

## A Disturbing thought

A disquieting tale of mistreated babies has resulted from research on teen-age parents, conducted by Dr. Vladimir de Lissovoy, professor of child development and family relations at The Pennsylvania State University.

His three-year study of the problems of 48 teen-age married couples, 46 of whom were expecting children at the time of their marriage, shows, says the researcher, "that it is evident that these young parents were not familiar with developmental norms of their children.

"It is my conclusion that the children of many adolescent marriages have a high risk of joining the number of battered and abused babies."

Dr. de Lissovoy's study involved mothers who averaged 16½ years of age and fathers who averaged just over 17 years in age. Forty-one of the mothers and 35 of the fathers were high school dropouts, and they came from families described as "rural working class."

Dr. de Lissovoy points out that each of the couples was visited and interviewed at least five times at specific intervals during the three years.

"There is little question that these young parents were undergoing severe frustrations," he says. "Their lack of knowledge and experience, their unrealistic expectations of child development, their general disappointment in their lives and their lack of economic resources served to raise their irritability and lower their threshold of tolerance."

"To the question 'How often do you spank?' the mothers' replies included, 'When he deserves it,' and 'When I can't take it any longer,'" reports Dr. de Lissovoy.

The effects of this situation were often alarming.

Answers to some other questions -- like asking the mothers when they expected their child to sit up for the first time without support, how often did they think the baby would cry for no reason, or how did they plan to feed the baby food he needed if the baby did not like it -- showed poor comprehension of normal child development, says Dr. de Lissovoy.

Marital problems concerning finances, in-law relationships, and social activities were also problems for these young parents.

"The parents' personal, social and economic frustrations, which contributed to disenchantment in their marriage relationships, also affected their behavior toward their children," advises Dr. de Lissovoy.

One of Dr. de Lissovoy's criticisms is that people who should have been helping the teen-age parents were not doing their duty. Parents of the young couples too often advised them to "Let the baby cry" or told them "you'll find out (for yourself) soon enough," he says. Doctors, too, were often at fault he adds. Many times the doctors would try to solve the problems of the young family by handing the mother a mimeographed list of things like formula preparations and food supplements.

Dr. de Lissovoy cautions that generalizations cannot be made about all teen-age parents from this study "Because the sample was a typical one, the results must be noted with caution," he warns. "Nevertheless, the findings merit the attention of those who work with adolescents in schools or in community agencies."

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The research done on this project has been reported in the July-August issue of "Children Today" magazine and in the May issue of the "Journal of Marriage and the Family."  
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## Rockin' at the Plaza

Last Saturday saw the birth of a mini-festival at the Olmstead Plaza parking lot. Rained out the previous week, Saturday's sunshine brought out a crowd of about 2000 people with 700-800 being there at its peak.

The first note was struck at 11 a.m. when Shanghai took the stage and started the first set, playing until early afternoon. Picking up where Shanghai left off, the Legends came on and had the crowd hand-clapping

and foot-stomping to their hard rock beat. It was at this time that the crowd was at its peak and everyone was in the festive mood. Both Shanghai and the Legends are products of Harrisburg and are among the better bands in the area. Incidentally, the Legends are breaking up and will play their last set at The Lodge in Dillsburg on Halloween.

Saturday's happening was sponsored by the Olmstead Plaza merchants and WKBO radio with WKBO's Alexander serving as M.C. Both should be commended for providing some good entertainment to the people for free.

Is Nothing Sacred, a band from State College, was the third and final band to play and closed out the day's program. Any one of the bands could have headlined the bill as all three are equally talented. Next spring should see another concert of this type but with club type bands headlining the bill.

It was a relaxed crowd that heard the music and they were either very young or else part of the older crowd. Occasionally you'd see a parent stop and listen for a few minutes. The absence of any police posed no problems as everyone was there to listen to the music and have a good time. As with any outdoor concert, there was the usual litter of bottles and cans to clean up afterwards.

All in all, it was a good way to spend a Saturday as everyone there seemed to be having a good time. Next spring's concert should be just as promising.  
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## 'NEW' COURSE EVALUATIONS

University Park, Pa., Sept. -- The University Council on Thursday accepted from its subcommittee on student evaluation a general format for a University-wide surveying instrument from student evaluation of courses.

As now developed, the surveying instrument will be a three-part questionnaire. The first part will contain questions to be asked of every student throughout the University. The second part will be prepared by Colleges and Departments to meet their specific needs, while the third part will be prepared by individual instructors to assist them in course improvement.

Although the Council has recommending powers only, members hope the questionnaire will be widely adopted throughout the University. In the preparation of the new surveying instrument, the University Division of Instructional Services drew on more than 90 separate questionnaires in use within the University. UDIS is assisting the Council sub-committee in preparing the questionnaire.

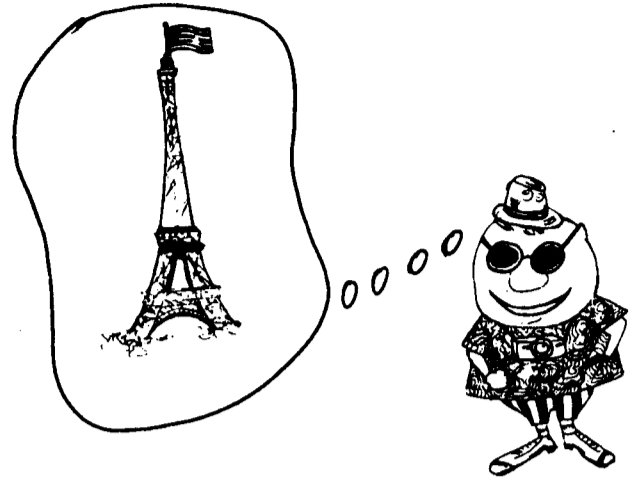
The Council is expected to make its recommendations on student evaluation to University President John W. Oswald in October.

Meeting with the Council was Dr. William L. Harkness, professor of statistics, as representative of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs. The council subcommittee will meet with representatives of the Senate committee in preparation of the final surveying instrument.

Others present at the meeting were Dr. Robert E. Dunham, vice president for undergraduate studies; Dr. Eugene R. Melander, assistant vice president for undergraduate studies; Leslie P. Greenhill, assistant vice president for academic services; and Dr. David W. Stickell, supervisor, examination services, UDIS.

Charles J. Smith, director of the Ogontz Campus, was designated as vice chairman of the Council to preside in the absence of Dr. Russell E. Larson, University provost, who is chairman.

The Council will hold its Nov. 1 meeting at the Berks Campus at Reading.  
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## Take a leave of absence

At a time when students seem to have a growing desire to stop and then restart their college studies, The Pennsylvania State University has adopted a leave of absence policy to make possible such interruptions.

The plan, developed by the University's Division of Admissions, Records and Scheduling, will go into effect in the Winter Term, 1974, which begins December 6.

It is designed to allow students greater flexibility in their programs of study and, at the same time, provide faculty and administrators the means by which to plan for a student's return to the University.

At present, the leave of absence option is available only to associate and baccalaureate degree students and carries a four-term or one-year limit. However, under special circumstances, it is possible to extend the leave period to a maximum of eight terms or two years.

The option is available at the University's 17 Commonwealth Campuses and the Behrend College of the University in Erie as well as at University Park.

Under the procedure, a student wishing to take a leave would simply complete the required form and submit it to the Records Office at University Park.

The dean of the student's College at University Park or the director of his campus will determine a student's eligibility to take a leave of absence.

Generally, any student who would continue in his program for the next term if he remained consecutively enrolled would be approved for a leave of absence.

The student would then return for registration for the term indicated on his request form.

If a student returns earlier or later than he had specified, he must apply for readmission. If degree requirements change while a student is on leave of absence, he would be held to those requirements in effect prior to his taking leave.

It is expected that the new option will be helpful in encouraging students to attend Penn State under a flexible attendance pattern.

According to Warren K. Haffner, director of the Division of Admissions, Records and Scheduling, department personnel will be able to project course offerings and requests, based on the number of students who are returning for a particular term.

At the same time, he said, administrators will be able to plan for students' returns as far as University planning and facilities are concerned.

"Through use of this new leave of absence option," Mr. Haffner added, "the University will become much more flexible to the needs of many types of students. In addition, the groundwork will have been laid for some facets of the extended degree opportunities program."

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