

TEEN PROBLEMS/ISSUES AND COURSES ADDRESSING  
THEM AS PERCEIVED BY HOME ECONOMICS  
STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The need for secondary home economics educators to keep abreast of the trends and social issues affecting today's youth is a crucial problem in the home economics discipline. It is imperative that the current secondary home economics curriculum reflect the occurring societal changes in order to meet the demands of the contemporary student. Spitze (1983) stated:

Home economics is an ever-changing profession just as society and the family are in continual change. It is important that we as home economists and teachers continually revise programs, curricula, and experience to which our students are exposed. (Spitze, 1983, p. 157)

One finding from a survey conducted by Greninger (1984) listed the revision of curricula as a priority in home economics because of the need to reflect changing technological and societal developments in the coursework (Greninger, 1984, p. 33).

Home economics is defined as:

the study of the laws, conditions, principles, and ideas which are concerned on one hand with man's immediate physical environment and on the other with his nature as a social being, and is the study specifically of the relation between those two factors". (East, 1980, p.10)

Since the development of this definition in 1902, home

economists have been striving to study and educate individuals in the areas of human development and family relations, nutrition and food management, clothing/apparel and textile products, consumer education and management, and housing and living environments (Hoeflin, Pence, Miller, & Weber, 1987).

Similar to the discipline's definition, the purpose of home economics has remained consistent throughout the years. The purpose is to improve the quality of life through research and the application of knowledge from all the sciences (Hoeflin et al., 1987). Achievement of this purpose must occur in a variety of societal settings; therefore, the techniques utilized to accomplish this purpose must incorporate present societal changes. Social economic changes are agents that should stimulate change in the home economic curriculum. Many changes have occurred over the years, and the curriculum has been evaluated, revised, and expanded by experts to address some of these changes. Increasing knowledge in behavioral sciences since the 1950's has greatly influenced home economics programs. For example, home economics courses examine clothing as it relates to human behavior rather than choosing the correct garment for one's features, or expanding nutrition concepts from what one should eat to include eating patterns, behaviors, disorders and the social and economic effects of malnutrition throughout the world. Family economics and consumer education have become more important in home

economics programs since the 1960's responding to the consumer movement and federal vocational legislation (East, 1980, p. 54-55). Each decade has witnessed shifts in the curriculum in response to changes. The challenge remains to enable individuals to live more effectively in their environment while fulfilling human relationships, especially as they relate to the family.

Various experts in the home economics profession have been critical of home economics education programs for the lack of relevance to current trends and social issues. Brown (1984) acknowledged the need to analyze home economics education in light of meeting the present needs of students.

We must be more analytic of contemporary society, calling upon levels and depths of analysis that go beyond Reader's Digest and best sellers in the culture industry to scholarly work. We need to develop an attitude and competence to seek out the implications of existing social conditions and to ask whether other alternatives would be better for those we seek to serve. (Brown, 1984, p. 54)

The continual emphasis on the traditional basic skills of cooking and sewing is one problem which may contribute to a lack of significant changes in the home economics curriculum. For example, the home economics curriculum guide in Texas suggests teaching six weeks of clothing and textiles with a majority of that time spent on developing one's sewing skills. With continuing strong emphasis on food preparation and clothing construction, other present day needs and demands of students during adolescence may go unfulfilled.

There are an estimated 45 million young people between the ages of 14-24 years who comprise about one-fifth of the total population in the United States (edited by Scanlon, 1980). All of these young people are experiencing the period of their lives referred to as adolescence - the transition period when one is in the process of leaving childhood and becoming an adult. Adolescence has typically been viewed by scholars as a period of storm and stress because of the multiple physical, mental, and emotional changes occurring. Compounded with this succession of changes, adolescents are confronted with many critical problems/issues. Researchers have identified several prevalent problems/issues confronting today's teens. Problems/issues identified include: alienation/loneliness (Gerler, 1986; Mijuskovic, 1986; Bronfenbrenner, 1986); alcohol (Thorner, 1986; Sherman, Lojkutz & Steckiewicz, 1984; McKenry, Tishler & Kelley, 1983); anorexia (Muuss, 1985; Gilbert & DeBlassie, 1984; Chng, 1983); bulimia (Maceyko & Nagelberg, 1985; VanThorre & Vogel, 1985; Carter & Duncan, 1984); drugs (Reagan, 1986; Thorne & DeBlassie, 1985); low self concept/esteem (Eskilson, Wiley, Muehlbauer & Dodder, 1986; Crosby, 1982; Ellis & Davis, 1982); runaways (Adams, Gullotta & Clancy, 1985; Spillane-Grieco, 1984; Young, Godfrey, Matthews & Adams, 1983); suicide (Lloyd, Armour & Smith, 1987; Strother, 1986; Steele, 1985); teenage pregnancy (Black & DeBlassie, 1985; Simkins, 1984); and teenage sexuality (Black & DeBlassie, 1985; Chilman, 1983). The successful coping or resolution of these issues is

directly related to the youth's success during adulthood.

### Purpose and Objectives

Since the discipline of home economics focuses on improving one's quality of life, the researcher's objective is to determine if the home economics curriculum attempts to improve the quality of life for youth by addressing the problems facing them. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth and the consumer and homemaking courses addressing these problems/issues.

The following research objectives were formulated in order to deal with the purpose of the study:

1. To ascertain demographic information about the population.
2. To identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth as perceived by the high school vocational home economics teachers.
3. To identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth as perceived by the high school students in consumer and homemaking courses.
4. To point out the teenager's problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each consumer and homemaking course(s) offered in the high school as perceived by the high school vocational home economics teachers.
5. To point out the teenagers' problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each consumer and homemaking course(s)

offered in the high school as perceived by the high school students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses.

6. To make recommendations for future home economics curriculum based upon the findings of the study.

#### Assumptions

The following assumptions existed for the study:

1. That participants would truthfully and objectively respond when completing the instrument.
2. That the participants were familiar with the vocational home economics curriculum.
3. That student participants provided a representative sample of students in each high school.
4. That the home economics curriculum is planned to meet the needs of today's youth.
5. That respondents would acknowledge the option to write in a perceived problem/issue affecting teens that was not included in the instrument.
6. That respondents conscientiously followed instructions given on completing the questionnaires.

#### Limitations

The following limitations were acknowledged by the

researcher:

1. The findings of this study are limited to vocational home economics programs in Region I, District XVI of the Texas Panhandle.
2. The results are based on the perceptions of the home economics educators and students attending home economics classes on the day the instrument was administered.
3. Due to the quantity of research conducted, research on the problems/issues facing the youth was limited to the past five years in the review of literature.
4. The study was limited by the size and representativeness of the selected sample and so is not generalizable to other locales.

#### Definition of Terms

Several terms had specific meaning for this study. The following definitions provide clarity:

1. Adolescent/Teen/Youth: the period of life between childhood and maturity, specifically 13-19 years of age (Guralnik, (Ed.), 1984).
2. Problem/Issue: an intricate, unsettled question that is ready for a decision (Guralnik, (Ed.), 1984).
3. Region I, District XVI: the entire Texas Panhandle including the following counties: Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro,



Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deafsmith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Palmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, and Wheeler (Texas Education Agency, personal communication, May 11, 1987).

4. Texas Vocational Home Economics Education: curriculum that is divided into two categories of homemaking taught in secondary schools -- Consumer and Homemaking Education and Occupational Home Economics Education (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984).
5. Consumer and Homemaking Education: a division of Texas Vocational Home Economics Education that is designed to prepare youth and adults for the occupation of homemaking. It includes the comprehensive and specialized course format (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984).
6. Alienation/Loneliness: lack of a sense of belongingness, a feeling of being cut off from family, friends, or work (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).
7. Anorexia: a complex eating disorder involving primarily an obsession with food and weight and characterized by a vigorous refusal to

- eat in pursuit of thinness (Chng, 1983).
8. Bulimia: a complex eating disorder marked by compulsive preoccupation with food, compulsive eating of extraordinary amounts of food, compulsive purging of food usually by vomiting or fasting, and a compulsive need to keep this behavior secret (Yudkovitz, 1983, p. 472).
  9. Self Concept/Esteem: the perceptions one has about her/himself in a number of areas -- physically, intellectually, and socially. Self esteem refers to the evaluations one places on those perceptions (Schillings, 1986).
  10. Runaways: person between the ages of 12 and 18 years who leaves home, stays away for more than 48 hours and knows that he/she will be missed (Spillane-Grieco, 1984, p. 64).
  11. Substance Abuse: the misuse of alcohol and illicit drugs.
  12. Suicide: the act of killing oneself intentionally (Guralnik, (Ed.), 1984).
  13. Teenage Pregnancy/Sexuality: the culmination of a sequence of transitions, including the initiation of sexual activity and becoming pregnant (Moore, Peterson, & Furstenberg, 1986, p. 777).
  14. Other: any issue/problem not identified on the

questionnaire which is perceived as an issue/problem facing the high school adolescents.

### Summary

Chapter I has introduced the reader to the study. It has been pointed out that societal issues should stimulate change in the home economics curriculum. It was suggested that present day needs and demands of students during adolescence may go unfulfilled if the home economics curriculum does not incorporate the critical issues affecting today's youth. The main objective of the study was to identify the top three problems/issues facing youth and the home economics courses addressing these problems/issues. Chapter II will discuss the review of literature. The methodology of the study will be found in Chapter III, and the results will be presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V is the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The review of literature was conducted to examine research pertinent to the objectives of this study. It was divided into two distinct sections:

- 1) Societal problems/issues affecting today's youth.
- 2) Extent to which secondary home economics curriculum guides address these problems/issues.

The former focused on the identification, description and extent of societal problems/issues affecting today's youth. Researchers indicated that the most prevalent problems facing youth included: anorexia nervosa/bulimia, alienation/loneliness, alcohol and drugs, low self concept/esteem, runaways, suicide, and teenage pregnancy/sexuality. A discussion on each of these problems/issues is presented in the first section. In the latter section, current Texas Vocational Home Economics Education curricula are examined. The goal of this review of literature was to acknowledge the extent of teenage problems/issues and to outline suggested home economics curriculum; so that ultimately, the

implications for the home economics curriculum to assist youth in facing these problems could be addressed.

#### Alienation/Loneliness

"To be alienated (or lonely) is to lack a sense of belonging, to feel cut off from family, friends, school, or work (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, p. 430)." Throughout the growing up process, many people may feel cut off from one or the other of these worlds; but usually not for very long and not from more than one world at a time. Mijuskovic (1986) suggested that there is more loneliness and alienation experienced among adolescents than any other age group. The search for one's identity is a developmental task that becomes critical to solve or address in adolescence, and this very search for an identity may leave many young people feeling alone and alienated (Gerler, 1986). In the early years of adolescence, this condition is compounded by a series of rapid and unpredictable changes. Physical changes are probably the most obvious.

Of equal importance to the physical changes are the social, intellectual, and emotional changes occurring at this time. Adolescents have a tendency to develop a kind of "delusion of uniqueness" as a result of all of these changes happening at once (cited in Gerler, 1986). Gerler (1986) further stated that unpredictability and unevenness of early adolescence account for the delusion of uniqueness and for the feelings of alienation that people often experience at this age. Special personality characteristics, such as low

self-esteem, strong feelings of self-pity, may also promote loneliness or alienation (Mijuskovic, 1986). Many reasons have been cited by researchers as possible explanations for the prevalence of alienation/loneliness in adolescents. Mijuskovic (1986) identified six predominate reasons: the sense of separation and alienation from parents; introduction of new concepts into the adolescent's world because of advanced cognitive development; tendency to think in terms of "possibilities" and choices; increase in one's sense of freedom because of physical growth; search for self identity; and the struggle for meaningfulness in the adolescent's existence. Adolescents live in a social "limbo" in that they enjoy neither the rights, privileges, and psychological supports of the child nor those of the adult.

Anyone who has worked with adolescents has observed their preoccupation with how they look and how their appearance and other characteristics compare with those of others their age. These preoccupations are probably related to this "delusion of uniqueness". They try to "belong" in a peer group, at the same time they try to achieve some degree of separation from their parents. According to Gerler (1986), it is when circumstances are less than ideal that this normal growth and separation can become painful and frustrating. Attempting to achieve a degree of separation from parents while trying to achieve a degree of belongingness in a peer group increases feelings of alienation.

Many researchers have held alienation directly or indirectly responsible for many of the adolescent problems: depression, attempted suicide, sexual promiscuity, eating disorders, and substance abuse (Calabrese & Schumer, 1986; Calabrese & Seldin, 1986; Gerler, 1986). Alienation research has yielded inconsistent results (Calabrese & Seldin, 1986); thus it was only inferred that adolescents who feel apart from the mainstream and who long to be accepted are more likely to unsuccessfully cope with or address the problems/issues prevalent in adolescence.

Calabrese and Seldin (1986) suggested that society take a closer look at its various institutions, their structures, policies, and practices in order to decrease alienation. Bronfenbrenner (1986) suggested the school as the best of all U.S. institutions to initiate and strengthen links that support children and adolescents. The delusion of uniqueness can be found in so many domains of adolescent functioning, it can best be prevented by educational approaches that address each of these issues.

#### Eating Disorders: Anorexia Nervosa/Bulimia

##### Anorexia Nervosa

Anorexia nervosa is an eating disorder which affects a large number of young, adolescent girls in the United States. Sometimes referred to as "the starvation sickness" or "weight phobia", anorexia nervosa is a baffling disorder. The distinguishing feature of anorexics, as opposed to other

very thin people, is that they intentionally starve themselves. Researchers estimated that 94% to 95% of all victims are females and that one girl in every 100 between the ages of 11 and 18 may fall victim to the disorder (Muuss, 1985; Chng, 1983). The disease seldom occurs in males and older people. It is generally believed that the incidence among males is greater than presently recognized. Research indicated that males become anorexic at an earlier age than females and relatively more anorexic males come from the working class (Chng, 1983).

Anorexia nervosa is a complex emotional disorder involving primarily an obsession with food and weight. It is characterized by a vigorous refusal to eat and a morbid fear of weight gain, even though the individual may be painfully emacipated (Chng, 1983). An anorexic adolescent may experience: excessive weight loss (approximately 25% of the body weight); use of various means for weight loss; weight phobia; body image disturbances; extreme moodiness; social isolation; and strong feelings of insecurity, inadequacy, and helplessness (Muuss, 1985; Gilbert & DeBlassie, 1984). Muuss (1985) outlined these behaviors and conditions exhibited by an anorexic: 1) very limited food intake and excessive concern with caloric intake and body weight; 2) preoccupation with thoughts about food; 3) weight reduction and preoccupation with body size; 4) medical conditions -- slowness of heart, loss of normal blood pressure, high probability of cardiac arrest, skin and hair abnormalities, low body temperature, and amenorrhea.



Anorexia nervosa is a serious condition. If the underlying cause is not successfully resolved, it can result in permanent brain damage or death. The seriousness is increased because there is no clear consensus about the nature and causes, nor is there agreement about its treatment. Several researchers have suggested various theories to try to explain the causation of this eating disorder:

- 1) Social Theory - stated that society relays contradicting messages about food and weight control. People are socialized to believe that being fit and thin are necessary characteristics of a "model person" or "good person"; yet society seems to be obsessed with food. These conflicting messages cause this eating disorder (Muuss, 1985; Chng, 1983).
- 2) Psychosexual Theory - stated that this eating disorder may be a result of psychosexual problems; specifically trying to avoid sexual maturity (Muuss, 1985).
- 3) Family Systems Theory - stated that the conflict occurs as a direct result of the anorexic's interaction with his/her family (Gilbert & DeBlasie, 1984). These family characteristics included conflict avoidance, overprotective; rigid and strong feelings of allegiance (Muuss, 1985;

Gilbert & DeBlassie, 1984). The entanglement of family members with each other interferes with the adolescent's identity formation.

- 4) Biological Theory - stated that the disturbance of the hypothalamus, the master control for all glandular secretion, may somehow be malfunctioning causing the anorexia nervosa. Hypothalamus damage has been associated with lab animals becoming anorexic (cited in Muuss, 1985).
- 5) Psychobiologic Regression Hypothesis - stated that once body weight drops below a critical level, the developmental changes of puberty are reversed. Therefore, anorexia produces a regression to an earlier stage of development which may be an expression of the inability to cope with the stress and demands of adolescence. (cited in Muuss, 1985)

Anorexia nervosa may be viewed in many different lights. Anorexic behavior can be seen as another mechanism for coping with the full force of adolescence (Chng, 1983) and may very likely be a response to the emotional stresses of adolescence. Given the principle that it is better to prevent an illness than to cure it, time and energy should be devoted to promote better understanding of the risks factors involved in anorexia nervosa. Timely intervention

may prevent the problem or minimize its severity.

### Bulimia

Bulimia nervosa, bulimia, and bulimarexia are words attempting to label similar eating behaviors. The word "bulimia" means gorging or insatiable appetite. The young women (primarily) who exhibit the syndrome called "bulimia" have an extreme eating disorder - a disorder marked by a compulsive:

- 1) preoccupation with food;
  - 2) eating of extraordinary amounts of food;
  - 3) purging of food usually by vomiting or fasting;
  - 4) concern about weight; and
  - 5) need to keep this behavior secret.
- (Yudkovitz, 1983, p. 472)

Hodges et al. (1985) described bulimics as being "perfectionists with behavior characterized as ritualistic, obsessive, and compulsive but with feelings of low self-esteem" (p. 20).

Bulimia characteristically begins in the teen years, usually with girls. Research by VanThorre and Vogel (1985) and Carter and Duncan (1984) concluded that there is a bulimic population at the high school level which includes females, ages 14-18. Maceyko and Nagelberg (1985) reported that 7% of the high school population sampled were bulimic. Johnson, Lewis, Love, Lewis, and Stuckey's (1984) findings were remarkably similar with 8% of the high school population showing signs of being bulimic. Maceyko and Nagelberg (1985) found that 39.8% of the males and 38.9% of the females reported binge eating at least once each week.

But Nagelberg (1985) also found that men constitute a very low percentage (5-10%) of the bulimic population. Due to the guilt and secrecy which often accompany bingeing and purging, however, the actual prevalence of this disorder may be significantly higher.

Several physiological complications result from bulimia including: dehydration and electrolyte imbalance, increased incidence of muscle weakness, irregular heartbeat, ulcers, seizures, lethargy, chronic indigestion, facial puffiness, bloodshot eyes, hernias caused by the force of the gagging reflex, stomach ruptures from being overloaded, and tooth decay because of the large amount of sweets consumed during the binge episode and the acid damage during the purging episode (Hodges, Hertzler, & Holder, 1985; Yudkovitz, 1983). Bulimics usually maintain normal weight, seldom falling below 15 percent of their ideal body weight because caloric absorption is decreased only slightly -- 12 percent of the total calories consumed.

The causes of bulimic syndrome are still a matter of speculation. Because of the episodic, uncontrollable nature of the disorder, physiologists and neurologists have suggested that some "neurophysiological basis exists and that the disorder may be a variant of psychomotor epilepsy" (Yudkovitz, 1983, p. 473). Real or imagined male rejection, faulty parent-child relationships, conflicts about sexuality and sex roles are all possible links to the initial binge eating in bulimic females (Yudkovitz, 1983). Difficulty with coping is noted in social and sexual unease; problems

with studies or work; fear of rejection and loneliness; lack of assertiveness; feelings of inferiority about appearance, intellectual ability, and acceptable behavior; and weak adjustments in extended family and marital relationships (Hodges et al., 1985; Maceyko & Nagelberg, 1985). Bulimics often experience feelings of having little mastery over their destiny.

These moods and feelings result in a lack of appropriate coping skills and an inability to handle emotions. Stress caused by leaving home, entering a new school, breaking up with a boyfriend, or confronting new experiences often precipitates episodes of bulimia. Eating may become a major coping skill and a means to deal with unpleasant feelings. Bulimia often follows the stress of a long period of severely restricted dieting (Hodges et al., 1985; Johnson et al., 1984).

Bulimia is difficult to treat because only a small proportion of bulimics actually seek help for their problem (Maceyko & Nagelberg, 1985). It may prove useful to provide educational and preventive programs (stress on proper nutrition by family and professionals) in the high schools to help alleviate the problem among adolescents.

#### Runaways

A runaway is described as a "person between the ages of 12 and 18 years who leaves home, stays away for more than 48 hours and knows that he/she will be missed" (Spillane-Grieco, 1984, p. 64). The difference between runaways and

throwaways should be noted: throwaways are youths who are told to leave or are abandoned by their parents. There are delinquent and nondelinquent adolescent runaways. This review of literature focuses on nondelinquent runaways.

Nationally, more than one-half million adolescents leave home yearly (Adams, Gullotta & Clancy, 1985). Typically these youths are referred to as runaways. Survey studies using probabilistic sampling have estimated that "one out of every eight adolescents will run away from home at least once before his or her 18th birthday" (Young, Godfrey, Matthews & Adams, 1983, p. 275). These authors agreed that the majority of runaways are 16 years of age or younger with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls running away each year. While on the run, youths are exposed to situations of potential exploitation and place themselves at risk for completing several normal developmental tasks of adolescence.

Adolescents run away for multiple reasons. Running away is a response to an unhealthy family, work or school situation (cited in Young et al., 1983). The most consistently reported factor underlying runaway behavior is poor parent-child relationships which is reflected in conflict (Loeb, Burke & Boglarsky, 1986; Adams et al., 1985; Spillane-Grieco, 1984; Young et al., 1983). The parent-child relationship is apparently an extremely influential factor relative to runaway behavior. Adams et al. (1985) and Young et al. (1983) maintained that poor teacher-student relations and school problems are causal factors behind

adolescents leaving home. Running away may be viewed as an expression of independence or a growing disillusionment with existing societal/parental values. Further, it was reported that runaways are more likely to come from either single parent or very large families. A large number of runaways come from families where all siblings are of the opposite sex which may place these youth into an isolated and alienated home situation. Some are severely and repeatedly abused and see no alternative but to leave. Physical abuse and/or neglect have been reported in many, but not all runaway cases. There is a tendency for throwaways to identify abuse more often as the main reason for leaving home than runaways (Adams et al., 1985; Young et al., 1983). Personal behavior patterns such as dress, sexuality, or drug use were rated among the least important reasons (Loeb et al., 1986). The primary reasons for running away included excessive parental control on issues related to friends, schooling, grooming and behavior (Loeb et al., 1986).

Many, but not all, adolescents are involved in delinquent acts before, during, and after running away. "Troubled," "unhappy" or "confused" may best describe the average runaway according to Young et al. (1983, p. 277). Substance abuse was common among runaways prior to and during the runaway event. Further, runaways often sell drugs to support themselves while on the run. In addition, both male and female runaways may, of necessity, come to "sell sex for favors". The academic and vocational potential of most runaway youths is very low because most

runaway youths are still in school and run during the school year; many times never returning.

Although running away is not a new phenomenon in the United States, it has recently grown to crisis proportions and thus has become a significant social issue. A recent twelve-year follow-up study of runaway children (cited in Loeb et al., 1986) reported that the problems among runaways, particularly in interpersonal relationships, were continuing into adulthood. If the parent-child difficulties, presented earlier in this paper, are ever to be overcome and not merely repeated with the next generation, intervention of some sort is essential.

#### Self-Concept

Self-concept development may be as much of a process of discovery as a process of development. According to Crosby (1982), the primary concern or core of self-concept development is the uncovering and realizing of human potential. Self-concept is a broad generic term which encompasses many smaller constructs, including self esteem. Crosby (1982) delineated three possible positions of self-concept: how one perceives him/herself, how one perceives others perceiving him/her, and how one really is. Similarly, Gecas and Schwalbe (1986) identified the self as a social product, emerging out of symbolic interaction and the prerequisite cognitive capacity for role-taking, which enables one to see him/herself as (one imagines) others see him/her. Schilling (1986) defined self-concept as the



perceptions one has of him/herself in a number of areas -- how one perceive ourselves physically, intellectually, socially. In addition, she defined self-esteem as the evaluations one places on those perceptions. Gecas and Schwalbe (1986) agreed by stating that self-esteem is "the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, successful, significant, and worthy" (p. 38). Ellis & Davis (1982) stated that the term "self" is used to represent the psychological and physical totality of the person. Furthermore, the self-system was the organization and integration of all experiences into the self, whether or not the individual was aware of that integration. Whatever the definition, Crosby (1982) stated that the development of self-concept will aid and direct a student's strivings in a constructive manner throughout the life cycle.

Historically, self-concept has been one of the major methods by which researchers have attempted to understand adolescence. Self-concept may be viewed as a form of cognition about the self (Ellis & Davis, 1982). This cognition of self goes through many stages during the adolescent years. According to Ellis and Davis (1982), the internal structure of the self concept of a 14 year old appeared to be relatively stable. The adolescent who was 14 years of age was described as having a new contentment and relaxation in life style. During this stabilized period,

the 14 year old was actively involved in the process of consolidating the gains he/she had made at previous times. The 15 year old adolescent's self concept appeared similar in structure to that of the 14 year old's self concept. The adolescent at 15 was described as "thoughtful, quiet and serious" (Ellis & Davis, 1982). Further, the 15 year old was "increasing in self awareness, with a rising spirit of independence, and loyalty to groups at home, school, and in the community" (Ellis & Davis, 1982, p. 216). At 16 years of age, there appeared to be a change in the structure of the adolescent's self-concept. The 16 year old appeared to experience a major reorganization of the self concept structure - which produced instability and changes in the total self-concept. Sixteen year olds reported marked distortions and conflicts about their perceptions of themselves as well as the external environments. As the adolescents reach 17-18 years of age, a change in the structure of self concept resulted in a more independent, internally evaluated self concept.

The changes in self concept across the adolescent years appeared to represent an expansion of awareness of the self and the world. As adolescents mature, they have the cognitive ability to consider the consequences of their actions. As children develop cognitively, they can conceptualize their impact on others and the effects reflected on themselves. Adolescents appear to react in a broader sense to values and social standards, while attempting to accept themselves as persons of worth,

depending on which social valuing agent was chosen. The moodiness experienced in adolescence may not be only a reaction to physiological change, but a reaction to the changes and reconstruction of the self concept at different ages across adolescence.

Kaplan (1982) (cited in Eskilson, Wiley, Muehlbauer & Dodder, 1986) pointed to a connection between self-attitudes and deviant behavior. These researchers reported that negative self attitudes (low self-esteem) are thought to arise from a) self-perceptions that one's behavior or attributes do not meet personal standards; b) self-perceptions that important others do not positively (and may in fact negatively) value one's self; and c) one's absence of normatively acceptable coping mechanisms which could defuse the impact of self-perceptions of failure or of rejection by others. Kaplan argued that all adolescents are motivated to achieve a positive self-evaluation. Thus, adolescents whose self-esteem is not sufficiently nourished in conventional groups are likely to reject conventional norms and adopt deviant behaviors as a means of restoring their derogated self-image. The specific deviant behavior adopted depended upon the alternatives available and the individual's assessment that the behavior would be likely to lead to self-enhancement.

Stephens (1982) identified six different ways in which the self is used as an important variable in explaining deviant behavior, specifically drug abuse:

- 1) as a defense mechanism against a diminished

- self concept;
- 2) as the result of an inability to perform as expected;
  - 3) as the result of labeling by society;
  - 4) as a means of affirming a self-concept;
  - 5) as a way to determine what one's self-definition is; and
  - 6) as the result of changes in self-definition that are created by the deviant behavior, drug use patterns. (p. 215)

Stephens (1982) referred to drug abuse to support his point. There is literature which suggested that drug abuse is sought by a person specifically to affirm or validate a self-concept. That is, drugs are used because such use is consonant with a person's view of him-or herself (Stephens, 1982). Many adolescents, in the quest for one's identity, may use drugs as a way of identifying with a group or as part of a quest for one's identity. Theories stress the importance of self as either an independent or intervening variable in the explanation of drug abuse (Stephens, 1982).

Eskilson et al. (1986) found that peer acceptance is crucial for the maintenance of positive self esteem. Their data were consistent with the many studies that demonstrated the connection between peer pressure and non-normative behavior. Students under considerable pressure from their friends to commit deviate acts are far more likely to admit such behavior. Under high levels of perceived parental pressure, they found two distinct patterns of the deviance/self-esteem relationship: alcohol and drug use was associated with no apparent decrease in self-esteem, but low self-esteem was associated with vandalism. It is intriguing to speculate why vandalism, but not substance abuse, was

associated with low self-esteem. Consumption of alcohol and drugs, even if one felt an inability to meet goals, is nevertheless peer-condoned. The use of such substances actually may enhance status among peer, while alleviating feelings of failure. Since vandalism neither eases awareness of failure nor is as likely to gain peer approval, it is not surprising that youths reporting vandalism do not get relief from their negative self-feelings. Drinking, possibly drug use, may be seen by the young as "adult" behaviors -- a means of rehearsing for the adult role. Property damage, in contrast, directly assaults symbolic representations of adult power, and may be a way adolescents lash out at a world whose apparently unmeetable standards they feel unable to achieve (Eskilson et al., 1986). A low self-concept/esteem may be directly or indirectly related to deviant behaviors in adolescents.

Luftig (1983) hypothesized that the self-concept is a circular force that influences both how experiences are perceived and whether new experiences will be attempted. It determines how experiences are interpreted and provides sets of expectancies. Self-concept has been correlated with a variety of educational and psychological variables. For example, self-concept is positively related to school achievement among intermediate and secondary school pupils (cited in Luftig, 1983). Self concept has been shown to be related to anxiety level, locus of control, body build, and language development and usage (cited in Luftig, 1983). He stated:

The robustness of the relationship between self-concept and schooling has led educators to become aware not only of the effects of school on cognitive functioning but also effects on affective development. (Luftig, 1983, p. 252)

Leonardson (1986) identified four variables that were found to make a unique (and positive) contribution to self esteem: GPA, health, home life, and active involvement in extracurricular activities. He pointed out that he was not making a claim to a cause-and-effect relationship between self-concept and the variables mentioned, his research results suggested that improvement in self-esteem is definitely plausible. It is important for educators to acknowledge the critical goal of enhancing self-concept through schooling.

#### Substance Abuse: Alcohol and Drugs

The adolescent stage of development involves many changes; changes which produce stress. Adolescents are forced to cope with these changes and their related stresses in a variety of ways. Yet a growing minority of adolescents turn to self-destructive behaviors as ways of managing the change and disruption characteristic of this phase of development (McKenry, Tishler & Kelley, 1983). Virtually all studies agree that by the end of adolescence, the vast majority of young people have tried alcohol - the most frequently used drug (Thorner, 1986; Sherman, Lojkutz & Steckiewicz, 1984; McKenry et al., 1983). Indications are that 80%-90% of all adolescents have had some experience

with alcohol; with 25% of the U.S. population between 13 and 18 years of age being categorized as "problem drinkers" (Thorner, 1986; Sherman et al., 1984; McKenry et al., 1983). Thorner (1986) reported that the three major drugs used by students are in the following order: alcohol, 79%; tobacco, 43%; marijuana, 42% (p.43). Alcohol has been, and continues to be, the major drug abused by students. Use of either of the two major licit drugs, alcohol and cigarettes, remains more widespread than use of any of the illicit drugs. About two thirds of all seniors surveyed reported use of some illicit drug at some time in their lives, marijuana is by far the most widely used (Thorne and DeBlassie, 1985). The use of drugs by young people may be considered one of the most serious problems the world faces today. Drug addiction is epidemic among teenagers; one of every six teenagers suffers from a severe addictive problem (Thorne & DeBlassie, 1985). "Drugs are destroying the minds and bodies of our children and unless we can change the situation, we are in danger of losing part of an entire generation" (Reagan, 1986, p. 39).

Drugs serve a variety of functions for different individuals. Thorne and DeBlassie (1985) cited more specific motivations for use included the positive feelings and reduced pain that adolescent users may experience; a rationalization for openly acting out behaviors that would otherwise be socially unacceptable; and seeking status, identity, or companionship. Drug use may be a means of expressing hostility, or understanding consciousness and

perceiving deeper truths, or expressing civil disobedience (Thorne & DeBlassie, 1985, p. 335). Five reasons identified by Thorner (1986) were:

- 1) to ease anxiety caused by stress;
- 2) to ease into personal and social difficulties;
- 3) depression;
- 4) loneliness; and
- 5) feelings of worthlessness. (p. 44)

Initial experimentation with most illicit drugs occurs during the final three years of high school. Thorne and DeBlassie (1985) identified two important factors contributing to the beginning use of illicit drugs by adolescents: opportunity and perceived availability of drugs. Teenagers with strong social bonds to home and school are not as likely to be substance users as those with weaker bonds. Strong peer bonds seem to enhance use. Teens appear to be influenced by the example of older family members (Pickens, 1985; Sheppard, Wright & Goodstadt, 1985).

Children, parents, teachers, and the general public need to become more knowledgeable about the problem. Primarily, the two ways of dealing with the drug problem are: drug education programs and the use of the law as a deterrent. Thorner (1986) noted that the deterrent effect of law and enforcement does not seem in the long run to be effective in the reduction of drinking and driving. Several researchers (Buckalew & Daly, 1986; Thorner, 1986) pointed out that the educational system constitutes an appropriate vehicle for provision of drug education programs. However, they acknowledged the problems plaguing implementation and



operation of the programs: 1) determination of the discipline which will assume responsibility for program operation, 2) guidelines for training responsible persons, and 3) agreement on what should constitute the content and strategy of a drug education program (Buckalew & Daly, 1986).

Drug education is one of the few interventions which is both preventive and inexpensive, and the school is one of the few institutions with a formative influence on children prior to when drugs become easily accessible and use begins. Buckalew and Daly (1986) suggested that effective drug education programs need to offer unbiased and factual information along with skills development involving coping, decision-making, and self-concept. The objective of drug education should be an increase in the level of knowledge and awareness about the risk/benefit ratios of drugs so that meaningful comparisons between drugs can be made plus a factual approach to counter the magic, mysticism, and emotionalism usually associated with describing the effects of drugs (Buckalew & Daly, 1986). A factual and unbiased presentation of information is necessary for the consumer who hopefully will integrate this knowledge into decision-making. Renfro (1984) reported that young people who become chemically dependent often lack problem-solving techniques or coping mechanisms. Adolescents have a tendency to have "tunnel" vision and think that drugs are the only solution to their problems. It is thought that if students do not generally make responsible decisions in choosing between

alternative forms of behavior, it would appear unlikely that they would somehow make a responsible choice in regard to their use of alcohol and other drugs. Cummings (1979) (cited in Thorne & DeBlassie, 1986; Shepperd et al., 1985) supported the concept that substance abuse is something for which the individual can take responsibility. Cummings further stated that by taking responsibility for one's actions, one could avoid any feelings of helplessness and despair. What is known about prevention and human behavior strongly indicated educating youth in skills which enhance healthy decision-making is the direction for education to take (Sherman et al., 1984).

According to Pickens (1985), giving young people information about drugs could have, as far as drug-using behavior is concerned, three results:

- 1) There may be no effect at all, that is, drug users do not increase or decrease their use, and non-users exposed to drug education become users at much the same rate as non-users who are not recipients of this information.
- 2) There may be a clear effect on behavior - either a reduction in drug use, or an increase.
- 3) There may be a mixed result, that is, some students increase use while others decrease their use, or the use of some drugs increase while other drugs become less popular. (p. 35)

Many reasons for a lack of emphasis on alcohol and other drugs use in the educational system have been projected. Sherman et al. (1984) identified four prevalent reasons:

- 1) The lack of knowledge of the effects

of alcohol and drugs makes administrators, parents, and teachers uncomfortable in discussing the issue which increases the possibility of denial that any problem exists.

- 2) The general stigma associated with alcohol and other drug misuse may lead some principals to feel that merely providing education in regard to the use of alcohol and other drugs, infers that their students have alcohol and other drug related problems, which in turn reflects upon their administrative capabilities.
- 3) The educational materials available within school systems in regard to drug education have stressed "alcoholism" education and have not addressed the problems which face adolescents.
- 4) Who is to provide such education? If teachers are to be the individuals to provide this education, they need education in the presentation of alcohol and other drug education activities.

At this time, the effects of drug information on behavior are best regarded as unpredictable (Pickens, 1985). An increase in drug use may be as probable an outcome as a decrease: mixed results may be more likely than either a

purely negative or positive outcome. Banishing information from drug education programs completely is, however, not a viable proposal since information about drugs, of varying degrees of accuracy and completeness, will always be available to young people from their peers, the media, or other sources.

The problems facing the alcohol and drug abuse field are enormous. However, society would be better able to deal with these problems if everyone's energies were cooperatively utilized rather than significantly consumed through fighting one another (Sherman et al., 1984).

#### Suicide

Suicide in the United States is reported by some as the third leading cause of death among adolescents, exceeded only by accidents and homicides (Strother, 1986). Others reported the incidence has exceeded homicides and risen to the number two position (Lloyd, Armour & Smith, 1987; Steele, 1985). Yet, these statistics probably underestimated the frequency of suicide because of misreporting and underreporting as the result of cultural taboos related to the act. As many as 25% to 50% of adolescent suicides may be disguised or not reported for various reasons (Simons & Murphy, 1985). It is fairly certain that although official statistics may underestimate the actual incidence of suicides; they represent the minimum number that occur (McIntosh & Jewell, 1986). During the past two decades, suicides have increased 250% among females

age 15-24 and 300% among males in this age group (cited in Simons & Murphy, 1985). Simons and Murphy (1985) reported that young people accounted for 20% of all male suicides and 14% of all female suicides in the 1980s. The rising suicide rate among young people has caused a growing concern among parents, teachers, fellow students, and mental health professionals. These concerns were reflected in numerous articles currently appearing in the popular press and scientific literature. Even though the suicide rate for those aged 20-29 is higher than that for the teenagers, the fact that the suicide rate for those aged 15-19 has more than tripled over the last 30 years is alarming (Smith & Crawford, 1986).

Adolescents who attempt suicide tend to be female, by a ratio of 4:1; more than 90% try to kill themselves by ingesting drugs; and they do not want to die (Strother, 1986). Strother continued by stating that adolescents who succeed in killing themselves tend to be male, by a ratio of 3:1; two-thirds of them kill themselves with guns; and most of them are serious about seeking death. McIntosh and Jewell (1986) observed that suicide attempts have increased more among males than females in recent years because males used lethal methods in higher proportions. In reality, four out of five people who kill themselves have made previous attempts: 12% of those who attempt suicide will do so again and succeed within two years (Martin & Dixon, 1986). Suicide is sometimes called the leading cause of UNNECESSARY death. Attempted suicide (nonfatal) rates are probably at

least 10 times higher (some say even 100 times than completed suicide rates in most groups) (Maris, 1985). This would mean at least 50,000 nonfatal suicide attempts among 15-24 years old occur each year.

Adolescence can be the most "roller-coaster" time of life. This period of growth -- mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially -- is characterized by rapid changes. It is the most intense phase of development, bringing more changes than at any other time of life (Ray & Johnson, 1983). Actually, it is a time when too many changes are taking place too fast for some youths to cope. One of the biggest changes for adolescence is shedding the relatively comfortable role of child for that of a responsible adult. This can be a very lonely time. There are physical changes -- including a new awakening of sexuality, emotional highs and lows, even environmental changes such as a shift from junior high school to senior high school, or high school to college or the work force (Hals, 1985). Adolescence is a time of mixed messages internally and externally. Teachers, parents, friends, and the media are all pulling at the adolescent. Career goals, sexual relationships and expectations, and decisions concerning future marriage and children are among the areas of life causing fear, doubt, and confusion. Adolescence is a time of mood swings, depression, loneliness, anger, fear, rage, guilt, a sense of worthlessness, and other negative emotions, balanced by positive firsts, new experiences, new relationships, new independence, accomplishments, and

pleasures. Momentary suicidal feelings or thought are not uncommon among teenagers. A study conducted by Smith and Crawford (1986) in Kansas suggested that suicide was indeed a personal concern of most high school students and a serious concern for 1 out of 4 of their high school students. According to Smith and Crawford (1986), the best estimate (using populations data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984) of the number of American students approximately of high school age who have attempted suicide is between 1,567,272 and 2,425,540. It appeared that, at least among teenagers, approximately 90% of the attempters do not request medical assistance.

The causes of adolescent suicide are very complex and numerous. Johnson (1985) pointed out that the causes of adolescent suicide may lie in adolescence itself. Suicidal teenagers are typically characterized by depression. Depression is a major factor in the underlying dynamics of the adolescent suicidal personality. As adolescents with low self-esteem compare themselves to their happy, well-adjusted peers, they become more acutely aware of the problems which make them feel even more depressed and of less worth (Martin & Dixon, 1986). Everyone gets depressed; depressions are normal feelings. However, depression can be deadly when combined with the deterioration of relationships with peers and family. Strother (1986) pointed out that symptoms of depression (e.g., poor appetite, weight loss, changes in sleeping patterns, difficulty in concentrating, academic problems, self-deprecatory thoughts) may signal the

possibility of a suicide attempt. Simons and Murphy (1985) suggested that acting out by means of delinquency, sexual promiscuity, alcohol, and drugs is a manifestation of depression in adolescence. Depression in adolescence may stem from a wide range of situations involving social interactions such as failure, loss of love object, and rejection. It can also be caused by biochemical imbalances in the brain (Ray & Johnson, 1983). Regardless of the nature, depression remains the leading cause of adolescent suicide.

Loss of a parent has a very damaging influence on the adolescent. Many adolescents do not adjust to the loss of a parent. The ability to adjust seems to depend on the nature of the loss (death, divorce, desertion), the developmental stage of the youth at the time of loss, ego strength, the degree of independence already achieved, and the remaining support system within the family (Ray & Johnson, 1983). Alienation of an adolescent from the family unit and society is considered another major cause of suicides in adolescence (Martin & Dixon, 1986; Ray & Johnson, 1983). Lack of communication among family members leads to increased family alienation. High or low expectations by the parents may also alienate the adolescent. Lack of family concern and support were also associated with suicide ideation (Simons & Murphy, 1985). Emotional problems were related to ideation of suicide, with parental support having a strong impact on the extent of emotional problems.

Simons and Murphy (1985) outlined four reasons for



suicide attempts: confusion about one's identity; the belief that suicide will transform the painful situation and create a problem-free life; the inability to cope with the increased mobility and continuous change occurring in the U.S.; and a feeling of hopelessness. McBrien (1983) cited problems with the opposite sex and school problems as reasons for suicide attempts.

In addition, low self-esteem and feelings of inferiority typified several suicide attempters (cited in Simons & Murphy, 1985). Abuse of alcohol and drugs and modeling their suicides after other suicides may be reasons for suicide (Maris, 1985). Maris (1985) stated that both parents working, stress, high unemployment rates and scarce jobs, sex role confusion, competition in schools, "the bomb", etc. could all be causes of the rise of adolescent suicide rates. The various causes of adolescents suicides are as unique as the individual who attempts or completes a suicide.

Those young people most at risk for suicide have probably given prior warning, through words or behavior, that suicide is a possibility (Strother, 1986). Researchers revealed that there are four broad areas identified as forewarnings of suicide (McBrien, 1983; Ray & Johnson, 1983):

- 1) verbal statements such as, "I want to die";
- 2) behavioral clues, the most serious being previous attempts or writing a will;
- 3) situational clues, with family and relationship problems being most common; and
- 4) syndromatic clues, with the three develop-

mental stages of the syndrome being a) history of previous problems, b) additional problems associated with adolescence, and c) a recent intense period of problems with significant social relationships (depression and loss common among this group). (McBrien, 1983, p. 76).

The prevention of adolescent suicide is a relatively new practice because the problem of death among the young has been growing to significant numbers only in the last 20 years. People in regular contact with suicidal young people are normally the first to detect a potential case. These people could include parents, friends, teachers, and ministers. Because parents and friends are often closely involved with the causes of adolescent suicide, they are not as objective as a teacher or counselor (McBrien, 1983). The teacher and counselor, both of whom work with the youth, should be aware of the changing behavior patterns that may be clues to potential suicides. When a teacher becomes aware of warning signals from a student, the most critical preventive measure is listening (cited in McBrien, 1983). The threat should be taken seriously and a sense of trust developed. If the case calls for intervention, the teacher can serve as a adviser in getting professional help. Candid and open discussion of suicide with students is a significant aspect of death education and helps dispel myths surrounding suicide. Educators need not fear adolescent suicide education because discussion of suicide will not make depressed students more inclined toward suicide; typically, they are emotionally relieved (Johnson, 1985). In fact, communication may actually help to modify the

likelihood of an attempt. Students need to know why people attempt suicide, what behaviors are exhibited, and how they can help (Hals, 1985). Since many young people have never really lived, any suicide is a waste. Therefore, it is critical for home economists to assist adolescents in developing life skills, which may include coping with suicidal ideations.

### Teenage Pregnancy/Sexuality

Adolescent sexuality includes physical characteristics and capacities for specific sex behaviors, together with social-psychological learning that shapes values, norms, and attitudes about these behaviors during adolescence (Chilman, 1983). A birth, to an adolescent, is the culmination of a sequence of transitions, including the initiation of sexual activity, becoming pregnant, and resolving the pregnancy in a live birth (Moore, Peterson & Furstenberg, 1986, p. 777). Since teenage sexuality and pregnancy are very much intertwined, this review of literature was an exploration of these two topics in relation to each other.

American teenagers exhibit an increased involvement in sexual intercourse and a rapid attitude change concerning premarital sexual activity, pregnancy, and contraception. Twelve million teenagers are sexually active in the United States today, approximately seven million male and five million female adolescents (cited in Black & DeBlassie, 1985). About 50% of all teenagers have sexual intercourse before graduating from high school (Texas Education Agency

(TEA), 1987). Over one million of these sexually active adolescent girls get pregnant each year, which is the equivalent of one in every ten in the United States below the age of twenty (cited in Black & DeBlasie, 1985). Of these teenage pregnancies, three out of four are unintended (Simkins, 1984). Forty-seven thousand adolescents gave birth in Texas in 1985, accounting for 15% of all live birth. Of these nearly 47,000 births, 26% were second or subsequent births (TEA, 1987).

Research revealed that for the last 20 years the overall birthrate has declined for teenagers, but the percentage of births to younger teenagers has increased. From 1957-1975, the number of births to females aged 10-14 almost doubled from 6,960 to 12,642 (Riker & Riker, 1981). Even though teenage pregnancy is still increasing, the birth rate has decreased. One possible explanation for the decrease in teenage birthrates is the increase in the use of abortion to terminate teenage pregnancy. Approximately one-third of all pregnant teens utilize abortion as a means of dealing with pregnancy (Maslach & Kerr, 1984). According to National Center for Health Statistics (1980), the abortion rate for females under 15 years of age was five times that of females age 15-19 (TEA, 1987). Teenage pregnancy is clearly an issue of national, state, and local concern.

Relative to teenage pregnancy, an obvious question to ask is, "Why are so many teenagers becoming pregnant?". Initially, the teenager believes that she is too young to get pregnant, that she doesn't have sex often enough to

become pregnant, or that she won't become pregnant if she only has sex at a certain time of the month (Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), 1980). These beliefs were formulated on the basis of ignorance/misunderstanding concerning sexual matters. There were strong indications that many teenagers are either uninformed or misinformed about their own bodies, reproductive functions, and contraceptive methods. The major source of sex information for adolescents is their peers and the level of accuracy is low (Simkins, 1984).

Not only has there been a significant increase in sexual activity, but the majority of teenagers still engage in unprotected sex or else use contraceptives only periodically (Black & DeBlassie, 1985; Simkins, 1984). The failure to use contraceptives is in part due to ignorance of the existence of such techniques and how to make effective use of them.

Another possible contributing factor is various societal influences. Not so long ago, a boy was highly motivated not to get a girl pregnant. There was a strongly accepted social belief that one should control sexual desire in anticipation of a happy and permanent marriage and parenthood which helped adolescents of the past to refrain from early sexual activity.

Today adolescents are receiving conflicting messages concerning their sexual behavior. Emerging values such as love, freedom, interpersonal honesty, open communication, self-actualization, short-term commitments, and non-

exploitation (Black & DeBlasie, 1985) are currently encouraged by both the media and the general public. These values often conflict with the cultural values transmitted by parents regarding sexual behavior. Strouse and Fabes (1985) suggested that one of the strongest informal sources of sex education is the media. Other studies have found that television is regarded as at least second in importance to parents as a source of sexual influence. Strouse and Fabes (1985) stated that the youth of America have little opportunity to observe adult sexual behavior, and hence, may be forced to depend upon the mass media as a source of sexual learning. Communication of parental values is one of the primary means by which parents socialize their children. Strouse and Fabes (1985) recently discovered that adolescents in their study perceived parents as models of sexuality half as often as they perceived them to be models of behavior in general. Amann-Gainotti (1986) reported that American parents play a very small role in the transmission of sex information to their children. However, it was also suggested that parental involvement can either directly or indirectly serve as a source of sexual socialization, and that by default, many parents are yielding to the more accessible influence of the mass media, especially entertainment television (Strouse & Fabes, 1985). Moore et al. (1986) found that the daughters of parents with traditional attitudes and effective communication practices were less likely to have had intercourse, therefore, a combination of both traditional attitudes and effective

communication practices may be required to produce low rates of sexual activity among adolescents.

The earlier sexual activity may be influenced by an increasingly earlier onset of puberty. There is a decline in the age of the menarche. The average age of menarche has been dropping about four months per decade for the past century and has now stabilized at 12 years, 9.5 months (Simkins, 1984). However, there is evidence that adolescents are not developing at a faster rate cognitively. Young people may "look" like adults, but their thinking process has not reached adult developmental levels. Strouse and Fabes (1985) stated that many young teens may be too cognitively immature to engage in the logical, premeditated thought processes necessary to assume the desired level of responsibility for their sexual behaviors. According to Proctor (1986), few teens look much beyond a few weeks or months into their future. Chilman (1983) identified a relevant finding reported by Adelson which stated that younger adolescents rarely reason logically in cost/benefit terms regarding a course of action; they are more likely to make a choice arbitrarily, based largely on impulse. In addition, they lean toward simplistic idealism and move toward greater pragmatism and realism as they become older. Pestrak and Martin (1985) pointed out that many adolescents have not yet identified their own individuality. Consequently, they are unable to cope effectively with various aspects of a mate relationship because they are unable to identify their own individuality much less the

individuality of another.

Personal attitudes/needs are identified by many researchers as factors contributing to teenage pregnancy. The total life situation of the youth indicated the risk to have a premarital pregnancy. According to Kantner (1983), a girl reared under unstable family conditions, with low educated parents, and less religious orientation has a higher risk of premarital pregnancy than someone who was reared in an opposite situation. Black and DeBlassie (1985) reported that some girls become pregnant in the hope of receiving more attention from family and/or friends. A girl may wish to produce a highly valued companion or pet for herself; someone dependent upon her who made it safe for her to receive and return love. The pregnancy may occur as a result of a girl's sexual bargaining as she tries to obtain a commitment of affection and exclusivity from her partner in exchange for sexual favors. Scott (1983) found that love was indeed related to pregnancy, with 89% of the white school-age mother and 80% of the blacks reported being with their sex partners at the onset of pregnancy. Black and DeBlassie (1985) counseled several 14-15 year old girls who reported that a major reason for becoming pregnant was to spite their overprotective or domineering parents.

There are many consequences associated with adolescent pregnancy: physical/health, economic, social and emotional/psychological consequences. Negative physical/health consequences may affect both the teenage mother and the young child. The teenage body is not yet



physically mature enough to withstand the stress of childbearing and the birth process. The danger of death during or immediately after pregnancy is higher for girls under sixteen than for women in their early twenties. There is a higher incidence of life-threatening condition such as anemia, nutritional deficiencies, and prolonged labor in teenage pregnancies (cited in Black & DeBlassie, 1985; Simkins, 1984). Babies born to teens may have a lower IQ, usually due to the poor nutrition and lack of prenatal care throughout the pregnancy. Stillbirths, low birthweight, and retardation are more common among teenage pregnancies. A higher rate of child abuse and neglect has also been documented for children of adolescent parents (Black & DeBlassie, 1985; Simkins, 1984).

Adolescent pregnancy is given as the major reason for girls leaving school (cited in Black & DeBlassie, 1985). Eighty percent who become mothers by age 17 drop out and never complete high school (TEA, 1987). Ninety percent who are 15 and younger do not complete high school; 40% of this group fail to complete the eighth grade (TEA, 1987). School-age fathers younger than 18 years of age drop out of school at a rate of four in 10 rather than the eight or nine in 10 that characterized school-age mothers. The disruptive effect on the teenager's education has a serious impact on subsequent vocation and income. The income of teen mothers is one-half that of mothers who give birth in their twenties. The pregnancy not only disrupts schooling, it minimizes the acquisition of vocational skills. The

difficulties in finding employment often cause the teen mother to go on welfare.

Teen mothers often experience negative social pressure and alienation from family members (Black & DeBlassie, 1985). Dating becomes difficult because the infant demands so much attention. This normally results in isolation from friends who do not have the same requirements on their time.

Major psychological issues of adolescence are associated with sexuality, pregnancy, and abortion. Black and DeBlassie (1985) found that undesired early pregnancy creates severe stress, threatens the adolescent's need for privacy, and inhibits identity formation. Failure to successfully achieve Erikson's tasks of identity formation in adolescence may not enable the individual to function optimally as an adult.

If the rate of teenage pregnancies continues to increase, the future of the female adolescents does not look very bright. It has been predicted that four in 10 of the young girls (approximately 14 years of age) will experience one pregnancy, two in 10 will give birth, and more than one in seven will undergo an abortion while still in their teens (cited in Black & DeBlassie, 1985). Surely, a country with our wealth of human resources and technological advancements will not let this prediction come true.

#### Curriculum

Vocational Home Economics Education in Texas is divided into two categories: Occupational Home Economics Education

and Consumer and Homemaking Education (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p.1). Both areas are relevant in meeting the needs of today's youth who must prepare for a career and for the responsibilities of a home and family. Local program offerings, based on the needs of the community served by the program, are determined from these options by local administrators, home economics teachers, advisory committee members, parents, and students (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p.3). The Consumer and Homemaking aspect of Vocational Home Economics Education was the area of focus in this study.

The curriculum developed for Texas Vocational Home Economics Education was designed to "prepare youth and adults for the occupation of homemaking (Consumer and Homemaking) and for gainful employment in home economics occupations (Occupational Home Economics)" (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 1). A comprehensive sequence course format and a specialized course format are offered in Consumer and Homemaking Education. The comprehensive Consumer and Homemaking Education courses include: Homemaking I, II, and III. These courses develop in a progressive sequence the concepts related to all subject areas in home economics. The following specialized courses which provide in-depth instruction in one home economics subject area include: Child Development, Care, and Guidance; Clothing and Textiles; Consumer Education; Family/Individual Health; Family Living and Parenthood; Food and Nutrition; Home

Management; and Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment.

The Smith Hughes Act of 1917 was the first legislation that "authorized federal funds for homemaking education" (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 1). In 1968, the Vocational Education Amendments presented challenges for Vocational Home Economics Education to emerge from "traditional limitations into a new position of relevancy" in today's curriculum through programs designed to:

- 1) Help individuals and families improve the home environment and the quality of personal and family life;
- 2) Give greater consideration to social and cultural conditions and needs of families;
- 3) Encourage preparation for professional leadership in home economics and consumer education;
- 4) Prepare youth and adults for the role of homemaker;
- 5) Contribute to the employability of youth and adults as they assume the dual role of homemaker/wage earner;
- 6) Help all families, including the low-income and disadvantaged, meet their needs; and
- 7) Promote knowledge of nutrition and food use and the understanding of the economic aspects of food use and purchase. (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 2)

The education Amendments of 1976 strengthened and broadened the scope of Vocational Home Economics Education. These amendments placed emphasis on:

- 1) Encouraging participation of both males and females to prepare for combining the roles of homemaking and wage earning;
- 2) Encouraging elimination of sex stereotyping;
- 3) Giving greater consideration to economic, social, and cultural conditions and needs, especially in economically depressed areas;
- 4) Encouraging outreach programs in

- communities;
- 5) Preparing males and females for the work of the home; and
  - 6) Emphasizing consumer education, management of resources, parenthood education, and promotion of nutrition knowledge and food use to meet current social needs. (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 2)

In 1981 the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 246 mandating that the State Board of Education design, implement, and govern a well-balanced curriculum for accreditation within the state (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984). This well balanced curriculum included essential elements which were established for the courses and based upon input from the public and the Texas Education Agency. After some modifications, Chapter 75 of the Texas Administrative Code was adopted by the State Board of Education on March 10, 1984.

In order to receive accreditation, local school districts are given the responsibility of providing instruction in those essential elements for each subject taught. These essential elements are outlined in the Instructional Framework: Essential Elements and Basic Competencies for Vocational Home Economics Education in Texas (Hereafter referred to as the Framework). This Framework has been developed for the purposes of:

- 1) identifying the essential elements pertaining to each Vocational Home Economics Education course as mandated by HB 246 and Chapter 75 of the Texas Administrative Code,
- 2) outlining the competencies and subcompetencies to be developed in Vocational Home Economics Education classes,
- 3) providing guidance to teachers for local

- program planning, and
- 4) serving as a means of communicating the scope and content of Vocational Home Economics Education in Texas to others. (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 2)

The Framework identified the individual lists of essential elements for the Vocational Home Economics Education courses of study are included as well as the outline of the competencies and sub-competencies to be developed in the respective courses. In addition, the Instructional Framework included recommendations for class period allocations for Consumer and Homemaking Education courses. It was suggested that each school district use the identified elements as a foundation for curriculum planning rather than ultimate objectives.

Due to lack of space and time, the entire Framework has not been duplicated or included in this research paper. The essential elements outlined in this resource will be referred to throughout this paper (Appendix C).

### Summary

An overview of current problems/issues affecting youth in today's society and an examination of the current secondary home economics curriculum were included in Chapter II. Chapter III will provide a description of the procedures used for this study.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

Chapter III outlines the design used in conducting the research. An explanation of procedures used to execute the study including the population, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis are presented.

#### Population

All of the high schools with Vocational Home Economics departments located in Region I, District XVI of the Texas Panhandle were included in the population. The research was limited to the Texas Panhandle for four main reasons: the large size of the state; financial limitations; time limitations; and the researcher's close association with this area. Ms. Cindy Gruner, Occupational Home Economics Education Specialist I, provided the names and addresses of the high schools in Region I, District XVI. The original list included 60 high schools. All department heads of the vocational home economics programs in Region I, District XVI were sent teacher questionnaires, a total of 60.

In addition to the teacher population sample, students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses were sampled. The student sampling was undertaken in order to enable the researcher to point out any discrepancies occurring among

the teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions of problems/issues facing youth and the home economics courses addressing those problems/issues. The student sample was stratified by dividing the 60 high schools into their respective University Interscholastic League (UIL) basketball classifications. The University Interscholastic League (UIL) basketball classifications were utilized to stratify the high schools because all of the Texas Panhandle high schools were divided into these classifications. These classifications are based on the population of the high schools, with 1A having the smallest population and 5A having the largest. After classifying each high school, the results of the number of schools belonging to each classification were as follows: 30-1A; 12-2A; 9-3A; 5-4A; 4-5A.

Approximately 50% of the high schools in each classification were sent 60 student questionnaires: 15(30)-1A; 6(12)-2A; 5(9)-3A; 3(5)-4A; 2(4)-5A. If the number of high schools was an odd number, 50% meant rounding off to the next highest number. The sampling procedure utilized to determine the high schools used in the student population included:

1. assigning numbers to each high school in the five classifications;
2. placing the numbers of the high schools in each classification in a different container; and
3. drawing the numbers out of each container



until 50% of the high schools in each classification had been drawn.

A total of 31 high schools each received 60 student questionnaires - 1860 questionnaires were sent out. This sample represented the schools receiving student questionnaires to be completed by students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses.

### Instrumentation

Data were collected by utilizing two instruments designed by the researcher: a teacher questionnaire and a student questionnaire. The teacher questionnaire sought the following information:

- Part I - descriptive information of the high school;
- Part II - the respondent's perception of the top three problems/issues facing teens in the high school;
- Part III - the consumer and homemaking courses offered and the problem(s)/issue(s) each addresses.

Part I solicited personal information and descriptive data for the selected teachers including: high school and consumer and homemaking course student enrollment; high school classification; number of home economics teachers; and the consumer and homemaking courses offered in the high school. Part II asked teachers to rank from a list of items the perceived top three problems/issues facing teenage youth

in their high school. The list of items was constructed as a result of a review of literature to represent pertinent problems/issues facing youth. Space was provided for the respondents to identify and rank any perceived problems/issues not included on the list. In Part III, teachers were to match the consumer and homemaking course(s) offered in their high schools with the problems/issues the course(s) addressed or should be addressed.

The student questionnaire was a shorter version of the teacher questionnaire. This instrument included the identification of the consumer and homemaking course(s) in which the students respondents were currently enrolled. Students were asked to rank their perceived top three problems/issues facing high school students and to match the consumer and homemaking course(s) to the problem(s)/issue(s) it addressed.

Both questionnaires were submitted for review to eight home economics graduate students at Oklahoma State University, four high school home economics teachers, and the researcher's graduate committee. These persons were asked to evaluate and critique the draft of the instruments for content validity and to make comments and suggestions on any part of the questionnaires that they felt was inappropriate or needed improvement.

Copies of the student questionnaire were taken to a high school in Perkins, Oklahoma, for a pilot test. The pilot group consisted of 75 students enrolled in homemaking courses who voluntarily completed the questionnaires. These

participants were asked to examine and complete each instrument while considering clarity, length, and time required for completion. Their responses and comments, along with recommendations from the reviewers, were used to construct the final questionnaires.

#### Data Collection

The study was conducted using mailed questionnaires (see Appendix A). Hoping to survey students after almost completing the consumer and homemaking courses, the questionnaires were sent out on May 15, 1987. The selected subjects were sent the survey instruments accompanied by a cover letter that explained the purpose of and the reasons for conducting the research, outlined procedures for completion of surveys, and offered to share the findings and conclusions of the research. A stamped, self addressed envelope was enclosed for the convenience of the respondents.

On May 29, 1987, follow-up postcards were mailed to all individuals who had not responded within 14 days of the initial mailing date.

In an attempt to secure as high rate of return as possible, a third follow-up letter was sent out on August 10, 1987, after summer vacation. One week later, the researcher then telephoned the remaining sample subjects to inquire about the status of the questionnaires. The researcher discovered that four of the high schools had recently closed or had deleted the home economics programs.

Since these four high schools received both student and teacher questionnaires, the population of this study immediately decreased to 56 high schools with vocational home economic teachers and 26 high schools receiving student questionnaires.

#### Data Analysis

Upon return of the questionnaires, the surveys were checked for completeness, accuracy and usability of data, with all being acceptable for use. The questionnaires were separated into "teacher" or "student" responses and then coded by a computer analysts according to the data sought by each question. The software package, PC-File, was utilized to input all of the coded information into a micro-computer. This inputted data were returned to the computer analyst who promptly transferred all data onto the mainframe computer for final programming. A program was written to calculate frequencies and percentages for all items. After programming, frequency distributions and tables were constructed to illustrate information derived from the instrument and to use in the presentation of data.

#### Summary

Included in Chapter III was a description of the research design type, the population and sample plan, the instrumentation, the data collection procedures, and the methods of the data analysis. The study focused on high schools with vocational home economics departments. All

home economics department heads and a selected sample of students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses were requested to complete survey questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed to identify the perceived, top three problems/issues facing the teenagers in each high school plus the home economics courses addressing these issues/problems. Results of the study will be presented in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth and the consumer and homemaking courses addressing these problems/issues.

To achieve this purpose, the following objectives were formulated:

1. To ascertain demographic information about the population.
2. To identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth as perceived by the high school vocational home economics teachers.
3. To identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth as perceived by the high school students in the consumer and homemaking courses.
4. To point out the teenager's problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each consumer and homemaking course(s) offered in the high school as perceived by the high school vocational home economics teachers.
5. To point out the teenager's problem(s)/issue(s)

addressed by each consumer and homemaking course(s) offered in the high school as perceived by the high school students enrolled in the consumer and homemaking courses.

6. To make recommendations for future home economics curriculum based upon the findings of the study.

The findings of this study are presented in three main sections. The first section deals with the demographic information compiled about the researched population. The second section focuses on the identification of the top three problems/issues as perceived by the home economics teachers and the students enrolled in the home economics programs. Finally, the third section compiles the data which points out the problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each home economics course(s) as perceived by the teachers and students. All of the data obtained in this study were analyzed according to frequencies and percentage. The figures resulting from all calculations were rounded to the nearest hundredth.

#### Description of Sample

After the first mailing on May 15, 1987, 37 of the 60 high schools, or approximately 61.7%, responded. Of those questionnaires returned, 18 included student questionnaires; therefore, of the 31 schools sent student questionnaires, 58.1% were returned. Four more teacher questionnaires were received from the second mailing on May 29, 1987; resulting

in a total of 41 questionnaires, or a 68.3% return rate. There was no response to the follow-up sent on August 10, 1987, so the researcher telephoned the remaining sample subjects to inquire about the status of the questionnaires. One more teacher questionnaire was received. The responses received during the phone conversations are listed in Table I.

TABLE I  
REASONS FOR NOT RETURNING QUESTIONNAIRES

REASONS AFTER CONTACTING BY PHONE 3 TIMES	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
THREW AWAY/NO INTEREST	3	21.4
TOO BUSY/CLASSES TOO MIXED	1	7.1
UNAVAILABLE	2	14.3
WILL RETURN - NO RESPONSE	6	42.9
RESENT - NO RESPONSE	2	14.3
TOTAL	14	100.0

In addition to finding the reasons for not participating in the study, the researcher discovered that four of the high schools had recently closed or had deleted the home economics programs. Since these four high school received both student and teacher questionnaires, the population of this study immediately decreased to 56 high schools with



vocational home economics teachers and 27 high schools receiving student questionnaires.

Of these 56 teacher questionnaires, 42 were returned for a 75.0% return rate. Student questionnaires were returned from 18 of the 27 schools that were sampled for a 66.7% response rate.

### Size of High Schools

Table II illustrates the breakdown of the 42 participating high schools according to University Interscholastic League (UIL) basketball classification. Over half (52.4%) of the participating schools were classified in 1A; indicating that many of the schools in the Texas Panhandle are small.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS ACCORDING  
TO UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC  
LEAGUE (UIL) BASKETBALL  
CLASSIFICATION

UIL CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	NUMBER RESPONDING	PERCENT
5A	3	7.1
4A	5	11.9
3A	4	9.5
2A	8	19.1
1A	22	52.4
TOTAL	42	100.0

The predominance of the smaller high school population

The predominance of the smaller high school population is further illustrated in the number of high school students enrolled in grades 9-12 and the home economics program. As displayed in Table III, almost 80% of the schools had enrollments less than 500 in grades 9-12. Only one high school or 2.4% had between 1751-2000 students enrolled. Similarly in Table IV, 64.3% or 27 high schools had between 0-75 students enrolled in the home economics program. Five high schools had enrollments of over 200 in the home economics program; possibly indicating strong programs relative to high school population.

TABLE III  
NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS BY ENROLLMENT  
IN GRADES 9-12

NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
0-250	27	64.2
251-500	7	16.7
751-1000	3	7.1
1001-1250	2	4.8
1251-1500	2	4.8
1751-2000	1	2.4
TOTAL	42	100.0

TABLE IV  
 NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS BY  
 HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAM  
 ENROLLMENT

NUMBER OF HOME ECONOMICS ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
0-25	12	28.6
26-50	8	19.0
51-75	7	16.7
76-100	3	7.1
101-125	4	9.5
126-150	1	2.4
176-200	2	4.8
OVER 200	5	11.9
TOTAL	42	100.0

The chairperson of the vocational home economics department in the 42 participating high schools cited the number of home economics teachers employed by that school. Most schools employed only one home economics teacher. This was true for 26 of the 42 schools. Two of the schools employed five teachers. Number of home economics teachers hired (Table V) is indicative of size of school and enrollment in home economics.

TABLE V  
 NUMBER OF HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS EMPLOYED  
 IN THE HIGH SCHOOL POPULATION

NUMBER OF HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
1	26	61.9
2	8	19.0
3	4	9.5
4	2	4.8
5	2	4.8
TOTAL	42	100.0

Consumer and Homemaking Courses Offered

There are eleven courses identified in the Instructional Framework: Essential Elements and Basic Competencies for Vocational Home Economics Education in Texas (Hereafter referred to as the Framework) under the area of Consumer and Homemaking in Vocational Home Economics. The high schools in this study generally offered six of those eleven courses.

The data indicated, as shown in Table VI, that 95.2% of the schools offered one comprehensive sequenced course, Comprehensive Homemaking I. The other two comprehensive sequenced courses were offered to a lesser extent by the schools: Comprehensive Homemaking II (38.1%) and Comprehensive Homemaking III (11.9%). Every specialized course was offered by a large number of the schools with the exception of the Clothing and Textiles semester course, which was available in four of the high schools. The

following specialized courses were offered in at least 34 of the high schools: Child Development, Care and Guidance (88.1%); Consumer Education (83.3%); Family Living and Parenthood (90.5%); Food and Nutrition (95.2%); and Housing, Home Furnishings and Equipment (81.0%).

TABLE VI  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING COMPREHENSIVE AND  
SPECIALIZED COURSES OFFERED  
IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS

TITLE OF COMPREHENSIVE COURSES	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS (N=42)			
	YES		NO	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	40	95.2	2	4.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	16	38.1	26	61.9
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	5	11.9	37	88.1
TITLE OF SPECIALIZED COURSES	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS (N=42)			
	YES		NO	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	37	88.1	5	11.9
CLOTHING & TEXTILES	4	9.5	38	90.5
CONSUMER EDUCATION	35	83.3	7	16.7
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	24	57.1	18	42.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	38	90.5	4	9.5
FOOD & NUTRITION	40	95.2	2	4.8
HOME MANAGEMENT	23	54.8	19	45.2
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	34	81.0	8	19.0

The respondents did not identify any courses in the "other" category on the questionnaire. This data indicated that high schools generally offer only one comprehensive sequenced course and several of the specialized courses.

Students

TABLE VII  
NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS  
PARTICIPATING ACCORDING TO  
UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC  
LEAGUE (UIL) BASKETBALL  
CLASSIFICATION

UIL CLASSI- FICATION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS		NUMBER OF STUDENTS	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
5A	1	5.5	34	6.0
4A	2	11.1	113	20.0
3A	3	16.7	119	21.0
2A	5	27.8	175	31.0
1A	7	38.9	124	22.0
TOTAL	18	100.0	565	100.0

Of the 18 high schools that returned questionnaires, the number of high schools and students participating according to UIL basketball classification is illustrated in Table VII. A total of 565 students participated in this study. Of these 565, 299 students, or 53.0%, represented the 1A and 2A high schools. The 3A and 4A high schools had a total of 232 students, or 41.0%, who participated; whereas, only one 5A school was represented by 34 students.

The strong influence of the smaller populated schools in the student sample is duly noted in this data analysis.

Students in the sample were generally enrolled in three consumer and homemaking courses (Table VIII): Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care and Guidance semester course; and Family Living and Parenthood semester course. There were 301 students enrolled in Comprehensive Homemaking I; 161 in Child Development, Care and Guidance; and 78 in Family Living and Parenthood. Since the higher level comprehensive courses, Homemaking II and III, had combined enrollments of 8.7% or 54 students, it may be concluded that only a small percentage of students complete Comprehensive Homemaking I and proceed to Comprehensive Homemaking II and III. To a smaller extent, sampled students were enrolled in Food and Nutrition (6.4%); Consumer Education (3.5%); and Housing, Home Furnishings and Equipment (2.8%). Ten students or less were enrolled in Clothing and Textiles (5); Family/Individual Health (2); and Home Management ((5). Due to the concentrated enrollment of students in the three courses, there is a possibility that double enrollments exist causing the small enrollments in several courses.

TABLE VIII

SAMPLED STUDENTS' CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COMPREHENSIVE AND SPECIALIZED  
COURSE ENROLLMENT

TITLE OF COMPREHENSIVE COURSES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)			
	YES		NO	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	301	53.3	264	46.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	32	5.7	533	94.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	22	3.0	543	96.1
TITLE OF SPECIALIZED COURSES	YES		NO	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
	CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	161	28.5	404
CLOTHING & TEXTILES	5	0.9	560	99.1
CONSUMER EDUCATION	20	3.5	545	96.5
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	2	0.4	563	99.6
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	78	13.8	487	86.2
FOOD & NUTRITION	36	6.4	529	93.6
HOME MANAGEMENT	5	0.9	560	99.1
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	16	2.8	549	97.2

### Summary

A total of 42 high schools responded to the survey. More than 70 percent (71.4%) of the responding high schools were classified by UIL as 1A and 2A schools. The low student enrollment in the majority of the high schools clearly illustrated the predominance of smaller populated



schools in the Texas Panhandle. The enrollments of the home economics programs were relatively high when compared to the high schools enrollment. Five schools had a home economics enrollment of over 200 students. While enrollment was high, only one to two teachers were generally employed. The majority of the schools offered Comprehensive Homemaking I and choices from five specialized areas -- Child Development, Care and Guidance; Consumer Education; Family Living and Parenthood; Food and Nutrition; and Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment.

A total of 565 students from 18 schools responded to the questionnaire. The majority of the sample was dominated by respondents (53%) from 1A and 2A schools. The student respondents were concentrated in three courses -- Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care and Guidance; and Family Living and Parenthood; therefore, the curriculum in these three courses will be the most familiar to the students.

#### Ranking of Problem(s)/Issue(s)

The teacher and student respondents were asked to rank, according to their perceptions, the first, second, and third problem(s)/issue(s) facing the youth in their high schools. Each respondent could rank any of the problem(s)/issue(s) identified on the questionnaires as first, second, or third. Table IX illustrates the percentage of teachers identifying each problem/issue as their first,

second, or third rank, while Table X displays the students' first, second, or third rank of the problems/issues confronting teens. In addition to the identified problem(s)/issue(s), the questionnaire included a category labeled "other" which enabled the participants to point out any problem(s)/issue(s) not previously mentioned.

TABLE IX  
TEACHERS' FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD RANK  
OF PROBLEMS/ISSUES

PROBLEM/ISSUE	RANK					
	FIRST		SECOND		THIRD	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
ALCOHOL	23	54.8	10	23.8	4	9.5
ALIENATION/ LONELINESS	1	2.4	1	2.4	1	2.4
ANOREXIA/ BULIMIA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
DRUGS	2	4.8	4	9.5	8	19.0
LOW SELF CONCEPT/ESTEEM	9	21.4	7	16.7	11	26.2
RUNAWAYS	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
SUICIDE	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.4
TEENAGE PREGNANCY	4	9.5	3	7.1	9	21.4
TEENAGE SEXUALITY	3	7.1	15	35.7	6	14.3
*OTHER	0	0.0	2	4.8	2	4.8
TOTAL	42	100.0	42	100.0	42	100.0

\*Included: Career Choice, Peer Pressure, Rumors, Apathy

### Teachers' First Ranking

The analysis of the teacher questionnaires indicated that alcohol was ranked number one by 23 out of the 42 responding teachers (54.8%). Of the remaining 19 teachers, nine (21.4%) ranked self concept/esteem as their first rank, the second most popular choice of first rankings. The other problems/issues receiving first rankings by teachers included: alienation/loneliness (1); drugs (2); teenage pregnancy (4); and teenage sexuality (3).

### Teachers' Second Ranking

Teenage sexuality was the problem/issue ranked second the most often (35.7%). Alcohol followed with 10 teachers (23.7%) ranking it second. Within this second ranking, low self concept/esteem was identified by 16.7% as a problem/issue; while alienation/loneliness (2.4%); drugs (9.5%); teenage pregnancy (7.1%); and other (career choice and peer pressure, 4.8%) completed the teachers' second rankings of problems/issues.

### Teachers' Third Ranking

There were four distinct problems/issues identified by the teachers as their third ranking. Low self concept/esteem was ranked third by the highest number of teachers with 26.2%. Teenage pregnancy followed closely in this third ranking with 21.4%; drugs with 19.0%; and teenage sexuality with 14.3% of the population. Other areas in this

third ranking: alcohol (9.5%); alienation/loneliness (2.4%); suicide (2.4%), and other (rumors and apathy, 4.8%).

TABLE X  
STUDENTS' FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD RANK  
OF PROBLEMS/ISSUES

PROBLEM/ISSUE	RANK					
	FIRST		SECOND		THIRD	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
ALCOHOL	357	63.2	99	17.5	45	8.0
ALIENATION/ LONELINESS	10	1.8	27	4.8	30	5.3
ANOREXIA/ BULIMIA	0	0.0	3	0.5	7	1.2
DRUGS	67	11.9	163	28.8	123	21.8
LOW SELF CONCEPT/ESTEEM	13	2.3	57	10.1	54	9.6
RUNAWAYS	1	0.2	6	1.1	15	2.7
SUICIDE	3	0.5	7	1.2	22	3.9
TEENAGE PREGNANCY	69	12.2	73	12.9	138	24.4
TEENAGE SEXUALITY	44	7.8	128	22.7	120	21.2
*OTHER	1	0.2	2	0.4	11	2.0
TOTAL	565	100.1	565	100.0	565	100.1

\*Included: Stress, Prejudice, Smoking, Apathy, Destructing Property, Gossip, Language, Low Grades

### Students' First Ranking

The analysis of the student data indicated that 357 (63.2%) of the 565 students perceived alcohol as being

the number one problem/issue facing youth today. Of the remaining 208 students, 73 (12.2%) marked teenage pregnancy as their first choice, with 67 (11.9%) marking drugs as their first choice. Teenage sexuality also surfaced in this first ranking with 44 students (7.8%) indicating it as the first rank.

#### Students' Second Ranking

Five problems/issues prevailed in the second ranking by students. Drugs headed the second ranked list with 28.8%. Teenage sexuality (22.7%) was the second most popular choice closely followed by alcohol (17.5%), teenage pregnancy (12.9%), and low self concept/esteem (10.1%).

#### Students' Third Ranking

Teenage pregnancy, drugs, and teenage sexuality were very competitive choices in the third ranking by the students. All three problems/issues were closely ranked third by at least 20% of the student population: teenage pregnancy (24.4%), drugs (21.8%), and teenage sexuality (21.2%). The following problems/issues were ranked third by less than 10% of the students: alcohol (8.0%); alienation/loneliness (5.3%); anorexia/bulimia (1.2%); low self concept/esteem (9.6%); runaways (2.7%); suicide (3.9%) and other (2.0%).

## Summary

### Teachers

The majority of teachers (54.8%) perceived alcohol as being the top problem/issue confronting teens. In addition, about 88% (88.1%) of the teachers identified alcohol as either their first, second or third rank. While looking across the three ranks, it is noted that low self concept/esteem received 64.3% of the teachers' vote. In the second ranking, teenage sexuality was marked second by 35.7% of the teachers, but only marked first, second, or third by 57.1%. The third ranking was not clearly defined, but 26.2% identified low self concept/esteem as their third rank. Again looking across the rankings, it is highlighted that teenage pregnancy was marked first, second, or third by 38.0% of the teachers. No other problem/issue was ranked number one, two, or three by as high a percentage of the population. Clearly then, the data indicate that the top three problems/issues as perceived by the teachers facing youth today include: alcohol; low self concept/esteem; and teenage sexuality.

### Students

The students' rankings illustrate the perceived problems/issues confronting them and their peers in today's society. As illustrated in Table XI, the students agreed with the teachers and strongly indicated that alcohol

was the number one problem/issue facing teens (63.2%). Approximately 89% (88.7%) marked alcohol as the first, second, or third problem/issue. In contrast to the teachers' perceptions, students indicated drugs as the highest second ranked problem/issue. Also, drugs were marked by 62.5% of the students across all rankings. Similar to the teachers, the third ranking by the students was not clearly defined, but the problem/issue being ranked third by the highest percentage was teenage pregnancy with 24.4%, closely followed by drugs (21.8%) and teenage sexuality (24.4%). Across all rankings, teenage sexuality was ranked first, second, third by a higher percentage (51.7%) of the students than teenage pregnancy (49.5%). No other problems/issues were ranked number one, two, or three by a larger number of students. In summary, the students perceived the top three problems facing them and their peers as being: alcohol; drugs; teenage sexuality, with teenage pregnancy a close fourth.

TABLE XI  
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' AND  
TEACHERS' RANKINGS OF  
PROBLEMS/ISSUES

PROBLEM/ ISSUE	RANK											
	FIRST				SECOND				THIRD			
	NUMBER		PERCENT		NUMBER		PERCENT		NUMBER		PERCENT	
	*T	*S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S
ALCOHOL	23	357	54.8	63.2	10	99	23.8	17.5	4	45	9.5	8.0
ALIENATION/ LONELINESS	1	10	2.4	1.8	1	27	2.4	4.8	1	30	2.4	5.3
ANOREXIA/ BULIMIA	0	0	0.0	0.0	1	3	0.0	0.5	0	7	0.0	1.2
DRUGS	2	67	4.8	11.9	4	164	9.5	28.8	8	123	19.0	21.8
LOW SELF- CONCEPT/ ESTEEM	9	13	21.4	2.3	7	57	16.7	10.1	11	54	26.2	9.6
RUNAWAYS	0	1	0.0	0.2	0	6	0.0	1.1	0	15	0.0	2.7
SUICIDE	0	3	0.0	0.5	0	7	0.0	1.2	1	22	2.4	3.9
TEENAGE PREGNANCY	4	69	9.5	12.2	3	73	7.1	12.9	9	138	21.4	24.4
TEENAGE SEXUALITY	3	44	7.1	7.8	15	128	35.7	22.7	6	120	14.3	21.2
OTHER	0	1	0.0	0.1	2	2	4.8	0.4	2	11	4.8	2.0
TOTAL	42	565	100.0	100.0	42	565	100.0	100.0	42	565	100.0	100.0

\*T=Teacher Responses \*S=Student Responses

### Consumer and Homemaking Courses Addressing Problem(s)/Issue(s)

The objective of this data is to point out the teenagers' problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each home economics course(s) offered in the high school. Teachers were requested to identify consumer and homemaking course(s) which should address the problem(s)/issue(s) plus courses that are addressing those problem(s)/issue(s). In comparison, students were asked to indicate the consumer and homemaking course(s) they perceived as addressing problem(s)/issue(s). The fact should be highlighted that teachers chose the classes to be sampled; and the classes



most frequently sampled were those in Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care, and Guidance semester course; and Family Living and Parenthood semester course. It should also be noted that the respondents could identify as many consumer and homemaking courses as they perceived were addressing each specific problem/issue.

Teachers' Perceptions of Courses that  
Should Address Problem(s)/Issue(s)

Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care and Guidance and Family Living and Parenthood semester courses are the three courses perceived by teachers as being the ones that SHOULD address the majority of the problem(s)/issue(s) confronting teens: alcohol, drugs, low self-concept/esteem, runaways, teenage pregnancy and teenage sexuality (Tables XII-XVII). Of the responding teachers, at least 54% indicated that Comprehensive Homemaking I should address the following problems/issues: alcohol (66.7%), drugs (64.3%), low self-concept/esteem (85.7%), runaways (54.8%), teenage pregnancy (66.7%), and teenage sexuality (73.8%). A minimum of 28% of the teachers identified Child Development, Care and Guidance as the semester course that should address: alcohol (40.5%), drugs (42.9%), low self-concept/esteem (40.8%), runaways (28.6%), teenage pregnancy (47.6%), and teenage sexuality (50.0%). Family Living and Parenthood semester course was pointed out by at least 64% of the teachers as the course that should address: alcohol

(81.0%), drugs (66.7%), low self-concept/esteem (64.3%), runaways (64.3%), teenage pregnancy (66.7%), and teenage sexuality (78.6%). Approximately 30% of the teachers thought that alcohol (35.7%) and drugs (33.3%) should be discussed in Family/Individual Health semester course.

TABLE XII

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS ALCOHOL

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	28	66.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	12	28.6
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	9	21.4
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	17	40.5
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	2	4.8
CONSUMER EDUCATION	4	9.5
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	15	35.7
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	34	81.0
FOOD & NUTRITION	8	19.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XIII

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS DRUGS**

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	27	64.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	13	31.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	7	16.7
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	18	42.9
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	3	7.1
CONSUMER EDUCATION	3	7.1
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	14	33.3
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	28	66.7
FOOD & NUTRITION	7	16.7
HOME MANAGEMENT	4	9.5
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	2	4.8

TABLE XIV

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS LOW SELF-  
CONCEPT/ESTEEM**

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	36	85.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	14	33.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	9	21.4
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	17	40.8
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	10	23.8
CONSUMER EDUCATION	4	9.5
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	11	26.2
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	27	64.3
FOOD & NUTRITION	7	16.7
HOME MANAGEMENT	6	14.3
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	4	9.5

TABLE XV

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS RUNAWAYS

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	23	54.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	9	21.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	6	14.3
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	12	28.6
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	1	2.4
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	5	11.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	27	64.3
FOOD & NUTRITION	2	4.8
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XVI

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS TEENAGE  
PREGNANCY

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	28	66.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	13	31.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	7	16.7
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	20	47.6
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	2	4.8
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	9	21.4
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	28	66.7
FOOD & NUTRITION	9	21.4
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	4.8
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XVII

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS TEENAGE  
SEXUALITY

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	31	73.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	12	19.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	8	19.0
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	21	50.0
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	3	7.1
CONSUMER EDUCATION	4	9.5
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	12	28.6
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	33	78.6
FOOD & NUTRITION	4	9.5
HOME MANAGEMENT	3	7.1
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

The other three problems listed -- alienation, eating disorders, and suicide -- broke the pattern of courses suggested previously. The Comprehensive Homemaking courses I and II plus the Family Living and Parenthood semester course were identified as being capable of addressing alienation and suicide (Tables XVIII and XIX).

Comprehensive Homemaking I was indicated by 71.4% of the teachers as capable of addressing alienation and 54.8% indicated the course capable of addressing suicide. At least 25% of the teachers identified Comprehensive Homemaking II as capable of addressing alienation (38.1%)

and suicide (26.2%). The Family Living and Parenthood semester course was indicated by 52.4% of the teachers as capable of addressing alienation and 66.7% indicated the course as capable of addressing suicide. According to the data (Table XX), eating disorders, anorexia and bulimia, should be topics for discussion in Comprehensive Homemaking I (50.0%) and the Food and Nutrition semester course (50.0%).

TABLE XVIII  
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS ALIENATION

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	30	71.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	16	38.1
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	10	23.8
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	13	31.0
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	3	7.1
CONSUMER EDUCATION	3	7.1
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	8	19.0
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	22	52.4
FOOD & NUTRITION	3	7.1
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	4.8
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

TABLE XIX

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS SUICIDE**

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	23	54.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	11	26.2
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	7	16.7
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	12	23.8
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	1	2.4
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	9	21.4
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	28	66.7
FOOD & NUTRITION	3	7.1
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XX

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT SHOULD  
ADDRESS ANOREXIA/  
BULIMIA**

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	21	50.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	11	26.2
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	5	12.0
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE & GUIDANCE	7	16.7
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	2	4.8
CONSUMER EDUCATION	2	4.8
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	11	26.2
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	12	28.8
FOOD & NUTRITION	21	50.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	4.8
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

## Teachers' Perceptions of Courses

### Addressing Problem(s)/Issue(s)

The results of the teachers' perceptions of which consumer and homemaking courses should address each problem/issue and courses that are addressing them are very similar. Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care and Guidance; and Family Living and Parenthood were enumerated as being courses that should address and are addressing alcohol, drugs, low self-concept/esteem, teenage pregnancy and teenage sexuality (Tables XXI-XXV). The percentage of teachers perceiving that Comprehensive Homemaking I was addressing the following problems/issues included: alcohol (66.7%); drugs (64.3%); low self-concept/esteem (85.7%); teenage pregnancy (61.9%) and teenage sexuality (69.0%). Alcohol (47.6%), drugs (42.9%), low self-concept/esteem (28.6%), teenage pregnancy (52.4%), and teenage sexuality (40.5%) were the problems/issues recognized as being addressed by Child, Development and Guidance semester course. Teachers also perceived Family Living and Parenthood semester course as being the course addressing alcohol (81.0%), drugs (57.1%), low self-concept/esteem (57.1%), teenage pregnancy (64.3%) and teenage sexuality (71.4%).



TABLE XXI

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
ALCOHOL

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	28	66.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	11	26.2
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	4	9.5
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	20	47.6
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	3	7.1
CONSUMER EDUCATION	2	4.8
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	6	14.3
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	34	81.0
FOOD & NUTRITION	10	23.8
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	4.8
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

TABLE XXII

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
DRUGS

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	27	64.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	10	23.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	4	9.5
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	18	42.9
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	3	7.1
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	5	11.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	25	57.1
FOOD & NUTRITION	10	23.8
HOME MANAGEMENT	3	7.1
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

TABLE XXIII

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
LOW SELF-CONCEPT/  
ESTEEM

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	36	85.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	9	21.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	2	4.8
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	12	28.6
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	6	14.3
CONSUMER EDUCATION	2	4.8
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	5	11.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	25	57.1
FOOD & NUTRITION	4	9.5
HOME MANAGEMENT	3	7.1
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	2	4.8

TABLE XXIV

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
TEENAGE PREGNANCY

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	26	61.9
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	9	21.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	5	11.9
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	22	52.4
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	1	2.4
CONSUMER EDUCATION	2	4.8
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	5	11.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	27	64.3
FOOD & NUTRITION	5	11.9
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	4.8
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

TABLE XXV

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
TEENAGE SEXUALITY

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	29	69.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	10	23.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	4	9.5
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	17	40.5
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	2	4.8
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	4	9.5
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	30	71.4
FOOD & NUTRITION	2	4.8
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

Alienation and suicide were problems/issues identified as needing to be discussed in and being discussed in Comprehensive Homemaking I, Comprehensive Homemaking II, and the Family Living and Parenthood semester course (Tables XXVI and XXVII).

TABLE XXVI

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
ALIENATION**

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	28	66.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	9	21.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	4	9.5
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	8	19.0
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	2	4.8
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	4	9.5
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	22	26.2
FOOD & NUTRITION	3	7.1
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	4.8
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

TABLE XXVII

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
SUICIDE**

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	15	35.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	7	16.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	3	7.1
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	5	11.9
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	1	2.4
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	5	11.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	24	57.1
FOOD & NUTRITION	3	7.1
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

The teachers thought that the issue/problem, runaways, was being addressed in Comprehensive Homemaking I (33.3%) and II (14.3%) plus Family Living and Parenthood semester course (35.8%) (Table XXVIII); but they indicated that the Child Development, Care and Guidance semester course should address this problem/issue instead of Comprehensive Homemaking II.

TABLE XXVIII

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
RUNAWAYS

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	14	33.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	6	14.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	2	4.8
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	5	11.9
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	0	0.0
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	2	4.8
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	15	35.8
FOOD & NUTRITION	1	2.4
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

The two most suggested courses that should address and are addressing anorexia/bulimia were Comprehensive Homemaking I and the Food and Nutrition semester course

(Table XXIX). In addition to these two courses, the teachers thought that Family Living and Parenthood semester course and Comprehensive Homemaking II were two courses capable of addressing and addressing the eating disorders. Although the Family/Individual Health semester course (26.2%) was pointed out as capable of addressing anorexia/bulimia; few teachers (9.5%) indicated that this course was addressing these problems/issues.

TABLE XXIX  
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOME MAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
ANOREXIA/BULIMIA

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS (N=42)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	23	54.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	10	23.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	4	9.5
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	5	11.9
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	2	4.8
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	2.4
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	4	9.5
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	10	23.8
FOOD & NUTRITION	21	50.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	2.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	1	2.4

## Students' Perceptions of Courses

### Addressing Problem(s)/Issue(s)

The students' data supported the teachers' data in many ways. The students indicated that all of the problems/issues listed on the questionnaire, with the exception of anorexia/bulimia, were being addressed in three consumer and homemaking courses: Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care and Guidance semester course; and Family Living and Parenthood semester course (Tables XXX-XXXVII). According to the students, Comprehensive Homemaking I was addressing eight problems: alcohol (33.6%); alienation (14.9%); drugs (35.1%); low self-concept/esteem (35.2%); runaways (7.4%); suicide (9.4%); teenage pregnancy (32.0%); and teenage sexuality (25.8%). The same eight problems were perceived by the students as being addressed in Child Development, Care and Guidance semester course: alcohol (19.1%); alienation (11.5%); drugs (16.8%); low self-concept/esteem (12.4%); runaways (12.0%); suicide (13.1%); teenage pregnancy (34.3%); and teenage sexuality (31.9%). In addition, Family Living and Parenthood semester course was perceived as addressing alcohol (23.2%), alienation (29.4%), drugs (20.9%), low self-concept/esteem (22.1%), runaways (17.9%), suicide (20.9%), teenage pregnancy (28.3%), and teenage sexuality (27.1%).

TABLE XXX

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
ALCOHOL

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	190	33.6
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	18	3.2
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	11	1.9
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	108	19.1
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	3	0.5
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	39	6.9
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	131	23.2
FOOD & NUTRITION	32	5.7
HOME MANAGEMENT	0	0.0
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XXXI

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
ALIENATION

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	84	14.9
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	16	2.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	8	1.4
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	65	11.5
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	3	0.5
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	24	4.2
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	115	20.4
FOOD & NUTRITION	0	0.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	0.2
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0



TABLE XXXII

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
DRUGS

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	155	35.1
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	17	3.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	16	2.8
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	95	16.8
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	1	0.2
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	0.2
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	32	5.7
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	118	20.9
FOOD & NUTRITION	4	0.7
HOME MANAGEMENT	2	0.4
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XXXIII

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
LOW SELF-CONCEPT/  
ESTEEM

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	199	35.2
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	20	3.5
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	12	2.1
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	70	12.4
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	13	2.3
CONSUMER EDUCATION	0	0.0
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	17	3.0
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	125	22.1
FOOD & NUTRITION	1	0.2
HOME MANAGEMENT	0	0.0
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	9	1.6

TABLE XXXIV

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
RUNAWAYS

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	42	7.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	12	2.1
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	6	1.2
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	68	12.0
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	0	0.0
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	13	2.3
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	101	17.9
FOOD & NUTRITION	0	0.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	0.2
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	3	0.5

TABLE XXXV

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
SUICIDE

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	53	9.4
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	13	2.3
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	8	1.4
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	74	13.1
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	0	0.0
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	21	3.7
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	118	20.9
FOOD & NUTRITION	0	0.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	0	0.0
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XXXVI

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
TEENAGE PREGNANCY

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	181	32.0
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	14	2.5
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	7	1.2
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	194	34.3
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	1	0.2
CONSUMER EDUCATION	1	0.2
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	12	2.1
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	160	28.3
FOOD & NUTRITION	0	0.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	4	0.7
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

TABLE XXXVII

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
TEENAGE SEXUALITY

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	146	25.8
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	14	2.5
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	8	1.4
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	180	31.9
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	0	0.0
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	14	2.5
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	153	27.1
FOOD & NUTRITION	0	0.0
HOME MANAGEMENT	4	0.7
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

As similarly perceived by the teachers, the students pointed out that anorexia/bulimia was being addressed in Comprehensive Homemaking I (10.6%), Family Living and Parenthood semester course (9.4%), and Food and Nutrition semester course (21.2%) (Table XXXVIII).

The major difference between the teachers' and students' perceptions centered on the impact of Comprehensive Homemaking II and the Family/Individual semester course on addressing the problems/issues. Teachers seemed to think that these courses are capable of and are addressing more of these problems/issues than the students.

TABLE XXXVIII  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING  
COURSES THAT ADDRESS  
ANOREXIA/BULIMIA

TITLE OF COURSE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS (N=565)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I	60	10.6
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II	15	2.7
COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III	14	2.5
CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE	33	5.8
CLOTHING AND TEXTILES	0	0.0
CONSUMER EDUCATION	0	0.0
FAMILY/INDIVIDUAL HEALTH	19	3.4
FAMILY LIVING & PARENTHOOD	53	9.4
FOOD & NUTRITION	120	21.2
HOME MANAGEMENT	1	0.0
HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT	0	0.0

### Summary

The data of the teachers and the students revealed only a small variance in their perceptions of which consumer and homemaking courses should address and are addressing the teenage problems/issues -- alcohol, alienation, anorexia/bulimia, drugs, low self concept/esteem, runaways, suicide, teenage pregnancy and teenage sexuality. Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development, Care and Guidance semester course; and Family Living and Parenthood semester course were the three consumer and homemaking courses pointed out as being capable of addressing and addressing the majority of these problems/issues. Comprehensive Homemaking I and Family Living and Parenthood semester course were said to address every single problem/issue by teachers and students. Both respondents agreed that the Food and Nutrition semester course addressed anorexia/bulimia. The Child Development and Guidance semester course was indicated by teachers and students as addressing a majority of the problems/issues.

In contrast to the students, the teacher perceived Comprehensive Homemaking II as having more of an impact in addressing alienation and suicide. Also, the teachers thought that the semester course, Family/Individual Health, could play a meaningful role in addressing alcohol, anorexia/bulimia, and drugs.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The study focuses on determining if the home economics curriculum attempts to improve the quality of life for youth by addressing the problems/issues facing them. The purpose of this study was to identify the top three problems/issues confronting youth in the Texas Panhandle and the consumer and homemaking courses addressing those problems/issues as perceived by vocational home economics teachers and students enrolled in homemaking courses. The objectives were:

1. To ascertain demographic information about the population.
2. To identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth as perceived by the high school vocational home economics teachers.
3. To identify the top three problems/issues facing the Texas Panhandle youth as perceived by the high school students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses.
4. To point out the teenager's problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each consumer and homemaking course offered in the high school as perceived by the

high school vocational home economics teachers.

5. To point out the teenager's problem(s)/issue(s) addressed by each consumer and homemaking course offered in the high school as perceived by the high school students enrolled in the consumer and homemaking courses.
6. To make recommendations for future consumer and homemaking curriculum based upon the findings of the study.

The entire population of high schools with Vocational Home Economics departments located in Region I, District XVI of the Texas Panhandle, a group of 56 teachers, was contacted by mail questionnaires for the study. There was an overall return rate of 75.0%, or 42 teachers, with all being usable. In addition to the teacher population, students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses were sampled. Approximately 50% of the high schools in each University Interscholastic League (UIL) basketball classification were sent 60 student questionnaires. A total of 565 students from 18 high schools participated in this study.

The data were collected by using two instruments - one for teachers and one for students. The teacher questionnaire was divided into three parts: descriptive information of the high school; the teachers' perceptions of the top three problem(s)/issue(s) facing teens in the high schools; and the consumer and homemaking courses offered and addressing each problem/issue. The student questionnaire was a shorter

version of the teacher questionnaire. Students were asked to rank their perceived top three problems/issues confronting high school students and to match the consumer and homemaking course(s) to the problem(s)/issue(s) addressed.

Upon return of the questionnaires, the data were computer programmed so that the frequencies and percentages could be tabulated and presented. Based on the results of the above data analysis, the following conclusions and recommendations are supported and suggested.

#### Findings and Conclusions

Based on the data gathered in this study, it appears that the majority (71.4%) of the high schools were classified as 1A and 2A; indicating that many schools in Region I, District XVI of the Texas Panhandle were small (enrollments of 250 students or less in grades 9-12). Since many of the high schools were classified as 1A or 2A, more than 50.0% (53.0%) of the students involved in this study represented schools in these classifications. Compared to high school populations, the vocational home economics programs in this area seem to be relatively strong. Approximately 64.0% (64.3%) had home economics program enrollments of 75 students or less. If this number were compared to the maximum number of high school students (250) enrolled, then up to 30.0% of the students population were enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses. Generally, these high schools employed one home economics teacher (61.9%); possibly indicative of



the size of school, enrollment in home economics program, or the money available for salaries (especially since program enrollment appears high).

The Framework lists the "essential elements" plus "competencies and sub-competencies" for eleven consumer and homemaking courses in vocational home economics. The high schools in this study generally offered six of these eleven courses -- one comprehensive course and five specialized courses -- : Comprehensive Homemaking I (95.2%); Child Development, Care and Guidance (88.1%); Consumer Education (83.3%); Family Living and Parenthood (90.5%); Food and Nutrition (95.2%); and Housing, Home Furnishings and Equipment (81.0%). The students in this study were generally enrolled in three consumer and homemaking courses: Comprehensive Homemaking I (53.3%); Child Development, Care and Guidance (28.5%); and Family Living and Parenthood (13.8%).

#### Ranking of Problems/Issues

The teachers and students were requested to rank first, second, and third the problem(s)/issue(s) that they perceived facing the youth in their high schools. The top problem/issue identified by both teachers and students was alcohol, which was ranked number one or two by the highest percentage of the teachers (78.6%) and the students (80.7%). The acknowledgement that alcohol is a major problem confronting today's youth coincides with virtually all

research studies on teen alcohol use. Researchers indicate that alcohol is the most frequently used drug; with 25% of the U.S. population between 13 and 18 years of age being categorized as "problem drinkers" (Thorner, 1986; Sherman et al., 1984; McKenry et al., 1983). With such strong support from previous researchers and both teachers and students in this study, there is no doubt that alcohol is a major problem/issue facing today's youth, including those youth in the Texas Panhandle.

Low self concept/esteem received the second highest percentage of the teacher rankings (64.4%) as shown in Table IX. Teachers obviously agree with research pointing out the importance of developing a positive self-concept, with the primary concern or core of self-concept development being the uncovering or realizing of human potential (Crosby, 1982). Ellis and Davis (1982) reported that a major reorganization of the self concept occurs during adolescence (approximately 16 years); therefore, self-concept development is at a critical stage during adolescence. Whether this reorganization results in the positive or negative self-concept may affect the ultimate potential achieved by the adolescent.

In contrast to the teachers' second ranking, the problem/issue receiving the highest percentage for second ranking by the students was drugs. The problem/issue, drugs, referred to the use of any illicit drugs. The student data reinforced previous research stating that the use of drugs by

young people may be considered one of the most serious problems the world faces today, with one out of every six reported as suffering from a severe addictive problem (Thorne & DeBlassie, 1985).

Teachers and the students agreed again on the third and fourth problems/issues prevalent in their high schools -- teenage sexuality and teenage pregnancy. These two problems/issues received noticeable percentages across all rankings. When these percentages were totaled, it was evident that teenage sexuality and pregnancy were considered by the respondents as major problems/issues confronting teens. One possible explanation for these two specific problems/issues being ranked so similarly is the interrelatedness of the two. Moore et al. (1986) described this interrelatedness - "A birth to an adolescent is the culmination of a sequence of transitions, including the initiation of sexual activity, becoming pregnant, and resolving the pregnancy...(p. 777)". The data obtained in this study supported findings by other researchers. It has been reported that more teens are becoming sexually active and that one in every ten of these sexually active adolescent females gets pregnant (TEA, 1987; and cited in Black & DeBlassie, 1985).

#### Consumer and Homemaking Courses

#### Addressing Problems/Issues

The data indicated that the three Consumer and

Homemaking courses -- Comprehensive Homemaking I; Child Development Care, and Guidance semester course; and Family Living and Parenthood semester course -- were perceived by the teachers and the students as capable of and addressing the majority of the problems/issues facing youth. Teachers and students specifically identified alcohol/drugs, low self-concept/esteem, runaways, teenage sexuality and pregnancy as problems/issues needing to be discussed or being discussed in the previously mentioned courses. Teachers differed from the students in their perceptions of which courses were addressing the issue of runaways -- instead of the Child Development, Care and Guidance addressing the issue, Comprehensive Homemaking II was thought to actually discuss runaways. Teachers also thought that Family/Individual Health should address the problems/issues of alcohol and drugs. The students further indicated that this three course sequence actually addressed two more teen problems/issues -- alienation and suicide.

A new pattern of three courses -- Comprehensive Homemaking I, Comprehensive Homemaking II, and Family Living and Parenthood -- was pointed out by teachers as being the consumer and homemaking courses capable of and addressing alienation and suicide. The assessment of the data appears to indicate that teachers perceive Comprehensive Homemaking II and Family/Individual Health as capable of influencing and having more of an influence on teen problems/issues. The teachers and the students both supported Comprehensive

Homemaking I and the Food and Nutrition semester course as two courses for handling the eating disorders, anorexia and bulimia. In addition to these two courses, the teachers' perceptions differed from students in that teachers indicated that Family/Individual Health semester course should address the eating disorders, but that Comprehensive Homemaking II was addressing them.

Courses in consumer and homemaking education are divided into two formats -- comprehensive and specialized. Comprehensive Homemaking I is the first comprehensive sequenced course offered to high school students in Consumer and Homemaking education. There are two other comprehensive courses: Comprehensive Homemaking II and III. In a progressive sequence, these courses address the concepts related to all subject areas required for the occupation of homemaking (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984). Child Development, Care and Guidance; Family Living and Parenthood, Family Living and Parenthood, and Food and Nutrition are four of the eight specialized courses referred to in this study.

The Framework identifies the essential elements for all Vocational Home Economics Education courses. These essential elements represent the "core knowledge, skills, and competencies all students should learn to be effective and productive members of society", and it was suggested that the requirement of each essential element be considered in making the final selection of curriculum content to facilitate the

development of the essential competencies (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 3). These courses include: Comprehensive Homemaking I and II; Child Development, Care and Guidance; Family/Individual Health; Family Living and Parenthood, and Food and Nutrition. Essential elements listed for each course allow for and support the inclusion of the teenage problems/issues into the curriculum.

The Framework identifies the four subject areas to be grouped together for each of the two semesters of the comprehensive courses. Comprehensive Homemaking I and II have the same class period allocation for each subject area. The period allocations for the subject areas relevant to this study are: Food and Nutrition (35); Child Development, Care, and Guidance (20); Family/Individual Health (10); and Family Living and Parenthood (20) (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 6). With the number of class periods allotted and the amount of material to be covered; the degree to which a teacher is able to adequately discuss the problems/issues facing teens is questionable. Comprehensive Homemaking II would allow for a more in depth study of the problems/issues because the comprehensive courses are progressive and students who have taken Homemaking I will have already been exposed to these issues. The questions arise as to when addressing these problems/issues are critical to an adolescent and the number of students exposed to this information because they would

have to enroll in Homemaking I then II. Data in this study indicate that Homemaking II and III are not offered by the majority of the high schools, so as indicated by the teachers and the students, Homemaking I appears to be the obvious course to address these issues/problems.

As revealed by the data, the semester course(s) are fully capable of comprehensively addressing teen problems/issues. Developing concepts and skills related to the preparation for parenthood plus prenatal and postnatal care are essential elements emphasized in the semester course Child Development, Care and Guidance (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984). This focus easily includes the discussion of teen sexuality and pregnancy. This course also provides the student with the opportunity to develop "concepts and skills in the evaluation of a child's development" which includes:

1. Identifying influences on the development of children, and
2. Analyzing factors related to physical, motor, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development. (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 67)

With these essential elements in mind, a discussion of all problems/issues related to the development of an individual can be addressed - especially when adolescent development is discussed.

In the semester course, Family/Individual Health, the essential elements supporting the discussion of teen problems/issues include the:

1. Concepts and skills related to personal health.

- a. characteristics of a healthy person, and
  - b. principles of good health.
2. Concepts and skills related to public health.
    - a. major health concerns, and
    - b. factors contributing to world health problems.
  3. Concepts and skills for the well being of mother and infant. (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 87)

The Family Living and Parenthood course has a strong capability to address each problem/issue confronting teens. The first essential element pertains to the concepts and skills related to individual development, while others relate to the concepts and skills involved in the family life cycle (specifically adjustments, problems, and rewards at each stage) and family crisis (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984) which all support the curriculum's inclusion of any problem/issue the teacher or students perceive as being necessary.

The goal of the semester course, Food and Nutrition, is "to develop concepts and skills related to the significance of food (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 99). The essential elements were: 1) evaluate factors affecting food habits and 2) identify social, cultural and aesthetic values of food (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 99). A sub-competency identified to achieve those two essential elements included "analyzing the physiological, psychological and social influence on eating patterns and habits (Texas Tech's Home Economics Curriculum Center, 1984, p. 101)". A discussion of eating disorders would fall nicely under these



essential elements and competencies.

As illustrated throughout this discussion, the consumer and homemaking courses are certainly capable of addressing all nine problems/issues discussed in this study. The amount of material to cover and the time allotment may make a detailed discussion of each one not feasible. But a discussion of the top three problems/issues perceived by the teachers and teens involved in this research is definitely feasible and possibly critical to today's teens.

#### Recommendations

Limited as they are, the data and interpretations of the study warrant the following recommendations for further research and action. Recommendations pertaining to the study's objectives and methodology plus further research areas are presented below.

#### Objectives

1. Further studies should be conducted to determine what impact the size of the high schools participating in the study has on the findings.
2. Since a significant discrepancy between the teachers' and students' perceptions of the prevalence of the problem/issue, drugs, was revealed in this study, it is critical that teachers develop an awareness and acknowledge drugs as a major problem/issue confronting today's teens.

3. The identification of problems/issues facing teens as perceived by vocational home economics teachers and students enrolled in consumer and homemaking courses should be conducted to point out any changes and/or discrepancies occurring.
4. The consumer and homemaking courses in vocational home economics should continue to address the problems/issues confronting teens.

### Methodology

5. If further studies are undertaken using the same methodology, the total student population or a more representative sample from the high schools in each University Interscholastic League (UIL) basketball classification should be obtained.
6. In this study, the students were mainly enrolled in three consumer and homemaking courses, it is recommended that a random disbursement among all consumer and homemaking courses be done in any future studies to analyze for differences and/or similarities in the findings.

### Further Research

7. Additional studies should be conducted in other parts of Texas to identify the differences and similarities of teachers' and students' perceptions of problems/issues facing teens and the consumer and

homemaking courses addressing them.

8. Studies should be undertaken examining the sex, race, and socioeconomic breakdown of the participants to point out any differences or similarities in the identification of problems/issues facing teens.
9. Teachers and students perceived consumer and homemaking courses as addressing all of the teen problems/issues identified in this study; therefore, it is suggested that additional studies should identify the amount of time spent in the consumer and homemaking course(s) addressing each teen problem/issue.
10. Further research is suggested concerning the teachers' perceptions that Comprehensive Homemaking II and Family/Individual Health semester course should have more impact on addressing teen problems/issues.
11. Research on the teaching techniques utilized when addressing teen problems/issues should be conducted.
12. Further studies should be undertaken on the Texas Vocational Home Economics curriculum process in order to determine the impact of student input as compared to teacher input.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years have you been a home economics teacher? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of High School: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Respond to the following question with regards to the high school in which you are employed.

**PART I**

1. Check the number of students enrolled in the high school (9-12 grades):

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| _____ 0 - 250     | _____ 1251 - 1500 |
| _____ 251 - 500   | _____ 1501 - 1750 |
| _____ 501 - 750   | _____ 1751 - 2000 |
| _____ 751 - 1000  | _____ 2001 - 2250 |
| _____ 1001 - 1250 | _____ 2251 - 2500 |
| _____ Over 2500   |                   |

2. Identify the classification of the high school by circling the appropriate category:

- 5A            4A            3A            2A            A
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Check the number of students enrolled in the courses offered in home economics:

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| _____ 0 - 25   | _____ 101 - 125 |
| _____ 26 - 50  | _____ 126 - 150 |
| _____ 51 - 75  | _____ 151 - 175 |
| _____ 76 - 100 | _____ 176 - 200 |
| _____ Over 200 |                 |

4. How many home economics teachers are employed in the high school? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Check the consumer and homemaking courses offered in your high school:

- |                                                            |                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ Comprehensive Homemaking I                           | _____ Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course             |
| _____ Comprehensive Homemaking II                          | _____ Food and Nutrition Semester Course                       |
| _____ Comprehensive Homemaking III                         | _____ Home Management Semester Course                          |
| _____ Child Development, Care and Guidance Semester Course | _____ Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment Semester Course |
| _____ Clothing and Textiles Semester Course                | _____ Other: Title of Course(s) - _____                        |
| _____ Consumer Education Semester Course                   | _____ _____                                                    |
| _____ Family/Individual Health Semester Course             | _____ _____                                                    |

**PART II**

6. Select the top 3 problem(s)/issue(s) you perceive as being the major ones facing the teenage youth in your high school? Rank the three problem(s)/issue(s) that you have selected in order of prevalence. (1 being the MOST prevalent and 3 being the LEAST prevalent of the ranked three.)

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ Alcohol                 | _____ Run Aways              |
| _____ Alienation/Loneliness   | _____ Suicide                |
| _____ Anorexia/Bulimia        | _____ Teenage Pregnancy      |
| _____ Drugs                   | _____ Teenage Sexuality      |
| _____ Low Self Concept/Esteem | _____ Other: Identify- _____ |
|                               | _____ _____                  |

7a. Do you think that the courses in home economics **SHOULD** address any of the problems you've identified?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes (continue to #7b)            \_\_\_\_\_ No (skip to #1B)

7b. If yes, match the course in column B with the issue/problem in column A that it **SHOULD** address. (Courses in column B may be used more than once.)

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
_____ 8. Alcohol	A. Comprehensive Home-making I
_____ 9. Alienation/Loneliness	B. Comprehensive Home-making II
_____ 10. Anorexia/Bulimia	C. Comprehensive Home-making III
_____ 11. Drugs	D. Child Development, Care and Guidance Semester Course
_____ 12. Low Self Concept/Esteem	E. Clothing and Textiles Semester Course
_____ 13. Run Aways	F. Consumer Education Semester Course
_____ 14. Suicide	G. Family/Individual Health Semester Course
_____ 15. Teenage Pregnancy	H. Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course
_____ 16. Teenage Sexuality	I. Food and Nutrition Semester Course
_____ 17. Other: Identify- _____ _____	J. Home Management Semester Course
	K. Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment Semester Course
	L. Other: Title of Course(s)- _____ _____

18a. Are the home economics courses presently offered in your high school addressing any of these problems?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes (continue to #18b) \_\_\_\_\_ No (skip to #30)

18b. If yes, match the course in column B with the issue/problem in column A that it addresses. (Courses in column B may be used more than once.)

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
_____ 19. Alcohol	A. Comprehensive Home-making I
_____ 20. Alienation/Loneliness	B. Comprehensive Home-making II
_____ 21. Anorexia/Bulimia	C. Comprehensive Home-making III
_____ 22. Drugs	D. Child Development, Care and Guidance Semester Course
_____ 23. Low Self Concept/Esteem	E. Clothing and Textiles Semester Course
_____ 24. Run Aways	F. Consumer Education Semester Course
_____ 25. Suicide	G. Family/Individual Health Semester Course
_____ 26. Teenage Pregnancy	H. Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course
_____ 27. Teenage Sexuality	I. Food and Nutrition Semester Course
_____ 28. Other: Identify- _____ _____	J. Home Management Semester Course
	K. Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment Semester Course
	L. Other: Title of Course(s)- _____ _____

NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of your home economics teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Check the consumer and homemaking course that you are presently enrolled in:

<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Homemaking I	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course
<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Homemaking II	<input type="checkbox"/> Food and Nutrition Semester Course
<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Homemaking III	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Management Semester Course
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Development, Care and Guidance Semester Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment Semester Course
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothing and Textiles Semester Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: Title of Course(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Education Semester Course	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Family/Individual Health Semester Course	_____
	_____
	_____

2. Select the top three (3) problem(s) you think are the major ones facing the teenagers in your high school. Rank the three (3) problems that you have selected in order of the most frequently occurring. (1 being the **MOST** frequently occurring and 3 being the **LEAST** frequently occurring of the ranked three.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/> Runaways
<input type="checkbox"/> Alienation/Loneliness	<input type="checkbox"/> Suicide
<input type="checkbox"/> Anorexia/Bulimia	<input type="checkbox"/> Teenage Pregnancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> Teenage Sexuality
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Self Concept/Esteem	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: Identify-
	_____
	_____
	_____

- 3a. Are the home economics courses presently offered in your high school addressing any of these problems?

Yes (continue to #3b)       No (end of survey)

3b. If yes, match the course in column B with the issue/problem in column A that it addresses. (Courses in column B may be used more than once.)

<u>COLUMN A</u>	<u>COLUMN B</u>
_____ 4. Alcohol	A. Comprehensive Home-making I
_____ 5. Alienation/ Loneliness	B. Comprehensive Home-making II
_____ 6. Anorexia/Bulimia	C. Comprehensive Home-making III
_____ 7. Drugs	D. Child Development, Care and Guidance Semester Course
_____ 8. Low Self Concept/ Esteem	E. Clothing and Textiles Semester Course
_____ 9. Runaways	F. Consumer Education Semester Course
_____ 10. Suicide	G. Family/Individual Health Semester Course
_____ 11. Teenage Pregnancy	H. Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course
_____ 12. Teenage Sexuality	I. Food and Nutrition Semester Course
_____ 13. Other: Identify- _____ _____ _____	J. Home Management Semester Course
	K. Housing, Home Fur- nishings, and Equipment Semester Course
	L. Other: Title of Course(s) _____ _____ _____

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE



May 15, 1987

Mrs. John Doe  
Home Economics Dept.  
High School  
805 N. High School Lane  
Nowhere, Texas 00000

Dear Mrs. Doe:

Since home economics focuses on improving one's quality of life, the question arises as to whether the home economics curriculum attempts to improve the youths' quality of life by addressing the problems facing them. By highlighting this question, one is attempting to examine the existing situation and make recommendations for the improvement of the youths' present and future quality of life.

I am a graduate student at Oklahoma State University working on a masters degree in Home Economics Education and Community Services.. One of the objectives in my graduate program is to determine the most prevalent issues confronting today's teens. As a high school home economics teacher, you are in an ideal position to help me make that determination. Additionally, your input on how the resolution of these problems is implemented or could be implemented in the content of your courses is needed. Last of all, input from your students concerning these issues is requested to increase the validity of the research.

I am restricting my research to high schools in District XVI because of my close association with the teens in this area. I grew up in Pampa, Texas, so I am especially interested in the problems facing teens in the Texas Panhandle and how the home economics curriculum is assisting them in overcoming their problems.

The completion of the attached surveys will assist me in identifying the major problems confronting the youths in your high school and specific ways the home economics curriculum is addressing these problems. Your responses will be confidential, and your assistance will be greatly appreciate. Please complete the enclosed questionnaires by MAY 31, 1987 and return in the enclosed stamped envelope to:

Bobbie Skaggs  
805 N. Christy  
Pampa, Texas 79065

If you would like a summary of this study, please indicate by circling one of the following:

I (would) (would not) like a summary.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Sincerely,



Bobbie Skaggs  
Graduate Student

Bettye Gaffney, Ed.D.  
Academic Adviser

NOTE: If you request a summary, we shall record your request by the number of your questionnaire. Persons recording your responses will not have access to your name and address.

HI!

Just a note to remind you to fill out and return the needs assessment questionnaire(s), the one(s) addressing teenage problem(s)/issue(s) and the vocational home economics curriculum, by MAY 31, 1987. In order to complete my study with accurate results, your input is needed.

If you have already mailed your questionnaire(s), please accept my sincere thank you for this valuable information. Your support and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Bobbie Skaggs  
Graduate Student  
Oklahoma State University

August 10, 1987

Mrs. John Doe  
Home Economics Dept.  
High School  
805 N. High School Lane  
Nowhere, Texas 00000

Dear Mrs. Doe:

I am writing in regard to the needs assessment questionnaire(s) sent to you in May asking for your and/or your students' cooperation in the completion of this questionnaire(s).

I apologize that the questionnaire(s) arrived so late and at such a busy time of the year, therefore making it very difficult to complete. However, your input is still needed to increase the validity of my research.

If it is at all possible, please complete the questionnaire(s) and return in the envelope previously provided.

Thanks so much for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Bobbie Skaggs  
Graduate Student  
Oklahoma State University

APPENDIX C

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

## COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING I

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Comprehensive Homemaking I shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for Comprehensive Homemaking I as follows:

Concepts and skills related to family living and parenthood. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Develop self-awareness and positive self-direction.
2. Define developmental tasks of young persons moving toward adulthood.
3. Summarize ways to develop and maintain mental health.
4. Identify skills involved in the occupation of homemaking.
5. Develop an awareness of factors involved in marriage and family life.
6. Describe how behavior affects the rights and privileges of others.
7. Identify factors which influence relationships with peers, children, and older adults.
8. Outline rights and responsibilities of family members and families.
9. Relate home economics skills to jobs and careers.
10. Evaluate the effects of career choice on the family.

Concepts and skills related to home management and consumer education. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

11. Identify the meaning and elements of management.
12. Develop a personal decision-making procedure.
13. Organize management of time, energy, and income.
14. Identify related job opportunities.

Concepts and skills for managing food and nutrition for the family. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

15. Analyze basic nutrition requirements.
16. Investigate management and consumer aspects of food and nutrition including sanitation and safety.

## COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING II

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Comprehensive Homemaking II shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for Comprehensive Homemaking II as follows:

Concepts and skills related to family living and parenthood. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Develop skills for effective personal interaction in groups and with special individuals.
2. Analyze own development.
3. Identify adjustments of the single adult.
4. Identify adjustments necessitated by marriage.
5. Identify and evaluate the components of responsible parenthood.
6. Describe support systems and service for families with small children.
7. Identify financial considerations involved in child care.
8. Identify related job opportunities and recognize responsibilities of the dual role of homemaker and wage earner.

Concepts and skills related to home management and consumer education. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

9. Analyze and evaluate decision-making procedures impacting on family use of all resources.
10. Analyze and evaluate management of household tasks for quality family living.
11. Develop consumer skills essential to satisfying family living.
12. Identify related job opportunities.

Concepts and skills related to child development. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

13. Relate principles of human development to the young child (infant through five years).
14. Prepare for parenthood.
15. Outline factors which contribute to the well-being of the mother and unborn child.

## COMPREHENSIVE HOMEMAKING III

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Comprehensive Homemaking III shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for Comprehensive Homemaking III as follows:

Concepts and skills related to family living and parenthood. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Analyze family-related laws.
2. Investigate possible adjustments at each stage of the family life cycle.
3. Identify available support systems at each stage of the life cycle.
4. Identify family problems and crises.
5. Identify interpersonal skills needed for job success.
6. Analyze the interrelationship of employment and home life.
7. Identify related career ladders.

Concepts and skills related to home management and consumer education. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

8. Identify changing management patterns throughout the family life cycle.
9. Investigate community resources related to family management.
10. Identify ways to achieve financial security.
11. Identify related careers and job opportunities.

Concepts and skills related to child development. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

12. Evaluate physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and personality development of the school-age child.
13. Describe needs of exceptional children.
14. Identify principles and methods of effective guidance.
15. Investigate causes and solutions to the problem of child abuse.
16. Assess child care alternatives.
17. Identify and evaluate community resources related to the school-age child.



## CHILD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND GUIDANCE SEMESTER COURSE

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The Child Development, Care, and Guidance Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Child Development, Care, and Guidance Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to preparation for parenthood. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Identify tasks and responsibilities of parents.
2. Describe consumer considerations for babies such as equipment, clothing, medical expenses, insurance, and child care.
3. Identify and evaluate the emotional factors related to parenting.

Concepts and skills related to prenatal and postnatal care. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

4. Summarize the principles of prenatal and neonatal development.
5. Identify neonatal care essential to the well-being of mother and child.

Concepts and skills in evaluation of a child's development. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

6. Identify principles of child development and relate them to specific children.
7. Identify influences on development of children.
8. Analyze factors related to physical, motor, intellectual, emotional, moral, and social development.
9. Evaluate factors affecting the development of exceptional children.
10. Analyze whether one's characteristics are a result of heredity or environment, or both.
11. Describe the importance of nurturance to the development of a child.

Concepts and skills related to child care techniques. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

12. Apply basic needs of individuals to the care of young children.
13. Identify the role of play in learning.

## CLOTHING AND TEXTILES SEMESTER COURSE

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The Clothing and Textiles Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Clothing and Textile Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills affecting family clothing decisions. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Identify factors affecting decisions.
2. Identify possible resources for effective decision making.
3. Develop a procedure for family decision making.

Concepts and skills for consumer buying. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

4. Identify the effects of advertising and labeling on consumer choice.
5. Identify consumer protection agencies and their services.
6. Define effective standards for consumer buying.
7. Identify and practice principles for good decision making.

Concepts and skills related to the fashion industry. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

8. Identify the different types of businesses in the clothing fashion industry.
9. Describe factors influencing the clothing fashion industry.
10. Identify ways the industry affects the national economy.

Concepts and skills of clothing management. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

11. Describe the role and principles of effective wardrobe planning.
12. Demonstrate effective principles of wardrobe planning.
13. Evaluate various clothing-care products.
14. Demonstrate use of major clothing equipment aids.

Concepts and skills for selecting textiles. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

15. Identify fiber characteristics.

## CONSUMER EDUCATION SEMESTER COURSE

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The Consumer Education Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Consumer Education Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to allocation of resources. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Identify the purposes of and factors involved in management.
2. Develop and use the decision-making process.
3. Organize personal budget to fit needs of individual and family.
4. Identify types of savings and investment plans available to consumers.
5. Identify types of credit, insurance, social security, and taxes.

Concepts and skills related to consumer buying. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

6. Evaluate factors which influence consumer purchasing.
7. Identify principles of consumer purchasing.
8. Analyze factors influencing housing choices.
9. Identify housing alternatives.
10. Evaluate housing to meet family needs.
11. Describe how to buy and maintain automotive products and services.
12. Evaluate the significance of consumerism as it relates to food, meal planning, and food technology.
13. Identify clothing needs and ways to budget and purchase clothes for family members.

Concepts and skills related to consumer citizenship. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

14. Describe government legislation affecting consumers.
15. Identify the rights and responsibilities of a consumer.
16. Identify types of fraudulent and deceptive practices.

**FAMILY/ INDIVIDUAL HEALTH SEMESTER COURSE****ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

The Family/Individual Health Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Family/Individual Health Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to personal health. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Identify characteristics of a healthy person.
2. Describe principles of good personal health.

Concepts and skills related to family health protection. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

3. Identify management principles for family health and safety.
4. Analyze factors influencing family health decisions.
5. Identify ways to adjust to family health problems.

Concepts and skills related to public health. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

6. Identify major health concerns.
7. Evaluate factors contributing to world health problems.
8. Identify public health organizations.
9. Evaluate situations affecting community health.
10. Identify community health measures.
11. Describe methods for providing a safe environment.
12. Identify available community resources.

Concepts and skills for the well-being of mother and infant. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

13. Define principles involved in preparing for children.
14. Identify principles of neonatal care.
15. Identify principles of care of the mother.
16. Identify principles of care of the growing infant.

**FAMILY LIVING AND PARENTHOOD SEMESTER COURSE****ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

The Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Family Living and Parenthood Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to individual development. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Analyze individual needs at various stages of development.
2. Develop appreciation of self, family, and peers.
3. Relate management principles to personal life.

Concepts and skills related to preparation for adult living. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

4. Develop effective interaction skills in groups and with special individuals.
5. Identify adjustments of the single adult.
6. Describe commitments made in marriage vows.
7. Identify adjustments necessitated by marriage.
8. Weigh options for the immediate future.

Concepts and skills related to responsible parenthood. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

9. Identify qualities needed by parents.
10. Analyze financial considerations related to children.
11. Identify potential emotional effects of parenthood.
12. Identify and evaluate the components of responsible parenthood.
13. Identify community resources available in special parenting situations.

Concepts and skills related to factors which contribute to a successful family life. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

14. Analyze factors affecting relationships within the family.
15. Describe rights and responsibilities of family members.

## FOOD AND NUTRITION SEMESTER COURSE

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The Food and Nutrition Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Food and Nutrition Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to the significance of food. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Evaluate factors affecting food habits.
2. Identify social, cultural, and aesthetic values of food.
3. Identify local, state, and federal nutrition programs.

Concepts and skills of food buying. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

4. Identify the effects of advertising, consumer agencies, and other resources on food buying.
5. Describe principles of wise use of available resources.
6. Develop a procedure using good consumer practices in the marketplace.

Concepts and skills of kitchen planning and management. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

7. Identify principles for establishing effective work areas.
8. Describe major and minor equipment needs.
9. Identify and practice principles of equipment care and repair.
10. Identify factors affecting cost.
11. Evaluate equipment cost vs. equipment features.
12. Identify and practice safety procedures in the kitchen.

Concepts and skills related to family nutrition. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

13. Identify the effects of nutrition on the body's digestion, absorption, and utilization.
14. Assess energy needs of the body as they affect weight.
15. Analyze classification of nutrient characteristics, sources, and functions.

## HOME MANAGEMENT SEMESTER COURSE

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The Home Management Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Home Management Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to personal and family living. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Explain the importance of management in reaching family goals by dual role homemakers.
2. Compare human and nonhuman resources and identify ways to utilize them.
3. Establish personal priorities.

Concepts and skills related to management process. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

4. Identify steps in decision making.
5. Identify types of decisions and factors affecting choices.
6. Describe how to adapt to change in today's society.
7. Apply management skills to achieve personal and family goals.

Concepts and skills related to managing a home. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

8. Select a home to meet the psychological and sociological needs of the individual.
9. Describe how to select home furnishings and equipment.
10. Summarize food resources.
11. Identify alternate approaches for resolving problems of food management.
12. Describe the importance of achieving family goals as a group.
13. Identify multiple roles of family members.
14. Identify physical and psychological needs of children.
15. Plan for family clothing needs.
16. Outline transportation needs and alternatives.

## HOUSING, HOME FURNISHINGS, AND EQUIPMENT SEMESTER COURSE

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment Semester Course shall include instruction in the following essential elements:

Essential Elements Common to All Vocational Education Courses found on page 10.

Essential elements identified for the Housing, Home Furnishings, and Equipment Semester Course as follows:

Concepts and skills related to the basic functions of housing. The students shall be provided opportunities to:

1. Identify methods of meeting physical and emotional needs of the family.
2. Evaluate the role of housing in relation to protection, privacy, and self-expression.

Concepts and skills related to the influence of home environment on the family. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

3. Describe the relationship of housing conditions to health and safety.
4. Identify principles which satisfy the psychological needs and well-being of family members.
5. Define influences of housing on social and emotional development.
6. Analyze the effect of the environment on the intellectual growth and development of family members.
7. Identify economical methods for families to satisfy their housing needs and wants.
8. Analyze ways housing is influenced by economic changes.

Concepts and skills related to factors influencing housing and home furnishings decisions. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

9. Identify human factors such as life style and stage in life cycle which may influence decisions.
10. Describe housing alterations to meet special requirements needed by the disabled, very young, or the very old family member.

Concepts and skills related to housing trends in the future. The student shall be provided opportunities to:

11. Identify the effects of populations.
12. Analyze the effects of pollution on future housing.



VITA

Bobbie G. Skaggs

Candidate for the Degree of  
Master of Science

Thesis: TEEN PROBLEMS/ISSUES AND COURSES ADDRESSING THEM  
AS PERCEIVED BY HOME ECONOMICS STUDENTS AND  
TEACHERS

Major Field: Home Economics Education and Community Services

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Pampa, Texas, February 3, 1963,  
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Education: Graduated from Pampa High School, Pampa,  
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