

## EDUCATION

In today's complex society, education is our only hope for the future.

Most of the school dropouts in Syracuse come from the lower socioeconomic areas. For example, in 1960 there were 541 school dropouts. Of this number, 370, or 69 percent were from the most depressed section of the community. This section contains 44 percent of the city's population.

In our lower income areas, a much higher proportion of dropouts leave school before reaching the ninth grade. Nearly 20 percent of low-income dropouts leave in the seventh or eighth grade; whereas, less than 7 percent drop out at these grade levels in the rest of the city.

Over half of the boys in our low-income areas are 2 or more years behind the grade normally attained by their age group on a citywide basis.

Approximately one-third of our low-income dropouts come from broken homes or one-parent families while in the higher income areas the proportion of dropouts with broken homes is only one-half as great.

To counteract these problems, the mayor's commission for youth has developed the following programs:

1. A new and creative reading and language skills program to educate youths who find it hard to read and speak effectively.
2. A curriculum materials development program to create entirely new curricular materials for education programs designed for low-income groups.
3. Guidance programs specifically designed to help youth and their families through counseling, to meet their immediate problems and to develop insight into ways of handling difficulties in the future.
4. Work and education programs emphasizing vocational education, and providing an alternative curriculum that would lead to a high school diploma.
5. A program to overcome the wide gulf that exists between low-income populations and the school by developing community schools and neighborhood study centers where school personnel can work informally with low-income families. A variety of recreational, vocational, and educational programs will be offered to serve the needs and interests of neighborhood residents.

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

We have estimated, on the basis of available data, that over half of the 16- and 17-year-old boys in our low-income areas, who are out of school are idle. More than 25 percent of youths who are actively seeking positions are unable to find them. The problem among Negro youths is far greater than it is among white youths.

In the field of employment the focus of the commission's programs is on training of people in work skills and habits so they can enter profitable employment in those trades and occupations that are developing in our community. Obviously, this is the most direct way to reduce poverty, reduce our welfare caseloads, and increase the competence of our citizens so that they become taxpayers rather than tax users.

Among these programs will be skill centers to train people for the labor-hungry trades and services; work stations where people will be trained in actual commercial or industrial settings in cooperation with the owner; and workcrews to develop skills while doing necessary and important work in the community.

A strong educational component is included as part of the training plans. Through participation of the city school system we are making arrangements for remedial education, as well as trade instructions. We are also planning to develop a high school equivalency program for people who can't go back to school.

The mayor's commission has already enlisted the cooperation of the business and industrial community as well as labor to make this employment program a success.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

The community services programs of the mayor's commission are designed to develop the competence of our low-income population through self-help and self-improvement programs. In addition, we are concerned with getting the right service, to the right people, at the right time and to coordinate all the efforts of the agencies now serving these areas. The mayor's commission is committed to the philosophy that the people who are served by programs must