DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR A COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAM

GEORGE M. GAZDA
University of Georgia

Abstract

Developmental education is defined. Its philosophical foundations and a rationale for its adoption are presented. Thirteen "content"modules on which developmental education might focus are then outlined. In conclusion, the implications for teachers, counsellors, and counsellor educators are noted.

Résumé

Cet article définit l'éducation qui vise le développement de l'individu. On en présente les fondements philosophiques et les raisons qui motivent son adoption. Ensuite, on esquisse le contenu de treize modules qui pourraient servir de ligne de conduite pour ce genre d'éducation. En guise de conclusion, on présente certaines conséquences pour les enseignants, les conseillers et les responsables de la formation des conseillers.

The theme of this issue of the *Canadian Counsellor* encompasses the essence of developmental education, viz., the content of counselling and guidance and the emphasis on the counsellor as teacher/trainer. Although it can be argued that the content outlined later has always been the province of counselling and guidance, to my knowledge this content has never been isolated quite so definitively, nor has it been given such a prominent place in the curriculum.

In a short presentation such as this, it will not be possible to develop all the issues that have led the writer to take the position described here. But it is believed that the reader would be interested in why this position is recommended and how it may be different from current counsellor education models.

First, why is a different approach necessary? The writer suggests that current counsellor education content and practices are not significantly different from those employed to train counsellors through the 1958-era NDEA Institutes. The emphasis in those institutes was on preparing counsellors to be good listeners and facilitators, somewhat in the passive mode. Some critics have claimed that these counsellors were trained as amateur psychotherapists. At any rate the emphasis in most instances was on training in interviewing skills with some effort devoted to the use of group tests, group guidance, and occupational information. A frequent goal of counselling was to assist counsellees to develop understanding and insight into their problem(s), but intervention strategies were rarely offered by the counsellor to assist them in resolving their problems. Not infrequently the counsellees were left to their own devices once their problems were defined. Needless to say, the counsellees were often unsuccessful in their choice of strategies.

With the increasing numbers of students entering educational institutions in the late 1950's, the 1960's and early 1970's and with the shortage of teachers and other school personnel, counsellors were welcomed by teachers and parents as an additional source of help for the student. Because of the national emphasis on directing the able students into science careers, many counsellors spent much of their time in helping students obtain financial assistance for and admission to colleges of their choice. Other counsellors singled out the problem students and spent long periods of time in intensive counselling. Still others kept student records and served in administrative capacities. In sum, counsellors too often worked in isolation from the teacher and other school personnel. The results of their efforts, especially the specific areas of their expertise, often went unnoticed.

Times have changed considerably since the late 1950's and the 1960's. The public is demanding that educators be accountable. Secondary school personnel and college and university faculties in particular are being criticized for not teaching the so-called *basics,* essentially the 3-R's. Educators themselves are split on the need for greater stress on mastery of the academic areas versus greater emphasis on the teaching of life coping skills that go beyond the 3-R's. The fact that religious

institutions and families are less able to teach the life coping skills is frequently cited by those educators who have assumed more of these responsibilities.

Having briefly summarized the issues leading to the present state of affairs, the writer will sketch what he believes are the current needs of society. Still very important, of course, are the 3-R's. People must be able to communicate effectively and also compute accurately. But there are many other skills that are necessary for effective living and these skills have been appropriately named life coping skills although, in fact, the skills in the 3-R's are also life coping skills. The life coping skills go beyond the "training of the mind", and include training or educating the whole person.

Teachers are often not taught these types of life coping skills even though they may be expert in their academic areas of specialization. The fact that teachers frequently do not model appropriate or effective life coping behaviors obviously adversely affects the students because students, especially young students, frequently imitate teachers. What is being suggested, then, is that teachers will need to be prepared to model and/or teach life coping skills in addition to the 3-R's. Counsellor educators will need to become more actively involved in teacher education if these skill areas are to be introduced.

Although teachers should be trained in the learning packages or modules that will be outlined later they will not be expected to achieve the same level of mastery as will counsellors. Therefore, the counsellor will remain the "expert" in the school in the areas of life coping skills.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION, DEFINITION, AND RATIONALE

We have heard much in recent years of *affective education, psychological education, humanistic education,* the *implicit curriculum, life skills training, deliberate psychological education, contemporary life skills, career education,* et cetera. The writer has added to the coining or labeling process by referring to this shift in educational purposes as *developmental education* (Gazda, 1975). Recently, Miller (1976) edited a monograph entitled *Developmental Education and Other Emerging Alternatives in Secondary Guidance Programs.* This monograph reports research on the model of Sprinthall and associates.

The following are the writer's reasons for coining the term developmental education to describe this new movement:

1. First, developmental education conveys the proactive-preventive emphasis that is included in this movement.

2. Secondly, the other terms are either too vague, e.g., psychological education, that suggests an emphasis on the psychological domain, only; or too narrow, e.g., affective education, that suggests dealing only with a person's feelings.

3. Thirdly, developmental education incorporates all areas of human development, especially those areas of human development where models are rather well developed and accepted. For example, Piaget's Cognitive Developmental States (Flavell, 1963; Wadsworth, 1971; Zigler, 1973); Havighurst's (1972) and Erikson's (1963) Psychosocial Developmental Stages; Super's (Super, 1963; Super, Crites, Hummel, Moser, Overstreet & Warnath, 1957) Vocational Developmental Stages; Gesell's (Gesell, Ilg & Ames, 1956; Gesell, Ilg, Ames, & Bullis, 1946) Physical-sexual Developmental Stages; and Kohlberg's (Duska & Whelan, 1975; Kohlberg, 1975; Kohlberg & Turiel, 1971) Moral Stages. To be truly preventive, educators and counsellors must have some general guideposts or parameters against which to compare "normal" or expected development along the five basic human developmental processes just cited.

Developmental education, broadly defined then, constitutes a program whereby certain well-defined non-academic content (outlined later in modules) would be taught systematically to all age levels (both in and out of school) for the purpose of developing those skills essential to effective participation in the family, in the community, in employment, and in continued learning.

Counsellors, teachers, and other educators must *teach directly* not only skills critical for effective *interpersonal* functioning, but also skills that equip persons to assess their condition, follow reasonable plans to avoid problems, and effectively solve those problems which cannot be avoided. The writer's position also rests upon several other propositions that can be outlined only briefly in this treatment.

Proposition One: All attempts to teach/educate should be related to the student's developmental readiness. Another way of stating this proposition is that students should be viewed as unique in their readiness to learn skills, concepts, etc., but that even within their developmental stage, there is an optimum period for learning various attitudes and coping behaviors. The curriculum must be very flexible rather than lock-step if the uniqueness of each student and his/her different learning rates are to be considered.

Proposition Two: If society believes that compatibility among its members is an important goal, then *cooperation rather than competition* should be emphasized during the educational experience.

Proposition Three: Prevention of educational

and interpersonal problems should be pursued at least as much as the remediation of deficits. (There always seems to be financial support available for numerous remedial programs, e.g., drug education/counselling, remedial reading, "special" education, etc., but very little available to prevent problems in these areas. Education has no counterpart of "preventive medicine", or "preventive dentistry"). One of the purposes of the recommendations contained herein is to create such a preventive thrust.

Proposition Four: Positive self-concepts are developed through success experiences; therefore *mastery learning* should predominate. This means that educators must carefully arrange the learning tasks to maximize success and minimize failure.

Proposition Five: The process of education should produce *responsibily independent citizens.* Students do not assume responsibility or independence when they are taught in a leader-dominated, competitive and often oppressive environment; therefore the learning process should include *active participation* on the part of the learner and a physical and emotional *climate* conducive to the development of responsible behavior.

Proposition Six: Teachers, counsellors, and other educational personnel should be taught in the manner in which they are expected to teach/counsell their teachers. In other words teacher-educators and counsellor-educators should be *models* of teaching/counselling so that their products will also be models for their own students.

Proposition Seven: Process skills should be taught to teachers/counsellors in such a way that they in turn can utilize the same or similar procedures to teach, train, or counsel their students. In other words, the methodology of teaching should be most appropriate to the learning task so that the teachers or counsellors can utilize the same or at least similar approaches when they work with their students.

Proposition Eight: Prospective teachers and counsellors must be convinced that neither their education nor that of their students is ever really complete. They must be prepared for a lifetime of self-education. This philosophy should be operationalized by de-emphasizing credit hour accumulation and degree accumulation and emphasizing certificates of competency in speciality areas.

These eight propositions are not exhaustive. Nevertheless, they do communicate the essence of this writer's philosophy of education which, the writer believes, is necessary if the reader is to understand the content and thrust of developmental education.

CONTENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Recently the National Assessment of Educational Progress (1975), a division of the Commission on Education of the States, cited seven areas that were recommended by a planning committee as basic skills that should be present in our population in addition to reading, writing, and mathematics. These seven skill areas are as follows: (1) *consumer,* (2) *health maintenance,* (3) *interpersonal,* (4) *citizenship,* (5) *family relationship,* (6) community resource utilization, and (7) career and occupational development skills. Speaking on behalf of business and industry at the United States Office of Education Commissioner's National Conference on Career Education, Mr. Richard Terrell (1976), Vice-President of the Board of Directors of General Motors Corporation, cited the following as skills representing the fourth R — Relevancy — in *education: communication, leadership, problem-solving, decision-making, self-assessment, and self-fulfillment and creativity.* At the same conference, Marilyn Rauch (1976), representing the American Federation of Teachers, recommended that students should be taught adaptive skills. The overlap of the 13 modules that will be cited and the areas cited by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Terrell's enumerations, and Rauch's recommendation is obvious; however, it is believed that the areas/modules that the writer is proposing represent a more comprehensive program than any of those cited.

Although some of the modules may go beyond what most schools provide today, they can be incorporated into the current curriculum without detracting from the still important goal of teaching the 3-R's. Insofar as these modules have not been a part of teacher education and counsellor education, they must be provided through in-service programs for the upgrading of teachers and counsellors. Perhaps even more important, these modules should constitute the essential *non-academic core* of teacher education and the *complete* program for counsellor education.

The writer's contention is that the content or essence of each module can be translated to behavioral and cognitive "life coping skills". The teacher-educator and counsellor-educator must first translate the content of these modules into a curriculum for the teachers and counsellors so that they will acquire these life coping skills for themselves. They should also assist teachers and counsellors to develop and implement training modules in these skill areas for the age group(s) which they will teach/counsel.

The writer has not personally developed all of the modules proposed herein. Moreover, the order

in which they are presented is not necessarily the preferred order nor are these modules always so distinct that they could not be taught concurrently. In sequencing the modules, one might be guided by Bruner's (1964) theory of instruction, however, experimentation ultimately should determine the preferred sequence with modules being taught concurrently in some instances where learning could be reinforced through related experiences in other modules.

At this point, the writer would like to briefly describe 13 areas of life coping skills. Although it is not contended that these areas, are exhaustive, they do correspond to and go beyond the seven life coping skills areas of the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The citation of these skill areas and a general statement of the goal for this skill development is all that space permits. Many of these 13 skill areas are also areas in which teachers and counsellors, especially, must demonstrate competency in order to be more effective in teaching children and adults in a classroom setting.

Some individuals may question if these skills can be taught. More and more evidence is available that they can, but this issue cannot be settled at this time. The writer maintains that these skill areas can be taught best through presenting them in progressive packages or modules, and the following listing of the modules represents only a suggestion of the order in which they could be implemented.

Module 1. Stages of Development of Basic Human Processes. *Goal:* To know the stages in the following five areas of human development: (1) Physical-sexual, (2) Psychosocial, (3) Cognitive/Intellectual, (4) Vocational, (5) Moral.

Module 2. Parent Education. *Goal:* To facilitate parents' understanding of the kinds of behavior that might be expected from their children at given ages and to teach them effective parent-child relationships, including listening and responding skills.

Module 3. Communication/Facilitation Skill Training. *Goal:* To be able to listen and to respond to others in a helpful/facilitative manner.

Module 4. Identification and Development of a System of Personal Values. *Goal:* To identify one's own values and to learn to apply them to relevant social issues.

Module 5. Emotional Awareness. *Goal:* To become aware of one's range of feelings and to be able to label feelings accurately.

Module 6. Cultural, Ethnic, Racial, and Sex Differences and Similarities. *Goal:* To know the basic similarities and differences among the cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within one's immediate and anticipated life space, and also to know the similarities and differences between males and females within each of these groups.

Module 7. Decision-making and Problem-solving. *Goal:* To understand the parameters involved in decision-making and problem-solving and to be able to implement them effectively.

Module 8. Conflict Resolution. *Goal:* To develop techniques for resolution of conflicts.

Module 9. Physical Fitness/Health Maintenance. *Goal:* To recognize the elements of a good physical fitness/health maintenance program, and to participate actively in the program.

Module 10. Applied Learning. *Goal:* To know the key principles of learning and to be able to operationalize them in meeting a variety of life's needs.

Module 11. Organizational Development. *Goal:* To understand the institutional power structure and to be able to use appropriate strategies for change.

Module 12. Group Process/Dynamics. *Goals:* To understand the concepts of group process. To participate in a variety of groups with various goals so as to experience the differing effects on group members.

Module 13. Career Education/Guidance. *Goals:* To recognize the need for career education/guidance and to be able to apply it to one's career choice and development.

CONCLUSIONS

It is hoped that the reader has discovered from the preceding presentation that the same content in the developmental education curriculum is intended for everyone. Obviously the content and the process through which that content is taught will have to be scaled to the readiness of a given age group. But each age group will develop increased skills in the various modules until they have achieved functional mastery. Since developmental education is concerned with life-long learning, all levels of formal schooling from pre-school to graduate school will need to be involved. Beyond formal schooling other institutions or agencies must also become involved, such as the providers of adult education, community mental health, employment, and rehabilitation services. These out-of-school agencies can be phased in appropriately only if school personnel reach out to them and help them to understand and to accept their development and maintenance roles, and also, when appropriate, their initiating roles.

And how is the counselling and guidance profession to be affected by developmental education? Obviously, counsellor-educators will first have to accept the concept of developmental education with its emphasis on development of

specific life coping skills. Should they accept this philosophy of education, then *retraining* in the skills spelled out in the 13 modules will be necessary. Practicing counsellors in schools and agencies will then need in-service training for development of skills in each or, at least, in several of the modules. Competencies for certification and licensure will need to be modified to reflect these skills.

In order to maximize the implementation of these skills, teacher-educators will need to be retrained so that they, too, could teach these skills to pre- and in-service teachers. Counsellors in the schools must be experts who can serve as resources to help teachers implement the modules. Counsellors must also be prepared to teach certain modules themselves, for example, the Parent Education module. In order to go beyond the school environment in providing life coping skills, agency counsellors must also be equally competent.

Counselling and guidance is at another crossroad! The writer believes counselling professionals should begin teaching life coping skills in order to provide a comprehensive approach for meeting the needs of most individuals and groups in our society. The developmental education model is offered to implement a life coping skills curriculum.

References

Bruner, J.S. Some theories on instruction illustrated with reference to mathematics. In E.R. Hilgard (Ed.), *Theories of Learning and instruction* (63rd National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook, Part I). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Duska, R., & Whelan, M. *Moral Development: A guide to Piaget and Kohlberg*. New York: Paulist Press, 1975.

Erikson, E.K. *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton, 1963.

Flavell, J.H. *The developmental psychology of Jean Piaget*. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1963.

Gazda, G.M. *Developmental education: A model for counsellors*. Paper read at the Nebraska Personnel and Guidance Association Convention, Lincoln, Nebraska, October, 1975.

Gesell, A., Ilg, F.L., & Ames, L.B. *Youth: The years from ten to sixteen*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956.

Gesell, A., Ilg, F.L., Ames, L.B., & Bullis, G.E. *The child from five to ten*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946.

Havighurst, R.J. *Human development and education* (3rd ed.). New York: David McKay, 1972.

Kohlberg, L. Continuities and discontinuities in childhood and adult moral development revisited. In Paul B. Baltes & K. Warner Schaie (Eds.), *Life-span developmental psychology: Research and theory*. New York: Academic Press, 1975.

Kohlberg, L. & Turiel, P. Moral development and moral education. In G. Lesser (Ed.), *Psychology and educational practice*. New York: Scott Foresman, 1971.

Miller, G.D. (Ed.). *Developmental education and other emerging alternatives in secondary guidance programs*. St. Paul: Pupil Personnel Services Station, Division of Instruction, Minnesota Department of Education, 1976.

Rauch, M. Speech representing the American Federation of Teachers, Presented at The United States Office of Education Commissioner's National Conference on Career Education. Houston, Texas, November 8, 1976.

Super, D. Vocational development in adolescence and early adulthood: Tasks and behaviors. In D. Super, *Career development: Self-Concept Theory*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1963.

Super, D., Crites, J., Hummel, R., Moser, H., Overstreet, P., & Warnath, C. *Vocational development: A framework for research*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1957.

Terrell, R. Speech representing Business and Industry. Presented at the United States Office of Education Commissioner's Conference on Career Education. Houston, Texas, November 9, 1976.

Wadsworth, B.J. *Piaget's theory of cognitive development*. New York: David McKay, 1971.

Zigler, E.F., & Child, I.L. (Eds.). *Socialization and personality development*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1973.