

# research in brief

## **Parent Growth Group**

Family interaction has become recognized as an important part of the development of human beings at all stages of life. Parents have an enormous responsibility, but relatively little support in our culture, for developing and influencing human growth and interaction. There are many parent education programs for parents of the elementary school level and above, but very little for parents of preschool children.

A study was designed to develop and evaluate a curriculum of structured educational experiences for child care center parents of preschoolers in the CSU preschool and University Village.

A pre/post method of evaluating the curriculum was designed. The scores of parents enrolled in the 12-hour curriculum were compared to scores of a control group of parents as well as pre/post scores of both groups. Hereford's Parent Attitude Survey and Beenvenu's Parent-Child Communication Inventory were used and analyzed using t-tests.

### Results:

1. There are significant differences in pre/post scores of the experimental group.
2. A significant increase on the confidence subscale of the parent attitude scale was attributed to the "Parent Growth Group" experience of the experimental group when a comparison was made of the scores of the control group.

### Curriculum included:

1. Exploring self-concept and values of parenting.
2. Communication skills.
3. Understanding preschoolers: physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually.
4. Discipline.
5. Resources for further growth of child and family.

The curriculum is given in the appendix of the study and would be helpful to anyone wishing to replicate the study.

Major changes for the growth curriculum suggested were:

1. Expand curriculum from six to eight sessions.
2. Use text for outside reinforcement of concepts learned in the formal sessions.
3. Make goals more explicit (syllabus).
4. Make use of more filmstrips.

*Editor's Note*

Parent education is an important phase of Extension home economics work. Since there's so little available for parents of preschoolers, agents and specialists might want to expand their programs to meet the needs of some of these younger parents.

"A Parent Growth Group: Means Toward Enhancing Family Interaction?" Faith Skold. Master's thesis, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, 1978.

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