

On learned parenthood

By MARY CONNELLY

When parents give birth to a child they somehow have to get the infant out of the crib and into adulthood.

Child-rearing, as old as the parent-child relationship, calls for know-how and some measure of agreement between spouses about methods to be used.

Even in an age of mass circulation family magazines and how-to manuals about child-rearing, a person's childhood experiences are the primary source of child-rearing ideas as a parent.

"THE PRIMARY SOURCE is always the parenting one has had," said Bloomfield Hills marriage counselor and psychiatric social worker Jane Beer.

But while direct experiences as a child may be most influential in determining attitudes toward parenting, the old cliché "like mother, like daughter" does not always apply.

Children may react to their parenting experiences by assuming the stance opposite that practiced by their parents, according to Nathan C. Claunch of Farmington Hills, consulting psychologist and marriage counselor. Parents who are overly strict, for example, may raise offspring who become overly-permissive parents.

"THE KIND of parent you become can also be influenced by the type of parent your spouse is.

"Someone who discounts your feelings is not going to be as good a parent as someone who accepts your feelings," said Claunch. "And you won't be as good a parent if you are married to such a person."

Educational experiences and motivation to become informed are other factors which may influence the type of parent you are or might become, commented Southfield psychologist and marriage counselor, Morris Davidson.

"THE MORE education a person has, the more likely they are to study various methods and use new findings in child-raising and psychology," Ms. Beer said.

Claunch commented that the use of magazine articles and books on child-rearing does not always produce marked changes in parenting behavior.

"They are used partly to confirm what we already believe and partly for new information which is helpful but usually doesn't make a big change in what people do," Claunch said.

"IN THE CASE of reasonably happy parents, good information from articles often provides permission to do what they would like to do but which they might not have done because it disagrees with the parenting of their parents."

"Articles about being nice to the kids in your house are less helpful than articles about being nice to the kid inside you," Claunch said.

"One of the best ways to meet the needs of kids is to make sure your own needs are met. People who are feeling good about themselves tend to parent kids who feel good about themselves."

OBSERVATION of child-rearing methods practiced by friends

They won at bridge

Bill Linto and Keith Rossin led the north and south players in bridge games at the Every Wednesday Duplicate Club this week. They were followed by Dr. and Mrs. Robert Sobel; Woody Ott and Ed Knight; and Ed Welton and Carl Manogian.

In east and west play the winners were Roy Good and Bill Geary; Dr. and Mrs. Louis Shvovitz; Lillian Smith and Skip Walker; and Esther Knight and Pauline Stewart.

The club meets each week in the Southfield Parks and Recreation Building, the civic center. Guests are welcome, but must arrive before 7:45 p.m. to arrange for a table.

or other family members can also contribute to a couple's child-raising formula.

But some of the professionals say more can be done to train couples in their role as parents. Claunch suggested the use of parent effectiveness training courses or transactional analysis workshops.

Davidson encouraged parents to enroll in college-level courses in the area of child development.

ITEMIZING other possible in-

formation routes Davidson said, "I could see walk-in clinics where a couple planning to have a child have the opportunity to walk in and sit down with a professional or a group of people led by a professional."

He also suggested baby clinics "where parents with young kids could come in and discuss what kind of things they were experiencing rather than depending entirely on memory and trial-and-error."

Davidson and Claunch also said

parenting would be strengthened if increased educational efforts were made among young people.

DAVIDSON supported the establishment of pre-school programs built into school curriculums which would enlist the skills of older students. Acting as aides to the children, students would learn to understand the youngsters' experiences.

Claunch suggested school sponsorship of teen-age involvement and activity in day-care settings.



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