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PHILOSOPHY AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A ROAD TO
DESPAIR OR A
HIGHWAY TO
UNDERSTANDING?

**Building
Resilient
Christians**

**NAD Teacher
Perceptions of
Adventist Curriculum**

**Computer
Security for
Small Schools**

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An Old Friend in a New Country



I have just returned from my first accreditation visit to the South Pacific as associate director of education for the General Conference. After a brief visit to Avondale College, we found Sonoma College's 400 students from Papua New Guinea, Melanesia, and Polynesia studying in a lush garden-like campus, dusted with ash from the eruption of Mt. Tavorvur two weeks earlier.



Lisa M. Beardsley

Next, I traveled to Port Moresby for an accreditation site visit at Pacific Adventist University, where most of the 500 students study education, theology, or business. I was especially anticipating this leg of our journey because the vice chancellor and I had studied together in the Philippines. I had last spent time with Nemanı Tausere and his pretty Tahitian wife, Francy, at Fulton College in Fiji about six years ago, when he was principal and I was the graduation speaker. What a joy it was to share evening tea with these dear old friends in a new country.

I have found that the relationships formed while at Adventist schools are helping me be more effective in my work around the world. I never dreamed fellow students would occupy significant positions of leadership all over the world and thereby provide an important network of influence.

Not only was I able to renew old friendships, but I also made new ones, such as with the students we met for interviews (see group picture on page 47). I also had the happy fortune of working with Barry Hill, director of education for the South Pacific Division. Our partnership was cemented over a week of long days evaluating the schools, writing and editing reports, and sharing many a laugh.



Author on swinging bridge over Dora Creek at Avondale College in Australia

Prestigious universities have long understood that the success of their graduates later in life depends not only on academics but also on the social networks created while at school. Beyond the three R's of reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic is the fourth R of relationships. Richard Osborn (now president of Pacific Union College) a few years ago introduced me to the fourth R by giving me a book by Parker Palmer.¹ As teachers foster the development of a relationship between the student and the academic subject, they also can create personal relationships with students that make the classroom a fun and safe place to learn.



Nemanı Tausere and his wife Françoise Angele

According to Vygotsky,² experiencing a relationship in which knowledge is mutually constructed is fundamental to the development of human cognition. Palmer contends that "knowing of any sort is relational, animated by a desire to come into deeper community with what we know." He elaborates: "Knowing is how we make community with the unavailable other, with realities that would elude us without the connective tissue of knowledge. Knowing is a human way to seek relationship and, in the process, to have encounters and exchanges that will inevitably alter us. At its deepest reaches, knowing is always communal."³ By experiencing the classroom as a safe place in which to explore, students can begin to discover truth for themselves. To enter into that environment with students while developing their proficiency is the Christian educator's challenge. It will only be

Continued on page 47

PHILOSOPHY AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A ROAD TO DESPAIR OR A HIGHWAY TO UNDERSTANDING?

See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy” (Colossians 2:8, RSV).¹ Paul’s counsel has caused many Christians, including Seventh-day Adventists, to harbor an unnatural fear of philosophy. When a second-century theologian cried, “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”² or when the Adventist founder Ellen White admonished against wandering “in the mazes of philosophy,”³ they may have wanted to convey a note of caution to emerging movements in church history. Paul himself alludes to a significant reason for this concern. In his time, Greek apologists and philosophic adherents were posing a real threat to the growth of Christianity. The apostle had to issue a spiritual and theological warning to the Colossian church: Christ is non-negotiable. “For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule

While Christian education must be grounded and rooted in a Christocentric commitment, it must not fail to recognize that it operates in a world whose philosophic commitment and academic pursuits may be at variance with a Christian perspective.

and authority” (Colossians 2:9).

While Christian education must be grounded and rooted in a Christocentric commitment, it must not fail to recognize that it operates in a world whose philosophic commitment and academic pursuits may be at variance with a Christian perspective. In the face of such variance, the Christian school does not have the luxury of hiding like an ostrich; indeed, it has an obligation to its students, its constituency, and its pursuit of the highest possible outcomes in the learning process to prepare the student to face the subtle as well as the obvious issues philosophy raises in everyday life and learning.

Is it possible to fulfill such an obligation? I believe it is if we (1) dispense with some traditional myths about philosophy, (2) understand the nature and function of philosophy, and (3) develop a plausible Christian worldview within which to pursue this intellectual journey.

BY JOHN M. FOWLER



Among the traditional myths some Christians have developed about philosophy, one is that faith and reason are incompatible.

den for ages, and who can solve the most difficult problems for minds that believe in Him.”⁵

Thus, there is a link between reason and faith—both are gifts from God, and both are to be exercised in Christian education. The Scriptures mandate that we develop our minds—indeed, growth in knowledge is part of the sanctification process (2 Peter 1:5-7). Since Christian faith demands the transformation of the mind (Romans 12:2); it therefore does not abrogate mind or reason, but transforms it so that the human mind functions with the assistance of divine enlightenment. This is a task only faith can reach out and grasp.

The second myth that some Christians cherish is that intellectual growth undermines Christian faith. But, in fact, an educated Christian can be a better informed and effectively communicative person. While most of Jesus’ disciples were uneducated (showing that God can use anyone He chooses), men like Moses, Daniel, and Paul illustrate the power of educated persons who submit themselves to the demands of faith. To be sanctified does not mean to be stupid. Again Ellen White writes: “Ignorance will not increase the humility or spirituality of any professed follower of Christ. The truths of the divine word can be best appreciated by an intellectual Christian. Christ can be best glorified by those who serve Him intelligently. The great object of education is to enable us to use the powers which God has given us in such a manner as will best represent the religion of the Bible and promote the glory of God.”⁶

Get Rid of the Myths

Among the traditional myths some Christians have developed about philosophy, one is that faith and reason are incompatible. But both faith and reason are God’s gifts to human beings, and any perceived incompatibility between the two is not grounded in biblical revelation. “Come now, let us reason together,” invites the Creator (Isaiah 1:18), and the same God also describes faith in Him as fundamental to our relationship with Him (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 1:17).

Christian faith underscores that when God created humans in His image (Genesis 1:16), He shared with them His creativity, which of course implies a rational capacity. Human rea-

soning may often be faulty or marred, but that does not mean it has no role in Christian life. Indeed, even the faith life of a Christian must be lived, explained, and shared in a world that is tuned to using tools built by reason. Part of Christian education’s task is to develop rational capacity to the maximum. Wrote Ellen White: “All who engage in the acquisition of knowledge should strive to reach the highest round of the ladder. Let students advance as fast and as far as they can; let the field of their study be as broad as their powers can compass.”⁴ This lofty goal, however, comes with a caveat: “But let them make God their wisdom, clinging to Him who is infinite in knowledge, who can reveal secrets hid-



A third myth is the perception that there is a distinction between the sacred and the secular, and that we should live that distinction. A deeper understanding of the Christian faith demands that while we live in the secular, we must never give up the sacred; indeed, we must mediate the sacred to secular people, so they can better understand, appreciate, and grasp the dynamics and the sense of fulfillment found in the sacred. God is a God of both the altar and the laboratory, and the Christian must not be apologetic about the former or enamored by the latter.

We must not dichotomize the sacred and the secular to the extent that we restrict religion to the heart and to the Sabbath, and education to the mind and to the rest of the week. The hidden danger of the secular is to think and live as though God does not exist. It is the mandate of faith to face that danger in its own territory and overcome its wiles. To do that, faith needs

to maintain its God-given ability to reason at its sharpest focus. We live in the world, but we are not part of it. The world is both our home and our mission.

The integral relationship between faith and reason is well summarized by Ellen White: “Knowledge is power, but it is a power for good only when united with true piety. It must be vitalized by the Spirit of God in order to serve the noblest purposes. The closer our connection with God, the more fully can we comprehend the value of true science; for the attributes of God, as seen in His created works, can be best appreciated by him who has a knowledge of the Creator of all things, the Author of all truth.”⁷

Understand What Philosophy Does

To question is philosophy’s occupa-

There is a link between reason and faith—both are gifts from God, and both are to be exercised in Christian education.

tion as well as its tool. Philosophy seizes every opportunity to probe, prod, doubt, analyze, and seek. The goal of its questions is meaning and coherence. Morris notes: “The philosopher’s job is to ask the kinds of questions that are relevant to the subject under study, the kinds of questions we really want to get answered rather than merely muse over, the kinds of questions whose answers make a real difference in how we live and work.”⁸

All philosophy is concerned with three basic questions: What is real? What is true? What is good? The first relates to ontology and metaphysics, the study of reality and existence. What constitutes reality? Is human ex-

The second myth that some Christians cherish is that intellectual growth undermines Christian faith.

istence real? Does the tree that we see make up part of reality? Or does the idea of tree-ness or human-ness take precedence in the understanding of reality? As Schaeffer says, "Nothing that is worth calling a philosophy can sidestep the question of the fact that things do exist and that they exist in their present form and complexity."⁹

The second area of interest in philosophy is epistemology. How do we know that something is true or not true? Is what is true always true? What are the conditions and limitations of knowledge? Are we as humans responsible for the creation, certification, and verification of truth? Is truth relative or absolute?

The third area of concern to philosophy is ethics. What is good? What defines appropriate conduct? Is there a norm for behavior? Is it objective, subjective, relative or absolute, universal or particular? What is the source of that norm—tradition, social mores, current practices, the will of the ruling power, situation, religion? Is valuing a conditional process?

Philosophy's answer to these questions depends on the worldview that one adopts. For example, if you were a follower of Plato, yours would be a worldview of idealism—a belief that reality consists of the world of ideas. Using that assumption, an idealist would define what constitutes reality, truth, and ethics. But if your worldview is that of a materialist, an evolutionist, or existentialist, your perception of reality and truth will be quite different.

So how should a Christian relate to philosophy? First, it is always an advantage for a Christian to understand the complexities of various philosophies—their views, their methodology,



their conclusions, and their challenge to Christian intellectual and faith life. Mars' Hill, Paul found, was not an impediment but a propeller to a better understanding and proclamation of faith (see Acts 17:22-34; cf. 1 Corinthians 2:1-7). Second, a Christian must develop a worldview that will provide an adequate ground on which to stand, and to carry on a meaningful dialogue with and witness to the secular world.

Building a Christian Worldview

In dealing with philosophy, Chris-

tian educators must avoid the twin dangers of capitulation and indifference. On the one hand, they may be tempted to surrender to the philosophic onslaught and feel compelled to reinterpret or reject their faith claims. On the other, they may hide from asking or facing critical questions. While surrender may destroy one's faith commitment, panic renders one's faith-witness ineffective. Instead, the Christian has a responsibility to deal effectively with the questions philosophy raises and to provide credible answers from



the perspective of a Christian worldview. Schaeffer puts it bluntly: “Christianity has the opportunity. . . to speak clearly of the fact that its answer has the very thing that modern man has despaired of—the unity of thought. It provides a unified answer to the whole of life. It is true that man will have to renounce his rationalism, but then, on

the basis of what can be discussed, he has the possibility of recovering his rationality.”¹⁰

While philosophers find their unity of thought in their chosen point of departure—mind, matter, existence, materialism, language, class, etc.—where do we go to develop a Christian worldview? Without pretending to be either

exclusive or exhaustive, let me suggest three basic faith affirmations we can use. These affirmations are wholistic in nature, universal in scope, biblical in origin, and non-negotiable in commitment.

1. God is the ultimate reality. “In the beginning God. . .” (Genesis 1:1). Therein lies the Christian’s foundation

We must not dichotomize the sacred and the secular to the extent that we restrict religion to the heart and to the Sabbath, and education to the mind and to the rest of the week.

for a worldview. Because God is, I am. Without Him, nothing is. ““In Him we live and move and have our being”” (Acts 17:28). To the Christian, God as a Person is what constitutes the ultimate reality. He is the cause and designer of creation. His activities have structure, purpose, and order. As Schaeffer says, “The strength of the Christian system—the acid test of it—is that everything fits under the apex of the existent, infinite, personal God, and it is the only system in the world where this is true. No other system has an apex under which everything fits. . . . Without losing his own integrity, the Christian can see everything fitting into the place beneath the Christian apex of the existence of the infinite-personal God.”¹¹

2. We know because He has revealed. A second dimension of a Christian worldview is that human knowledge is based on God’s revelation in nature and in Scripture. Hence, we study nature and its flow in history and experience within the context of God’s creation of, and action in, nature. The believing mind discerns the workings of God in the beauty and mystery of nature, praising one and probing the other. The Christian also accepts the Bible as an epistemological cornerstone for his or her worldview. This means that “no interpretation of ultimate significance can be made without biblical revelation. Lacking the perspective it gives us, the things of the world are disconnected objects only, the events of the world are mere unrelated coincidences, and life is only a frustrating attempt to derive ultimate significance from insignificant trivialities.”¹²

Accepting God’s Word as an epistemological source does not mean that we view the Bible as a sort of divine

encyclopedia. It does mean, however, that we believe it addresses life’s great issues: Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? What is the meaning of history?

What is my role in society? The Bible has something to say on these and other crucial questions of existence and destiny, and thus a Christian worldview—and Christian education—must take into account what it says, even as they encounter the positions of other systems.

3. God relates to human beings.

The Christian worldview accepts an anthropology that recognizes a close kinship between God and humans. The kinship can be summarized in three major assertions:

(a) God created human beings in His own image (Genesis 1:26, 27), and thus, they are not a result of some cosmic accident or the apex of some evolutionary paradigm, limited and controlled by a complex system of mechanical laws. Kinship with God makes it possible for humans to function creatively, relate meaningfully, and be held accountable for their actions.

(b) Because of this kinship, the Christian sees evil as the result of a rupture in the God-human relationship, called sin in the Bible. Sin—alienation from God—is at the root of distorted perceptions, relationships, and values. This, asserts the Christian worldview, explains the chaotic, confused, and hopeless situation that warps life into an existential dilemma.

(c) Because of God-human kinship, the Godhead has not left humans without hope. The Christian worldview is both redemptive and surgical. It is redemptive because God has saved humanity from sin and reconciled them to Himself through the cross of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19). It is surgical in that it looks forward to an end-time when sin and its results will be completely wiped away, preparing the way for the creation of “new heavens and a

new earth” (Isaiah 65:17). Both aspects of restoration are rooted in the life and death of Christ. Thus, to know Him and to relate to Him become central to both Christian living and Christian learning. Without Him, there can be no Christian worldview.

Conclusion

With such basic affirmations, working within a faith-asserting worldview, Christian education can function without compromising faith or sacrificing intellectual integrity. Our teaching will, then, become wholistic, God-centered, redemptive, and service-oriented. It will become a joyous pursuit in which faith and reason embrace each other, as the worshiping heart and the inquiring mind are integrated and at peace with each other.

Given that, philosophy need not be a road to despair but a highway to better understanding. ✍



John M. Fowler is an Associate Director in the General Conference Education Department in Silver Spring, Maryland.

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BUILDING RESILIENT CHRISTIANS

A GOAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION

Connie* was an honor roll student in her Adventist academy. Bill* played in the band and was a class officer his senior year. Connie's parents work for the church. After graduation from academy, they married and moved to the middle of Wyoming, to be near Bill's work. The nearest church was nearly an hour's drive away, and few young people attended. The pastor's sermons were not very inspiring, and Sabbath was one of the few days they could sleep in. It became much easier to listen to a sermon on tape rather than to make the effort to attend. Sometimes Connie would plan a picnic, or they would both relax at home with a book. Gradually, the unfinished proj-

Our schools need to focus on building Christians who are able to deal with difficult situations without losing their faith.

ects of the week crept into the Sabbath hours.

Roger Dudley's 10-year study of graduates from Adventist academies¹ found that about 48 percent of the respondents educated in Adventist schools were no longer regularly attending church a decade after graduation. Even though many of them may return later in life, these numbers give cause for concern. The original Valuegenesis study² reported that the attitudes toward religion of students who attended

Adventist schools and those who attended public schools were not vastly different on many topics. Valuegenesis II research, however, found that Adventist students in church-operated schools were significantly more likely to uphold the doctrines of the church than Adventist students studying in public schools.³

Dudley's longitudinal research on graduates from Adventist high schools⁴ suggests

BY SHAWNA VYHMEISTER

* Not their real names.

“Resilient Christians” know how to glean strength to maintain their Christian experience in whatever environment they are planted.

habits that are incompatible with Christianity.

3. The teachers aren't committed enough or don't really live what they believe, and students “see through” their veneer of Christianity.

4. Young people mean to stay in the church, but after they graduate, they spend a lot of time on secular pursuits, and have little contact with spiritual things. Many complain that their church is not loving, is critical of them, or does not meet their needs, and they eventually drop out.⁵

5. Schools are doing their best, but their methods of promoting Christianity are not effective with today's teens.

Whatever the reason, the solution is the same: Our schools need to focus on building Christians who are able to deal with difficult situations without losing their faith. We need to find out how to better educate our students so that they will become good Christians and useful citizens, and remain practicing church members throughout their lives.

The sort of individual described above could be labeled a “resilient Christian,” borrowing a term from secular educational research and applying it to spirituality. This concept could be defined as follows:

“Resilient Christians” know how to glean strength to maintain their Christian experience in whatever environment they are planted. They expect to face adversity for being different from those around them, and do not become discouraged when they discover that other Christians are imperfect examples of God's character. They maintain their



that students actually do get the message, but that when they leave school, many of them don't follow through on their decision to remain Adventists. A variety of explanations have been given for why so many youth leave the church:

1. The world is getting more sinful, and it is therefore harder to raise Christian children who stand up for what they believe.

2. Parents aren't doing their part, and the kids come to school already “pre-programmed” with ideas and

“Resilient Christian people . . . cope gracefully, even elegantly” with unexpected or unpleasant events.

own personal relationship with Christ, and share their love for Him with others.

“Resilient Christian people . . . cope gracefully, even elegantly”⁶ with unexpected or unpleasant events. They are not excessively influenced by their environment, since they have learned how to depend on God for support. Resilience includes insight, independence, relationships, initiative, creativity, and humor.

Christians who are resilient will

- ask tough questions and give honest answers;

- not avoid difficult or painful truths;
- see their circumstances realistically; and
- take responsibility, rather than blaming others for their problems.⁷

If we could develop this kind of student in our schools, we might possibly retain a larger percentage of them, rather than losing them out the back door of the church.

Related Educational Research

Secular educational research may help to shed light on better ways of developing resiliency in Christian youth. Studies on curriculum and instruction, as well as research on resiliency, can help us teach spiritual concepts, as well as intellectual ones. Following is a review of selected studies, examined for their relevant applications in the area of spiritual resilience.

Outcome-Based Curriculum Planning

This desired outcome is the starting

point for some approaches to curriculum. Wiggins and McTighe⁸ encourage teachers to build their lesson plans backward, beginning with the desired results, and trying to see what they want their assessments to look like. They then determine what sorts of activities will produce that kind of knowledge, and finally, what content will support the overall goals for the course.

This idea makes sense for Christian educators who wish to help students become and remain strong, active church members as well as good citizens of their community. We must begin by knowing where we want to end up, and then design activities and experiences that will help us get there.

If our curriculum is not achieving our goal of developing Christian young people who will “stand for the right, though the heavens fall,”⁹ we need to change what we are doing and find or design content and activities that better achieve this goal. We need to remem-



ber that the goal is not simply having the students choose to follow Christ. Our success must be measured not by how they choose, but by whether they maintain their initial commitment. Beginning with that outcome in mind, we need to work backward, to see where to make changes that will lead to increased spiritual resiliency in our youth.

Educational Effectiveness Research

One of the basic messages of recent research on educational effectiveness¹⁰ is that no matter how children enter school, they should have a chance to come out better. Sadly, until recently, students who enrolled with many advantages (socioeconomic status, intelligence, background knowledge) often graduated with the top honors, and those who came in weak emerged even weaker. In other words, schools were reproducing society, and not really giving every child a chance. This realization has changed the way schools look at success, and has encouraged many of the leading researchers and consultants to focus on how to help schools with large populations of failing students. As they have concentrated their energies on populations that have traditionally done poorly in school, they have begun to learn many new things that were not clear before:

1. Students who come from impoverished backgrounds often have inadequate family/personal support systems. Their homes and communities are often affected by physical abuse, drug and alcohol use, and emotional abuse.¹¹

2. Such students enter school with academic weaknesses and need help to be able to do grade-level work.¹²

3. These students have major deficiencies in the area of vocabulary development. The average 1st grader from a middle- or upper-class home knows a minimum of 6,000 words. A child from an impoverished environment, however, may only understand and use only around 3,000 words.¹³

4. Researchers are finding that the single most important factor in school success is the social support of family.¹⁴ Students who lack that have a big



deficit, indeed, but one that can still be overcome by providing other sources of support.

Though educators do not have any control over students' characteristics when they arrive at school, they do have a fair bit of influence over what they are like when they leave school.¹⁵ Schools and teachers *can* make a difference.

Even if IQ is regarded as fixed (there are varying opinions on this), a high-quality school environment, even one with medium-quality teachers, can improve the performance of low-achieving students. The implication is that what students *don't* bring to school is the school's problem. We can't ask parents to produce higher-quality stu-

dents to make us look better—we simply need to do a good job with whatever students we get. Therefore, we need to structure each school's program to ensure that every student has a bet-

Studies on curriculum and instruction, as well as research on resiliency, can help us teach spiritual concepts, as well as intellectual ones.

ter chance to succeed.

In addition to a new emphasis on building background knowledge where it is absent, current research also suggests making testing more meaningful and using it as a basis for student learning. In a recent conference on teaching and learning, Wiggins¹⁶ proposed doing much more assessment and less teaching, since when students are assessed early and meaningfully, the students themselves can see where and how they need to improve, and can make adjustments to help themselves reach the goal. Wiggins suggests that anything worth learning will probably take multiple attempts before it is achieved. He adds that it is not so much the original content or teaching

The implications for Adventist education are obvious: Teachers need to give pupils more feedback along the way about how they are doing in different aspects of their education, so they can make adjustments. Teachers must not simply blame society or family background for a student's lack of academic or spiritual growth. The school has to make a difference for the pupils who aren't making it on their own, not merely rejoice with those who would have done well with little help from the school. Schools need to work on developing both academic competencies and behaviors that support spiritual resilience, and seek alternative means of support when home and society don't provide enough.

schools to promote it. If we could just boil this ability down to its essence and then help students develop it, they would have a better chance at success.

Benard explains that resiliency is hard to define—like the wind, we see the results, not the actual thing. She claims that “the development of resiliency is none other than the process of healthy human development”¹⁹ and therefore is not uncommon. That is, if students learn how to relate properly to their environment, they can cope with the problems that will surely face them both in their personal life and in their Christian journey.

At-risk children are often described as culturally, ethnically, or linguistically different from their peers.²⁰ These dif-

One of the basic messages of recent research on educational effectiveness is that no matter how children enter school, they should have a chance to come out better.

ferences are often seen as deficits in an environment where being like others is important. Such children traditionally do not do as well in school.

The parallels with Christianity are powerful here. Are Christians culturally and linguistically different? They should be. Are they ethnically different? If they see themselves as not belonging to this world, that's exactly how they should feel. Christian students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, may well be judged as inferior because of their differences. Most certainly, they will face strong pressure from society to conform. Some students have the inner strength to stand up to that pressure; others do not.

Researchers have searched for dif-



method that motivates student learning, but rather the feedback about how they are doing that helps students the most.¹⁷ Basically, when students get clearer feedback about what they are doing well and what they need to improve, this produces more effective learning. Testing should allow students to make adjustments and try again, which makes it a step in learning rather than the end of the process, when it is too late for the student to improve.

Resiliency Research

The idea of resiliency is currently receiving a lot of attention from the academic research community, which has focused on students who do well, even under difficult circumstances. They thus hope to identify and understand what factors help such students to be more resilient, so that schools can promote that type of behavior.¹⁸ Adventist educators also need to better understand resiliency before we can begin to make practical adjustments in our

ferences between students who are at-risk but do well, and students who face the same difficulties but are overwhelmed by them. Resilience literature suggests that educational persistence and academic achievement correlate with participation in extracurricular activities and pride in the child's school.²¹ Other results show that resilient students had significantly higher perceptions of family/peer support, teacher feedback, and positive ties to the school. They placed a higher value on school, peer belonging, and family than non-resilient students did. Researchers also found that students' sense of belonging at school was the only significant predictor of academic resilience.²²

In their meta-analysis of research

Though educators do not have any control over students' characteristics when they arrive at school, they do have a fair bit of influence over what they are like when they leave school.

- a good school and classroom learning environment.²⁴

These results have important impli-

is one place where they are loved, accepted, and safe.

Comer²⁵ suggests that the lack of family support can be replaced in a child's life either by teachers or other caring adults. But this list of skills also shows a need for autonomy, an individual sense of where one is going and how to get there, as well as the ability to solve problems and make good use of time. Do we teach these skills in our schools? Unfortunately, I fear that we do not emphasize them enough. We often try to save our students from the world by not giving them the opportunity to interact with it and make their own choices about it. This is incredibly complex because of sinful human nature. On the one hand, students must make their own decisions about doing what is right. On the other hand, if we allow them too much freedom, they will tend to choose what is not best for them, given the sinful nature of human beings.

So what is a school to do? The resiliency literature suggests that we need to teach students how to make good decisions for themselves. This is much more difficult than simply creating a fair set of rules to follow.

Unconditional Teaching

Teachers sometimes complain that students are enrolling with less and less from home (less learning, less character, less in the way of life skills) and that school is supposed to magically make up for all the things homes are failing to do. It's important to note, however, that students don't only come in with less of *everything*. They are also more diverse than before. Students are exposed to many more ideas at a young age, even within the Adventist school system, and they bring new and different skills to class than they did 20 years ago. As for what the school is supposed to do about it, it seems there really is only one answer: Either we are intentional about helping students

on resiliency, Waxman, Gray, and Padrón²³ attempted to summarize what is known about resilient children. They came up with the following list of personal and environmental characteristics:

- social competence,
- problem-solving skills,
- autonomy,
- a sense of purpose,
- motivation and goal orientation,
- positive use of time,
- family support, and

cations for Christian schools. If our goal is to develop resilient Christian adults who will remain true to their beliefs in spite of adversity, we need to help our students develop these characteristics. We already know that family support matters. But external support matters, too. The sense of belonging to a school was the only significant predictor of success for at-risk students. This identification with an esteemed group is important for students. They need to know that school



achieve success, or we are not. As educators, we cannot shirk our responsibility by blaming parents for not doing their part. Either we accept the challenge and do our best to ensure that all students learn, or we should find a different profession. Education is a salaried job—we are paid to get the job done, not to do only the pieces we have traditionally considered our responsibility in the past.

Secular researchers are now suggesting what Christians have known all along—helping each child reach his or her potential is a must. We cannot excuse ourselves by assuming that it is inevitable that at-risk students will fail. Our mandate is to find appropriate methods and materials to help them succeed.

This concept of accepting students as they are and teaching them whatever they need to know is referred to by some as “unconditional teaching.”²⁶ The idea here is that we don’t see students as having deficits that we have to

Teachers need to give pupils more feedback along the way about how they are doing in different aspects of their education, so they can make adjustments.

“fix,” but rather, we value each individual for himself or herself. Kids need unconditional acceptance. “Unconditional teachers. . . make it clear that although there are certain expectations in the classroom—expectations that, ideally, the students themselves have helped to create—the teacher’s basic affection need not be earned.”²⁷ This does not mean there are no standards; merely that children are valued for more than their successes.

Each child should be equally important to us. The teacher “should see in every pupil the handiwork of God—a candidate for immortal honors. He should seek so to educate, train, and discipline the youth that each may attain to the highest standard of excellence to which God calls him.”²⁸ We cannot be satisfied with achieving success with only some of our students. “If some children matter more to us than others, then all children are valued only conditionally.”²⁹

This concept of unconditional teaching is one that we need to work on as Christian teachers. It is always easier to love only the lovely and the loving, but that is not what God asks us to do. It is also easy to give students the idea that God will not love them if they participate in certain behaviors.

We need to realize that our classroom demeanor will have a deep and lasting effect on the way our students view God. If we are impatient and unkind when they fail, they may well see

Some things you can do to increase resiliency in your students:

1. Make students responsible for their own behavior. Young people need to learn that achieving Christian maturity isn’t about whether or not they “get caught,” but about learning to make positive choices that will affect their future.
2. Help students learn how to make decisions about what to watch on television, what to read, what to access on the computer, etc. Don’t tell them what to do—help them learn how to decide.
3. Don’t overprotect students. Let them talk about the evils in society and understand what is wrong with certain behaviors or entertainments and why they should be avoided. Don’t desensitize them to evil by constant exposure, but help them learn to recognize evil when they see it, so they can steer clear of it.
4. Let students know that as Christians, they are walking north in a world that is going south. They need to know that they will not remain different if they simply follow the crowd and do what comes naturally.
5. Give students unconditional love and support. Resilient students usually have at least one adult who believes in them and cares what happens to them. Ideally, this includes two parents and a teacher, but any interested adult can make a difference in the life of a child.
6. Give students responsibilities to carry out. Resilient students often have at least one talent or some responsibility where they feel they make a difference to others. Give them classroom responsibilities. Encourage them to assist younger students. Schedule classroom community service projects. Make them feel needed.
7. Talk with students about what will happen when they leave the sheltered environment of Adventist schools. Ask them how they plan to handle the pressures of the secular world. Planning ahead will help them deal with difficult issues in the future.
8. Offer opportunities for students to practice their new skills. Help them to meet non-Adventist realities in safe ways.
9. Evaluate your teaching and your school’s programs. What are you doing to help students prepare to live and thrive as Christians in a secular society?
10. Search your own soul. What do you do to feed your personal spirituality in a secular world? You cannot share what you do not have.



God as being the same way. If we overlook the character flaws of the good students, that message also gets recorded. If we allow all students some freedom and the opportunity to make important decisions with the support of caring adults to help them work through the implications, they will have the opportunity to grow from those experiences. The question is not what will solve the teacher's problem in the simplest way today, but rather, what solution will produce the best long-term results for each student?

Developing Spiritual Resiliency in Our Students

Developing resilient Christians is not a uniquely Adventist goal. Other Christian institutions advertise programs for those who wish to develop "an intellectually resilient Christian worldview."³⁰ But the question persists: Why are we not having greater success? We know that part of the answer is that

developing resilient young people who will not fail when faced with real-world problems is not an easy task, especially within the sheltered environment of the Christian school.

"What's required to deal with the real world cannot neatly be summarized in a theory, or by facts or by mere education. The rich range of complex and subtle skills we need can only be acquired by living in a complex set of situations and cultivating the raft of abilities such complexities require."³¹ If we do not create these more complex situations in which our students can develop and practice real-life skills, how can we expect them to be able to cope when they leave the sheltered, nurturing environment of the Adventist school?

It is clear that, in many cases, the education we have been providing is not sufficient to prepare young people to remain faithful to God when they leave school. Of course, in a sinful

If our goal is to develop resilient Christian adults who will remain true to their beliefs in spite of adversity, we need to help our students develop these characteristics.

world where the devil is actively at work, nothing that we try will be 100 percent effective. We must, however, continue to expand our concept of what constitutes good education, and what we need to do in our schools. Often, we presume "that mere education will help our children find their way in the world. The richer word instead is

The resiliency literature suggests that we need to teach students how to make good decisions for themselves.

formation. Formation is both education and the shaping of the entire person so that he or she is deep in resources for coping with a world that is sometimes evil.³²

Simply telling students what they should do will not produce the desired result. We need to help them develop ways of living and thinking that will get them through difficult times. They need to practice these skills, and take ownership of them.

It is crucial when contemplating how to develop a complex concept like spiritual resiliency that we do not forget our source of power. In order to develop a resilient Christian life, we need to “listen to God’s voice in Scripture daily,” and to expose ourselves regularly to “an expository teaching ministry. Without that hearts start to harden and we wander.”³³

Giving students the space to develop their own values system is not as simple as removing the barriers and allowing them to choose for themselves. God has made it abundantly clear that behavior does matter to Him. He has specific, binding rules for our lives, and wants us to live within His boundaries. But within those ethical absolutes, there is still a lot of freedom for personal expression.

My challenge to Adventist educators everywhere is to help our students develop the skills they need to be resilient Christians. Help them learn to get nourishment from the Source; to accept being different from the world; not to become discouraged by other people’s failures; to be holy in a sinful world. These skills are developed through careful use and practice—and feedback. They are not often explicit in the curriculum, yet they are implicit in everything we stand for, and they are required for success in life.

As educators, we must find ways to make current educational research serve the needs of the church—not only to better our academics and teach-

ing techniques, but also to develop spiritual resilience in our students. ✍



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Profile 2004: K-12 TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF ADVENTIST CURRICULUM

Note: This is the second article to appear in the JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION based on the results of the Profile 2004 study of educators in the North American Division (NAD). For those desiring in-depth information including statistical results, links to the full report submitted to the NAD Curriculum Committee as well as the paper presented at the American Educational Research Association can be found at <http://www.andrews.edu/~burton/>. Results of the Profile studies help administrators, teachers, and teacher educators to better understand one another's perceptions of curriculum and instruction issues and concerns. It thus helps to set the agenda for curriculum development in the NAD.

For almost two decades, the North American Division has conducted studies to determine the effectiveness of its curriculum materials. Profile 2004 is the latest in this series. Each of the nine Profile studies has surveyed NAD K-12 teachers about their perceptions and use of curriculum guides prepared under the direction of the North American Division Curriculum Committee (NADCC).

As this survey was conducted electronically, available participants included

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all NAD educators with e-mail addresses. As e-mail addresses often change or may be inaccurate in published or electronic lists, thus making surveys sent to those addresses undeliverable, the research team decided to invite all educators with e-mail addresses to participate in the study, rather than doing a random sample. The researchers included all educators with e-mail addresses in order to obtain a comparable number of completed surveys to those received in previous Profile studies conducted via surveys sent by mail. A total of 2,718 NAD elementary and secondary teachers and administrators had e-mail addresses available via printed

or electronic lists. Of this number, 540 responded, for a gross response rate of 19.9 percent. The total number of respondents was comparable to, although a bit smaller than, previous Profile studies.

The Profile 2004 study included two survey items on the availability of NAD-prepared curriculum guides and their use by classroom teachers. Three additional survey items asked teachers to rate the quality of the curriculum guides. This article reports on teachers' responses to these items.

The survey items relating to teachers' perceptions of the quality of NAD curriculum guides asked if (1) the materials were easy to use, (2) they represented best practices in the field, and (3) they supported the Advent-

BY LARRY D. BURTON,
PRETORIA G. GITTENS-ST. JUSTE,
AND R. LEE DAVIDSON

ist philosophy of education. Teachers responded to these items using a traditional Likert scale with five options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. For the analysis reported in this article, the responses for “strongly agree” and “agree” were combined into a single group, as were the responses for “strongly disagree” and “disagree.” This resulted in three groups of respondents: those who agreed with the survey item, those who disagreed, and those who were neutral toward it.

Availability of NAD Curriculum Guides

To determine whether NAD-prepared curriculum guides were available, we asked the K-12 teachers to indicate whether they had a copy of the curricular guides developed for their discipline. A large majority of teachers had a copy of the NAD-prepared curriculum guides, with responses ranging from a low of 70.7 percent of elementary teachers who said they had a copy of the *K-8 Fine Arts Curriculum Guide* to a high of 81.4 percent of academy teachers who had copies of either the *9-12 Language Arts Curriculum Guide* or the *9-12 Modern Languages Curriculum Guide*.

With the exception of the *K-8 Fine Arts Curriculum Guide*, fewer than 10 percent of elementary teachers responding to the survey indicated they

did not have a copy of any particular curriculum guide. Almost one-third of elementary-level respondents said they did not have a copy of the newly released *K-8 Fine Arts Curriculum Guide*. It is possible that some conferences had delayed the distribution of the Fine Arts document until the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year, as some had made a similar decision regarding the *Journey to Excellence* campaign materials (see Figure 1).

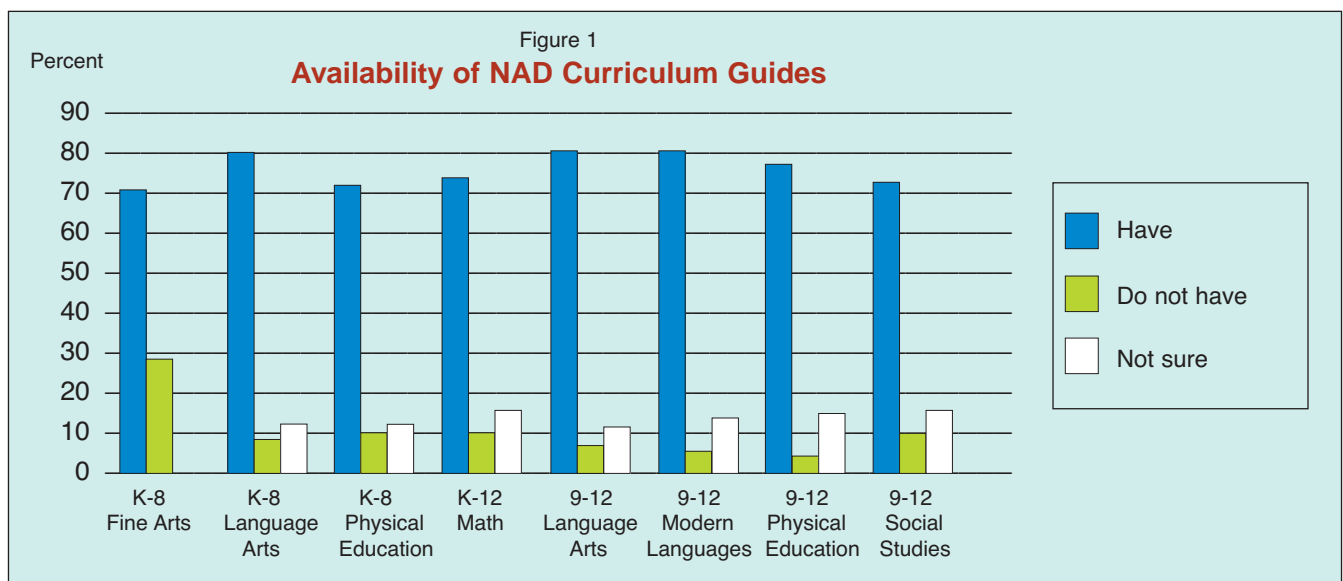
A small percentage of respondents said they were not sure whether they had a copy of the curriculum guide for their subject area. To determine whether teachers who were new to the Adventist system and those with five or fewer years of experience were more likely to be unsure about having copies of these NAD curriculum guides, the researchers did a cross-tabulation analysis. For three curriculum guides (K-12 mathematics, 9-12 social studies, and K-8 language arts), it was true that new teachers were more likely than more seasoned teachers to respond “not sure.” It should be noted, however, that the largest group of new teachers said they did have copies of all curriculum guides.

Perhaps new teachers were not aware of NAD curriculum guides and therefore did not investigate whether these materials were available at their schools. It is possible no one shared information about the NAD curriculum

guides with these new teachers. Also, in some schools, teachers make notes in the curriculum guides and then carry those items with them when they move to a new school. Therefore, some teachers may have had the curriculum guides at a previous school but were unsure whether they were available at the current school. If teachers weren’t sure they had copies of the curriculum guides, it would seem obvious that they were not using them. Maybe this situation could be improved if conference superintendents informed every K-12 teacher on a yearly basis that NAD-approved textbooks and curriculum materials are expected to be used in the classroom, and provided information on how to obtain replacement copies.

Use of NAD Curriculum Guides

Elementary and secondary teachers were asked whether they used the NAD-produced curriculum guides for long-term planning. With the exception of the *K-8 Physical Education Curriculum Guide*, only about 25 percent of all respondents reported using their curriculum guides “regularly” for this purpose. When combining teachers who chose “regularly” or “sometimes” in response to this survey item, the *K-8 Language Arts Curriculum Guide* appeared to be the most-used new curriculum guide. Just over 71 percent of teachers reported using it at least “sometimes.” The *K-12 Mathematics*



Curriculum Guide was used at least “sometimes” by 64.8 percent of respondents, and the *9-12 Language Arts Curriculum Guide* was used “regularly” or “sometimes” by 62.0 percent of respondents.

Only 13.5 percent of elementary physical education teachers indicated that they regularly used the PE curriculum guide for long-term planning. Perhaps one reason for this response is that physical education is not considered a “core curriculum area” by many educators. Thus, elementary teachers may not use this guide regularly because they devote little instructional time to the subject. Also, some NAD elementary schools do not have adequate facilities for the teaching of PE, so they may be less likely to use the curriculum guide. Of the curriculum guides studied in Profile 2004, the K-8 and 9-12 guides for physical education were the least used by teachers, with 45.7 percent of elementary teachers and 54.3 percent of secondary teachers who taught physical education indicating they “never” used these curriculum guides. Perhaps a study should be conducted comparing the structure, content, and implementation patterns of the guides that get the most use with those that get the least. The other curriculum guides listed in Table 2 were used by about half of the responding teachers. No data was reported for the *K-8 Fine Arts Curriculum Guide* due to an error on the survey instrument.

In the Profile '99 study, slightly more than 60 percent of the secondary

Each of the nine Profile studies has surveyed NAD K-12 teachers about their perceptions and use of curriculum guides prepared under the direction of the North American Division Curriculum Committee.

teachers surveyed reported having used their curriculum guides for long-term planning within the previous school year. The results from Profile 2004 seem to indicate a major decline in the regular use of curriculum guides at the secondary level. However, as the two surveys' questions and response options were not identical, it is impossible to be sure of that conclusion. Still, it should be noted that after almost two decades of revising curriculum guides and studying the process through Profile surveys, the largest single group of academy-level teachers still select “never” to indicate how frequently they use curriculum guides for long-term planning. In response to this pattern of non-use, particularly at the secondary level, the Secondary Advisory of the NADCC voted to suspend the production of further curriculum guides until they can give more in-depth study to

this phenomenon and develop a strategy for providing curriculum materials that will positively impact the work of NAD secondary teachers.

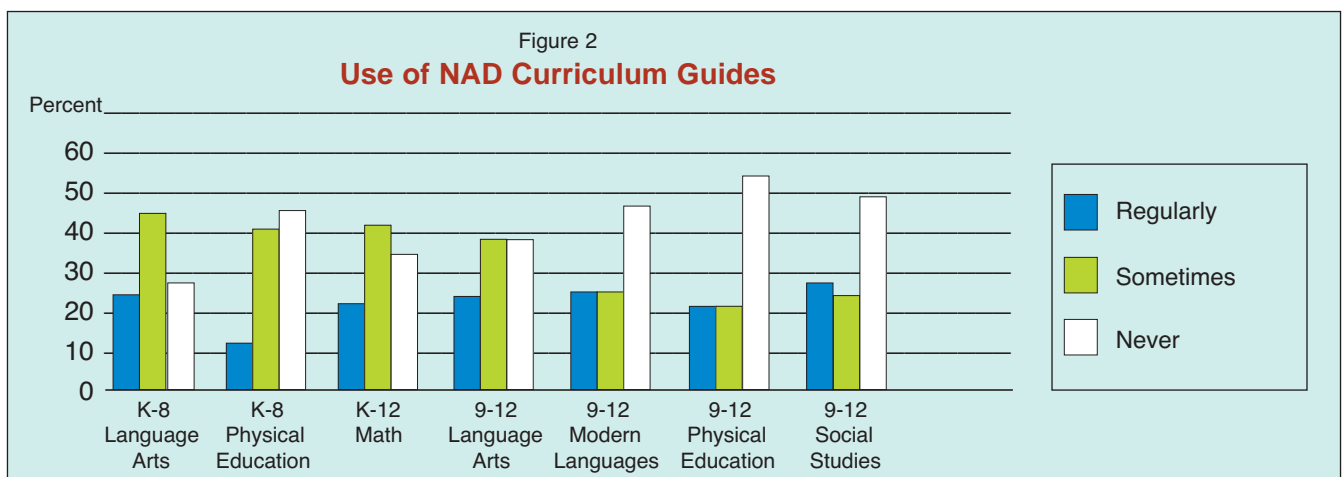
Quality of NAD Curriculum Guides

Three questions were included in the Profile 2004 survey to assess the quality of NAD-produced curriculum guides. Respondents were asked to rate these guides regarding usability, inclusion of best practices in the discipline, and support for the Adventist philosophy of education.

Usability of NAD Curriculum Guides

In an attempt to measure “teacher-friendliness,” the survey instrument asked teachers whether each curriculum guide was “easy to use.” This phrase was selected because in the Profile '99 study, academy teachers said curriculum guides could be improved by making them “easier to use.”

For the eight curriculum guides studied in Profile 2004, the overwhelming response to this item was “neutral.” With the exception of the *9-12 Language Arts Curriculum Guide*, more than half of the respondents selected the neutral response for the “easy to use” item. For the *9-12 Language Arts Curriculum Guide*, almost 44 percent of the respondents selected “neutral.” This ambivalent reaction by such a large number of teachers is consistent with their response to the question about the use of curriculum guides. If only about one-fourth of teachers regularly use the curriculum



guide, then the other 75 percent are probably unfamiliar with the guides and would therefore tend to be neutral in assessing their ease of use (see Figure 3).

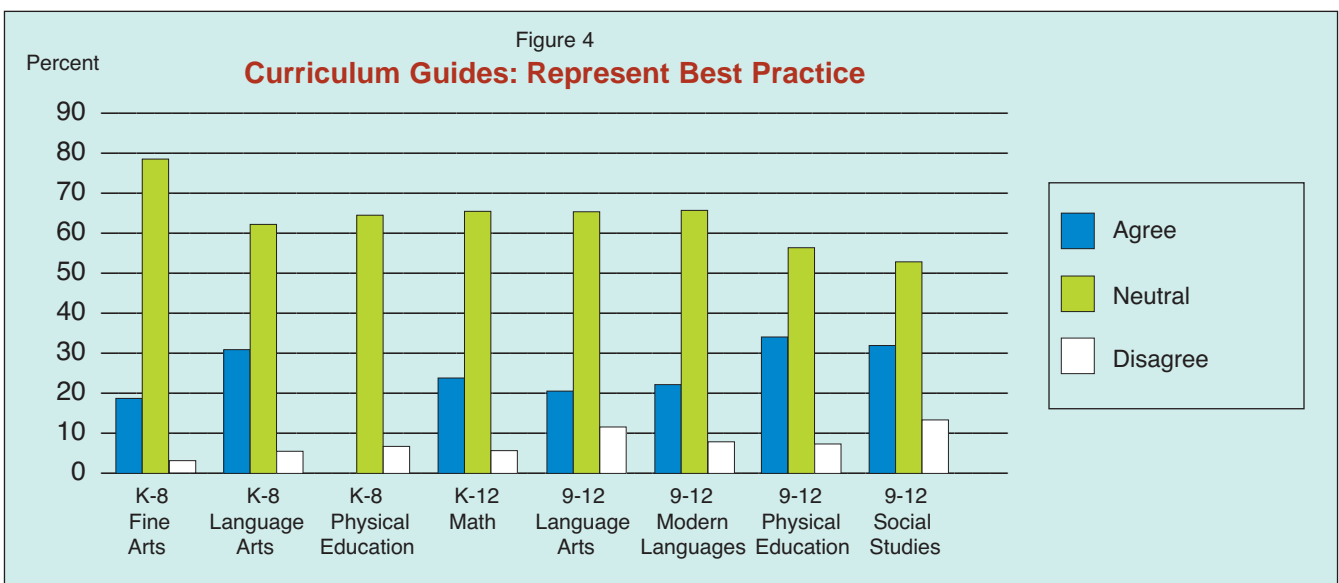
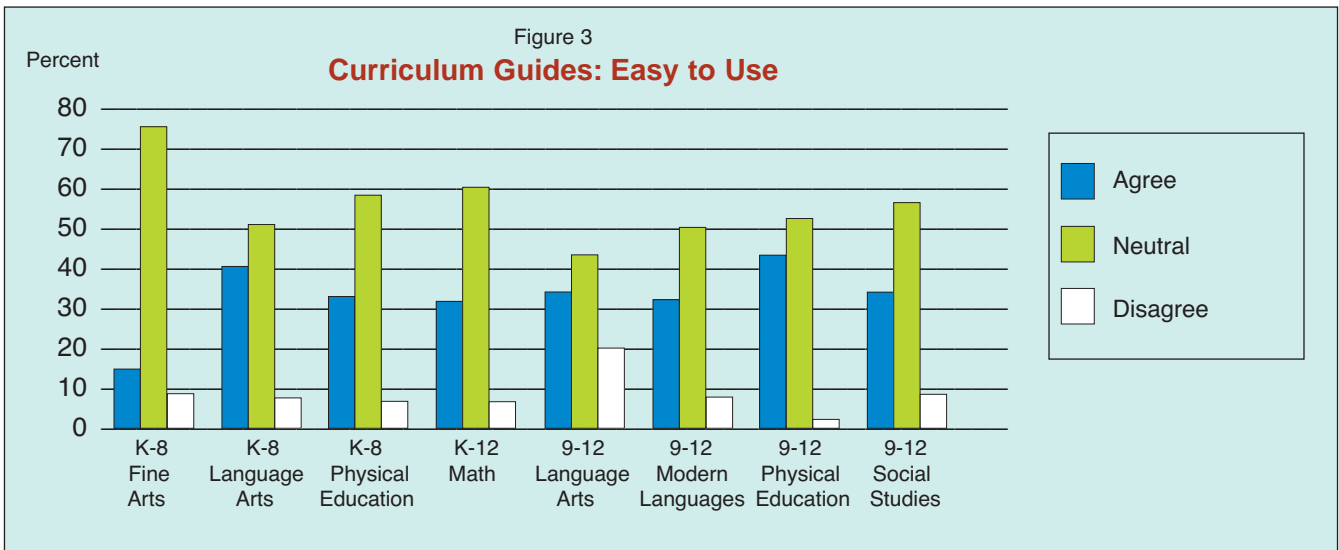
In looking at teachers' perceptions about the "ease of use" for all elementary curriculum guides, the language arts guide received the best ratings. At the 9-12 level, the secondary physical education curriculum guide received the best ratings. A disconcerting discovery was that fully one-fifth (20.8 percent) of secondary language arts teachers said their curriculum guide was not easy to use. Perhaps further investigation will reveal that some teachers who rated curriculum guides as difficult to use actually used them in-

The survey items relating to teachers' perceptions of the quality of NAD curriculum guides asked if (1) the materials were easy to use, (2) they represented best practices in the field, and (3) they supported the Adventist philosophy of education.

frequently, if at all, because they preferred other curriculum materials. It could also be that providing a "neutral" response option allowed the teachers to reply without giving the question much thought.

Support of Best Practices

When asked if the curriculum guides represented best practices in the discipline, again the teachers' most common response was "neutral." The three highest-rated curriculum guides in this area had just over 30 percent of respondents who said the *K-8 Language Arts Curriculum Guide*, the *9-12 Physical Education Curriculum Guide*, and the *9-12 Social Studies Curriculum Guide* represented best practices within their





disciplines. The *K-8 Language Arts Curriculum Guide* and the *9-12 Physical Education Curriculum Guide* were also the highest-rated guides in terms of ease of use (see Figure 4).

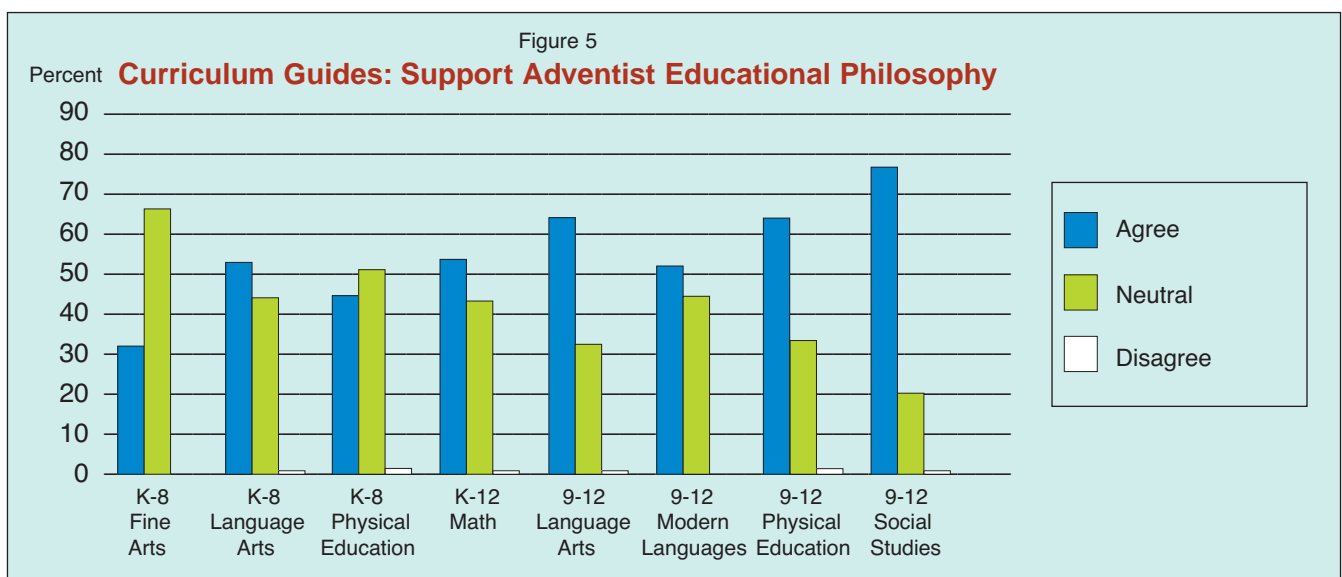
There are at least two possible explanations for the large number of neu-

tral responses to this item. One is that the teachers did not feel confident that they knew what best practices were in their discipline, and therefore felt obliged to either mark “neutral” or leave the question blank. Another possible explanation is that the teachers were not

familiar with the curriculum material and therefore didn’t know whether it represented best practices or not.

Support for the Adventist Philosophy of Education

Another item asked teachers



whether they thought the curriculum guides supported the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education. In contrast with the response patterns on the previous two items about curriculum quality, teachers responded positively to this question. More than half of the respondents believed six of the guides supported the educational philosophy espoused by the church. More than three-fourths of secondary social studies teachers believed their curriculum guide supported the Adventist philosophy. However, just under half of those rating the *K-8 Physical Education Curriculum Guide* said that it supported Adventist philosophy, and less than a third of elementary teachers agreed that the fine-arts guide supported Adventist philosophy. In general, secondary teachers were more likely to agree that their curriculum guides supported the Adventist philosophy of education, whereas elementary teachers were more likely to select a neutral response (see Figure 5).

Of the three quality indicators used in Profile 2004, teachers were more likely to say that the curriculum guides supported the Adventist philosophy of education than to rate them as easy to use or as representing best practices. Still, the large percentage of neutral responses to the philosophy item is a

cause for concern. This could indicate that many teachers believed the curricula materials did not effectively support the Adventist philosophy of education. Another possible interpretation is that the teachers were unsure of their own understanding of the Adventist philosophy of education. Or perhaps they had a theoretical understanding of the Adventist philosophy of education but were unable to discern its presence or absence in the guides. The explanation for these responses will require additional investigation. This “soft” response to whether NAD curriculum guides support an Adventist approach to education indicates that the church may be faced with a challenge in maintaining the unique environment and ethos of Adventist schools.

Correlations Between Use and Perceptions of Quality

The figures presented above are somewhat disconcerting at first glance. However, these descriptive statistics cannot reveal the subtle patterns of relationships that may exist within the teachers’ responses. To understand the responses more fully, we conducted a correlation analysis, using inferential statistics, to see if we could discover additional information. An analysis of teachers’ responses to these survey

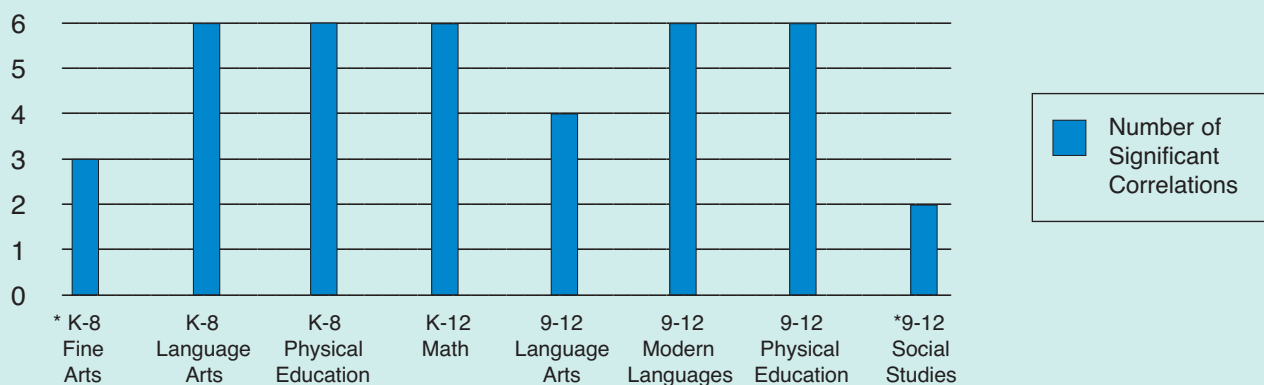
items produced multiple correlations between the teachers’ use of curriculum guides and their perceptions of the guides.

There were six possible correlations for each curriculum guide. Three correlations were possible between the use of curriculum guides and as (1) easy to use, (2) representing best practices, and (3) supporting the Adventist philosophy of education. Two correlations were possible between perceiving guides as easy to use and perceptions of guides as (1) representing best practice and (2) supporting the Adventist philosophy of education. A final correlation was possible between perceptions of the guides as representing best practice and supporting the Adventist philosophy of education.

Our inferential analysis of teachers’ perceptions about most NAD-developed curriculum guides revealed the following pattern: The teachers who **used** the curriculum material were also more likely to say the guide was *easy to use*, it *represented best practices*, and it *supported the Adventist philosophy of education*. This correlation pattern was evident for five NAD-produced curriculum guides: the *K-8 Language Arts Curriculum Guide*, the *K-8 Physical Education Curriculum Guide*, the *K-12 Mathematics Curriculum Guide*, the 9-12

Figure 6
Correlations Between Use and Perceptions of Curriculum Guides

Note: Six correlations were possible*



* For full statistical details on the correlations, visit <http://www.andrews.edu/burton/> or <http://circle.adventist.org>. Only three correlations were possible for the K-8 Fine Arts and 9-12 Social Studies guides due to missing data.

Modern Languages Curriculum Guide, and the *9-12 Physical Education Curriculum Guide*. Although the other curriculum guides did not show significant correlations for each of these items, all showed correlations between at least two items. Thus, in general, the more a teacher used a particular curriculum guide, the more likely he or she was to have a positive perception of its quality (see Figure 6).

Since the teachers who used the curriculum guides were more positive in rating the quality of the guides, it follows logically that ongoing training is needed related to the curriculum guides, their use, their inclusion of best practices, and their support of the Adventist philosophy of education. This training must start in the teacher-education programs in the North American Division colleges and universities. However, introduction to the curriculum guides in a single methods course is inadequate to ensure their use in the classroom. Training in the use of the curriculum guides needs to become a core component in the professional development cycle offered by local conferences and larger Adventist schools. But rather than focusing on curriculum documents in isolation, professional development needs to include training related to instruction and assessment, as well. Otherwise, such efforts are doomed to failure.**

Professional development should also focus on the unique features of Adventist education, including the implementation of our philosophy of education. Emphasis should be placed on demonstrating how these unique features and distinctive philosophical positions inform the selection of curriculum material, instructional methods, and assessment techniques at the classroom level. Ideally, this professional development will provide a bridge between philosophy and practice. This will help teachers understand the day-to-day implications of the philosophy of Adventist education.

In larger Adventist schools, principals need to become more active in communicating to teachers the need to obtain and use NAD curriculum

guides. Ongoing dialogue about their use, relationship to best practices, and Seventh-day Adventist distinctiveness will help teachers better understand foundational issues relating to the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education.

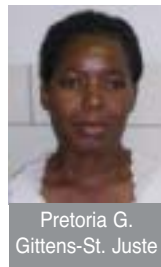
It appears that instead of conducting another Profile study at this time, the NADCC should sponsor an alternative investigation to answer the pertinent questions arising from Profile 2004. While seeking for answers, the researchers should engage teachers in dialogue individually and in small groups. This interview approach can serve to clarify issues that tend to “hide” in the survey approach.

North American Division education administrators and teachers desire to work in unison; the results of Profile 2004 can be used to develop initiatives that will cement this unity of purpose in a manner that will be beneficial to students and educators at all levels. ✍



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Far More Than Bed and Bath

The emphasis for this column will be to encourage administrators who supervise residence hall deans. Perhaps you've asked yourself, "What can I do to encourage and inspire deans to greatness, in terms of service and leadership?" If you desire your students to be led more than controlled, inspired as well as instructed, and engaged to cooperate rather than coerced to comply, you are off to a good start.

How about your deans? Do they understand this style of leadership? Do they know how to be redemptive in their discipline and in their general expectations? Are they kind, even when frustrated?

Keeping in mind the old maxim, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten," could it be that some things need to be changed? If this strikes a responsive chord, I invite you to consider these ideas as you supervise residence hall deans:

Encourage your deans to seek a personal relationship with Christ and to pray and share with others as they pursue their own spiritual journey. Ask them to share with you how that journey is progressing. Refer to their work as a ministry. Encourage them to keep a prayer journal or diary where they can record daily their insights, feelings, and challenges.

Encourage them to love and support their own families and to make their needs a priority. Ask about their spouse and children. Respond in a timely manner to specific requests that relate to deans' families. Be honest and open about what you can and can't do about housing and scheduling.

Expect your deans to be mature adults in their interaction with stu-

dents, while encouraging them to form appropriate and caring relationships with them. Encourage them to have fun with the students and staff and to avoid taking themselves too seriously.

Encourage your deans to develop and articulate a clear vision of what they want their program to be like. Ask them to review their mission statement and specific goals and objectives for their residence-hall program. Reviewing this with your deans provides helpful structure and accountability.

Encourage your deans to develop a strong faith and the confidence that goals and objectives can be reached through their commitment and responsibility and God's empowerment. Pray with them about these challenges.

Review your expectations of what it means to be "on duty" and "off duty," a balanced work ethic, and the sacrifices they may be asked to make. Reading Hebrews 13:15 and 16 together can be powerful.

Encourage your deans' professional growth through in-service training and professional reading. Ask them to share with you what they have been learning. Encourage them to be educational leaders on your campus and in their profession, as they develop expertise in their field.

Provide financial assistance and encouragement to attend the Adventist Student Personnel Association (ASPA) annual conference and/or a deans' workshop (held alternating summers at Andrews University and La Sierra University).

Espouse the philosophy that every problem presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Show your deans how to keep a balanced view of problems and personal needs. Encourage them to find creative ways to prevent crises.

Dialogue with them about the importance of being committed to take

the long view of their ministry. Sowing good seed is their primary responsibility. The Holy Spirit will take care of the harvest.

Seek to build a team of residence-hall deans who share a common vision and a sense of calling. Deal assertively with anything that might undermine team unity and purpose.

As you supervise your deans and their programs, pray for insight, patience, courage, and faith that your efforts to hold them accountable will be successful.

Excellence in service is what our students and their parents deserve. My final challenge is for you to use the discussion questions below for personal reflection and as a stimulus for specific supervision strategies.

Questions for Discussion

1. What pre-service/in-service training opportunities are available for your residence-hall deans? Are they adequate?
2. What assessment strategies can you use to keep your deans focused and committed, yet balanced?
3. Do your faculty and staff understand and support the residence-hall ministry on your campus, or are they more concerned about control issues and policy enforcement? How can you ensure that people understand the wholistic ministry of the residence halls and the deans?
4. How can your residence-hall deans be encouraged and empowered to become "educational leaders" on your campus and in their profession?

Donald W. Murray spent his entire professional career (42 years) as a residence-hall dean. In June 2006 he retired after serving at Laurelwood Academy, Columbia Adventist Academy, Blue Mountain Academy, Andrews University, and Columbia Union College.

One of the challenges teachers face in a small school is the need to “spread themselves thinly” over areas in which they have little experience or expertise. This is especially true when it comes to maintaining computer security. This article provides some advice for teachers in this situation. It includes topics such as maintaining physical security, keeping important files safe and away from prying eyes, protecting students from dangers on the Internet, providing protection from malicious software, and finding sources of support.



COMPUTER SECURITY FOR SMALL SCHOOLS

Physical Security

Physical security requires a little knowledge and a lot of common sense. Here are some specific problems to avoid:

1. Temperature extremes. Computers produce heat, so their ventilation holes need to be kept open to maintain air flow. Placing a laptop on a soft surface such as a bed can block ventilation and lead to overheating. Very cold conditions also pose a risk, usually from condensation.

2. Moisture and other liquids. Water can conduct electricity, so all types of electrical equipment must be kept dry to prevent shock hazards. However, even small amounts of liquid can damage electronic equipment. If equipment does become wet, it should be switched off until dry. Placing the item in a dry, warm place may prevent damage if only small amounts of clean water were involved. Unfortunately, this is not the case when juice or beverages find their way into computer components. To clean the mess, it may be necessary to pay a technician to dis-

mantle components and possibly replace parts.

3. Physical damage. Most computer equipment is fragile. Monitors, hard drives and CD/DVD drives are particularly vulnerable to severe vibration, which is not usually covered by warranty. Drives are more vulnerable while running than when they are switched off.

When shopping for electronic equipment, try to buy items that are sturdy and “childproof.”

4. Power surges and spikes. This risk is often greater in rural areas than in cities. A surge protector protects equipment from moderate surges and is a good investment. It is also wise to switch off electronic equipment at the end of the school day and when an electrical storm is approaching.

Modems are quite vulnerable to spikes through the telephone line. Un-

BY PETER WALLACE

plug the phone line or high-speed Internet connection when storms pose a threat.

5. Dust. Floppy disks, CDs, and DVDs are vulnerable to damage from dust. A build-up of dust inside computers can lead to overheating, so keep off the floor and away from windows. As computers age, check inside the case for dust accumulation. You can remove the dust with a narrow vacuum cleaner attachment, but take care not to get too close to components, or you might suck them out with the dust.

Physical security also includes some precautions that can easily be overlooked:

1. Keep warranty documents and manuals where they can be found easily.
2. Keep track of purchased software, original CDs, and licenses. Many schools give this responsibility to the librarian, but administrators and teachers still need to be aware of licensing conditions and copyright laws (see Janine Lim's article on copyright restrictions in a previous issue of this journal: <http://circle.adventist.org/browse/resource.phtml?leaf=5180>).

Data Security

Data security refers to keeping important information safe. This includes preventing documents from being lost or corrupted and ensuring that sensitive information is accessible only to authorized personnel. The value of the documents will determine the precautions necessary to maintain data security.

Some of the threats to data security include the following:

1. Forgetting where a document was saved.
2. Accidentally deleting files or saving another document with the same name, thus deleting the original.
3. Leaving a disk or portable drive where it can be taken by people who should not have access to it.
4. Leaving a computer logged in and unattended, thus allowing unauthorized people access to it.

When shopping for electronic equipment, try to buy items that are sturdy and "childproof."

5. Careless treatment of passwords, failure to use a password, or using one that is easy to guess.

6. File corruption, which makes files unreadable.

7. Failure, loss, or theft of com-

puter equipment, people had to use short, cryptic file names. This is no longer necessary, so use filenames that will still make sense to you in a few years.

Backup Methods

Depending on the size of the school's computer network, a backup scheme may need to be complex or simple, and can be manual or automated. Here are some low-cost options



puter equipment.

8. Deliberate action by people wishing to cause harm. This can range from mischievous children to hard-core hackers. Maintaining data security requires both a planned backup scheme and careful measures for access control.

Organization

Document loss often results from poor organization. Some teachers who maintain a very systematic filing cabinet seem totally disorganized when saving files on their computer. Organization requires the creation of a folder structure and logical naming of folders and documents so that everything is saved in a way that makes it easy to find. In the "old days," when DOS was

suitable for small schools:

1. Copying files to floppy disks.

Floppy disks can be quite unreliable, so this option is not recommended.

2. Copying files to CDs or DVDs. CDs and DVDs are reliable, have much greater capacity than floppy disks, and provide a good option for archival storage.

3. Copying files to Flash drives.

Flash drives, also called USB drives, are fast, reliable, convenient, and quite tough. They provide an excellent option for short-term backup.

4. Copying files to portable hard drives. Portable hard drives connect to a computer via a USB cable. They function like Flash drives but have a much greater capacity. They provide an excel-

lent option for daily backup. However, schools should have two such drives. One should be kept in the safe while the other is in use, then they can be swapped the next day.

5. Sending files to an e-mail account. Hotmail, Yahoo, and GMail provide free e-mail addresses with plenty of free space. If you have good Internet access, this provides a free alternative for files that do not contain sensitive data.

6. Copying files through a network to another computer. Copying files to a preferred backup destination is a simple task, but ensuring that users have the latest version of files can be time consuming. Synchronization software (such as the Synchronization feature in Windows XP) makes this task a lot easier. It can automatically copy everything new from the computer's documents folder to the portable hard drive and replace old versions. Synchronization software can also be used to synchronize files with other computers on the network.

Planning a Backup Scheme

Whatever methods you choose, the procedures need to be systematic and regular. Choose what to include in your backup scheme, including all documents produced in the principal's office and by teachers, student data, academic records, financial records, personnel information on aides and volunteers, and library records. Documents produced by students and stored at school should also be included.

If your school uses digital cameras, exclude photographs and movie files from the normal daily backup since the quantity of data may dramatically slow down the backup process. Copy these large files to DVDs.

You should consistently use three methods of backup: day-to-day, off-site, and archival backup. Be sure to label CDs and other removable media so that you can identify their content and backup date.

1. Make backups every school day.
2. Store backups in a safe, water-proof location. At school, the safe or strong room would be the best.

3. Use two different backup methods. For example, store materials on portable hard drives, and send copies of files to your GMail account.

4. In addition to backups stored at school, maintain off-site backup so that if your safe and computers are stolen, destroyed, or damaged, this valuable data can still be recovered. Taking an additional copy of your backup home may be satisfactory as long as you have a secure place to store it.

5. Try to automate the backup procedure. Server operating systems and most synchronization software can do this.

6. At regular intervals, make an archival backup of all office and teacher files and a separate backup of student files.

Archival backups could be done at the end of each term and before computers are upgraded. Archival backups are usually stored on CDs or DVDs, but make sure they are stored securely and systematically for quick retrieval.

7. Be sure to review and test your backup procedures on a regular basis to ensure that procedures are working as expected.

Access Control

Breaches in access control can be damaging and embarrassing. Allowing confidential information to become public could lead to litigation. Here are some safeguards:

1. Choose secure passwords. A combination of numbers and letters with a total of at least eight characters (including several that use the shift key) is recommended.
2. Keep passwords secret. Breaches of security could result from students' overhearing passwords or seeing a password written.
3. Log off or lock the computer before leaving it. In Windows XP, locking is as quick as holding the Windows key and pressing L. Unlocking requires your password.
4. Ensure that each user has a secure documents folder.
5. Do not allow students to use the

login of a teacher or computer administrator.

Create a separate account for each student. (This is also an important precaution to employ on the teachers' home computers.)

6. Be careful where you leave disks, CDs, and portable drives.

7. If you use a file server on your network, ensure that staff and student data is stored in different partitions and that students are not allowed to access the staff partition.

8. Be especially vigilant about the security of files containing sensitive in-

Even small amounts of liquid can damage electronic equipment.

formation such as Social Security numbers, grades, personnel matters, and financial information.

9. When redeploying or disposing of computers, ensure that all sensitive data is erased from the hard drive.

Protection Against Malicious Software

Viruses, worms, trojans, and spyware pose a continuous threat to computers, particularly those that can access the Internet. The term *virus* is often used in the generic sense to include worms and trojans. Because viruses can spread so quickly, it is best to have anti-virus and anti-spyware software configured to update automatically using reliable sites on the Internet. Computers that are not connected to the Internet should still be updated regularly because many viruses can be transferred by files on disks or other removable media.

In addition to software protection, it is essential to educate both teachers and students to use safe practices which include the following points:

1. Do not open e-mail attachments unless they have been checked by anti-virus software, you know who sent them, and the message of the e-mail is consistent with your knowledge of the sender. Those who distribute viruses are very cunning and increasingly rely

on deception as much as on technology.

2. Be wary of links in e-mail from unknown sources. Never click on links in spam messages.

3. Never reply to spam messages, or those that ask for personal information or financial data. Warn students not to reveal information about themselves in chat rooms or in response to e-mail inquiries.

4. Be very careful about downloading programs from the Internet. Software from reputable sources is unlikely to contain viruses, but determining which software and download sites are reputable will require some research. A series of Google searches using the names of the software and the site, along with the word *review*, will allow you to read what reviewers have written.

5. Avoid clicking on pop-up messages, which can deceive you into installing malicious software. If in doubt, do some research on Google using the terms from the popup message.

Software Updates and Patches

Modern operating systems are very

complex and contain millions of lines of code. Errors in the code can be exploited by hackers, so software manufacturers release periodic updates to fix these errors. As soon as an update is released, some hackers analyze the update and write malicious software to exploit errors in it.

For this reason, new updates should be installed promptly. The best way to do this is to use the automatic updates feature, but this requires reliable and fast Internet access. If your computer cannot access the Internet, the risk is less but you should still install updates whenever possible.

Firewalls

Any computer that connects directly to the Internet should have firewall protection. Attacks from the Internet are frequently automated, putting every unprotected computer at risk.

The simplest form of protection for a single computer is a software firewall. Some vendors offer anti-virus software and firewall software in the one pack-

Maintaining data security requires both a planned backup scheme and careful measures for access control.

age, which simplifies computer management.

If your network accesses the Internet via a router, the router should provide firewall protection, but be sure to ascertain that it does. If not, you should install a hardware firewall between the router and the network.

Internet Filtering

Internet filtering refers to the use of software to block access to undesirable Websites. Though a useful aid, filters should never be your only form of protection. There is no substitute for supervision.

Filters should be updated weekly because those who profit from the undesirable Websites are constantly changing their tactics to circumvent the software.

For stand-alone computers or those in a small network, filtering software

Picture Removed

can be installed on each computer. For larger networks, it is more efficient to install the software on a single computer that protects the whole network. Commercial products for protecting networks are quite expensive, but there are good free open-source alternatives.

Some Internet service providers include a filtering option with their monthly fee.

Usage Policies for Students and Staff

Most schools have an Acceptable Use Policy for onsite computers, and penalties for failure to comply with its provisions. It should include statements that address the following issues:

1. Careful behavior around computers.
2. Restrictions on installing applications. Allowing unauthorized personnel to install applications opens the door for copyright infringement and increases the risk of introducing viruses.
3. A requirement that students obtain teacher permission before accessing the Internet. This also places an obligation on the teacher to provide appropriate supervision.
4. A requirement that students and staff observe copyright regulations relating to music, movies, and games as well as material for academic purposes. Schools risk heavy fines if they cannot demonstrate reasonable vigilance in preventing users from storing unauthorized copyrighted material on school computers. This applies to materials downloaded from the Internet or brought to school on CDs or other media.
5. What can and cannot be stored on school computers. Apart from copyright concerns, consider the problem of large files filling hard drives and students being distracted by material on the computers.
6. What constitutes appropriate material for students to access on the Internet, and a requirement that students discreetly notify the teacher if they inadvertently access inappropriate material on the Internet.
7. Printing procedures and fees.

Any computer that connects directly to the Internet should have firewall protection.

Extra Support

If some of the advice and procedures described in this article sound like a foreign language to you, consider obtaining technical support. It would be prudent to explore support options before problems arise so that assistance can be obtained promptly when needed.

Some possible sources of help and answers to questions include the following:

1. Friends and parents in the school community. Free support can be valuable, but it may come with risks attached. Some people who offer free support may ignore copyright regulations. Others may have personal preferences that are incompatible with your school's needs or resources. Try to obtain advice from a range of sources.
2. Colleagues in larger schools.
3. Online communities. Many online communities have forums where you can ask questions and receive answers. A Google search can provide a list of such communities (i.e., <http://teachers.net/mailrings/> or <http://www.siec.k12.in.us/west/edu/list.htm>). People in these forums are typically eager to answer questions, but some communities have a large volume of messages posted each day. You might prefer to join the new Adventist Virtual Learning Network Community: <http://www.avln.org/commuity>, which also offers the opportunity to discuss other issues relevant to Adventist schools.
4. Paid support. Sometimes there is no alternative but to hire a computer technician to provide the support you need.

Budgets

Tight budgets often tempt schools to limit spending. However, items such as anti-virus software, access control, and backup schemes must be given a

high priority because the costs of negligence can be devastating.

Items that should be purchased and upgraded as required include the following.

1. Backup devices such as DVD burners and portable hard drives.
2. Synchronization software or other backup software.
3. Anti-virus, anti-spyware, and firewall software.
4. Internet filtering software.

Items that require an annual budget allocation include the following:

1. Consumables such as CDs and DVDs, and small items such as Flash drives.
2. Updates and renewal of subscriptions for protective software (anti-virus software, etc.).
3. Upgrades for both operating systems and programs. How frequently you should upgrade depends on a number of factors, with security being a major consideration. Computers running MacOS prior to version 10 or Windows 95, 98, and ME pose a security risk.
4. Provision for paid support.

While the cost of computer hardware has been decreasing steadily, security risks and the cost of protection have increased. Modern society's increasing dependence on technology makes it imperative that we do not ignore these risks.

For More Information

The Adventist Virtual Learning Network Community site <http://www.avln.org/community> offers both support and opportunities for collaboration. It provides detailed information on some of the issues mentioned in this article and links to other relevant sites. To obtain access, send an e-mail to community@avln.org.au.



Peter Wallace teaches Information Technology at Brisbane Adventist College in Queensland, Australia. He previously taught in small schools where looking after computers and their security

was among his many responsibilities.



“A lot of people have gone farther than they could because someone else thought they could.”
Anonymous

Mentor Doug Havens (Escondido Adventist Academy) demonstrating the use of new equipment purchased by mentee Melissa Price (Redlands Adventist Academy).

Mary Lopez* was excited about her first full-time teaching assignment in an Adventist elementary school. She had completed all the required coursework in the teacher-preparation program, passed the state-mandated tests for certification, and completed her student-teaching assignments with positive recommendations from her master teacher. Mary was considered a promising teacher in training by her college professors and potential employers, two of whom offered her teaching positions.

In the week before school began, Mary appeared enthusiastic and collegial with other faculty and administration. She cheerfully greeted the parents and students on registration day. Mary assured the principal that she was ready for the new school year. She had put up attractive bulletin boards and completed her long-range lesson plans, as well as a detailed lesson plan for the first two weeks of school. The textbooks and other materi-

MENTOR THE BEGINNING TEACHER

als were neatly stacked and ready for distribution to students on the first day of school. Mary had posted a “Welcome” sign on the door and rules on the wall of her classroom.

Once school began, all seemed to be going well for Mary.

The first stress point came a few days before Back to School Night, when teachers met with

* Not their real names.

BY THAMBI THOMAS

parents to explain classroom rules, the curriculum, homework policy, field trips, etc. However, since this topic had been covered in the teacher-training program, Mary was able to prepare for it with a little help from the other teachers. All was well, or so it seemed.

Several weeks later, the principal, Mr. Felt,* walked into Mary's classroom one morning to find the students working quietly by themselves. The students told him that Ms. Lopez was in the restroom. A few minutes later, Mary emerged. One glance, and the principal could see that she had been crying. When he asked if everything was all right, Mary quickly pulled herself together and said she would be OK. The principal suspected that everything was not OK and decided to meet with Mary after school.

That afternoon, when Mr. Felt asked Mary how things were going, she began to sob uncontrollably. After a few minutes, she confessed, "Things are not going very well! I have been crying every day, and I cannot sleep at night. I don't think I am doing a good job. My stomach goes into a knot every morning when I am getting ready for

school. I don't know what is the matter with me. I try to prepare for class, and I am doing my very best, but the kids are not listening to me. I feel overwhelmed, and the parents have so many questions. I don't think I can do this anymore."

The principal, sorry to have been oblivious to Mary's needs, offered to provide her with a teacher's aide or send her for counseling, to no avail. Mary had decided teaching was not for her and wanted to quit right then.

Mary's case may be somewhat extreme. However, while many new teachers manage to survive their introduction to teaching, research indicates that for a significant number of them,

While many new teachers manage to survive their introduction to teaching, research indicates that for a significant number of them, the first three to five years are very challenging.

the first three to five years are very challenging. In fact, the attrition rate for public school teachers after one year is 17 percent, 30 percent after the second year, and as high as 80 percent after 10 years.¹ Researchers at the University of North Carolina reported that the attrition rate for first-year teachers was 2.5 times higher than that of more experienced teachers.²

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future published in 1996 predicted that in 10 years, two million elementary and secondary teachers would be needed to replace teachers who would be retiring or leaving the profession and to meet

the demand for new teachers due to population growth trends over that decade. The first major premise of the report was that "What teachers know and do is the most important influence on what students learn."³ The report recommended that the states create and fund mentoring programs for beginning teachers. Today, 33 states have done so.

Many U.S. public school districts, including those with the highest growth rates, have implemented a mentor teacher program to help ensure the success of beginning teachers and to maintain stability within the school district. Nearly all teachers who have been paired with a mentor are unani-

mous in their praise of the program. These teachers, reflecting on their first years of teaching, indicate that the support, counsel, camaraderie, and encouragement they received from the mentor played a key role in their success and longevity in the profession. The positive impact of mentoring programs on teacher morale is also seen as an important reason to warrant their inclusion in a teacher-induction program.

Since there is no attrition data for teachers in the Adventist school system, one must look at statistics for private education in general. One such source is the "Schools and Staffing Survey" conducted during the 1987-1988 school year and the follow-up survey the following school year. It was found that the attrition rate for teachers in private schools was 12.7 percent, which was more than twice as high as teachers in the public school system (5.7 percent).⁴ It seems likely that the rate of attrition in the Adventist school system falls within this range as well.

The primary focus of this article is to provide a practical framework that conference offices of education and large schools can use to develop and implement mentor teacher programs to support the beginning teacher.

An Overview of the Mentor's Responsibilities

Teacher mentoring consists of experienced educators sharing their knowledge, expertise, and training with new teachers. It has clearly defined expectations of the mentor and the beginning teacher, referred to as the mentee or protégé. It is important for the mentor to enter this relationship with a commitment to help the beginning teacher succeed.

The mentor must:

- Work regularly and directly with the mentee according to an established schedule;
- Aid the mentee in long-range planning for the school year;
- Assist the mentee in creating a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and motivates students to manage themselves;

ORING

- Ensure adequate lesson planning and preparation for the first three weeks of school;
- Offer ideas to engage students in special projects;
- Be available to assist the mentee with problems as they arise;
- Provide feedback, guidance, and support to the mentee without appearing to meddle;
- Offer insight into research-based support for instructional strategies;
- Assist in the development of classroom materials;
- Help the mentee to better understand the culture and organization of the school;
- Have periodic contact with the mentee to review progress, debrief on successes and failures, and inform the mentee of professional-growth opportunities; and
- Model effective teaching strategies and professional conduct.

The Mentor Teacher Program planning committee of the Pacific Union Conference identified several key outcomes for its mentor teacher program. The mentor will:

M - *Model* the teaching competencies identified as essential for success in teaching;

E - *Encourage* the personal and emotional well-being of beginning teachers;

N - *Nurture* the professional growth and retention of beginning teachers;

T - *Transmit* the philosophy and culture of Adventist education to beginning teachers;

O - *Observe* classroom teaching and review effective practices with mentees;

R - *Reinforce* the development of self-improvement goals and problem-solving skills; and

S - *Support* and challenge beginning teachers with ongoing assistance.

The mentor does not supervise the mentee but rather maintains a supportive, cordial, and professional relationship. Evaluation for professional growth and continual employment is the responsibility of the employer. Conversations between the teacher and the mentor must remain confidential. The relationship might be impaired or

compromised if the mentor also served as the mentee's evaluator.

Building Effective Mentor-Mentee Relationships

Not every experienced teacher can be a good mentor because the mentor-mentee relationship is in some ways a forced partnership. The mentor and mentee often don't know each other and have usually been assigned to work together. It is therefore imperative that the administrator help the mentee to approach the relationship as being in his or her best interests rather than seeing it as a threat. Being assigned to a mentor does not indicate a lack of preparation or professional shortcomings. Rather, the mentor can provide specialized support to help the mentee succeed during those crucial first few years of teaching.

In the Pacific Union, we have found that when the mentor teachers are

identified by the conference office of education or the school and invited to participate in the program, they come with a commitment to help beginning teachers. Even so, the mentor must have the right attributes and qualities for this type of relationship. He or she must be committed to the role and willing to invest the necessary time and effort. For Adventist teachers, particularly multigrade teachers, who have a heavier-than-normal work load, taking on the task of mentoring a beginning teacher represents extra work without increased remuneration. Many Adventist educators, however, appreciate having the title of "mentor" and the opportunity to mentor a beginning teacher.

The mentor's warm and accepting attitude plays an important role in building the relationship. Likewise, the mentee's willingness to be guided and critiqued by another teacher will help ensure that the relationship gets off to a



Mentor Edith Bradshaw (right) and mentee Maylinne Peters, both teachers at La Sierra Elementary School, engage in long-range planning before the start of the school year.

good start.

Many studies and reports have identified classroom management as a key issue in the success of the beginning teacher. A poorly managed classroom makes it almost impossible for learning to take place. Too often, beginning teachers view themselves as failures because they enter the profession with weak classroom-management skills, not understanding that these skills are honed by experience. They do not understand why students do not want to sit quietly in the classroom or follow instructions. The perceptive mentor can offer suggestions and problem-solving solutions—but even more important, he or she can help the beginning teacher plan and organize for the first few weeks of school in order to prevent classroom-management problems during those critical first few days. The mentor can offer insight into what is likely to work, based on experience; and identify potential pitfalls without stifling the mentee's creativity.

The effective mentor is skilled in the art of teaching and providing instructional support in an environment that promotes student learning. It is helpful to have the mentee visit the mentor's classroom early in the school year for informal observations, to team-teach with the mentor, or to observe a model lesson. At the end of the day, the two can reflect together on what went well and what didn't go as planned. The mentee can ask questions and seek clarification. It is critical at this early stage in the relationship that the mentor demonstrates successful teaching and classroom management.

The mentor should also visit the mentee's classroom for similar purposes; however, teaching demonstrations in the mentee's classroom should occur by mutual agreement. The value of the team approach can be seen in the following statement made by a high school teacher who had taught for 25 years, "I have taught 20,000 classes; I have been 'evaluated' 30 times; but I have never seen another teacher teach."⁵

Another frustration for beginning teachers is dealing with "problem parents." Quite often, the problem results

from miscommunication or the teacher's failure to understand parental concerns. The mentor can help the mentee build positive interpersonal relationships that encourage parents to become partners in the education of their children. The mentor can also give concrete ideas on effective strategies to keep parents informed about their children's progress in school and school/classroom events. A parent handbook (in contrast to the bulletin published by the school) contains grade- or class-specific information of special interest and benefit to parents. Some of the topics covered in this handbook include a brief biographical sketch of the teacher, class schedule, parent sign-up forms for field trips and help with fund-raisers, homework policy, classroom discipline strategies, a list of classroom supplies, guidelines for birthday celebrations in the classroom, etc. Parents also seem to appreciate knowing the specific topics students will be studying as well as the skills that will be taught or reinforced during the school year.

The mentor should see himself or herself as a lifelong learner who frequently engages in professional growth activities and is therefore able to encourage the mentee's participation in staff-development opportunities.

The mentor must have the skill and the capacity to communicate hope and inspire optimism in the beginning teacher. The mentor is involved in building another teacher, and thus can make a contribution that will impact lives for years to come. In the mentor teacher program, one can see the truth of English author Albert Pine's statement that "*What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.*"⁶

Selecting the Mentor Teacher

Mentor teachers must be selected according to specific criteria, rather than merely by years of teaching experience. The local conference office of education or the school that plans to implement a mentor teacher program should have a set of minimum qualifications to use in compiling a list of po-

tential candidates. A mentor teacher should have:

- Earned a valid Standard or Professional denominational teaching credential;
- Achieved regular employment status;
- Provided direct classroom instruction to students for at least 10 years;
- Demonstrated effective classroom management and discipline strategies;
- Built positive working relationships with peers and parents;
- Demonstrated effective communication skills;
- Received satisfactory or better performance ratings on the past three teacher evaluations; and
- Have a positive attitude about another teacher observing him or her teach.

Preparing Mentors to Serve as Facilitators

First, the conference or school needs to make a commitment to establishing a mentor teacher program. Once mentors have been identified, a formal training process will help ensure that everyone understands the goals and expectations of the program. Mentors need to know the parameters of the program and the operational protocols of the school system. Teachers who spend their days primarily working with children may need to be reminded that adults tend to be more goal oriented, and that they learn best when their learning is relevant to their experience.⁷

There are numerous resources to help in developing a mentor program, including national and state departments of education. Mentor training programs typically cover the following topics:

- An overview of the "system" expectations of the mentor;
- An understanding of how adults learn;
- A review of effective teaching strategies;
- Characteristics of an effective classroom;
- A review of effective classroom-

management strategies;

- Preparing for parent-teacher conferences and other meetings/events; and
- Small-group problem-solving activities using typical problems beginning teachers are likely to encounter.

Conference Office of Education/ Site Administrator Responsibilities

The success of a mentoring program will depend to a large degree upon the planning, training, coordination, and support from the conference office of education and/or site administrators. Once mentors have gone through an orientation and have been assigned a mentee, plans must be set in place to:

1. Provide opportunity for a meeting of the mentors and mentees, ideally before the beginning of the school year or soon after. The following topics would be appropriate at this first meeting:

- a. mentor program expectations;
- b. mentor duties and responsibilities;
- c. pertinent topics covered at the mentor training/in-service that will be beneficial to the mentee;
- d. the importance of both mentors and mentees maintaining a simple log of contacts and topics discussed and

The Central California Conference in the Pacific Union has been operating a successful mentor teacher program for the past nine years. Readers desiring additional information on how the mentor teacher program operates may contact Ken Bullington or Ileana Santa-Cruz Espinosa, associate superintendents of education, Central California Conference, 2820 Willow Ave, Clovis, CA 93612. Phone (559) 347-3000. E-mail: KPBullington@aol.com.

For additional information, readers may also contact the author at the Pacific Union Conference, P.O. Box 5005, Westlake Village, CA 91359. Phone (805) 413-7100. E-mail: Thambi@puonline.org.



Dorothea Amey, former Pacific Union Conference associate director of education, at a mentor training in-service.



Mentor teachers engage in a group activity during the in-service.

assistance given/received during the school year, with the promise of confidentiality;

e. Methods of contact or accessibility during the school year (e-mail, telephone, etc.); and

f. Scheduled visits to their respective schools to observe each other's classrooms.

2. Provide opportunity for a mentor-mentee meeting prior to start of school or shortly thereafter. Mentor and mentee should agree on:

a. Methods of contact or accessibility during the school year (e-mail, telephone, etc.); and

b. Scheduled visits to their respective schools.

3. Provide opportunity for the mentee to visit and observe the men-

tor's classroom, followed by a post-observation conference at a convenient time the same day.

4. Arrange for the mentor to visit and observe the mentee's classroom, followed by a post-observation conference at a convenient time that same day.

5. Encourage regular communication between mentor and mentee throughout the school year.

6. Require mentors and mentees to submit quarterly reports of their interactions and visits.

7. Provide opportunity at the end of the school year for mentor and mentee to evaluate the effectiveness of their interactions and of the mentor program in general.

8. Provide/arrange for reimburse-

Sample Forms
(As used in the Pacific Union Conference Mentor Teacher Program)



Mentor/Mentee "Get Acquainted" Questionnaire
(To be completed before the first meeting or at the first meeting of mentor and mentee)

Name _____ ☐ Mentor ☐ Mentee

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____ e-mail _____

Hobby _____ Spouse's Name _____ Children _____

Favorite Foods _____

Hobbies _____

In my free time I like to: _____

Types of books I like to read: _____


I wish I knew more about: _____

My professional goals for this school year are:

- _____
- _____
- _____

My personal long-range goals are:

- _____
- _____
- _____



Mentor - Mentee Classroom Visit Observation Form
(To be completed by the observer and/or on "taking point" during the post-observation conference)

Check to indicate the one observing: _____ ☐ Mentor ☐ Mentee

Mentor: _____

Mentee: _____

School Site: _____ Date of Visit: _____

Grade Level: _____ Number of Students: _____

Subject/Lesson Taught: _____

Objective Goal for Lesson: _____

Teaching Methods/Strategies: _____

Materials Used: _____

Activity/Assignment Observed: _____

Comments: _____

Hampton.html (2001), pp. 2, 5.

3. National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future" (September 1997), at <http://www.nctaf.org>, p. 10, retrieved September 14, 2006.

4. Croasmun, et al.

5. Linda Darling-Hammond, "Teacher Learning That Supports Student Learning" at <http://edutopia.org> (May 1, 1999), retrieved September 14, 2006.

6. See http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Albert_Pine/, retrieved September 14, 2006.

7. Northwest Regional Educational Library, National Mentoring Center, <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/>.

8. Ellen G. White, *Educa-*

tion (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903), p. 84.

9. See especially the article by Linda Gilbert, "What Helps Beginning Teachers?" *Educational Leadership* 62:8 (May 2005), pp. 36-39.

To obtain copies of these and other helpful forms to use in a mentoring program, contact the author (Thambi@puconline.org).

ment of travel expenses incurred by the mentor and mentee. In order to not pose an added burden to the mentor/mentee schools, the conference office of education should bear the expenses for substitute teachers when the mentor/mentee visits the other's school.

9. Offer to reimburse the mentor/mentee for incidental expenses, such as a "get acquainted" meal at the start of the school year, a mentee gift, telephone calls, etc.

10. Offer the mentor and mentee a predetermined number of professional activity credits for participating in the mentor program, subject to the completion and submission of all required reports.

Ellen White, commenting on Christ's work of mentoring His disciples, wrote, "The most complete illustration of Christ's methods as a teacher is found in His training of the first twelve disciples . . . To them, above all others, He gave the advantage of His own companionship. Through personal association He impressed Himself upon

these chosen collaborators."⁸ Mentors give of themselves to help ensure the growth and success of another—a

priceless gift.

A recent issue of *Educational Leadership* (May 2005)⁹ focused on the generational gap that is evident in the teaching work force and of the growing need to support new teachers. At a time when the Adventist educational system is having difficulty finding qualified teachers to fill current needs, we must do all we can to support, encourage, and retain our beginning teachers so that they experience success and the joys of teaching right at the outset, and can be more effective in preparing students for today and for eternity. ✍



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NOTES AND REFERENCES

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KEEPING EVERYONE HEALTHY AT SCHOOL

PREVENTION— THE BEST TREATMENT

PART II

Besides the diseases and illnesses discussed in Part I of this article, a number of others can pose a real threat to students and others at school, causing unnecessary pain and suffering, as well as absences. Some are highly infectious (contagious), and others, although not as easily contracted, can still be transmitted at school.

Part I discussed diseases spread through the air and through direct contact with sick people. Illnesses are spread by other means in the school environment, as well. Part II will discuss those spread by ingesting contaminated food and/or water, as well as those transmitted by insects and other vectors. The information provided will help teachers and other school personnel recognize conditions that are likely to foster the spread of these diseases, determine which symptoms need immediate attention and medical evaluation, and take steps to keep everyone healthy and disease-free throughout the school year.

Infectious Disease Indicators

Since teachers spend many hours each day with students, they are in an excellent position to detect early physical and/or behavioral changes that may indicate an illness or infection, and thus prevent its spread. School

Since teachers spend many hours each day with students, they are in an excellent position to detect early physical and/or behavioral changes that may indicate an illness or infection, and thus prevent its spread.

nurses, principals, secretaries, and other school personnel can also help to identify early signs of illness in the school environment.

Certain symptoms of infectious diseases can serve as red flags for medical evaluation and medical care. These include changes in appetite, behavior, skin, eye color, and bowel habits (including abdominal pain), a fever, rash, sore throat, cough, earache, nasal discharge, and congestion (see Figure 1 on page 40).

Schools need to have well-defined, written policies to deal with student illness and injury. These must include parental-consent forms that allow the school to administer prescription and over-the-counter medications and obtain

emergency care for students under 18 years of age. However, even with parental consent, staff members should not give children aspirin for viral illnesses because of the possible association with Reyes syndrome, which can affect many organs of the body (the brain is particularly vulnerable).¹

Infectious Diarrhea

Diarrhea can spread quickly if not detected and contained early. If a school, day-care center, or dormitory has a diarrhea outbreak, the local health department should be contacted while waiting for confirmation of the cause.²

The typical symptoms of intestinal

BY R. PATTI HERRING

Picture Removed

infections include diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and fever, which may be caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites, or intestinal worms. The severity of the symptoms depends on the cause and vitality of the person's immune system. The most common mode of transmission is fecal-oral contamination (transfer of germs from feces to the mouth by unwashed hands or ingestion of contaminated food or water). People can also contract a number of diarrheal infections by swimming in contaminated swimming pools, lakes, and rivers.³

Any student with persistent diarrhea, especially if it is accompanied by fever and cramps, should be seen by a health-care provider as soon as possible.

Recommendations for Preventing the Spread of Food- and Water-Borne Infections

1. Report without delay to the local health department any clusters of diarrheal infections and suspected food- and water-borne illnesses. Work with them to identify the cause(s) and to prevent recurrences. This will require keeping careful records to determine whether there is a common source of infection, such as the swimming pool

or river, the dining hall, a particular classroom or locker room, etc., where outbreaks occurred within a specific time period.⁴

2. Students and employees should be encouraged to stay home if they are feeling ill or suffering from diarrhea; or when the local health department or physician advises.

3. Food handlers and child-care workers should be instructed not to come to school if they have any type of diarrheal illness or open skin lesions or sores. Once infected, they should be cleared by a licensed health-care provider before returning to work.

4. Students and staff with diarrhea should not use the swimming pool.⁵

5. Make sure water used for drinking and food preparation is treated with chemicals or boiled. Do not serve ice that has been made with untreated water.

6. Conduct regular inspections to ensure that temperatures are maintained within acceptable ranges for refrigerators (less than 40° F/60° C) and hot-food serving areas (greater than 140° F/ 60° C). Make sure that the internal temperature of cooked foods containing eggs, milk, and meat products reaches at least 185° F (85° C) before serving. Do not store or transport

perishable foods at room temperature for more than a few minutes, especially in hot weather. Store foods in clean, sealed containers.⁶

7. Do not serve unpasteurized milk, or eggs, meat, and seafood that have not been thoroughly cooked. Be alert to possible contamination of leafy vegetables, sprouts, and juices.

8. Avoid cross-contamination when preparing food. This can occur when the juices of eggs and meats (i.e., chicken, turkey, fish, etc.) touch other foods, cutting boards, and countertops on which other foods are prepared.⁷ Clean food-preparation surfaces frequently with disinfectants.

9. If a commercial dishwasher is available, make sure that the water temperature is at least 170-180° F (70-75° C).⁸ If dishes and eating utensils must be washed by hand, first scrub off remaining food using hot water and soap, then soak in a solution of one tablespoon chloride bleach per gallon of water. Drain and air dry.

10. To control flies and insects, install screens on windows and doors; spray as needed with insecticides; keep trash and composting areas away from buildings.

11. Instruct students, teachers, and other school employees and volunteers to practice proper hand-washing techniques after using the bathroom, before eating, after changing diapers, and before handling food. Post signs as reminders in various places throughout the school (bathrooms, kitchens and cafeterias, diaper-changing areas, dormitories, etc.). Provide adequate tools and agents (i.e., antibacterial soap and alcohol wipes, waste disposal containers, etc.) in the bathrooms and other areas throughout the school. Provide parents/guardians with hand-washing resources via take-home fliers.

12. Diaper-changing stations/surfaces should be disinfected after each diaper change. Toilets and sinks should be cleaned and disinfected daily. Surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected

Figure 1

Common Indicators of Infectious Diseases⁹

Signs and Symptoms of Infection	School's Responsibility	
Changes in Appetite	Student is picky about what he or she wants to eat, eats very little or not at all; may want only certain foods or prefer only liquids.	Observe the child to see if other symptoms occur.
Changes in Behavior	Irritability, drowsiness, or indifference, occurring with fever, fatigue, and pain	If accompanied by other symptoms, ask parent/guardian to take the child home and get a medical evaluation.
Fever	Low-grade fever: 99.5 – 102.2° F (38 - 39° C) High fever: 102.2° – 104° F (39 - 42° C)	Parent/guardian should be asked to take the child home if he or she has a fever higher than 100.4° F (38° C). Quarantine dormitory students with a high temperature until the cause has been diagnosed. Give treatment (including medicine) only if parent/guardian has signed a permission form. Do not give aspirin for viral illnesses because of the possible association with Reyes syndrome.
Skin and Eye Color	A noticeable change from the student's normal skin or eye color: the skin might look pale, ashy, colorless, or have a pasty glow; the cheeks may be flushed or rosy; the eyes may be yellow-tinged or red.	Observe the child to see if other symptoms occur.
Rash	A change in the skin's appearance or texture, which causes swelling and color changes, making it feel warm, dry, cracked, bumpy, blistered, and often painful.	Determine whether this is due to a contagious disease (chicken pox, measles, etc.); if so, isolate the child from other students until parent/guardian can take him or her home. Ask parent/guardian to contact a physician for an evaluation.
Changes in Bowel Habits/ Abdominal Pain/Vomiting	The student makes frequent requests to go to the bathroom and complains of diarrhea, constipation, or severe stomach cramps. The student is absent from school frequently because of abdominal pain or vomiting.	Severe diarrhea can quickly result in dehydration and even death. Persistent, severe pain accompanied by vomiting, diarrhea, or constipation requires immediate medical attention.
Nasal Discharge and Congestion	Clear nasal discharge (runny nose and watery eyes) may indicate a cold or an allergic reaction. Yellow or greenish discharge may indicate a serious infection.	If discharge is accompanied by sneezing and other cold/flu symptoms, ask parent/guardian to keep student home until he or she has recovered.
Sore Throat	Student has a raw, red throat and/or difficulty swallowing, and may have swollen glands in the neck.	If a fever accompanies these symptoms, the student should be sent home, and parent/guardian encouraged to get a medical evaluation, as it may indicate strep, mononucleosis (a viral infection spread by close contact), or another serious illness.
Cough	The student has a cough that lasts more than three weeks. Check whether accompanied by a loss of appetite, weight loss, or other symptoms.	Ask parent/guardian to get a medical evaluation, as this may indicate tuberculosis or another serious illness.
Earache and Discharge From the Ear	The student complains of pain in ear, pulls at ear, or holds hand to ear. There may be drainage (blood or pus) from the ear.	Ask parent/guardian to get an immediate medical evaluation.

Figure 2

Diarrheal Infections Common to the School Site¹⁸

Organism	Symptoms	Incubation & Spread	Infectious Period & Duration	Control Measures/ Treatment
Campylobacteriosis	Diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting	Incubation: 3-5 days, with a range of 1-10 days Spread: By contaminated food, impure water, and unpasteurized milk; contact with infected persons and pets	Infectious Period: Throughout the course of the infection if not treated with antibiotics for two to seven weeks Duration: Variable (days to several weeks)	Report to local health department within one day. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Antibiotics
Giardiasis Caused by protozoan parasites	Often no symptoms; but may cause persistent diarrhea, abdominal cramps, bloating, frequent loose, pale, and greasy stools, fatigue, and weight loss	Incubation: 5-25 days or longer; 7-10 days average Spread: person-to-person, fecal-oral route, ingestion of contaminated food or water	Infectious Period: Entire period of infection, which may be without symptoms Duration: Variable (several weeks to several months)	Report to local health department within three days. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Infection will usually go away by itself, but severe cases may require antiprotozoal medications.
Salmonella	Sudden onset of headache, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, may have blood or pus in the stool, sometimes vomiting and fever. Dehydration can occur, especially among infants, and may be severe.	Incubation: 6-72 hours; usually 12-36 hours Spread: By ingestion of contaminated water, undercooked or improperly stored foods; preparation of food on contaminated surfaces; contact with infected animals or an infected person's feces.	Infectious Period: During entire period of infection (usually 1-4 weeks) Duration: Several days to several weeks	Report to local health department within one day. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Infection will usually go away by itself, but the person should drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration.
Shigellosis	Diarrhea, fever, nausea, abdominal cramps and vomiting, may have blood or pus in the stool	Incubation: 12-96 hours (usually 1-3 days), occasionally up to one week Spread: Person-to-person by direct or indirect transmission through dirty hands or fingernails after bathroom use. Flies may transfer the organism to uncovered food.	Infectious Period: Entire time organism is in the stool (usually 1-4 weeks) Duration: Several days to several weeks	Report to local health department within one day. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Antibiotics, replacing fluids to prevent dehydration
E. coli	Does not always produce symptoms, but often causes diarrhea and abdominal cramps. Person may have blood or pus in the stool.	Incubation: 1-9 days; usually 3-4 days Spread: Person-to-person by direct or indirect transmission through dirty hands and fingernails after bathroom use; in agriculture, by contaminated lettuce, green onions, spinach, alfalfa sprouts, or juices; organism may be transferred during food preparation to food and food surfaces	Infectious Period: Entire period of infection, which may be without symptoms Duration: Several days to several weeks	Report to local health department within one day. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Infection will usually go away by itself, but the person should drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration.

Continued on page 43

Since HAV is transmitted by the fecal-oral route, hand washing is also an important preventive measure.¹⁹ If a food handler contracts the disease, he or she should not be allowed to return to work for at least two weeks. Food handlers whose family members are infected with HAV should be tested before being allowed to prepare food at school.

Although hospitalization may be required for diagnosis and managing the symptoms, no specific treatment has proved effective for Hepatitis A.²⁰ Children should be excluded from school on a case-by-case basis.²¹

Cholera: A diarrheal disease contracted from ingesting water or food contaminated by the bacteria *Vibrio cholera*, which produces toxins in the body. Left untreated, cholera can cause dehydration and loss of electrolytes (sodium, potassium, calcium, etc.). In severe cases, death can occur. **Symptoms** include painless and profuse, watery diarrhea and occasionally vomiting and leg cramps. **Prevention:** Same as for other food- and water-borne diseases.²²

The primary **treatment** for cholera

The typical symptoms of intestinal infections include diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and fever, which may be caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites, or intestinal worms.

is replacing lost fluids with Gatorade-like sports drinks or replacement salts and large volumes of boiled or bottled water. In severe cases, victims need immediate medical attention.

Typhoid fever: A life-threatening disease that affects about 21.5 million people each year. This disease is spread when an infected person prepares food or beverages for others without washing his hands after using the bathroom. The *salmonella typhi* bacteria can also get into the water supply.²³

Symptoms can include a fever as high as 103° to 104° F (39° to 40° C), weakness, stomach pain, headache, and loss of appetite. Some individuals

may experience a flat, rose-colored rash. The only sure diagnosis is through testing of stool or blood samples.²⁴

Prevention and treatment: CDC's motto again is applicable: "Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it." Individuals with this disease should not prepare food for other individuals or care for small children. A medical clearance is mandatory before infected children or other school personnel are allowed to return to the classroom or workplace. Even asymptomatic infected persons can spread the disease. The vaccine for typhoid is not completely effective, but the disease is treatable with antibiotics.²⁵

In summary, food- and water-borne diseases can be debilitating and potentially deadly. Depending on the cause (virus, bacteria, or parasite), the incubation period varies. Infected persons should not attend school or handle food. According to experts, the single most important thing people can do is to wash their hands to keep from contracting or transmitting infectious diseases and illnesses.²⁶

If the school gets its water from a

Figure 2 Continued

Diarrheal Infections Common to the School Site

Organism	Symptoms	Incubation & Spread	Infectious Period & Duration	Control Measures/Treatment
Viral Gastroenteritis (stomach flu)	Low-grade fever, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, body aches, headache	Incubation: 24-72 hours Spread: Person-to-person by direct or indirect transmission through dirty hands and fingernails after bathroom use	Infectious Period: During the illness and shortly afterwards Duration: 1-2 days	No need to report to health department. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Infection will usually go away by itself, but the person should drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration. Antibiotics may make symptoms worse.
Yersiniosis bacteria	Headache, acute, watery diarrhea (especially in young children) fever, vomiting, anorexia, pharyngitis	Incubation: 3-7 days; generally under 10 days Spread: By eating and drinking contaminated food and/or water; contact with infected persons or animals	Infectious Period: At least as long as symptoms persist; if untreated, organism can be excreted for 2-3 weeks. Duration: 2-3 weeks	Report to local health department within one day. Students and staff should not attend school if they have symptoms. Treatment: Antibiotics

lake, stream, well, or cistern, or uses untreated water from the local town's pumping station, the water should be tested regularly and treated with chlorine. Commercial filters can also remove algae, fungi, minerals, and chemical pollutants that make untreated water unsafe to drink.²⁷ If the school budget does not allow for the purchase of a commercial filter, the water can be boiled. At sea level, the water should be boiled for at least one minute (three minutes or more at higher altitudes). If impurities are identified by testing, the water should be boiled for at least 10 minutes to remove germs, bacteria, and other harmful pollutants. It is better to over-boil (longer than 10 minutes) than to under-boil the water. Once it cools, it is safe to drink. Keep in mind, however, that boiling and chlorination will not remove dangerous metals (aluminum, lead, cadmium, arsenic, and mercury), salts, or most chemicals. This requires filters or distillation.

The School's Responsibility

Each school must establish policies that ensure the safety of food and water. In many countries, public health regulatory agencies monitor and regulate the handling and preparation of food at schools. Most school cafeterias must adhere to state and county regulations. However, administrators shouldn't assume that people know how to prevent the spread of dangerous diseases. Policies relating to these matters should be printed and distributed to teachers and staff. Compliance should be monitored regularly.²⁸ Teachers and classroom aides should keep their eyes open for potential threats to environmental school safety.

Insect-Borne Diseases and Other Communicable Conditions

Scabies and lice (head and body) are common preventable problems at school, along with ringworm and pinworms.

Scabies: A severe skin infection caused by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. Scabies can affect people from any socioeconomic status regardless of age, sex, or race, although it is more com-

mon when people live in crowded conditions or practice poor hygiene. Even casual contact with a person with mites can allow their spread. Mites can survive three to four days away from human skin. Occasionally, scabies is spread by contact with the contaminated bed linens of an infected person or with bath towels used for showers after gym class or after swimming. Scabies can be transmitted as long as a person remains untreated.²⁹

Symptoms: Symptoms can occur two to six weeks after first exposure, and re-infection can occur in one to four days.³⁰ The earliest sign of scabies is itching, usually at night. Little red bumps, resembling hives, tiny bites, or pimples, appear on the skin. The mites usually can be found in the webs between the fingers and toes as well as around the wrist and navel, the backs of the elbows, the folds of the armpits, beltline, and abdomen, in the creases of the groin, and on the genitals.³¹

Treatment: There are effective over-the-counter and prescription ointments, which usually must be applied to the skin from head to toe, and left on for at least 8-14 hours. For persistent cases, a second treatment is needed one week later. Since it is uncommon for only one member in a family to be infected, other residents in the home should be examined and treated. A medical clearance for the student and the family should be required before the student is allowed to return to school.³²

Lice: A common contagious problem in school-aged children. There are three types: head, body, and pubic lice. **Head lice** are the most common and infect 6-12 million people in the U.S. each year. **Body lice** are more often a problem in underdeveloped countries, but are also problematic for homeless people in the U.S. **Pubic lice** are usually transmitted by sexual contact. The life cycle for lice is up to 30 days, but they do not generally survive for more than 24 hours off the human body.³³

Some body lice can transmit diseases such as typhus, trench fever, and relapsing fever; but for the most part, head and body lice are more uncom-

fortable than dangerous.³⁴ Since the louse's eggs hatch within one week and reach sexual maturity 8-10 days later, they can multiply swiftly. Lice are spread by contact with infected individuals and their personal belongings (like clothing and head gear).³⁵

Symptoms: Itching of the scalp or the body where the eggs hatched, and small grey nits (eggs) or insects at the base of hair follicles.³⁶

Treatment: The spread of lice can be prevented by instructing students to avoid head-to-head contact with their

Tips for a Safer School Environment

1. Develop comprehensive policies relating to illness and vaccination. Notify parents/guardians in writing to keep their children home from school when they are sick.

2. Students' vaccinations should be kept up to date; non-compliant students should not be permitted to attend school. Vaccines guard students—and others in the school environment—against a number of dangerous infectious diseases.

3. Don't allow children to share utensils or personal items like cups, glasses, forks and spoons, or combs, toothbrushes, hats, underwear, etc.

4. Instruct children to wash their hands after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing their nose. Encourage them to sing the "happy birthday" song or the "ABC" song to ensure that they have scrubbed for at least 10-15 seconds.

5. Refer students to the school nurse when they are sick. He or she should do a medical evaluation and notify the parent/guardian to pick the student up from school. Children with infectious diseases should be quarantined.

6. Teach students about good health habits, including proper diet and adequate sleep (at least eight hours every day), in order to keep their immune system healthy.

classmates while in class and at play. Items such as combs, brushes, barrettes, ribbons, towels, and hats should not be shared or stored together. Students should not lie on other people's bedding, pillows, or carpet.³⁷ Carpeting and upholstered furniture will need to be vacuumed to remove the lice. There are over-the-counter and prescription chemicals that can kill lice.

Parasites: Organisms that use a host organism's tissues or blood for their own nutritional benefit. They can infect humans from all walks of life, poor and rich, in all parts of the world. A number of parasites are spread through human carelessness, poor hygiene, and unsanitary conditions. The roundworm family is the most problematic as well as the most common parasite that affects humans. Some of the most common roundworms include the pinworm, the large intestinal roundworm, the hookworm, the whipworm, and *trichinella spiralis* (found in undercooked pork). The best treatment is prevention—pure water, thorough cooking of food, and good hygiene. Several types of parasites, including pinworms, can be spread by pets, articles of clothing, bedding, food, and dust, and can survive outside the human body for a period of time.

Treatment: Most respond well to drugs, although measures need to be taken to avoid re-infestation. In severe cases, the physician may prescribe iron supplements to prevent anemia.³⁸

Ringworm: Despite its name, ringworm is caused by various types of fungi. It can infect the body in general, the scalp, the groin, or the feet (athlete's foot). It appears as small red patches or bumps on the skin that spread outward, forming a red, scaly ring whose inside appears clear. It can be spread directly by contact with infectious individuals or animals, or indirectly by contact with surfaces or articles on which the fungus lingers (e.g., hats, bedding, shower caps, etc.). It is not necessary to report it to the local health department.

Treatment: Infected students should be referred to their health-care provider for treatment, which is very

effective.³⁹ Surfaces and articles should be washed thoroughly with disinfectant solutions. Articles that cannot be washed and disinfected (e.g., shower caps) should not be reused.

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that these conditions are not spread to others. Infected children should be excluded from the classroom and school-related activities until the day after the appropriate treatment has started. They should be under the care of a physician or school nurse for and during treatment. Only when the health-care provider has deemed the student and other household members non-infectious should the student be permitted to return to school. All students in infested classrooms should be inspected, and the same protocol applied to them and their families.⁴⁰ Dressing areas, showers, sports equipment (floor mats, exercise equipment, etc.) should be carefully disinfected and cleaned daily. Towels and other shared items should be laundered and sanitized.⁴¹

Other Insect-Borne Diseases

Several other insect-borne viral diseases can pose a threat at school. Lyme disease is caused by a bite of a bacteria-infected tick, while malaria, West Nile Virus, and yellow fever are transmitted by infected mosquitoes.

Lyme Disease: A potentially serious disease spread by infected ticks. An early sign is a circular rash, which can increase in size to 12 inches in diameter over a period of 3-30 days. Other **symptoms** include fatigue, chills, headache, and swollen lymph nodes. **Prevention:** Avoid being bitten by using insect repellent, and remove ticks from skin, clothing, and landscaping. In most cases, Lyme disease can be successfully treated with antibiotics, particularly if treatment is started early. In a small number of cases, symptoms (muscle and joint pain, fatigue, cognitive problems, sleep disturbances, and arthritis) persist even after treatment.⁴²

Malaria: A serious and sometimes fatal disease caused by a parasite transmitted by the bite of an infected female *Anopheles* mosquito.⁴³ The disease is

prevalent in tropical and subtropical regions of the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 300-500 million cases of malaria each year, and more than one million deaths. **Symptoms:** Similar to flu (chills, high fever, shaking, headache, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea). Some individuals may experience muscle aches and tiredness. Because of the loss of red blood cells, malaria may cause anemia and jaundice. **Protection:** Eliminate pools of water where mosquitoes can breed, spray insecticides on the walls of buildings to kill adult mosquitoes, wear long sleeves and long trousers at night, use insect repellent, install screens on windows and doors, and sleep under insecticide-treated bed nets. **Treatment:** Early diagnosis is important, combined with anti-malarial drugs that can destroy the parasite and prevent reoccurrence. There is currently no vaccine available for malaria.⁴⁴

West Nile Virus (WNV): A potentially serious illness transmitted by the bite of a mosquito infected with flavivirus, which occurs in many parts of the world.⁴⁵ Diseases caused by the West Nile virus include encephalitis, meningitis or meningoencephalitis, and West Nile fever.⁴⁶ The West Nile fever can cause mild to severe **symptoms** ranging from headache, body aches, a skin rash on chest, stomach, and back, nausea, vomiting, and swollen lymph glands to high fever, headache, muscle weakness, vision loss, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, convulsions, and paralysis. However, about 80 percent of those infected do not experience any symptoms.⁴⁷

Prevention: The same as for malaria—reduce the risk of mosquito bites. There is no **treatment** for WNV. People with severe cases should seek medical attention immediately to prevent disability and even death. In milder cases, the illness improves on its own.⁴⁸ Victims should get plenty of rest, drink lots of water, and seek medical care if symptoms get worse.

Yellow Fever: Another disease transmitted to humans by infected mosquitoes, which occurs only in trop-

ical South America and sub-Saharan Africa. It gets its name from the yellowing of the skin and eyes caused by the virus.⁴⁹ Yellow fever infections are usually mild, but they can cause severe life-threatening side-effects. Although there are two types, intermediate or urban yellow fever, which is spread by the *aedes aegypti* mosquito, causes most cases of yellow fever in humans.⁵⁰ This mosquito breeds in discarded tires, water storage containers, flower pots, and oil drums.⁵¹

Symptoms: High fever, chills, muscle aches, backache, headache, and vomiting commence three to six days after being bitten by the mosquito. After a short recovery, some individuals experience reoccurring symptoms like bleeding, shock, and kidney or liver failure.⁵² **Prevention:** Take the same precautions as for malaria and West Nile virus. The best prevention, however, is vaccination. **Treatment:** Infected individuals are encouraged to rest, drink plenty of fluids, and avoid exposure to mosquitoes.⁵³

School Policy

"It is clear that, in addition to deciding whether a student should attend school, the administrator or his/her designee must also evaluate whether the disease has implications for the student's participation in such activities as physical education, athletics, field trips, and lunchroom work. For example, the student who may possibly infect others with a disease that can be spread via droplets, fecal-oral contamination, or sores on the skin should not work in food services until approved to do so by the school nurse, licensed health-care provider, or public health official. At the same time, good personal hygiene such as washing hands after using the bathroom and before handling food must be emphasized. In addition to proper hand washing techniques, it is required that food handlers, where practical, wear single-service gloves."⁵⁴

Conclusion

Schools have a moral responsibility to keep their students well. The best way to prevent infectious diseases is to

practice good hygiene, particularly hand washing (see Part I for more information).✍



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For further information about immunizations and their role in preventing communicable diseases, download and read "Important Facts Regarding Immunizations" from the February/March 2003 issue of this journal on the Web (<http://circle.adventist.org/browse/resource.phtml?leaf=4445>).

This series of articles has been read and approved by the Health Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The information in this series represents the best of current research as compiled by the authors and verified by the JOURNAL'S copy editor. However, with the passage of time, new information and recommendations may emerge. Readers should consult a health professional for information specific to their personal health status and medical history, and for recommendations relating to public health issues in Adventist schools. It is always prudent to get more than one opinion.

Resources

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
5600 Fishers Lane, CDER-HFD-240
Rockville, MD 20857
<http://www.fda.gov>
Telephone: (301) 827-4573; 888-INFO-FDA (463-6332)

National Reye's Syndrome Foundation

P.O. Box 829
426 North Lewis
Bryan, OH 43506-0829
nrsf@reyessyndrome.org
<http://www.reyessyndrome.org>
Telephone: (419) 636-2679;
1-800-233-7393
Fax: (419) 636-9897

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Traveler's International Information Telephone Line provides information on cholera and other diseases that affect travelers
Telephone: 1-877-394-8747

Lyme Disease

For treatment guidelines developed by the Infectious Disease Society of America, visit [http://www.IDSA/Practice Guidelines for Treatment of Lyme Disease/PDF 120KB, 114 pages](http://www.IDSA/Practice%20Guidelines%20for%20Treatment%20of%20Lyme%20Disease/PDF%20120KB,114%20pages).

West Nile Virus

<http://www.cdc.gov/westnile> or call 1-800-232-6348

National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse

2 Information Way
Bethesda, MD 20892-3570
Telephone: 1-800-891-5389
Fax: (703) 738-4929
E-mail: nddic@info.niddk.nih.gov

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Continued from page 3

later in life that students will realize the value of their networks and sense how the quality of their relationships affects their success and satisfaction in work and life. Social scientists describe this as the building of social capital.

It need not be an either/or proposition: what you know versus who you know. But isn't the most important reason for Adventist education to help students develop a relationship with God and their Savior, and thereby become more like they were created to be? The significance of this is emphasized in the prayer of Christ: "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them" (John 17:25, 26, NIV).

So perhaps who you get to know while in school may be most important



Students at Pacific Adventist University, Papua New Guinea

after all. Imagine the thrill of finding out that you have an Old Friend in that New Country.—Lisa M. Beardsley.

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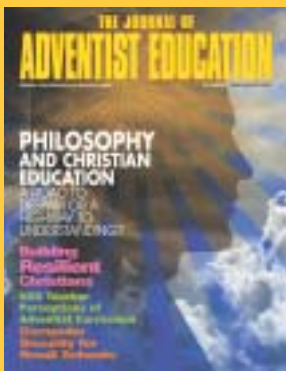
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