

tools of the trade

Maxine Ferris, "TT" editor
Michigan State University

Working with Children *Working with Children. New York, New York: Parents' Magazine, Inc., 1978. Four sets of slides with cassettes or records. Total price: \$230. Price of each set: \$65.*

In the past few years, *Parents' Magazine* has developed many useful filmstrip/audio educational packages dealing with families and children. "Working with Children" is no exception. The content was developed in consultation with experts and is presented in an attractive format.

The sets are intended to be used as resource or stimulus material to provide a framework for discussion. Each set is composed of 5 filmstrips/audio units that provide 10 minutes of material per unit. There's one discussion guide for each set and this guide covers all five units.

"Working with Children" has four sets of materials: (1) Understanding the Responsibilities of Child Care, (2) Encouraging Healthy Development in Children, (3) Dealing with Daily Situations, and (4) Cooperation Among Staff, Family, and Community. Each of these sets has five subunits. With Set 4 for example, you find the topics: (1) The Child's Family, (2) Working with Parents, (3) When Children Have Special Problems, (4) Working with Staff and Support Personnel, and (5) Child Care and the Community.

As the discussion guides state, the material is designed to prepare child care and development personnel for work with children. That audience is evidently perceived to be in an educational setting such as a high school or community college. All scripts have jargon in them: "positive self-image," "good self-awareness," "language competency," "communicate

effectively," and so on. The leader must judge whether his/her audience has sufficient background to understand the ideas presented.

Set 1, Understanding the Responsibilities of Child Care, has three units that would be useful in presenting the need for a variety of quality child care options to community groups. Sets 2, 3, and 4 are suitable for in-service training of child care personnel. Certainly the participants on-the-job experiences would provide lively discussion.

It's absolutely necessary to go through the material before presenting it to become aware of the writer's viewpoint and style. For example, Set 3 suggests using nuts, seeds, and raw vegetables as snacks without discussing age appropriateness. Yet, Set 2 covers infant through age six development. (Many pediatricians don't recommend these foods for preschoolers.)

With judicious matching of these materials and the appropriate audience, one filmstrip/audio unit provides the basis for a very good one-hour program.

Jeanne Brown