AN APPROACH TO FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
THROUGH FOSTERING STUDENT-PARENT
UNDERSTANDING

by

MARY STEWART STATE

A THESIS

submitted to

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degree of

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APPROVED:

Redacted for Privacy

Dean of School of Education
In Charge of Major
Redacted for Privacy

Chairman of School Graduate Committee
Redacted for Privacy

Dean of Graduate School

Helyn V. Hoskins, Typist
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She also wishes to thank Dr. W. L. Van Loan for his suggestion of the major idea, Dr. O. R. Chambers for guidance throughout graduate work, and Mr. Ray W. Hardman, Principal of Corvallis High School, for encouragement and assistance in the collection of data.
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AN APPROACH TO FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
THROUGH FOSTERING STUDENT-PARENT
UNDERSTANDING

CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION. Education is a community responsibility. Inversely, any community is a result of the educational forces operating there. The homes set up patterns for living and individual systems of values. These values we hold as fundamental to a community and a nation. The power of the school as an influence in bettering these patterns is being more and more recognized.

It is the writer's opinion that the secondary school is not as yet assuming the leadership it should maintain in the improvement of family relations; that it is not drawing on the potential wealth of information and ideas inherent in the total experience of the public; that student-parent understanding may be improved by the school through better cooperation and extended curriculum.

In order that the writer might better understand the shortcomings of our present parent-student relations,
a study has been made of parent-student interests and possible desires in this field.

This study deals with a wide sampling of general attitudes toward closer parent-student relations and does not concentrate on any one phase. The areas covered in this study include a sampling of the high school students' attitude toward parent participation and an indication of the parents' attitude toward the present Parent-Teacher set up with an inventory poll of interest in a proposed parent group to discuss student problems.

The writer feels that through an increased knowledge of the attitudes of both students and parents in these areas, a plan for action can be more adequately prepared to meet the needs and interests of both student and parent.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY. The motive for this study is a desire on the part of the Corvallis secondary school to attempt a plan for the coming years which may result in creating better present and future homes; and to help change some existing family patterns by means of more cooperation between the school, adolescent and adults. It is recognized that the age level of the secondary school members produces a normal resentment against adult control and that such "breaking away"
from parental apron strings is desirable. It is also recognized that the greatest difficulty in parent-school relations is in contacting and maintaining relationships with those parents and adults whose needs are most acute and who are generally not touched by any group work program of the school.

It is the writer's hope that the results of this study will enable the Corvallis high school to launch a program which will help in the building of a better community by improving family relationships through fostering better student-parent understanding.
NEED FOR THE STUDY. Beginning in the 1930's there has been a "movement" toward family life education. Out of informal, small group meetings of mothers, grew the two organizations now known as the Child Study Association and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. Since World War II, family problems have grown, bringing an increase in scope of the problems of the school. It is an appalling fact that although there has never been a greater need for wholesome family life than now, the family as a unit seems to be gradually disintegrating.

The effect of this weakening of the home influences and control to the future of the community, state, nation and the world is the concern of educational and political leaders.

With aims by which to counteract this disintegration and thereby to improve family life, there has been an increase in the agencies concerned with such problems. Some of these are the United States Office of Education, United States Office of Agriculture, the Children's Bureau, American Association of University Women, National
Council of Family Relations, Federation of Women's Clubs, National Committee on Parent Education, American Home Economics Association, Woman's Foundation of New York, and state departments of health and education. Colleges led in instituting courses in family life education and one of the most recent trends on the secondary level has been in the same field. This is essential, since only approximately one-fourth of high school students go on to college. Most of the remaining three-fourths marry before or soon after leaving high school. These individuals set up family patterns with little or no preparation for dealing intelligently with the problems which arise. They are the parents of the future.

The job of the school is only half done when it has educated the adolescent academically. Helping the parent to do a more adequate job of his share in the education process is as fully important for society. The term parent should be unlimited in tension—present parent and future parent. The boys and girls in our high schools are the fathers and mothers of tomorrow.

"But he who knows how to cleanse the current of a stream begins by clearing out its source. And he who would straighten the end of a process, must commence with making its beginning correct."(4, Introduction)
This Taoist statement is further warranted by our modern psychological belief that all human behavior is based on past experiences plus the effect of external and of internal forces. Each individual's system of values, which underlie the basis of our desirable family and social patterns, is largely determined by his own early home experiences and his school training. Values we hold as a community and as a nation must be developed in the home.

The secondary schools in their few hours of daily contact during ten months of the year cannot expect to entirely re-vamp an adolescent's "value content." But it is the opinion of this writer that through attempting a "clearing out the source," courses should be offered in family life, marriage and sex education at the secondary level. Starting at the other end of the stream, there should be adult education in family living. Gradually family patterns should change just as the stream becomes purer and straighter. In the end a closer relationship should be gained between parent, student and school.

In the Corvallis high school, attempts that have been made toward parent education have consisted of Parent-Teacher meetings, teacher-parent conferences, high school programs, exhibits and open houses. For the
student, family life education has been incorporated in
the Health program as a required subject for three years.
Recently, an elective course in marriage education for
seniors has been added to the curriculum to supplement
work done in other departments.

It is the feeling of the writer that while an
inroad has been made toward helping students to become
better parents, the present program is inadequate for
effective adult education. Effectiveness of an adult
education program depends upon active cooperation between
the school and the adults in the community. This is not
present in a proportionately large enough degree here.

Adult and/or parent education should here be
defined to clarify the meaning of the term as used in
this thesis. It is not employed in the common concep-
tion of simply offering courses to adults to cover the
opportunities of which they were deprived earlier. It
is "that area of adult education which is primarily con-
cerned with education for family life and parenthood."  
(11, p. 16)

The Handbook of Adult Education gives an even
more encompassing definition: ...."Whatever help in
living can be got from the recorded or communicated
experience of others. It is education for everybody
at all times and in all conditions;" (2, p. 4)
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES. Courses offered to the student, and the adult meetings sponsored by the school should have for their general objectives the enrichment of family living as a unit through more participation of all the family members in the life of the family group.

A summary of aims and objectives of such student and parent courses might be listed as:

1. To give parents better insight into the art of family living.
2. To show parents the need for modifying their attitudes toward adolescents.
3. To give parents an opportunity to verbalize their attitudes and attempt to adjust them to present adolescent mores.
4. To help parents in personal adjustment.
5. To help parents understand the purposes and types of modern education.
6. To help students understand and adjust their personalities to those of adults.
7. To help adolescents participate more intelligently and fully in their family group.
8. To give adolescents a chance to develop better standards of values.
9. To give adolescents a better understanding of the responsibilities and problems of marriage and family life.
10. To create better understanding and relationship between adult and adolescent.
CHAPTER III
METHODS OF PROCEDURE

TECHNIQUES USED. Information in regard to both student and parent attitude toward parent school relations was gathered by means of:

(1) Multiple-choice questionnaire with space for additional comments.

(2) Multiple-choice duo-cards to parents.

(3) Parent opinions through a sampling of interviews.

(See Appendix for copies of questionnaires)

CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE. In planning the questionnaire used in the high school, the writer took into consideration the wide sampling, and so endeavored to fit vocabulary and type to suit grade levels from eight to twelve. She was given student assistance on this. She made it multiple-choice style with room for additional reasons and comments instead of written opinions in essay form. She felt that underclassmen would be apt to have few ideas of their own while upperclassmen would want to express themselves. Consideration was given also to the ease in reading and checking results.
The duo-postal card with multiple choice answers was sent to all the parents. This was also constructed with the idea in mind of the variety of reading levels and vocabulary found in the various homes to which they were sent. It was felt this type of card questionnaire would be more apt to be returned than a longer questionnaire requiring more time and writing.

THE SUBJECTS. The subjects included in this study were approximately seven-hundred parents to whom cards were mailed, and six-hundred and seventy-two high school students in Corvallis to whom questionnaires were given. This high school draws on the surrounding rural districts so many parents and students do not live in the city of Corvallis.

COLLECTION OF DATA. Before any student was asked to check the questionnaire, its purpose was thoroughly explained to the group. The writer personally gave out the questionnaire, in order to explain and answer any questions which might arise. The papers were unsigned. No compulsion was used so not all students checked one. In order to not disturb classroom work, not every student in high school was contacted. Questionnaires were presented in the social-education classes in grades eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve. All groups were urged to do more than to simply check the items listed. It was
explained that these were given only to stimulate thought and that their own opinions were more desired.

One half of the duo-card to the parent explained its purpose and these cards were also to be unsigned, although many were returned with signatures.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

SCOPE. The results of this study are divided into six parts. The results of student attitude toward parents' visiting school are in Part I. Part II contains the results of student attitudes toward a parent discussion course. Part III is a summary of the attitudes. Part IV contains the results of the parent poll; Part V, personal interviews, and in Part VI are the comments on the results of the parent poll.

The student responses are classified by grades with the exception of grades eight and nine, which are tabulated together because of the convenience of administering the questionnaires. The total enrollment for each grade for the year 1948-1949 is given at the top of each Table as well as the number of students from that grade who filled out the questionnaire. Percentages are based on the total number who answered the questionnaire. Many marked several reasons while others marked but one or checked the major statement, giving no reasons. All additional comments from students and parents follow each Table.

In interpreting results, it must be kept in mind that very often adolescents avoid marking the very things
which bother them most; that underclassmen would fail to see much reason for such a survey; that many will attempt to be facetious; hence allowances must be made.

The parents to be interviewed were chosen at random by a cross-section sampling of a few parents representing various grades, social and economic levels, with no attempt at any form of selective processing.

**PART I. STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD PARENT VISITATION AT SCHOOL**

**TABLE I**

*Eighth and Ninth Grade Attitudes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total enrollment = 380</th>
<th>Questionnaires = 231</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I do like to have my parents visit high school because</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. proud of parents</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. parents are too critical</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. not afraid to have them meet my teachers</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. other students' parents do come</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. other students' parents do not come</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. others would tease me</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. grades are too low</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. grades are o.k.</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. parents understand</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Enrollment a 380</th>
<th>Questionnaires a 231</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td><strong>Per cent</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I do not like to have my parents visit high school because

1. proud of parents  44  19.0
2. parents are too critical  13  7.7
3. afraid to have them meet my teachers
   not afraid to have them meet by teachers  5  2.1
4. other students' parents do not come  6  2.6
5. others would tease me  18  7.7
6. grades are too low  3  1.3
7. grades are o.k.  9  3.9
8. parents understand  8  3.4
9. like to have them know what I'm doing
   do not like to have them know what I'm doing  10  4.3
   6  2.6

Attention is called to the fact that from the eighth and ninth graders, the 187 who like to have their parents visit the school and the 44 who do not, no student checked "ashamed of" parents. Thirty-nine evaded the question entirely. This omission of the checking of number 1 or its being checked "proud of," the writer feels is very indicative of the adolescent's desire to conceal any parental shortcomings from the school.

It appears that of those liking to have parents visit school, the largest percentage of them are

1. proud of parents
2. not afraid to have them meet teachers
(3) like to have them meet their teachers
(4) grades are average

Of students who do not like to have parents visit, 7.7% think parents are too critical and 7.7% say it is because other parents do not come. The total number checking this response was 51 which is over 22%. It seems easier to omit the reasons or not state any reasons for not wanting parents to come to school as evidenced by the small percentage of checked reasons. Out of 414, only 17 had any comments to make in regard to achievement marks as being a cause for their dislike of visiting parents. In the entire eighth grade and ninth grade section, these grades as a feature dealing with the attendance or non-attendance of parents was checked but 113 times, or less than one-half the total number (43.9%).

According to eighth and ninth graders, the greatest influence on their opinion toward parent visitation comes from either "being or not being afraid to have them meet the teachers" or in "liking or not liking the parents to know what they're doing." (Total responses to these were 154 and 144, respectively).

Additional Comments by Eighth and Ninth Graders

In addition to the nine choices listed, eighth and ninth graders gave as additional reasons for "liking
or not liking to have parents visit the high school":

"see what kind of a program the school has"

"understand our grades better"

"Just for plays and Parent-Teacher Association--
not to visit classroom"

"work better if parents, teachers and student
talk together"

"parents are sometimes too particular and don't
understand that other children do the same"

"parents do not understand work--draw own con-
clusions"

"parents apy"

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{TABLE III} & & \\
\textbf{Tenth Grade Attitudes} & & \\
\hline
\textbf{Total Enrollment = 200} & \textbf{Questionnaires = 133} & \\
\hline
 & \textbf{Number} & \textbf{Per cent} \\
\hline
\textbf{I do like to have my parents visit high school because} & & \\
1. proud of parents & 100 & 75.1 \\
2. parents are too critical & 9 & 6.7 \\
3. afraid to have them meet my teachers & 1 & .0075 \\
not afraid to have them meet my teachers & 79 & 59.3 \\
4. other students' parents do come & 23 & 17.2 \\
other students' parents do not come & 20 & 15.0 \\
5. others would tease me & 3 & .022 \\
6. grades are too low & 2 & .015 \\
7. grades are o.k. & 62 & 46.6 \\
8. parents understand & 48 & 36.09 \\
9. like to have them know what I'm doing & 83 & 62.4 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
Again it is noticeable that unless an adolescent can check "proud of parents," he avoids the issue. There is evidence of a definite relationship between "liking parents to come to school," "not being afraid to have them meet their teachers," and their grades. This also applies to the "liking to have them know what they're doing." The main reasons for tenth graders not liking to have parents visit school seems to be due to numbers 2 and 4—that "parents are too critical" and "other students' parents do not come." A very minor percentage fear any teasing by other students although this is often thought by adults to be the reason high school students do not wish parents to visit school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I do not like to have my parents visit high school because</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. proud of parents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. parents are too critical</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. afraid to have them meet my teachers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. other students' parents do not come</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. others would tease me</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. grades are too low</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. grades are o.k.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. parents understand</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. do not like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Comments by Tenth Graders

"think parents would enjoy meeting friends' parents and students"
"give me ideas for improving myself"
"have them realize the need of the school"
"to see school I'm attending"
"teacher's opinions"
"would better understand me"
"homework now and then"
"understand grades"

TABLE V
Eleventh Grade Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I do like to have my parents visit high school because</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. proud of parents</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. parents are too critical</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. not afraid to have them meet teachers</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. other students' parents do come</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. others would tease me</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. grades are too low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. grades are O.K.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. parents understand</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Enrollment = 214
Questionnaires = 161
<table>
<thead>
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<th>I do not like to have my parents visit high school because</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>For cont</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ashamed of parents</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. parents are too critical</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. afraid to have them meet my teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. other students' parents do not come</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. others would tease me</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. grades are too low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. grades are o.k.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. parents understand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. do not like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest percentage of eleventh graders "like to have parents visit," are "not afraid to have them meet their teachers" and like to have parents know what they're doing. Most of them feel that other students' parents do not attend; a very small percentage feel that parents are too critical or that students would be teased.

**Additional Comments by Eleventh Graders**

- "parents don't understand grades"
- "don't understand my motives for study"
- "don't understand present school activities"
- "parents work - no time"
- "would like mine to come but other parents don't"
- "parents don't know when to keep quiet"
"not during school time"

"makes me self-conscious"

"other parents might laugh at them"

**TABLE VII**

**Twelfth Grade Attitudes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Enrollment = 163</th>
<th>Questionnaires = 147</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do like to have my parents visit high school because</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. proud of parents</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. parents are too critical</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. not afraid to have them meet my teachers</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. other students' parents do come</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other students' parents do not come</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. others would tease me</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. grades are too low</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. grades are O.K.</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. parents understand</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE VIII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total enrollment = 163</th>
<th>Questionnaires = 147</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td><strong>Per cent</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not like to have my parents visit high school because</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ashamed of parents</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. parents are too critical</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. not afraid to have them meet my teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. other students' parents do not come</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. others would tease me</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. grades are too low</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. grades are o.k.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. parents understand</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do not like to have them know what I'm doing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A larger percentage of seniors than of any other class like to have parents visit the high school. More than sixty-five per cent are "not afraid" to have them meet their teachers and more than 60% "like their parents" to know what they're doing. Their main reason for not liking parents to visit school is because other students' parents do not come. Grades do not appear an important issue at this age, nor does fear of meeting teachers or being misunderstood or being teased.

**Additional Comments of Twelfth Graders**

"get to know teachers and student problems better"

"if other parents would come"
"like them to know how school is run"
"meet other students and parents"
"see our building, etc."
"like teachers to tell them what's wrong with me"
"parents should meet our teachers"
"have better understanding by getting other
people's ideas"

"I like parents to know what other students are like too"
"classes are not conducted so that I am proud to have my parents come"
"it makes young people feel like babies"
"I am sometimes ashamed to have parents witness conduct of high school boys"
"parents don't understand"
"I don't want parents to meet teachers"
"real reason is other parents do not come"
"live too far in country"
"do not like parents visiting school"
"parents don't understand present school attitudes"

- Mentioned by two or more students
PART II. STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD A PARENT DISCUSSION COURSE OF STUDENT PROBLEMS

TABLE IX

Eighth and Ninth Grade Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>For cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am in favor of such a course and including such subjects as</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. petting</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. dating</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. use of leisure time</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. reasons for behavior differences</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. personality—development, difficulties</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. freedom in school and home</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. how late we stay out</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. our reputation</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. &quot;going steady&quot;</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. boy-girl relations</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. drinking and smoking</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. rules enforced at home</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. money</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. conduct in public places</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. engagements</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. school cliques</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. our terms parents don't understand</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of eighth and ninth graders not in favor of a parent's discussion course of student problems was eleven. The remaining twenty-five either didn't mark it at all or marked "I don't care." The topics most desired by the largest percentage were personality, use of leisure time, dating, conduct in public and "our
reputation."

**Additional Comments of Eighth and Ninth Graders**

"I think it would help parents to understand school children better"

"parents are too prying"

"might be embarrassing"

**Additional Topics Suggested**

1. use of the car
2. skipping school (why)
3. style of clothes
4. going out on school nights
5. school activities at night
6. wearing lipstick
7. school activities for all grades
8. age to get married
9. age of dating
10. discipline
11. being popular
12. your friends parents don't like
13. your boy friends
14. our grades
TABLE X

**Tenth Grade Attitudes Toward Discussion Course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total: 133</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am in favor of such a course including such subjects as</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. petting</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. dating</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. use of leisure time</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. reasons for behavior differences</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. personality--development, difficulties</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. freedom in school and home</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. how late we stay out</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. our reputation</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. &quot;going steady&quot;</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. boy-girl relations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. drinking and smoking</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. rules enforced at home</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. money</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. conduct in public places</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. engagements</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. school cliques</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. our terms parents don't understand</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fourteen tenth graders were not in favor of a parent discussion group of student problems. 89.4% were in favor with the favored subjects being personality, use of leisure time, dating, conduct in public, and "our reputation."

**Additional Tenth Grade Comments**

"go to Parent-Teacher Association but not to class"
"parents are too particular"
"parents don't understand that other kids do the same"

"make me self-conscious"

**Additional Suggested Topics by Tenth Graders**

1. our grades
2. our school
3. why behaviors change so much
4. how strict parents should be
5. responsibilities of average teen-ager
6. relations between parent and child
7. not being able to go with boy you like
8. why we dress as we do
9. dating on school nights
10. recreation places
11. the friends you like and parents don't
Sixteen eleventh graders were not in favor of a parents' discussion course. Twenty-two said "I don't care" and the remaining fifteen either checked nothing or made comments only. Favorite topics indicated for such a course were dating, school cliques, adolescent terms, what hours should be kept and personality.
Additional Eleventh Grade Comments

"parents and teachers blame each other for conduct of kids in school and this might help"

"hate to have parents come by themselves"

"too much difference in the class of kids here"

"parents don't understand school activities"

"parents don't understand ways of kids in general"

Additional Suggested Topics from Eleventh Graders

1. clothes
2. jobs
3. getting more kids in activities
4. how to choose friends
5. explain school activities to parents
6. the family car
7. class distinction
TABLE XII
Twelfth Grade Attitudes Toward Parent Discussion Course

Total = 147

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am in favor of such a course and including such subjects as</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. petting</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. dating</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. use of leisure time</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. reasons for behavior differences</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. personality--development, difficulties</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. how late we stay out</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. freedom in school and home</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. our reputation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. &quot;going steady&quot;</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. boy-girl relations</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. drinking and smoking</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. rules enforced at home</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. money</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. conduct in public places</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. engagements</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. school cliques</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. our terms parents don't understand</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirteen twelfth grade students were opposed to a parent discussion course. All seniors checked either for or against such a course and 91.1% were in favor of the course. The following desired topics for discussion were indicated: dating, how late to stay out, boy-girl relationships, freedom at home and school, and reasons for behavior differences tying in with drinking and smoking.
Additional Twelfth Grade Comments

"I think if they kick out the 'big wheels' in the Parent-Teacher Association and let some real parents in the offices that the attendance would go up--so-called nobodies aren't even spoken to at P-TA."

"students know what is right and wrong"

"parents who would come understand kids and others won't come"

"folks hate P-TA."

"everything will straighten out--too much fuss over trite things"

"let parents see educational processes"

"meet parents of other students my age"

Additional Suggested Topics from Twelfth Graders

1. new youth center and its problems
2. choosing own friends
3. use of car and clothes
4. jobs
5. parents prying into students' business
6. athletics
7. being independent of parents to show what you can do
8. number of activities for each
9. emotions
10. grading system
11. racial prejudice
12. student-teacher problems
13. church relationship to student
14. knowing girl one goes with
15. how limited activities and social life should be
16. what we do at school
17. School's reputation and how parents could correct it

*mentioned by two or more students
18. discuss courses available for future work
19. school authority
20. the places we go
21. our teachers
22. should high school girls go with college fellows
23. being alone with person of opposite sex
24. reasons for grades we get
25. are for dating
26. ways in which students and adults may get along
27. school activities

PART III. SUMMARY OF ATTITUDES

The total results obtained from the questionnaires to students and parents include a number of significant points which can be briefly summarized.

Toward Parent Visitation

1. 532 students said they did like to have parents visit school. This is 79.1% of the 672 who answered the questionnaire.

2. 140 students, or 20.8%, checked that they did not like to have parents visit school.

3. 67.6% marked that they were proud of their parents.

4. 59.2% liked to have their parents know what they are doing.

5. 57.0% were not afraid to have their parents meet their teachers.

6. 41.0% felt their grades "were o.k."

7. 32.7% felt their parents understand them.
8. 19.4% thought that other students' parents did not visit school.

9. 11.0% thought their parents too critical.

10. Only .032% students checked that their grades were too low.

11. Only .031% marked that they feared being teased by other students.

12. Only .029% declared they did not like to have parents know what they are doing.

Evidently some of the popular adult opinions in regard to reasons for parents not visiting the high school are incorrect; namely, that the children oppose their going, that they resent having their parents knowing what they're doing and that they don't like to have parents meet their teachers.

Common rumor among adults is that high school students fear they will be teased if parents visit school and that high school students think parents are too critical. The questionnaire would deny those ideas if judged by percentages of the total number.

Breaking it down by grades, however, the results show that in all the groups the two items checked the most as reasons why they do not like to have parents visit school were:

1) Other parents don't come
2) Parents are too critical
Towards Parent Discussion Course

1. 85.1% of all the students answering the questionnaire were in favor of having a parent discussion course.

2. The largest number not in favor of such a course was 16 from the eleventh grade.

3. Sixty-two or .092% failed to mark whether in favor or not.

4. The largest percentage in favor, 91.1%, was from the senior class.

5. The lowest percentage in favor was from the junior class.

6. Rankings of the classes in regard to attitude toward such a course were:

   (1) Seniors
   (2) Sophomores
   (3) Eighth and ninth graders
   (4) Juniors

7. The least favored subject for all age groups was in regard to engagements. A total of 11.1% checked this item affirmatively.

8. The ten favored topics are listed below in order of ranking importance as marked by students:

   1. Dating  225 responses  43.8%
   2. Hours to keep  257  "  35.2
   3. Personality  252  "  37.5

4. Use of leisure time 246 responses 36.6%
5. Freedom at home 238 " 35.4%
6. Terms we use 230 " 34.2%
7. School cliques 223 " 33.1%
8. Conduct in public places 223 " 33.1%
9. "Our reputation" 217 " 32.2%
10. Reasons for behavior differences 215 " 31.9%
11. Boy-girl relationships 210 " 31.2%

9. The topic of dating was chosen by all classes as one for discussion.

10. Personality problems were indicated as desired for discussion groups by eighth and ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

11. Seniors showed a preference for discussion on the reasons for behavior differences instead of personality.

12. Drinking and smoking was one of five major choices of the twelfth-grade group, but for the entire school it rated 163 responses, or only 25%.

13. Surprisingly, eighth, ninth and tenth graders were the only ones who showed evidence of any amount of interest in the topic of engagements.

14. The percentage of interest in the subject of petting was greatest from the eleventh-grade group.

15. Money would seem to be of the greatest concern to eighth and ninth graders but 182 responded, in all, which is 27.0% of the total groups.
16. Rules enforced at home received the largest percentage of responses from the eighth, ninth and eleventh graders.

17. Seniors exceeded the underclassmen in their responses to the topic of boy-girl relations but fell below in percentage of interest in dating.

18. Again, the greatest percent of interest in how late they may stay out goes to the eighth and ninth graders (41.1%) with eleventh graders second and seniors third.

19. "Our reputation" as a concern received the most responses from the eleventh graders.

PART IV. RESULTS OF PARENT CARD POLL

From approximately seven hundred cards sent to parents of high school students, one hundred and eighty-four replies were received or only 26.2%; a disappointing average. It is not possible to tabulate the exact number of parents receiving cards because of the difficulties in mailing, duplications and dissent ones. From these replies, tabulations have been made on the number who have visited the high school, the number who attend Parent-Teacher Association meetings and the number who would be interested in a parent discussion course of student problems.
103 parents out of the 174 replies had visited the high school. This is 55.9%. Parents who had not visited the high school totaled seventy-four or 40.2%. Seven did not check whether they had or had not visited the school.

Those who said they had attended Parent-Teacher Association meetings totaled seventy-one or 39.5%. Those not attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings were one hundred and ten or 59.7%. Three made no reply to this question.

Of those who have visited the high school but do not attend Parent-Teacher Association meetings, there were 49 or 28.4%.

Parents saying that they would be interested in a parent discussion course totaled 154 or 83.6%. Only ten definitely marked that they would not be interested. The remaining twenty left the question unmarked with the exception of a few comments which will be given later.

Of the 110 not attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings but in favor of a parent discussion group, there were 85 or 77.2%. 
TABLE XIII

Parent Reasons for Not Attending
Parent-Teacher Association

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Parents = 110</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I do not have time</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I find them dull</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My children do not want me to attend</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Just never started going</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Don't know anyone who goes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest percentage, 49.0%, claim that lack of time is the reason for not attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings. The reason rating second in importance shows 31.8% have never started going.

Comments in regard to Parent-Teacher Association

"Attend grade school and haven't time for meeting at both schools."

"Conflicts with other meeting." (15 comments)

"Too theoretical"

"Monday is a poor night"

"Not practical enough"

"No one to leave with children"

"My son thinks it would be conspicuous where other parents do not go."

"I'm only home on week-ends."

"Never know when they take place."

"Take up such petty issues."
"Have been in communities where 'parent-teacher association groups became meddlesome."

"Transportation difficult."

"Could arrange time."

"Meeting would be finished by time I could get there."

"Live too far away."

"Work nights as telephone operator."

"Boys never bring the notices of when they are home to us."

"No transportation."

"I have not found the other high school members very friendly."

"Do not enjoy them like grade school Parent-Teacher Association."

"Three meetings a year rather than eight or nine"

"It would help if notices of meetings could reach us a week or so in advance."

"Think it more important to stay home with children."

**Comments in Regard to Discussion Course**

"Interested but probably no time to attend."

"Devote a Parent-Teacher Association meeting to problems would suffice."

"Indifferent."
"Am very interested and read much material on the subject."

"Very much."

"But not as aired in paper of Grant high School round table."

"If some action would be taken."

"Thank you for your interest and concern for our children."

PART V. RESULTS OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

In order that the writer could use unbiased opinions, no record was kept of the names, or social or economic background of the adults whose opinions were requested regarding the faults of the present Parent-Teacher Association set-up and suggestions for the future. A random sampling of names was taken from the school files and calls were made at the homes by the writer. Persons contacted were from diversified economic and social groups including cooks, waitresses, doctors, professors, businessmen, loggers and unemployed. Twenty-five calls were made but only eighteen parents were contacted. Only responses that were different are listed. The comments, unclassified, of these persons are listed below:

1. "Going to things like that is a habit and I have never got the habit of going."
2. "I think the reason people don't attend Parent-Teacher Association meetings is because there's too much college control. Unless you're part of the college, they don't want you there."

3. "I used to go but sure was disgusted the way they hold their elections. They're not proper."

4. "The meetings I have attended were very dull. My main complaint is that no one has a chance to participate. You just listen to a speaker and then go home. Nothing is ever solved."

5. "I have been active in the Roosevelt Parent-Teacher Association and found it very enjoyable but I'll attend the high school one next year."

6. "Why not do like the grade schools and have more kids on the programs instead of some college professor saying what you already know in big words?"

7. "I think more people would go if they were informal. I haven't gone because of that."

8. "I can't go to so many things. This town is too highly organized. You could go to something every night and I feel staying at home once in a while is more important to my family than Parent-Teacher Association. I don't get enough out of them."

9. "My idea of any parent discussion groups is that you'll never get the ones you want to come. You
have the same trouble in medical treatment. The ones who are intelligent and clean go to the doctor. The others won't."

10. "I would like to suggest that we have groups of mothers get together informally instead of an organized meeting."

11. "If they would do something in a group meeting like explaining the high school activities program, subjects, etc., parents might go."

12. "I don't like it. They're too snoopy and the kids don't like it."

13. "I've never gone 'cause I don't have nothing to wear and I don't know nobody who goes. Any other kind would probably be just the same."

14. "Well, I had an office once and they never even called to tell me when they'd meet and I heard they'd met so I figured I wasn't wanted."

15. "Ones I've attended never did anything but waste my time. I can do more for my children at home."

16. "I have a large house, six children and my husband works nights so I can't get away. I'd like to go."

17. "Why not have the mothers put on feeds for the athletes during the year?"

18. "I go sometimes but my husband won't and I don't like to go alone. Isn't there some way to interest
PART VI. COMMENTS ON RESULTS OF PARENT POLL

The excuse given by most parents that they do not have time does not seem valid to the writer. She is of the firm belief that all individuals find the time to do the things in which they are interested or really want to do. Too many confuse what is urgent to them with what is really important. The urgent things may be jobs, parties, clubs, housework, but the important thing that the parents should realize is what they and the schools are helping their children to be and in consequence their children's children.

The total number of replies from the parents shows an appalling lack of interest and concern in any attempt on the part of the secondary school to better its relationship with adults. This same condition is also indicated by the large percentage who have not and do not attend Parent-Teacher Association meetings. The fact that only 40.2% have even visited the high school building to see the physical set-up and the results of the taxpayer's money is discouraging.

On the other hand, it was encouraging to the writer to have so many responses in favor of a parent discussion group with even 77.2% of those not attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings granting approval and interest.
Summarizing from the responses checked and the comments made, the writer feels there is a need for a parent discussion group of student problems in conjunction with a course for students in family life problems. Students are not opposed to parents attending, and they are interested in having their parents know about and discuss the problems which are vital to them. The problem to the school seems to the writer to be that of arousing interest of parent by means of the student; getting parents started to attend meetings and then providing a program which will be informal, informative, challenging to adult and adolescent with more individual participation from the group.

The data presented in this study gives but a glimpse into the total situation. It does not give final answers but it may provide a forward step in the fostering of better relations and other improved developments of family patterns. Nothing can be proved until after years of experimentation. The writer has based her recommendations for a program to be used in the Corvallis secondary school upon factors revealed in this study.
CHAPTER V
RECOMMENDATIONS

Course of Study in Family Education in the School

Statistics show us that the average adolescent will soon become a parent. Since only approximately 25% have an opportunity for further education, the secondary school has the responsibility in this field if we are to fill society's demand for better homes.

The writer feels the program which has been established in the Corvallis high school should be continued. This program will be briefly described in the following pages.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION
(Required)
Course of Study as Part of Health Classes

EIGHTH GRADE

How Do Living Things Reproduce
(6 periods)

SOPHOMORES

Heredity and Human Life
(4 periods)

Prenatal Growth and Development
(3 periods)

Growth During Infancy and Childhood
(3 periods)
SENIORS

Development During Adolescence
(5 periods)

Happy Relationship With Other Sex
(4 periods)

Making A Happy Marriage
(3 periods)

Family Relationships
(5 periods)

Part of Homemaking Course
(Elective)

Family Life Education
(Juniors - One semester)
(Seniors - One semester)

Marriage Education
(Elective)
(Seniors only - One semester)

Units:

1. The Family Past and Present (Origins of customs, family types and patterns)

2. Why We Act as We Do (Behavior and personality)

3. Dating

4. Courtship

5. Engagement

6. Wedding

7. Honeymoon

8. Problems of First Years of Married Life

9. Children - Responsibilities and Problems

10. Your Children and You - Better Homes for the Future
This course is offered to mixed groups of only seniors and may be taken in lieu of the health course. Beginning with family patterns, customs and differences of the past, the course is planned to make a complete circle ending with a discussion of how the student may improve upon his parents' shortcomings and provide a better home for his children.

Methods used in all the above courses are informal discussions, lectures, reading, films, field trips, panels, debates, projects and reports. Much use is made of the excellent material available through the N. C. Brown Trust Fund, the American Institute of Family Relations and current magazines.

Corvallis high school is one of the seven schools listed in the United States as offering a course in marriage education at the secondary level. Interest in the course is evidenced by the increase in enrollment in the three semesters it has been offered from an original sixteen to ninety-nine for the coming year.

The idea for having parent discussion groups about student problems was partly an outgrowth of the suggestions made by the classes in marriage education who felt adults too often did not appreciate the importance of, or stress sufficiently some of these problems listed. They felt talking things out in joint groups would be a
release from tensions and create better school, parent, adolescent relationships.

This suggestion was carried out by the introduction of a parent-student panel in class time on the subject of petting. This was very well received by both students and parents. Throughout the coming year the writer feels it advisable to incorporate into the school program more of these student-parent panels, touching on various subjects. Through these, more parents may be brought to the school during school hours, with the hope of creating more interest in what the school is attempting in the way of improving daily living.

Parent Discussion Groups

From the information tabulated in the preceding pages, it appears evident that parent education for more understanding and better family living is not only needed but is desired by both students and parents. In order to do their jobs well, parents require new knowledge and deeper understanding. The best way seems to the writer to be through group thinking, pooling of experiences, ideas and information. Talking things out not only is progressive and informative but it has therapeutic value through releasing nervous tensions.

Factual knowledge is unimportant to such a group. Discussions should deal with life situations and center
around family relationships. Group thinking, sharing of experiences, exchange of viewpoints, consideration of other's opinions all help toward the growth of the individual. Situations may be seen more objectively and parents be better able to cope with them.

Fewer parents still hold that the school has a job to do, the home a job to do and that each should work in isolation. They are gradually learning that there is an opportunity for understanding children through a parent-education program. Schools also are recognizing the importance of the parent for unifying the student's experiences both in and out of school. This should be from nursery school to adult level but this paper is limited to parent education at the secondary level.

There will be many obstacles. These will include adherence to tradition, administrative difficulties, the inconsistencies of the interests in choice of subject matter for both adult and adolescent, conflicts in social strata, the "bugaboo" of some who always connect any such meetings with their old conception of school.

The death of such groups comes when the discussions are too stiff, dull and "over the head" or outside the experience of most of the participants. There has been too much conformity. No program of this kind has to be like last year's or like the year's to come. To be successful it must produce what the adults want and
how they want it. Before adults will attend, a feeling must be aroused "of wanting to"; they must realize that attending is their privilege, that it will benefit them as individuals. The basic reason for attendance anywhere at any time is really due to the fact that the individual desires more personal satisfaction from being there than he would gain by being absent. For purely selfish reasons, the public attends group meetings. The desire for attendance lies within the self—the ego. To get parents to attend, a desire must be aroused which will withstand the pull of other things; such as, home duties, job, fatigue, inertia, and social engagements. Which is urgent, which is important? Parents are not, as a rule, interested in any children but their own. They do desire greater advantages for their children than they themselves had. But they will not consider it important to attend meetings advertised as doing this unless they feel something worthwhile for their specific cases has been derived.

Suggested Needs and Problems

In order to meet these needs and problems, the following suggestions might be considered:

1. Giving something to make the parent feel he is being helped.

2. Keeping it informal, friendly.

3. Letting everyone make contributions. Giving
to the group is more stimulating to the individual than taking from it.

4. Finding a good leader or leaders. This should be someone who is friendly, good-natured, sincere, sensitive to others, capable of guiding group discussions and having the ability to inspire confidence.

5. Notifying parents in plenty of time. (Personal contacts are best.)

6. Providing a comfortable, pleasant social atmosphere.

7. Presenting and having more simple "down to earth" materials to reach the less privileged groups.

8. Getting all concerned to put aside purely special interests and work together cooperatively.

9. Having individual participation.

10. Developing group thinking and talking. Ideas along this line might well be adopted from the "Great Books" plan where different leaders are used and group thinking maintains a high level.

11. Avoiding "experience" meetings—a tendency of parents to talk about their own children which is boresome to the group and unfair to the child.

12. Keeping the group thinking always moving to a solution. Complaints of such groups are that nothing is ever solved.
13. Maintaining good publicity through individual contacts, newspapers, and radio. If it appears to be a popular group the public will be drawn in, for all persons like to be a part of the popular groups.

14. Planning programs to reach young people. If their interests are aroused and they attend, parents will be apt to come. Having more students participate in programs.

15. Helping adolescents and adults in realizing their finest in the development of personalities.

16. Establishing desirable relationships in and out of the home.

17. Aiding in the solution of present and future family problems.

18. Integrating curriculum offerings in family life with adult education.

19. Promoting coordination of all community agencies which can contribute to the improvement of home and family education.

20. Attempting to serve more homes and to reach the parents who are generally not touched by such programs.

Recommendations for an Immediate Program in Corvallis.

1. Initiate the program by a pre-school orientation evening class for in-coming eighth graders and all new students with their parents. At this meeting which
should be the week before school commences, have about six different persons, faculty, administration and students explain such things as administrative policies in regard to attendance, report cards, tardiness, discipline; the grading system; curricula offered and requirements for graduation; counseling and guidance services; school clubs and activities; honor organizations; homework expected; study habits explained; social program for the year—hours, etc.; school cafeteria; school papers; fees; and a presentation to the parents of the proposed ideas for parent discussion groups soliciting their participation.

2. The superintendent might call together representatives of agencies or groups interested; such as, social welfare, churches, libraries, teachers, American Association of University Women, Parent-Teacher Association, and American Legion, for the purpose of planning, rather than to agree on any set plan.

3. Or the principal could be the organizer, forming a nucleus of interested parents, teachers and students to plan.

4. Publicity should be started as early as any definite plans have been made. Panel before local groups and service clubs might elicit interest and cooperation there. Radio talks and newspaper articles help in a
campaign to put over an idea. Neighborhoods should be canvassed by interested women and men.

5. At the beginning of the year, the principal or the dean of girls might contact some of the most interested mothers and try to start them having morning coffees, or any kind of informal get-togethers of all the mothers of girls who are in close association. Many mothers are not acquainted with the parents of their children's intimate friends. Through "get-togethers" they learn the habits, customs, hours kept, places frequented by that group and many problems may be solved together much more easily than individually. The old neighborliness that has been lost through growth may be salvaged in some degree this way.

6. If agreeable with a planning committee, the writer feels that what might be named "Pa-Ha-Me" evenings should be started as soon as possible. These groups should be limited in number so that a friendly, informal atmosphere can be maintained. It could be organized through the social-education classes with possibly two of the eighth grade sections, involving approximately sixty students, starting it by sponsoring a pot-luck dinner for themselves and parents. The plans for the affair should be arranged by a group consisting of the principal, parents, students and teachers. Possibly, as is often done
in the grades, there could be a "key mother" from each social-education section to serve on the planning committee. The program for the evening should appeal to the interests of that particular group. Suggested activities other than the pot-luck dinner might include a panel discussion on some pertinent subject, a program put on by the students, a joint student-parent program, movies or family games and square dancing. If children are participating, parents are more likely to attend. Family projects might be sponsored; such as camp cooking, music, photography, and gardening with "Pa-Ma-Me" participating. The groups should be kept as small as possible to retain an intimate, neighborly relationship. This plan could be continued throughout the year through the avenue of the social-education classes comprising students of the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. Even if the majority of get-togethers are purely social, contacts will be made; interest should be aroused and closer relationship brought about between student, parent and school.

7. Instead of the formally conducted Parent-Teacher Association meetings, smaller groups could be invited for group discussions. Relatively unorganized undesignated groups are best for informality. The interest aroused, amount of participation and attendance of these smaller groups would probably be much better if it could be worked out so that the members are of similar
backgrounds and mental development. The writer feels that lectures are not recommendable because of the passivity of the group and the difficulties of their trying to follow a line of thinking unfamiliar to them. This may be avoided very often, however, if a lecture seems expedient by following it with a discussion period.

The Corvallis situation is peculiar in that it is a college town. In the high school, there is a decided division between what is known as the "town kids" and the "hill kids." This distinction seems to have a "carry-over" to the parents for many criticisms received were based on a resentment of the control and superiority of the college element in high school affairs. (Perhaps having the smaller groups of similar backgrounds meet together would avoid this situation and undoubtedly the group thinking would be more balanced.)

Students could help on a planning committee for these discussion groups and often participate in forums and panels covering those subjects which have been tabulated as being requested by students for parent discussion. A greater understanding should be worked out in this way between student and parents.

The topics which are discussed in the marriage education and family life classes should be integrated with the discussions in the adult groups to sponsor
better family living as a unit today.

All of the subjects undertaken should be broken into several parts, have pointed questions, discussions and a summary of each. A plan should be set up at the beginning, taking into consideration interests and needs of each group, which will have a goal in sight and a clear conception of what may be expected to be accomplished. To avoid criticism, discussions should always move toward some solution.

The number of meetings and time will have to be determined by the interests and desires of each group. The initial meeting must be appealing and worthwhile. Attendance committees should be appointed by the superintendent or the principal for several groups. These could each take several names of people fitted for that group and contact each personally. Through it all, a neighborly feeling should be established and maintained.

Subjects for group thinking, other than those suggested by students for student-parent meetings, might include such topics as: The Changing Nature of the Family, Functions of the Family, The Family Income, Forces for Family Disorganization, Wise Use of Leisure Time for Adolescent and Adult, Study Conditions in the Home, Homework, Helping in the Work at Home, The Climacteric and Its Effect on Family Life, Behavior Differences, and
Personality. In regard to the last especially, everyone
is vitally interested in his own personality. Why not
devote a meeting to the taking and explaining of person-
ality tests with each parent scoring his own? of of
vocational tests?

8. At the beginning of each school year, a parents'
handbook containing the curricula offered, state require-
ments, required subjects each year, the grading system,
the dates of issuing report cards, the schedule for
athletics and all evening school programs or social events,
special events, faculty members and subjects taught,
vacation periods, school clubs, activities and purposes,
school regulations, and any other items of interest to
parents which will make them better informed and aware of
the school's place in the lives of their children and the
community.

9. To further contacts with the parents and main-
tain closer relationship through the school year, the
principal could mail a four page leaflet every nine weeks
to the parents. This could have a student drawing of
some phase of school life on the front and a message from
the superintendent or principal. The rest could be filled
with school highlights; such as, how many of last year's
class went to college, how many in school have jobs,
special training programs, any outstanding honors won by
students or school, coming events, number of meals
served in cafeteria that month, cafeteria menus, number
of books furnished, new library books, etc.

10. As mentioned earlier, parent-student panels
on subjects requested by the students will be held dur-
ing each semester in the marriage education classes. If
these appear to be reaching any solution, the panels
might also be held for evening group meetings or at the
"Fa-Na-Me" dinners.

11. For parents who complain that they cannot
attend because of the necessity of remaining at home with
smaller children, the Service and Welfare committees of
the Girls' League could be in attendance on the nights
of the meetings and dinners and entertain the youngsters
in another part of the building. They could also go to
the homes as "baby-sitters" if more desirable.

12. If friendliness, interest and neighborliness
were created, the transportation problem of the few
should soon be taken care of in the same way it is in
the service clubs. Members contacted who have cars
willingly pick up members who do not.

13. One of the greatest difficulties in any pro-
gram of this sort is in finding a dynamic leader. There
are trained specialists in the field but in the event
one is not obtainable, there certainly should be lay
leaders in a community the size of Corvallis who would
be competent. As mentioned before, it is more friendly and informal to have an unorganized group, but leadership is vital. The "Great Books" plan accomplishes both by having group thinking under the leadership of different members at each meeting. Everyone who attends is benefited by the experience and thoughts of others as well as giving to them from his thinking and experiences. From such participation, a healthy inner glow evolves and people want to participate again.

(1). Efforts should be constantly maintained to keep the all-important goal in view. The get-togethers may be informal and social, the meetings may be stimulating and productive in thought, but the aim of all concerned—students, parents and school people—should be to enlarge and reshape the thinking of the parents and to advocate and develop the young people for better family living in the present and future.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Pamphlets


Magazines


Corvallis High School would like to encourage better relations between school, student, and parent. We feel parents and the public in general do not always understand the reasons for conduct, terms used, emotions and desires of high school students. Parents and high school students seem to be growing farther apart—why? To help us understand and do something about some of these things, will you please cooperate by checking this questionnaire.

I do

like to have my parents visit high school

1. are ashamed of (proud of) parents
2. parents are too critical
3. afraid not afraid
4. to have them meet my teachers
5. parents do not come
6. others would tease me
7. grades are too low
8. grades are O.K.
9. parents understand

...like to have them know what I'm doing

do not like

10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

Comments:
I am in favor of a parents' discussion course dealing with student problems. These problems should include:

1. petting
2. dating
3. use of leisure time
4. reasons for behavior differences
5. personality--development, difficulties
6. freedom in school and home
7. how late we stay out
8. our reputation
9. "going steady"
10. boy-girl relations
11. drinking and smoking
12. rules enforced at home
13. money
14. conduct in public places
15. engagements
16. school cliques
17. our terms parents don't understand
18.
19.
20.
21.
22.
23.

Comments:
Dear Parent:

Corvallis High School would like to encourage better relations between school, student, and parent. Please help us formulate plans by checking the attached card and returning it to us now.

Thank you,

CORVALLIS HIGH SCHOOL

I {have \(\) visited the high school.  
(\(\text{have not}\))

I {do \(\) attend Parent-Teacher Meetings because
(\(\text{do not}\))

1. I \(\text{(do \(\) have the time.}\)
2. I find them very \(\text{(dull \(\)) interesting}.\)
3. My children \(\text{(do \(\) want me to attend.}\)
4. Just never started going.
5. Don't know anyone who goes.
6.

I \(\text{(would \(\) be interested in a parent discussion}}\)
(\(\text{would not}\)) course of student problems.