

Seminars for Parents

Exploring Childhood

Seminars for Parents

Exploring Childhood



Preface

During the fall of 1972, when EXPLORING CHILDHOOD was being trial tested for the first time, thirty parents from various communities in the Greater Boston area met together to discuss their children's involvement in the program. Parents of both young children and high school students came to the meeting. They talked about the goals and purposes of the course and issues of child development that interested and concerned them. Enthusiasm for the meeting was so strong that the parents decided not only to continue to meet during the year, but to try to develop a mechanism that would allow other EXPLORING CHILDHOOD parents to meet together. So it was that the idea of *Seminars for Parents* was born.

During the next year, a small group of parents continued to meet together. They identified and planned five topics that they felt EXPLORING CHILDHOOD parents would find valuable. Since then, the seminars have been used, revised, and expanded to include two more seminars.

In their final form, the seminars are intended for anyone who has an interest in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD and the issues it addresses. They include detailed suggestions for seven meetings. Anyone can plan and lead the meetings: They require no special training or preparation, although some optional reading materials are suggested if the seminar planners have time.

In addition to the seven meeting agendas, there is a section entitled "General Strategies." The information found here is intended for anyone who wishes to modify or change the suggested agendas, or plan new agendas around different issues or topics.

Parents wishing to purchase any of the optional reading material will find ordering information on page 34.

Copyright © 1973, 1974, 1975, Education Development Center, Inc.
All rights reserved.

Social Studies Program
15 Mifflin Place
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Contents

ADVICE TO LEADERS	1
General Strategies	4
Sample Strategies	7
SEVEN SEMINARS	11
1. Introduction to EXPLORING CHILDHOOD	11
2. Development Issues: Childhood	15
3. Development Issues: Adolescence	17
4. The Protection of Children	19
5. Discipline	23
6. The Fieldsite as an Extension of the Home	29
7. A Different Way of Raising Children	31
RESOURCE MATERIALS	34

Advice to Leaders

INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended as a guide for people conducting EXPLORING CHILDHOOD parent seminars. The seven seminars outlined in this booklet are designed to be implemented by a parent and teacher who together form a Community-based Leadership Team. The seminar agendas and materials provide a mechanism for parents to know more about what their children are learning and doing in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD classrooms and fieldsites. We hope that, as a result, parents will expand the relevance of the program for students by discussing their own experiences and values with their children.

GOALS

The major purposes of these seminars are to:

- help parents understand the EXPLORING CHILDHOOD program, how it is being used in schools, and how it may be useful to the larger community.
- help parents become familiar with some current issues on child development and childrearing and to share this understanding with other parents.
- provide a mechanism for parents to supplement the curriculum with their own experiences, values, and ideas.
- help parents increase their confidence in themselves as caregivers of children.

It is important that the leader set an atmosphere in which people feel free to discuss their concerns and experiences openly. The materials and agendas provided should be seen as catalysts to help parents explore the issues and ideas that concern them most.

TRAINING AND
LEADERSHIP TIPS

Parent leaders are often very anxious about whether or not they will have adequate training to be a co-leader with the EXPLORING CHILDHOOD teacher. Much of this concern has to do with not knowing the student and teacher materials thoroughly. While the parent leader needs some familiarity with the student materials, he or she does not need to be an expert. The course teacher can be a resource to the parents in this area, and should be the key source of information about course materials and student activities.

On the other hand, the parent leader should take the lead in deciding what are the parents' interests and needs. The parent leader should always open the seminar and start the introductory activity. For training purposes we recommend that parent and teacher:

- attend teacher seminars together where possible, to become oriented to the leadership role and the seminar format.
- discuss all relevant course materials with each other.
- plan agendas and activities with each other.
- visit classrooms and fieldsites.
- practice techniques of leading discussions or getting a discussion started with teachers, parents, and each other.
- discuss the seminar together afterward, focusing on what went well, what didn't, and why. This is a good way to learn and grow as a team and to develop leadership skills.

SEMINAR
PREPARATION

The seven seminars outlined in this book are each designed to run about ninety minutes. To prepare for the seminar the team should:

- set goals and priorities for the seminar and discuss ways of making them clear to participants.
- read the appropriate agenda in this booklet and modify the agenda according to local needs.
- arrange to have necessary materials available.
- plan and carry out ways of notifying parents and motivating them to attend (i.e., sending an initial letter to parents announcing the workshops and describing their

purpose and their value to parents; asking students to encourage parents to attend. Students can organize and provide babysitting, arrange transportation, set up equipment, tell parents about the class, etc.).

- plan ways to include other parents in leading seminar activities.

AT THE SEMINAR

At the beginning of each meeting, review the agenda quickly so that everyone is familiar with it.

As leader, your first job will be to set a friendly, relaxed atmosphere at each seminar and to help people to get to know one another. You might try one of the following procedures:

- Ask participants to introduce themselves and to say whether they are a parent of an EXPLORING CHILDHOOD adolescent or young child, and what they have heard about the course.
- Ask participants to pair off and spend five minutes finding out about each other. After five minutes, reform into a large group and have each person introduce his or her partner to the rest of the group.
- Ask each person to talk briefly about his or her family.

In order that participants and leaders have a chance to share with each other what they learned, and to plan future meetings together, you might use the last fifteen minutes of the seminar to:

- re-examine the goals of the seminar.
- reflect on the range of activities.
- raise such questions as: In what ways did you find the seminar useful to you as a parent? Can you suggest ways the seminars might meet your needs and interests better? Do you have suggestions for the next meeting?

You may want to ask another parent to lead this feedback session. One or two parents can be asked to start the discussion by stating their feelings about the session. If you decide to this, it may be a good idea to speak to the parents about it before the seminar.

General Strategies

GENERATING DISCUSSION

Most people have had the experience of being part of a discussion that got sidetracked, or in which one person took over and talked only about his or her concerns. While it is important that participants feel free to talk openly about their experiences, feelings, reactions to the films, and so on, the discussion leader should also feel free to interrupt and redirect the discussion if it drifts too far off the subject or becomes concentrated around one person for very long. Often, you will simply have to use your judgment--to listen carefully and decide when and how to intervene. However, there are a few ways of setting up a discussion that might help you keep the conversation focused on the seminar topic.

- *Questionnaires.* If people find it hard to talk, having a chance to write down responses to questions before talking may help them organize their thoughts and feel more relaxed about speaking. If people are asked to share their reactions and are reluctant to do so, questions might be answered anonymously and handed in to the leader. In this case the leader might use the answers on the questionnaires as a basis for discussion. ("One person felt Rachel's father directed her too much. What does anyone else think?") As an alternative, each person's questionnaire might be used for his or her own reference. A sample questionnaire appears on page 7.
- *Focusing Questions.* Before showing a film or asking people to read something, you might give them one or two questions to think about and discuss afterward. If the question requires people to analyze some aspect of the material, or state their reactions to a person or event, each person's answer is bound to be different. Discussing these differences can launch a lively debate and give people a chance to learn from one another. Some focusing questions related to child care are listed on pages 8-10.
- *Atmosphere.* The quickest ways to kill a discussion are to fall into a predictable routine or to raise questions that don't stimulate interest. Therefore, it's important to have plenty of variety--ask different kinds of questions, use different kinds of materials, and so on. As leader, your interest will communicate itself to others: If you are excited about something,

your enthusiasm will be infectious. Some other tips:

- give people a chance to voice their concerns
- play "devil's advocate" from time to time--purposely take an opposite point of view from the one being expressed in order to encourage the speaker to strengthen what he or she is saying or to stimulate others to express different views
- when a discussion is going well, back out of it and let questions and comments flow freely among the rest of the group

At times it is difficult to end a discussion that is going well. You might do so by suggesting that the group move on to the next agenda item and drop the ongoing discussion until the end of the seminar or the next meeting.

BREAKING INTO SMALL GROUPS

In most of the seminars, it is suggested that participants form small groups for part of the session. Several small discussions going on at once allow more people to participate. Also, many people find it easier to talk and exchange experiences in groups of three or four than in one large group.

If the seminar planners would like the group to cover several issues in a limited amount of time, they might have each small group discuss a different issue. Afterward, when participants re-form as one large group, everyone can hear reports from the small groups and add their own comments to each topic.

USING FILMS

The documentary films for EXPLORING CHILDHOOD can be used many different ways. They are powerful tools for starting discussions--nearly everyone has strong reactions to them and feels an urge to talk about those reactions. In using films, be sure to give people time to express their likes and dislikes, but don't stop there: The films can provide an excellent starting point for a discussion about general issues, concerns, and needs relating to the care and development of young children.

In each seminar, specific questions and activities are suggested with each film. But the way you show the film is up

to you. Some techniques you might try are:

1. Give a brief summary of who is in the film and ask a focusing question before showing the film.
2. After the film, ask participants to give their first impressions--to mention specific images or sounds that spring to mind. This is often a good way to spark conversation and to get viewers to start comparing impressions and feelings.
3. Ask participants to look specifically at the kinds of interactions going on between people in the film and to think about the kinds of relationships people seem to have. Ask them how particular incidents in the film compare to their own experiences: What similarities or differences do they see?
4. Show the film without any sound; ask participants to infer emotions from the movements, gestures, and expressions of the people in the film. Then show the film again with the sound.
5. If the discussion is a particularly good one, participants might want to see the film again. This time, you can stop the film at different points to discuss a specific interaction of interest.

Sample Strategies

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Choose any number of responses to any one question.)

1. In this film ("Rachel at Home") do you feel that the parents have:
 - (a) a strong sense of values and expectations to instill in the children?
 - (b) no defined role as a model for their children?

2. What values are being fostered in Rachel's home? Please list.
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
 - (d) _____

3. In what ways are those values fostered?

4. Do you think Rachel's behavior reflects those values? Why?

5. Which of the following do you see in Rachel's interaction with her younger sister? Give examples from the film.
 - (a) cooperation
 - (b) helpfulness
 - (c) competitiveness
 - (d) dominance
 - (e) independence
 - (f) responsibility

6. In the film "Rachel at School," do you feel that the following might be seen in Rachel's daily activities? In what ways?
 - (a) the father's influence (or lack of influence) on Rachel.

 - (b) Rachel's attitudes seen in her interaction with her younger sister.

 - (c) Rachel's attitudes seen in her interaction with her mother.

FOCUSING QUESTIONS

Competence

How much stress should parents put on this?
What are some ways of encouraging competence?
What skills are encouraged in the films and how?

Children's responsibilities

How much should children help?
How do they learn to help?
Is helping encouraged or discouraged in the films? How?

Demonstrating affection

What are some ways a parent might show caring?
Should boys and girls be treated differently?
What difference does age make in the amount and kind of affection the child receives?
How is affection shown in films?

Self-esteem

How self-critical should children be?
What helps children to grow up feeling good about themselves?
What criticisms do children receive in the films?
In what ways are they praised?

Compassion and egocentrism

How can a caregiver help a child recognize and deal with the pain of another?
Name some incidents in the films in which children show either sympathy or jealousy and rivalry toward a sibling.
What is your reaction to these feelings?
How would you respond to the child?

Independence

How much stress should parents put on it?
What examples are there in the films of the kinds of independence different parents stress?
Are there trade-offs when children are taught to be independent? (For example, what if you want to foster independence by letting a child choose what he or she eats for breakfast but also want the child to have a nutritious meal?) Explain.

The child as socializer

How does the child's behavior in the film affect his or her parents' behavior?

Is the child aware of his or her influence on others?

Trust

How can parents build trust in their children?

How much should parents trust a four-year-old?

Does lying matter?

Aggression

What constitutes aggression?

Where does it occur in the films and how is it handled? with what effect?

What caused it?

What are other ways of handling it?

Control of emotion

What kinds of emotions do parents seem to show in the films?

What evidence can you find in the films of parents feeling angry?

How do they display or control their anger? with what effect?

What would you do in the same situation?

When should parents get angry with their children and how should they handle it?

Roles and expectations

What roles (cook, server, organizer, questioner, authority figure, money earner, entertainer, teaser, teacher, mediator, praiser, discourager, discipliner, etc.) are played in the films and by whom?

How do parents demonstrate what roles they expect their children to play?

How do parents encourage these roles (by providing models, praising, criticizing)?

Possessiveness and sharing

Do members of the families show possessiveness or sharing? Give examples.

How is such behavior encouraged or discouraged?

Do you think sharing should always be encouraged? Why or why not?

Discipline

What evidence can you find of family members disciplining each other?

Who disciplines whom and for what?

How do you think the person being disciplined feels?

How would you handle the same situation?

Is self-discipline encouraged or discouraged? How?

Cleanliness

Is cleanliness a value?

If so, how is it encouraged?

Do you feel it is important? Why or why not?

Routines and rituals

For something to be a routine or a ritual, it must be a regular, expected occurrence. Do students see such occurrences in the films?

How can they tell?

What values do these patterns reflect?

How do the children participate in them, and what do they learn?

Can parents describe similar routines or rituals in their own families and the effect they have?

AGENDA

If you plan your own meeting, be sure to have an agenda. It will help you block out how much time to spend on each activity, and help you see the pattern of activity you have planned. Any of the agendas in the next section might serve as a model for planning your own meeting.

Seven Seminars

1. Introduction to Exploring Childhood

Purposes	To explain the purpose and goals of EXPLORING CHILDHOOD. To have parents examine the materials used by students in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD. To provide opportunity for parents to comment on the importance of EXPLORING CHILDHOOD.
Planners	One or more parents and the course teacher.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers.
Materials	Films, "Preview Film" or "Helping Is...."
Options	Read background papers in teacher's guide for <i>Getting Involved</i> . Show "Little Blocks" (8 minutes) instead of summarizing Overview; distribute Overview to take home.
Time	90 minutes.

INTRODUCTION
20 minutes

Ask participants to introduce themselves.

OVERVIEW
10 minutes

To introduce the EXPLORING CHILDHOOD program, the leader might summarize the following overview by Marilyn Clayton Felt, Project Director, or distribute copies for participants to read. The group might then react to this description and relate experiences their children have had.

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD, a program for junior high and high school students, combines the study of child development with regularly scheduled work with young children. It offers students opportunities to develop competence in working with children, as well as a framework for understanding the forces that shape human development.

The main source of energy for students is their work with children at the fieldsite (a day care center, nursery school, kindergarten, or other child-care center). In developing a curriculum to support and extend this experience, the Social Studies Program of Education Development Center has been guided by the following questions:

- What kinds of help can we provide to make the field work rewarding?*
- How can we draw on the students' experience with children to bring students in closer touch with their own identities and to foster in them an understanding of the conditions needed for growth in others?*
- What ideas and issues from the social sciences will allow students to explore and understand the world of children?*

So that students might become valued members of the child-care staff, we offer them activities to do with children and ways to think about situations involving children. Because the program is being adapted to a vast range of conditions, and used by people with varying needs, concerns, values, and traditions, students are "apprenticed" to the responsible adult at the fieldsite. Knowing the perspective of the program and also of the community, the fieldsite teacher is able to counsel students about how to deal with individual problems and sensitive issues.

The curriculum is divided into three parts. Module One, Working with Children, is designed to prepare students for field work. Films, booklets, role-play exercises, and exposure to the activities and materials that fieldsites offer help students gain confidence about working there with children. Module Two, Seeing Development, asks students to use

their fieldsite experience, along with materials on children's play, art, and children's explanations of events to build an understanding of how children experience the world. In Module Three, Family and Society, students first explore families and then consider what happens when children go "beyond the front door" into the world at large. A series of documentary films enables students to observe a variety of family experiences, to become more aware of what is transmitted to children in daily, commonplace interactions, and to discover styles of childrearing that differ from their own experience. Similarly, autobiographical readings about childhood in different cultures give students insight into the attitudes, traditions, values, and experiences of others. Independent projects in their own communities help students learn how their society cares for children. Guidelines for the projects suggest ways of collecting data on such topics as children's literature, law and children, public media and children, and nutrition. Besides providing an opportunity to develop research and survey skills, these projects give students a chance to meet people in a variety of roles that may suggest future career possibilities.

Four values have influenced the direction and shape of EXPLORING CHILDHOOD. These are:

- To view the present, whether adolescence or childhood, as an important time of being as well as becoming.
- To demonstrate that insight can be learned and can be an important influence on behavior.
- To help students and children develop confidence in their own identities.
- To legitimize the view that anyone responsible for the care of a child has worthwhile experiences to share with others.

FILM
15-22 minutes

View "Preview Film" (15 minutes) or "Helping Is..." (22 minutes).

DISCUSSION
40 minutes

How do you feel, as a parent of an adolescent, about your child being involved in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD? Do you think he or she will benefit from the course in any way? Explain.

How do you feel, as a parent of a young child, about having adolescents interact with your child or being responsible for him or her in any way?

What role(s) do you think the caregiver should assume in relation to the child (i.e., playmate, teacher's assistant, counselor, baby-sitter, etc.)? Why?

CONCLUSION
5 minutes

Arrange next meeting; review planned agenda.

2. Development Issues: Childhood

Purpose	To discuss the process of development in children--what it is, how it can be observed, and what implications it has for caregivers.
Planners	One or more parents; course and fieldsite teachers.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers.
Materials	Film, "Half a Year Apart"; poster, "Directions in Development."
Optional Preparation	Review any or all of the following EXPLORING CHILDHOOD student and teacher materials on development: <i>Looking at Development, Child's Eye View, Child's Play, Children's Art, and Making Connections.</i>
Time	90 minutes.

INTRODUCTION
20 minutes

Ask new participants to introduce themselves. Share experiences.

TOPIC OF
DISCUSSION
10 minutes

What is development and how does it change a person? Development is the process of continuous change and growth that all human beings undergo throughout life. As children grow and change, we are able to see how the things they feel and do are constantly being influenced by where they are in their development as well as by the situations, people, and objects they encounter.

There are many aspects of children's development that can be observed: physical growth; ability to use and control muscles; ability and desire to communicate with others; ability to use symbols (such as words and images) to

represent real things; emotional expression and control; and the degree to which children can understand other points of view, perceive the world as something separate, and grasp the notion of fairness.

The larger question to be discussed in this seminar is: What effect does a child's development have on us as caregivers?

FILM
14 minutes

View "Half a Year Apart."

SMALL GROUP
DISCUSSION
20 minutes

Discuss the film, "Half a Year Apart." The following questions can be used as guides for discussion:

- What differences did you see between the two children? Can you describe the needs, abilities, and interests of each?
- How would you behave with a child who is just starting to use words and asked for a cookie by pointing rather than actually saying the word?
- How do you know when a child may be ready to tie his or her own shoes?

Parents might like to chart their own child's development, using the "Directions in Development" poster. Afterward, using their results, participants might discuss how a child's development can be uneven--how a child can move ahead quickly in some areas, more slowly in others.

LARGE GROUP
DISCUSSION
20 minutes

One member of each small group should summarize the group's discussion for the rest of the seminar members, pointing out the ideas or comments people found most interesting. Discussion might then turn to broad questions about development. For example:

- How do you, as a caregiver, best support development?
- Is development inevitable, or are caregivers necessary to make sure it happens?

CONCLUSION
5 minutes

Arrange next meeting; review planned agenda.

3. Development Issues: Adolescence

Purpose	To take a closer look at adolescents, their development, and their role as caregivers in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD.
Planners	One or more parents and the course teacher.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers; EXPLORING CHILDHOOD students.
Materials	Record, "Memories of Adolescence."
Optional Preparation	Read "How Adolescents View Themselves" in <i>Fieldsite Teacher's Manual</i> and "Perspectives on Adolescence" (teacher's guide for <i>Looking at Development and Making Connections</i>).
Time	90 minutes

INTRODUCTION
15 minutes

Ask new participants to introduce themselves. Share experiences.

TOPIC OF
DISCUSSION
10 minutes

Adolescents are learning about their own values in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD, and about the tasks that face parents. They are learning about this at a time when they are going through a period of physical and emotional change. Let us consider, then, what family relationships with adolescents are like. Also, the ways in which our own identities were or are being shaped in adolescence.

RECORD
20 minutes

Listen to selections from "Memories of Adolescence" (each side runs about 20 minutes).

SMALL GROUP
DISCUSSION
20 minutes

Choose one set of questions to discuss:

- What did the teenagers on the record experience that was common to your own adolescence or to the experiences of teenagers you know? What factors influenced change in their lives? in your own life?
- What roles do you think parents and teachers play that affect adolescents' development? What roles do you think they should play?
- In what ways has your adolescent child changed since he or she began working with children in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD? In what ways have you as an adolescent changed since working with children in EXPLORING CHILDHOOD?
- What seemed to be *the* most important thing in your life as an adolescent? How did you feel about it then? How do you feel about it now? Why was it important? How did it change you?

LARGE GROUP
DISCUSSION
20 minutes

Have someone from each group summarize discussion of each small group. What similarities and differences emerge?

CONCLUSION
5 minutes

Arrange next meeting; review planned agenda.

4. The Protection of Children

Purposes	To examine and discuss the kinds of stress families may undergo, and how these situations may result in real jeopardy for a child. To discuss the fact that anyone responsible for a child's well being needs support at one time or another. To consider ways of finding support. To discuss ways of helping people in stressful situations.
Planners	One or more parents; course and fieldsite teachers.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers; EXPLORING CHILDHOOD students.
Materials	Written handouts: "A Case of Family Stress" and "Christmas Rush"; paper; pencils; blackboard or poster and felt marker. Optional: <i>Under Stress</i> materials.
Preparation	Make copies of readings to hand out at meeting. Collect other materials.
Time	90 minutes.

INTRODUCTION
15 minutes

Ask new participants to introduce themselves. Share experiences.

TOPIC OF
DISCUSSION
5 minutes

There are many periods of stress in the life of a family. The sources of stress are varied, and include such things as death, birth of a new child, loss of job, overwork, illness, low self-esteem, isolation from friends, moving to a new community, lack of necessary services, divorce, family rifts, etc.

Families usually have various forms of outside support and strength that help them to cope with stressful situations: family, friends, church, and community agencies, for example. But when these support systems fail for any reason to meet the needs of caregivers, the mental and physical health of a child may be endangered.

READING
5 minutes

"A Case of Family Stress."

SMALL GROUP
DISCUSSION
30 minutes

Discuss the case study, and talk about why and how you can change stressful situations for yourself as well as for others. What resources exist within yourself? What resources exist within the community? As a group, list both kinds of resources.

LARGE GROUP
DISCUSSION
30 minutes

While someone from each group reads the group's list of resources, one of the leaders can list all suggestions where everyone can see them. Add any new ideas that come to mind.

Read "Christmas Rush" and discuss:

- Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation?
- Was there anything the caregiver could have done to prevent this accident?
- Do you see any connection in your own lives between accidents and being under stress?

CONCLUSION
5 minutes

Arrange next meeting; review planned agenda.

A CASE OF FAMILY STRESS*

"I knew what I was doing but I just couldn't stop myself...always before I could send her out, then sit down and have a cup of coffee and I'd be fine. Mostly when I'm talking to someone I'm fine. But when I'm sitting there thinking, things get worse."

These are the words of a young mother who is participating in a program which helps families whose children may be endangered by abuse or neglect. This mother's situation came to the attention of a doctor at a city hospital through an unusual situation. Her two young sons are hemophiliacs (an inherited condition in which the blood does not clot properly, causing prolonged bleeding from any wound). When she first brought her older son to the hospital for treatment and diagnosis, hospital authorities thought that child abuse might be involved. In talks between the mother and the hospital staff, it was revealed that her feelings of being unable to deal with the stress in her life were being taken out primarily on her daughter, the oldest child.

This woman's daughter is five-and-a-half, and her older son is four-and-a-half. She has remarried, and she and her second husband have a baby son. Many things affect her sense of self-worth and her ability to raise her children. Some of them are: the way she was raised [never being able to please her mother, constantly being referred to as a bad girl], her feelings about her own parents, occurrences surrounding her daughter's birth, the break-up of her first marriage, fears for her children's health, concern over how others judge her and her daughter, and tensions in her present marriage. She is under a great deal of stress, some of which has built up from past experiences, some of which is the result of present pressures in her life.

This parent has found some sources of help and is beginning to find ways of coping with herself and her family.

*Adapted from *Under Stress: Keeping Children Safe* (student booklet).

CHRISTMAS RUSH*

Christmas is supposed to be a time of pleasure. For me, I guess it's more the culmination of weeks of too much to do, too many good intentions, too many responsibilities, and too many people counting on me. Still, I was responsible for what happened the year Ginny was almost a year old.

In a rush of final preparations for Gran and Grandad's arrival, I'd just returned from the supermarket and sorted out the groceries I'd stocked up on for the holiday. I looked hastily through the mail, noticing some Christmas cards from people I'd forgotten. There was even one from Mrs. Spencer, an elderly widow who lived alone in one of the boarding houses on our street. I decided I could just run upstairs and wrap a small gift for her and take it across the road to brighten her Christmas.

I carried Ginny up the long flight of wooden stairs that led to our bedroom; the high ceilings in our old house make that climb extra long. Hurriedly, I set Ginny on the rug and rummaged for Christmas wrappings. I just wasn't thinking that at almost one year Ginny was getting into really active crawling. Then I heard that terrible heart-stopping bump bump bump as she tumbled down that whole flight of stairs. I tore down the stairs desperately, and covered her wailing little body with my own, trying to hold her but afraid to move her. Miraculously, she was unharmed. It's still hard to tell anyone about it, seven years later.

*Reprinted from *Under Stress: Keeping Children Safe* (student booklet).

5. Discipline

Purpose	To discuss and exchange ideas about the purposes and messages behind discipline and the goal of helping children work toward self-control.
Planners	One or more parents and the course teacher.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers.
Materials	Readings: "Causes of Misbehavior Among Young Children" and "Punishment."
Preparation	Make copies of reading materials. Optional: Read <i>What about Discipline?</i>
Time	90 minutes.

INTRODUCTION
10 minutes

Ask new participants to introduce themselves. Share experiences.

TOPIC OF
DISCUSSION
5 minutes

Just as adults go through periods of stress, so do children. People who persist in thinking of childhood as a time of happy innocence are fooling themselves. Every child's life includes some stress and frustration and it comes out in the child's behavior.

We often expect children to behave in certain ways. People have different ideas about what is "good" behavior. But there is some behavior that nearly everyone would agree is "bad"--injuring another person, hurting animals, or destroying other people's property, for example. In a situation where misbehavior is taking place, we inevitably come to the question of *discipline*. The purpose of this discussion is to consider positive ways of providing discipline--ways that help children build inner control and self-discipline.

READINGS
10 minutes

Read "Causes of Misbehavior Among Young Children" and "Punishment."

SMALL GROUP
DISCUSSION
30 minutes

In small groups, discuss one or two of the following questions:

- Do you think young children need discipline? What about adolescents? Give reasons to support your point of view.
- Recount times when your children misbehaved. Were the reasons for misbehavior similar to those listed as causes of misbehavior?
- As you recall your response to a specific instance of misbehavior, whose needs do you think were uppermost: yours, the child's, or both? Whose needs do you think should have taken priority? If the incident were happening now, would you handle it differently?
- What issues involving discipline trouble parents? teachers?
- How have students handled discipline issues at the fieldsite? Did the fieldsite teacher help in any way?

LARGE GROUP
DISCUSSION
30 minutes

Summarize small group discussions, and then turn to the question: How can we help children build self-control?

CONCLUSION
5 minutes

Arrange next meeting; review planned agenda.

CAUSES OF MISBEHAVIOR AMONG YOUNG CHILDREN*

Children misbehave because of trouble in their lives.

Adults often see children fall apart "for no reason," except that there *is* a reason even if it is not apparent. For example, a child who has been teased, or humiliated, by older brothers and sisters and neighborhood children, or even by parents, might misbehave. Children have to absorb difficult changes in their lives--changes that are hard for them to understand, like moving from one home to another or having to be cared for by someone they don't know.

While most of these troubles fall under the category of normal stress, there are children whose lives are marked by deep unhappiness. Some children have to endure scenes during which their parents or other relatives fight, strike each other, or abandon the family. Children feel helpless at such times, as they do in the face of divorce, illness, and death.

Children misbehave because the day's activities ask too much of them.

If children get tense and cranky in a particular situation, if they start pinching or hitting, then the situation itself may be to blame. For instance, what might happen if you:

- set up a project at the fieldsite of making cookies with several children--with only one mixing bowl and spoon, so that some of the children had not had a turn to stir the batter when time ran out?
- ordered four-year-olds to walk slowly (not run) down the long hall to the lavatory?
- expected the children to wait, before going outdoors, with sweaters and coats on, in a warm room?

Children misbehave because they act their age.

Not always, but often, children misbehave because they don't know any better or because they can't yet make themselves *be* any better. They can't skip any of the stages of growth.

*Adapted from *What about Discipline?* (student booklet).

What is needed from teachers and parents, first of all, is good humor--combined with a sensible kind of discipline. Adults see that rules are followed, but they don't blame and shame preschoolers for being childlike.

Rules should fit. In order to make rules fit, we have to remind ourselves of where children are in their development. What are they like?

- Children are *dependent*--physically, legally, and emotionally. They have been fed and cared for by their families, and kept safe for as long as they've been alive.
- Children are *egocentric*. They are just learning to share. A little girl in nursery school says, "Sharing means you have to wait." She doesn't get the whole picture--that after you wait, you get your turn. (Maybe she doesn't get a turn, sometimes.)
- Children are *active, headlong*. They throw themselves into activity without plan or thought. Sometimes a group of preschoolers will race through a playroom as if suddenly turned on by an invisible switch. They are rough, and they are noisy. They disrupt the room. What do you think of an adult's moving in and playing with a restless group of children just long enough to steady them? not taking over, not trying to entertain them, but focusing their attention on a new or different idea (playing "train" for example) that helps to settle them down?
- Children can be *talkative*. They may chatter until you can't stand any more.

Children who like to talk have a way to communicate, and that's good. But you may want to limit the flow of words, especially if someone else needs a chance to be heard.

On the other hand, children who are forced to be silent, who are discouraged from saying what is on their minds, who don't receive answers to their questions--these children may be in trouble with learning (and with self-esteem) even though they may seem "good."

- Children are *determined*. They like their new feelings of power and decision-making and haven't learned how to be reasonable once they start being unreasonable.

One of the hard parts of keeping good discipline is knowing how to balance one child's need to have his or her way against the needs of other children and adults. What you do in a particular situation should depend on the child, but also on the adult. Some children need to be stopped in their tracks (separated from the group bodily if necessary). Some need gentle explanations and another chance.

Children are *honest and blunt*. They say what comes to mind. Some haven't yet learned to be tactful. How do you teach children to tell the truth if you must sometimes ask them not to tell quite the exact truth?

If a child misbehaves because he or she is "going through a phase" adults shouldn't always shrug it off and wait for the phase to pass. However, a certain amount of shrugging makes sense for minor infractions that really aren't important.

Children want and need to know what adults like and don't like. Adults should make it clear that they like certain behavior and don't like other behavior.

*PUNISHMENT**

Punishing is one way to express disapproval and to try to persuade a child to stop doing something. It seems to work best when the punishment fits the "crime" and when it occurs immediately after the offense.

For example, if a child writes in a book with crayons, you remove the crayons. If a child repeatedly spills food on purpose (and you are sure it's on purpose) you remove the child from the table for a few minutes.

But punishment alone is not enough, in the opinion of many educators. The child needs to learn *what to do*--as well as what *not to do*. He or she needs to learn *how to get along*: for example--to wait, to give turns, to talk instead of strike, to listen to another child's wishes. Children learn all this from being told and, especially, from being *shown what to do*. And they learn from being praised for doing well.

Whatever method of discipline the adult uses, he or she sets an example for dealing with the problem. Even though young children tease and defy and lash out at adults, they also depend on adults and look up to them as people who set much of the tone of their lives. The adult whose rules are fair, who states those rules clearly, who holds an upset child instead of hitting him or her, who talks and listens to children, gets across the disciplinary message.

*Adapted from *What about Discipline?* (student booklet).

6. The Fieldsite as an Extension of the Home

Purpose	To have the parents of young children express to EXPLORING CHILDHOOD students their view of the fieldsite and how it reflects and supports the values and customs of the home. In this endeavor, parents will have an opportunity to hear expressed the values of the fieldsite and of other parents.
Planners	Two or more parents.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers; EXPLORING CHILDHOOD students.
Materials	Films, "Rachel at Home" and "Rachel at School"; questionnaire; pencils; black-board or poster and felt marker.
Preparation	Make copies of questionnaire; collect other materials and film equipment.
Options	Instead of showing the films, arrange a panel discussion in which students talk about their fieldsite experiences. If you show the films, you may want to preview them and perhaps use some of the techniques and questions suggested earlier in "General Strategies."
Time	90 minutes or more.

INTRODUCTION
10 minutes

Students, parents, and teachers should introduce themselves, and tell the others what their connection is with the program (e.g., "student at x high school and x fieldsite"; "parent of x child at x fieldsite"). Leaders should then describe briefly the purpose of the seminar.

FILM
15 minutes

View "Rachel at Home."

QUESTIONNAIRE
20 minutes

Fill out questionnaires *anonymously*. (One or two people might tally responses on blackboard or poster.) Discuss reactions to film.

SMALL GROUP
DISCUSSION
15 minutes

Focus on the fieldsite--an institution that may or may not embody the values reflected in the children's homes. Discuss and compare the two environments, fieldsite and home, considering what "carry-overs" there are between the two--values, expectations, children's behavior, and so forth.

FILM
15 minutes

View "Rachel at School." Focusing question: What values from Rachel's home are reinforced at school?

LARGE GROUP
DISCUSSION
10-30 minutes

Discuss focusing question and then consider:

- What should be done if values in the home and in the fieldsite conflict?
- Do parents feel their children's school supports their values?
- Are there things about the home and family life that parents wish the school understood?

CONCLUSION
5 minutes

Arrange next meeting; review planned agenda.

7. A Different Way of Raising Children

Purpose	To present a childrearing arrangement that is different from that of most Americans. The contents of the films have been found to be unfamiliar to many parents, and this introduction to another culture can prove to be exciting as well as informative or threatening.
Planners	Two or more parents.
Participants	Parents of young children and adolescents; course and fieldsite teachers.
Materials	Films, "Young Children on the Kibbutz" and "Girl of My Parents"; questionnaire; pencils; blackboard or poster and felt marker. Optional: <i>Children in Society</i> .
Preparation	Make copies of questionnaire; preview films, if possible; collect other materials and film equipment.
Time	90 minutes or more.

INTRODUCTION
10 minutes

Participants introduce themselves and share experiences.
Leader introduces subject of seminar.

FILM
10 minutes

View "Girl of My Parents." Focusing question: How are Hagit's statements about herself like or unlike what your teenagers might say about themselves?

SMALL GROUP
DISCUSSION
10 minutes

Share reactions to film. Discuss focusing question, explaining how you account for the differences and similarities you perceive.

FILM
26 minutes

View "Young Children on the Kibbutz."

QUESTIONNAIRE
15 minutes

Fill out questionnaire. Discuss responses.

LARGE GROUP
DISCUSSION
15-45 minutes

How does the kibbutz philosophy affect the way children are raised?

How does this society affect how you raise your children?

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Select any number of responses to each question.)

1. In your opinion, which of the following behaviors did you see in "Young Children on the Kibbutz"?

- (a) cooperation
- (b) competition
- (c) individuality
- (d) lack of freedom
- (e) security
- (f) responsibility

2. Which of the following do you feel teenagers might gain from viewing this film?

- (a) knowledge of different provisions for the care of children?
- (b) awareness that there are different provisions for the care of children?
- (c) models of child care for themselves?
- (d) ability to question and evaluate their own ideas of child care provisions?
- (e) other (explain)?

3. How important do you feel it is for you as a parent to be exposed to different ways of providing for the care of children?

(a) very important, because _____

(b) not important, because _____

(c) harmful, because _____

Resource Materials

Materials recommended as "optional preparation" may be available on loan from a school using EXPLORING CHILDHOOD. Should you wish to purchase any of these materials, you may order them directly from Education Development Center, 15 Mifflin Place, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138. All orders under \$25.00 should be accompanied by a check or money order. For orders under \$10.00, please add 20% of the cost of materials to cover postage. For orders from \$10.00 to \$25.00, please add 15% of the price.

Looking at Development \$2.50
Student and teacher booklets. Introduces the idea of development and suggests ways of learning about it.

Directions in Development \$4.75
Data poster showing five areas of growth between infancy and primary school age.

Child's Play \$4.25
Student and teacher booklets. Presents theories about children's play, ways of learning about it, and observations about how play changes with age.

Children's Art \$7.25
Student and teacher booklets, drawing sort poster. Looking at how children draw, paint, and work with art materials can tell a great deal about children's interests, abilities, and level of development.

Child's Eye View \$5.75
Student and teacher booklets. How children see the world--moving from egocentrism to an awareness that other people have needs, perspectives, and minds that are different from their own--is the subject of this unit.

<u>Making Connections</u>	\$6.00
Companion student and teacher materials to <i>Looking at Development</i> . Includes brief summaries of how Montessori, Erikson, and Piaget view the process of human development and, in the teacher's guide, five perspectives on adolescence.	
<u>What About Discipline?</u>	\$2.20
Student booklet. Discipline is seen positively as the process of finding gentle and practical responses to children's cranky, disruptive, or withdrawn moments.	
<u>Under Stress: Keeping Children Safe</u>	\$9.75
Student and teacher booklets, record of a case study of family stress. Learning to deal with your own problems in ways that do not jeopardize yourself or those around you is the subject of this unit. (Also available without record for \$6.25.)	
<u>Children in Society</u>	\$8.25
Student and teacher booklets. Includes materials on two other societies--the Israeli kibbutz and the Ibo of West Africa--to provide other perspectives on the role of society in influencing children's development.	
<u>Fieldsite Teacher's Manual</u>	\$4.25
An introduction to EXPLORING CHILDHOOD for teachers at sites where adolescents are doing their field work. Includes a paper on how adolescents view their role at the fieldsite, and sample student materials.	

Please note: This is only a partial listing of course materials. A complete listing appears in the EXPLORING CHILDHOOD catalog, which will be sent free of charge on request.

Seminars for Parents is based on an earlier version by Louise Grant, Carol Mascoll, Shirley Raynard, and Naarah Thornell (parents), and Kenneth Manning and Louis Grant Bond (staff developers). This revised edition was developed and produced by the following people:

Developer: Naarah Thornell

Editor: Anne Glickman

Contributors: Louis Grant Bond, Michael Cohen, Rita Dixon Holt, Marjorie Jones, Barbara S. Powell, and Emma Wood Rous.

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Director:
Marilyn Clayton Felt

Curriculum Coordinator:
Ruth N. MacDonald

Module Head:
Susan Christie Thomas

Project Manager:
Kathleen L. Horani

Senior Scholars:
Jerome Kagan, Professor of Human Development, Harvard University

James Jones, Assistant Professor of Social Psychology, Harvard University

Freda Reblsky, Professor of Psychology, Boston University

Consultants:
T. Berry Brazelton, Pediatrician and Clinical Assistant Professor, Harvard University

Urie Bronfenbrenner, Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, Cornell University

Jerome S. Bruner, Watts Professor of Psychology, Department of Experimental Psychology, Oxford University

Betty H. Bryant, Nursery School Director, Center for Child Care Research, Education Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey

Courtney Cazden, Professor of Education, Harvard University

Joan Goldsmith, Co-Director, The Institute of Open Education/ Antioch Graduate Center

Patricia Marks Greenfield, Associate Professor of Psychology, University of California at Los Angeles

John Herzog, Associate Professor of Education, Northeastern University

David Kantor, Director of Research and Development, Boston Family Institute

Beatrice Blyth Whiting, Professor of Education and Anthropology, Harvard University

Developers:
Norma Arnow
Wendy Johnson Barnes
Ellen Grant
Rogier Gregoire
Toby Grover

Patricia Hourihan
Margaret Janey
Peggy Lippitt
Ronald Lippitt
Karlen Lyons
Lucy Lyons
Pamela Matz
Jim McMahon
John Nove
Judith Salzman
Jeanette Stone
Ianthé Thomas
Juliet Vogel
Sandra Warren
Dennie Wolf

Filmmakers:
Henry Felt
John Friedman
Mark Harris
Lynn Smith
David Vogt

Film Staff:
David Barnett
David Berenson
Frank Cantor
Elvin Carini
Edward T. Joyce
Allegra May
David Nelson
Charles Scott
Dan Seeger
Charles L. White, Jr.

Editors:
Marcia Mitchell
Marjorie Waters
Nancy Witting

Design:
Myra Lee Conway
Roz Gerstein
Diana Ritter
Michael Sand
Karen Shipley
Judy Spock
Alison Wampler

Production:
Patricia A. Jones
Scott Paris

Parent Education:
Louis Grant Bond
Naarah Thornell

Teacher Education:
Michael J. Cohen
Marjorie Jones
Edward Martin
Barbara S. Powell
Emma Wood Rous

Evaluation:
Geraldine Brookins
Martin Chong
Catherine Cobb
Joan Costley
Sherryl Graves
Aisha Jones
Eileen Peters

Regional Evaluators:
John R. Browne
Karen M. Cohen
Judith McMurray
Mark Walker
Kaffie Weaver

Regional Field Coordinators:
Florence J. Cherry
Thomas A. Fitzgerald
Andrea J. Love
Annie Madison
T. David Wallsteadt
Dianne H. Willis

Support Staff:
Florence Bruno
Genevra Caldon
Bushra Karaman
Pamela Ponce de Leon
Maria Rainho
Denise Weaver

Distribution Coordinator:
Steve Westlund

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER/ SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

Director:
Janet Hanley Whitla

Senior Associate:
Peter B. Dow

Director of Evaluation:
Karen C. Cohen

Director of Publications:
Anne Glickman

Director of Teacher Education:
Rita Holt

Director of Special Projects:
Nona P. Lyons

Director of Field Services:
Dennen Reilley

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD has been developed by the Social Studies Program of Education Development Center under grants from The Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development; the National Institute of Mental Health; and with the support of the Office of Education.