Jean's Journal

Jean Wheelock
FCE Council Chair

Summer is upon us, so quickly it seems. Warm days and fireflies twinkling like magic lights in the dark of the evening are reminders of this season. Another is the celebrating of our country's freedom. This month, as many of us proudly displayed our flag, had family picnics and watched with awe the many beautiful firework displays on the 4th of July, I'm reminded of a story on the Pledge of Allegiance by Red Skelton. The following is from The Red Skelton Hour, January 14, 1969:

The Pledge of Allegiance

I remember this one teacher. To me, he was the greatest teacher; a real sage of my time. He had such wisdom. We were all reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and he walked over. Mr. Lasswell was his name...He said:

"I've been listening to you boys and girls recite the Pledge of Allegiance all semester and it seems as though it is becoming monotonous to you. If I may, may I recite it and try to explain to you the meaning of each word:

I - me, an individual, a committee of one.

PLEDGE - dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.

ALLEGIANCE - my love and my devotion.

TO THE FLAG - our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom. Wherever she waves, there is respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts "freedom is everybody's job."

OF THE UNITED - that means that we have all come together.

STATES - individual communities that have united into 50 great states, 50 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose, all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that's love for country.

OF AMERICA

AND TO THE REPUBLIC - a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

FOR WHICH IT STANDS.

ONE NATION - meaning so blessed by God.

INDIVISIBLE - incapable of being divided.

WITH LIBERTY - which is freedom and the right of power to live one's own life without threats or fear of some sort of retaliation.

AND JUSTICE - the principle or quality of dealing fairly with others.

FOR ALL - which means it's as much your country as it is mine.

Since I was a small boy, two states have been added to our country and two words have been added to the Pledge of Allegiance..."under God." Wouldn't it be a pity if someone said "that's a prayer" and that would be eliminated from schools too?

Parade!

Join the "Keeping Families First" parade on Saturday, August 7 at 1:30 p.m. at the Lancaster County Fair. Entries can be just about anything! Dress in a costume, become a clown, dress up your pet or design a "red wagon size" float. Agencies are welcome to carry banners. Come on 4-H clubs, use your imagination and be in the parade! For more information contact LaDeane Jha, 441-7180, or Barb Gaither, 471-3700. (KW)

Keeping Families First Day

Saturday, August 7 is the date for all families to enjoy a "good ole fashioned" Keeping Families First day at the fair. Start the day at 1 p.m. with the opening flag ceremony and end the day dancing the polka, doing the hokey pokey, the limbo and the Funky Chicken with your family and friends. In between, take time to march in the parade, visit organizational booths and enjoy the activities they have planned for families. Plan to eat a picnic supper together while being entertained prior to the dance. You're guaranteed a "good ole fashioned" good time. (LJ)

Setting a good example

LaDeane Jha
Extension Educator

Fritz Redl, a famous child psychiatrist, used to say to groups of parents: "Get out your paper and pencils. I am going to tell you the three most important things you will ever need to know about raising children." The parents would wait breathlessly for his words of wisdom. Then he would say, "Example, example, example." Similarly, Eda LeShan, a family counselor and author on parenting, has often said: "The only way to raise a decent human being is by being one." These two observations are on target. What children become has most of all to do with the example set by those who rear them.

In case you doubt the importance of teaching by example, think about your own childhood. How were you most influenced to become the person you are—for better or for worse? Was it mostly what you learned in school? Was it mostly your grade school, high school and adult friends? Was it mostly movies or television? Chances are that the person you have become was influenced mostly by the example set by your parents and other people who were close to you when you were young.

Since young children do not have prior knowledge or skills, they eagerly look for someone to imitate. That "someone" is usually one or both of their parents. Frequently, children are more affected by what their parents do than by what they say. They learn how to behave by seeing mothers and fathers behave and then following their example. For this reason, you need to be aware of the "lessons" you may be unintentionally teaching. It's not unusual for a mother to overhear her four year old scolding a younger sibling or doll in the same sharp tones that she herself uses when scolding the children. Such unintentional influences are just as powerful as those we carefully plan.

We all lose our tempers, say things we're sorry for, are not always as kind as we would like to be, maybe even cheat a little here or there. It is reassuring that it is the general trend of our behavior that influences our children, not the isolated instances of bad (or good) behavior. We are human; so are our children. Perfection can be expected of neither. What is important is to admit mistakes, accept the consequences of our behavior, say we're sorry and demonstrate how to make amends for our failures.

Family Living

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

by Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

For faster drying and energy savings when drying clothes be sure to clean the lint filter after each load. Dry only one washer load at a time. Overloading increases drying time and causes uneven drying and wrinkling. When drying only one or two items, add a few similar clean, dry items to balance the load and allow for proper tumbling action. Dry hard-to-dry items separate from lightweight items. Mixing the two garment weights will overdry faster-drying garments because the dryer will continue until the moisture is gone from the heaviest items. (LB)

Parenting tips for teaching character:

Teach Parents play a very major role in teaching children the importance of character in the lives of their children.

Advocate Be assertive about the importance of being a person of character. Make it clear that you expect your children to be trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and a good citizen.

Model Always set a good example in what you say and do. Hold yourself to the ultimate of high standards of character by honoring all of the pillars. Realize that you are human and when you falter be accountable, apologize and vow to do better next time.

Enforce Reward good behavior with praise and discourage inappropriate behavior with fair and consistent consequences that show you are serious about good character. Most of all, be consistent.

Use the three "C's"

Be consistent The messages you give your children should be clear, consistent and repeated frequently.

Be concrete Teach character using examples that your children can relate to and have experienced themselves.

Be creative Capitalize on the teachable moment. Use good and bad movies, TV shows, the news, newspapers, games, role plays, and everyday situations to teach character development. Have fun while you learn! (LJ)

Summer: A great time to practice family citizenship

Take a pro-active role in a community project. Help at a paint-a-thon, or with a Habitat for Humanity House construction project.

Present your ideas at a City Council or Board of Education Meeting.

Participate in a neighborhood or community clean-up.

As a family, choose a community project and do it on a regular basis. Some ideas, help at a homeless shelter, deliver meals-on-wheels, take care of a vacant lot, mow lawns for persons needing help. (LJ)

Health Awareness Day

Friday, August 6
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Ag Hall, State Fair Park

Health Awareness Day, sponsored by:

Lancaster County Family & Community Education Clubs, emphasizes healthy lifestyle practices. Booths will feature hands-on activities and information for youth and adults. Local health related agencies such as Saint Elizabeth's Burn Center; Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department; March of Dimes; Nebraska Injury Prevention Coalition; Visually Impaired Peer Support Group; Lancaster County Sheriff and many more will be on-hand to share their information.

Come join the fun!

FCE members are needed to volunteer at Health Awareness Day

Call Ann Meier, 488-6219, if you can help August 6.