Displaced homemakers with children now qualify for aid

Michigan's displaced homemaker program has been extended to 1985 and eligibility requirements changed to allow persons with children at home to qualify for services.

Displaced homemakers are generally women over 35 who, because of death, divorce or disability, have lost their sole source of income — their spouse.

The program was first established as a pilot in late 1978 in the Michigan Department of Labor, Office of Women and Work. Displaced homemaker centers were established in Marquette, Macomb County and Grand Rapids.

During the last two years seven additional centers have been established throughout the state, including Oakland and Wayne counties.

"During the first two years of the pilot program, 1,077 persons applied for services at three centers and, of that number, 310 were determined not eligible because they had children younger than 16 in the home," said Patricia Curran, director of the Office of Women and Work.

Currently, she said, there are four or five persons a month being turned away because they have a 12- or 13-year-old child but meet all the other requirements.

To be eligible, a person must have spent at least 10 years as a homemaker; lack adequate skills to secure gainful, full-time employment; be unemployed or underemployed for three months prior to application; have been supported by government aid which is no longer available or have been dependent on the income of another family member for one-half or more of support and the need to become self-supporting as the result of death, divorce or other loss of the provider.

Curran said that by removing the "no children" requirement the new law is not providing an alternative to Aid for Dependent Children. (ADC)

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"Those who can get ADC will do so," Curran said.

WHILE THERE IS no prohibition against ADC recipients participating in the Displaced Homemaker programs, Curran said those who do not qualify for any other type of assistance get first priority.

Emphasis is placed on education and job training and developing job seeking skills.

"Since most of the people who come to the programs for help have not sought or held a job for several years, and sometimes not at all, they either have no skills or the skills they had are obsolete," Curran said.

In addition to providing emotional support, the displaced homemaker centers direct participants to adult education and community college programs as well as federally subsidized job training programs.

The centers also provide information on obtaining educational loans and grants and conduct job seeking skill training such as resume writing and interviewing.

For the 1983-84 fiscal year, the legislature has appropriated $374,000 for 10 centers. The funding was the same amount as last year.

Conference geared to parents of gifted

Seminars and workshops of interest to parents of gifted children will be presented during the fifth annual Conference on Gifted Education. Sponsored by Roeper Review and The Academy of the Gifted, the conference will be Saturday, Oct. 29, in Roeper City and Country School's Birmingham campus.

The conference will begin with a dinner and keynote speech Friday, Oct. 28, in Somerset Inn, Troy. Nick Colangelo, assistant professor of education at the University of Iowa, will talk on "Giftedness, Moral Development and Social Responsibility."

Other topics will include "Parenting for Gifted Children," "Who's Afraid of a Gifted Kid?," "Special Concerns of Black Parents of Gifted," and "The Gifted Child in the Nuclear Age."

The Somerset Inn event begins at 5:30 p.m. and costs $25. Saturday's programs will run from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and cost $20. The package price for both days is $40.

For registration call Karen Parkhurst or Richard Watson at Oakland Schools, 858-1999, or write Roeper Review Conference, P.O. Box 329, Bloomfield Hills 48013.