figures, Helen Keller and Vincent van Gogh might be considered).

**Teacher's Summary**

**Empathy** is the ability to perceive and feel what another person is feeling, without experiencing the pleasure or pain as intensely as the other person does. To be able to empathize is one of the most important qualities a person can develop. It enriches all human relationships.

If a baby cries and the mother would just be irritated by the noise, and ignore the child, their relationship would get off to a very bad start. On the other hand, if the mother senses how the baby is feeling when hungry or cold, can picture this uncomfortable feeling and want to help, she is experiencing empathy. If your best friend loses in a track race he felt he could win, and you tell him that you know how he feels, you are showing that you can empathize, and it probably will help your friend feel better. Nowhere is the ability to empathize more important than in being a parent. Being able to empathize will make the parent better understand her or his child and guide the parent in how to best help his or her child. In a marriage too empathy between husband and wife is very important. If empathy is lacking, misunderstandings are likely.

In what ways can we see empathy in the very young child? You may have seen a mother burn her finger or hurt herself in some other way, and a two-year-old patting her and saying, "You OK Mommy?" Among the crucial growth-promoting influences of the
family romance on the child is the further development of the ability to empathize. The girl comes to realize that if her fantasized marriage to her father were to happen, her mother would be terribly hurt, so in her feelings she arrives at the decision "Mother can have the husband she loves; I'll find a good one someday myself." The same decision is made by the little boy in relation to his father.

As the child develops sensitivity to what her parents, or siblings, or other people are feeling, she learns to respond in appropriate ways to them. She not only understands others increasingly correctly, but also can understand how they feel about her.

**Altruism** is the feeling of wanting to be generous to someone, even when this involves some moderate self-sacrifice. If your friend Joey forgets to bring his lunch on your Boy Scout outing, and you gave him half of yours, that would be altruistic. If you were to insist that he take all of your lunch, that would not be a good idea. Why? It would make him feel very uncomfortable, and it would not be showing self-respect. You are an important person, too, who is entitled to lunch.

However, a healthy amount of altruism is very important in all human relationships. New parents give up some of their night's sleep to give their infant his 2 a.m. feeding; if a family budget is tight, many a mother has given up the idea of a new dress in favor of athletic shoes for her son; a husband may give up his bowling evenings to baby-sit, so his wife can take a course in computer programming. With the world becoming more interactive all the time, most people altruistically help those in need such as at times of earthquakes, floods or wars.

In the case of the 3-6 year old child, we can see that when the child gives up her romantic wishes toward her father at the end of her family romance, she is increasing her ability to be altruistic (to her mother). Also, the guidance the parents give in encouraging altruistic and empathic behavior toward siblings and peers helps greatly. The child who develops these behaviors early lays the groundwork for warm and satisfying relationships within the family, at school, and later in his or her adult life.

**Sublimation** is viewed by psychoanalysts to be the result, at least in part, of the child's converting his sexual and hostile feelings into creative activities. Like empathy and altruism, sublimation is an enormously productive new development. It grows directly out of the new mental abilities 3-6 years old have developed, as they deal with the troublesome but normal problems of their family romance.

There is a well-known belief that a good thing to do with anger is to put it into some creative activity. For instance, an athlete who can put into the swing of a bat the anger he feels at having been hurt may increase the success of what he is doing.

Emotional hurt, sexual frustration, anger and hostility also may be sublimated into the creative arts. Some of the world's most valued music, painting, sculpture and writing have been fueled by strong feelings which could not be acceptably expressed directly, but
which were converted by sublimation into great gifts for humanity. Sublimation may not only produce great works, it is also a most useful tool in everyday living.

**Assignment**

Choosing someone you know, or a character from history, fiction, sports, television or from your imagination, describe a person whose actions demonstrate empathy, altruism and/or sublimation. Give one or more example of what that person has done which makes you see him or her in that way.

**Outcome**

Students will understand that the qualities of empathy, altruism and sublimation begin to develop early in life, and to a significant extent are influenced by the successful giving up of the family romance wishes. The students will understand also the value of these attributes to the personality throughout the life span.
**PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:**
Lesson Plans for **GRADES 7 and 8**.

**UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS**

**THE CHILD'S ABILITIES TO ADAPT -- Part 2 (Child Rearing Aspect):**
OTHER IMPORTANT ADAPTIVE CAPABILITIES

**Objective**

To reinforce understanding of the values of empathy, altruism and sublimation.
And to learn how parents can support the development of these qualities in their children.

**Class Activity**

The students will read their descriptions of persons who demonstrate good abilities in one or more -- empathy, altruism or sublimation. With each, consider the following questions:

How do you think your person's approach to people affected his/her relationships with them? His/her success at school or work?

Do you know anything about the kind of family life your person had or has now? When younger? If so, what kind of influence do you think it had on the way his/her personality developed?

**Teacher Presentation**

There are two main ways parents can help their child develop empathy and altruism.

1. They can help by modeling these types of behavior themselves. When the parent is sensitive to what the child is feeling, and responds in a caring way, it conveys a message of empathy to the child, and awakens a desire to behave in this way, too. The child also is a keen observer of the interaction among family members, and of the feelings and behaviors they display. On the other hand, the parent who has the attitude "Do as I say, not as I do" will not be modeling an attitude of empathy for the child.

Altruistic attitudes also are contagious. If family members most of the time are thoughtful and generous toward one another, the child will follow suit. Unfortunately, greedy and selfish attitudes are contagious as well.

2. A second way to promote the development of empathy and altruism is to encourage any signs of them in the child's behavior. When seven year old Mike stopped his own play to show his four year old sister how to put her puzzle together, Mother
commended Mike for his thoughtfulness. That his mother noticed and praised his behavior gave Mike a good feeling of self-respect, and a warm feeling toward his little sister. We hear a great deal about sibling rivalry, and this is natural up to a point. However, when parents attempt to treat their children fairly, and help them to become empathic and thoughtful, and to deal with their angry feelings in constructive ways, a great deal of the rivalry diminishes and the siblings learn to really value one another.

With regard to sublimation, when a parent senses that a child is trying to put his or her energies into creative activity, such as drawing, the child should be encouraged, even if the drawing doesn't make much sense to the parent. To say, "That's supposed to be a dog? It doesn't look like one!" may give a child the feeling of being very put down. When the child brings his picture to mother for approval, her role is not to be art critic, but supporter. She can say, "I can see that you really are learning to draw," and this will give the child encouragement to keep trying. Besides the improvement in drawing skill continued effort will bring, there will also be progress in sublimation. This is because some of the child's troublesome feelings are being channeled into a creative project. Supporting the child's efforts at sublimation without exaggerating his achievement, is enormously helpful, and will enhance the child's efforts at sublimation and his motivation for learning.

**Outcome**

The students will understand that good modeling by parents, and the encouragement parents give children in their efforts toward empathy, altruism and sublimation will facilitate greatly the development of these values.
THE PRESCHOOL YEARS (3 - 6 YEARS)

CONSCIENCE FORMATION
PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
Lesson Plans for GRADES 7 and 8.

UNIT 3 - 3 to 6 YEARS

CONSCIENCE FORMATION -- Part 1 (Child Development Aspect):

Teacher Preparation:  Textbook UNIT 3, pp. 103 -111.

Objective

The students will learn about the large stride in the development of the conscience that occurs during the 3 to 6 year period.

Class Discussion

1. What do we mean by the word "conscience?"

2. Was your conscience in place when you were born, like your eyes and ears?

3. At your age, you have quite clear ideas about right and wrong. Where did you get these ideas?

4. Is your conscience only negative, or is it also positive -- does it guide you to do good and considerate things, as well as telling you what you are not allowed to do?

5. What kind of feeling does your conscience give you if you do something your parents tell you not to? If you do something to help someone?

6. Have you seen a child under the age of 6, ask as if he is conscience-stricken: "What happened?" What feelings was he expressing?

Teacher Presentation

A conscience in good operating condition is one of the most important features of the human personality. The world would be in complete chaos if everyone did what he/she felt like doing without regard to anyone else's feelings, or without regard to our laws or principles of good behavior. Very early, from the end of the first year on, there are signs that conscience development is beginning. From the parents' firm tone of voice and facial expression of disapproval, the infant learns that he may not do certain things, e.g., pull hair, or eat out of the dog's dish. The child shows signs of distress if called "Bad boy!" and of pleasure when called "Good boy!"

The newly-forming conscience of the one-to-three year old is based directly on the parents' guidance in their Do's and Don'ts. The child of this age can feel that things he
does may be "good or bad"; but he has no judgment yet of "right and wrong", though he
is absorbing into his mind what his parents are teaching him. However, by the time he is
four and a half or five, he has developed a conscience which enables him to make many
judgments himself about right and wrong things to do. As he grows older, of course, his
conscience supervises him in an increasingly wide range of activities and becomes more
mature in its judgments.

There are two parts to conscience development:

1. The **morality** part, which approves or disapproves of what the child does; if it
disapproves, the child then suffers from a sense of guilt.

2. The **ideal-self** part. The child develops with the help of his parents, goals
about the ideal kind of person he wants to be. To the extent that he is able to live up to
his own expectations, he has a good level of self-esteem; when he fails to behave
according to his own standards, he develops feelings of shame and inferiority and his
self-esteem sinks. If the child does something which causes his parents to say "Nice boys
don't do that; aren't you ashamed of yourself?" he is ashamed because his own conscience
agrees with what his parents said.

How does a person's conscience develop?

1. The groundwork, as we have said, takes place in infancy, with the limits
parents set on behavior. The toddler, in order to please her parents, will keep away from
the electric outlet when mother says "No", although it may take three, four, or more
repetitions. She learns that nice girls don't pull the cat's tail. If the parents' limits are set
firmly, but in a caring and respecting way, the child will be able to accept them without
feeling "put down." However, if the limits are set harshly, the child will develop a
feeling that she is bad, and not worthy of being loved. A continuously harsh approach
will lead the child to develop a severe and self-punishing conscience; whereas a caring
approach leads to the development of a reasonable, effective conscience.

2. The parents' own behavior serves as a model for the child's conscience
development. If a mother tells her six and four year old sons to stop fighting because
brothers should get along with one another, and then she has an angry argument with
their father when he comes home, the boys won't be very convinced about the value and
importance of trying to resolve differences between them without fighting.
Disagreements and anger are bound to be part of family life, but parents can set
guidelines both for themselves and the children about reasonable ways of resolving
disagreements. The old saying "Actions speak louder than words" is especially true, as
children identify with their parents in the development of their consciences.

3. During the 3 to 6 year period, the Family Romance plays a very important part
in the development of the child's conscience. Because the little girl deeply loves her
mother, she feels shame and guilt over her wish to harm her when she fantasies her
mother to be her rival. Little Diane, who dumped her mother's perfume into the toilet and
asked her father to take her out, she could see that her behavior was upsetting and hurting her mother. After three episodes of this, with help from both parents, Diane's conscience was strengthening to the point that this behavior was no longer acceptable to herself. When parents can handle misbehavior wisely, the child develops enough shame and guilt to serve as an interior monitor of behavior, but still retain a sense that basically she is a good person. The same, of course, is true of the boy. When the child has worked through the Family Romance conflicts successfully, the parent of the same sex becomes the major model of identification in conscience development, as in other ways, during this period.

4. First and foremost, it is the parents who help a child develop a conscience, because they are the people the child loves most, and by whom he feels most loved. The child therefore wants to please his parents by behavior as they wish, and he is receptive (although sometimes rebellious) to their correction. However, as the child grows through the 3 to 6 years period, others may also -- though to a much lesser degree than the parents -- contribute to his conscience development. Siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles may also influence him. Again, the closer his personal relationship to them is, the more their influence will be. His preschool teachers may also add some part. As we shall address in later Units, later, teachers at school, and in Sunday school, if the child attends one, offer guidelines for his behavior. We shall also see that the standards of the child's peers will become increasingly important as the child moves through the elementary school years and into adolescence. If he develops a healthy, well-functioning conscience since early childhood, he usually will be able to make good judgments later, judgments which reflect the input of the important people of his life, but which are basically his own. Naturally, the 3 to 6 year old will make mistakes in his judgments and will have episodes in which he "lets himself down" by doing something unacceptable to himself or others. However, he will learn from mistakes, and his conscience will begin its vital function of monitoring his behavior.

Assignment

Answer any 3.

1. Describe the two most important "right and wrong" standards your parents taught you.

2. In addition to your parents, who has had the most important influences in your life, in helping you develop standards for behavior? What was there about this person that made you want to listen to, or be like him or her?

3. Do you think a parent can be too strict? Too lenient? Explain.

4. Jerry, age 5, was driving with his parents to visit his grandparents. They got a late start and father was driving fast, quite a bit over the speed limit. He told Jerry to watch out of the back window, and tell him if a policeman came into sight. What message was Jerry's father giving to him?
**Outcome**

The students will have learned the two basic components of conscience development, the morality part, the conscience proper, and the ideal-self part. The students also learned about the influences which help shape the conscience: the largest being the behaviors of the child's own parents, their clear and empathic limit setting, the child's identifications with the parents, and of large importance are the experiencing and the outcome of the child's Family Romance. Also, at this age persons outside the immediate family may influence the child's conscience but usually to a much lesser degree.
Objective

The students will learn how parents can help their child to build a well-functioning conscience while simultaneously fostering the child's good self-esteem.

Class Discussion

Ask volunteers to read their write-ups. The following points, among others, should emerge from them.

1. Regarding the standards their parents taught, it should be pointed out that many of the most important attitudes and behaviors were learned and absorbed in the first 6 or so years of life.

2. The questions of the influence of non-parental figures should bring out the fact that although the largest contributor to a child's conscience is the child's parents, a caring person outside the immediate family can also help in conscience building, before, during the 3-6 age period, and especially beyond this period.

3. Re: Strictness and leniency: Standards imposed in too strict, hostility-loaded manner, can make a child develop too much shame and guilt, and make him feel inferior; or as he grows older, he may rebel, and throw his parent's standards overboard. On the other hand, parents who are too lenient, and do not define standards of behavior leave it up to the child to pretty much build his own conscience, which he cannot do well on his own. His unrestrained behavior will get him into trouble with peers and adults. He will be rejected when he does not accept the rules of the games peers play, and will have a big problem fitting into the structure and expectations of school (unless he has help later), and he may get into trouble at work, or with the law.

4. Jerry's father was giving the message that doing something against the law is all right if one doesn't get caught. Even though the speed limit is not a major law, this is not a message Father should be giving Jerry, if he thought about it. Jerry is at an age when he is beginning to idolize and pattern himself after his father. This, too, is something Father should bear in mind.
Teacher Presentation

Do you think it is possible to correct a child's misbehavior, and still enable a child to build self-esteem or as well as a good conscience?

Consider the problem Jennifer's mother had, when Jennifer not only kicked and yelled about going to bed on time, but then said to her mother "I hate you!" Naturally her mother was hurt by this, and she was pretty mad at Jennifer too.

If mother had said "I know you don't mean that; good girls don't say that to their mothers!" how would that make Jennifer feel? ("But I really do mean it; I must be a very bad girl") If mother had said "That's a terrible thing to say; how do you expect me to love you when you say you hate me?" How would Jennifer feel? (Jennifer would feel guilt and shame, and also anxiety that her mother might stop loving her.)

How then, remembering that mother also had some angry feelings, could the situation be handled helpfully?

1. Mother needs to be honest about her own feelings and Jennifer's. She might say "I can see you are very mad at me right now. Parents and children do sometimes feel that way, and I'm feeling a bit mad at you, too."

2. Mother can help Jennifer understand that they can talk together about the things they don't like. She can point out that if they talk things over first, some of the mad feelings might not come.

3. Mother can help Jennifer understand that although angry feelings do come between them once in a while, their love feelings for each other are very much bigger, and are for always.

4. Often, as in the case of Diane, the perfume dumper, a parent has to go a step further, and institute some punishment such as by temporarily withdrawing a privilege, to make it clear that this behavior is not to happen again. Clear definition of prohibitions can help a child to know what behaviors are acceptable, and what ones are not.

5. It helps enormously if a parent can understand the psychological reason behind a child's behavior. E.g., four years old Johnny asked her mother if his father would be coming home for dinner, and looked downcast when she said he was. "It's never with just you and me," Johnny said. His behavior had been fine all day and mother knew he had nothing to worry about in terms of reproach from his father. She realized that Johnny was struggling with Family Romance feelings, so she handled the situation quite gently. She could have made him feel guilty by saying, "Well, after all, Daddy provides the food you eat; aren't you ashamed of not wanting him to come home?" Instead, she said something to the effect that Daddy is in the family too, and loves both Johnny and Mommy; and Mommy does want him to come home. She added that some day Johnny
will have a home of his own, and will have a wife to come home to, and maybe a little son like Johnny.

6. On the positive side, parents can help a child develop sensitivity to others, by demonstrating this attitude themselves, and by encouraging the child to act on his own generous impulses. Respectful attitudes toward pets can be instilled by having the child help with feeding, and in gentle handling. This is even more important in the relationships with siblings. Considerate attitudes can be fostered, particularly if the parents are fair-minded toward each child. Children do have to be reminded that parents love each one, because they sometimes are inclined to see favoritism when it is actually not there.

7. A sense of humor can often resolve a situation when a child's misjudgment may lead to his doing something wrong, or just embarrassing to the parents. Five year old Sam was at dinner with his parents and their guests, a couple whom Sam knew and liked. He suddenly burst forth with the remark, "Daddy says you are rich. Are you?" In a case like that, a good-natured humorous reply is best. Sam had meant no harm, and to shame and humiliate him on the spot would damage his self-esteem. If the guest could answer jokingly "Yes, of course!", and the father could say jokingly "We didn't tell him to ask this!" the situation could end in a good-humored day. Later, in private, the parents could tell Sam that to be polite, we don't ask people personal questions about how much money they have, or about how old they are.

To summarize, here are some Do's and Don'ts about helping a child develop a sense of morality, and a sense of the ideal-self he wants to become:

1. Remember that by the way you approve and disapprove of the child's conduct, you will be giving her the building blocks for her conscience. If your disapproval is overly strict and hostile, her conscience will become harsh and self-punitive too. If your disapproval is expressed in a clear, but sympathetic way, her conscience will develop into an effective and reasonable one.

2. Repeat as often as necessary, the behavior you expect from the child. Give reasonable answers to her "why?" questions. (Don't say "Don't ask why; just do it!")

3. Be honest in acknowledging the child's feelings, and your own when upset and angry.

4. When correction is necessary, do it in a manner which respects the child, and that gives her reassurance that you care for her. (If you are so angry that you can't control yourself, wait a few minutes.)

5. Try to understand the reason the child is behaving as she is.

6. Encourage the child to talk about her anger or other bad feelings. Let her know that it is safe to talk with you about her misbehavior. If punishment is needed, it
will be fair. Sometimes it helps to have a child suggest her own punishment; but be aware that young children can be unduly harsh and if the suggestion from the child is too harsh the parent let the child know, tell the child what she did was not that bad, and the suggestion should be modified.

7. Help the child look back over his behavior and think about how he might handle the situation differently next time.

8. Help the child understand that because he did a "bad" thing, he is not a "bad" person. Saying, "This is a bad thing to do," is better than saying "You're a bad boy!"

9. Never make fun of, or humiliate a child when he has done something undesirable. Talk with him later in private.

10. Make use of humor when you can, in a good-natured way.

11. Encourage the building of ideal-self standards by attempting to be a good model for the child's identification.

12. Encourage his positive feelings toward other people and pets.

**Outcome**

The students will have learned that both in developing moral behavior, and ideal-self standards, parental attitudes of understanding, correcting in a clear and caring manner and encouraging positive interaction with others, will help the growth of a reasonable conscience, and of good self-esteem.