Booklet to help the teacher cope

TOM McINTYRE

Teachers who think carefully before they react have a better chance of coping with students who curse, cheat, steal and generally disrupt a class.

This is the concensus of opinion developed by a special N.C. Association of Educators Task Force on Discipline.

The group's findings have been printed in a 16-page booklet, which has been distributed to more than 50,000 NCAE members across the state. The booklet text treats such diverse discipline problems as student profanity, cheating, lack of attention and even parent-teacher confrontations. And in each case, the task force recommends that teachers think before acting and to try the alternatives sugested by the booklet.

Spanking is not one of the recommended alternatives.

Elaine Poovey, who works with the gifted and talented program in the Asheville schools and chairperson of the task force, said, "We concluded that many discipline problems are worsened because a teacher reacts emotionally to an emotional situation before giving the matter some good hard thinking."

The task force began its study with the premise that most students are self-disciplined and that both teachers and students are human and not perfect.

The booklet - "Positive Approaches To Discipline" - first of all asks the teachers if they can agree that most students are self-disciplined and that discipline is management rather than punishment among other things.

The teacher is also asked to determine if he or she has set aside personal problems, if they are in good health physically and emotionally and if they are in control of their temper.

Some examples of the data included in the booklet are: What do you do when a student is involved in cursing or using an obscene gesture? The teacher is charged with thinking about what caused the behavior; (A) peer pressure, (B) anger, (C) attempt at comedy, (D) attention, (E) failure in school work, (F) lack of belonging.

The teacher must think about his or her reaction when the action occured and what the student's attitude is about changing his behavior.

The booklet suggests the teacher try ignoring the behavior if it is a first time, staying calm and watching the reaction, discuss with the student what has happened, suggest acceptable substitute actions or words when such a need arises, and lastly, confer with the parents.

When you have a confrontation with a student:

Think what causd the confrontation, determine if your authority is being challenged, if there will be a winner and what will be the results.

Teachers are asked to try recognizing that challenges are a natural part of the growing up process, discussing with classes at the beginning of the term the rules and regulations also conduct expected, encouraging students to challenge in a positive manner, respecting the rights of all members of the class, using a warning system, but be consistent, using a disciplinary technique such as specific classroom placement, detention, extra work, physical work and-or separation from the class.

When you have a confrontation with a parent:

Think - are you being challenged, is the confrontation necessary, will you need a witness, will this change your relationship.

Teachers are informed they might try - starting the conference with a positive statement, like asking the parent what the student has explained, state the school position concerning the problem, ask the parent if there are quetions in areas of misunderstanding, let the parent state his or her opinion about the school position, determine if the school position conflicts with that of the home, keeping the parent informed of the student's progress of lack of progress.

Will this booklet information help teachers better deal with discipline problems in the class? The NCAE seems to think so.

But, like the task force determined, we have to recognize that teachers and students are only human and not perfect, so only tme and method practice will tell.

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Showing a new face

Girl Scouting shows us a new face--and at the same time reaffirms its timeless values--with a striking new emblem that is showing up everywhere these days.

The familiar trefoil, which has identified the Girl Scouts for almost 65 years, has been redesigned to show a pattern of girls' faces. You get the feeling, that these girls are young, vital, eagerly looking toward the future. The idea of growth is there, somehow, and the idea of diversity comes through very clearly. These are the things that Girl Scouting is all about. They sum up the distinctive service that the organization renders to our country.

The trefoil shape stands for the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise, which has been made by every one of the 40 million girls and adults who have belonged to this great youth movement since 1912. "I will try," they say: to serve God; to serve our country and mankind; to live by the Girl Scout Law, a moral code that has influenced the lives of all those 40 million Americans.

Local Girls Scouts are displaying the emblem with pride--and we are proud of them for doing so. We wish them well in their endeavors, and we urge them to keep up the good work.

READER DIALOGUE

Remember Narcisus?

To the editor,

Remember Narcisus! He was a beautiful youth who fell in love with his reflection in a spring.

It would seem we have another Narcisus in our midst. He is better known as "Mr. Big" and he doesn't like to familiarize himself with others - only his special friends. That is he disassociates himself with all expect the special interests until just prior to and on election day.

At this time he comes on with a hypocritical grin or sneer to those who have helped elect him in the first place. Then after he is re-elected he does an about face on the citizens at large to serve a selected few.

This is indeed a Narcisus - one who has fallen in love with his own reflection on a spring of self-conceit and decait, a cistern of no substance.

This situation has existed in the Historical City for a number of years.

I realize as many others have that some segments of the press has had a hands off attitude as far as the city administration is concerned, choosing to tell the citizens instead they never had it so good. This brings up the question - who has sold out to whom?

I look forward with anticipation to seeing new faces in the traces this round of election.

EVERETTE PEARSON
Kings Mountain

Poets Corner

PLEASE HELP ME

Please help me, I'm about to go
Help me, please don't say no.
I'm so young, it's hard to fight back
I need help, someone has to attack.
Give me a chance to live as other kids do
Help me to have the chance God gave you.
Won't you help me and take a stand
Someone please come and hold my hand.
I'm only a poor, defenseless child
Hurry before this thing goes wild.
Please don't let it destroy me
Help stop this thing called Muscular Dystrophy.
Please contribute to the research centers
Stop this thing from entering
Don't let it take me before I get a chance to walk
Please help me, I want to grow up and talk.
Help me so I can growup and play ball
Please hurry, I want to grow to be tall.
Come and help me before it's too late
Come quickly before they close the gate.
Why won't you help me? I want to live!
Why won't you offer what you have to give?
Please help me before I go,
Help me, please don't say no.

DONNA HOLMAN
KMSHS STUDENT

Under research grant

Zoologist studying biological clocks

By LUCY COULBOURN
Special to Mirror-Herald

Dr. Herbert A. Underwood, assistant professor of zoology at North Carolina State University, has been given a National Institutes of Health Research Career Development Award for his research in biological clocks in lower vertebrates and mammals.

The award which is being funded through the federal National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, will carry a five-year salary supplement. Its purpose is to free a research scientist from administrative and teaching duties so that he can devote fulltime to his investigations.

Underwood, who joined the NCSU zoology faculty in 1975, has worked on a number of projects involving circadian rhythms (defined as any daily or rhythmic cycles that persist under constant conditions).

Cycles Are Numerous

In human beings, he says there are hundreds of these cycles but the one most people pay most attention to is the sleep-wake cycle. But there are also others which affect everything from temperature changes in the body, to electrical activity in the brain to hormone levels in the blood.

Underwood has theorized for some time that many psychological disorders in humans could be due to a person's internal clock being out of order and some recent studies in the field of psychiatry are pointing in this direction as well.

"People don't realize to what extent their well-being is dependent on these things happening at the right time," he commented.

Research in biological clocks is in the very early stages, and he thinks it is because researchers are beiginning to realize the importance of the clocks to human health that he received his award for the continuation of his studies.

Underwood's research is in the areas of the organization and physiology of biological clocks and the role of biological clocks in thermo-regulation and photoperiodism. Among other things, he is interested in the effect of light on the reproductive cycles of animals in which biological clocks play an important part.

All animals above the level of bacteria, he says, have biological clocks which serve to give internal cues to trigger daily body rhythms. Most of these are synchronized with the 24-hour rotation of the earth.

Cycle Is Split

He thinks he has already successfully located two parts of the brain in lizards which he has shown to be part of the lizard's "clock." By removing one portion he was able to split the lizard's cycle of activity into two parts, one reflecting a 25-hour cycle and the other a 23-hour cycle.

Underwood says he hopes to use part of his study time to visit other research laboratories and hopes to learn new techniques in biochemistry and neuroanatomy.

A Ph. D graduate of the University of Texas, he also completed post-doctoral studies there and at the Max Planck Institute for Behavioral Physiology, near Munich, Germany, where he worked under a grant from the German government.

KINGS MOUNTAIN
MIRROR-HERALD

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Solar design earns ALT cash

By BOB CAVIN
Special To Mirror-Herald

Some people might object to having 32 big, 55-gallon barrels of water stacked up in their living room, but not John Alt.

Alt, an instructor of interior design at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, has designed a whole house around the tiers of water drums, and he believes they will help reduce the cost of heating the structure by 50 to 90 percent.

Decorated to be an aesthetically appealing living room partition, the barrels of water coupled with an 18 by 24-foot glass area on the south side of the house form a passive solar energy system suitable for residential dwellings.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Hud) also believes in Alt's concept for a passive solar energy system and recently presented him with a $5,000 award for his design and a $7,000 construction award to help him get started building it.

HUD sponsored a nationwide competition for passive solar energy system designs for residential houses and gave out 145 design awards and 80 construction awards for the best systems.

Alt was one of seven North Carolinians who received design awards in the competition and he was the only designer in the state to win a construction award.

"The competition demonstrates a change in attitude by the government toward passive solar energy systems," Alt commented. "At first, the government chose not to support research on passive systems. Instead, it poured money into research on active solar energy systems."

Alt, who received the master of architecture degree from N.C. State University in 1976, has been interested in solar energy since 1972 when he helped Steve Baer, a pioneer in passive solar energy systems, construct the first home in the U.S. incorporating a passive system in New Mexico.

Alt's winning design incorporates a passive solar energy system in a 2,500 square-foot, two-story house. He plans to begin building the house in May.

"The passive solar energy system is the simplest, least expensive and perhaps the most effective way to reduce residential utility bills," Alt stated. "But few people understand how it works because active systems have received more attention by the government.

"To have a clear understanding of how the passive system works, it is best to know how the more commonly known active system works," he explained.

Active solar energy systems use "collectors" mounted outside of the house to trap the sun's heat, according to Alt. The heat is then transferred by pipes or duckwork to a storage unit usually in the basement of the house.

"When the living spaces need heat, a heat exchanger takes the hot air from the storage unit and pumps it into the house," Alt said.

"All this is done automatically just like a regualr heating system and the occupant would not know the house is being heated by the sun except that his fuel bills would be much less," he added.

However, it would take many years in fuel savings to pay for the active solar system, according to Alt, since they tend to be very expensive.

"An active solar system costs from $8,000 on up for an average house," he noted. "The expense of the active system is mostly for its mechanical devices and installation.

"But a passive solar energy system uses almost no mechanical devices," he pointed out. "Instead, it uses simple, creative ingenuity on the part of the designer.

"Generally, the extra cost involved in a passive system house is having a competent person design it," Alt stated. "The design fee would be substantially less than the cost of installing an active solar system.

"But it should be remembered that for the design fee the home owner is not only getting a built-in heating and cooling system, he is also getting a total home environment designed specially for his family needs."

The passive solar energy house is designed so the winter sun heats its living spaces directly, according to Alt, instead of first heating a solar collector and then transferring the heat to the house as in an active system.

"The glass that would normally cover the collector panels on an active system becomes the south window area on the passive house," he said. "The house itself becomes the collector panel."

He pointed out that the size and location of the windows must be carefully designed to collect the amount of heat the house will need not only during the day, but also at night and the next day should it be cloudy. That's where the barrels of water come in.

"Obviously, the need to collect extra heat while the sun is shining means the house would overheat during the day," Alt explained. "Some of the extra heat is stored in the barrels of water, and the interior of the structure is designed with materials which absorb and store this extra heat."

In addition, there are two shafts on each end of the house, allowing the excess heat to escape through the roof in summer.

"Fans located at the bottom of these shafts cut in when the temperature at the ceiling rises above a certain point," Alt said. "Since heat rises and collects in the upper portion of the house, it can be pulled down through the shafts and stored under the house for extra heat during winter."

This heat storage part of the interior structure is called "thermal mass" and it can be made of common building materials such as brick, stone, concrete or water.

"The size and location of the thermal mass must be carefully designed to store just the right amount of heat," he explained. "Generally, this is about three times the amount of heat needed during the day while the sun is out."

When the living spaces begin to cool at night or on a cloudy day, the heat stored in the thermal mass radiates outward and keeps the spaces at a warm temperature.

The only mechanical device generally required in a passive solar energy system is an insulating curtain which must be closed over the large south glass area at night or on a cloudy day.

"This is the only 'extra activity' required on the part of the home owner," Alt chuckled.