

Shaping the Future

Volume 6, Issue 1
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Lutheran Education Association...linking, equipping, affirming educators in Lutheran ministries.

May It Be Well With You...

“So they set out and went from village to village (and church to church and school to school) preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere!” (Luke 9:6) Let me suggest that this is the mission and vision of educators, and, for that matter, for all people of God! We are called to proclaim, to teach and to heal, in the name of the healing Christ! We heal others, in Christ’s name, as we witness and teach wellness with our hearts and our bodies and our minds.

The focus of this issue, as Wheat Ridge Ministries and LEA once again partner, is “Health and Wellness.” How can we as educators live healthy lives as we model for others what health and healing is all about?

Some definitions to consider:

Wellness — our physical and mental well-being; ability to function in society.

Health — the wholeness of God’s creative love at work in our lives. Personal well-being. A process of adapting to the changes of life.

Wholeness — the revelation of who we are as persons because we have been touched by Christ. To live for a purpose.

Shalom — Peace, wholeness, unity of things under God.

Key point — It is not how we feel that makes us healthy but what and who we are as persons of God, in Christ Jesus!

***So, let us Lutherans ask,
“What does this mean?”***

It means, among other things:

...that health is a gift from God. It is not something we achieve, but rather something we are given. Hooray for that! People who die in the Lord, for example, “die well!”

...that we as educators have a role to model what health is all about to the children and youth around us — our eating habits, exercise, attitudes, worship styles, life styles — all are ways of sharing health and hope with others.

...that we continue to go “village to village” in our lives, just as the disciples did, proclaiming and teaching others that Christ is the Healer of all!

Health is a gift from God. It is not something we achieve, but rather something we are given.

...and that we live in forgiveness in Christ so that even when we fail to live as healthy as we ought, or fail to model healthy lifestyles — we are forgiven and empowered to point others to their health and hope in the healing Christ!

Enjoy this resource! And more importantly, enjoy our daily ministries of proclaiming and teaching and healing, through Word and Sacrament, the living out of your life of health and hope for others to see.

That’s what health and wholeness is all about! May it be well with you...and also with those children, youth and adults around you!

Rich Bimler is president of Wheat Ridge Ministries.

Creating MediaWise Kids, Families and Communities

“We deliver hearts and minds.” You might think this is a quote from *Shaping the Future* or another Lutheran publication, but it’s actually from a Music Television (MTV) marketing brochure. That MTV slogan describes one of the greatest challenges facing Lutheran educators today: Parents and teachers are competing with powerful forces for the hearts and minds of kids.

Today’s children are no longer growing up in neighborhoods, they’re reared in “cyberhoods,” media environments that shape their attitudes, values and behavior. Media consumes more time in children’s lives than any other activity except sleeping. As we move further into the 21st century, thanks to the digital revolution, the media will play an even more dominant force in our children’s lives. But a force for what?

There are TV programs, movies and video games that can engage, entertain, teach positive values and even inspire. Unfortunately, there are many other forms of media that titillate, manipulate and degrade. Some entertainment companies are willing to dish out the raunchiest, crudest and bloodiest fare imaginable to boost their bottom lines. Profits, not the welfare of our kids, motivate too many producers who control incredibly powerful channels of mass communication.

Make no mistake about it; the screens are powerful. That’s why advertisers are willing to part with as much as \$3 million for thirty seconds of screen time. They’re not fools throwing away their money. They know that the messages and images on screen are influential.

The list of ways that the media diet affects children — how much and what kind — doesn’t quit. The benefits of wise media can include improved reading, increased cooperation, better problem solving skills and access to treasure troves of information. But a bad diet brings violence, disrespect, lower reading scores, poor academic performance, promiscuous sexual attitudes, obesity, eating disorders, decreased curiosity, weakened imagination and shorter attention spans.

That’s why the National Institute on Media and the Family is joining with LEA to invite Lutheran educators to create MediaWise kids, families and communities. MediaWise is both a process and a movement to reclaim a culture of respect among children and a commitment to be the best they can possibly be in school. MediaWise schools are committed to teaching and supporting healthy use of media. The MediaWise program demonstrates in a concrete and powerful way that the Lutheran school community understands the power of media, practices MediaWise habits, and is committed to creating a respectful community.

Find out more about
MediaWise
Contact LEA or the
National Institute on
Media and the Family
at 888-672-5437 for
information.

The process is simple. Teachers, students and families learn about the power of the media and identify positive media habits. Then the students and families commit to their own customized MediaWise plan. The rest of the congregation holds up and supports the MediaWise kids in their midst. All of the materials and tools are created to help you as Lutheran educators bring media education to your students and families. You can contact LEA or the National Institute on Media and the Family at 888-672-5437 for information.

The media will continue to grow in their power to influence our children. Whether the media will be a force for good or harm is up to us. The battle for the hearts and minds of our children is too important to leave to chance. Learning and practicing MediaWise habits will be a critical factor in “shaping the future.”

David Walsh, Ph.D., is the president and founder of the National Institute on Media and the Family. He has written seven books including his most recently released, *Dr. Dave’s Cyberhood*. His PBS special, *Raising MediaWise Kids* is airing throughout the country this summer and fall. Dr. Walsh will be a featured speaker at the 2002 LEA Convocation in Minneapolis.

Reject the Bullying; Not the Bully

I wonder if Abel bullied Cain. Did Cain taunt Abel? My guess is that already in the first family there was teasing, taunting, threatening. I reflect on this after the school shooting tragedies of recent years. Of course, no one knows what goes into the dark decision to fire a handgun at a group of students. Whether or not bullying played any significant role in these incidents I don't know. This I do know. As through the centuries, bullying, taunting and name-calling are endemic in our society. Many believe that it is especially vicious among adolescents. It is a pure symptom of lack of wellness.

An article in the *Los Angeles Times* on junior high taunting triggered an outpouring of some 200 email messages. Most told of tormenting episodes of being hurt by put-downs because of size, sexual orientation, ethnicity or even how well they performed academically. Young people in our congregations live in this environment every day.

One DCE I know asked the confirmation class to confidentially list on file cards the most common pejorative terms classmates use in school today. The list was as long as it was distressing.

The church and all its educational settings are called to be an alternative community. One of the values that our congregations and all their classes and groups must teach vigorously and demonstrate continuously is "In this place you will be safe from taunting, put-downs, insults, name-calling, threats and bullying."



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Bullying is prevented by clearly teaching God's Law as stated in the 5th and the 8th Commandments. When bullying or taunting occur the sinner is confronted. Efforts are made to determine what unmet need the bully is trying to meet through inappropriate words or actions. Repentance and contrition are called for. When appropriate, the teacher arranges for the victim of the taunting to tell the bully how it feels to be put down.

The Gospel is finally the power to enable speech that is health-giving and affirming, especially as we teach how Christ for our sake was taunted, spit upon and rejected by humanity. Through His obedience we are made whole.

[We must teach],
"In this place you will
be safe from taunting,
put-downs, insults,
name-calling, threats
and bullying."

The Holy Spirit empowers people to live out the example of God's alternative community, the church. In the church God's people speak well of each other, see Christ in every other person and emphatically reject the use of verbal put-downs and bullying.

Mel Kieschnick is a staff associate with Wheat Ridge Ministries.

Wellness in the Classroom

How can Lutheran educators keep children healthy?

When students in an elementary methods course are asked to recall and reflect on their own health instruction experiences in elementary school, they invariably refer to “I remember that in one grade the boys and girls were split and we talked about...,” or “In science we did some stuff about the human body...,” or “We did some environmental stuff about...” No matter the snippets recalled, the annual general consensus is that their health education was basically non-existent, was not “lifestyle” related, or left no lasting positive impressions.

The classroom is an ideal setting to help children establish lifelong healthy attitudes and behaviors. However, the first recommendation in this process is to change the term from “health education” to “wellness living.” Wellness is an “umbrella” term involving numerous components; health education is only one of these. The second recommendation is to change the focus from a separate curricular subject taught “if/whenever there’s extra time” to the practice of infusing wellness elements across the curriculum on a regular basis. The “body, mind, spirit” model is frequently cited for Lutheran elementary education. While spiritual and cognitive growth and development permeate the entire curriculum, “body” issues generally are assigned to specific practices such as recess, physical education, health education and after-school sports.

Wellness is defined as “the constant and deliberate effort to stay healthy and achieve the highest potential for well-being.” (Haeger & Haeger, 1999) The words “constant” and “deliberate” would also describe the faith-life journey followed by Christians and encouraged through Lutheran education. Life and health are gifts of God and are to be maintained and used to His glory. The definition also implies, with “effort,” the decision-making process involved in *choosing* to be well. If the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, then making the right choices for wellness can be viewed as part of the whole cloth of Christian living. The generally accepted dimensions of wellness include the physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, environmental and occupational domains, although as Christians we would put the spiritual unit at the center. All of these dimensions are present within the elementary classroom. Each school day children — and teachers — are confronted with situations and opportunities for making choices.

Here are some foundations for making wellness choices in your classroom:

Create a Wellness Journal

Is journaling a strategy used in your classroom? How about a “wellness journal”? This can be as simple as checking the proper blanks on a pre-established list of target behaviors, or recording daily “wellness” activities or experiences in sen-

tences/paragraphs. Ideally the process would involve some analysis, for older children: what was the issue, what were the choices, what was my decision, why did I make this choice. If wellness is presented from a lifestyle perspective, this type of journaling is appropriate for “homework.” Children can become aware of all of the “choices” they confront while away from school. Family involvement in wellness practices can also be encouraged.

Teach Wellness Through Example

Can wellness be “taught” through example? What examples are you providing throughout the day? As a Lutheran educator you can share good Christian stewardship of “wellness” by getting enough sleep; by being a good steward of your own work/ family/play life; by modeling balance, variety, and moderation in what you eat; by sharing stories of your own active lifestyle with your students; and by including “God’s help in making wellness choices” in your classroom devotions. What snacks are provided and/or encouraged? Are healthy choices included in the lunch menu?

Create a Positive Attitude Towards Exercise

What kind of message is sent to children when “gym” is withheld as a penalty for misbehavior in the classroom? If physical education is a

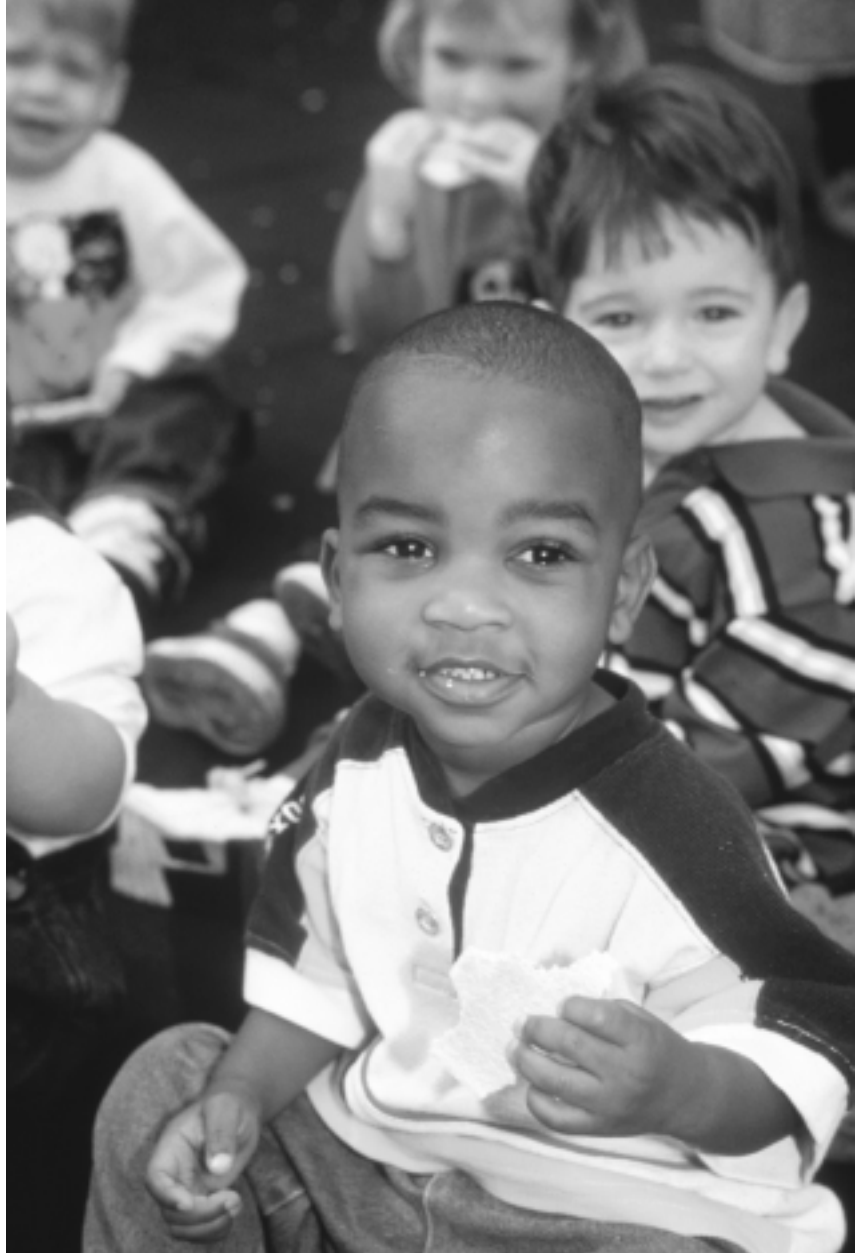
regular curricular component, it loses this status with such a practice. Consider the reverse: if a child misbehaves in the gym, is that child then to be excluded from social studies, science or religion? What message is sent to children if penalties for acting out in “gym” include running laps or doing push-ups?

Practicing Proper Posture

Is your classroom ergonomically correct for children? Are children able to practice good posture with the seating arrangements provided? Are accommodations provided for “differently-sized” children? Several recent biomechanical studies on children’s orthopedic issues focused on “bookpack” use and computer workstation arrangements. “Care and treatment of my body” elements could extend to a class task or small project of exploring how to select, pack, adjust and wear “bookpacks” properly. This leads the students into proper posture and body mechanics without the usual “preaching” approach to good posture.

Help Kids Manage Stress

Stress is far too prevalent in the lives of children today, both in and out of the school setting. Learning to manage stress is an important element of a “wellness” lifestyle. Beginning in preschool, children can learn the feelings of “tight” and “loose” in body segments in order to recognize signs of tension. This leads to the ability to practice one of the widely recommended “conscious relaxation” techniques. If children know what it feels like to “make hard knots with their muscles,” and are able to let body parts



BREAD FOR THE WORLD/USDA

go limp “like a rag doll,” they can use the alternating processes to relieve the muscular tension of stress. Learning to “stop and breathe” is another stress management technique that can be identified and practiced. This involves slow, deep inhalation with longer and fuller exhalation after each breath. The entire class could do “relaxation breathing” before beginning a test; individuals can be encouraged to do it before giving reports to the class. (Can you think of classroom situations when YOU need to use this technique?) Children can learn to “stop, breathe, and think” in conflict situations on the playground, for exam-

ple, as a part of anger management.

Recess, as a break from classroom confinement and tasks, is one of the earliest methods of stress management practiced in schools. Help your students to use their recess time in whatever manner will best help them return to the classroom refreshed and ready for learning. “How did I handle my stress today?” can find its way into student journals.

A suggested source for assistance in using “fitness breaks” during the school day is the video *Fit Kids Classroom Workout*, available from Human Kinetics Publishers.

Choose Healthy Foods

Another important component of wellness that can be addressed in the classroom is nutrition and weight control. The two topics generally are addressed together, but for children, the emphasis should be on making good nutritional choices and achieving an optimal energy output level through physical activity. School-age children, especially girls, are already too focused on the presumed deficiencies of their bodies! Children can explore nutritional values of favorite snack foods (from learning to read labels) and determine the best choices from fast-food locations (nutritional folders generally available upon request). They can identify individual daily caloric/nutrient needs based on energy output, and also can investigate better physical activity choices to burn more calories. In this connection, children need assistance in remembering that the body is a gift from

These all-school events can be used to focus on wellness:

A.C.E.S. Day (All Children Exercising Simultaneously).

This annual event will occur May 1, 2002.
(members.AOL.com/
acesday/aces.html)

Jump Rope for Heart/Hoops for Heart.

Designed primarily as fund-raisers for the American Heart Associations, and accompanied by excellent educational materials promoting wellness.
(www.aahperd.org, or
800/213-7193, ext. 429;
www.americanheart.org
or your local chapter of the
American Heart Association)

God. No matter your shape, size, color or ability level, God lives inside and loves you.

Many children today are overweight and even obese. However, a focus on calorie restriction is not healthy during the growing years. From a classroom instruction perspective, this may be best managed with a caution for patience while the body continues its growth changes. Meanwhile, the recommended “prescription” involves making good food choices and becoming more physically active.

Walking to Wellness

Are you — and your students — aware of the major benefits to overall wellness that can be achieved through walking? Even moderate walking lowers blood pressure, improves cholesterol levels, reduces body fat, helps manage stress, and enhances mental well-being.

Are you aware of the subject-matter integration opportunities available in conjunction with walking activities?

■ While walking, preschoolers can look for, identify, and discuss shapes or colors in nature and the neighborhood, or observe the changing seasons — a slower pace for a while for observation, then a faster pace for healthy hearts and lungs.

■ Older children can focus on a continuous heart-healthy or calorie-burning pace as they discuss assigned topics with a partner.

■ Time, distance, pace, and calorie expenditure all require math calculations. One elementary class walked through a vacant field with old socks over their shoes. When they returned to the classroom they planted their socks in dirt; learning benefits were “reaped” when sprouts appeared!



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■ Destination walks can be planned and used over a longer time period. How far is it to your state capitol, or other point of interest? Calculate mileage—one way or round trip? How long does it take to walk a mile? (Estimate, then practice.) How long would it take the class to acquire that amount of walking mileage? What is each child’s allotment? Estimate, calculate. Now on your topic walks, the children are also working on acquiring mileage for their destination. Expand the social studies content: what would we see along the way if we actually took the trip? What goes on at the state capitol?

■ In some schools, the walking project continues even in bad weather, as they walk quietly through the school halls! Involve several grades in a “walks of the

Bible” project — what routes did Jesus take while on earth (beginning with Nazareth to Bethlehem)? Can we “walk” any of Paul’s journeys?

■ Get the entire school population involved in a major distance walk! See the “walking curriculum:” *Walking for Little Children*, K-3, and *Walking Wellness*, 4-6+. (creativewalking.com)

■ Another walking program involves attempting to accumulate 10,000 steps per day. Although the recommended process involves using a pace counter, the overall idea may be manageable without technology. (digiwalker.com) The U.S. Center for Disease Control is promoting a national KidsWalk program to encourage children to develop “pedestrian” habits, and to get adults to reclaim their communities for safe, healthy walking. (cdc.gov)

Your classroom is a perfect place to infuse wellness elements across the curriculum. Will you and your students choose to be well?

Judith C. Kretschmar is associate professor, Department of Human Performance at Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois.

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According to the American Lung Association, there is a 90% probability of not smoking if a child doesn’t smoke prior to age 19. Contact your local Lung Association chapter for helpful resources to present this vital environmental, physical, social wellness topic.

Resources for Wellness in the Classroom

National Institutes of Health (NIH). www.nih.gov

United States Department of Agriculture, Food and nutrition information center. www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/

PE Central (curricular ideas, lesson plans). www.pecentral.org

PARK-NICOLLET Health Source (the Kids Activity Pyramid; help children increase activity in their lives); free catalog. 800-372-7776

Health Promotion Wave (K-12 Scope & Sequence chart). www.HealthWaveInc.com 800-374-7953

Heart Healthy Kids (educational materials for younger grades). Fax: 859-485-4869.

Eat Well & Keep Moving. *Chung, et. al. (2001)* “...an interdisciplinary nutrition and physical activity curriculum aimed at building lifelong healthy habits in upper elementary (grades 4 and 5) school students.” Human Kinetics Publishers, Champaign, Ill. 800-747-4457 www.humankinetics.com

Planet Health. *Carter, et. al. (2001)* An interdisciplinary curriculum for teaching middle school (grades 6-8) nutrition and physical activity. Human Kinetics Publishers, Champaign, Ill. 800-747-4457 www.humankinetics.com

The American Fitness Alliance (resources, programs, services). www.americanfitness.net

Dynamic Physical Education for Elementary School Children, *Pangrazi, R. (2001)*. 13th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. **Chapter 13, Wellness: Developing a Healthy Lifestyle**, pp. 275-294. Content: awareness and decision-making skills; body & functions; health-related fitness; and “lifestyle alternatives”: nutrition and weight control; relaxation, stress, and tension; substance abuse; safety and first aid.

American Dairy Council: local or national agency.

Wellness Councils of America: 9802 Nicholas Street, Suite 315, Omaha, NE 68114 402-827-3590

Local hospitals; community health department (screenings; personnel; services; resource materials).

Special recommendation for Lutheran educators for personal benefit

A Letter on Peace and Good Health. *Wind, J. (1998)*. InterLutheran Coordinating Committee on Ministerial Health and Wellness. 773-380-2881

Five Things Every Teacher and Parent Should Remember

1 Every Child is Gifted.

Each child is unique in God's eyes and should be special in our eyes. No child should be more valued than any other no matter how smart or how talented. Help each child to discover his or her own gifts and then provide opportunities and encouragement for developing those gifts in order to serve God, and to do so with gladness!

2 Human Needs are Pro-rated.

When lower level needs are not well met, higher needs are set aside, or worked on minimally. We need air, water, food and sleep. When those needs are cared for, we next focus on safety. If we don't have to worry about those things, we can focus on our emotional needs for love and acceptance. Next we can think about learning, and finally higher level needs such as spirituality. When children are tired, cold, hungry, angry or feel unloved, it's difficult for them to concentrate on lessons. Make sure to start with the basics.



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3 Children Need Trustworthy Adults.

A trustworthy adult does not expect more or less than children are able to do. They remember that abilities run on a continuum rather than a specific point at each age. They observe each child carefully to see what that child's gifts and needs are at that moment, and then offer appropriate help in meeting those needs and developing those gifts. When a child fails or exhibits inappropriate behavior, adults try to understand and help to alleviate causes of such behavior rather than punishing or demeaning the child.

4 Children Learn to Respect Others by Being Respected.

When we recognize and encourage development of gifts and acknowledge children's needs and fulfill those needs promptly and appropriately, we are showing respect. Children who experience this kind of respect learn how to give respect and have no need to show disrespect.

5 Adults Constantly Seek the Fine Line Between Helping and Withholding Help.

The line is like a box within which the child is capable, outside of which the child is not mature enough to function successfully. When we continue to do for a child what she can do for herself, we diminish her self-esteem. On the other hand, when we don't help when a child really is not capable, the child may cover up his inability as best he can to avoid shame or punishment. When to help and when not to help is a constant parent/teacher question.

With God's help and prayer for each individual child, we can do our best to be the teachers, friends, parents and grandparents children need. There is great joy in bringing up healthy and whole children in the name of Christ!

Lois Brokering is a former Kindergarten teacher and curriculum consultant. She has written for many church publishers.

Being healthy means...

Children, ages 4-13, at Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Roselle, Illinois, were asked a series of questions about what it means to be healthy. Here are some of their responses:

What does it mean to be well?

- Not to be sick
- To be healthy and lead a Christian life
- To feel good

How do you stay healthy?

- Eat the right foods, exercise and get enough rest
- Eat an apple
- Take vitamins
- Go to church

What could you do to be healthier?

- Exercise more
- Don't eat so much junk food
- Listen to God more
- Have a better relationship with God

What can adults do to be healthier?

- Stop smoking, eat the right foods, exercise
- Teach their kids about God more
- Read the Bible
- Join a fitness club

What gives you hope?

- My panda bear
- Teachers and parents
- Laughter
- People who tell me about all of the possibilities for the future
- God will always take care of me



Healthy Relationships, Healthy Attitudes

Our eleven-year-old, Alexis, starts middle school this fall. It's hard for us as parents to believe she is that old, but harder still to anticipate what lies on the path ahead for her. Alexis is bright, energetic, talented and a good student. She is also biracial and adopted. As a parent, my prayer is that she will continue to love who she is and live out who she is as a child of God. Now the question is, "How can you and I, as parents, teachers and significant adults help to make that happen?"

Relationships with other adults

In 2000, Search Institute and Lutheran Brotherhood conducted a study of almost 1,500 American adults in an effort to determine what actions adults believe are important on behalf of young people. Though the list of actions is interesting, the data, which shows the gap between "believe this action is important" and "do it," is somewhat disconcerting. The largest gaps appeared in three areas that I believe are relatively easy to accomplish:

- Report positive behavior—telling parents if they see a child or teenager doing something right (a gap of 43%).
- Expect parents to set boundaries—expect parents to enforce clear and consistent rules and boundaries (a gap of 42%).
- Have meaningful conversations—have conversations with kids that help adults and young people "really get to know one another" (a gap of 41%).

The survey also indicated that healthy relationships with children and youth are more likely to occur with:

- Women
- Adults over 35
- People with a high school education or less
- Parents
- African Americans or Hispanics
- Married and widowed adults
- People who make less than \$60,000 per year
- Long-time community residents
- People who volunteer at least monthly
- People who attend religious services

Healthy attitudes for young people

So, how do we encourage healthy attitudes and relationships in our young people? Here are a few suggestions for youth:

- ▲ Ask significant adults (teachers, pastors, parents of your friends) important questions about their life and work like, "how did you decide on a college?" or "why did you decide to have children?" or "why did you choose your life's work?"



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- ▲ Be willing to speak up on behalf of other kids or even yourself. Let adults as well as peers know that you have a valid opinion and that you want to be heard!

- ▲ Write a thank-you note to an adult who has made a difference in your life—a teacher or other adult whom you will always remember.

Foster healthy attitudes, healthy relationships in parents

- Be proactive in getting to know your child's friends and their families. Our neighborhood has an ice cream social the night before school starts in August so that families know which kids are home alone after school and who is walking home or riding the bus. And we all get to know one another better.

- Think twice before you say or do something around your child and his/her friends. Make sure your action and attitude reflect positive values.
- Encourage your child to seek out the ideas and opinions of other adults whom they know and trust when they are making important decisions.

Encourage healthy attitudes and healthy relationships in schools and churches

- Sponsor social events that involve people from several different generations — youth, adults and grandparents. Plan time for cross-generational sharing of ideas, dreams and life stories.
- Consider a mentoring program that links adults (other than parents) with youth.
- Connect adults who have specific skills or interests with youth who have needs (i.e. tutoring in math, teaching piano lessons, attending ballet together).

Healthy relationships with significant adults also build healthy attitudes in young people. Knowing how to make decisions whether it be about making friends, developing one's self-image, or knowing who it is "safe" to talk to comes from having positive interactions with parents and other adults. We can't protect our kids from everything in this sinful world, but we can be proactive in helping our young people develop positive relationships! Blessings as you build health and hope in the name of the healing Christ!

Margaret Rickers Hinchey is a staff associate with Wheat Ridge Ministries.

Students from the Academy Dar al-Kalima, Bethlehem, Palestine, shared stories of the Nativity with Wheat Ridge Ministries.

Keeping Children Healthy and Whole

Joe Bash, a Christian innovator, poet and educator, said, "We meet Christ coming from the future." To me that means, we meet Christ face-to-face. Not from behind while we tag along, but in person, as Christ comes from the future.

In the beginning we put on Christ in baptism. We have the name, the peace, picture, promise, the presence of Christ. The future is shaped from our beginnings. Lutheran educators get to shape the future each day with their students. Health and wholeness happens in these relationships — face-to-face, with Christ and with each other.

When we nursed on our mothers, learned to walk toward someone cheering us on, hugged, rode high on a shoulder or felt the wind on a swing, we were face-to-face. Wholeness is everything, coming together, centering, peace. Wholeness is our daily way of living. Good teaching and learning make this happen. You make it happen every day with your students. Christ meets us face-to-face daily enabling us to help others become healthy and whole.

All disciplines of education belong together. All look back and ahead face-to-face, individually and together, remembering the One who promised — when you truly remember, I will truly be there. You will face me, have me, see me.

There are new beginnings and new relationships. We see Christ face-to-face in the children we teach, here and around the world.

Mitri Raheb, pastor of Christmas Lutheran Church, Bethlehem, Palestine, asked children to imagine, draw and tell what the Nativity means to them living in the birthplace of our Lord. Forty children from the Academy Dar al-Kalima, Bethlehem, sent writings. They drew and imagined. They faced their own drawings and told stories of the annunciation, journey to Bethlehem, nativity, angels, shepherds, Herod, the flight to Egypt. They faced what was, is and will be. They found meaning in looking at the past and facing the future. In their writings we see them see, look, wonder, behold and believe. These 40 true stories are combined in the 2001 Wheat Ridge Ministries devotional booklet titled, *The Hopes and Fears of All the Years*.

Christian education is about meeting Christ, face-to-face. It is only through meeting Christ that we can face the past and shape the future — in His image. May your beginnings and endings be in Christ!

Herb Brokering is an author, poet, teacher, pastor and is a staff associate with Wheat Ridge Ministries.



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Thanks for your continuing encouragement of Wheat Ridge Ministries through your financial gifts, projects, prayers and healthy lifestyles!

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www.wheatridge.org

Upcoming Events

**Southwest Lutheran
Educators Conference**
November 18-20, 2001
Palm Desert Marriott
Palm Desert, California
Contact: Rachel Klitzing,
949-854-3232



This is a publication for you — the LEA members. If you have questions, concerns, comments about LEA or if you have an idea for an essay in a future issue of *Shaping the Future*, please contact the LEA office. We'd love to hear from you.

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