

Fighting illiteracy

Study recommends middle school programs

By ERIC GRIBBIN
Staff Writer

To fight illiteracy, programs should focus on students in the middle grades, according to a recent study by the UNC Center for Early Adolescence.

"A large number of illiterate people realized that they were illiterate in the fifth to seventh grades," said Judith Davidson, co-author of the study. "The figures we have about dropouts show that the decision to drop is usually reached in the middle grades."

The nationwide Project for Adolescent Literacy study was designed to determine what adolescent literacy programs are successful and the reasons for their success, Davidson said.

The three-year study looked at 32 adolescent literacy programs in and out of schools, she said.

"The successful programs had a common core. At the base of this core was an understanding of who adolescents are and what could help

them. "The sad part is that there are so few programs to deal with the number of early adolescents who need help. According to the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress), 6 percent of 9-year-olds are illiterate and 40 percent of 13-year-olds cannot read their textbooks. There is a wide spectrum of needs, and for many students, these needs are not being met," Davidson said.

James Cunningham, an assistant professor of education, said those numbers were not surprising.

"It's difficult to know exactly what the figures are," Cunningham said. "Most of the people who do not read well are people who have been to school and did not benefit from the instruction. It takes a specialized program to help people. The (UNC Early Adolescent) Center has identified programs around the country with specialized knowledge. This is why the center's study is good." Although none of the 32 programs

in the study are located in North Carolina, the state is making a substantial effort to fight adolescent illiteracy, said Dennis Davis, director of the Division of Support Programs of the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

"I think that North Carolina has done a lot on adolescent literacy programs. We have used the term remediation, not literacy," he said. "We are spending \$80 million on literacy through our Chapter 1 programs (federally funded educational programs). We are also spending \$23 million on programs that have been earmarked for dropout prevention programs that deal with literacy."

There are state programs that mirror national programs, he said, but the state's Basic Education Program, which should reduce class sizes and guarantee additional services for all students by 1993, is the best way to guarantee an improvement in adolescent literacy, Davis said.

Parachute accident causes stir

By LAURA FRANCIS
Staff Writer

In the aftermath of a fatal skydiving accident, controversy over federal regulation of parachuting laws has erupted, but organizations representing the sport maintain that present regulations are satisfactory.

On April 2, Ivan Lester McGuire, 35, jumped from an airplane with video equipment but forgot to attach a parachute to his pack.

"Many people are saying it's a stupid thing," said Kevin Gibson, director of publications for the U.S. Parachute Association. McGuire was videotaping other divers when he jumped and apparently did not realize that his parachute was not attached to his pack. It may seem like an obvious factor to overlook, Gibson said, but he may have been

too busy with the other equipment.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which regulates the U.S. Parachute Association, requires that emergency parachute building and packing must follow governmental regulations and that each diver must wear a seatbelt in the airplane.

"The FAA does not compromise on rules in the aircraft, but beyond there, the FAA generally leaves parachute rules to be policed by the U.S. Parachute Association," said John Roseborough, an aviation safety inspector.

The U.S. Parachute Association is a private group of several thousand members that trains skydiving instructors, Gibson said. The association has basically been self-regulated for 25 years.

"Recently, the FAA wanted to totally deregulate because we do

such a good job, but (the U.S. Parachute Association) still wanted the government to have some control," he said.

Divers must also wear a helmet and a flotation device (if they are within one mile of a body of water), and they must be a legal adult or at least 16 years old with parental consent.

Nancy Fayhard, bookkeeper at the Franklin County Sport Parachute Center, where McGuire died, said the accident has been unfairly publicized. "Rep. Miller is going after us," she said.

Rep. George Miller of Durham, who is known for his work to pass stricter government regulations for parachutists, could not be reached for comment. Miller unsuccessfully introduced a bill in 1985 to require licenses and liability insurance at sport parachuting schools.

Last paper is Thurs., April 21; Classified deadline is noon, Wed., April 20

Rally

Morehead Planetarium parking lot. "We wanted to pay a silent tribute to the women who have been raped, assaulted and even murdered in that parking lot," said Patty Hurst.

Protest

federal charges for violations of First Amendment rights and undue use of force, pending consultation with a lawyer," he said.

Observers' opinions about the incident varied. Freshman Jeanne Jordan and sophomore Quinn Brown said the police were unjustly harassing the demonstrators. "They weren't interfering with Lenoir customers," said Jordan.

Juniors Sterling Gilreath and Jeff Templeton said they supported the police. "We came here to eat, not to

Allocations

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Two groups with especially small allocations, the Korean Student Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, withdrew their requests before the emergency meeting, Ferris said.

The 11-group addition to the committee's funding list came from newly-organized groups, groups who missed the budget hearing deadline last year and groups who don't usually ask for funding, he said.

Women's Forum co-chairwoman. Throughout the march, participants chanted, sang and held signs stating the cause of the march.

"However we dress, wherever we

listen to protest. The Pit is the place for protest," said Gilreath.

Jeff Templeton agreed. As employees of a private corporation, Marriott officials had the right to request that the protestors leave, he said.

Sophomore Lauren Brike said she was disturbed by the implications of the incident. The situation indicates that the police aren't capable of handling explosive situations, she said.

"I was surprised when the police arrived," Brike said. "They were just doing a theatrical presentation and handing out literature, no different from that of any other group. The police came in and converged upon them, pushing them out in the hall. The police handled it badly... Their reaction was disturbing."

go, yes means yes, no means no," the marchers chanted.

The march ended in the Pit, and more speakers addressed the crowd. "Pause to reflect on the victims that couldn't be with us tonight and the survivors," Sitton said.

Hurst said, "If we can somehow harness this community feeling, we could support those victims of sexual assault. Gather strength from this time and take this strength home and use it."

"We have to start talking about sexual assault with our family and friends. It has to become something that is all right to talk about."

The march's accomplishments should not be forgotten, Hurst said.

"The one thing we can do after this night is not to forget, and to get involved maybe on a personal level through the Rape Crisis Center," she said. "We have got to go beyond financial support to emotional, spiritual, public and political support."

"If you receive anything from this night, I hope it will be the sense of community. Start to build on this sense of community."

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