

COURSE OF STUDY FOR HEALTH EDUCATION
for
A FOURTH GRADE

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS
PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF SCIENCE

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Health education can be a vital force in improving the health of present and future generations. The term health education is used to designate that part of the school health program which provides teaching and learning experiences and activities for the purpose of favorably influencing knowledge, habits, attitudes, practices, appreciations and conduct pertaining to individual and group health. The trial and error methods of teaching health in the past have revealed the difficulty in getting the proper attitudes and practices established. The health program should be organized and conducted on a basis comparable to other school subjects and activities. Sufficient time allotment, motivation and planning are highly essential to the success of the teaching.

There are many factors in this modern world that clearly show the need for extensive knowledge of health and hygiene in maintaining individual and group health. The rapid advancements in science, medicine and technology deem it necessary that the individual have sufficient knowledge of past, present, and future health hazards and the available services to avoid or overcome them. The statistics on a national, state or community basis concerning illness and death bring prominent attention to the need for greater effort through health education in not only reducing unnecessary illness and death, but in improving and maintaining a high level of health in the population.

In order to properly determine the scope of the health teaching in the school program it is first necessary to consider

the needs and characteristics of the children involved. In this instance it is a local fourth grade whose ages are between nine and ten years. By first having a knowledge or understanding of the physical, intellectual and emotional growth of the average nine-year-old, comparisons can be made to determine any deviations from this focal point. The degree of maturity of these children is such that they cannot be given the extensive knowledge needed for adult life. However, they should be introduced to new materials and healthful living as rapidly as their maturity and level of intelligence will permit.

The major areas of health and safety education presented are personal health, nutrition, digestion, community health and sanitation, communicable disease, stimulants and depressants, safety and first aid.

The units are presented in terms of the expected educational outcomes, namely knowledge, skills and attitudes. Suggested activities are included which might be incorporated at any time during the teaching of the unit. Supplementary readings are also suggested for various reading groups within the class.

The evaluation of the health program should be carried on continuously from the beginning of the unit, throughout its presentation to its culminating activity. It must be kept in mind that the home and community environments also contribute to the improvements within an individual. Also, attitudes developed are difficult to measure. Therefore, the evaluation process can by no means be considered an accurate means of determining how much the child has benefited from the health education program. By means of standardized

tests, teacher-prepared essay tests, completion tests, oral questioning and interviews, dramatizations, teacher observations, and the pupils' creative works the teacher may determine with a fair degree of accuracy the extent to which the school health program has influenced the life of the child.