

GUIDING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN SHARING  
WORTHY LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

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## PREFACE

Observation from childhood made the writer concerned with the need for planning and guiding young people in the community to make wise use of leisure time. Long time interest in leisure time activities plus limited recreational facilities in the community, prompted the study to find worthwhile ways of using time wisely for group and individual development.

Conversations with pupils enrolled in homemaking classes aroused the interest of the writer in finding and using leisure time pursuits which would help them develop socially.

As a home economics teacher, observations at home and school impressed the writer with the definite need to develop within pupils a desire to make constructive use of leisure time at home as well as at school.

The writer wishes to express her sincerest appreciation to her adviser, Miss Rowan Elliff whose inspirational guidance and careful criticisms encouraged the development of the study. Appreciation is also expressed to Dr. Millie V. Pearson, Head of the Department of Home Economics at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. Particular appreciation is due the twenty high school girls and their families who participated in the study and to Principal W. D. Murphy and the faculty of Douglass High School for their encouragement.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN SATISFYING BASIC NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES . . . . .	1
II. PLANS FOR MEETING RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES . . . . .	8
Limitation of the Study . . . . .	8
The Community . . . . .	9
Schools . . . . .	11
Students . . . . .	11
Major Hypothesis . . . . .	12
Basic Assumptions . . . . .	12
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	13
Reasons for Choosing the Problem . . . . .	13
Definition of Terms . . . . .	15
Activities Carried on in Making the Study . . . . .	15
III. GUIDING INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN SHARING LEISURE TIME . . . . .	18
Needs Recognized by the Students Following Discussion of the Survey Included . . . . .	21
Activities Engaged in by Families Included . . . . .	25
Recreational Activities Carried on in Club Work . . . . .	25
Individual Reports of Leisure Time Activities . . . . .	27
Report from the Johnson Family . . . . .	31
Sewing . . . . .	31
Playing Games . . . . .	31
Television . . . . .	31
Radio . . . . .	31
Traveling . . . . .	32
Church . . . . .	32
School . . . . .	32
Taking Pictures . . . . .	32
Mrs. Roxanne Alexander's Report . . . . .	33
Report of the Tyner Family . . . . .	35

Chapter	Page
IV. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY . . . . .	37
Findings . . . . .	39
Recommendations . . . . .	39
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	44
APPENDIX . . . . .	47
VITA . . . . .	48
TYPIST PAGE . . . . .	49

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Individual Leisure Time Activities of Interest to Girls Enrolled in Homemaking . . . . .	19
II. Family Activities from Which Members as a Group Derive Pleasure . . . . .	20

## CHAPTER I

### THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN SATISFYING BASIC NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Today both school administrators and home economics teachers are asking themselves, what are the real values, attitudes and beliefs that influence the educational program in this rapidly changing American democracy in which we live? Before teachers can adequately guide pupils toward optimum human development they must be able to clarify their own beliefs regarding the educational philosophy of others. Education should prepare individuals for living and contributing to the promotion of a shared society based upon the democratic ideals set forth in the Constitution of the United States.

The school as an organized agency has for its purpose the defending and extending of the democratic way of life through its citizens; therefore its concern should be that of developing individuals who will be able to find a satisfactory place in life and make worthwhile contributions to society.

The school program should focus attention upon things people do to provide themselves a livelihood and to promote the worthy use of leisure time and better living in general. This should encourage individual achievement and the formation of beliefs and attitudes that will permit the individual to choose and prepare to occupy a place in society acceptable to him. The method of interpretation of the meaning of education will in a large measure rest with the philosophy of administrators, the teachers and the members of the community in which one lives.

Since one of the major aims of education is to prepare pupils for

satisfying personal, home and family living, home economics teachers should use all available resources to capitalize on opportunities to enrich the program and to guide pupils in using leisure time wisely. Homemaking education is designed to provide experiences related to real life situations which tend to enable pupils to become self directive in constructive living. It also attempts to aid individuals in solving problems as they arise whether personal, or in families or groups. Such education can be an on-going process if it provides a challenge for growth, not only during the years in school but after formal schooling is complete. The homemaking teacher therefore should help her pupils to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom to the solving of personal and home problems.

Homemaking education should be an integral part of education as a whole. It offers many opportunities for enriching the whole school program at all levels by providing a curriculum that is practical and realistic. Education for homemaking should not be set aside from the rest of the school program, but should be based upon everyday experiences in the school, home, and community. In this relationship it can contribute to helping pupils live better.

Pupils, parents, and others in the immediate environment have a stake in the program and should lend their ideas and assistance in planning, sharing, and carrying out worthwhile activities. Through planning, the individual can find ways to translate the general objectives of education into home economics activities and finally to result in changed behavior.

Much has been written regarding the value and use of leisure time pursuits. When needs have been sensed, parents, teachers and students are interested in finding more satisfactory ways of using leisure time



wisely.

Due to commercialized activities along with changing home conditions many leisure time activities are increasingly taken away from the home. Therefore home economics has as one of its aims the promotion of education for family living through family shared leisure time activities. The teacher has an opportunity to guide others in providing learning experiences which will help the family as well as pupils become increasingly efficient in using resources common to their environment.

Many problems are emerging from the social, economic, and industrial conditions of our time. The need for using leisure time wisely has been keenly sensed by many teachers, parents, and others interested in education. Individuals are faced with shorter working hours. Inventions shorten the working day of young people outside of regular school activities; hence the problem of finding leisure time pursuits is of vital importance not only for individual and family development but for society as well.

In the field of education Faust<sup>1</sup> states that,

Through play or recreation, living is enriched and we keep physically and spiritually fit. Through play in leisure hours we find our greatest opportunity for self-expression for growth and development, for achieving cultural and spiritual heights.

Music, drama and pageantry, creative art, literature and recreational forms of play are absolutely essential to the enrichment of the life of the individual and the home.

Leaders in many areas seem to feel that young people engage in costly leisure time pursuits which often may not only be expensive but positively harmful. Many times the activities sought by individuals

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<sup>1</sup>John W. Faust, "What Makes it Bounce", Recreation, November, 1950, p. 209.

outside the home are of little value or even actually harmful; they lack necessary supervision and guidance to be worthwhile because very few opportunities for using time wisely have been provided in the home or the community.

A review of literature related to the study of leisure time activities indicates that much has been written and that leaders in all fields recognize the need for well chosen leisure time activities as well as means of using leisure wisely. Sparks<sup>2</sup> states that "Shared family recreation can be planned which allows for individual preferences and abilities; which is educational and creative and can be incorporated into all areas of family activity thus increasing mutual understanding and respect between various age and interest groups." Many thinking people recognize the value of shared leisure time as a means of bringing the family closer together in our present social set up.

In a recent study Hawkins<sup>3</sup> states,

Much of the literature shows that recreation and leisure time activities are increasingly centered away from the home. Changing home conditions along with reduction in size of families often makes it necessary for children to seek outside the home those experiences and values of cooperative and social activities which were once acquired at home.

Home economics teachers should feel a responsibility for putting forth effort, and for working with and teaching the value of using leisure time wisely. Many worthwhile contributions can be made toward helping pupils in meeting the need for using time wisely as one way of improving social and family living.

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<sup>2</sup>Amy Means Sparks, Suggestions for Teaching Family Recreation Through the Homemaking Program. Abstract.

<sup>3</sup>Harold L. Hawkins, A Study of Family and Leisure Time Activities, p. 6.

This is in agreement with Groves who says,<sup>4</sup>

In some present day families cooperation and compromise seem to be interpreted as the enjoyment of leisure by the children while the parents do all the work. It is natural that the young should seek pleasure and the mature confine themselves more closely to productive activities; yet unless parents do something, be it work or play, in the spirit of fun rather than for its own sake than because of any utilitarian value to come from it, they cripple not only themselves but their children's regard for them.

A father who never appears in any role other than wage earner or handy man about the house is hardly thought of as a personality distinct from the pocketbook or ash can. The pursuit of some hobby, sport, or skill outside the daily routine, intensifies the parents own individuality and gives importance to his personality in the eyes of his children. If family leisure is to have meaning, it must include recreation for the parents as well as the younger generation!

Many of the treasures and values of family living are merely taken for granted. The age shows evidence of this, but individuals must dedicate themselves to the preservation of the institutions which nurture and influence future citizens.

Since social maturity is an all important factor in growing up, opportunity should be provided for a wide range of experiences providing participation in activities common to the environment. Many unexplored channels may prove to be fascinating to students who had little or no interest in leisure time activities. The introduction of new interests must begin where students have an interest and then build a variety of new experiences which provide for group and individual participation.

Leisure time activities should help young people to spend or invest their time wisely, in order to meet the needs of a rapidly changing complex society, if success is to follow in terms of social maturity. Parents help to give children a feeling of security when they provide for the training necessary for satisfying adult life, rather than allow them

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<sup>4</sup>Ernest R. and Gladys H. Groves, "Leisure in the Family", Child Study, February, 1928, pp. 8, 9.

to make mistakes and direct their own activities.

It is the duty of the school as well as the home to provide training in the use of leisure time activities in order to diminish juvenile delinquency problems, but this responsibility is often ignored or even denied.

According to J. Edgar Hoover,<sup>5</sup>

Youth played a predominate part in crimes in 1949 against property. 27.4 percent of the persons charged with robbery, embezzlement, burglary, larceny, auto theft, fraud, forgery, counterfeiting, receiving stolen property and arson were less than 21 years old. The predominate age among persons arrested was 21.

These vital statistics would be of serious concern to educators, parents and others interested in the problems of youth as they exist. Evidently the answer lies in the fact that many youth have not learned to satisfy certain basic needs in a desirable manner. Thus, it is evident that the value of what to do during leisure hours is of vast importance, if young people are to make the most of unoccupied time.

The teacher should be prepared to meet the needs of the group by becoming acquainted with many varied leisure time pursuits. Many students may be unaware of the possibilities of leisure time activities and therefore find themselves with nothing to do. The teacher may acquaint them with activities that may prove interesting and fascinating to them.

Davis<sup>6</sup> agrees with this point of view. He believes in "teaching acceptable ways of utilizing emotional energy in preparing the individual to live at peace with himself and with society." One of the most

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<sup>5</sup>J. Edgar Hoover, "High-lights of Uniform Crime Reports for 1949, The World Almanac and Book of Facts, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup>Robert Davis, Educational Psychology (New York, 1948), McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

effective ways by which learning may be continued is to guide pupils to develop their abilities to plan and work with family members and others to develop their leisure time activities through initiative and creative efforts. Planned leisure time activities promote family "together-ness" and provide excellent opportunities to include all members in cooperative activities. When families work together in planning to use leisure, family living is enriched, and family skills are developed while in - sight and self direction are provided which are necessary for resourceful and constructive living.

Children need to be given an opportunity to work with parents and to be given responsibilities and privileges in helping with household duties and social functions through which they may share pleasant hours.

Dr. Thom<sup>7</sup> says,

Children will become interested in parents and the family as a group only if they are permitted to take an active part in the family activities at the earliest possible age. Children should be given an intelligent insight into what goes to make up life of the parents. The mother's responsibilities in running the house, the social and economic status of his particular family as compared with that of other families.

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<sup>7</sup>Douglass A. Thom, Guiding the Adolescent. (Washington 25, D. C., Revised 1946), Federal Security Agency, Social Security Administration, U. S. Children's Bureau, Publication 225.

## CHAPTER II

### PLANS FOR MEETING RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

The first part of the study was concerned with the use of leisure time activities in the achievement of democratic ideals which would enrich American life. Teachers, parents, and community leaders desire to improve the education of all children in the wise use of leisure time.

Educators are concerned with helping students in schools and the people in the community to meet their basic needs. The writer was aware of her responsibility for working with the families of 20 girls enrolled in her homemaking classes in planning leisure time activities which would encourage them and their families to learn many skills and to use them creatively in developing wholesome family shared recreation.

The study was based on the belief that if her teaching was significant, pupils and parents would plan leisure time activities cooperatively and thus strengthen individual and home life.

#### Limitation of the Study:

The problem was limited in scope to a study of recreational and leisure time activities carried on by the twenty junior and senior high school girls who were enrolled in homemaking in Douglass High School in Duncan, Oklahoma together with their families. Emphasis was placed on the major leisure and recreational activities in this particular environment.

The study was further limited to the responsibility of the homemaking teacher in setting up units to be taught in classes and working cooperatively with parents in the home toward actually carrying on leisure

time experiences with family groups.

#### The Community:

Some understanding of a community is helpful in interpreting a program that has its focus on family life. Duncan is located in southwest Oklahoma. It has a population of approximately 25,000. It is the county seat and a business center for neighboring towns and rural communities which make it the metropolis of that particular area.

Due to a tremendous growth in population within the past eight years, the community has taken on customs and cultural patterns which blend into the democratic way of life. While segregation still exists, there is an unusual and friendly relationship between races which illustrates progress toward more democratic ways of living and thinking.

Commonly known in recent years as the "Buckle on the Oil Belt," areas surrounding Duncan produce an abundance of oil. Two of the largest oil companies, Sunray and Rock Island Refining Companies have main offices in Duncan. The industry in which the city takes greatest pride is the Halliburton Oil Well Cementing Company which employs approximately two thirds of the population, however many people are engaged in farming and in business.

There are three banks in the community which are supported by the various industries already mentioned. The majority of the people appear progressive and use many modern facilities.

The health status is good. This is an accomplishment of the cooperation of local health departments and families residing in the residential district.

Most of the property in this community is privately owned. Only a small percent of the homes are rented. There is a small Federal Housing

project in one area which is rented. It might be said that about three-fourths of the homes are owned and one-fourth rented. It was assumed that experiences would be selected that were based on family-centered activities designed to preserve some of the family solidarity lost in commercial leisure time pursuits.

The problem did not include the organizing and developing of community and physical educational activities, except as they related to family leisure time activities. This does not mean that the teacher did not intend to encourage such projects in the community, but that she would work through class experiences leading to home participation so that parents and other family members might be encouraged to experience and see the value of improving family recreation.

Emphasis was placed on the value of using time wisely to give students the opportunity to entertain themselves as well as the family group. Since idleness may breed bad habits, pupils were directed in finding ways to occupy themselves during periods of leisure time. It was hoped that the study might influence others to make a broader and more intensive search for ways of using leisure time with larger groups of individuals and their families.

The fact must not be overlooked that some of the most beautiful churches and some excellent church schools are in the building process.

In spite of the fact that this community is located in a thriving metropolis there are limited recreational facilities in the Head addition where most of the Negro people live, therefore the writer chose to work with families and students to encourage them to manage and use their leisure time wisely. She believed that through cooperative planning and management parents and children could enjoy themselves without spending



money lavishly. To accomplish this purpose she worked with the homes and the school to set up a teaching unit on leisure time situations. It was not only necessary to work with girls in helping them to meet personal needs but to have an understanding of home conditions in order for her teaching to extend into the community.

#### Schools:

The schools are adequately equipped and well organized due to the efforts of an open-minded democratic superintendent who desires the best for youth in educational training for citizenship. Along with the Board of Education the superintendent has worked untiringly to accomplish a program of education which meets student needs.

There are six grade schools, Duncan Junior and Senior High Schools and Douglass High School for Negroes. These schools are very adequately equipped in that they prepare students to make a livelihood for themselves, if they prefer not to enter college. Trades are offered which prepare them for future living; however a large percent of students leaving high school enter college.

#### Students:

The students vary, coming from average and poor class families; however in each situation families seem to provide an adequate livelihood for their children. The occupational groups include ministers, teachers, businessman, restaurant owners and operators, beauty and barber shops, employees of oil companies, mechanics, chauffeurs, maids, hotel porters, and bootblacks.

As a teacher of homemaking in this locality, the writer believed that the school program could do much in guiding and preparing boys and girls to earn a livelihood. The main problem lay in the fact that there

were no suitable recreational activities for Negro youth. Therefore, the writer accepted as her responsibility the problem of guiding students in homemaking classes in the use of family shared recreation that might be expected to carry over into individual and family life activities.

Major Hypothesis:

The major hypothesis upon which the study was based assumed that the use of family shared leisure time activities is a vital part of a functioning homemaking program: therefore the homemaking teacher should and can help students and their families to experience and see the value of family shared leisure and recreation.

Basic Assumptions:

As a basis for making the study it was assumed that:

1. Leisure time activities for the entire family can be developed at home if the homemaking teacher is alert in planning and working cooperatively with pupils and parents in school and in home experiences.
2. Individuals can be given opportunities to participate in a variety of recreational experiences that may be family shared.
3. Adolescents will accept the opportunity to participate in planned leisure pursuits, if activities in which they may be interested are provided.
4. Individual differences can find expression in leisure time pursuits.
5. Pupils can be taught many ways to use time wisely with little or no cost. Thus family leisure can be shared by the family as a group.
6. Through a well organized recreational program leisure time

activities may make a real contribution to a good life.

Statement of the Problem:

The problem chosen for the study was: How can the teacher of homemaking in a high school give guidance to the members of her classes in the use of family shared recreation that will carry over into individual and family life activities?

Reasons for Choosing the Problem:

1. The teacher of homemaking at Douglass High School in Duncan, Oklahoma recognized the need for guidance in the use of family shared leisure time since there were very few recreational facilities available in the community.  
Observation and varied experiences in teaching homemaking at Douglass School for thirteen years convinced her that wise use of time might make a real contribution to well adjusted personalities and the improvement of personal, home, and family living.
2. Observation from childhood made her conscious of the need for planning and guiding young people in the community in making wiser use of their leisure time. Long time acquaintance with the recreational problem of the community and a recognition of the limited facilities available prompted the effort to help high school students and their families find worthwhile ways of using and managing time wisely for group, family, and individual development.
3. The study was undertaken in an effort to show that family solidarity can be retained regardless of an age of restlessness in which family members seem to have no time in which to enjoy themselves as a group.

4. The teacher was not only concerned with the needs of high school students and their leisure time activities, but of all family members as well.
5. Conversations with pupils enrolled in homemaking classes and home visits with parents aroused further interest in planning and finding more constructive ways to help pupils develop into acceptable citizens.
6. The teacher believed that a study of family shared leisure and recreational activities would provide the needed opportunity for growth and development of class members, and their families and that would suggest many ways through which families and schools might cooperate to achieve an over-all purpose of producing well rounded citizens who would take a worthy place in society.
7. The problem was of importance particularly in a Negro community where the teacher had a definite role in helping pupils and their families to improve personal, home and family living.

The concern gave rise to the following questions:

- a. What are the opportunities for capitalizing on leisure time activities in homemaking classes?
- b. Can leisure in the homes in which these girls live be improved?
- c. Can leisure time activities be taught in homemaking classes?
- d. Will the desire to use leisure time wisely continue after the unit is completed?
- e. What are some evidences of the carry-over in teaching leisure time experiences?

- f. Will there be any evidences that families spend more time together in the home?
- g. In what recreational and leisure time activities are families engaging?

#### Definition of Terms:

According to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary,<sup>8</sup> leisure is defined as:

Free time after the practical necessities of life have been attended to. The adjective leisure means being unoccupied by the practical necessities, as, leisure hours. The adverb leisure applies to slow, deliberate, unhurried undertakings; conceptions of leisure vary from the arithmetical one of twenty four hours. . . which gives the surplus time . . . to the general notion of leisure and the time which one uses as he pleases.

According to the same reference recreation is defined as:

Any activity pursued during leisure, either individual or collective, that is free and pleasurable, having its own immediate appeal, not impelled by a delayed reward beyond itself or by any immediate necessity. Recreation includes play, games, sports, athletics, relaxation, pastimes, certain amusements, art forms, hobbies, and avocations. A recreational activity may be engaged in during any age period of the individual, the particular action being determined by the time element, the condition and attitude of the person, and the environmental situation.

#### Activities Carried on in Making the Study:

1. Explored the possibilities for guiding students in worthy use of leisure time which might be family centered.
2. Examined available studies and literature that would give help on developing a family centered approach to the use of leisure time.
3. Formulated and stated an educational philosophy which placed emphasis on meeting needs in the use of leisure time.
4. Talked with students and parents concerning the significance and importance of leisure time being spent wisely.

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<sup>8</sup>Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Copyright 1941; 50th ed. Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Co., pp. 573, 832.

5. Set up a check list to determine leisure time activities in which family members as a group participated.
6. Set up a check list of leisure time activities in which students participated.
7. Mailed letter to parents asking for their cooperation in the study on using leisure time as one way of strengthening family solidarity.
8. Planned a tentative unit on ways of using leisure time wisely for students in homemaking classes, based on an analysis of findings from the check lists.
9. Worked with parents in their homes to suggest ways in which families might enjoy one another and fulfill one of the several functions of home and family living.
10. Sponsored a program in which families came in groups called "Families Together."
11. Taught a unit concerned with helping students find ways of using leisure time wisely.
12. Worked with New Homemakers of America in developing leisure time activities.
13. Secured reports of experiences in a family centered recreational program from students and mothers.
14. Organized findings and made recommendations for use by other teachers interested in developing family centered leisure time activities.

Four kinds of leisure time activities were considered in making the study, namely: recreational activities, personal enrichment activities, citizenship activities, and personal advancement activities. The varied

uses of leisure were expressed in wisely planned physical, creative, dramatic, and educational activities. It was hoped that through sharing leisure time activities positive attitudes might be created and interests and knowledge be broadened to include all ages of the family group.

It is clear that there is a real need for families to provide leisure time activities that are family centered and make use of facilities readily available at limited cost. The homemaking teacher is in a logical position to take the initiative in helping families to engage in shared leisure time activities.

CHAPTER III  
GUIDING INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES  
IN SHARING LEISURE TIME

Preparation for teaching a unit designed to develop participation in shared leisure time activities required considerable investigation on the part of the teacher to determine the kinds of leisure time experiences that might be desirable. Such planning required that activities be included that would be enjoyed by all members of the family, but the starting point must be the individual girl or class member.

The problem was presented to the class and a list of possible activities was developed from which individuals and family groups might derive enjoyment.

The students with the teacher set up a check list of activities the group felt that they would enjoy. Space was provided for indicating their choices. A copy of this check list is found on page 47.

Information resulting from the check lists is shown in Table I.

The study included not only leisure time activities of students, but also the leisure activities shared by the family group. A letter was mailed to parents asking their cooperation in checking a list of activities in which the family members as a group participated. A copy of the letter is found on page 45.

A check list was mailed to the parents containing a list of leisure time experiences from which family members as a group derive pleasure. A copy of this check list is found on page 46.

Results are shown in Table II, indicating the activities from which families derive much, some, or little pleasure.



TABLE I

Individual Leisure Time Activities of Interest  
to Girls Enrolled in Homemaking

Items	Choice
Hiking	0
Going to parties	4
Going to plays	1
Cooking	4
Window shopping	1
Making clothes	10
Visiting friends	5
Playing cards	2
Singing	5
Reading	6
Church	16
Playing baseball	1
Listening to the radio	3
Talking with others	6
Going to the movies	13
Going to concerts	2
Roller skating	5
Playing music	3
Attending club and group meetings	4
Dancing	5
Doing hobbies	0
Playing tennis	0
Playing basketball	15
Going automobile riding	0
Driving an automobile	4

TABLE II  
Family Activities from Which Members  
as a Group Derive Pleasure

Family Activities	Much	Some	Little
Going on picnics	9	6	5
Going to church	15	2	3
Visiting and entertaining friends	4	11	5
Driving for pleasure	13	4	3
Fishing	12	2	6
Watching television	10	5	5
Attending sports events	8	7	5
Listening to the radio	10	7	3
Dancing	12	4	4
Reading	8	8	4
Gardening	2	9	4
Playing games	5	9	9
Playing cards	7	5	6
Attending parties	9	7	8
Working at home	12	4	4
Listening to individual or group singing	9	10	1
Listening to music	9	7	4
Playing musical instruments	3	4	13
Attending club meetings	7	9	4
School activities	9	8	3
Attending socials	6	8	6
Sewing	8	8	4
Attending concerts	4	8	8
Making things with one's hands	6	7	7
Working on handicrafts such as crocheting, embroidering, and quilting	7	7	6

The results of the survey made in the classroom and those secured from the check lists marked by parents in the homes of the twenty high school girls and their families, were studied by the group and analyzed in order to give guidance in organizing a more adequate recreational program designed to introduce new ways of spending leisure time.

The survey appeared to indicate that:

1. A more clearly defined statement of the meaning and contribution of leisure and recreation was needed.
2. A greater variety of experiences in leisure time activities was needed.
3. Members of the family needed to assume some responsibility for recreation in the home.
4. There was need for selecting activities for creative self expression.
5. Students as well as the members of the family needed to learn to choose activities that would not involve the spending of large sums of money.
6. Experiences designed to improve family solidarity should be selected and carried out in the home utilizing some of the new experiences emphasized in units of class work.
7. An understanding of a variety of leisure time experiences was needed for maximum development of family members.
8. The relationship between school, the homes, and the community might be improved if recreational and leisure time pursuits were encouraged and experienced.

Needs Recognized by the Students Following Discussion of the Survey Included:

1. Knowing kinds of leisure time activities available.
2. Recognizing and planning better use of leisure time.
3. Making more satisfying social adjustments in home and community living.
4. Developing a consciousness of community responsibility toward recreation.
5. Selecting suitable reading materials for one's self.
6. Understanding the importance of family shared leisure.
7. Gaining some knowledge of how to set up family recreational and leisure time projects.
8. Developing some understandings regarding the value of various commercial types of entertainment.
9. Developing an appreciation of a home which offers opportunities for wholesome leisure time and recreation.
10. Using resources available in the home to get the most value from the time used.

In order to secure help in meeting the needs they had discovered the students raised questions that were related to their personal and family problems. These included problems that required study in the initial, the developmental and the culminating stages of the study.

Problems considered in the initial stage included:

1. The importance of using leisure time wisely.  
The importance of developing leisure-time habits early.  
The effect of leisure-time activities on our national life.  
Leisure during war and emergency.
2. What does leisure mean to you?
3. How does your family use its leisure?

Leisure time in the family fifty years ago and now.

Leisure time activities in everyday family life.

4. What kinds of leisure time activities may families enjoy?

Recreational activities.

Personal enrichment activities.

Citizenship activities.

Working together.

5. What is the relation between work and leisure?

Balance of one's work and play.

Compensation of recreation for what is lacking in work.

6. What leisure opportunities are offered by the school and community?

Organizations.

Community recreation.

Use of library.

7. What commercial entertainment is available?

Motion pictures.

The radio.

Television.

Public dances.

8. How may the home be used as a recreational center?

The importance of the home as a means of security.

9. Am I forming good leisure time habits which will always be of value to me?

10. How can my family spend some of its leisure time together?

For general advancement?

For recreation?

After analyzing the results of the brief surveys and considering the problems which were raised the group members were concerned with:

1. Planning to get the most from leisure time.

Cultivating a hobby.

Playing a musical instrument.

Craft work.

Drawing and painting.

Photography.

Bird study.

Care and training of pets.

Collecting.

2. Getting out of doors the year around.

3. Family parties for special occasions.

4. Out-door experiences with nature.

5. Enjoyment of beauty.

6. Playing for self expression.

7. Experimenting and learning new leisure time activities.

8. Making plans for family shared leisure time activities.

9. Carrying out plans made in developing family shared leisure time and recreational activities.

The entire community was interested in family shared recreation.

Over a period of eight weeks students reported activities considering such questions as:

1. Are members of the family learning to know and enjoy each other better?

2. Do family members have a definite, cooperative plan for spending some leisure together?

3. Do family members have a variety of interests?

4. Are arrangements made for the individual interests of each member.
5. Am I learning to know and enjoy my family more?
6. Are we learning ways of enjoying each other?
7. Do I really plan my leisure time activities?
8. Do my leisure time activities bring me what I want most?

A richer life?

Broader interests and real enjoyment?

9. Do I engage in some form of creative self-expression?

Activities Engaged in by Families Included:

Flower gardening.

Making collections of various kinds.

Photography.

Millinery.

Poultry raising.

Playing games. (Shuffleboard, badminton)

Candy pulling.

Playing tennis.

Engaging in sports.

Writing poems.

Nature study.

Treasure hunts.

Playing party games.

Sewing.

Cooking.

Recreational Activities Carried on in Club Work:

Through the New Homemakers of America students implemented the idea

of learning to manage time wisely. At first many girls complained of a lack of leisure time, but time schedules were worked out by the girls to show that some time was left for leisure and recreation.

Meetings of the club were held on Wednesdays and the girls worked in groups of four. Each group was asked to contribute a new idea or way of doing something which other members of the group were able to learn quickly. By using such a method each person profited by the experiences of others and shared with other club members.

The group decided to do some activities related to leisure and recreational experiences in class and others through the New Homemakers of America club. The teaching of handicrafts in class proved interesting. The teacher made a display of some of the types of things she had done and allowed the group to decide on the activities they wanted to work with. Johnson grass mats, terry cloth house shoes, yarn belts, glass etching, rick rack ear screws, textile painting, sequin ties, and felt purses were made. During open house night a display was made of the work of students in the homemaking department.

They felt that the playing of games would be more far reaching if enjoyed by the New Homemakers of America club as a group rather than by individual classes. Before the closing of each meeting a committee of four girls introduced new games for the group in which members participated. Some games requiring thinking rather than strenuous physical activity were provided.

The significance and importance of hobbies was discussed by the group. The teacher taught a unit showing students how hobbies may become useful as a source of earning money and may be useful in later life. Students reported from the homemaking library stories of individuals



whose hobbies later became their life's work. One student told how her hobby in photography developed and how she plans to follow this work upon graduation from high school. She showed the group many snapshots, those taken at the beginning of her interest in photography to the present stage. They showed evidences that there had been considerable improvement. Two other students reported on the satisfaction their hobbies had brought to them. One student showed a collection of seventy assorted colored vases; another has a collection of thirty perfume bottles, some of which came from foreign countries. They were eager to share these hobbies during the open house display.

Some members of the class group and their families enjoy picnicing; therefore the group decided to have a demonstration on how to make picnics enjoyable, safe and sane. A demonstration on how to build an outdoor fire and how to roast certain foods over an open fire was given. All necessary precautions were taken in putting the fire out after foods had been cooked and the importance of leaving the picnic ground clean and in order was stressed. A class demonstration showed suitable foods for picnicing and how to pack the picnic basket properly.

#### Individual Reports of Leisure Time Activities

Some results attributed in part to the teaching of a unit on Leisure Time activities in the Douglass High School in Duncan, Oklahoma during the year 1953-54, were indicated by oral class reports made of the value of their leisure time activities. Two of the girls volunteered to write descriptive reports of activities engaged in after the study of the unit.

Bobbie Jean Tyner's report is used to show how class work had been presented to arouse interest in using her leisure time to better advantage.

The unit taught on wise use of leisure time in my homemaking classes made me become aware of the necessity of managing and planning to use one's leisure constructively. When Mrs. Hayes first taught the unit on leisure I wondered if I really had any leisure time, since I help with home work and my younger brothers and sister.

After giving some thought to the idea of leisure time, my mother and I decided to work out a schedule which would give all members of the family an opportunity to enjoy themselves together as well as individually.

I enjoy singing and I decided to use some leisure by practicing vocal lessons more often and doing a wider variety of Negro spirituals. This type of music is significant to the Negro race. I also spend some time reading about the lives of famous writers of Negro spirituals.

We are a musical family and we spend many hours singing together. On several occasions, we have been invited to sing in various churches in our city. Wayne, my baby brother at the age of three enjoys singing solos, and is not a bit stage frightened.

I have learned to spend more time with my brothers and sister. We play games and read stories. I have enjoyed teaching my younger sister and brothers new games which Mrs. Hayes acquainted me with during a study of games and puzzles.

Christmas is the most joyous occasion of the year to me. Aside from its religious significance there is the spirit of giving. We had so much fun making gifts in our home. I learned to make many articles during the unit of teaching handicrafts in my class work on leisure time interests. Some handicrafts are very simple and cost so little. Not only do you save by making gifts but we find it a wise way of using time.

My mother has a half day job and in the afternoons when we are in

school she works in the yard. I think Mrs. Hayes was able to convince her that flowers help to beautify a home. Even my smaller brother helps her to sow seeds for various kinds of flowers. It is so interesting to watch plants grow.

Usually on Saturday nights we spend a portion of our recreational time doing things together as a family. I have learned to make taffy, pop corn balls and several tasty candies. We really enjoy the taffy pulls, from the oldest to the youngest. We have had so much fun eating pop corn balls and engaging in various games until we have almost stopped attending movies.

In conclusion I would like to thank Mrs. Hayes for teaching such a unit. I used to wonder what to do with my time during summer vacation periods, but through her teachings I have been able to improve myself from a personal point of view and I feel that I am a better family member, and when I am married and have a family of my own I will do all I can to encourage my children in having good times together as a family as a means of preserving ideals and contributing to worthwhile future citizens.

Varicee McCain, a student, reported her reaction to the experience in family shared recreation. She wrote a letter which follows.

As a result of having studied the unit on wise use of leisure time, I have a better understanding of its significance in aiding one's personal and social development.

I became interested in music when I was a small girl and I can remember how I used to spend hours practicing on the piano because I was interested. As time passed it became less important to me, although I had a fairly good foundation in music.



As soon as our class discussed the unit on music as a hobby or a leisure time pursuit I immediately became interested. Mother purchased a piano for the home and I am happy to say that I have accomplished much. At present I play both religious and popular music. I play for my church services including a fifteen minute broadcast on Sunday mornings.

I have always been interested in sewing. As a little girl I tried to sew along with my mother. I have taken every advantage in my home-making classes in clothing and I now make most of my wash dresses. The money saved on wash dresses will be used in another place in our family budget.

There are three of us; all girls and I find sewing a good hobby for I am able with my mother's assistance to make clothes for my younger sisters.

I have become interested in embroidery and I crochet doilies and dresser scarves. I have a small collection on hand now and I plan to enlarge it by making various kinds of crocheted pieces. There is nothing like a good hobby to entertain one during leisure hours.

Our grandmother is an invalid and we spend some of our leisure bringing happiness and sunshine into her life. This gives an opportunity for us to enjoy many happy hours together.

The mothers in three families were happy to submit reports on family-shared leisure which had resulted from emphasis on a program designed to show its importance. The teacher, with the principal's permission made the homemaking library available to parents who showed an interest in broadening their knowledge in relation to planning and using leisure time wisely.

Reports prepared by Mrs. Edmond Johnson, Mrs. Roxanne Alexander, and Mrs. Louins Tyner follow.

Report from the Johnson Family:

When Mrs. Hayes letter and questionnaire were received regarding leisure time activities I was not too interested, but when Bettye, my oldest daughter, came home and told of experiences and activities in her unit being taught in her homemaking class regarding wide use of leisure and recreation, I was happy for Mrs. Hayes to come into my home and work with our family.

My husband and I are the parents of three girls ages 13, 9, and 1 year. Naturally they need things to do for contentment as well as enjoyment. The following list shows some of the ways we were helped.

Sewing. My main leisure activity.

The girls enjoy making things with me on a simpler scale. Bettye especially enjoys this experience since she is taking homemaking. During the teaching of the unit on leisure she made nine articles in the handicraft unit. She earned Christmas money by selling sequin ties and terry cloth house shoes.

Playing Games. Some of the games we played were ones we were well acquainted with, but through the homemaking library we have added several new ones to our fun night.

Television. Although many persons are somewhat critical of television, I feel that it is entertaining and educational for my family. We no longer have to spend fares for movies, but Bettye's teacher helped us to realize the importance of evaluating what our girls should and should not see on television. We also learned not to allow late television programs to interfere with the girls sleeping hours in order not to interfere with school work.

Radio. The radio plays a part in our family group leisure. We

have become aware of programs liked by different members of the family; therefore we have learned a great lesson in patience and sharing leisure time in order for each one to enjoy his program.

Traveling. Our family group usually looks forward to its annual vacation trip. Mrs. Hayes assisted us in getting copies of magazines related to vacations. Together, we as a family have enjoyed reading and deciding as a group where we would like to spend our vacation.

Church. We feel that a home cannot be secure unless its members belong and take an active part in its services. Church activities may be dull for children unless activities are used to keep them happy. As a result of my experiences I have accepted the responsibility for working with young people. The teen agers response is wonderful since we plan our activities together centered around having "fun for all" in our church group.

School. I had not previously attended school activities as often as I should have, but with the help of Mrs. Hayes I have realized why it is necessary to attend and work in all school activities for the good of the children. When children realize their parents are supporting them in programs, they beam with delight and do their best. I am now one hundred percent behind school activities for building future citizens.

Taking Pictures. As a family we enjoy kodaking very much. We are very proud of our collection of snap shots and enlargements. Our specialty is making pictures of babies. This is a good hobby and will do much to occupy adolescents in their leisure time.

I enjoyed working with the teacher in this study for much has been gained from the experience that I had not given special consideration. With her help and my own experiences as a mother I feel that I will be

able to better assist my daughters in using their time wisely for self improvement.

Mrs. Roxanne Alexander's Report:

As a result of having taken an active part in the study of leisure time activities I was happy to write the following report:

My daughter was impressed by the unit taught in her homemaking classes related to the wise use of leisure time activities. I too was very much impressed with what she has been taught regarding the management and use of time. Since I am a widow, I was happy to work with Mrs. Hayes for I realized the need for helping my daughter in planning the use of her time and finding ways of entertaining her at little or no cost.

Our day, as we call it, begins with the evening meal during the school term. We discuss things of interest that happened during the day. After the dishes are done and the home work finished, we listen to the radio. We both like quizz programs and those types of radio programs related to home and family living.

We make most of Delois' school clothes. Since she is taking clothing in homemaking, we have quite a bit of enjoyment making things parallel to those being made at home. This gives her the experience in carrying over into the home what has been learned in her classes.

Although we like to cook, the idea of trying new recipes was introduced by Mrs. Hayes. We have so much fun trying out new recipes and introducing new dishes into our menus. We have learned to enjoy foods prepared differently and have learned to eat many that we formerly thought we did not care for.

Delois is interested in basketball, and I find myself attending

games frequently. I attended not only for enjoyment, but I feel that it is a good form of recreation for releasing energy for teenagers. Not only have I been interested in sports, but I find myself giving more time to all activities of the school. I feel that there must be a definite link between the school, home, church and community if we are to produce well rounded future citizens.

In a community such as ours I was glad to be made aware of the opportunities as a parent to help Delois plan and use her time wisely, since community recreational facilities are limited.

Saturdays are the days we clean house, iron, mend wearing apparel and shop for groceries. This is also movie night and I have learned to be careful about the types of movies Delois should be allowed to attend. If a movie has educational value we usually attend together.

Sunday school and church are two important activities of our lives. As a mother I feel that religious training is essential in the lives of our children.

We enjoy jig-saw, crossword puzzles and games. With the teacher's assistance many new games were introduced in our family schedule of leisure and recreation. I feel that such activities stimulate thinking and help to develop a keen mind.

Delois learned many kinds of handicrafts in her homemaking classes that she has shared with me. I am making articles now to be given as Christmas presents. I am especially enjoying my experiences with Johnson grass mats. This teaches us a lesson in learning to use what we have at hand.

Now that we have become aware of the management and wise use of our leisure time, we take turns in planning what we might enjoy together



as a family. Delois has been able to bring many of her class experiences into our home which makes available an opportunity for us to grow together educationally, socially, and spiritually.

As our niece grows up Delois should be able to accept the responsibility of helping her to develop into an all round personality by teaching and sharing with her the management and wise use of leisure time. I feel that these ideals should be taught early in life if good returns are to be expected in later years.

Report of the Tyner Family:

As a wife and a mother of four children I find that leisure time can be spent in family shared activities. Our favorite interest is music, and we like to sing as a group.

I have a part time job and when I get home in the afternoon I get the house in order and then it is about time for me to start our evening meal. The children get in from school about 4:15 or 4:30. This is the beginning of our day together.

Alva Wayne my three year old son usually blesses the table at meal time. I feel that this bit of religious training should start early in a child's life. After dinner has been served and the kitchen left in order we turn to the living room for an hour or so of leisure.

My seven year old daughter Theopal plays the piano and we join her in a few numbers she has learned to play well. I hope some day she will be able to play not only for our family group singing activities but for the church and school.

Realizing that music seems to be our talent, I encourage my nine year old son Louins Jr. to play and practice his piano lessons during a part of his leisure time. You can not start a child out with a new

experience and expect good results, but with guidance and encouragement we can help him grow.

We enjoy picnics during late spring, summer and early fall. Mrs. Hayes was helpful in working with us on how to pack picnic lunches for best results. She also taught the smaller children games to play during our stay on the picnic. This one way the family can enjoy one another without having to spend a lot of money.

Fishing is a great sport and my husband always tries to find a picnic spot near a place for fishing. After we bait our hooks and get them in the water we usually enjoy watching the bites of the fish. It is quite thrilling to see the fish nibble the hook and then finally get caught. We are able to use fish we catch during leisure time as a part of our family food supply.

We are deeply interested in the activities of the school and usually attend as many affairs as possible. Children feel proud to have parents present when they have a part in the program. If there is anything we can do to help our children in adjusting to society, we are always willing to do it. It is from the homes that future citizens will emerge.

Families can have leisure if a schedule is provided. No matter how large the family may be good times may be had by working, playing and enjoying one another.

It was a pleasure to help Mrs. Hayes in making this study. I now have a better interpretation of family shared leisure time activities in preserving family stability in our rapidly changing society.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

It was believed that a study of family shared leisure time activities could serve as a means of strengthening family solidarity and counteract the destructive effect of many social influences present in modern living and that homemaking teachers can and should help families and students in planning wholesome and constructive leisure time activities and family shared recreation.

An investigation of literature indicates that many thinking educators believe that recreation can be helpful to the family in developing mutual understanding and shared enjoyment among family members.

In an effort to validate the hypothesis that a need exists for guidance in planning family shared leisure and recreation a check list was submitted to twenty junior and senior high school girls and their families to determine what activities and interests they pursue.

A list of activities was developed which might help students and their families plan wholesome leisure and recreational pursuits. Demonstrations and application of these activities were carried on through actual experiences in the homemaking department and homes of students in homemaking classes.

Of the families studied there is some evidence that families are spending more leisure time together than before the study was made. This may be a result not only of class activity but of other factors such as home visits, home room mothers clubs and the Community Club. There is some indication that as the study progressed more recreative activities

were experienced and that they were more educational. The teacher should become more alert in broadening her scope of knowledge as related to leisure and recreational pursuits.

All parents contacted during the study believed that more time and thought should be given to planned leisure and recreation in the homes, schools and community.

As a result of the study there was some indication that parents, community leaders and others may work together in an effort to provide improved recreational facilities in the community. Organization of a Girl Scout unit was made possible through this study as one provision for helping girls to use their leisure time wisely during the summer vacation period.

Several of the families contacted in making the study had given little or no serious thought to the subject for themselves or their children. Such a situation gave the teacher the opportunity to acquaint her students with the many possibilities for managing and using leisure time profitably. Students became aware of the necessity for wise use of leisure time and assumed responsibility for helping their family members to plan and get the most out of family shared leisure and recreation.

When pupils became interested in new and exciting activities they were able to arouse the interest of their families in leisure and recreational pursuits heretofore neglected.

While working with parents and students in this study it was found that through shared recreation and leisure activities, all members could participate in the planning; thus giving an opportunity for individual preference and increasing understanding of leisure for various age groups.

Findings:

Some results of ways leisure time activities helped to enrich family living were:

1. Students enrolled in homemaking accepted family responsibilities freely.
2. Students enrolled in homemaking classes were not seen roaming the streets so often as formerly.
3. Former students whose sisters participated in the study became interested and organized a club to use their leisure time in making garments for smaller sisters and brothers.
4. Students were able to exert their influence in getting their families to attend social functions in the community regularly.
5. Students took more time to help little brothers and sisters use their time wisely.
6. Recreative activities chosen were more educational, creative, interesting and entertaining not only in the home but in the school and community as well. Families welcomed help in planning these activities.
7. In many instances moral values of the family were strengthened.

Recommendations:

The wise use of leisure time and recreation is a vital problem in this complex society. The findings in this study indicate the need for closer cooperation between the home, school and community in programs of guidance in the wise use of leisure time.

Homemaking teachers have an opportunity for planning and guiding leisure time activities because of the close contact with the every day lives of their students. It is therefore recommended that:

1. Units on wise use of leisure time be taught in classes to provide students with many leisure time experiences which may help them to become better adjusted individuals.
2. Simple leisure time activities involving little or no cost be provided in planning the homemaking curriculum to strengthen family solidarity.
3. Guidance be given to families in acquiring wholesome recreation and leisure time pursuits.
4. Homemaking teachers adapt this study to meet the needs of the particular situation in which they are working.



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# A P P E N D I X

Letter Sent to Mothers of Students Enrolled in Homemaking Classes.

719 South Third Street  
Duncan, Oklahoma  
October 7, 1954

Dear Mrs. Raymond:

I need your help. Yours is one of the families selected to assist in a study of the leisure time activities of girls and their families.

Your daughter has cooperated in class activities related to the use of worthwhile leisure time activities in her home economics classes. She would like to work further on leisure time activities in her home with the members of the family. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

A check list is being mailed to you which we hope will help to secure information necessary for us in the study in which we are interested. We need to find what leisure time activities are carried on among family members within homes of students in homemaking classes.

I will be happy to call at your home next week to explain any information needed concerning the check list and the purpose of this study.

Yours truly,

Robbie C. Hayes

Check List to Determine Leisure Time Activities From Which Families Derive Pleasure.

From what activities does your family derive pleasure? Below is a list of activities in which families as a group frequently take part together. Space is provided on the left to check ones from which you derive much, some or little pleasure.

	Much	Some	Little
1. Going on picnics			
2. Going to church			
3. Visiting and entertaining friends			
4. Driving for pleasure			
5. Fishing			
6. Watching television			
7. Attending sports events			
8. Listening to the radio			
9. Dancing			
10. Reading			
11. Gardening			
12. Playing games			
13. Playing cards			
14. Attending parties			
15. Working at home			
16. Individual group singing			
17. Listening to music			
18. Playing musical instruments			
19. Attending club meetings			
20. School activities			
21. Attending socials			
22. Sewing			
23. Attending concerts			
24. Making things with one's hands			
25. Handicrafts such as knitting, crocheting, embroidering and quilting			

Check List to Determine Leisure Time Activities in Which Homemaking Students Are Most Interested.

Please Check Five Leisure Time Activities in Which you are Most Interested

1. Reading	
2. Church	
3. Playing base ball	
4. Listening to the radio	
5. Talking with others	
6. Going to the movies	
7. Going to concerts	
8. Roller skating	
9. Playing music	
10. Attending club and group meetings	
11. Dancing	
12. Doing hobbies	
13. Playing tennis	
14. Playing basket ball	
15. Going automobile riding	
16. Driving an automobile	
17. Hiking	
18. Going to parties	
19. Going to plays	
20. Cooking	
21. Window shopping	
22. Making clothes	
23. Visiting friends	
24. Playing cards	
25. Singing	

## VITA

Robbie Chappell Hayes  
candidate for the degree of  
Master of Science

Thesis: GUIDING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN SHARING WORTHY LEISURE TIME  
ACTIVITIES

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THESIS TITLE: GUIDING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN SHARING  
WORTHY LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

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The content and form have been checked and approved by the author and thesis adviser. The Graduate School Office assumes no responsibility for errors either in form or content. The copies are sent to the bindery just as they are approved by the author and faculty adviser.

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