

Education

SCHOOL TALK

By Dr. Marshall C. Darnell

"Whatever Is Necessary Is Possible"

By Dorothy Perry

"What is necessary is possible" could well have been the philosophy of the Clark County School District when the School Success Program was conceived. It became evident that the dropout rate in Las Vegas was in keeping with the nation -- about a 75% graduation rate. Under the auspices of the Pupil Personnel Department, the School Success Program has been in effect for one year.

It was the intent of the program consultant to initially collect data from other districts as to effective preventative and intervention programs and begin networking with the community agencies and representatives regarding services offered.

As a result of community interest, a group called City was formed. Citizens Interested in Today's Youth, which include representatives from Southern Nevada Employment Training Program, National Association of Latin Americans, Clark County Community College, Henderson and North Las Vegas Recreations, Juvenile Courts, Nevada Parole, Boys/Girls Club, and Clark

County School District, just to name a few. This organization is working on gang diversion activities and sponsored a district-wide seminar on summer youth activities.

One of the newest ventures of the program are Instructional Clinics which are located at seven different locations throughout the school district. These clinics accommodate students who have been excluded from their home school for non-attendance and are invited to attend a clinic which is strictly voluntary. Students may earn one-half credit up to one and one-half by attending and satisfactorily completing 60 hours of work for each one-half credit. Students will be encouraged to return to their home school for the second semester or attend Sunset or an adult education site.

Research shows that dropouts are identifiable by the third grade. One of the most common characteristics whether the students are this young or in high school, is low self-esteem. With this information, a committee is reviewing various self-esteem programs that are being used in the district as well as in other districts and will be in-servicing represen-

tatives from each school as to what is available and what a vital component the feeling of self-worth is to any success, especially academic achievement.

UNLV students in education classes have volunteered their time to work in some schools as tutors. This program has started off small but hopefully will expand next semester and next year.

"American youth drop out of high school for a variety of reasons which have changed very little over the past 20 years. Although they are often interrelated and overlap, it is possible to group them into three major categories: student's in-school experiences, students' family condition and work/economic factors." This quote was taken from a publication called "School Dropouts, Everybody's Problem". This title summarizes everything; we as family, community, business, and school district must work in partnership to see that our children are educated in the schools and not on the streets. If you would like to become involved or need a speaker at a club or borrow a movie called "Dropout", please call me at 799-5480.

Dorothy Perry, The Clark County School District School Services Consultant, has provided this guest article.

CHILD WATCH

By Marian Wright Edelman
President
Children's Defense Fund

Teaching Teens About Consequences

Michael Carrera is a dynamic man who runs a program for disadvantaged black teenagers in the tough Harlem neighborhood in New York City. He has a favorite story he likes to tell about a young man in the program named Gerald, who one day showed up several hours late for his job. Carrera took out of his wallet the exact amount of money the youth lost by missing those hours of work -- it came to \$6.70 -- and showed it to Gerald. "From that point on," Carrera laughs, "he was a minimum of one hour early."

Teaching teens about consequences is what Carrera's program, the Children's Aid Society's multiservice center for youth, is all about. The 66 teens enrolled in the program learned about the consequences of irresponsible actions -- whether the lesson is that showing up late can cost money, or that too-early pregnancy and parenthood can cost a future. On the flip side, they also learn about the positive consequences of trying hard and achieving.

The Center's program has five different components, all of which fit together and reinforce the message that these youths can succeed if they take responsibility for themselves and their lives.

First, all teens in the program attend weekly sessions on family life and

sex education, which teach them to look at sexuality in proportion to the rest of their lives. A graduation ceremony at the end of the course -- complete with diplomas, speeches, and a dinner -- give teen participants a sense of self-esteem and accomplishment.

Second, the teens get a chance to participate in individualized sports like tennis, golf, and squash, sports that are especially good at building self-discipline because they require playing under control in order to win.

Third, the teens learn to express themselves creatively through weekly workshops with actors from the Harlem-based National Black Theatre (NBT).

Fourth, the youths get help preparing for the world of work through the Center's Job Club. They attend weekly classes in career awareness and job preparation, culminating in actual work experience in a guaranteed summer job.

Finally, teens learn how to take care of themselves by receiving health and medical services tailored to their specific needs. Enrollees get a thorough physical exam and whatever tests are needed. Based on this information, contraceptive counseling along with weekly followup sessions is provided to those teens that are already sexually-active and thus at risk of too-early pregnancy of parenthood.

After just one year in operation, it is clear that the program works. Not one of the young women has become pregnant nor, to the best of the staff's knowledge, has any of the young men fathered a child. All teens are in school and attending classes regularly. Parent participation in all facets of the program helps them to "sustain this positive path that their kids are on," says Carrera.

For more information about the program, write Dr. Michael Carrera, c/o The Children's Aid Society, 105 E. 22nd Street, New York City, NY 10010.

NAACP Promoting 4th Annual ACT-SO Competition

The Las Vegas Branch of the NAACP is promoting its fourth annual Academic Cultural Technological Scientific Olympics (Act-So) competition.

All Afro-American high school students in grades 9-12, who are interested in competing in the areas of humanities, performing arts, visual arts and/or sciences, need to be present at the orientation scheduled for Nov. 22, 1986 at 6 p.m. The orientation will be held at the local NAACP branch office located in the Nuclues Plaza.

For further information call 455-5356 or 646-1662.

Students Raise Funds

The Clark County Community College Respiratory Therapy students recently manned the CCCC booth at the North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce Fairshow. The students provided information about the College, its respiratory therapy program, and lung disorders in general. The students' booth featured handcrafted Holly Bells, hand painted porcelain Christmas tree ornaments, reversible indoor/outdoor thermometers, and 1987 reversible wooden wall scroll calendars. The students were, and are, raising funds to support a trip to Salt Lake City, Utah for a clinical rotation through the University of Utah Medical Center as part of their training. Respiratory Therapy is an Allied Health specialty involved in the treatment of patients with impairment of the heart-lung system. The respiratory therapy practitioner works with other health care professionals to deliver effective and comprehensive health care under the direction of a physician.

While at the University, the CCCC students will become involved in the care of patients in its many intensive care units at the University. The experience will also provide insight into the many areas of specialization which a Respiratory Therapist may enter. The students are continuing to sell these items at the College. Anyone interested in helping their cause may contact any of the students at the College or call 643-6060, ext. 32.

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