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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1982 Volume VI: The Changing American Family: Historical and Comparative Perspectives

Impact of a Handicapped Child on the Family

Guide for Curriculum Unit 82.06.08
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This unit addresses some of the issues and complexities faced by a family having a handicapped child. The focus is not on a specific disability but rather how a family might cope and adjust to the realization that their child will always be “exceptional.” There is a need to address these issues because handicapped individuals are becoming increasingly visible in our schools and communities. With the advancements of modern science most disabled children will live a normal life span. This has significant implications for the family as it matures. Teaching a unit on this topic will help sensitize students to the feelings and needs of disabled persons and create an awareness of the stress and joys experienced by a family having such a child. Bibliographies are offered for teachers to read more about specific disabilities as well as the relationships between family members and the handicapped child.

(Recommended for 8th through 12th grade Social Studies and Health.)

Key Words

Family Management

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