Families: Social Stability Amidst Cultural Diversity

Delegating Decisions in Marriages

Helping Strangers Become Neighbors: Mitigating the Effects of Rapid Change

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Families persist, even though a few stereotypes about families may have perished. Families are changing, but are not in decline, says Bonita Wyse, Dean of the College of Family Life at USU. And change isn’t a recent phenomenon.

“The family has been changing since the Industrial Revolution,” Wyse says. Our perceptions of the stereotypical family of the 1950s, which was exaggerated by television, is a historical blip, the product of peace and prosperity after World War II, she says.

The trends affecting families were apparent early this century as more women entered the workforce, people married later and had fewer children, and divorce rates increased.

Today, 75 percent of families are departures from the so-called “norm” of Dad the breadwinner, Mom the bread baker, and two children.

So exactly what is a family?

Defining a family can be a contentious issue, particularly since a definition has far-reaching legal ramifications in matters such as rent control and medical benefits, Wyse says.

Wyse says the following definition, which home economists originated early this century, is still valid: “A unit of intimate transacting and interdependent persons who share some values and goals, responsibility for decisions and resources, and have commitment to one another over time.”

The definition addresses what a family does—its function—rather than who is considered a member.

The definition also recognizes that families nurture, socialize and civilize individuals, Wyse says. Families also transmit society’s values from generation to generation.

When the family changes, so—eventually—does society, and vice versa.

Dramatic changes in how families deal with the core issues of food, clothing and shelter are reflected in the USU College of Family Life.

“We don’t just stitch and stir,” Wyse says. The curricula now includes family and human development, home economics and consumer education, and nutrition and food sciences. It includes issues such as parenthood, divorce, infant development, coping with death and dying, sex roles, food chemistry, housing, textiles and family finances.

In spite of some of Utah’s unique characteristics—the state ranks first in birth rate, population below 17, median age and household size—Wyse says the state is buffeted by the same forces that affect the rest of the nation.

The incomes of working women have maintained the American standard of living during the past 25 years, Wyse says.

“During a time that real wages were declining, women steadily doubled their numbers in the workforce. Women have to work. They have saved the standard of living of American families. Women are responsible for nearly a third of our country’s earnings.”
Buffeted By Other Trends
Here are some other important trends that affect families:

• Since 1960, the two-parent, one-paycheck family decreased by 60 percent, the two-parent, two-paycheck family increased by 221 percent, and the one-parent, one-paycheck family increased by 430 percent.

• In spite of additional paychecks, the income of the average American family has barely kept up with inflation. When adjusted for smaller family size, income per person has increased only slightly. Unless young couples both work or receive help from their parents, many could not afford to purchase a home.

• There has been an erosion in the ability of middle class families to purchase homes, pursue financial security and educate their children.

• Income has decreased for families with children, poor families and those headed by females. Income has increased for elderly couples, couples in late middle age with no dependents and single people.

• The divorce rate of 50 percent means that half of all children will spend a significant period living with only one parent, usually the mother. Divorce usually means a drastic decline in income and standard of living for women.

• Poverty has become “feminized” as the number of female-headed households increased. In 1986, 51 percent of families below the poverty line were female single-parent families. Minority women disproportionately fill the ranks of the poor. A correlate is that one out of five American children is living in poverty.

• People experience more transition points. In the past, men and women often lived with their parents until marriage, had children and lived with the same spouse. Now men and women may live alone, cohabit with another adult, perhaps marry, have children, divorce, live alone, remarry, become stepparents, have “blended” families. Each of these transitions is accompanied by special stresses and problems.

The Basic Unit for Self and Society
Wyse says it is difficult to separate whether changes in society have fostered changes in families, or vice versa. For example, did feminism cause changes in the family, or did internal pressures in the family create rise to feminism?

Whatever the origin of change, changes in the status of women and in family life are inexorably linked, Wyse says.

For example, alternative care must be arranged for many children and the elderly who were once cared for by women at home. Women have also brought familial concerns to the workplace. The role of parent and worker have also been redefined for many males.

“The problems of the family are in search of national leadership,” Wyse says. “We’ve made some progress, but some issues need much more attention. We need to help make workplace and job aspirations come together. We especially need to address redesigning of job benefits and child care.

“Family is the basic unit for self and society. It will always be with us,” Wyse says.

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Who makes the decisions in marriages? It depends what is being decided. In a related study involving residents of the same communities involved in the survey of stress (see p. 35), USU sociologists examined the relative influence of husbands and wives in rural families in several types of decisions.

Wives were slightly more influential than husbands in decisions involving children, but the husbands were more influential in decisions involving the whole family.

Previously married women tended to have more influence than women in their first marriages in decisions about major purchases, when to leave a party, and (contrary to expectations) whether a child can have more money or a new toy.

And employed wives had more say than unemployed wives in decisions about major purchases and about whether a child spends time away from home.

Income also increased wives’ influence, although it appeared that wives earning $5,000 to $15,000 tended to have more clout than wives with higher or lower incomes. Age and education also increased wives’ influence in some decisions.

Husbands’ influence also varied with the type of decisions. Employment, income and education increased their influence in some decisions.

Generally, the sociologists say there wasn’t any single factor which determined whether a husband or wife would have more influence in all decisions. However, findings in a related study indicated which kinds of decisions might be likely to precipitate disagreements.

For example, more than half the couples said they agreed on who should decide whether to purchase an item worth more than $250, but only about one-third said they fully agreed on who decided the color or style of such a purchase.

The most contentious topic seemed to involve when to go home from a social event or dinner at a friend’s house. Only about 20 percent of the couples said they agreed on this type of decision. But hang in there. The longer couples were married, the more likely they were to agree on who decides when it’s time to go home.

And when spouses finally do agree to leave a party, perhaps they should not watch television or listen to music together when they arrive home. Only about 40 percent of the couples said they could agree on who selected television programs or chose the music.

KG

This research was conducted by USU sociologists Ann Leffler and Richard Krannich, and sociology graduate students Helal Mobashe, Vicki Rhea and Pamela Saptia.

Delegating Decisions in MARRIAGES
HELPING STRANGERS BECOME NEIGHBORS:
Mitigating the Effects of Rapid Change
Inerals, Oil, Coal, Energy. Many Western communities flourish in boom markets for these resources and wither when markets deteriorate.

But whether it’s boom or bust, the social consequences can be the same—rapid change often cripples communities.

It’s somewhat like the westerns when rowdy cowhands with fistfuls of cash thunder into town. Business booms—at least temporarily. Citizens cower. And elected officials try to cope.

The analogy is not all that far-fetched, says USU sociologist Ronald Little, who is determining how “resource-dependent communities” weather major changes in economic growth and population.
Today, however, corporations not cowhands are often the progenitors of economic growth. And many citizens welcome the chance for economic revitalization although they may not anticipate the other changes that accompany it—nor the possibility of economic collapse a few years down the road.

Little and sociologists Richard Krannich, Thomas Greider and Edna Berry have been studying four communities (Delta, Vernal, and Randolph, Utah, and Evanston, Wyoming) that have weathered major economic and population changes. A relatively stable community (Tremonton, Utah) is included in the study as a “control.”

“Basically, we’re looking at communities dependent on a particular natural resource base,” Little says. “Typically, it almost always happens that there’s a boom-and-bust cycle. Things are great when a product is in demand, but then the mineral deposits are exhausted or the market for a commodity declines.”

For example, Delta depended largely on agriculture before a boom associated with construction of the nearby Intermountain Power Plant in the early 1980s. Vernal weathered the collapse of the oil shale and petroleum industry while Randolph experienced a short energy boom and is now coping with a depressed agricultural economy. Evanston became one the nation’s most infamous boom towns during the early 1980s before it slumped into the economic doldrums with the downturn in the oil and gas industries.

The Social Aftermath of Growth
Sociologists have hypothesized that rapid population growth places tremendous stress on individuals and communities. The depressing litany of potential social ills includes increased rates of mental illness, suicide, divorce, crime and delinquency, individual isolation, family disturbances, alcohol and drug abuse, and other social problems.

Economic decline may be characterized by similar problems, although its social consequences have not been studied as extensively.

But the consequences of rapid growth and decline were not always as straightforward as sociological theories might dictate. For example, sociological theory indicates that “neighboring activities” (visiting and help), should decline as rapid growth disrupts social ties. However, residents of the boom towns tended to socialize more often with their neighbors (but did not rely on their neighbors as much for emotional support) as residents of more stable communities.

Even residents of a trailer park in Evanston, who were more likely to be newcomers to the area, socialized more often with their neighbors than residents of the other three communities.

Why? The USU sociologists speculate that rapid growth may actually provide more opportunities to associate with people who share similar interests, thus expanding rather than limiting their circle of acquaintances.

Residents of small but rapidly growing communities may maintain “a level of polite but uncommitted involvement with neighbors while withdrawing into more disaggregated and personalized social networks of social support,” say Greider and Krannich, or they may also create a “community within a community,” such as a mobile home park.

But there were some less benign social manifestations of burgeoning population growth. Residents of rapidly growing communities perceived that there were more problems with medical care, schools, crime, and drug and alcohol use in their communities.

The Power of Negative Thinking
And residents of boom towns expressed greater fear of crime than residents of other communities, even though there was no evidence that crime rates actually differed in the communities. Thus, it appears that what residents think is occurring may be as powerful a force as what actually occurs. Or, as the sociologists say, residents’ perceptions of community change and problems may spawn “a unique and powerful social reality, which leads to the conclusion that boom town life is stressful, dangerous, and disorganized.”

“Such change may be accompanied by a constriction of social interactions into more clearly distinct and separate ‘private spheres’ or relatively intimate association and ‘public spheres’ characterized by distrust, hostility,
and fear of strangers,” the sociologists state in a recent study. This could increase fear of crime, particularly in “stable and relatively homogeneous communities that are suddenly inundated by a large number of immigrants who are apt to be temporary residents, highly transient, and culturally distinct from the local pre-boom population.”

Fear of crime tended to abate when the population declined after a period of rapid growth, perhaps because residents think that community life is returning to “normal.” A population decline during economic stability or stagnation may trigger fears that crime will increase, due to poverty and the ineffectiveness of sanctions on those who are about to leave.

These findings indicate that rapid population growth has a much more complex effect on a community’s social interactions than previously indicated. “Social disruption, like well-being, is a vague and multi-dimensional concept,” Krannich and Greider note.

Clearly, not all residents of a community perceive rapid growth in the same manner, as Little and Greider found when they studied how Delta residents viewed the proposed transfer of water rights from agriculture to the Intermountain Power Plant.

Even though Delta was a culturally homogenous community, some opponents of the transfer assigned quasi-spiritual values to water while many proponents of the transfer viewed water in a utilitarian manner. Similar differences in values, beliefs and ideologies also influence how residents react to other types of change.

Planning Enhances A Community’s Clout

The boom-bust cycle may be exacerbated in the future as communities scramble to create employment opportunities. Local officials may be reluctant to impose restrictions on firms seeking to locate in the area.

Communities in the West are increasingly at the mercy of decisions governed by international trends and large multinational corporations, Little says.

“Most of us in the Rocky Mountain region live with the consequences of decisions made by large corporate and political powers. We don’t have the large manufacturing base that lends stability to other regions of the country,” Little says.

However, Little says communities aren’t entirely helpless in the face of change. For example, Delta worked with the construction company to plan housing and other facilities for workers. Such planning requires “a concerned electorate and clout with developers,” Little says. Delta also benefited from the fact that many of the members of the board of directors of the Intermountain Power Project had ties to the area and accommodated the concerns of local residents.

In a 1986 report, researchers noted that “Delta represents a unique and very atypical ‘boom town.’ In contrast to the experiences of communities such as Gillette, Rock Springs, and Evanston, Wyoming, or Craig, Colorado, development of the IPP proceeded only after substantial advance planning, and was accompanied by extensive monitoring and impact mitigation efforts. Although such activities cannot be expected to eliminate all of the negative impacts of rapid growth, in general Delta appears to have avoided most of the severe effects witnessed in more infamous western boom towns.”

Preserving A Community’s Social Fabric

Another factor in economic development is the strong attachment to local areas felt by many Utahns. “It’s not very appealing to residents of the Great Basin to think that everyone might not have a right to earn a living in their place of birth, Little says. “This is an especially critical factor in Utah with its high birth rate.”

Small rural communities must also decide whether economic growth jeopardizes the lifestyle and environment that local residents find so appealing. And there’s also the irony that “while most parents want their children to stay in the area, many, if not most, children say they want to leave,” Little says.

In any event, it’s clear that rapid population growth alters a community’s social fabric. Dimming the negative aspects associated with these changes may simply mean programs that encourage residents to get to know each other better. In study after study, sociologists have found that what people think of their community often hinges on what they think of each other. A community suddenly filled with “strangers” also tends to be filled with fear and uncertainty.

KG
The Other Side of Social Networks: SOMETIMES FRIENDS AREN’T FRIENDLY

There’s a darker side to life in rural areas and small towns.

Even in pastoral settings, people don’t always get along smoothly. Although cooperation and harmony are the ideals, there’s also conflict, hostility and stress.

This doesn’t mean towns and villages are seething with tension or about to erupt in street violence. It does mean sociologists are finding that life in smaller communities is more complex than many studies have shown. Of particular interest is the fact that the “emotional freight” conveyed by social networks includes conflict as well as support.

In other words, some of the friends and acquaintances who provide support and pleasure often cause the most grief, particularly to women.

USU sociologists say researchers have often assumed that social networks have only positive results and tended not to scrutinize the antagonisms in society as carefully as the friendlier relationships.

Looking At Both Sides
That’s about to change. For more than 6 years, USU sociologists have been studying how residents of small and medium sized cities cope with socioeconomic change. Their most recent study involved interviews with almost 450 residents of three Utah communities—a small stable agricultural community, a university community that has grown slowly but steadily during the past few decades, and a smaller “boontown” community whose population recently burgeoned due to energy development projects.

What they learned about the relationships between stress and the size and growth of communities, gender, sense of community, and health problems will help officials develop effective programs and policies for residents seeking assistance in adjusting to socioeconomic changes and stress.

And in spite of perceptions to the contrary, small towns and villages experience many of the social and economic problems that plague the rest of society.
For example, plummeting prices for agricultural commodities have created tremendous economic and social insecurities, notes Pamela Riley, USU sociologist and project leader, who is working with sociologists Ann Leffler, Richard Kranich, and Gary Kiger.

Other communities are shouldering problems that accompany rapid economic growth. And residents of small communities must weather the other banes of life—illnesses, deaths, divorces, and other personal travails.

Friends Sometimes Annoy Us
In one of the studies, respondents were asked to help researchers define three types of networks: a contact network (who people see or spend time with) a support network (who people turn to for help for various types of problems and would ask for assistance) and a conflict network (people, aside from spouses and children, who tend to be overly demanding, would refuse to help if asked, or tend to do something to upset the respondent).

The relationships between those networks provided a wealth of information about social interactions. One somewhat surprising finding was that people often associate with and ask for help from many of the same people who annoy them.

According to some sociological theories, residents of larger communities should be able to form networks with people who share the same interests, thus reducing the overlap between supportive and “antagonistic” networks. But there tended to be a lot of overlap in all of the communities studied, perhaps because all were relatively small (fewer than 30,000 residents) compared to large American cities used in other studies.

Both support and conflict networks were more extensive in the smallest (agricultural) and largest (university) communities than in the boomtown. The smaller networks in the boomtown may reflect the fact that many residents had recently moved to the community.

Women Experience More Conflict
People tended to associate with those of the same sex, but tended to experience a disproportionately high amount of conflict with members of the opposite sex. This was especially true for women: Only 14 percent of their contacts were men, but men were mentioned as irritants 30 percent of the time.

Women also experienced more conflict with relatives, “probably because women in society are expected to maintain family ties, such as inviting relatives to dinner, sending birthday cards, and so on. As an exchange system, women give a lot, but they also expect a lot,” Riley comments on her colleagues’ findings.

Women may be “integrated” or “trapped” in relationships of more than one type, as relatives, churchgoers, support givers and friends. Men tend to have fewer overlapping networks. The sociologists say male and female conflict patterns are so distinct that the networks in a community seem to have “his” and “hers” features.

“In general, women expressed greater levels of stress than men, regardless of the type of community. Some analysts attribute this to the fact that women are more willing to acknowledge their problems while men are expected to ‘cope.’ Other studies have shown that women are more likely to seek psychiatric help than men,” Riley says. However, Riley believes some women may experience more stress simply because they may not have lived in a community as long as their husbands, and, especially if they are not employed, may have fewer ties to the community.

The Balm of Economic Satisfaction
What factors were associated with higher levels of perceived stress?

A major factor was economic satisfaction—people who felt financially secure generally thought life was less stressful. That doesn’t necessarily mean that a high income is associated with less stress since “some of the respondents with the lowest incomes were economically satisfied,” Riley says.
Not surprisingly, the more “life events” (e.g., divorce, death in the family, loss of job), the higher the perceived stress.

Religion was a factor in the predominantly Mormon communities studied. Non-Mormons experienced more stress than Mormons, “not necessarily because non-Mormons were excluded from community life because of religion, but because they may have been relative newcomers to a community and have not yet been integrated,” Riley says.

Perceived stress seemed to increase with household size, probably because incomes tend to be lower in families with young children. The length of marriage may also be a factor. “In other studies, marital satisfaction has been found to be high shortly after marriage, decreases when children are born, and increases after children are grown and leave home,” Riley says.

Family disagreements were also an important barometer of stress. The greater the number of disagreements, particularly those involving sex, household division of labor and discipline of children, the more stress reported by respondents.

Another aspect of the study concerned the relationship between chronic illness, such as heart disease and diabetes, and stress. Some research has shown that the support offered by social networks can “buffer” the stress caused by chronic disease. This seemed to be true in the communities studied.

Contact with friends (more than neighbors or relatives) seemed to be the most effective in reducing the stress associated with chronic diseases.

Not All Types of Support Provide Solace

Findings clearly indicate that there are differences in the forms of social support—and that some types of support may actually be somewhat counterproductive.

For example, offering to help may make the recipient of the assistance feel guilty and dependent. Emotional support may reduce stress, but not if, ironically, it’s offered by the same person who irritates you, a scenario which appears to happen fairly often, particularly to women.

One of the best stress-reduction tactics apparently involves seeking support from a variety of sources, such as family, friends and clergy.

And it pays to be selective in who you ask for help. As in the communities studied, disagreements often crop up between close friends and relatives.

When that happens, help may offer relief—and resentment.

KG

Dain Gillespie, sociologist with the University of Utah, and USU sociology graduate student Lori Cramer were involved with aspects of the research.
The High Cost of DIVORCE

It's often said that both partners lose in a divorce.

That's not quite true. Women usually fare much worse financially than do men, says Barbara Rowe, a family resource management specialist with USU Extension.

Although divorce has profound long-term effects, many couples have a poor understanding of their financial situation. And that usually works to the disadvantage of women.

In a study of the financial status of 116 Oregon couples who divorced after at least 10 years of marriage, Rowe found that men’s incomes remained the same or increased. Women’s incomes were much lower than before divorce, even after considering child support or alimony. The situation in Oregon mirrors national trends, Rowe says.

“Few women received spousal support after divorce,” she says. “Those who did received only a minimum amount for a fixed period. This caused severe financial hardship for many of the women, especially those who had been full-time homemakers during the marriage.

“These women were forced to take low-paying entry-level jobs. The divorce also often meant that women lost valuable health care coverage, insurance and pension benefits. Fewer than one-third of the wives had any type of pension plan other than social security.”

The Importance of Financial Independence

Even if a woman receives the family home in the settlement, she may not be able to make the payments because of her lower-paying job. Women who had custody of the children often found that child support payments failed to cover child care costs while they worked full time.

“One clear implication is the need for career planning for young women to help maximize their earning capacities. Most women of today, married or not, will work at paid employment through most of their adult years,” Rowe says.

Rowe says young women should strive for financial independence to avoid the financial pitfalls of a potential divorce and to move closer to the concept of marriage as a true partnership.

Rowe and attorney Alice Mills Morrow have written an Extension booklet to help divorcing couples better understand the decisions. The publication, A Guide to Financial Decisions Made at Divorce, is based on Utah law and includes worksheets to determine a couple’s financial situation as well as information about assets and debts, child and spousal support, credit and income tax considerations.

DHJS

To avoid the financial repercussions of a potential divorce, experts say young women should strive for financial independence.
FAMILIES
Remain Crucible of Change

What's in store for families? Change, and lots of it.
That may be a disheartening prospect for those hoping for a hiatus of sorts in social change. Nonetheless, professionals are already gearing up to help families weather the next few decades.

And it appears that all family members, from babies to the elderly, will be affected by the problems and opportunities that seem to be waiting in the wings. Glen Jenson, USU family and human development specialist who recently completed a survey on family-related social trends, says the prognosis for families is mixed. People have more freedom whether or not to marry (about 90 percent of all people eventually do), marriage dissolution rates are stabilizing or declining, and more males are sharing household duties and helping rear children. And a recent Gallup poll indicates that 93 percent of Americans say they are "very satisfied or mostly satisfied" with their family life.

Also on the plus side of the ledger is the fact that professionals know more about human behavior, and are therefore better able to provide meaningful assistance. There's more help available to families
who seek assistance. Families are also smaller, which should mean parents have more time to spend with children, and more resources per child.

Still, these pluses won't alleviate all problems, as is indicated by the fact that 74 percent of Americans think the problems of children and youth are worse than 10 years ago. “Families have more options available to them, but most parents live such a frantic-paced life that they have less time to spend with their children,” Jenson says.

The erosion of the extended family, diminished sense of community and limitations on the assistance that schools can provide have also exacerbated pressures on families.

In a recent study, Extension agents and selected clients around the United States and in Utah were asked to identify the most important social trends and issues that are likely to affect families.

**Concerns Fostered By An Aging Population**

On a national basis, caring for the elderly emerged as the top issue due to the aging of the parents of baby boomers. Between now and the year 2000, those 60 years of age or older will be the fastest growing age group. About 1.2 million elderly are now in nursing
homes. This is expected to increase to 2.2 million by the year 2000.

Baby boomers tended to have fewer children, which means their children must shoulder a greater burden of caring for their aging parents, Jenson says. Daughters have traditionally cared for their elderly parents, but that arrangement will be less common as more women enter the work force.

Moreover, many daughters of the elderly find it difficult to find quality care for their own children, much less their aging parents. Children are less likely to live close to their elderly parents, which makes it more difficult to provide care.

Young, Unmarried Parents

Next on the list were problems associated with teenage parents, who make up a large number of unmarried parents in America. In 1986, more than 1 million girls in America under the age of 20 became pregnant, 47 percent of whom gave birth to approximately 500,000 babies. Forty percent had abortions. In Utah during 1986, there were 1,110 teen mothers 17 years old or younger and 2,288 mothers 18-19 years of age.

National surveys indicate that each teenage birth costs taxpayers more than $5,500 annually. Teen
Birth rate, 1985 23.4% 2nd
Death rate, 1985 5.7% 49th
Marriage rate, 1985 10.4% 22nd
Divorce rate, 1985 5.2 20th
Average life expectancy* 75.8 yrs 4th
% of women of child-bearing age giving birth, 1984 10.2% 1st
Legal abortions*, 1981 93 49th
Infant mortality* 9.1 43rd
% of infants to unmarried mothers, 1984 7.7% 50th
% of all births to mothers under 20, 1984 8.7% 47th
* per 1000 population
* for births in 1979-1981
* per 1000 live births

mothers are less likely to receive adequate prenatal care, and more likely to live in poverty and to be less educated. Their children are more likely to have low birth weights and to grow up in single-parent households.

Teenage pregnancy and childbirth rates started to increase about 15 years ago. Rates have declined in recent years, but the increase in the number of teenagers has resulted in more teen parents. Child abuse and neglect was ranked third. Child abuse rates increased by 158 percent from 1976 through 1984. In 1984, 27.4 incidents of child abuse and neglect were reported per 1,000 U.S. children. Some experts believe only one-fifth to one-third of child abuse is reported. Poverty, unemployment, alcohol abuse, being handicapped, high family stress and poor housing increase the risk of child abuse.

An Issue of Balance
Problems associated with the need to balance work and family ranked next in importance. Finding adequate and affordable child care will become a more pressing issue as more women enter the work force. "This issue presents a quandary in Utah, where many
### A Utah Almanac

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Every day</th>
<th>Every year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Couples get married</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Couples divorce</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Children's parents divorce</td>
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<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Children are born</td>
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<td>Children are born to females under the age of 18</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Teenagers conceive a child</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Teenagers between 18-19 conceive</td>
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<td>Teenagers under 18 conceive</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Children are born out of wedlock</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Abortions are performed</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Abortions are performed on females 19 &amp; under</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Reports of children who are abused and neglected</td>
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<tr>
<td>145</td>
<td>Persons drink at least 4 alcoholic drinks and drive a motorized vehicle</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>Under 20 years</td>
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<td>60 and over</td>
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<td>Do not have health care insurance, most of which are children</td>
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<td>Utah families live in poverty (9.6% of the total population)</td>
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<td>Persons live in poverty</td>
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<td>Of Utah's children live below the poverty level (12.8% of all children)</td>
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<td>Homicides</td>
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<td>Individuals over 100 years of age</td>
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<td>209               Having been diagnosed with AIDS since 1981</td>
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<td>128               Have died from AIDS since 1981 (as of July 21, 1981)</td>
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<td>1,463             Would likely test positive for HIV (AIDS virus)</td>
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<td>Female single parent families with children under 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>46%               Of married females with children under 18 are in the work force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44%               Of married females with children under 6 are in the work force</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-5%              Of the year-old population have handicaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%               Of the school age population have handicaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%                Of total state is termed handicapped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
think mothers should not work outside the home but lower paying jobs and large families create pressures for women to supplement family incomes. Talking against this trend has not discouraged large numbers of women from working," Jenson says.

Jenson says very little is known about the quality of child care in the state. Some experts estimate that 150,000 children in the state receive inadequate child care.

Latchkey (unsupervised) children are a major concern in the state, Jenson says, due to the fact that 70 percent of the parents in Utah with children ages 6-13 are in the work force.

Nationally, 25 percent of working parents leave their children in the care of relatives and 21 percent arrange work to trade-off caring for children. Commercial day-care centers care for 10 percent and another 10 percent are cared for by friends or neighbors. Seven percent stay with older siblings, 6 percent tend themselves and 5 percent attend nursery schools.

The litany of potential concerns also included health-care costs, spread of the AIDS virus, problems associated with single parenting, drug abuse, a lack of resources to address problems of children and youth, stress and time management, youth suicide, and stepparenting.

"There were marked differences in the priorities identified in the state and national surveys," Jenson says. The top four issues identified by Utahns were the development of personal values and self esteem, child abuse and neglect, unemployment, and inadequate parenting skills.

Survey results will be used to plan Extension programs and to establish research priorities, that reflect the priorities and concerns of Utahns, Jenson says. How are families faring in Utah compared to the rest of the nation? As the tables show, in many respects, families in Utah are healthy.

In other areas, however, improvements are definitely in order.

KG

*The information in the tables was compiled by Glen Jenson and USU doctoral students Glenna Boyce and Wallace Goddard.
Child Care: Pressing Needs Demand Innovative Solutions
ike it or not, alternative care for preschoolers is a fact of life in many families.

The popularity of day care surprised even USU researchers. They needed some children 4 years old and younger who hadn’t been in day care for a study.

It was difficult to find many, even in rural Cache Valley.

Here’s why: Almost 60 percent of Utah women and 56 percent of U.S. women are in the labor force. Fifty-seven percent of mothers with children under age 6 are employed, as are 71 percent of mothers with children ages 6-17.

Nearly half of all employed mothers with school-age children ages (6-17) and two-thirds of mothers with children under 6 work full time.

Almost 507,000 children in Utah are younger than age 13, and about half of them need alternative child care because their mothers are employed. The 240 licensed child care centers in the state care for 17,000 children, and 1,500 licensed family day care homes care for 12,200 children.

The remaining children—about 224,000—probably are in unlicensed (and therefore unregulated) care where the quality of care depends completely on caregiver training and ethics.

Ann Austin, Jay Schvaneveldt and Shelley Lindauer, faculty members in the USU Department of Family and Human Development, are studying aspects of the issue.

It’s an issue that demands attention.

**Establishing Child-Care Standards**

“Our society has moved from private care to widespread public upbringing of our children. Who determines our standards for quality? The federal, state or local governments? Should it be up to parents?” Austin asks.

Austin believes in a pluralistic approach to child care, one which should involve churches as well as employers and businesses.

“Not all of our child care can or should be sponsored exclusively by employers, churches, government or private providers,” Austin says. “We need diverse child care offerings that allow parents to select an environment that expresses their philosophical orientations.”

Compared with the progressive day care climate in other industrialized countries, the situation in the United States is “an embarrassment,” Lindauer says.

“Japan, the Soviet Union and the Scandinavian countries have comprehensive programs that include health, nutrition, parent education, social services, and after-school care. Day care facilities are plentiful, and are at work or close to work sites.”

**Benefits Exceed Costs**

Society benefits when working parents are confident that their children are receiving good child care, the researchers say. Those benefits include lower absentee rates and higher productivity.

“We know that money spent on care early on pays off later, especially in the disadvantaged population,” Lindauer says.

It’s estimated that every dollar spent on early care eventually saves four to seven dollars. Children who receive adequate day care are less likely to be in special education, less likely to be chemically dependent and less likely to be on welfare. They are more likely to be employed. The girls are less likely to become pregnant early.

The researchers say child care is a family issue.

“But families and children are not good lobbyists,” Lindauer says. “Children don’t vote. They need someone to speak for them. The elderly have made gains because they’ve become a vocal group.

“The irony is that individual child care is such an important issue, the harassed parents don’t have time to do anything about the overall problem,” Lindauer says.

She says the Act for Better Childcare (which was still under consideration during early 1990) is “the
first major bit of legislation totally concerned with the family in 20 years. The Equal Opportunity Act of 1968 was the last legislation that affected children.”

Contradictory Findings On Social Effects
Does day care alter a child’s social behavior? The evidence is contradictory, the researchers say.

Results of some studies suggest that day care and preschool children are more socially mature than children reared exclusively at home. By some measures, these children are more cooperative, friendly, responsive and confident.

In another study, children in day care and children with some preschool experience who were reared at home had similar abilities to reason through social dilemmas, but differed in their actual behavior.

However, other researchers report that children in day care and preschool are less polite, less agreeable, less compliant and less respectful of others than are home care children. Austin, Shvanleveldt and Lindaufer recently compared the social behavior of 54 Cache Valley children who had been cared for at home, in day care, or in preschool.

The children were a homogeneous group, except for their child care experience. All came from families where both parents were present in the home; their parents were well educated and families were relatively large. Race, national origin, religion and socioeconomic level were also similar.

Children were asked to solve social dilemmas involving helping, sharing, comforting and honesty. Their civic awareness was tested by their ability to identify national symbols, government figures, historical figures and religious figures. They were also asked to identify cartoon and Star Wars figures.

Day Care Can Expand Child’s Awareness
Results indicated that a high-quality child care program expands a child’s awareness of the world,
Reproductive Behavior Will Help Control ALFALFA WEEVIL

The reproductive foibles of alfalfa weevils are helping researchers locate and control this insect pest.

The three types of alfalfa weevils in the U.S. (western, Egyptian and eastern), originally from Europe, are members of the species *Hypera postica*, and are so similar in appearance that it is difficult to distinguish between them. Moreover, they infest the same areas in some western states. (The ranges of the western and Egyptian weevils overlap in southern Utah).

Entomologist Ting Hsiao has identified some reproductive characteristics that will help identify and develop biological control agents for these pests. For example, female western weevils reproduce when they mate with Egyptian or eastern males, but not when females of these strains mate with male western weevils. Hsiao traced this infertility to a tiny rickettsia microorganism, *Wolbachia postica*, found only in the western weevil.

This microorganism also protects the western weevil against a parasitic wasp, *Microctonus aethiopoideis*.

Hsiao says weevil strains also differ in their susceptibility to the parasite *Bathyplectes curculionis*.

A new screening technique should be easier and faster than microscopic techniques now used to identify strains. The technique developed by Christine Leu, Joseph Li and Hsiao utilizes protein associated with wolbachiae.

JS
Researchers are closer to developing an effective vaccine against the bluetongue virus (BTV), which affects several species of grazing livestock.

The virus causes reproductive problems in cattle and sheep, and often kills sheep and goats.

Virologist Joseph K. K. Li and coworkers sequenced genes of the five bluetongue strains found in the U.S. There are 24 strains of the virus in the world. The disease, once thought to be confined to Africa, where livestock apparently developed some immunity, seems to be spreading.

The virus is spread by small biting flies, and perhaps by infected semen. Symptoms of bluetongue disease include inflammation of the mouth and nose, and constriction of the blood vessels to the tongue, which causes the “blue tongue” characteristic of the disease.

The blue-tongue virus consists of double-stranded RNA instead of DNA. Each of the viruses’ 10 genes codes for a protein, one of which is used to build a tubular network where the virus replicates. The proteins or parts of the proteins coded for by the virus may be used as antigens to create a “subunit” vaccine, Li says.

Sequencing the genes could lead to other methods of attacking the virus, such as interfering with protein synthesis by the virus.

BRISTLECONE PINES
Don't Slow Down

Bristlecone pines, the Methuselahs of the plant kingdom (some live for thousands of years), don’t necessarily grow more slowly as they age.

“We saw no predictable changes in these trees as they aged,” says Ronald Lanner. Results don’t mesh too well with some widely held theories about aging in trees, but do raise some interesting possibilities.

Some theories attribute senescence in trees to mutations caused by cosmic rays, or a reduction in the transport of nutrients and water.

None of these theories appeared to hold water, at least for bristlecone pine. For example, as trees aged, there was no reduction in bud size, shoot growth, nor in the characteristics of xylem or phloem cells.

So why do these trees finally die? Lanner suspects that bristlecone pines that aren't killed by causes such as lightning, fire or bark beetles, eventually succumb to a far more mundane enemy—the loss of soil around the roots, which eventually exposes and kills roots. A comprehensive test of this hypothesis might involve protecting some trees from all potentially adverse environmental factors, such as insect damage and cosmic rays.

It could be a long study. The oldest Great Basin bristlecone pines that Kristina F. Connor and Lanner studied was 4,712 years old. The youngest was 14 years old. Trees were selected from Mammoth Creek in the Dixie National Forest in southern Utah and from two locations in the White Mountains of California.
Some strains of alfalfa tolerate salt better than others. So do some strains of nitrogen-fixing bacteria.

Combining the most salt-tolerant of both types of organisms could eventually boost yields on millions of acres of droughty and saline soils around the world.

While it has long been known that strains of alfalfa differed in their salt tolerance, USU researchers are identifying the extent and sources of this variation, a precursor to developing more salt-tolerant alfalfa germplasm.

Salt (sodium chloride) in soil inhibits germination and growth of alfalfa on soils in many arid regions of the world. Salt from irrigation water and from nitrogen fertilizers exacerbates the problem.

USU researchers studied the salt tolerance of 229 cultivars and germplasm releases of alfalfa, and selected 29 of the best performers for additional germination tests. They are now studying salt tolerance during later stages of growth, and are determining the number and inheritance of genes that govern salt tolerance.

The best alfalfa strains tested tolerated water with a salt concentration of about 1 percent, while some strains of rhizobia have been identified which tolerate a salinity of about 4 percent, says plant scientist William Campbell. To put that in perspective, the salinity of seawater is about 3 percent.

"We suspect that salt tolerance and drought tolerance in alfalfa may be related. There is some evidence for this in rhizobia," Campbell says.

The differences in salt tolerance apparently reflect differences in cell membranes. Inoculating salt-tolerant strains of alfalfa with salt-tolerant root bacteria promises to further increase yields as well as reducing use of nitrogen fertilizers.

The research involves Campbell, Ramzi Mohammad, and Melvin Rumbaugh, plant geneticist with the USDA Forage and Range Research Laboratory in Logan.

JS

PROGRESS
in the Search for
SALT-TOLERANT ALFALFA
Transfers Could Provide Enough Water for ENERGY DEVELOPMENT, Say Economists

As long as water can be transferred among users, there should be enough water in Utah for energy-related economic growth, even without additional water-storage facilities and in spite of periodic droughts.

That’s according to a computer analysis of the relationship between water and revenue from agricultural and energy-related industries by USU economists. They say it may be necessary to free water markets to efficiently transfer water among uses and regions.

Economists John A. Keith, Gustavo A. Martinez Gerstl, Donald L. Snyder and Terrence F. Glover note that the amount of water available is “not a significant constraint in regional economic growth in the Upper Colorado River Basin and the Utah portion of the Great Basin, particularly if water rights are relatively freely transferable.”

We need to look at what water will produce in terms of return,” Keith says. “Energy is a very high-value use. If water were to be allowed to freely transfer by lease or by sale in the market, then available water would not limit energy.”

Keith says farmers stop irrigating low-value crops such as wet-meadow hay during a drought. “There’s enough low-value irrigation that it would pay both the irrigator to lease or sell and the energy producer to buy or sell those water rights. Both would gain.

“We really ought to see some freeing up of water markets so water can be efficiently transferred among uses and among regions.”

Water in Western states is largely controlled by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation regulations because water-storage projects have been developed by the bureau rather than by agriculture, which seldom can pay for storage development, Keith says.

“With water storage, we’re really not a water-short state. We have seasonal water flows. Given the amount of storage now, other than in the Sevier Basin, which is a closed system, the problem of interseasonal flow is not critical.

“We have problems getting water from one place to another but the water is there,” Keith says.
Grazing Trials Should Answer Remaining Questions About FORAGE GRASSES

How good are some of the new grasses on Intermountain rangelands?

We’re about to find out. Large-scale grazing trials will let range scientists and plant breeders determine whether forage grasses differ from a cow’s perspective.

Range scientist Chris Call notes that most of the exotic cool-season grasses originally used to reseed rangelands were developed in areas such as North Dakota and Saskatchewan, and may not have been fully adapted to conditions in the Intermountain west.

Researchers with the USDA Forage and Range Research Laboratory in Logan have developed and released new cultivars of crested wheatgrass and Russian wildrye for the Intermountain region. On small clipped plots, the seedling vigor and forage quality of the new cultivars were markedly better than standard cultivars.

The new cultivars are extremely popular, but some questions remain as to whether these new cultivars produce a higher proportion of stems to leaves and whether their canopy structures determine how livestock harvest forage.

A 5-year study at the Tintic Experimental Area is addressing these questions. Preliminary results are promising. As in the small plots, Syn-A Russian wildrye and Hycrest crested wheatgrass continue to have better seedling establishment than the standard cultivars, Vinall Russian wildrye and Nordan crested wheatgrass. Pastures have been seeded for 2 years so grazing trials will start this spring.

Performance and diet selection of the Angus heifers will then be correlated with forage canopy and quality characteristics of the different cultivars.

KG

Market Outlook Mixed for Some UTAH COMMODITIES

An economist has a mixed prognosis for two of Utah’s most important agricultural commodities, turkey and fruit.

First, the good news: Per capita turkey consumption is expected to increase from 13 to 16 pounds during the next decade. It also appears that Utah fruit might capture a larger share of the market on the West Coast and in Texas by grade-sorting fruit to create additional quality categories. Creating a distinctive state brand might increase the quality of shipments, but may not increase market share.

However, economist Terry Glover says turkey production is likely to increase substantially in the South Atlantic states, which could depress prices in the eastern market, a major outlet for Utah turkey meat. Fortunately, these losses should be offset by increased per capita consumption.

And while grading fruit might mean a larger market share, Glover says the costs associated with these practices might exceed the potential increases in revenue. Additional study is needed to weigh the economic merits of a fruit-grading/brand system.

KG
NEW DAIRY PRODUCTS Will Lure Consumers

In the pitched battle to develop convenience products, the dairy industry often watched from the sidelines. The marketing possibilities for some staple dairy products seemed limited.

But that’s about to change. The next generation of dairy products will offer exceptional convenience and flavor, in addition to solid nutritional quality. Researchers have even weaned some refrigerated products from cold temperatures.

One of the promising upstarts is a yogurt that need not be refrigerated, with a shelf life of more than 6 months. The secret to the yogurt’s longevity? Ultra-high temperature (UHT) processing and sterile packaging, a one-two combination that eliminates all spoilage microorganisms, says food scientist Paul Savello. One of the final hurdles prior to commercial development is finding a stabilizer to prevent protein from separating during storage.

The yogurt should be an ideal product for export, Savello says.

Another mouthwatering product is the unlikely stepchild of a problem—the formation of gels in whey proteins in ultrafiltered milk during cheesemaking. After studying the phenomenon for several years, it finally dawned on Savello that gel formation might be useful in developing a pourable cream cheese.

It is. Just according to script, the whey proteins in concentrated ultrafiltered milk gel when heated to the consistency of melted cream cheese. (The whey proteins act like the proteins in egg whites that are added to cream cheese to make cheesecake.) UHT processing and sterile packaging should eliminate the need for refrigeration.

Also on the drawing board is a skim milk-fruit juice drink that Savello says “combines the goodness of orange juice and the healthfulness of milk.” Although demand (and prices) for dairy products have increased in recent months, demand for skim milk still languishes. If it becomes popular, such a nutrient-laden beverage could eliminate any slack in the demand for skim milk.

Adding citrus juice seems to improve the “mouth feel” of skim milk, Savello says, while UHT processing eliminates the need for refrigeration. Research now focuses on stabilizers that will prevent the precipitation of milk protein.

Food scientist Donald McMahon is developing milk puddings from UHT-processed milk. An enzyme is added to coagulate sterilized milk—the final product need not be refrigerated until opened.

He is also fortifying ice cream with beneficial bacteria often found in yogurt—Lactobacillus bulgaricus, Streptococcus thermophilus, Lactobacil-
L. acidophilus and Bifidobacterium bifidus. Unlike L. bulgaricus and S. thermophilus, L. acidophilus and B. bifidus usually survive the acidic environment of the stomach and reach the intestines, where they can have several beneficial effects, including inhibiting the growth of pathogenic bacteria, as anti-cancer agents, and controlling blood cholesterol levels. Their therapeutic effects have attracted considerable attention in Europe.

L. acidophilus and B. bifidus promise to be particularly beneficial in replenishing bacterial populations in the intestines of long-term users of antibiotics. Antibiotics can kill intestinal bacteria, thus allowing undesirable yeasts to flourish.

And the “metallic” flavor of concentrated canned milk may be a thing of the past with UHT-treated concentrated milk that Savello and McMahon are developing. One problem is preventing the formation of gels in sterile ultrafiltered milk that has been stored at room temperature for several months.

Aspects of the research are funded by the Western Dairy Foods Research Center, the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board and the USDA Agricultural Research Service. A USU faculty grant supports McMahon’s research with bacteria.

KG

Banking on the Right
GRASS GENES

Imagine trying to identify very distant relatives by their appearances. Odds are that time would have obscured most physical similarities. Researchers are discovering that the visible traits of some grasses also belie their genealogy. In this case, however, clarifying the relationships among grasses could eventually mean higher wheat yields.

The grasses of interest are members of the group Triticeae, which include the major cereals and forages. The genealogy of members of the genus Thinopyrum, which includes intermediate wheatgrass, is of particular interest. These perennial grasses can hybridize with wheat and could be a source of genes for such traits as disease resistance, says taxonomist Mary Barkworth.

For years, taxonomists have wrangled over the classification of members of this genus. The matter is of more than academic interest: destruction of the habitat of some species could result in the irretrievable loss of some genes unless representative samples of the right accessions are preserved.

Research assistant Jim Jarvie has analyzed the extracts of seedlings to identify relationships among members of the Thinopyrum species, which will make it easier to identify seed accessions now stored in germplasm banks.

Jarvie’s findings also clarify how classification of these grasses is related to their morphology and anatomy.

“It turns out that some grasses that appear very different are in fact very closely related,” Jarvie says. “Further classification of these species will help us determine which species should be collected as soon as possible for gene banks.”

KG
Many young mammals (including humans) avoid unfamiliar foods.

The food neophobia of children often exasperates parents, but it helps young lambs distinguish between nutritious and toxic plants on rangelands.

How?

Bellyaches seem to provide valuable clues, say researchers who tested lambs’ ability to distinguish between combinations of unfamiliar and familiar foods. The experiments also involved “harmful” foods, palatable feeds that had been treated with lithium chloride, which upsets their gastrointestinal systems.

Lambs associated foods with gastrointestinal illness. If they became ill after eating an unfamiliar food and a familiar food, they subsequently avoided the unfamiliar food, even though the familiar food contained lithium chloride.

Lambs that had consumed foods laced with lithium chloride subsequently displayed more fear of new foods.

“Our study involved a simpler setting than a ruminant is likely to encounter on rangelands, but data from these studies suggest that the novelty of a food is an important factor,” says range scientist Fred Provenza, who conducted the study with associate Beth Burritt.

Lambs also learn which foods to eat, and possibly which to avoid, from more experienced sheep.

“Sampling seems to play an important role in diet selection. Sheep generally consume more than one food per meal, and those that consume small quantities of a variety of plants minimize their risk of poisoning,” Provenza says.

Plant toxicity is not constant over the growing season or in all plant parts. Sampling may help sheep ingest safe amounts of poisonous plants, or help sheep detect when a potentially toxic plant is no longer harmful.

JS
Neither Husbands
Nor Gadgets Lighten
HOUSEHOLD CHORES
Not too many years ago, some pundits speculated that the proliferation of household gadgets would nearly eradicate household chores.

Other observers theorized that husbands would do more housework as their wives entered the labor force.

Not so, on either count. Neither appliances nor employment have significantly reduced the time wives spend on household chores, according to a recent study of time use in Utah families.

"Many people assume that an increase in household appliances will lead to a decrease in time spent doing household work. This assumption turns out to be more of a wish than a reality," says USU home economist Jane McCullough.

Six Hours Per Day On Household Chores

The 1987-88 study is similar to one conducted 10 years before. "Homemakers were still, on the average, spending more than 6 hours per day doing household work, just as they were 10 years earlier," McCullough says. As in the previous study, the tasks of food preparation, housecleaning and physical care of family members each required more than 1 hour per day of a homemaker’s time.

The latest study was characterized by a marked decrease in the percentage of full-time homemakers (from 57 to less than 40 percent) and an increase in the time that homemakers devoted to paid employment (from 82 to 150 minutes per day).

However, wives devoted just about as much time to daily household chores (375 minutes) as their counterparts did 10 years earlier (397 minutes). The most noticeable changes involved a 17-minute decline in food preparation and a 12-minute increase in time allocated to shopping.

"Despite the many new products and technologies, households do not operate and care for themselves. There are few appliances that function without an input of human time. While microwave ovens have decreased the time required to cook food they have not noticeably reduced preparation and clean-up time," McCullough says.

Traditional Division of Labor Persists

"The traditional division of labor was very much in existence in the families studied," McCullough says. On the average, husbands spent a half hour more in household work than husbands 10 years before. For example, men spent 7 minutes a day in housecleaning (10 percent as long as women). Men also spent 4 minutes washing dishes, and 7 minutes in food preparation.

Even though many men helped out more around the house, that assistance didn’t reduce the time women spent on household chores. This indicates that families may be spending more time together in tasks such as shopping.

Husbands of women employed full-time spent less time in household work than husbands of women who were employed part-time or who were full-time homemakers. Additional research is needed to determine possible reasons for this trend.

Another assumption (unfounded, as it turns out) was that employed women will spend less time in social and recreational activities. However, employed women did spend slightly less time participating in organizational activities than women not employed outside the home.

Older children apparently don’t help enough to substantially reduce the time required for household chores. Homemakers in families in which the youngest child was less than 1 year old spent about as much time in household tasks as homemakers in families in which the youngest child was more than 12 years old. The type of household chores differed somewhat, however.

Children Spend More Time on Schoolwork

Children required almost 1 hour more for schoolwork than their counterparts 10 years ago, and there were some differences in how children in urban and rural areas spent their time. Girls from rural areas spent
more time doing schoolwork and less time helping with housework than girls from urban areas. Boys from rural areas spent more time in schoolwork and paid work and less time in social and recreational activities and in household work than boys from urban areas.

The consistency of findings between the two studies may indicate that those raising families have very little discretionary time after eating, sleeping, employment and obligations to other family members, McCullough says.

Consistent patterns of time use may also be a deliberate attempt by homemakers to provide some valuable continuity and stability to life.

The 1987-88 study involved 214 Utah families. A similar study 10 years earlier involved 210 families. Respondents were asked to record how they used their time for two days in 10-minute intervals. Half the families participating in the study were from Salt Lake County and half were from Washington and Iron counties.

KG

How homemakers spend their time
(average minutes per day)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1977-78</th>
<th>1987-88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food preparation</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishwashing</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housecleaning</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of home, yard, car &amp; pets</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of clothing &amp; household linens</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of clothing &amp; household linens</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>Social &amp; recreational</td>
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<td>Personal care of self (includes sleep)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
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<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccounted for</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Single Parents: More Work, Less Housework

One byproduct of the escalating divorce rate has been a dramatic increase in the number of one-parent families. In the United States in 1970, single-parent families with children under 18 made up 12.5 percent of the total. This increased to almost 23 percent in 1988.

In Utah, 11.5 percent of the families are headed by one parent, 94 percent of them by women.

How does single parenthood affect time use? To find out, Extension home economics program leader Marilyn Noyes interviewed 101 single parent families in the Salt Lake area, 98 of which were headed by women.

Single homemakers spent almost 2 hours less per day doing household tasks than their married counterparts, but spent more time in paid work (almost 4 1/2 hours) than married homemakers (2 1/2 hours), and more time in school (more than 1 1/2 hours) than their married counterparts (12 minutes). Single homemakers also tended to be better educated (79 percent had post high school training) than their married counterparts, which may be related to the time they spend in school.

Married homemakers were better off financially—38 percent of the two-parent households had incomes of $25,000 or more versus only 16 percent of the one-parent households. And 5.5 percent of the two-parent families had poverty level incomes versus 24 percent of the one-parent households.

Average ages of single and married homemakers were similar (38 vs. 36 years) but a much larger proportion of the single homemakers were between 31 and 40 (63 percent vs. 32 percent), perhaps the result of an increase in the divorce rate after several years of marriage.

Noyes cautions that the results may not be representative of all single-parent households because the respondents were not randomly selected. And, as in the study of two-parent families, there were substantial variations in time use between families.

The ages of the single-parent homemakers ranged from 20 to 51. Seventy-nine percent were employed for at least 8 hours per week, and 55 percent worked 40 or more hours per week. All had completed at least the eleventh grade.

KG
The golden years may hold golden opportunities for some communities in Utah. As the population ages, and the economic clout of the elderly increases, promoting the advantages of retirement in Utah might be a way to spur economic growth.

Utah seems to have many of the attributes that retirees want, says Joan McFadden in the Home Economics and Consumer Education Department. She recently surveyed pre-retirees at USU to determine their preferences in retirement communities, part of a larger research project involving eight western states and Missouri.

Many participants in the regional survey (from 48 percent of Wyoming residents to 81 percent of Oregon residents) said they preferred to retire in their home states. However, of those who said they would consider moving upon retirement, most named a Western state as their first choice.

The Lure of Mountains and Water
The environmental and climatic conditions characteristic of several areas in southern Utah could lure many retirees. Seventy-nine percent said it was important to be near mountains and 72 percent said nearness to a lake or river was important.
Almost three-quarters wanted to be near trees and foliage and where humidity was low. About half of those interviewed preferred an area with no snow in the winter. One-third preferred warm temperatures year round.

Nearly all pre-retirees said medical facilities were the most important characteristic of a community. Low cost of living and low utility rates were important to most, as were library and recreational facilities. More than half the respondents said a hospital with general practitioners, a few specialists and limited surgery would be acceptable if these medical services were located nearby or in the community. The others preferred immediate access to more extensive medical facilities.

Retirees are attracted by the state’s mountains, lakes and rivers, climate, medical facilities and low living costs.

An aging population will increase the economic clout of retirees, McFadden notes. Those over 65 made up 12.3 percent of the U.S. population in 1987, an increase of almost 17 percent in seven years.

Those aged 45-64 represent 18.6 percent of the U.S. population. Increased life expectancy and lower fertility rates mean that the 1990 census will probably show a 23 percent increase in the number of households headed by people at least 65 years old.

These trends may hold economic opportunities for the development of retirement communities such as St. George. McFadden notes that retirees usually have guaranteed incomes, do not compete for existing jobs, and require services that create additional employment.
There are costs associated with new developments for the retired, however. These include providing for adequate medical, library and recreational facilities, in addition to retirement housing.

McFadden’s survey of more than 600 USU employees 40 years of age and older indicated that almost two-thirds plan to stay in the Cache Valley area when they retire—and that bodes well for economic growth in the region.

**Most USU Employees Plan to Stay**

The attributes that USU employees found desirable were similar to those mentioned by respondents in other states. Most said that the area’s medical facilities, cost of living and recreational opportunities were big pluses (Figs. 1 - 3). And most want to live in a detached single family dwelling, a type of housing more popular (and affordable) in the Cache Valley area than in many other regions.

More than 80 percent said they would prefer living in a community that included people of all ages during the first 10 years of retirement.

The higher the income, the more likely the USU respondents were to have made plans for retirement. Most said they had started saving for retirement and about half said they had started estate planning or made a will. Fewer than one in five had purchased acreage or a lot for retirement.

And belying the common perception that many retirees have a penchant for continuous travel, almost 40 percent said they would not consider a recreational vehicle as retirement housing.

Family members were influential in retirement decisions. Almost all of the respondents said spouses had a major or strong influence on decisions concerning where to retire. Nearly two-thirds said their children influenced their retirement decisions.

KG
Some view the problem as early, nonmarital sexual activity...
Others, however, argue that changing patterns of teenage sexual behavior are the inevitable consequence of broader social trends... [and] believe that public programs should help teenagers guard against unintended pregnancy. Still others in our society view the most compelling problem as neither early sexual activity nor abortion, but as teenage childbearing.

Teenage Sexuality: Adolescent Actions With Adult Consequences

Few family-related issues generate more concern than teenage sexuality.

Small wonder. The question encompasses the emotion-laden topic of sexuality, the turmoil of adolescence and the controversial issues of contraception and abortion.

There are about as many proposed “solutions” to the problem as there are definitions of the problem, says Brent Miller in the Family and Human Development Department who has extensively studied adolescent sexual behavior.

Unfortunately, there are no simple answers in sight.

The detrimental consequences of teenage childbirth unnerves parents but often don’t deter teenagers, who tend not to personalize the consequences of intercourse in the mistaken belief that “it won’t happen to me,” Miller says.

The gloomy prospects for teen mothers include a greater chance of complications, illness or death during childbirth, premature or low birthweight babies, a greater likelihood of unstable marriages, and fewer educational and occupational opportunities for the mothers as well as the children.

The spread of AIDS has increased society’s financial stake in teens’ sexual behavior, as have the escalating welfare costs associated with teenage births. Some analysts estimate that total welfare-related expenditures attributable to teenage childbearing amounted to $16.6 billion in 1985.

According to a 1988 survey, 33 percent of the high school students in Utah have engaged in sexual intercourse, which is substantially lower than the national rates of nearly 45 percent for girls and 55 percent for boys of similar ages.

Live birth rates to teenagers are similar in Utah and the United States. Teenage abortion rates in Utah are about one-third of the national average.

There are no good data on contraceptive use among Utah teens, but “my educated guess is that kids in Utah are less likely to use contraceptives,” Miller says. These trends mean that teenagers in Utah are less likely to engage in premarital sex, but are probably at a greater risk of pregnancy as a result of intercourse due to reduced use of contraceptives.
**Discipline: Moderation Seems Best**

What's a parent to do? Miller says supervision and rules help, but within limits. In one study, he found that sexual permissiveness and intercourse were most prevalent among teens who said their parents weren't strict or had no rules, and were intermediate among teens who said their parents were very strict and imposed many rules.

Moderation appears to be the best option. Adolescents who said their parents imposed a moderate number of dating rules and were moderately strict in their discipline had the lowest rates of intercourse or sexual permissiveness.

Grades count, although not all good students remain sexually abstinent. The better the grades and the higher the educational aspirations of teens, the less likely they were to have intercourse. And teens' attitudes toward school reflect the importance that parents place on good grades.

Stable marriages of parents are a positive factor, but divorce per se doesn't seem to be as much to blame as the reduced standard of living and emotional turmoil that accompanies dissolution of marriages. Miller found that teenage girls raised by single parents are more likely to have nonmarital sexual intercourse than girls from intact marriages. However, the effects of single parenthood were partly due to lowered income and social status, which also influence teens' sexual behavior.

The relationship between marital status and sexual permissiveness of teens might also be attributed the reduced ability of single parents to adequately supervise their teenagers. Others blame the disruption associated with divorce, or hypothesize that divorced parents may be less religious and may have more sexually permissive attitudes.

None of these theories has been confirmed, however.

**The Inconsistencies of Attitudes**

Teens' attitudes toward premarital intercourse have a major effect on the probability of sex before marriage. And religion shapes those attitudes, as Miller found in his study of the sexual attitudes and behavior of teens.
in Utah, New Mexico and California: Teens who attended church regularly were much less likely to condone premarital intercourse.

But teenagers’ attitudes and behavior weren’t always consistent. Some teens who had sexual intercourse said premarital intercourse was wrong, and about one-third of the virgins that were neutral or condoned sex before marriage had not engaged in sexual intercourse—or at least not yet.

Delaying dating until teens are older substantially reduces their risk of premarital intercourse. In the United States, the median age when adolescents start dating has declined from about 16 years of age in the 1920s and 1930s to about 13 years in the 1970s.

Mormon teens are taught to delay dating until 16 years of age, and Miller says that their patterns of dating and premarital sexual experiences are different than adolescents in the general population. Mormon teens were more likely than non-Mormons to postpone dating and less likely to have experienced sexual intercourse.

However, Mormon teens who dated early were five times as likely to have had sexual intercourse as Mormons who postponed dating until 16 years of age (see graph). Among non-Mormon teens, early daters were about twice as likely to have had sexual experience as those who had postponed dating until 16 years of age.

Avoiding “Unacceptable Consequences”
Miller sees some hope in national prevention programs, such as those designed to help teens postpone or abstain from sexual intercourse. These programs first seek to personalize the risks of early sexual activity and then provide social skills and training to help teens extricate themselves from or avoid situations that foster sexual involvement. This involves rehearsing responses and role playing, especially to help girls resist the pressures to have sexual intercourse often applied by older males.

Miller believes the best policy is to encourage teenagers to abstain from or at least postpone sexual intercourse, however that might be achieved. “But at the same time I realize that some teenagers will not be abstinent and I think it would be irresponsible not to teach sexually active teens about contraception to minimize the even more difficult and unacceptable consequences of pregnancy, early parenthood or abortion.”

And what about sex education? “Most studies have found that students who receive sex education in public schools are no more likely to have sexual intercourse than those who have not. If contraceptive information is included in sex education courses, students who have sex are more likely to use contraception,” Miller says.

While there is growing support for sex education at school, there is nearly universal agreement that parents need to be more effective sex educators at home, Miller says. He received a federal grant to prepare and evaluate print and video resources designed to help parents and their preteens discuss sexuality, before these children enter the age when they are at the greatest risk.

Miller doesn’t see any major reduction ahead in the sexual activity of teenagers, in part because society sends teens a mixed message: advertisements and the mass media convey “very heavy messages that sexual activity is acceptable and expected,” inducements that sometimes drown out the warnings of experts and the pleas of parents.

KG
When Home and Business Merge: PUTTING INITIATIVE TO WORK

There's the worm lady in Roosevelt, the Chums man in Hurricane and the candy lady in Fairview. And don't overlook the jeans woman in Manti, the rug man in Marysville, the pickle pie woman in Bicknell, and the upholstery woman in Junction.

All are successful Utah home-based businesses, endeavors that contribute millions of dollars annually to the state's economy. All are examples of initiative, creativity and hard work.

Similar endeavors should be encouraged and nurtured, says Barbara Rowe, family resources management specialist with the Extension Service and the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station.

Rowe studies successes and problems of home-based businesses in the state, and determines their contribution to the state's economy.

"We have a large number of home-based businesses in Utah. Only Missouri outranks us in the percentage. Heavily urbanized states, such as New York, have the fewest," Rowe says.

Rowe, herself a former small business owner, and Marion Bentley, Extension specialist in business and economic development, teach workshops around the state on home-based businesses.

The Rowe/Bentley workshops generated a series of 11 workbooks that are now used in 38 other states. An additional workbook will concern the diagnosis and treatment of a "sick" business.

"Businesses can get in trouble. We tell people how to recognize the red flags, how to best survive a wreck. Sometimes it's time to bail out," Rowe says.

Creativity and Caution
Interest in the workshops also stimulated an Experiment Station project concerning the economic contribution of Utah's entrepreneurs.

Because home-based businesses are scattered around, their economic contributions are often not apparent. Bentley estimates that home-based businesses probably contribute several million dollars annually to Utah's economy, an amount that is increasing.

"How do these people proceed? How do they succeed? We can learn from them," Rowe says.

They do it creatively—and carefully. For example, the worm woman drove her competitors out of business by providing fresh clean worms in damp sawdust packed in Styrofoam containers. She regularly checks on the worms in the convenience stores where the worms are sold, and replaces them if necessary.

The Rowe/Bentley study is now part of a study involving researchers in Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Hawaii.

"We wanted to know how much home-based businesses contribute to the economy. And we wanted to know what resources need to be in the community for them to survive. The different states should provide some interesting comparisons and contrasts. The study will give us good baseline data for tracking trends," Bentley says.

Photos:
Kathy Rhead and Cindy Peterson, Empire Business Forms Inc.
Wayne and Michelle Sanderson, Lazer Electro/Optics Consulting
Changes in Lifestyle
Some of the home-based businesses represent a significant and conscious lifestyle change for the entrepreneur. Chums, colorful cloth strings that attach to sunglasses, are marketed coast-to-coast by a young man who moved to Hurricane because he liked the environment.

"You can live anywhere and have a product-based business," Bentley says. "Many are opportunistic. Where there's a hole in the market, there's a better chance of success. Product-based businesses can be a real boon in a rural area where the farm economy is slow. We see that home-based businesses in urban areas are generally more service-oriented."

Agricultural workers and agricultural sales are not included because they are studied through other avenues.

Many home-based businesses involve writing. "People can write anywhere. Patricia McConnell, for instance, lives in Moab, because she likes the area. She can send her manuscripts to editors and publishers anywhere by computer modem," Rowe says.

Creative artists—songwriters, disc jockeys, artists, photographers—often work at home and outnumber craftspeople. Contractors, mechanics, repair people, dispatchers, salespeople and day care services are often home-based. Professionals such as accountants and attorneys may have home offices. And there are more unusual enterprises: the aquarium maintenance man, the blacksmith, the worm woman.

Some people may recognize a market but not go into business. The "born entrepreneurs" have the willingness to take the start-up risk.

The entrepreneur who started Clear Creek Travel and Folklore near Richfield offers tours of archaeological sites by buckboard, horseback and van.

"It started small. It gets bigger every year. She's added entertainment in the form of native American dances," Rowe says.

The Perils of Success
A small, slow start-up can be an advantage, Rowe says. "Many learn quickly that the problems of running a business are not to their liking. Starting small and growing larger is easier than starting as a full-scale business. Money can gradually be put into expansion."

There are perils in success. Expansion may mean hiring more help or finding more room.

"The candy woman went from making candy to problems of managing personnel, purchasing and paperwork. For some, it may not be an easy transition."

The researchers say home-based businesses are not a quick way to riches. Although they may involve less financial risk than a downtown business, there are always expenses, and the financial stakes increase as businesses grow. Expansion also increases the need for managerial skills, and the risks associated with failure. It often takes three years for a business to show a profit.

"Fifty percent of the businesses make less than $10,000 a year," Rowe says.

Scrutinize Motives Before Starting
The optimum pricing of goods and services is often a problem for entrepreneurs.

"Small home-based businesses often price their product too low. We tell them they can't determine..."
prices by what the neighbors are willing to pay. You have to go where the customers are and find out what the product is worth to them. The successful businessperson needs to factor in materials plus time, plus profit. Profit is essential for a business to grow,” Rowe says.

It may not be possible to price some widely produced crafts high enough to earn a profit, Bentley says.

“People need to look at their motives. Maybe a person just wants to keep busy, and the business builds self-esteem. But if money is the motive, they should get into something that adds to the income stream. We teach people how to build additional value, competitive value to their business.

“If someone is producing something at a loss, there is an opportunity cost in terms of time. That time might be better spent doing something else,” Bentley says.

Hiring family members can be an economic asset.

“Some use their children to pack their products, for example, or to act as sales representatives. They can be paid a reasonable wage, and the law provides that parents do not have to pay FICA (social security) for them. The experience in mom’s business or dad’s store can be extremely valuable,” Rowe says.

Bentley says information about support services such as loans is particularly important in rural areas. He now serves on a state committee that is determining how laws and regulations that affect these enterprises might be improved.

“Some legislation and ordinances discourage microbusinesses, but communities need to look at these businesses as options for development, not as a burden or a regulatory chore.

“Home-based businesses add vitality as well as income to a community. They’re worthy of development,” Bentley says.

JS

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**BUSINESS BOOKLETS AVAILABLE**

Several booklets concerning home-based businesses are available from the USU Cooperative Extension Service for $1 each. They include:

- DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS PLAN: GETTING STARTED
- MANAGING YOUR FINANCIAL ASSETS
- WORKING WITH PEOPLE: FAMILY, CUSTOMERS, AND EMPLOYEES
- MAPPING YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY
- SELLING YOUR PRODUCT: MARKETING AND ADVERTISING
- ACQUIRING CAPITAL
- COPYRIGHTS, PATENTS, AND TRADEMARKS
- FINANCIAL RECORD KEEPING
- SETTING A PRICE
- KEEPING TRACK OF TAXES

The booklets concern the three major areas discussed in the workshops: how to get started, how to stay in business (which includes marketing, pricing and management), and coping with growth and taxes.

“We like to make people aware of the pitfalls,” Rowe says. “We ask them, essentially, ‘Are you sure you want to do this?’ ‘Do you have the personal abilities that are necessary?’ ‘Will it be too much work?’ We ask, ‘Do you want to police employees or chase sales?’ We bring up practical items such as paying for one’s own health insurance.”

“After the workshops, some people may decide to put the idea on hold. We consider those successes, too.”

JS
Begin with good intentions and high expectations.

**Advance one square.**

You lose your temper when your teenager acts surly.

**Roll the dice and try again.**


Those adjectives tend to become part of a rather shopworn litany in the vocabulary of some parents, particularly those with teenage sons and daughters. Some parents are comforted by the belief that it’s “normal” for relationships with adolescents to be riddled with strife and tension.

But parents shouldn’t blame adolescence for stormy relationships with teenagers. Bickering and conflict with teenagers may be symptoms—not the cause—of other problems in the family, says Gerald Adams with the Family and Human Development Department.

**Striving for Independence**

“There is evidence that conflicts in relationships with adolescents are no more common than in other relationships,” Adams says. “Adolescence doesn’t need to be a conflict-laden period, although the nature of conflicts involving adolescents may differ.”

Relationships often deteriorate when an adolescent seeks to become more independent and starts chafing at restrictions and rules. How parents communicate with their children may determine whether the adolescent-parent relationship sours, Adams says.

Go back one square.

You find the towel on the bathroom floor and automatically assume that your teenager left it there.
According to Adams, parents should neither completely abdicate attempts at discipline nor ignore adolescents’ pleas for greater independence. The most successful families negotiate with adolescents to accommodate their desire for more freedom, and treat adolescents as equals rather than subordinates.

An adolescent’s successful transition into adulthood involves a balance between individual interests and the welfare of others. “The families that facilitate character development of the child strike the right balance between individuality and ‘connectedness,’” Adams says.

While there are dangers in allowing too much independence, there are also risks in “enmeshing” a child too tightly in the family, thus “foreclosing” a child’s character development. When this occurs, an adolescent is not encouraged to develop and explore his own uniqueness.

A child whose identity is too closely linked with the family is more likely to experience severe psychological crises later in life, Adams says, as may occur, for example, when parents dictate a child’s career choice.

Adams categorizes the emotional development of adolescents into four statuses. An adolescent with a diffused identity, which is considered to be the least mature, is neither searching for a sense of self nor has any clear sense of commitment. An adolescent with a foreclosed identity has accepted a commitment but has merely accepted the standards of parents or other adults.
And an adolescent with a moratorium status has not found an acceptable commitment but is searching for an identity. The most mature adolescent is one with the status of identity achievement. This adolescent has experienced an identity crisis and solved it by selecting meaningful personal commitments.

What characterizes those families in which adolescents are encouraged to mature? To find out, Adams is studying relationships in more than 60 Utah families. The results could be used to develop a primer on successful adolescent-parent communication.

The study involves urban and rural families with adolescent sons and daughters. All are two-parent families. There may be several children in a family, but only one adolescent is being studied.

The Importance of Communication
Some types of communication may occur rarely but could be extremely important in predicting other behavior. For example, adolescents rarely attempt suicide, but a suicide attempt is a good predictor of long-term depression.

Other behaviors may occur in clusters and can be studied as a group.

"There may be developmental paths by which kids mature during adolescence. We may be able to predict why some kids progress, some stay stable, and others get worse during their character formation," Adams says.

"If we can identify family communication behaviors that predict development, we can then develop a parenting program that teaches both kids and parents to communicate to facilitate growth."
Each member of the family is interviewed once a year in the home and completes a battery of tests. Families are also asked to solve certain problems. How they interact during the task reveals relationships and communication patterns.

“All communication in a family is terribly complex, on a cognitive, behavioral or emotional basis,” Adams says.

The type of communication between spouses may also be a powerful predictor of how parents communicate with adolescents. “The healthiness of the adult personalities may predict the communication style, which may in turn predict the development of adolescents,” Adams says.

**Treating Adolescents As Equals**

“We are finding that families that engage in democratic communications which allow adolescents to manifest their own individuality as a part of the family are more advanced in their maturity. These adolescents have a more mature sense of identity and a more complex view of their world,” Adams says.

More than 50 types of behavior are analyzed and coded. Some data have been analyzed, but the study will not be completed for several years.

Adams says interest in the positive role of families in adolescent development has increased in recent years. From the late 1950s to the early 1980s, researchers tended to focus on the importance of peer relationships and the conflicts between adolescents and their parents.

Fortunately, more researchers are now studying how families can enhance positive growth during adolescence.

KG
With all that happens in families, how do researchers identify behaviors that help adolescents?

It isn’t easy.

Determining which behaviors help adolescents both develop as an individual and feel part of a group (the family) is an important aspect of Adams’ study. It also requires a somewhat esoteric vocabulary.

The lingo is all in the interest of scientific accuracy. Behaviors must be defined so clearly and unambiguously that two people who observed the same behavior would classify it the same.

Here’s how Adams and his coworkers do it. Their criteria provide a useful scorecard to evaluate the interactions in your family.

Respecting Each Other’s Ideas

Behavior which helps an adolescent express his or her individuality is called enabling. Actions which tend to prevent an adolescent from reaching these goals are called constraining.

For example, behavior which “enables individuality” is that where “each family member exhibits self-assertion, validation, and permeability. Family members acknowledge and respect each others’ beliefs, feelings and ideas.”

Examples of this type of behavior are self-assertion (a display of awareness of one’s own point of view and responsibility for communicating it clearly), acceptance (paraphrasing, open question, positive feedback and understanding for the other speaker, expressing agreement, warmth and encouragement for the other person to continue with his or her speech).

It also includes self-disclosure (direct expression of feelings, needs, attitudes or opinions), positive separateness (disagreement with and direct challenge of other’s ideas) and self-focusing (attempt by the speaker to clarify his/her own uncertainties or confusions about another’s viewpoint).

Constraining Individuality

In contrast, behavior which constrains individuality is defined as distracting, judging, withholding, indifference, affective excessiveness and devaluing in which family members refuse to deal with a problem or stop discussion before differences of opinion are resolved.

This type of behavior is characterized by criticism, distortion, negative solutions, interruptions, avoidance, and narcissistic self-focusing (an attempt to clarify a person’s own uncertainties or confusions but one in which there is a refusal to consider others’ perspectives).

The Difficulty of Scoring Behavior

“These behaviors were difficult to operationalize,” Adams says. “When we started to examine behaviors, we often had to construct our own scoring scheme.”

Categorizing and analyzing behavior is a major reason why it will require several years to code and analyze information gathered during the study.

“We are using more than 50 different measures in the study and are ‘saturating’ families to obtain as much information as possible, and to make sure the results are as accurate and as comprehensive as possible,” Adams says.

And helpful. Within a few years, findings will help parents get along better with their adolescents.

KG
Child Support Guidelines: EQUITY VERSUS EMOTION

In 1984, the federal government required each state to establish monetary guidelines for child support. Seventeen Utahns served on a advisory task force to study the issue.

The recommended guidelines of the task force displeased many Utahns. And the revisions to the guidelines displeased others.

"We had expected the guidelines would be controversial. We hadn’t anticipated the outburst of bitter, angry testimony and letters,” says Barbara Rowe, family resources management specialist with USU Extension, who served on the task force.

The task force began studying the issue in May 1987. Members eventually developed 11 principles (see p. 52) to help resolve disputes and recommended the “income-sharing model,” which awards child support according to each parent’s relative income.

Revisions Reduce Child Care Payments
Following emotional criticism of the guidelines at public hearings held around the state, the task force revised the child custody guidelines and scaled down payments to compensate for child care tax credits and the exemption for dependents allowed custodial parents.

The Judicial Council, which created the task force, originally adopted the guidelines, but subsequently made the guidelines advisory following complaints by husbands, second wives and legislators.

The Office of Recovery Services (ORS) was asked to draft new guidelines to meet the Oct. 1, 1989, deadline established by Congress.

Rowe feels the new guidelines violate many of the 11 principles originally adopted by the task force.

“These revisions put the scheduled payments so low that of the 42 states with guidelines, only five have amounts lower than Utah’s,” Rowe says.

“The new guidelines call for equal sharing of extraordinary medical expenses and child care for employed custodial parents, despite the fact that Utah women have only 53 percent of the earning power of Utah men,” Rowe says.

“The guidelines provide a deduction for previously assessed child support whether or not the obligation has been paid, and specifies no adjustment by children’s ages. The new guidelines also provide for 50 percent reduction of support when a child spends more than 25 days of a 30-day period with the non-custodial parent, although the fixed expenses of the custodial parent do not decrease by more than 10-20 percent during these periods.”

Rowe says a children’s advocacy group unsuccessfully challenged the ORS guidelines. However, the new law does create an advisory committee named by the Governor and charged with reviewing the guidelines and making recommendations to the legislature.

“I hope that needed modifications of the current law will be made in the best economic interest of Utah’s children,” Rowe says.

JS
CHILD SUPPORT

Guideline Objectives Formulated by the Task Force

1. To provide as simple as possible a uniform child support guideline to facilitate understanding by the parties and efficient administration by the courts.

2. To provide a uniform, consistent and objective method for determining child support obligations to enable parents and attorneys to estimate a child support award.

3. To ensure that inadequate child support doesn’t contribute to the number of children living in poverty.

4. To protect children as much as possible from the adverse economic consequences of family breakup or non-formation.

5. To encourage joint parental responsibility by allocating support in proportion to each parent’s income. To the extent that either parent enjoys a higher standard of living, the child is entitled to share in that higher standard of living.

6. To allow parents to rely on the amount of the child support obligation so that both parents can plan other parts of their lives.

7. To provide a standard to review the adequacy of existing child support orders.

8. To provide a method for periodic updating of child support orders.

9. To apply the uniform child support guideline without regard to the gender of the custodial parent.

10. To minimize negative effects on the major life style decisions of both parents. The guideline should avoid creating economic disincentives for remarriage or labor force participation.

11. To ensure Utah is in conformity with federal law and therefore qualifies for continued federal funding for state and federal welfare programs.