

Quebec Home and School

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THE QUEBEC FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

*Rosedale
Springtime
Revue*

SEE PAGE 11



VOL. IV, No. 2

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

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QUEBEC HOME AND SCHOOL

Published Monthly by
THE QUEBEC FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS
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Vol. IV, No. 2

Montreal, Quebec

November, 1951

Know Your School



Mr. L. M. CLARK

School has now been in session for two months and the children's timetable has assumed that familiar pattern which school days bring. Home and School Associations have also resumed their activities for the two go hand in hand.

One of the primary Home and School aims is that parents should learn as much as possible about the schools their children attend. The underlying purpose behind this is not one of criticism but rather one of self-education and, in a sense, duty.

There was a time when the parents felt that they had done their part when they sent the children off to school. The rest was up to the teachers and school authorities. This attitude is becoming a thing of the past due in part to Home and School. Parents now realize it is their duty to learn what happens to the child in school, what the school surroundings are like, what school facilities are provided, what the curriculum calls for, — in order to be able to under-

stand and help their children in the day to day difficulties which they encounter. By recalling their own childhood experiences, parents realize that these day to day difficulties are bigger and more real to the child than the day to day problems which adults encounter.

Home and School Associations in planning their programs should make the study of the school facilities in their communities and the educational system a part of the season's activities. Educational authorities welcome the interest of parents. After all, it is the parents who pay the taxes which provide the school facilities and meet the expenses of educating the children. Better conditions can only be obtained if we, as parents, are convinced that changes are necessary and the educational leaders are always glad to inform Home and School groups of the needs of the school and of future plans.

The administration of the schools involves many problems in periods of rising costs, such as we are now passing through. This difficult task is borne by the public spirited citizens who serve as School Commissioners and Trustees. Naturally, the interest of

(Continued on next page)

parents is welcomed and Home and School Associations have an obligation to co-operate whenever possible with School Boards in furthering the education of our children.

It is a human failing to criticize and it is easy to point to the shortcomings of any institution. It is a more difficult thing, but far more rewarding and worthwhile, to work toward the elimination of some of those deficiencies. Let us all resolve that, individually and collectively, we will work with

school principals and teachers, with school commissioners and trustees in the interest of education. And let us not be discouraged by the size of the task. The fact that children no longer dread school — that playing "hookey" is not as attractive as it used to be — indicates that we have made progress. Our duty as parents and as Home and School members is to see that we continue to progress.

L. MOWBRAY CLARK, *President.*

These Federation Committees can help you in planning your Association activities. Ask them!

Children's Leisure Reading: Mrs. F. Willows, (Acting) 29 Canal Road, Beauharnois.

Health: Dr. Chas. W. MacMillan, Faculty of Medicine, McGill University, Montreal.

Parent Education: Mrs. G. B. Clarke, 182 Desaulniers Blvd., St. Lambert.

Program Planning: Mrs. R. W. Coutts, 5662 McLynn Ave., Montreal.
Mrs. F. Willows, 29 Canal Road, Beauharnois.

School Finance: Peter W. Gooch, 232 Brookfield, Ave., Mount Royal.

Traffic Safety: Douglas C. Borden, 146 Balfour Ave., Mount Royal.

Vocational Education: Henry Wright and Andrew Watson, Verdun High School, Verdun.

Publications: Mrs. W. M. Hick, 3823 Melrose Avenue, Montreal.

Community Influences: Mrs. H. Shulman, 4705 Jeanne Mance, Montreal.

POINTE CLAIRE HOME AND SCHOOL NEWS

On Friday, September 21st, the Pointe Claire Home and School Association, under the chairmanship of Mrs. S. Longmore and Mr. F. Parkard, held their first dance at the Cedar Park School Gymnasium. Over 300 members and their friends had a most enjoyable evening dancing to Pete Sherwoods 12 piece orchestra.

The dance served a twofold purpose: firstly bringing together a large number of the new residents of the growing community and also making it possible to donate a Public-address system to the Cedar Park School Auditorium.

The gymnasium was beautifully decorated by Mrs. K. A. Hustwayte and her able assistants with large masses of fall flowers and foliage. During the evening Mr. S. Longmore, who acted as Master of Ceremonies, introduced Mr. Ian Stockwell, the principal of Cedar Park School, who drew the winning tickets for the doorprizes.

ATTENTION

REPRESENTATIVES!

Don't Forget

There is a meeting of the Council of Representatives on

Saturday, Nov. 17

at 2.30 P.M.

Divinity Hall

McGILL UNIVERSITY

MONTREAL

MENTAL HEALTH FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN

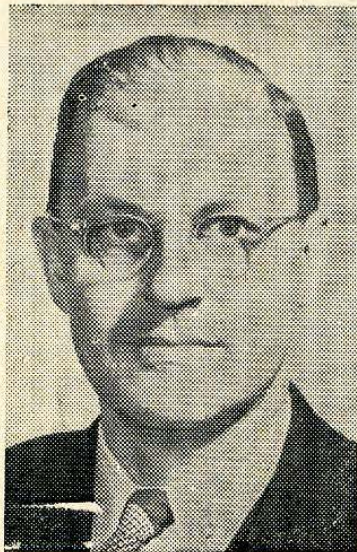
(From an address given at the Annual Meeting of the
Mental Hygiene Institute of Montreal, May 3, 1951.)

J. D. GRIFFIN, M.D.

Medical Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association

Mental health, we are told, is the child's birthright and the nation's strength, and in general, few would challenge this slogan. Mental health we say, is "a good thing" . . . good for children and good for the state. But it may be worthwhile to examine the concept of mental health a little more closely. What does it mean? How do you attain it? How can you keep it? And what is the individual citizen's responsibility about it?

First, what does mental health mean, anyway? Common sense tells us that a person is mentally healthy if he behaves in a *reasonable* way — if he looks after his responsibilities, obtains and keeps a job, gets along well with his family and friends, and, in general, is able to live a kind of life that, whether or not it gives him great inner satisfaction, at least does not disturb *us* too much. Undoubtedly some of these ideas about mental health are sound and practical. But note how many of them are based on our tendency to judge other people according to standards and values which are peculiarly local, not to say personal, in their application. When we say his behaviour is *reasonable*, we mean that his behaviour is acceptable to *us*. What would we say, for instance, if we were to find ourselves suddenly living with a primitive African tribe where curious religious rites, strange marriage customs and unusual attitudes toward health and welfare were the accepted way of life? Would we say they were all insane, or crazy? Obviously not. But their standards and values would certainly be different from ours. And any definition of mental health must take these cultural and social standards into account. Even in Montreal there are many different communities with different ways of judging things and different moral, social and cultural values. So the characteristics of "reasonable behaviour" in people living in the Snowden area may be quite different from those of people living over in the East end. Some social scientists speak of this variation in standards and values in appraising human behaviour as *cultural relativity*. It is one of the reasons why it is so difficult to be dogmatic and completely definitive when speaking of mental health.



DR. J. D. GRIFFIN

Are there *any* basic factors characteristic of mental health then? How about ideas like "happiness" or the "full life" or "self-fulfillment"? These ideas at least have the advantage of being less dependent on what society considers to be correct and right. They refer more to the individual's inner subjective perceptions, needs and satisfactions. They are more basic, in that they would apply to people in most cultural or social groups in the Western world at least.

We might say that good mental health means feeling comfortable about yourself, feeling right about other people and being able to meet the demands of life successfully or at least with inner satisfaction. Obviously, the mother who worries herself sick (literally) because she feels she is not bringing up her little girl in the right way, doesn't feel comfortable about herself and therefore, temporarily at least, is not in the best of mental health. Feeling comfortable about yourself means being able to accept your everyday worries, frustrations, resentments and disappointments without being disabled

(Continued on next page)

MENTAL HEALTH, con't

by them. It means having a healthy measure of self tolerance and self respect. It means being able to get personal satisfactions out of single everyday pleasures.

Feeling "right" about other people means being able to think helpfully about them, expecting to like them and trust them and expecting them to like and trust you. It means also the capacity for love and friendship, the knack of becoming part of a group and feeling a sense of responsibility to it. The little boy who is a "perfect gentleman" when introduced to his mother's friends, who never gets his clothes dirty or breaks his toys and who sits on his doorstep, watching the neighborhood children play but never is able to overcome his feeling of timidity and insecurity so that he can join in their fun — is not a very mentally healthy child. Similarly, the man who constantly quarrels with his neighbors, feels his boss has a grudge against him and blames his lack of success on "the Reds" or groups of people differing from him in religion or race, does not have a very healthy personality.

Finally, being able to meet the demands of life means the capacity to face problems as they arise, and do something about them; to plan ahead, thinking things out for yourself, making your own decisions, and having decided, putting your best effort into whatever is to be done. This aspect of mental health overlaps the others, of course, because all the *demands* which life makes concern either yourself alone or yourself in relation with other people.

This description of what we mean by *Mental Health* is by no means complete. Moreover, we must be very careful not to read into this description implications which are not intended. Life may present us with situations and demands which are intolerable and impossible. In such a case the only realistic solution may bring us into violent conflict with other people — even with ourselves. How then with "feeling right about other people" and liking and trusting them? Mental health is not necessarily synonymous with "living harmoniously" or learning to accept comfortably all emotional and social insults which life may present. A rebel can have good mental health. And, let's face it, the situation may arise again, as it has in the past, where in order to maintain our mental health, our capacity to feel comfortable and to live effectively with ourselves and others, we will have to be prepared to

fight for the right and the freedom to live and feel this way.

So, inevitably, we see that mental health for us is tied up with our democratic way of life, our personal freedoms and our way of thinking about ourselves and about our responsibility to the group, the community and the nation. We must have good mental health in order to be able to think clearly, decide unequivocally and act with conviction, courage and responsibility. Since such action stems from inner conviction established by personal assessment of the situation rather than by external authority, good mental health is the very essence of democracy. And to make the circle complete, only in a democracy can there be the freedom from external control and dictatorship so that mental health as conceived here may flourish.

Let us summarize briefly what has been said so far. We have seen that merely fitting in and adjusting comfortably to one's social and moral and cultural standards and codes is by no means a complete or sufficient characteristic of mental health. These standards change from culture to culture and from time to time. Even within the Western democracies there is change and variation making a definition of mental health in terms of "reasonable and acceptable" behaviour of very questionable value. However, when we examine the inner feelings of man, his attitudes toward himself, toward others, his capacity to think clearly and make decisions freely, we find we are closer to a concept of mental health that is both practical for a democratic citizen and important for a citizens' democracy. As a corollary, we assume (and it is an assumption with growing scientific support) that people who learn to think and feel and act in mentally healthy patterns such as these, are likely to avoid serious mental and emotional breakdown and illness. So the possibilities of a significant preventive approach to the problem of mental illness are very real.

But how? How can we improve our mental health and insure the healthy development of the personalities of our children? This admittedly is also a difficult problem. In spite of what the publishers of the self-help books on "Personality and Success" say, there are no simple rules to follow which will guarantee results. How wonderful if we only needed to have a mental X-Ray treatment or an emotional immunization shot in the arm! Mental health is so much an in-

(Continued on page 18)

SCHOOL TRAFFIC SAFETY

Now you can do something about it.

The Home and School Traffic Safety Campaign is on its way and it is none too soon. School traffic accidents still happen. On the fourth of September this year, the day school opened, there were, in Montreal, three separate school traffic accidents.

The broad objective of the campaign is to make school traffic safety a local community affair. The campaign is designed to stimulate each and every member of Home and School to work as an individual, and as a member of the community, to solve the traffic safety problem locally. More specifically, the objective is **TO ENCOURAGE EACH ASSOCIATION TO SET UP A PERMANENT TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE TO DEAL WITH THE TRAFFIC SAFETY PROBLEMS OF ITS SCHOOL AND ITS COMMUNITY.**

Last summer the associations were given a preliminary notice of this campaign. Many have already set aside specific evenings in their fall programs for the pre-

sentation of the Traffic Safety Plan. The first meetings are scheduled for October and other appointments run through November and into early December.

The work of the Federation's Traffic Safety Committee began more than a year ago. Much time has been consumed in the preparation of the Traffic Safety Manual, based on information drawn from cities in Canada and the United States, as well as from the literature of the National Safety Council. Our thanks for his work in preparing this manual goes to Mr. E. H. Harris of the West End Traffic Safety Council and the N.D.G. Community Council.

The next step in this campaign is the holding of meetings with the associations. The program that has been developed should be interesting, instructive and authoritative. The object of every meeting will be to guide the way to effective local action on traffic safety.

(Continued on next page)

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TRAFFIC SAFETY, *con't*

The presentation that is offered to the associations will be a full evening program of the membership of the association. It will include *movies*, a short *introduction to the project* and *open discussion*.

Such topics as these will be dealt with:

General safety training.

The "Elmer the Elephant" pennant.

School crossings and protection.

Suggestions for liaison with municipal authorities.

Establishment of a Junior Safety Council in the school.

Establishment and operation of a permanent Traffic Safety Committee in each association.

The discussion will be led by an individual who has a keen personal interest in traffic safety and who will be able to handle these subjects effectively.

The Traffic Safety Manual will be made available to local Traffic Safety Committees as they are established. In addition, an excellent illustrated brochure will be given to each person at the meeting, to summarize for him the project and the action that can be taken.

The films that will be shown are examples of many that are available for training children in traffic safety. These films are no amateur efforts, they are professionally prepared in Hollywood, featuring nationally-known movie stars. In Montreal, there are libraries of these films designed to educate children and adults in traffic safety.

The Traffic Safety Committee of the Federation will be glad to co-operate with your Association by holding a meeting with you. Arrangements can be made by getting in touch with Mr. K. Van Guen who is in charge of this part of the work of the Committee. Mr. Van Guen's address is 4950 Randall Ave., Notre Dame de Grace, Montreal.



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YOUNG PEOPLE'S SYMPHONY CONCERTS

We hear from the committee of the Young People's Symphony Concerts that they are commencing their third series of eight concerts on October 20th under the generous sponsorship of Les Concerts Symphoniques.

In only two seasons the young people of Montreal and vicinity have shown such enthusiasm for the opportunity of hearing and learning about good music at concerts designed especially for them, that the audience increased by some two hundred last season bringing the total attendance to 1,039, and it is quite possible that this year's series will be oversubscribed.

Dr. Wilfrid Pelletier, their conductor, is keenly interested in the young people, and in selecting music which is rhythmical, tuneful and colourful, and suitable for young ears. The students learn about the various instruments and sections of the orchestra, how music is made, something about the music to be played and the composers. They are also encouraged to answer musical questionnaires, to keep musical scrap books, and at the final concert each year prizes of records and money are awarded to the winners in three different age groups.

Prompted by the excellence of the art work displayed in many of the scrap books, the Committee has decided to provide a further outlet for artistic talent by holding a musical poster contest which, through the kindly interest and generosity of the directors of the Museum of Fine Arts, will be exhibited and judged there sometime this winter. The concerts committee is most anxious to afford our young people not only the education and pleasure of enjoying good music, but to stimulate an interest in other allied arts.

Again this season, through auditions held by Dr. Pelletier, several young artists will have the very great privilege to which they all aspire, of playing for an audience of over a thousand, and we hear that these talented students are received with tremendous interest and enthusiasm by their contemporaries.

All this is a splendid venture on the part of Les Concerts Symphoniques to provide our young people with leisure time activities of a worthwhile and lasting nature.

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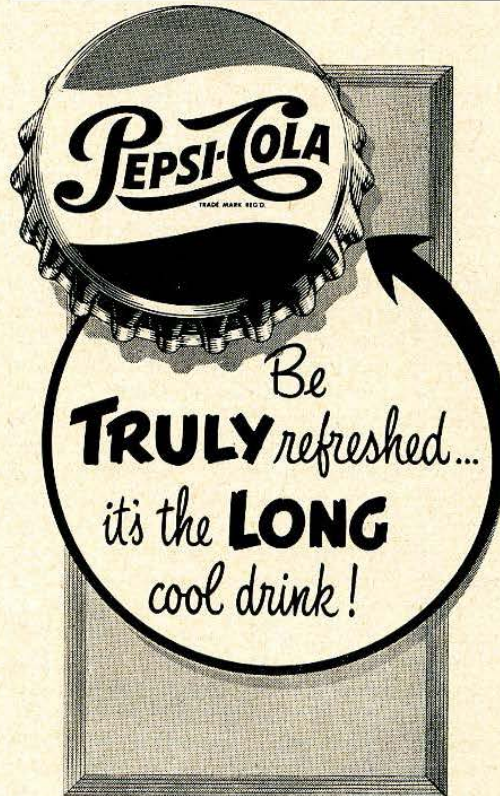
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PROGRAM AD #5 -1951

ASSOCIATION HIGHLIGHTS

LOUISE LESSARD

Associations are to be congratulated on their year's Highlight . . . many varied and worth-while projects, fund-raising methods and social activities were reported at Conference. Most Home and Schoolers will agree with this observer that Magog established an enviable precedent in sending to the conference a "one-man highlight" in the person of Alan E. Smith, who rose to report for Magog though he had been given nothing to report! The audience will not soon forget his homely philosophy and lively wit as he explained his predicament, imbuing all with a warm feeling of friendliness.

Highlight for most of the associations was a fund-raising project, which took the form of a Theatre Night in Cartierville; presentation of two plays and Fun Night in Buckingham; square dances in Delorimier, St. Laurent, Baron Byng and Iona; a military whist and bazaar in Crystal Springs; a "Valentine Hop for Mom and Pop" in Willingdon; a cooking sale and military whist in Woodlands; and a Nickle Night in Macdonald. The uses to which these funds were put are impressive. Here are some of them.

In Drummondville, a Welfare Committee was set up, wholly charitable and non-sectarian. At Macdonald, a Co-ordinating Committee was set up to provide chaperones for school dances, refreshments for visiting teams, etc. and lunches for children whose homes were too distant to reach during lunch hour. Crystal Springs started a school library and purchased a film projector and a radio; Delorimier purchased a mimeograph machine; Buckingham served hot soup and cocoa to eighty children all winter, added to the school library, built a new track for field events, purchased prizes for high-ranking junior students, and supplied corsages and boutonnieres for senior students at graduation exercises. Cartierville bought an amplifier system for their new school, complete with loudspeakers, microphone and automatic record player. The Birchton, Island Brook, Cookshire Association sponsored a skating rink, a dental clinic, and a Cod Liver Oil Fund. Barclay bought three radios, one record player, provided twelve electrical outlets for the school, supported the library and the Parents' Bookshelf with considerable sums of money, and made a donation to the Milk Fund. Woodlands supplied a film pro-

jector for the school and Willingdon is buying more books for the library and providing silk screen prints for the class rooms. Baron Byng bought a spot-light for the Little Theatre, subsidized the sale of hot soup and replenished the library. Lachine set up a one hundred dollar bursary for a deserving student in the graduating class.

Mental health is becoming an ever widening field of interest, as evidenced by the Asbestos, Danville, Shipton Association, which sponsored a series of lectures by a well-known psychiatrist. Herbert Symonds, Crawford Park and Macdonald reported a tremendously successful showing of the film "Human Growth". Quebec City and District concentrated on a membership drive and the establishment of a friendly attitude between the Association and the community.

Development of arts, skills and crafts has occupied a large place on many programmes. Lachine, Outremont, Rosedale, Iona and Riverview sponsored very successful dancing classes, while Riverview also reports a Child Study Group and a Public Speaking Course. St. Laurent established a millinery class as well as a choral group which shows promise of becoming a real cultural development for the community. Drummondville had a sewing class while Longueuil had an art contest. Woodlands began the newest Art Centre where the children gather on Saturday morning to paint and model, and at the same time, learn an appreciation of line, colour, rythm and composition. Willingdon has added a Drama Group to its Art Centre while the Adult Hobby Groups have over one hundred members taking part in oil-painting, woodworking and sewing. Willingdon's real highlight is the Educational Forum where an authoritative speaker on some topic of educational interest leads a discussion period. Buckingham sends in a novel ruse to bring out a capacity crowd to the Annual Meeting . . . feed them! If the Annual Meeting is preceded by a social event such as a supper, it is a guaranteed success. Dunrae Gardens has a annual spring exhibition featuring art, scrapbooks, collections, handicrafts, household science, pets (in cages) plants, etc. A small fee is charged, refreshments are available and about one thousand persons enjoy a profitable and informative day.

The foregoing record of achievements for one year's activity is indeed a tribute to the Home and School movement. Much valuable help has been given to the teachers and schools in the form of extra equipment and books; many children have been given a chance for better health and wider cultural interests; parents have found joy as they meet and work with friends and neighbours, understanding and tolerance as they learn, and satisfaction as they see a good job well done. Truly is the Home and School motto well chosen, "Our children play together, let us work together".

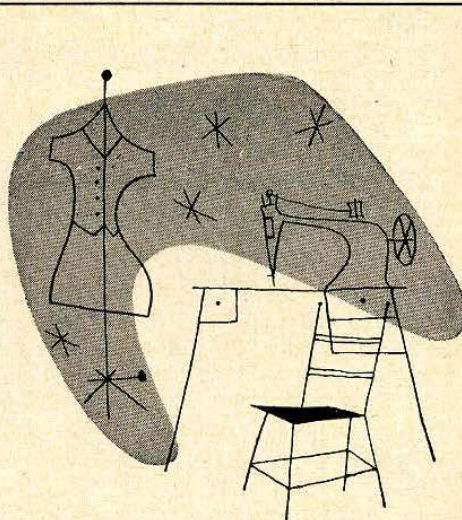
ROSEDALE SPRINGTIME REVUE

Rosedale Home and School Association presented its initial Dance Recital on May 30th, 1951 under the instruction of the Evans Sisters, before an appreciative audience, which filled the school's new gymnasium. Mrs. L. P. Crakanthorp was chairman of the event and was assisted by Mrs. E. I. Roll.

A lively "Gypsy Dance" by the senior group of girls opened the show, followed by the younger pupils in a military tap number "Soldiers on Parade" in traditional red, white and blue costume. "Micky Mouse" and "Heel and Toe Tap" preceded "Cheery Hop", a well performed dance which proved a very popular number, with its strikingly different costume. "Scotch Lassies" in most becoming outfits, drew well merited applause for a smartly executed routine to round out the first half of the program.

The second half featuring ballet had an Easter setting and original music, the lyrics to which were written by Dorothy Evans. The kindergarten "Chicks", so soft and downy in their cute yellow marabou costumes, drew a good round of applause, while the white marabou "Bunnies" nibbling at their carrots delighted the audience. The red and white "Tulips" and golden yellow "Daffodils" were most appealing and colorful as they performed their graceful dance. In lavender taffeta, the "Girls with their Easter Bonnets" gaily bedecked in flowers, were enthusiastically received, as they danced their way through this popular number with a vocal background to conclude the show.

After the final curtain, the whole company gathered on the stage where flowers were presented to the Evans Sisters, Dorothy and Verna and to Mrs. Crakanthorp.



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Children at Home



Readers are invited to write to this column for information relating to their children's adjustment to family life. Replies will be provided by a panel of accredited Leaders in Child Study Groups with experience in helping parents solve the difficulties which may arise in normal child development.

Letters should be addressed to Mrs. J. F. Ware, 15 Heath Rd., Montreal 29.

Question: "My husband and I wish you would explain why our two girls are so different. There is six years between them. The older girl is ten and has always been a "difficult" child, high-strung, bad-tempered and wanting me to do everything for her. At the same time, she's very bright. The younger one is just the opposite, sort of easy going and at the same time, independent. Since they've both had the same environment and the same training, I insist that their dispositions are inherited. What do you say?"

Answer: Our children inherit a large part of the physical aspects of their make-up. And insofar as their personalities are a result of their physical growth, their bodily chemistry and their glandular balance, you can account for a number of individual differences.

The place where many parents go astray in their thinking is by presuming that two children born of the same parents and living in the same home have been subjected to *exactly the same* environment. Because the environment in which we live is a constantly variable element. It depends on the times in which we live, the other people in the house, the comforts we have, the community about us and innumerable other items.

When a new baby is born, the most important item in the environment and for many years to come is the mother and the feelings she has relating to the child. Was she frightened at the prospect of pregnancy? Was she anxious over the expenses involved? Or was she full of love and confidence with the hope of being a mother?

Dr. Margaret Ribble in her book, *THE RIGHTS OF INFANTS*, describes how these and other attitudes on the part of the mother have a tremendous influence on the young infant's physical growth and mental outlook. She explains how the mother's fears and insecurities are transferred to the baby by her close contact in the day by day handling and feeding.

That is why one may question the statement in the letter above that these two sisters had the same environment. The first child, one may presume, came into a home where the atmosphere was one of fearful anticipation mixed with hysterical delight. The mother, probably in her early twenties, might have been unsure of herself those first few months in bathing and feeding the little treasure. Chances are she was terrified the first time the baby "threw up". Maybe she scolded and fussed unduly when the time came for toilet-training.

Six years later, came the little sister, into a home where she must share her parents' love with another child, already established. But this baby had a mother of quite different caliber. She was not only six years older chronologically, a more mature individual, but one with six years of experience in motherhood. There was no longer any fear of letting the baby drop when she was bathed. Instead she could confidently watch her baby grow without making every variation from routine into an earthshaking incident.

This probably accounts for a large part of the difference between your two girls, this change in attitude and normal growth on the part of the mother. There could be other factors too. It is not easy to estimate the influence of family events such as bereavements, job changes and so on which touch at certain stages our children's development. We cannot consciously control the whole environment. We can only learn to be aware of their needs and give them the best sort of loving support we can.

**HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS IN QUEBEC
AFFILIATED WITH THE FEDERATION**

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and Montreal South	Cartierville	Tetreaultville
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YOUNG CANADA'S BOOK WEEK

November 11th to 18th

"The pleasant books of childhood cross all the frontiers"

PAUL HAZARD

Young Canada's Book Week is again being sponsored by the Canadian Library Association (an association of librarians and library trustees), Nov. 11th to 18th, with the support of many interested organizations including the Canadian Home and School Federation.

The object of the week is to encourage the reading of good books among children. It aims to bring to the attention of parents and children the best and most worth while books that are obtainable today for young Canadians to read. It also aims to emphasize the need for good library service, both school libraries and public libraries, so that the worth while books will be within reach of all our boys and girls, wherever they may live.

To these ends, the Canadian Library Association publishes book lists, posters and book marks. These may be obtained for a small sum from its offices at 46 Elgin Street, Ottawa, or locally from public libraries. Price list on request. The Association also arranges for press and radio publicity at the national level.

The success of the Week depends upon local efforts and local interest. Is your community vitally interested in this important matter of children's reading? Are the best books available to your children or must they be content with cheap comics and mediocre series? What is your Home and School Association doing to support the objects of this Week? The Canadian Library Association can inaugurate the project — carrying it out is up to us in our own communities.

The enjoyment of good books can help to develop understanding, sympathy and imagination in a child. The best books can contribute towards the growth of the spirit. They help a child to learn appreciation of true values in life. To be able to enjoy good reading he must start young — five or six years old is not too soon for us to be choosing wisely what he shall read. Sharing books in a family — by reading aloud, for instance — increases children's enjoyment and at the same time strengthens family ties.

Here are some of the things that Home and School groups did last year to celebrate Book Week:—

Had a special speaker on children's books and reading.

Arranged a panel discussion on children's reading.

Held an exhibit of children's books, arranged by the local Children's Librarian, including books on the Canadian Library Association's Book Week list.

Raised money (by film showings, etc.) to buy books for the local children's library. The librarian prepared a list of titles needed.

Gave publicity to existing library services.

Teachers co-operated by:—

Arranging book reviews in the classroom.

Bringing their classes to visit the public library.

Making the Book Lists available in the classroom so that the children would know about the books listed.

Local radio stations used spot announcements prepared by the Young Canada's Book Week Committee of the Canadian Library Association; and featured local authors; speakers on children's reading; or discussions by boys and girls about their favourite books, or about the books on the List.

The Children's Reading Committee of the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations has sent out a list of materials (book lists, book marks, etc.) available for Book Week, to each Association in the Province. It has sent also a copy of the Book List and a pamphlet concerning the celebration of Young Canada's Book Week. Correspondence concerning this material may be addressed to Mrs. F. Willows, Beauharnois, P.Q., who is the Acting Chairman of this Committee.

Children can only read and enjoy good books if these books are made available to them. We can make full use of the existing library services — public and school libraries and the McGill Travelling Library — but at the same time let us consider what can be done to stress the need for better library services in this Province.

GRACE CROOKS, *Librarian*,
Montreal Children's Library.



Parents' Page

THE EASTER HOLIDAY QUESTION

Readers of Parents' Page will probably remember a suggestion which was brought forward in our October, 1949 issue, concerning the redistribution of the Easter holidays. The plan was that the Easter holidays consist only of Good Friday and Easter Monday; and that a week of school holidays be granted late in February or early in March, to make a break in the long term between Christmas and Easter.

In the following months all correspondence received by the Editor on the subject, was not only favourable to, but enthusiastic about the idea. Parents thought such a change should mean a sunnier holiday for the children and teachers, might cut down on the spread of contagious diseases, and would probably be a lot easier on families than the traditional Easter vacation when the children are so often housebound in rainy weather.

The redistribution of the Easter holidays has for some time been a matter of consideration by the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal. Recently a motion was passed by the Board which resolved that the Easter Vacation be changed from its present duration of "Good Friday and the week following Easter Day" to "Thursday preceding Good Friday, Good Friday and Easter Monday". The Board further resolved to request the Protestant Committee to give the School Board power to grant as holidays, at their discretion, the three days resulting from the shortening of the Easter Vacation.

This resolution, of course, will have to be approved by the Protestant Committee before it can be enforced. We would like to know what parents think about it. Discuss it in your Home and School meeting and have your corresponding secretary write your decision to us; or write us individually, or phone us. Your approval or disapproval of either change might be an important factor in what happens, if your opinions are made known. Do something about it now;

your opinion matters, your regrets won't, when it is too late.

WOMEN!

One of our neighbours reports that her ten-year old son isn't too impressed with women, as reasonable creatures. He was leafing through the pages of a woman's magazine, and came across pictures of the different reducing exercises advised for removing surplus weight in specific places. "Dames," he said disgustedly, "are sure dopes. Look at all the work they have to do so they won't get fat or fatter than they are, anyhow. They buy washing machines and ironing machines and floor polishing machines and electric sewing machines and I suppose other kinds of machines to do their work for them. Then they sit around and get fat, and have to get to work to do exercises to lose the fat. Why don't they just do the work in the first place, and they wouldn't get fat, and so not have to do exercises? Dames!"

A. LESLIE PERRY

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“... the sure companionship of books”

MARGARET McWILLIAMS

Patroness of Young Canada's Book Week

It would be difficult for me to think of any project in which I would find deeper satisfaction in sharing than that of Young Canada's Book Week planned by the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians, and I am most grateful to the Association for the honorary connection given to me. This is because, in the course of a long and varied life, I have learned that one of the most precious possessions anyone can have is a library of his own. In consequence, I am eager to see all young Canadians beginning to own some books, to have a bookshelf of their own for their own books.

A blind spot in our national planning lies in the lack of children's free libraries, or indeed of free libraries of any kind. For the health of the body the planners all over this country are working continually. This is good; but I never read of these plans without inwardly crying out, "What of the minds — their health and their growth?" Every year we have two and a half millions of pupils in our schools, more or less; every year we spend hundreds of millions of dollars on these schools; every year thousands of eager teachers spend themselves on teaching these young minds to acquire knowledge and, even more important, to grow and develop. We are even so anxious that our young people shall learn to love and to use books that every good school has its library, large or small but still a library.

When in their hundreds of thousands these young people leave school each year, keen to increase their knowledge and the pleasure they have found in reading, into what kind of condition do they come? They find themselves in a country in which 90% of the population living outside urban areas is practically lacking in free library service. The lack of book stores is similarly disheartening. Young people in large urban areas are more fortunate for several of these have fine free libraries for children as well as for adults, but for those outside the lack is almost complete. Both hope and tragedy lie in the fact that wherever there are free libraries, even if they are planned for adults, children are their largest users. There is in this situation an immense economic loss; there is also an intangible loss which no man can measure.

In the pursuit of knowledge, or of new experiences, there is no substitute for books.

The radio does valiant service, but there is a definiteness about a book which no radio series of talks can supply. Books also bring us friends — friends among the great ones of the past and of the present, among the intrepid adventurers in many and wide fields, among the inventors and scientists who have carried our civilization forward. I come back again to the friends whom books bring to us to point out that these friends never change; they never leave us because we have them safely and affectionately lodged in the books on our shelves, or just a little more remotely in the books we have borrowed and returned with reluctance because we longed to have them for our own. Often when we enter the room where we keep our books, their titles seem to shine out at us, and then we are for a happy moment or two in their company once more. As Dr. Samuel Hayakawa has said: "It is not true that we have only one life to live; if we can read we can live many more lives and as many kinds of lives as we wish. Alas, where there are no books, there can be little creative reading."

Now, in the lack of free libraries, the only alternative aid to throwing open wide the gates of the mind is the gift of books to young people. Not just any book, of course, but one wisely chosen to fit the needs, or the interests, of the one to whom it is given. It is my hope, as I am sure it is the hope — the ardent hope — of the children's librarians, that Young Canada's Book Week will prove a great event in the lives of young Canadians. I hope that when they see displayed the wide variety of books of special appeal to young people, when they listen to the informed advice which will be given by the librarians displaying these books, parents and friends will begin to make gifts of books to their loved young people. Many of them will create new desire for beauty and richness of life. Even one book may change the current of a life, or it may enrich its reader beyond all reckoning.

Our literature is full of wise words from wise men and women concerning books. I want to quote just two:

"It is a great thing to start life with a few books of one's own", wrote Conan Doyle, and to that Andrew Lang added:

*"When others fail him the wise man looks
To the sure companionship of books."*

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MENTAL HEALTH

(Continued from page 6)

tegral part of our everyday way of life it is unlikely that there will ever be a single simple procedure which can guarantee it. Further more, since the groundwork and structure of personality — good or bad — is laid down early in life and becomes more and more rigid and inflexible with the passage of time, there are many psychiatrists and mental hygienists who feel we are wasting our time with grown-ups and that we should devote our energies in mental hygiene to work with young children. Actually a total approach to the community is needed. And, fortunately, as long as there is life, the potential capacity for learning and change exists. There is a wonderful opportunity for useful mental hygiene work even with the aged.

However, before any very effective mental hygiene program can be introduced into the community there has to be interest in and readiness for it. There are very many ways in which a community can block a program of education for and in mental hygiene. Some of these blocks are provided unintentionally, or perhaps unwittingly by the attitudes of the people themselves. The demand for simple rule-of-thumb solutions for difficult problems of emotional and mental maladjustment is an example.

Some time ago, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation undertook to broadcast a series of dramatizations illustrating everyday difficulties in the field of human relations and mental health. The series was called "In Search of Ourselves" and in a somewhat modified form it is still being broadcast every year. The original intent was to present the problems dramatically, discuss the issues briefly and leave to the listening audience the task of thinking them through and discussing them, in the hope that a greater depth of understanding of human behaviour would result. No pat solutions were supplied. The reaction, largely from organized listening groups, was critical and negative. "You are the experts", they said in effect, "give us easy problems that we can understand and give us the right answers". Unfortunately, there are usually no easy solutions and certainly no one right answer. Problems in human adjustment are usually based on a number of factors all of which must be considered in seeking a solution, and there is often more than one possible solution. It seemed as though the listeners were resisting the invitation to think and discuss and search for more information.

They preferred to be told. It is interesting that two years later when a few of the same programs were re-broadcast in exactly the same way, the reaction was much more positive and enthusiastic. Several listeners commented that the new programs were much better than the old!

What had happened? It is probable that there had been a growth and a change in the attitudes of the listening community. It was more ready to accept the challenge of mental health problems and the mental health approach. It is also possible that the earlier criticisms and resistance to the program, represented an unwitting refusal of the idea that mental health, in the end, is the responsibility of the individual — and that he as a citizen and especially as a parent, ought to *do* something about it.

Many other kinds of resistance to the mental health idea are encountered in a community and sometimes even from high professional and administrative levels. Sometimes the resistance is quite open and deliberate, sometimes indirect and subtle. Sometimes the whole idea is blocked by attacking the personality or character of the psychiatrist or professional mental hygienist who represents it. From what has been said, surely we can understand that any approach to human behaviour and personality which directs the spotlight of interest and enquiry on personal attitudes, values and feelings, will certainly cause resistance and antagonism, especially from people who have attained a measure of precarious emotional security by the simple process of refusing to think or question.

While it is true that no great progress can be made in the mental hygiene movement until this community resistance to the idea, whether conscious or unconscious, has been largely overcome, it is also true that education for mental health must begin at the level of appreciation and acceptance present in the community. Thus the development of the mental health idea and the overcoming of initial resistances go hand in hand.

The methods and approaches of mental health education are already familiar to most Home and School Associations. Parent Education, of course, is nuclear. Classes of expectant mothers offer an unusually important opportunity. Here young women, many of them about to be mothers for the first time, have a chance to clear up anxieties and fears and resentments associated with their pregnancy, and at the same time they

can be helped to prepare themselves for parenthood, so they have a good chance of being able to satisfy the important emotional needs of their babies right from the start. But since, as we have seen, there is a tendency for adults to be a little more rigid and fixed in their way of thinking about themselves and about others (including their children) than adolescents or children, the tendency is for mental hygiene programs to be directed more and more to the children themselves.

Perhaps the most important area for community work in preventive mental hygiene is the school itself. Here and there, everywhere in Canada now, teachers in both elementary and high schools are striving to teach for mental health. Sometimes special courses are laid on called "Human Relations" or "Family Life" or "Child Study". Sometimes, while there is no formal recognition of mental hygiene in a special course, the idea of helping children to "feel comfortable about themselves, to feel right about others and to meet the demands of life with satisfaction" is being incorporated in everyday teaching of everyday subjects.

It is only right at this point to pay a justly deserved tribute to the work of Dr. Baruch Silverman at the Mental Hygiene

Institute. Dr. Silverman and the Institute for years have been mental health pioneers in Montreal and in the Province of Quebec. Here the first Parent Education groups were started and from the child guidance and clinical work of the Institute has come many of our more important mental hygiene insights and understandings. Now, with his program much expanded, we can indeed look forward to even greater achievements reflected in even better mental health for the citizens of all ages and an even more enthusiastic support by the citizens for mental health.

With leadership of this calibre, it is to be hoped that before very long the mental hygiene point of view will be accepted by teachers throughout the province and become part and parcel of the educational experience of every child. By the same token, it is to be hoped that mental health clinical and consultation services for the schools will be extended, so that children with emotional difficulties and personality deviations may be treated early, while there is still a good chance for a complete cure. In this way, both by positive mental hygiene influences and by early corrective treatment, the status of mental health of our children can be greatly improved.



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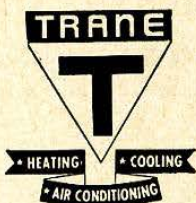
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