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ABSTRACT

Social development stresses the importance of working together with others in life. The home setting can emphasize social development and its objectives of instruction. How should parents assist the child in quality social development in which good human relations exist? First and foremost, parents should serve as models to children for good human relations. Also, when oral communication takes place, the content discussed should go to all in the group, not the few--it is good practice to have ideas circulate among the group or family members. Respect for others in the home setting is also important. The "feeling dimension" needs to be involved in group work, and being involved in a group may not be adequate unless a person feels rewarded for contributions made. New concepts and vocabulary terms will and should arise in home conversation and discussions, and creative thinking should be emphasized within the discussion. In fact, critical thought should be stressed, and brainstorming may be stressed. This paper also discusses attitudinal development toward others, how to evaluate the quality of human relations in the home setting, citizenship development in the young child, and morality and the child. (NKA)

ED 479 121

Reading, Social Development, and the Child.

by Marlow Ediger

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12 346



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2

READING, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND THE CHILD

Getting along well with others is important. Thus, the child needs to achieve in the area of social development. Social development stresses the importance of working together with others in life. The home setting, as a family, can emphasize social development and its objectives of instruction. If a family can work together to get things done harmoniously, the unit involved is doing well socially. Opposite of good social development would be rudeness, bickering, arguing, quarreling, gossiping, and disagreeing in an unpleasant manner. The home setting needs to get work done such as cleaning the house, doing the dishes, and putting things away into their proper places. These responsibilities are ongoing and must be completed to have a neat and tidy house. Then too, how these things are done is important. There are pleasant and unpleasant ways of doing things. Having a polite atmosphere to work in is desired as compared to the unpleasant.

Proper Social Development

How should parents assist the child in quality social development in which good human relations exist? First and foremost, the parents should serve as models to children for good human relations. The child may then observe that which makes for proper social relations. Thus, parents need to set the stage by getting along well with each other and with children in the family. There is nothing better to foster good social relations than getting along harmoniously with others. This needs to be noticed by children as a model to follow. In the school setting, talking about good human relations only, will not usually work unless this is practiced in reality. Children need to observe good human relations and practice the model learned.

Second, when oral communication takes place, the content discussed should go to all in the group, not the few. Sometimes, a person feels left out of a discussion because he/she is shunned in the group. A good conversationalist speaks to all in a group, not to one person only or to a few only. This can be practiced in the home setting whereby all are involved in the conversation.

Third, respect for others in the home setting is important. If a child interrupts others while oral communication is ongoing, there tends to be a lack of respect for individuals in the family. Families need to learn to respect each other in oral communication. Interrupting, negative remarks, put downs, and

derogatory remarks do not provide for situations involving good human relations.

Fourth, it is good practice to have ideas circulate among the group or family members. If conversation involves two people only in a family setting, the others will feel left out. It is good practice to bring in all into a conversation.

Fifth, the feeling dimension needs to be involved in group work. Thus, an individual needs to find out how it feels to be left out in a conversation or to be minimized. Feeling isolated is not a good feeling and makes one feel contempt for those who monopolize the conversation. All need to have feelings of belonging to a group.

Sixth, being involved in a group may not be adequate unless one feels rewarded for contributions made. Esteem needs must be met. Esteem needs may be met by giving recognition for facets of achievement. Sometimes, one child receives much more recognition than the other. A proper balance needs to be in evidence pertaining to recognition given so that children feel fairness of situations within the family.

Seventh, new concepts and vocabulary terms will and should arise in home conversation and discussions. These new need to be discussed as to their contextual meaning. When a library book orally read to the child is being discussed, the new concepts and vocabulary terms must possess meaning for the young learner.

Eighth, creative thinking needs to be emphasized within the discussion. When a child is ready, for example, he/she should be asked to provide a different beginning for the library book which was read aloud. Unique, new ideas are wanted in creative thinking. Memorization would be the opposite of creative thinking. Creative thinking stresses the novel and the new in learning. This activity can make for comments from the family in which good human relations is being emphasized.

Ninth, critical thought should be stressed. When a child has listened to a completed library book read aloud, he/she should, when ready, be able to compare the contents with a previous library book read aloud. Making contrasts between characters of the two books should make for interesting comparisons. The family may try to emphasize that comments circulate within a group rather than from the adult to the child, back to the adult, and then to a different family member and then back to the adult again. Each person needs to contribute.

Tenth, brain storming may be stressed. Here, family members give as many ideas pertaining to a different setting as compared to that in a story read aloud. Each setting needs to be

recorded and no duplicate responses given. The goal is to generate or branch out rather than stay with limited ideas.

Attitudinal Development Toward Others

There are specific attitudes which need development when emphasizing social achievement of the child. The child increasingly needs to accept others as human beings having worth. This must be done with regard to individuals of all races and creeds. Persons need to be accepted and valued for unique characteristics as well as for likenesses. The child needs to have experiences which assist in relating positively to others. Increasingly, the child needs to relate well to others. Problems involving good human relations need to be identified and solved. Meaningful solutions must be found which assists to developing a good self concept. The self concept should include values which provide direction in life and give perceived purpose in life. A relaxed home environment should be in the offing which maximizes personal and social achievement. The child should as much as possible make personal decisions in society.

Evaluating the Quality of Human Relations in the Home Setting

There need to be standards to use against which the evaluation may be made. If a standard is to look at models for good human relations, then these models or examples need identification. A discussion in the home setting may be held to identify these people and discuss the qualities they possess in good human relations. The discussion may lead in the direction as to what the child has done to emulate or pattern the self after these good examples.

Second, in group endeavors, each person should notice how he/she has brought others into the conversational setting. If individuals do not like to be left out of the conversational setting, then it behooves family members to not shun anyone but bring all into the conversational setting. The question then arises, "Is this being done?"

Third, People need to learn to respect each other, as an objective in social development. The child together with family members need to discuss how well this is being done. Situations can be identified where it is and where it is not being done. The question arises, "What can be done to increase respect for others?"

Fourth, "How well do ideas circulate within the group when conversing with others?" The point here is that no one should

dominate nor refrain from participating in the conversational or discussion setting.

Fifth, individuals need to feel that they belong to a group. People are human beings, not objects to manipulate. Being manipulated is different from being accepted within a group. The evaluative question which results pertains to, "How well do I do in helping others to feel they belong to the group?" Definite efforts needed to go into helping each feel they belong to the group setting.

Sixth, within the group, individuals feel they have made some worthwhile contributions. These contributions need to be identified and rewarded. Esteem needs may then be met. How well has this objective been achieved? A discussion of the strengths and weaknesses may ensue. Additional objectives might then accrue in helping others to meet esteem needs.

Seventh, meaning for concepts and terms used in a discussion must be in the offing. In developing good human relations in society meaningful conversation must be there. The group needs to discuss how well this is being done. Also, what can each member in the group do to assist in meaningful oral communication?

Eighth, new ideas make a group flourish and grow. How often has the child and other family members come up with new ideas which can be identified? New ideas should facilitate in making experiences in life increasingly up to date.

Ninth, critical thinking is useful in making comparisons among ideas and events. Thus, the child and parents should notice how well the former is comparing one library book with the other. The main characters of each might be compared. Additional comparisons which may be made between the contents of two library books include the setting, the plot, and point of view.

Tenth, the number of items given in brainstorming by the child must be noticed. To be sure, it is easier to provide additional new ideas for one topic as compared to another. This needs to be taken into consideration when evaluating brainstorming achievement. One good suggestion to try is to brainstorm how many uses there might be for a brick. Uses given should not be duplicated.

Citizenship Development

The young child needs to develop into becoming a good citizen. What does a good citizen do? The young child can do the following to show growth in being a good citizen:

1. place trash in a receptacle, not in the out of doors nor strewn in the house. Keeping the environment clean is of utmost importance. It is not good to see the undesirable and pollute a community. Rather a pleasant view needs to be in evidence. The young child can help to keep his/her room clean and tidy. Toys should have a proper place for storing when not being used by the child. The child also needs to be certain that dirty clothes are placed in a hamper for clothes washing. Additional tasks for the young child when he/she is ready include helping to set the table, putting dirty dishes into the dishwasher, and being a pleasant person in the home setting.

2. the child can help to keep the out of doors clean. Waste products need to be picked up and placed into an appropriate container. Beautification projects involving parents and the child enhance the quality of living. Flowers planted and grass seeded where needed enhance the home environment. The child may help in tasks which are developmental for the child. It is not wise to have a child participate in a task which is too difficult to do.

3. the child and parents need to discuss laws of the land. These laws need to be abided by. Breaking the law is unwise and the consequences need to be discussed at a young age with children. Understanding the meaning of the law is important.

4. the child needs to treat others fairly. Violation of human rights does not harmonize with a democracy. In a democracy, respect for the rights of others is important.

5. the child needs to be truthful in life. Telling mistruths about others is harmful to others as well as to the one who tells them. Defaming others or stealing money belonging to another person does much harm in making for a good society. Honest and truthful persons are needed to develop a just society.

6, the child developmentally should frown at injustices in society. Injustices include innocent people being in prison, people being accused unfairly, and failing to deal with others in a satisfactory manner.

7. the child should desire to have all do as well as possible in life. "Be all that you can be," is a good slogan. Assistance given to others in times of need is a characteristic of a good citizen.

8. the child needs to respect different talents and abilities possessed by individuals. Individuals differ from each other in talents possessed such as in art, music, athletic skills, mathematics, social studies, science, and the language arts. To be accepting of others who possess different interests is valuable in becoming a good citizen. Each person has an important niche to fill in society.

9. the child needs to realize he/she can improve society, even at a young age. He/she needs to be able to identify salient problems, plan how to solve the problem. and then the doing part enters in which emphasizes solving the problem. There are major as well as minor problems which need solving.

10. the child needs to be appreciative of society and the positive things therein. Weaknesses will continually need to be remedied. Having adequate food, clothing, a safe and good shelter, and quality education are musts for all. A good citizen is concerned that all have these advantages and opportunities.

Morality and the Child

At different age levels, the child needs to develop standards of morality to live by. Parents are very influential here in that the very young child learns, in part, moral standards from the parents.

Then too, the child, when growing up from an infant to being a toddler, bases his/her standards of morality on what satisfies the self. Egocentric development is in evidence. The personal needs of the child come first. Other considerations will need to wait until increased maturity come about. The young child may engage in parallel play with another infant where each does his/her own thing, but there is no interaction between the two individuals. There is a process of socialization which will need to occur and this comes about gradually.

In the second stage of morality, the child bows to authority for assistance in moral standards. In this stage, the self has been removed as the sole person from whom moral standards occur. Parents, other adults, and older children may have some power in molding the young child. Authority figures here become important to the child. Loyalty to other chosen sources are in evidence.

In the third stage, the older child has developed moral standards whereby the needs of others receive more personal attention. There are few people who reach this stage of altruism, but there are recorded events where even eight year olds have put their own lives on the line to save a young child from being mauled by a vicious dog in the out of doors. The author is amazed when reading about adults who give much of their time to charitable work, even though their own income levels are modest indeed. These individuals then engage in doing the following:

- * deliver food for Meals on Wheels
- * give a large part of their modest income to and for charitable causes

- * do needed tasks at senior citizen centers
- * become leaders of youth organizations such as 4H, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts.
- * work at charitable clothing centers to distribute clothing to the needy. The author distributed used clothing to Palestinian refugees on the West Bank of the Jordan, 1952- 1954. It was a sad situation to see the refugees suffer but gratifying to observe people in refugee camps receiving necessary clothing.

There are then different stages of possible growth for children in moral development. Models and examples need to be there for children to emulate in morality achievement. What is learned needs to be practiced in the gradual approach of achieving moral standards. For some reason, from young children through adulthood, some never come close to developing into becoming a moral person. Crime, vandalism, violence, theft, abuse of others, dishonesty and murder enter into the life cycle of an individual. This is very sad and moral teachings do need to be emphasized in the lives of all in society, beginning with the young child.

Young children need to develop a conscience in which right from wrong is learned. Getting along well with others and achieving proper attitudes toward others is important. Learning to accept oneself is of utmost importance in order to accept others in society. The self and others are both important for an individual to achieve standards of morality.



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