

A Series: THE BLACK FAMILY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 80's

PART VI - OUR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION IN THE '80s

By Maudra Jones

The challenges of the 90's have forced upon all of us a greater concern for making the educational experiences of our youth relevant to the needs of our society, in these complex times. The youth of our community deserve our very best efforts to insure that their part in the "dream becomes a reality." The family is the most important link in the education process - learning and the desire to learn begins at home. When parents fail to recognize their responsible role as the child's first teacher, that is the beginning of a "dream deferred".

Edward "Able" Robinson, as education consultant for NAPP, Inc. (Neighborhood Adult Participation Project, Inc.) in Huntington Park, California, was a moving force in organizing and mobilizing parents to become more informed, involved and influential in charting the education course of the youth in that community. Robinson wrote (in one of the NAPP publications titled "Some Of The Most Dangerous People May Be Parents If..."): "You, the parent can be the most important key in

opening the minds of your children to the adventure of knowledge which will enable them to travel the highway of life's long journey of creative learning and self-improvement...As a parent, you also may become your child's most difficult stumbling block to success." Given the fact that "children live what they learn," the early "lessons" at home can determine what children become and how they relate to the experiences on the "highway of life's journey" - how they, in fact, relate to family, church, school, friends, community, politics, voting, work, drugs, alcohol, crime, technology, TV,



Maudra Jones one!...Talk to them...Above all, LOVE them. When we begin with really loving our children and teaching them to love, like the "fruit of the spirit", everything else follows.

During and after slavery, when the desire to read and to become

children should begin at birth. The "labors of our fathers", especially those who suffered, bled and died for our right to read and to become educated, must not be in vain. The simple fact is that our children, in 1983, can be "blessed by our service" - if we but SERVE - diligently, wholeheartedly and faithfully in our jobs as parents.

Not long ago, I was encouraged during a conversation with a young mother of two children, ages seven and eleven. She shared a recent article which she

Carlos and to all the children of the world". Gwen Sisson, executive secretary, began her article with the following Baha'i Prayer:

"Blessed is the spot, and the house, and the place, and the city, and the heart, and the mountain, and the refuge, and the cave, and the valley, and the land, and the sea, and the island, and the meadow where mention of God hath been made, and His praise glorified."

Believing that religion is the fundamental basis

Sisson is a "modern-day mom" with views on life and parenting reflective of the wisdom of Sojourner Truth and Mary McLeod Bethune. Having read about their illuminating lives, coupled with her own sense of duty, Mrs. Sisson began the learning process for her two children at the time each was born. She related that prayer continued to be a daily practice during her pregnancy, with a focus on their health - both spiritually and physically. She was one of the first mothers to request an alternate

"WITHIN THE FAMILY, CHILDREN LEARN HOW, IN THEIR TURN, TO RELATE THEMSELVES TO OTHERS...WITHIN THE ENVELOPING LIFE OF THE FAMILY, EACH CHILD LEARNS WHO HE IS, WHAT HE IS AND WHAT HE MAY BECOME - WHAT IT IS, IN FACT, TO BE A FULL HUMAN BEING..." MARGARET MEAD

radio (you name it).

Dr. Alvin Poussaint asked the question, in his recent address, "What are you doing with your children in the formative years?" (The first five years). Part of the answer came with his admonition: "READ to your children from day

educated was like a "consuming fire", there were no books available on "How Children Learn", "Parenting Education" or "Rearing Children" or "Black Child Care". Yet parents, our great-grandparents and grandparents, knew that education of their



You have no right to enjoy a child's share in the labor of your fathers, unless your children are to be blest by your service.

had written and for any home environment and the foundation "children Amber and of any community, Mrs.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS procedure for activating the baby's breathing - that of allowing the mother to caress the baby in a quiet atmosphere instead of the traditional slap on the buttocks - thus preventing shock to the baby's nervous system. Dr. Poussaint's recommendation was not alien to this mother, who did indeed begin to read and talk with her children from "day one". And from that day forward, she related: "Everytime I performed a task in the child's presence, I told him or her what I was doing". She no doubt understood that "growing into maturity is a process of sharing meanings, values, purposes and power, with ourselves and other people in a world where constructive sharing is the only alternative to mutual destruction."

(To be continued next week).

Kincaid's FLOWER SHOP

1820 E. LAKE MEAD

642-8380

Come in and help us

Celebrate CHRISTMAS IN JULY!

20% to 70% OFF

July 25th to August 1st

COLORING CONTEST

For All Kids 3 to 13

Come in and get your entry now!

Great Prizes & Art Show

Call about our

CENTERPIECE DESIGN CLASS!!

Join the Original

ROSE-A-MONTH CLUB

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

ATTENTION, ALL MEMBERS!!!

Board Meeting - 7:30 p.m.

SCLC Meeting - 8:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 28, 1983

Meeting will be held at

TRIED STONE BAPTIST CHURCH

621 WEST CAREY

For more information, call

646-0550

(9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Agenda: Voter Registration

Busing

Martin Luther King's Memorial Day

The Use of Hollow Point Ammunition

by Metro Policemen

There will be open discussions for attendees to voice their opinions on these and other topics.

THE COMMUNITY IS INVITED

TO ATTEND