

with school work. Through step-by-step success, both parents and children set successively higher goals, thereby building an improved self-image.

While training parents to motivate their children and assist in their education, the project also attempts to encourage parents and parent figures to continue their own education under such programs as those of the Economic Opportunity Act, the Vocational Education Act, and the Manpower Development and Training Act. Such interest in self-improvement is likely to have a beneficial effect not only on parents and children, but also on the rest of the community.

The attempt to increase the involvement of parents in the education of their children and to encourage their own self-improvement is made chiefly through parent leaders chosen from each school community. The use of residents of each project school area was aimed at bridging the communication gap that often exists between home and school. Chief responsibilities of these leaders are to make home contacts with parents and to work with them in study-discussion meetings. These meetings are devoted to various topics that concern family life and education.

For the a number of years Cincinnati has conducted a parent study-discussion program through the use of such lay leaders. School administrators report that parents who have participated in the program show a more cooperative attitude toward the school. Most of this study-discussion work, however, has been conducted in the suburban areas. The parent education program is intended to expand the very limited exploratory efforts in this vein among disadvantaged families.

#### *Summary and conclusions*

The parent education project was aimed at helping disadvantaged children through services to their parents. The chief focus of the project efforts was in helping parents to understand their children and themselves, and to become more involved in the education of their children through a realization of the importance of their own parental role. To achieve these goals one paid leader was selected from the parents in each school area. These leaders were given intensive training that included general leadership development, instruction in planning and conducting discussion programs, information on cultural and educational opportunities offered by the community and training in the use of resources and agencies.

In all, this training was given to parent leaders representing 32 of the 40 target public schools. By publicizing the project and contacting parents in their homes, these leaders involved a total of 1,626 parents in one or more study-discussion programs. Average attendance for each session included about half the parents who had been enrolled from the area.

Responses on the parent participant survey and oral reports of parent leaders point to many worthwhile gains in parents' relationships with children and school and understanding of themselves and their role as parents. No comparisons of pre-post project gains were possible except for the teacher survey, where target teacher ratings indicate some improvement in parent-school relationships.

These signs of success suggest that the services of this project be continued in the same essential structure as before. Careful attention should be given to interpreting the project services to school staff and to community. Special efforts should be made to involve male parents and parents of nonpublic school children. Finally, gains made in the first project year should be built upon by extending the strengths of the program and providing follow-up contact with the specific parents served.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

#### *Parent Education*

##### *Description*

Parent education classes were offered to parents of secondary school pupils under the auspices of the area adult school. Participants studied home-school and parent-child relationships, the curriculum, and problems of adolescence. A specialist worked with teachers, interpreted the program to administrators, and conducted inservice education. Seventeen teachers assigned to the 22 classes devoted 2 hours per week to instruction and 1 hour to consultation with parents.

##### *Objectives*

To improve parental understanding of the educational program designed for the child.

To develop parental support and involvement in the educational program.