

Education

SCHOOL TALK

By Dr. Marshall C. Darnell

Wasted Potential

Parents are sometimes confronted with a unique problem -- they have a son or daughter, who has demonstrated through early childhood, an above average verbal ability. The child learns to speak in articulate sentences long before children their age would have a grasp of such concepts. Without formal training, many of these students learn to read on their own; and, they show unusual ability at memorized. They have a curiosity for everything around them. For those parents who have such children, there is a pride in accomplishment for what the child is doing and maybe a concern as to what they will do later in life.

Each of us as parents realize that the formative years are the ones most crucial to the development of any person. Through these preschool and elementary school years, as parents and members of an extended family, we encourage the child to succeed at every endeavor and we place high expectancies on the student in school as well as at home. Then for some, things start to go wrong. It may be for any number of reasons or circumstances, but there are some obvious signs. For these bright young people, we have taught them a sense of independence and we have taught them to question. But then we also expect that certain standards will be accepted without the

young person having a chance to even ask a question about the standard placed before them. Then there is the student who begins developing his own set of values and these may be in direct contrast to those held by family. The select a new set of friends. Many of these young people find the avenue into the drug culture. Most leave school before graduation and some leave home to live on their own. The story just reported here is not new, it has been told and retold countless times.

As parents we are all aware that at an early age in life problems may begin but do not manifest themselves until the student is in junior or senior high school. We try then as parents, as school officials, and community members to remedy a situation which occurred many years before. We sometimes treat the symptoms and not the cause.

Two weeks ago, in this column, we had an opportunity to look at a number of success programs which are being offered students in the Clark County School District. These students may have left school early or been confronted with a series of problems so intense that their own experience level will not allow them to cope with the circumstances. Potential of these students is unlimited. In many cases here are young people with exceptional ability who can

still graduate from high school, attend a trade school or college, obtain an education which produces not only career opportunities but an opportunity for worthwhile living. The programs which were described by Dorothy Perry mentioned success because that is what it is all about. Taking potential failure, turning it around and giving young people a new opportunity to realize their real opportunities.

If you know of young people who have changed their behavior, if school is no longer important, grades meaningless, and the family unit less important than the peer unit, then we need to treat the cause not just the problems at hand. There are programs and people available who can help, but we must ask for that help. There is a statement made which we have all heard, "a mind is a terrible thing to waste". This is true not just for the student who never gets an education, but also for that student who has turned away from the opportunity.

The nation today has scholars, scientists, physicians, and craftsmen with potential and ability. They may be only 15 or 16 years old at this time, but provided with guidance and support, many of these students who could be lost will "turn around" and the potential available will not be wasted.

ATTC Principal Calls For More Emphasis On Education and Student Achievement

"If we want well-educated, well-rounded young adults, we should be placing more emphasis on education and student achievement," states Area Technical Trade Center (ATTC) Principal Dan Berg. Berg's remark is based on a recent study which suggests that part-time jobs for teenagers are not all they are cracked up to be.

Going one step further, Berg conducted a study of his own among students enrolled in vocational programs at ATTC. ATTC is an elective extension which enhances the academic curriculum of each student's home high school.

His survey of 361 students reveals that 55 percent have jobs and that they work from

four to 40 hours weekly. Berg said, "This clearly shows that the work ethic for teenagers has become pervasive in our society."

Of students included in the personal survey, Berg stated they all agreed that schoolwork was adversely affected if they worked more than 15 hours per week. Another less than positive finding was that students felt their school and social life was rendered less desirable if they worked.

Despite the somewhat negative findings, Berg says there are a lot of positives to be found. For example, students holding down jobs related to their vocational specialty or potential career field after graduation seemed to derive more positive benefit from the work

experience. All students surveyed enjoyed the financial freedom afforded by their jobs.

Seventeen percent of the students who attend ATTC have a grade point average of 'B' or better. Berg says this is a good indicator, that, in spite of job pressures, students are still capable of performing well. He stresses that it is the shared responsibility of parents, schools and employers to protect the educational interest and welfare of young adults.

Courses available to students at ATTC include: Construction Trades, Culinary Arts, Diesel Mechanics, Electronics, Health Occupations and Hotel Operations.

Fashion Show Mall Hosts International Holiday Festival

The Fashion Show Mall, the city's most prestigious mall is hosting an International Holiday Festival from December 1-24, 1986.

Celebrating the season are talented groups of artists, young and old, who will be performing between the hours of 10:00am and 6:00pm Monday through Thursday and between the hours of 10:00am and 9:00pm Friday through Sunday.

Children from the Clark County School District, the Girl Scouts, and many talented professional musicians will perform a festive repertoire of classical

and contemporary international Christmas music. All this for you to enjoy and observe free of charge.

Guest appearances by accomplished local artists will highlight this festival on the weekends. String

quartets, flute and harp duets and mini orchestras will be on hand to toast in the season with gaiety and brilliance.

Join the fun, join the festivities. Engage in this heartwarming holiday experience.

McWilliams School To Observe 25th Anniversary

J.T. McWilliams Elementary School, 1315 Hiawatha Avenue will conduct a special program December 10, 7 p.m. in recognition of the school's 25th anniversary. The date of the program coincides with the birthday of the school's namesake, the late J.T. McWilliams.

birthday cake will be served. In preparation for the event, efforts are underway to locate surviving members of the McWilliams family to invite them to the program. Anyone with information about McWilliam's relatives is requested to call J.T. McWilliams Elementary School at 799-4770.

A history of Mr. McWilliams has been compiled by the school's A.T. classes and will be presented. A special

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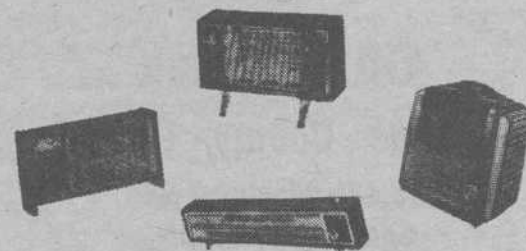
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