

Governor's Study Committee Finds Psychological Needs Are Not Met

Priority need of Oregon children highlight a 125-page comprehensive report released recently by the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth and Governor Mark Hatfield has recommended it as good reading for all of Oregon's thinking citizens. He also expressed his appreciation for the work of this committee during the past two years during which they gathered data for the report.

The following is the first of a series of articles about the facts in the report which has been prepared by a committee member, Ann Sullivan.

Psychological needs of many Oregon children and youth are just not being met either by their own homes or the other institutions which contribute to family life education.

So relates the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth which has culminated two years of work in a report for Oregon.

What evidence brings the Committee to make such a flat statement as above? Consider these:

1. The venereal disease rate among teenagers has increased greatly. Figures supplied by the Oregon State Board of Health show an incidence in 1950 of 40.3 cases of gonorrhea in all ages per 100,000 population and 48.6 for the 15-19 age group. While the all-age incidence per 100,000 population increased to 53.1 in 1958, the teenage figures was a startling 171—a 350 per cent increase against about 33 per cent for all ages.

2. The rate of births to mothers not married to the fathers of their children increased in Oregon from 18.5 per 1,000 live births in 1950 to 28.8 per 1,000 in 1957 for women of all ages; against this is set an increase of 50 per cent for girls under 20 and 52 per cent for the 20-30 age group.

(The committee noted that it knew almost nothing about the abortion rate, especially among the teenagers in Oregon, and nothing about the amount of contraceptive information commonly shared among teenagers, or anything definite about the relation-

ship between teenage pregnancies and shotgun marriages.)

3. There is an increase in the rate of teenage marriages. Between 1950 and 1958 these marriages in Oregon increased by one-third. The proportion of teenage brides increased from about 38 per cent of all brides in 1950 to 43 per cent in 1957.

4. There is an increase in the birth rates for teenage mothers. From 1950 to 1957 the crude birth rate dropped from 23.7 to 21.3 per 1,000. Within the same period, births to girls in the 15-19 age group increased from 92.9 per 1,000 to 116.4, a percentage gain of 25.3.

The committee notes that good families tend to reproduce themselves as children from them are married and in turn establish their own homes.

"Unfortunately," the report adds, "the same may be said of 'bad' families. They tend to reproduce themselves in successive generations."

The report points out that the "goodness" or "badness" of fami-

lies to some extent are produced or influenced by the total culture of the nation or the community, and to some extent by economic factors.

"But ultimately good and bad, which influences so strongly the marital relations upon which the family is founded, is developed through learning."

The committee makes these recommendations, which in the report carry considerable amplification and explanation:

1. A carefully planned research program should be set up, testing among other things social and psychological causes for the phenomena, the weight of the drive for conformity among the young people, evaluation of teenage marriages (good or bad), etc.

2. More family counseling services throughout the state.

families result from what the individuals in them have learned about family relationships from life in their own families in childhood. In a sense, even that hard-to-define thing called personali-

ties to some extent are produced or influenced by the total culture of the nation or the community, and to some extent by economic factors.

There is almost total lack in Oregon of family counseling agencies where families with difficulties could turn for help. There is no organized non-sectarian family agency except in the Portland area.

There is only limited unorganized service, totally inadequate because it lacks community backing and support. Children are directly affected by the tensions and turmoils of their parents. Many of them are deprived of one or both parents by separation or divorce, and the juvenile courts and other agencies "pick up the pieces" at great cost.

3. School counseling services under professionally trained personnel should be provided throughout the state. . . . Classroom teachers in Oregon are unable to get help in dealing with behavior problems because "coun-

selors" are either poorly trained or non-existent.

4. It is recommended that institutions of higher education provide more adequate teacher training programs in relation to family life and sex education.

5. It is recommended that more parent education programs be provided throughout the state with respect to family life, child rearing and sex.

6. It is recommended that regional and local conferences and workshops promote more understanding and acceptance of the basic tenets reflected by this report on the part of communities and school administrations.

7. It is recommended that communities be led to recognize the need for better law enforcement, especially in connection with the rising rate of VD among teenagers."

Former Resident Taken by Death

Mrs. Maude Lena Duncan, 2445 SE 76th Ave., a teacher in Vernonia and the Portland area for nearly a quarter of a century, died Saturday at Mt. Tabor Convalescent hospital. She had been ill for several months.

Mrs. Duncan, 60, had been an eighth grade teacher at Powell Valley school for the past 12 years. A well-known outdoor enthusiast, she was also active throughout her career in PTA work.

She was a member of Rose City Park Methodist church.

Mrs. Duncan was born in Portland February 28, 1900. She lived in Vernonia 35 years and

returned to Portland in 1941.

Funeral was at 1 p.m. Monday at the Ross Hollywood Chapel.

She is survived by the widower, Ross W. Duncan; a son, Ross W. Duncan Jr., Portland; a daughter, Mrs. William Shea, San Francisco; her mother, Mrs. Hettie F. Raber, Portland; four sisters, Mrs. Gladys Moritz and Mrs. Frances Dorney, Portland; Mrs. Elma Spencer, Seattle and Mrs. Thelma Jackson, New York, and seven grandchildren.

Vernonia Eagle

4 THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 1960

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