

group by working with individuals whose potentialities for adjustment are greater?

A different type of referral situation is the following:

Mrs. Roberts is a neurotic mother who has no understanding of her children's behavior and needs. She uses the case worker of the Jewish Social Service Bureau to secure emotional release by complaining regarding her various difficulties to an accepting individual.

One of her particular concerns is Nathan, seventeen years old, whom she rejects, in part, due to identification with her husband who is a deserter. She continuously complains of his bad behavior and lack of interest in earning money to help support the home.

The effect of these constant complaints, which the case worker found to be without actual factual basis, was to make of Nathan a rather shy boy with little confidence in himself or in his relationships with others.

The case worker discussed leisure time activities with Nathan, and, incidentally, referred to the Council Educational Alliance. Nathan was interested but reluctant to attend. He was not sure that he would like it. He was having "fun" with the boys in the neighborhood. The case worker recognized Nathan's remarks as evidences of underlying feelings of insecurity regarding his acceptance at the Council Educational Alliance and his ability to make a successful adjustment there.

The initial contacts at the Council Educational Alliance were made easy for Nathan by contact with the staff member who recognized Nathan's shyness and uncertainty, and helped him find a place in an interest group where the competition was not so keen as in a social group. Previous vocational tests at the Jewish Social Service Bureau had revealed an out-

standing mechanical ability, and Nathan was referred to an airplane construction group where this ability would be used to the best advantage. As a result of acceptance by the group worker, and successful adjustment in the interest group, Nathan has been able to take a more active part in other activities of the Council Educational Alliance, and some time ago, also became a member of a social group.

Referrals of this nature indicate a long step forward from the old method of sending a boy of this type to the group work agency with a card of introduction. A mutual discussion of the individual, his special needs for group activity, the manner in which the group work agency could help in the initiation of this, unquestionably enabled this boy to make the most of his group experience.

In brief summary, the referral and follow-up procedure developed between the Council Educational Alliance and the Jewish Social Service Bureau, gives no final answers regarding the relationship between the two fields. It indicates the need for further exploration along those lines between larger numbers of agencies. It points to the need for revised curriculum in schools for social work both for the case worker and the group worker. It raises the question of the possibility of combining the two services of each field in one administrative unit and the corollary possibility of training individuals equipped to supply both services, with the resulting implications for that phantom—generic social work. However, the established procedure has been helpful to both organizations, to the clients of both, and in the development of better integrated service to the community. There can be no question regarding the value of close co-operation between group work and case work agencies.

A Community Program for Jewish Education and Recreation

JEWISH EDUCATION IN A COMMUNITY PROGRAM

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WE AMERICAN Jewish educators, when we think of the wide gulf existing between the end product of our labors and what we had hoped to produce, sometimes tend to become discouraged; but when we compare the contemporary Jewish educational scene with what we found when we embarked upon our adventure about a quarter-century ago, we become more optimistic about our future.

We may mark three stages in the progress of Jewish education: 1. Making Jewish education more *attractive*. 2. Making Jewish education more *pertinent*. 3. Making Jewish education more *dynamic*. Inasmuch as it is not the main purpose of this paper to describe this progress, each stage will be outlined very briefly.

There can be no question that we have made a marked improvement in regard to the physical conditions of our school buildings and classrooms. We no longer carry on our educational work in dark and unpleasant rooms; basement classrooms and vestry rooms have been replaced by specially built school buildings which make adequate provision for air, light and sunshine. For the most part, these rooms are decorated and furnished attractively. There is still, unfortunately, need for much further progress along these lines. We still have school buildings which do not meet the accepted standards of safety and hygiene, to say nothing of pleasantness of surroundings.

Jewish education has been made more attractive through various ways and means. The old type *melamed* has been replaced by trained teachers who understand their pupils and have a sympathetic interest in them. The new textbooks are printed on good paper, with readable type, are illustrated with interesting pictures, and by and large are written in language and style calculated to appeal to the children of the age-group for which they are intended. Moreover, the curriculum has been modified with an eye to making Jewish education more palatable. The most important change along this line has been the introduction of music and artcraft. Extra-curricular activities were introduced for the same reason and with the same motivation. Similarly, improvement in method and educational technique came about as a result of the attempt to present material in as pleasing a way as possible. In short, progress in Jewish education during this stage can be measured by the degree to which Jewish education was made more attractive.

During the first stage, progress and improvement in Jewish education were largely external. The aims, purposes and scope of Jewish education were in the main taken for granted. The problem upon which Jewish educators concentrated was how to carry on this process of education under most favorable conditions. With the recognition that there existed a discrepancy between the needs of

American Jewish children in preparing for intelligent Jewish living in America and the kind of Jewish education which was being given in the orthodox Talmud Torah or reform Sunday school, that both types of education had developed along certain lines for historic reasons rather than in response to the actual realities of the situation, it entered upon the second stage of progress. This stage is characterized by the desire to make Jewish education more pertinent.

Aims and objectives were now analyzed, and on the basis of these analyses the curriculum was modified through subtractions and additions. Similarly, textbooks were improved not only through making their external appearance more pleasing, but the subject matter underwent a radical change. The avowed purpose of the new changes was to make the material more relevant. The starting point, however, in regard to all changes was the old curriculum and the traditional subject matter. The conception underlying the entire process remained substantially the same. The aim was to make this process more meaningful through the omission of elements which were recognized as irrelevant, and the addition of new elements calculated to satisfy newly recognized needs.

The most important expression of the attempt to make Jewish education in both the daily Hebrew school and the Sunday school more pertinent is to be found in the new interpretation which was given to extra-curricular activities. No longer were these activities regarded as a supplement to the important work of the school, serving as a means of attracting the child to the school and keeping him there for a longer period by making Jewish education more palatable through the pleasant association which these activities engen-

dered. Pleasant association became an end in itself, because joyous Jewish experience was recognized as a potent educational force. What is more, these extra-curricular activities, whether they were centered around holiday observance, junior synagogue, Keren Ami (an experiment in training for community responsibility), or any other phase or aspect of Jewish life, became a means of preparing for Jewish living through Jewish living.

We have not made as much progress along this line as we would have liked. We have encountered resistance from those who cannot conceive of Jewish education in any other pattern excepting in that with which they have been familiar; who cannot recognize that history never repeats itself, that no two moments are exactly alike and that, therefore, not everything which was pertinent under conditions previously prevailing is equally pertinent under new conditions.

In other words, the Jewish educator is engaged in a struggle on three fronts:

1. With the indifferent, i.e., with those who fail to recognize what they are doing to their children when they give them no Jewish education.
2. With the insincere, i.e., with those to whom Jewish education is a conventional gesture which is made in order to satisfy an uneasy conscience. They are not concerned with what happens to the child as long as they can say that they have done their duty. Children readily sense this insincerity. They, accordingly, do not stay long in the Jewish school, and do not take their work seriously enough while they do attend to derive any real benefits from their Jewish education.
3. With the interested but non-understanding, i.e., with those who fail to recognize that the problem of today is not the same as that of yesterday, that the

needs of the American Jewish child are not comparable to those of children who were brought up in a wholly different type of environment.

Instead of starting out with what is and bringing about needed improvements, we should begin with an honest analysis of our objectives from the point of view of the child and of the Jewish community to which we wish to integrate him. When we shall have made enough progress along the lines of making Jewish education relevant by being prepared to overhaul completely the entire educational process, we shall have reached the third stage, when Jewish education shall have become really meaningful or dynamic.

This stage of progress implies much more than improvement here or there; it implies a completely new orientation to the entire problem of Jewish education. Inasmuch as the theoretic must precede the practical, it is important that, in addition to the schools whose function it is to do as well as possible the tasks assigned to them in accordance with the concepts which are regarded as best at any particular moment, there should be departments of education in the rabbinical seminaries, training schools for teachers and Boards and Bureaus of Education whose business it should be to challenge every phase of the educational process, to free that process from all the trammels and shackles of history and to develop a program of education which will meet a felt need and will, therefore, be truly dynamic.

While we are fast approaching this third stage, we have not fully emerged from the first, and we still have a long road to travel in the second. In each of the three stages there are aspects of the educational process with which no single congregation or institution can successfully cope by itself. There are functions which can

be successfully borne only with the aid of a central agency. The writer has in mind such functions as making it possible for the child to continue his Jewish education beyond the elementary school level; experimentation; publication of texts and materials; the development and the introducing of standards; the improvement of instruction through careful supervision and guidance; making provision for adult education; and the training of teachers for both the Hebrew and Sunday schools. Some of these functions can be fulfilled by the staff of the central agency; others by the staffs of the affiliated agencies, stimulated to cooperative effort through the instrumentality of the central agency.

An integrated community program for Jewish education would call for the coordination of all agencies within the community dealing directly or indirectly with phases of the process designated as Jewish education—schools, synagogues, child-caring agencies and community centers. Such coordination would make it possible for agencies and personnel whose contacts with Jewish education are peripheral to derive the benefit of advice and counsel of trained Jewish educators who are devoting all their time and thought to the study of the problems of Jewish education. And, conversely, interchange of experience would prove a potent factor in enlarging and broadening the concept of Jewish education.

That it is possible to unite synagogues—orthodox, conservative and reform—into one system without interfering with the autonomy of the constituent institutions, the experiment in Chicago conducted for a period of ten or more years has clearly demonstrated. This experiment has further made manifest that such unification of the educational efforts of

independent synagogues leads to higher standards of achievement and that collective effort makes possible the attainment of otherwise unattainable goals. The experiment in Chicago has thus far been only partially successful, because as yet it does not embrace all the synagogues and temples of Chicago. There will be no truly integrated community program until it does, until it includes also all child-caring agencies and all the Jewish recreational centers.

Most Jewish centers house Jewish schools; but in many instances we are confronted with a very paradoxical situation. The school is of the conventional type, not making any use, or perhaps, more correctly, not allowed the use of the facilities of the center. The activities of the school are for the most part independent of the other activities of the center. In other words, not only is there need for integrating the Jewish educational work of the center with the educational program of the entire community, but a more primary step needs to be taken, namely, the integration of the Jewish school in the larger program of the center.

We Jewish educators have been engaged in the difficult task of convincing the rabbi who speaks of the primacy of the synagogue in Jewish life that his position has meaning only if the synagogue reckons with the totality of Jewish life and conceives of Talmud Torah for young and old as coordinate and not subordinate to worship. Too many synagogues have manifested reluctance to meet the deficit of the school and have failed to recognize the right of the school to a fair share of the budget. Moreover, frequently the rabbi as well as the congregation officers give to the school the dregs of their effort and interest. Similarly, in the case

of the center, the conception which the leaders in the center movement have long emphasized—that the center must cater to the entire family—must be brought home with vivid force by the Jewish educator until all the facilities of the center will be put at the full disposal of the children. Our task will not be completed until recognition is given the fact that the right of children to these facilities is no less than that of youths or adults.

The center has a remarkable opportunity to develop a true child center with a complete program of Jewish education emanating from genuine, joyous, satisfying experience; and this, incidentally, in no way implies a surrender of Hebraic emphasis. Such a program will bring us to the third stage of progress referred to above: Jewish education which will be truly meaningful, education which will bring about the desired changes in habit and attitude in the child and at the same time tend to create the type of Jewish social environment to which we aspire for the American Jew of tomorrow.

Even where the Jewish center is not prepared to go to such extreme lengths, the Jewish center has a unique opportunity for experimenting in Jewish educational programs which is not afforded to other types of institutions, provided the center and the central Jewish educational agency coordinate their efforts. Furthermore, inasmuch as the center executive stresses the educational character of the entire program of the center, and the Jewish educator insists that Jewish education is not limited to one age-group nor one type of activity, the area of joint interest is not limited to the work of the school. Center executive and Jewish educator are working on a common problem. There is no reason why the center worker and educator should not work together on

this common problem; each has much to gain from mutual cooperation.

Similarly, there is opportunity for cooperation between the educator and recreational worker in the boys' and girls' clubs which our communities are providing for our so-called underprivileged boys and girls. Far be it from me to belittle the character-building value of so many activities carried on in these clubs. How often have we Jewish educators been guilty of transgressing the commandment "Thou shalt not covet" when we thought of what we could do in the Jewish school if we had the facilities of these clubs for dramatics, artcraft and other activities! But speaking seriously, what logic is there in the present policy of our Jewish communities in not providing the Jewish school with these facilities and similarly in not utilizing these clubs which are so provided for Jewish educational purposes? Has not the time come for recognizing the character-building values to be derived from giving these boys and girls a sense of balance by identifying them with their people, the glories of its past, as well as the hopes and aspirations for future creativity?

As a first step in this direction I would suggest a very close tie-up between these clubs and the central Jewish educational agency. From such a tie-up the boys and girls of these clubs would get values essential to character building which are in no way subordinate in significance to those at present provided, and Jewish education would benefit through a unique opportunity of attacking the problem from the point of view of the needs of the child rather than from that of the curriculum more or less taken for granted.

In the case of the child caring and family welfare agencies, there is a similar

absence of logic whenever there is a lack of tie-up between these agencies and the board or bureau of education, which derives its support from the same community fund as they do. If it is the function of these agencies to provide for all the needs of the children under their charge, and if Jewish education is recognized as one of the needs of the child for the wholesome development of his personality, then it becomes incumbent upon the social workers to see to it that Jewish education be provided to the children for whose growth and development they are responsible. It is also natural to expect the social worker to be interested in seeing that this Jewish education be the best possible at the particular moment. To this end, he should seek opportunities to avail himself of the facilities and professional experience of the staff of the agency maintained by Federation for the purpose of raising the Jewish educational work of the community to the highest possible level. Cooperation between the Jewish social worker and the Jewish educator applies not only to the formal aspects of the Jewish educational program, but to the entire program of education of the dependent child, of which the Jewish educational aspect is a vital part.

There are many other areas of common effort, in which cooperation is desirable, which have not been touched upon, such as the adult education work of the central agency, the informal activities of the synagogue and the cultural program of various organizations. The foregoing should suffice, however, to indicate that there is ample room for coordination of Jewish communal agencies, and that such coordination is essential to a community program if the community wishes to take its responsibility to its youth seriously and with genuine earnestness.