

**CBCI COMMISSION FOR THE FAMILY**

**Family Life Education Programme**

**IN INDIA**

**Report on  
Planning and Implementation**

**NATIONAL SECRETARIAT**

**21, Museum Road, Bangalore-560 025**

CBCI COMMISSION FOR THE FAMILY

**Family Life Education Programme**

IN INDIA

COMMUNITY HEALTH CELL

326, V Main, I Block

Koramangala

Bangalore-560034

India

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47/1, (First Floor) St. Marks Road,

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## INTRODUCTION

Though the following pages are essentially a report on the planning and implementation of a family life education programme for high school students of the 8th, 9th and 10th standard and for working youth who are close to marriage, they also aim at creating a better understanding and appreciation of the need for, and concept of, family life education and of the manner in which such knowledge is imparted to specific target groups.

Few people have had the opportunity of learning what family life education is and many have still to be convinced of its importance. A way of making up for such deficiencies is to make them aware of the detailed planning and implementation of such a programme. They may find in such a report answers to many questions.

First the reader is given an insight into the origin of family life education as an independent discipline and into the needs that spurred its development. Since a similar movement is taking place in India, family life education is shown to be not just a foreign import, but a response to particular development in the Indian nation.

Then the principles and methods of planning and conducting the course are explained. Though the content of the course is drawn from a wide range of different areas and disciplines, a common perspective binds all these elements together into a unified programme geared to the needs of the people for whom it is written. The methods of imparting such education reveal that family life education is not just a programme to be added to the usual range of topics of a school curriculum, but is an education for life in the true sense of the

Third chapter deals with the actual writing of the books, the in-service and the pre-service training.

Finally you find the results of an evaluation conducted at the end of the project, which reveal the improvements that can be made and the good it has accomplished.

Hope that this report will promote better understanding of the family life education programme and assist in, and provide inspiration to, all who are engaged with the education of youth.

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A third chapter deals with the actual writing of the handbooks, the in-service and the pre-service training.

Finally you find the results of an evaluation conducted towards the end of the project, which reveal the improvements that can be made and the good it has accomplished.

We hope that this report will promote better understanding of the family life education programme and create interest in, and provide inspiration to, all who are entrusted with the education of youth.

—Fr. Oswald Dijkstra ofm.

# **The Need for, and Concept of, Family Life Education**

Non-formal family life education is as old as the family itself. Parents have always felt themselves responsible for the education of their children and have shared with them their wisdom, experience and values to give them a good start in life. In this task they were helped by the traditions and customs of the community, which collected and developed them over the centuries for transmission to the next generation. Till today non-formal family life education in the intimacy of the family circle has remained the bedrock on which formal education is built. What, then, brought family life education into the limelight of research and experimentation?

## **Its Origin**

Historically formal family life education began when the family underwent important changes in the 19th and 20th century when, as a result of these, the family became an interesting object of research, and when such research material began to be used for education programmes designed to help families cope with these changes.

In the last decades of the previous century there was already some movement towards the organisation of parent groups with an interest in child management, health, housing and wages. In the 1920's this movement was strengthened with concepts and therapies from the field of psycho-analysis. Home economics originated more or less at the same time in response to the phenomenon of urbanisation with a view to improve family life. The development of child psychology became another important source for family life education. In the field of historical and institutional aspects of family life, sociology made an important contribution. Finally, sex education gave a further powerful stimulus to family life education.

Historically, therefore, family life education drew its content from a wide range of disciplines and sources to meet the challenge of coping with the changing pattern of family life. These changes caused anxiety as they seemed to lead to an inherent instability of the couple and a loss of control by parents over adolescent children. To counteract this threat to the family as a unit of interacting personalities, the loose elements of home-making education, parent education, family sociology and sex education were gradually shaped into a unified discipline round the concept of relationship: parent-child, husband-wife, boy-girl etc.

## **The Concept**

By family life education we understand, therefore, the discipline which teaches the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which make for the right kind of relationships between the members of the family at every stage of the life cycle. It is a learning process, both formal and non-formal, that begins at birth and continues throughout life. It intends to help the members of the family, comprising both sexes and different ages, to assess their roles and to achieve harmonious family living. In this sense child education, marriage preparation, parent education, and marriage enrichment programmes are but stages in the life long process of family life education.

## **In India**

In India we observe a similar movement. Since independence numerous studies have appeared on a wide range of topics concerning the Indian family: the joint, extended and nuclear family, the changing patterns of family life, the status of women, the authority-structure in the family, the population problem, the concept of the small family, development and the family, delinquency and emotional disturbances, divorce, abortion, health and many other topics. These studies indicate a growing awareness of the forces that act upon the traditional Indian family and of the problems that are likely to emerge. This awareness has now turned into a positive interest in family life education on the part of the Government as well as of various voluntary organisations, though for different reasons. Some stress the aspect of the population problem, others that of health, development or sex education. Much of the research material is already being used in tentative programmes of family life education. It will take some more time before a clear concept of family life education and a coherent discipline will have emerged from the many loose fragments of present day programmes.

## **The Importance of the school**

Family life education as a lifelong process of learning needs to be imparted at different levels, by different agents to different members of the family. At present the school is singled out as the preferred agency of family life education. This choice implies no belittling of the role of parents. It rather refers to the fact that, with the spread of education, illiterate parents need the help of the teachers to cope with the effects of their children's exposure to new trends and ideas through the mass media. This is the Indian version of the loss of control by parents over



adolescent children mentioned above. There is a need for a graded programme of family life education in schools and colleges. The teachers, so they say, are the most important agents to handle this education, since they are in close contact with the student community.

Others draw attention to the fact that a large percentage of the youth in India are illiterate or school drop-outs at the primary level. Voluntary organisations should take family life education to the rural areas and the slums, where the large majority of families live. In either case teachers and volunteers need to be trained in imparting family life education, and materials, programmes and aids need to be designed as tools to be put into the hands of the teachers.

### **Fears**

There are fears as well, which are likely to impede the implementation of such a programme. The Indian family has ancient traditions which parents are not prepared to surrender easily to novel trends and life styles. Since parents live by a value system of their own, they are particularly sensitive to the kind of values imparted by others in schools and colleges. Another source of fear is the suspicion that family life education is just another term for population education with its emphasis on the concept of the small family. The child is a financial asset for many and a joy for most families. Still greater is the resistance of those who misunderstand family life education as another form of sex education and who feel that premature sex instruction exposes the adolescent to unnecessary dangers. In brief, they look upon the school as an agent of change which is now about to modernise the family as well. So they fear.

Principals and teachers have misgivings of their own. The curriculum is overloaded and the teachers are overburdened. Family life education is yet another subject to be added to this load and burden. The present educational system is geared to academic performance which will earn the student access to higher education or to a lucrative job. Family life education, on the contrary, aims at improving the quality of life and uses methods and techniques that are alien to the present system. The idea that school should train the students to be not only good citizens but also good family members, is still a novelty. The present school system is ill equipped for this role.

### **The Church**

The Church is deeply interested in family life education as she tells us in a relevant passage from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World : "Children

should be so educated that, as adults, they can, with a mature sense of responsibility, follow their vocation, including a religious one, and chose their state of life. If they marry, they can thereby establish their family in favourable moral, social and economic conditions. Parents or guardians should, by prudent advice, provide guidance to their children with respect to founding a family, and the young ought to listen gladly." (52)

In their communication to the Synod of Bishops on "The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World" the CBCI, gathered at Ranchi in October, 1979, confirmed the importance of family life education and reoommended the programme for Implementation in high schools and colleges as "it gives adolescents the necessary knowledge and training which will enable them to develop proper attitudes and acquire sound values towards marriage and family life. Particular attention - so the statement goes on - should be paid in our days to sex education, understood not as mere information on sexual matters, but basically as communication of the right values and understanding of sex in its correct and God-oriented perspective."

From its inception the Commission for the Family has considered family life education an integral and indispensable part of family pastoral service in India. As a first step the Commission composed a provisional syllabus for family life education at high school level and gave it wide circulation to awaken interest and encourage initiatives. Then it began work on planning the course.

## Planning the Course

Questions that required immediate attention were: For whom do we intend to write this course? What should be our guiding principle in view of fears, misgivings and different approaches to family life education? By what method of teaching could we best involve the students, teachers and parents in this programme? What topics should be chosen in view of the needs and the maturity of the student?

### The target group

Several reasons seemed to favour a family life education programme for the students of the 8th, 9th, and 10th standard. Firstly, the period of transition from the family of origin to the family of procreation, from dependence to interdependence, is of special significance as it sets the tone for adult life. Most important are the early years of this transition period when children, after a long spell of protected family life, begin to pass through a phase of accelerated growth and begin to loosen their emotional ties with the family of origin in preparation for a life of responsibility and adulthood. These children are the students of the eighth, ninth and tenth standard.

Secondly, parents at this stage are likely to lose their former control on adolescent children, who now begin to associate with peer groups and are easily influenced in what they see, hear and read. A family life education programme for schools would be of considerable help to guide the adolescents through these momentous experiences to a mature outlook on life.

Thirdly, many students are likely to discontinue their studies after high school to seek employment or to be of help at home. Before leaving school, they should be given the opportunity of learning to evaluate and appreciate their past experiences of family life and to understand the forces that make them now look beyond the family.

Fourthly, a programme for the 8th, 9th and 10th standard can easily be extended downwards to elementary school and upwards to college level. The same course can also be planned to be useful to voluntary organisations like family life centres, Mahila Mandals, youth clubs and Sunday schools for teaching out-of-school youth.

Another target group—not to be forgotten—is working youth. They have reached the end of the transition period and are about to be married. Since their school days they might not have had much opportunity to prepare

themselves for the momentous step they are about to take. In view of the modern threats to the stability of the couple and of marriage, a marriage preparation course would help the couple discover the meaning of marriage and the sources of strength for a stable relationship.

### **Guiding principles**

A family life education programme for adolescents of the 8th, 9th and 10th standard should be respectful of the Indian traditions, acceptable to the parents and attend to the needs of the students.

Indian parents are legitimately proud of their traditions, apprehensive of the emerging trends that threaten the stability of the family, and desirous of maintaining the closeness and solidarity of the traditional Indian family. One should not be blind, however, to the fact that many social and economic factors have ceased to be the traditional supports of family solidarity. In compensation for the loss of these supports greater emphasis should be laid on the importance of the human person and his ability to relate. This ability needs to be developed by creating in the students an awareness of the numerous relationships, within and outside the family, which help him to grow to maturity and through which he can help others to grow. Good relationships promote family unity and solidarity.

Parents are naturally apprehensive of any programme which is merely sex education. No amount of merely biological information can convey that mysterious element which makes sex human and acceptable. Though sex education should not be excluded from a family life education programme for youngsters who need to understand the meaning of their sudden growth, it should be offered in the context of family relationships where love is given a chance to humanize sex.

Finally, the programme should help the students develop the right kind of values and attitudes in these important matters. For us it means that it should be based on Christian values. A Christian programme of family life education is not the same as family catechesis. In family catechesis the parents are the subject, i.e. the active participants in the process of catechising their children in the setting of the home, covering the full range of faith. In a Christian programme of family life education the family is the object of the educational activity; it is imparted by the teachers in the setting of the school and is restricted to the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which make for healthy Christian family life.

These principles were summarised and formulated as follows :

1. The closeness and solidarity of the traditional Indian family is experienced as a gift that ought to be preserved. It is the school of deeper humanity, which children frequent for a far longer period than any other institute of learning, where the basic human and religious values are taught and transmitted, where the deep needs of love, trust, security, appreciation and responsibility are satisfied, where children through daily interaction with parents, brothers, sisters and relatives learn to relate to others, and where they acquire a profound sense of religious tradition and family loyalty which help them to discover their identity.

2. Emphasis on the importance of the human person positively contributes to the strengthening of family ties in an age when social and economic factors cease to be the traditional supports of family solidarity. The adolescent must learn to know and appreciate himself as a person and realize that his worth does not depend on his membership or on the prestige and status of his family. Emphasis on the human personality within the family will provide the family with that measure of resilience which is needed to make it adaptable to a fast changing society without giving up its role of chief educator.

3. To help the adolescent achieve maturity is the goal of education. The human person, like any other living being, is subject to growth. The ability to direct this growth towards definite goal is the exclusive privilege of man. Adolescence is a period of accelerated growth—physical, mental and emotional. A very important problem is the integration of sex into the development process of the human person. It is also the time that the adolescent begins to loosen his ties with the family and to reach out beyond the family. Family solidarity should not be identified with dependence on the family.

4. The ability to relate to others needs to be developed. Maturity demands that man learns not only to look after himself, but also to care for others and to be sensitive to their needs and feelings. Feelings play an important role in the psychological development of man. The adolescent must learn to recognise and to discipline his feelings, to communicate with others and to cooperate.

5. As man must assume responsibility for his own development, he stands in need of a value system, which enables him to give an appropriate response to a variety of situations he is likely to face. The adolescent must be helped to develop such a system.

A marriage preparation programme for working youth—the second target group we considered—should be sensitive

to the views and values which they are in the process of developing on marriage through discussion in offices and factories, participation in youth camps, seminars and social activities, through magazines, novels and films. Among them there is much hesitation between traditional and modern values. They must be given a forum where they can freely discuss their views, benefit from the experience of others, be confronted with the realities of married life and learn about the duties and obligations of marriage.

### **The Method**

Family life education is an education for life. Instead of addressing itself only to the minds and the memories of the pupils as the traditional lecturing method does, family life education should involve the whole student through various forms of interaction with the teachers and—as far as possible—the parents. To achieve this total involvement of the students the lessons should be planned with the following needs of the students in view :

1. The need to discover for himself—therefore, emphasis is laid not so much on imparting information as on drawing it out from the student himself.

2. The need to experience personally and in a practical way his own reactions, feelings and attitudes—hence the emphasis on allowing him to experience through various exercises and activities.

3. The need to be honest with himself—hence the emphasis on group sharing where his honesty will be tested by his peers.

4. The need for God's help if he is to change and mature and grow—hence the closing of each topic by a deepening of the experience through further sharing and group or individual prayer.

5. The need to remember experience—therefore the students are advised to keep a notebook and make good use of it. If possible, the typical classroom setting should be changed. Desks could be pushed aside and a central space created for free movement; chairs could then be put together for small group sharing, etc.

A general lay-out of lesson plans was designed to suit these needs.

The AIM tersely formulates the main ideas which the teacher should try to get across to the students.

The BACKGROUND briefs the teacher more extensively on the objectives of the lessons and provides useful

information. Both the aim and the background are meant for the teacher, not for the students.

The EXPERIENCE identifies the various reactions or responses which the teacher wants to evoke in the students. This is accomplished through different techniques.

The DEEPENING OF EXPERIENCE attempts to create a greater awareness by relating to Scripture and prayer.

The FOLLOW-UP involves further thinking and experiencing so that the impact of the lesson is strengthened. The student is given a task, to be accomplished either in the school or at home, to show what impact the lesson has made. The follow-up creates a link between the school and the home.

Worksheets for the students, one for each lesson, will facilitate the participation of the student in the experience and the accomplishment of his task. As a further follow-up it is suggested that the teacher keep all charts, collages, results of discussion, etc. so that at the end of the year, the class may present them as an exhibition on family life for the parents. This can be part of a "Family Day" or afternoon when the students also put on some of their role plays for their parents and perhaps involve them in discussion. They can prepare some refreshment for their parents from their own pocket money. A final prayer service for a prayer sharing with parents would be very much appreciated by them. The organisation of all this could be through committees formed from the class itself, each committee having its own leader and being responsible for one aspect of the day.

For couples engaged to be married other methods are required. Whatever these methods are, a written text seems to be a basic requirement as it can be put to different uses. Such a text should be written with a view to invite people engaged to be married to a serious reflection and discussion on issues which are easily overlooked or avoided and yet so helpful in promoting communication and understanding on the essentials of marriage. Some questions may be explicitly asked, others may spontaneously arise on reading the text

Such a written text, preferably presented in the form of booklets, can be conveniently exchanged between partners who happen to live far away from each other or who are prevented by custom from meeting in public.

In places where marriage instruction is mainly done by the priest, the text can be handed out to the partners in advance and subsequently discussed by them and the priest.

Such a text could be used as a basis for a series of lectures by experienced couples and experts, followed by a discussion.

Finally, such a written text could be profitably read as follow-up material by participants in free discussion, evenings on topics of interest regarding marriage or in sharing sessions according to the marriage encounter method.

### **The Content**

The course was planned in three parts: "The Family and Me" for the eighth standard, "Growing up in the Family" for the ninth, and "Growing out of the Family" for the tenth standard. The keyword of the first part is "relationship", of the second "growth" and of the third "identity as basis for intimacy".

Partone draws on the student's experiences of family life and tries to create an awareness of what family life means to him and how important he is to the family. First, the student is helped to discover himself as a person who is able to relate through the gifts of body, feelings, inherited traits, consciousness and freedom (Unit One). He is a member of the family into which he was born, where he experiences love, care and satisfaction of basic needs (Unit Two). Through constant interaction with the members of the family he acquires a deep sense of identity, belonging, security and happiness, develop his gifts and talents, and learns to respect and care for others (Unit Three). Through the family he gradually enters the larger human family of school mates, neighbours and friends (Unit Four). Basic to his education towards active participation in the life of his own as well as of the larger human family is the growth of his ability to relate to others through a love that is transforming, forgiving and lasting (Unit Five).

Part two deals with the period of accelerated growth and how it affects him and the family. The students is helped to understand that growth is not just a happening, but also a becoming, i.e., he can learn to direct it towards achievable goals (Unit One). During adolescence the student becomes aware of enormous changes, both physical (Unit Two) and psychio (Unit Three), which he must learn to understand, appreciate and integrate. He also becomes aware of his own sex and wants to understanding the meaning of this differentiation (Unit Four). Maturity defines the goal of the process of growth (Unit Five).

Part three prepares the student for the period after leaving high school and the student's altered role and responsibility in the family. Having learned the secret of his origin, the student's eyes can now be safely turned towards the future, when he, in turn, can become parent to a child. Before he can assume that responsibility, the



adolescent must pass through various stages of growth from dependence to interdependence. As adolescence advances, intimate relationships are transferred from parents to persons of the same sex and then to persons of the other sex in preparation for a life of intimacy with a marriage partner. Questioning the customs, traditions and values of the family is for the adolescent the means of loosening his ties with the family, discovering his identity and finding a place for himself in secure relationship with his peers (Unit One). The adolescent finds his identity by learning to assume responsibility for his growth and to train himself for social roles by developing his talents and aptitudes (Unit Two). The process of integration is not complete without the further advance of developing a healthy interest in the other sex which one day will lead him to the marriage relationship and a family (Unit Three). As marriage and family life come into view, it is important in the context of India's fast growing population to help the student understand the relationship between the size of the family and the quality of life by stressing the values that really matter (Unit Four). The series is brought to a close by introducing the student to the world at large where plenty of opportunities await him to confidently spend a meaningful life (Unit Five).

The complete syllabus of family life education for the 8th, 9th and 10th standard was then finalised and reads as follows :

## **STANDARD EIGHT**

### **Part One—The Family and Me**

#### **UNIT I—YOU AND THE FAMILY**

1. You are a person
2. The body as a means of contact
3. Feelings
4. Inherited traits
5. Man's special gift : Knowledge and free will

#### **UNIT II—APPRECIATING THE FAMILY**

6. Appreciating the family
7. Families are of different kinds
8. The beginning of a family
9. You don't join a family

10. In the family you need one another
11. In the family you love one another

### UNIT III—MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY GROW UP TOGETHER

12. Fatherhood
13. Motherhood
14. Parents are concerned
15. The joys of being together as a family
16. Quarrelling
17. Communication

### UNIT IV—MEMBERS OF A LARGE FAMILY

18. Friends and class-mates
19. All people share common humanity
20. We need other people
21. Popularity

### UNIT V—BASIC VALUES OF LIVING TOGETHER

22. Love
  23. Forgiveness
  24. Sincerity
- Appendix : The stages of love

## STANDARD NINE

### Part Two - Growing up in the Family

#### UNIT I—GROWING UP IN THE FAMILY

1. Life is Growth
2. You are growing up
3. You grow through the choices you make
4. You must interact to grow
5. Problems of growth

## UNIT II—GROWING UP SEXUALLY

6. The meaning of Sexuality
7. Differentiation of the Sexes
  - Section 1. Growing up a boy
  - Section 2. Growing up a girl
  - Section 3. Accepting one's Sexuality
8. Sexuality is important
9. Attitudes towards sexual growth

## UNIT III—GROWING UP PSYCHOLOGICALLY

10. Growing though giving and receiving
11. Growing though concern for others
12. Growing though sensitivity to others' feelings
13. Growing though adjustment
14. Growing though Foresight
15. Growing though conquering fear
16. Growing though accepting failure
17. Growing though Patience

## UNIT IV—SEXUALITY IS GOD'S GIFT

18. Love and the Gift of Life
19. A Child is born
  - Section 1. Parenthood
  - Section 2. Expecting a Child
  - Section 3. Labour and Birth
  - Section 4. "God blessed Them"
20. Parents and You
21. Families are of different sizes

## UNIT V—MATURITY

22. Dealing with Tensions
23. Maturity is Integration

## STANDARD TEN

### Part Three—Growing out of the Family

#### UNIT I—QUESTIONING THE FAMILY

1. Growing up is asking questions
2. The traditions that shaped you
3. Questioning family traditions
4. From dependence to interdependence
5. Peer groups
6. Mass media

#### UNIT II—ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY

7. What is responsibility
8. Rules and regulations
9. Freedom and authority
10. The role of conscience
11. Personal honesty
12. Parents trust you
13. Feelings about parents

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Koramangala  
Bangalore-560034  
India

#### UNIT III—YOU AND THE OTHER SEX

14. Opposites attract
15. Meeting the other Sex
16. Respect each other
17. Taking parents into confidence

#### UNIT IV—POPULATION AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE

18. The quality of family life
19. Population trends in the world
20. Population trends in India
21. Why does the population increase
22. The right understanding of family planning

#### UNIT V—A WORLD BEFORE YOU

23. Work for quality
24. The World around

The topics of the marriage preparation course were chosen in view of the Church's growing understanding of marriage as a sacrament which reaches far beyond the actual celebration of the marriage on the wedding day. The whole of Christian married life is sacramental. Who can claim to live his personal commitment to Christ to the full and leave the marriage relationship out in the cold? In the love between husband and wife, parent and child, God's love is given the unique chance of being experienced and relished. These are the topics :

- Realistic Expectations — What expectations do you bring to your marriage ?
- Communication — The art of building bridges.
- Learning about each other—Building bridges between the sexes.
- Living together—The blending of I and You in We.
- Building a Home Together — What makes a home a Home ?
- Growing together in Love and Unity — Love is the soul of marriage ; it unites.
- Creating Life Together — Love is also fruitful.
- Sharing Faith Together—Without faith there is no sacrament.
- Celebrating the Marriage —The meaning of its liturgy.
- Living Together for Others — A Christian family is apostolic.

### **The Project**

In May 1976 Dr. A.F.A Mascarenhas and Fr. Oswald Dijkstra, ofm, discussed with Mr. S. Santiago, Executive Director of the Indo-German Social Service Society, the need for starting a project on family life education and explained to him the outline of the programme. In the following months the project was worked out and made ready for presentation. It comprised the following stages :

1. A team of teachers and experts will design a teachers' manual for the 8th, 9th and 10th standard, containing concrete aims and purposes, lesson plans and teaching aids required. The preparation of the prototype syllabus for each standard will take approximately nine months to one year, at the end of which it will be finalised as a teachers' manual and students' workbook.

2. The next step will be the in-service training of the teachers. In this part of the project, which will overlap the first part, three teaching teams at Bangalore, Bombay and Calcutta will impart in-service training to the teachers in the high-schools. This training will consist of ten day seminars during the holidays, followed by bi-weekly sessions for three months.

3. The third step is the training of teachers on the pre-service level in the teachers' training institutions where teaching plans will be designed and implemented within their curriculum, spread over one and a half to two years.

4. A manual on family life guidance for college students and working youth who may be married soon, will be produced by another committee and implemented through team sessions by the various family life centres.

5. At the end of two and a half years, work a full six months will be devoted to proper and objective evaluation of the syllabus as prepared and conducted through its various stages, resulting in the release of the final syllabus on family life education for all educational institutions in India.

On March 25th, 1977 the project was presented to the Indo-German Social Service Society and forwarded and recommended to Misereor on 26th April 1977. On July 6th the project was approved by Misereor and a grant of Rs. 2,47,400/- was made available for its implementation. The project officially began on 1st November, 1977 and was scheduled to be completed by October 31st, 1980.

## **Implementation of the Programme**

In keeping with the three phases of the project the preparation of the handbooks was taken up first. After the publication of the 8th standard teachers' handbook the in-service training of the teachers was taken in hand. Towards the end of the project efforts were made to organise the pre-service training.

### **Preparation of the handbook**

Early in November 1977 a team of five members was formed for the purpose of preparing the handbook and organising the in-service training at a later stage. Members of the team were: Fr. Jude Pereira - Bombay, Sr M Cyril-IBVM, Calcutta, Dr. A. F. A. Mascarenhas, Sr. M. Faith SND and Fr. Oswald Dijkstra ofm - Bangalore. In each of the above places they would gather around them teams of teachers and experts who would cooperate in working out lesson plans on the basis of the family life education syllabus prepared by the CBCI Commission for the Family.

In order to evolve a common approach to the implementation of the programme, a first coordination meeting was convened and held at Bombay on 15th and 16th December 1977. It was agreed that :

1. A set of lesson plans for the 8th standard be prepared separately at Bombay, Calcutta and Bangalore. These lesson plans should be completed and posted to the members of the coordination team before 1st March 1978.
2. Each local team correlate the different versions of the lesson plans and prepare an integrated version to be discussed and finalised at the next coordination meeting scheduled at Bangalore from 28th March-4th April, 1978.
3. The family life education course be designed as a course of its own based on genuine Christian values. This formula seemed a fair compromise between two different concepts of a family life education course. One concept viewed the course as a form of catechesis and emphasised the need to make it truly Christian in content. For that reason the proponents of this view preferred to integrate the family life education course into the God-with-us series of the catechetical centre. Moreover, in view of the limited time available for catechism and moral science in the existing curriculum it was feared that it might not be possible to

conduct separate courses. The other view emphasised that over the years family life education had developed into an independent discipline with its own character, method, identity and literature and that it should keep pace with the developments in this field in India. Moreover the Government had entrusted the NCERT with the task of developing a population education programme with a view to introduce such a programme into the curriculum. It would be good for Catholic schools to have an alternative programme in keeping with their value system. As both views had their valid points, it was agreed to present the course as an independent programme but truly Christian in its value content.

To achieve the maximum coordination and cooperation, the aims and backgrounds were written out in advance so as to provide the teachers with a common basis on which to work out their lesson plans.

The three drafts of the lesson plans were exchanged in early March 1978. At the second coordination meeting held at Bangalore from 24th March till 4th April 1978 the correlated versions were synthesised into the final set of lesson plans for the 8th standard teachers' handbook by Sr. M. Faith SND, Brother M. B Finn (on behalf of Fr. Jude Pereira) and Fr Oswald Dijkstra OFM. Sr. M. Cyril IBVM was unable to attend. The text was printed by mid-July 1978. It was sent in bulk to the Family Welfare Centre, Bangalore, the Diocesan Family Commission, Calcutta and the Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Bombay, to be used in their in-service training programme for 8th standard FLE teachers.

Copies were also sent to all Bishops, members, associate members and regional representatives of the Commission for the Family, and to all directors of the family life centres. Informative leaflets were printed and sent to all Bishops, Major Superiors, Commission members, associate members and regional representatives, the directors of family life centres, to all alumni of the five training courses in family pastoral service conducted at Bangalore and to the principals of all Catholic highschoools in India. It was also advertised in the Catholic press.

Work on the draft lesson plans for the 9th standard FLE teachers' handbook was completed by the end of January 1979 and the exchange and correlation process by the end of February. By this time Fr. Jude Pereira and Sr. Mary Faith had withdrawn from the coordination team due to other commitments. At the third coordination meeting which took place in Calcutta from 25th March to



1st April 1979 and was attended by Sr. M Cyril, Br. K. Ward and Fr. Oswald Dijkstra, the correlated versions were synthesised into the final set of lessons for the 9th standard FLE teachers' handbook. The text was printed and ready for distribution in September 1979. Fr Saturninus Dias of Goa was invited to take the place Fr. Jude Pereira and joined to coordination team in April 1979.

Work on the lesson plans of the 10th standard FLE teachers' handbook was now taken up by the local teams at Bangalore, Calcutta and Goa, completed by them in February 1980. After the exchange and correlation of the lesson plans the text was finalised at the fourth coordination meeting held at Calcutta from 20th-26th April 1980. The meeting was attended by Sr. M. Cyril from Calcutta, Sr. Gonzaga from Goa and Fr. Oswald Dijkstra from Bangalore. The text was printed in June 1980 and the first phase of the programme had been completed on schedule.

Soon after the publication of the handbooks, Rev. Sr. Cyril prepared and printed FLE Student's Personal Record Sheets for the 8th, 9th and 10th standards, to be used in conjunction with the teachers' handbooks.

In the meantime another committee was set to work on a written text for marriage preparation. Members of the committee were Mr. Paul Roby, Mrs Jeanne Roby, Fr. Peter de Souza CSSR and Fr. Oswald Dijkstra OFM. All the topics mentioned earlier were tried out in actual discussions with engaged couples so as to stay as close as possible to the needs, problems and experiences of the young people in India today. The course was published in May 1979 under the title "Marriage—A Task for Adults."

### **In-service training**

After the publication of the 8th standard teachers' handbook, the in-service training of teachers commenced at Bangalore in mid-September 1978, at Calcutta and Goa in early November 1978, at Bombay in early February 1979 and continued in Bangalore, Calcutta and Goa till October 1981. The duration of the project was kindly extended by the IGSSS from November 1980 to 31st December 1981 in order to complete the in-service training. The in-service training was conducted through seminars and follow-up sessions, organised by the respective family life centres. Since some teachers teach in more than one standard, the total number of participants in the seminars exceeds the actual number of teachers trained.

	Bombay	Bangalore	Calcutta	Goa
Seminars	1	7	10	4
Participants	unknown	133	140	96
Follow-up sessions	unknown	9	14	8

The purpose of each seminar was threefold : to motivate the teachers, to provide sufficient information regarding the content of the course and to train them in the various techniques used in the course.

First, the teachers need to be motivated and convinced of the value of family life education. They have to overcome legitimate misgivings and problems of time and place before they can try out the programme in their schools. By the time of writing about 40 schools have introduced a programme of family life education.

The second objective of the seminar was to provide information. The first source of information is the handbook itself with which the teacher has to become familiar. That is done by a detailed study of pages 5-7 of the handbook, by explaining how the lessons are planned, by discussions on what is entailed under "experience" and by a general summing up of what is involved in planning a lesson. Then the teachers are taken through the aims and background material which is meant to give them an overall view of the content of the course and a clear insight into the way the lessons relate to each other. They are helped thereby by a short explanation at the beginning of each book which gives the main thrust and the basic ideas that bind the various units and the lessons of each unit together. Additional information is provided by inviting experts to share their expertise with the teachers on relevant topics: the emotional and psychological background of boys and girls in early teenage, the psychology of man and woman, the role of parents and teachers in sex education etc. Or a study is made of the characteristics of children in class, of the teacher's attitude, of what he/she expects, what his/her ambitions are for the students in view of creating rapport between students and teachers. Finally family life education is placed in the total context of the family pastoral service.

The third objective is the training in techniques. Most teachers are accustomed to the lecture-method. The handbooks of family life education call for an active participation of the children in the class. Not theories but the concrete experiences of the children are taken as the starting point of the lesson, to be further widened and enriched, then deepened and finally tested by making the children express what they have learned. To evoke these experiences a variety of techniques are used like story-telling, making posters, charts and collages, reflection, questionnaires, serendipity approach, non-verbal communication, surveying, interviews, attitude tests, use of symbols and colours, photo-language, role — playing, problem solving, group exercises. etc. The teachers are given practical experience in the use of these techniques. For instance, the teachers are divided in groups. Each group studies a certain number of lessons and gives back briefly the topics and contents, using the various techniques they have learned during the seminar. In this way each group is given the opportunity to study in depth one area of the handbook and to receive from the others the fruits of their studies of other areas. In this way the whole group gains a familiarity with all the lessons and a valuable opportunity of try out on the rest of the group techniques which they consider significant.

Seminars are meant to give the teachers as good a start in family life education as the circumstances permit. The follow-up sessions are meant to keep up and deepen their interest. Though teachers may be personally enthusiastic about family life education, a crowded curriculum, adverse conditions and lack of cooperation may put such enthusiasm severely to the test. The follow-up sessions give the teachers a chance to exchange experiences, improve their techniques, discuss problems and learn from others how to solve them. Important also is the feed back which the teachers share with each other: did the lessons go off well, how successful were the techniques, what kind of work pieces did the students produce? Difficulties with a particular lesson on the part of one teacher may be solved by others demonstrating how they handled the lesson. The follow up sessions also give the teachers an opportunity to evaluate the work done, to discuss problems arising from the student-teacher relationship and to plan for the future.

The seminars and follow-up sessions did awaken great interest in family life education among the teachers, and made them realise that they can make a major contribution to a healthy family life. Besides creating interest the training also gave them confidence to try out the programme.

## Pre-service Training

In October 1980 a list of 19 B.Ed Colleges was obtained from the Xavier Board of Higher Education, AICUF and AIFCTC. A set of FLE teachers' handbooks for the 8th, 9th and 10th standards and a questionnaire designed to elicit opinion about the nature and conduct of the pre-service training of student teachers in family life education were sent to each principal in November 1980. Positive responses were received from Mt. Carmel Training College, Kottayam, Stella Matutina College of Education, Madras, St. Xavier's College of Education, Palaymkottai and St. Ignatius College of Education, Palayamkottai.

A B.Ed pre-service training programme was then drawn up on the following lines :

### 1. The objective of such a course would be two-fold :

#### a) *Motivational.*

The teachers in training will have to be convinced of the value of family life education and sufficiently motivated to be prepared to teach it. They will have to see the need for such a course and the usefulness of the methods used. The way in which this is done is to allow them to experience the efficacy of the various techniques for themselves.

#### b) *Functional.*

This would include a training in the techniques and methods in the course and an extra amount of informational input.

### 2. Time required

Number of days - minimum - 5 days (25 sessions). These could be combined in one seminar of 5 days or could be distributed over several months - say one day, or even a half-day a month, or a session of an hour and a half once a week, depending on circumstances and availability of trainers.

### 3. Approach

This, to be effective, must be practical. Lectures should be avoided as far as possible. The techniques to be used later in teaching this course must be demonstrated practically by having the B.Ed students experience them by working through them. In this way they become convinced of their value and confident in their use and are more likely to use them afterwards.

#### 4. Lay-out for one Session

Individual work on the theme.

Group sharing or discussion based on the individual work.

A feed back from the group.

An analysis of the feedback and summary and input from the course director (here any extra information needed can be added).

Reflection and further discussion if necessary.

Prayer (if appropriate)

#### 5. Topics to be covered

- a. Why family life education? (motivational)—to be dealt with through posters and case-studies (What the students do not discover for themselves, can be added at the time of analysis)  
2 sessions
- b. The Family Pastoral Service (adapted appropriately if necessary to non — Christians) — informational, by lecture followed by discussion, sharing and question time.  
1 session
- c. The course — time allowed for personal study and discussion  
1 session
- d. The books — the method and lay-out explained and a personal study of the introduction and explanation given at the beginning of each book, followed by sharing in groups and questions  
3 sessions
- e. Techniques—13—20 sessions depending on time available.
- f. Practical application — preparation and teaching of lessons and critical evaluation by the group.  
5 sessions

The first B.Ed pre-service training programme was scheduled for 6th to 10th October, 1981, at the Stella Matutina College of Education, Madras. Due to unforeseen circumstances the seminar could not be held and had to be shifted to the first half of 1982.

## EVALUATION

A questionnaire designed to assess the effectiveness of the family life education teachers' handbook and in-service training programmes and their impact on teachers, students and parents was sent in January 1981 to approximately 400 persons, including teachers who have participated in the in-service training programmes and teachers and principals of schools who have asked for and received the handbooks. The evaluation was undertaken with some apprehension as the the 10th standard teachers' handbook was barely five months out of the press leaving insufficient time for an overall evaluation. Moreover, many principals and teachers had ordered copies of the textbooks out of personal interest but with no intention to introduce family life education in their schools. The replies of those who responded did reveal that the handbooks were used in schools where the teachers had had no in service training. In all 120 replies were received. They give us a first impression of how the handbooks were received and what was the reaction of the teachers and the impact on the students.

### **The handbooks**

The lessons are evaluated as good, well prepared, planned in an interesting way and fit for use outside the school. Some methods and techniques are considered unfit for the classroom atmosphere/situation. The follow-up activities suggested in the 8th standard handbook tend to be somewhat monotonous.

Some had reservations regarding the quantity of matter to be covered. The topics seem to be too many to be covered in one year, while each lesson is already too long for one period. They suggest that the number of lessons be reduced and the experience and deepening of experience be shortened.

Regarding the use of the handbook in rural areas they could be further simplified, adjusted to the conditions and the cultural and social background of a particular region, and translated into the vernaculars.

### **Reaction of teachers**

Schools where in-service training had taken place, reported that the training had brought the teachers closer together and had made the teachers' rapport with the students more appreciative and personal.

The teachers of these schools also made important suggestions :

- to exchange experiences, share problems and solutions and benefit from the support of one another.

- to learn from each other how to prepare materials and audio-visual aids and to share them.
- to discuss at P.T.A. meetings the syllabus of family life education and to share their experiences with the parents.
- to be further enlightened on specific topics relevant to the subject matter of the lessons.
- to have regular follow-up sessions every two months.
- to receive further training in how to identify family problems that may come to their notice through family life education and how to refer them to competent counsellors.
- inspiring texts and stories from other religions should also be included in the lesson plans wherever practical and appropriate so as to make the books acceptable to non-Christians as well.

In schools where no in-service training had taken place, many teachers felt inadequate to handle the matter without a much deeper reflection and study than their job allows or without a group training programme.

To make up for this inadequacy it was suggested that more background material be made available at the beginning of each lesson, that a team be sent to conduct in-service training for the teachers for 2 or 3 days during holiday time, or that, once a term, a team of experts visits the school, talks to the students and shows educational films.

#### **Impact on students**

The students are said to be very interested, to enjoy the lessons, especially those on growth and sexual development, and are eager to discuss values.

They show pleasant changes in attitude and behaviour, greater respect for each other, better understanding and widening of knowledge. The lessons help students to appreciate the home, to increase their sense of belonging and security.

Regarding the 9th standard handbook and sexual growth the students are said to be happy to be helped to discover the sacredness of sex and develop greater respect for the opposite sex. They appreciate and feel greater sympathy for, and gratitude to, their parents. Some were rather surprised that these problems were shared by so many. Others in particular appreciated lessons 5, 7, 11, 13, 18, 20, 22 and 23.

On this point there were also some adverse reactions: in one school the students didn't like to do the lessons on physical growth but enjoyed the lessons on psychological growth; in another (boys) school, the students felt that they knew everything and needed no further instruction; in yet another school the students didn't feel free to share their experiences as they were exposed to such topics for the first time.

Generally, students share easily, participate well, are cooperative, find the topics relevant to their age and class, enjoy discussion and group work.

We conclude this evaluation with a few general suggestions brought forward by the teachers:

- the Bishops should make family life education compulsory in all Catholic schools.
- Conscientize the Government and the Education Department on the subject.
- Arrange for family life education of parents at parish level.



## EPILOGUE

The completion of the project is by no means the end of the programme. Much remains to be done in the fields of in-service training and of the teaching materials for the teachers. It is now the task of the family life centres, teaching institutions and voluntary organisations to spread the family life education programme in the schools and to take it to the youth outside the schools. The translation of the course into the vernaculars and its adaptation to the social and cultural background of the region would greatly facilitate the spreading of the course. In Kerala, Fr. J Alencherry, Director of the family life centre of Changanacherry, has already completed the translation into Malayalam of the 8th and 9th standard handbooks. We trust that this translation will be well received and help to spread family life education in Kerala.

The family life centres of Goa and Calcutta have already begun to spread family life education beyond the areas of their centres. The family life centre of Goa has conducted in-service training seminars in Karwar and Belgaum. Sr. M. Cyril has conducted a number of in-service training sessions in many schools of her congregation in Asansol, Chandanagore, Darjeeling, Lucknow, Ranchi, Shillong and Simla.

The extension of the family life education programme to college level is still in the incipient stage. The Xavier Board for Higher Education has collected and published lists of topics and examples of techniques to be used as a first step towards further experimentation and development.

From the 12th - 16th October 1981 the All India Federation of Educational Associations (AIFEA), the Family Planning Association of India (FPAI) and the Indian Social Institute (ISI) organised a national seminar at Delhi on "The Role of Teachers in Family Life Education". The seminar was sponsored by the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Professions. The objectives of the seminar were :

1. To emphasise the role of teachers in family life education and to generate among educational institutions/agencies and teachers' organisations the knowledge and awareness of the need for family life education to improve the quality of life of the people.
2. To examine and discuss the nature and scope of family life education and to draw up a curriculum based on the needs of youth and families.

3. To consider and establish means of introducing family life education in school and in out-of-school situations.
4. To formulate a plan of action to be carried out at the state, regional and national levels in introducing family life education.

Sr. M. Cyril and Fr. Oswald Dijkstra participated in the seminar on behalf of the CBCI Commission for the Family by the kind invitation of the ISI.

The conference discussed three models of a teachers' training manual, carefully prepared by Dr. (Mrs.) Dorairaj on behalf of the ISI, by Dr. (Mrs) K. T. Singh of the Regional College of Education, Mysore, on behalf of the AIFEA, and by Mrs. Sarla Mukhi, Assistant Director-Population Education of the FPAI. Though each model had its particular approach, there was large agreement on essentials. If as a result of these discussions the three models could be synthesised into one teachers' training manual, an important tool would have been created for use in the in-service and pre-service training.

The seminar proceeded on the idea that priority should be given to the training of teachers in family life education who would then be motivated to introduce the programme into the schools. Hence the importance of the discussions on the role of teachers in family life education and on the three models of the teachers' training handbook. We were able to make a contribution by sharing with the participants our model of procedure. We first concentrated on the preparation of handbooks to be used by the teachers and designed for a specific target group and then took in hand the in-service and pre-service training of the teachers, focussed on the use of these handbooks. The handbooks and the models of the in-service and pre-service training were highly appreciated. If some of the practical proposals could be realised in the near future, our programme would greatly benefit by it.

We conclude this report with a word of thanks first to Bishop Ambrose P. Yeddanapalli ofm, Bishop of Bellary, Chairman of the Commission for the Family who, by his active guidance and encouragement, helped in the planning and implementation of this project.

A very special word of thanks is due to the Indo-German Social Service Society who made it financially possible to realise this programme by a very generous donation.

We are grateful to Dr. A. F. A. Mascarenhas, the than honorary secretary of the Commission for the Family, who took a special interest in this project and gave it the impetus which led to its completion within the space of four years, and to Mr. Paul Roby who, as the project officer, was mainly responsible for the smooth running of the project, the printing of the handbooks and other material and for handling the voluminous correspondence.

Much praise is due to the members of the co-ordination team and the local teams of teachers and cooperators - too many to be mentioned by name - who laboured so hard to produce the textbooks and to organise the in-service and pre-service training.

COMMUNITY HEALTH CELL  
326, V Main, 1 Block  
Koramangala  
Bangalore-560034  
India

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION STUDENT RECORD  
SHEETS TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE TEACHERS' HANDBOOKS ARE  
AVAILABLE WITH REV SR M. CYRIL LORETO  
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CALCUTTA-700015.

The Family Life Education Teacher's Handbooks for the 8th, 9th and 10th Standards and the Series "Marriage - a task for Adults" are available at the National Secretariat, C.B.C.I. Commission for the family, 21, Museum Road, Bangalore-560 025