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## Health Education in the Pineland Colored School, Sabine County, Texas

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HEALTH EDUCATION IN THE PINELAND COLORED SCHOOL,  
SABINE COUNTY, TEXAS

PRAIRIE VIEW STATE COLLEGE  
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by

Goldie B. Dunlevy Bryant

A Thesis in Health Education Submitted in Partial  
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Science

in the

Division of Home Economics

of the

Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College

Prairie View, Texas

August - 1938

## DEDICATION

To my husband, Frank Bryant, Sr. and  
little son, Frank Bryant, Jr. who have inspired  
me to succeed, I affectionately dedicate this  
thesis.

## OUTLINE

### I. Introduction

A. Importance of Health Education

B. Purpose of the Study

C. Method of Conducting Study

1. Direct Contact

II. The Present Health Program at Pineland School

III. The Work of the Various Health Agencies.

A. Homes

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C. Health Department

IV. Recommendations for Future Program.

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IMPORTANCE OF HEALTH EDUCATION IN THE PINELAND  
COLORED SCHOOL

The worth of any educational process is to be measured by its product. Health Education to the public is successful to the degree that it conserves and promotes the health of the public. Health Education is important because it leads to hygienic habits of living, a reserve force of energy, mental poise and all other conditions involving happy, robust health and a worthy rich life.

It was discovered in connection with the registration of young men in the late war that a large number were incapacitated for military service because of physical defects due to remedial or preventable causes. This fact has caused wider recognition of the importance of the good health and proper physical development of every member of society and of the need for suitable instruction and training to secure this basic end.

It has taken the world a long time to learn that a physically unfit nation soon becomes a mentally unfit nation and that a mentally unfit nation always becomes

a morally unfit nation. This is why educators are today stressing the need of Health Education.

Our boast of making the world safe for democracy is an idle one if we do not make it safe for our children and the future generation. What folly to spend millions to preserve our nation if we forget its future, its childhood.

Health heads the list of our cardinal principles of education. Interest in the health of the school child has spread rapidly as an outcome of cooperative study by educators and scientists. There has been awakened an interest in all phases of child life, social, emotional, mental as well as physical. In meeting the health problem of the growing child, it became necessary to know something of the child's needs and adjustments. With the gradual teaching of health into the public schools came many problems, some of which are still undergoing solution. There is no excuse for ignorance of the rule of healthy living among children.

As guardians of the future generation the responsibility of imparting the laws of health and practical application of these laws rests largely with the public school teacher. Health Education must go on through the whole school career of the child. The school must therefore lay its own plan and develop its own program.

The purpose of the present study is to present actual facts concerning health conditions and make suggestions which will aid in improving the health program at the Pineland Colored School so that it will be more significant in the lives of the school children.

Pineland school is located at Pineland, Texas in the extreme eastern part of Texas in Sabine County; in independent district number three; on state highway number 8. Pineland, Texas is twenty-five miles north of Jasper, Texas and twenty-five miles south of San Augustine.

Twenty-nine years ago Temple Lumber Company came in possession of this site, and hundreds of acres of timberland adjoining this site. The company set up a saw milling plant for the purpose of manufacturing yellow pine lumber. At the present both yellow pine and hard wood are manufactured.

The Company built dwelling houses, schools, churches, stores and other buildings to meet the demands of its employees. These buildings are rented and kept in repair by the Company. It has its own power plant and water plant. All buildings are wired and supplied with running water. A deep well is the source of the water supply.

A health department is maintained by the Company through a monthly medical fee paid by each male employee.

The total population of Pineland as shown by the last census is eighteen hundred. Thirty per cent of this

number is colored. There are one hundred and forty-four colored families in Pineland, Texas. The school population comes from sixty-four of these families. There are at present one hundred and fifty colored children of school age.

The school for Negro children is a frame building consisting of three rooms with nine windows each and there are six outside doors. It is a three-teacher school in which ten grades are taught.

The school site is about two acres in size. It is so located as to make it accessible for all the pupils. The surface type toilets are used.

This study has been conducted and based on information gained from personal observations, personal conferences and authoritative sources.

THE PRESENT HEALTH PROGRAM AT PINELAND  
COLORED SCHOOL

The present health program at Pineland Colored School is composed of three divisions:

1. Health Service
2. Health Supervision
3. Health Instruction

The health service at Pineland school is taken care of by the Temple Lumber Company Health Department. This includes any medical attention that may be necessary for school children, excluding major operations, obstetric and social disease cases for which charges are made. Whenever a child feels that he needs medical attention or advice he goes to the clinic for this service. The doctor makes house visits to those that are not able to call at the clinic.

There is practically no first aid service rendered at the school. All injuries are taken care of at the clinic which is located about a quarter mile from the school.

Daily inspections of children are made by the teachers or their appointees. In addition, the teachers watch for signs of eyestrain, defective hearing, toothache and in fact all the many ailments which affect children.

Student monitors or the teachers' appointees inspect the younger pupils for cleanliness of hands, face and

teeth. They report cases of sickness and names of pupils suspected of having infectious diseases of any kind to the teachers.

Temple Lumber Company Health Department appreciates our checking and reporting of such cases as measures can be taken to prevent an epidemic.

The class room teacher is in close contact with her children which contact indicates that she is an influential factor in the promotion of the school health program.

The following activities are the concern of the teachers in charge:

1. The morning health inspection
2. The hygiene and sanitation of the school
3. The care of her own health.

The Health Supervision of Pineland School deals with Ventilation, Lighting, Heating, Seating, Sanitation and Cleanliness of the buildings and surroundings.

Sufficient ventilation is always provided for the children. The windows can not be lowered from the top in order that a complete circulation of air might be possible. Since this condition exists, it was found convenient to slanting boards to prevent drafts.

Buff colored window shades are used because they reflect light. The seats are arranged so that the light

falls from the back over the left shoulders of the pupils. "Many a child has lost all interest in school work because his defective vision caused him to fall behind his class."<sup>1</sup> Pupils suffering from defective vision are seated near the blackboard, have well lighted desks and are not required to do as much outside reading as their classmates. Pupils with defective hearing are also seated near the blackboard where the teacher makes explanation of subject matter. Light falls on the face of the teacher in such a way that the pupils have full view of it and are able to do lip reading. The defective hearers can see the faces of other children as they recite. The teacher enunciates clearly and distinctly and attempts to get her students to do likewise in order that those with defective hearing can follow and read speech while it is given.

Three large wood stoves furnish heat in the rooms. Pineland School being located in a timber section and partly controlled by a Lumber Company, receives an ample supply of wood for fuel. The janitor has the rooms heated very comfortably on cold mornings.

The pupils take pride in keeping the buildings and surroundings in a clean and sanitary condition. They are cleaned regularly and voluntarily thereby

<sup>1</sup>

Barnes, Ina G., Rural School Management, p. 65

taking much responsibility from the shoulders of the teachers.

The teachers place special emphasis on cutting off the water at the drinking fountain so as to prevent a mud puddle at the fountain. Considerable water is used and continuous reminding is necessary in order to help the children form the habit of washing their hands after each visit to the toilet. Waste water is ditched off, therefore breeding places of mosquitoes are destroyed.

The school program is so arranged that undue fatigue is not experienced because the children are not overtaxed mentally or physically. There is a proper balance between work, play, rest and nourishment.

The daily program opens with devotionals and is followed by a study-recitation period of one hour and forty minutes. Then a recess of twenty-five minutes is given. A study-recitation period of one hour and twenty minutes follows. At noon an hour lunch period is given at which time all students are dismissed for home. In the afternoon a recess period separates the two study-recitation periods.

On the physical side, attention is given to the seating of students. " If teachers are careless or ignorant in seeing that seats are not fitted to the pupils occupying them, round shoulders, curved spines and sunken chests are the inevitable result." <sup>1</sup> With this in mind, we seat students, as near as possible, in seats that

1

Barnes, Ina G., Rural School Management, p. 78.

will aid in developing good posture. The smaller children use the low seats and desks and the higher seats and desks are used by larger students.

Health Instruction in the Pineland School is not regarded as a separate and distinct subject. Whenever the situation arises in which a health lesson can be taught, the teachers do so.

Health is correlated with other subjects especially oral and written English and citizenship and reading. Correlation of health with English is done in this manner: The students give oral and written sentences in which they tell the importance of some particular health habit or term. Themes are written on health subjects. Stories that show the value of good health habits are told. The students make health posters also.

In teaching citizenship we stress the fact that a good citizen cooperates in keeping the community in a sanitary condition thereby sickness and ill health are prevented and the death rate is low. Illness is expensive and the money spent to get well could be used to a more profitable advantage.

When any mention of food, water, climate or other environmental conditions is made in the reading classes, the teacher takes this particular term and discusses it in relation to health. Supplementary health readers are used and afford unusual interest to the children.

A large supply of health material from the State Health Department, Austin, Texas is always accessible to the students.

Health songs are sung. The children have composed other verses for these songs that contain health truths. Interesting programs are given during Negro Health Week.

#### The Work of the Various Health Agencies

In contacting the parents in their homes an effort was made to find out the number of unhealthy conditions within the homes and how they may be corrected in cooperation with the health instructions and activities taught in the Pineland School rooms since much can be done through the school when the school has some knowledge of what goes on in the home.

The writer observed that the sanitary conditions in the homes and surroundings were in fair condition. In only three of the yards was garbage found scattered around. The patrons realize that flies are bred in filth and they try to destroy all breeding places by keeping their homes clean and the garbage cans well covered. Food scraps are kept in covered cans in the back yards and used as feed for hogs. Fleas, mice, roaches and other pests usually found in homes are exterminated as quickly as is possible to do so.

Eleven of the homes had stagnant water due to improper drainage. Negligence in allowing the hydrants to drip and the disposal of waste water from the kitchen were sources of this stagnant water. It is in this kind of

water that mosquitoes are bred. Mosquitoes are a nuisance as well as carriers of malaria germs and the community each year is unfortunate to have several cases of malaria fever. This water can be drained off or kept covered with oil in order that mosquitoes wont live in it.

The screens at all of the houses were in excellent condition, thereby preventing flies and other insects from entering.

The diets served in forty three homes did not contain sufficient milk, fresh fruits and green vegetables to provide for proper development of growing children. The parents were of the opinion that foods served to working men and other adults were suitable for children. The children ate only the foods that they liked. Between meals they ate bread and syrup or candy.

Sleeping habits were irregular in all homes as none of the children had a designated hour to retire or arise. Sleeping conditions in six homes were poor due to the lack of bed room space and ventilation. All slept in beds, however.

The patrons were eager to get information that would promote and maintain good health and a check up later showed some improvement.

The Safety First Organization of Pineland, Texas was organized by the manager of the Temple Lumber Company. The Negroes and whites have separate branches but both

have the same objectives. The primary object of the Safety First Organization was to prevent accidents and hazards among the employees of the saw milling plant. It was later thought that this organization could render useful service to the Pineland Community at large through the health and safety lectures and programs. It holds regular meetings and during this time the community church is filled to its capacity with men, women and children. Some of the leading white citizens always attend.

A special lecture is given every two months by an Industrial Insurance Company representative who gives methods of preventing accidents and illnesses in the home and community as well as at the saw milling plant. A great deal of interest is shown in this organization and as a result accidents have been reduced far below the number that occur at other plants and the sick days of employees have been lessened.

This organization with its far reaching influence is causing people to become health conscious and a stronger and more intelligent group of Negroes is predicted for Pineland, Texas.

During the first two weeks in April each year, a clean-up campaign is in progress in the Pineland community. Temple Lumber Company Health Department instituted this

idea. It is also at this time that Negro Health Week is observed among the Negroes.

A general cleaning up of the community takes place and all rubbish is burned or hauled to the dumping ground, alleys are cleaned and ditches of water are either drained or covered with oil. Weeds and tall grass on vacant lots are mowed. The mowing continues through the year when it is necessary.

A first prize of five dollars and a second prize of two dollars and fifty cents are given to the families whose yards are the cleanest and most beautiful during the summer months. The prizes serve as incentives to the children and they work whole heartedly to win them. This interest in many of the children does not cease after the prizes are given but creates a desire to keep their premises clean and beautiful at all times.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In order to develop a stronger and happier group of school children in the Pineland School, the writer recommends that the homes set up higher standards of living.

The parents should become conscious of the value of a well balanced diet for their children. Sufficient milk served in some form should be in the diet daily. The raising of green vegetables in a year round garden would meet the needs of the children. Any surplus of these vegetables could be canned. A desirable taste will be developed for vegetables when they are served appetizingly and attractively. Parents should stress the fact that fresh fruits provide better nourishment than candies.

Parents should see that desirable sleeping habits are formed by their children. Crowded sleeping conditions in the homes could be remedied by putting more windows in the bed rooms or building sleeping porches.

Stagnant water around the homes could be prevented by allowing drainage of waste water.

An active Parent Teacher Association could formulate plans in which both the school and community would be benefited.

The coordinating of the school, church and the Safety First Organization on a health project could be of great benefit to the community.

The writer further recommends that the teachers endeavor to carry out an effective health program in the school and community in order to develop health consciousness in the citizens of Pineland, Texas.

## SUMMARY

Of all the functions of the school, that of maintaining and promoting the health and safeguarding the children is the most important.

The purpose of this work was to present actual facts concerning environmental conditions in the Pineland Colored School and make various suggestions which might aid in improving the present health program and meet the needs of the pupils. The study aimed to point out the physical, mental and social values that are derived from the health program through various agencies.

The health service that Temple Lumber Company Health Department offers the school makes it possible for Pineland children to be in a better health condition than those in other towns.

The results of the work of the various health agencies are influencing factors that have contributed to the well being of the community at large.

The school's health program is one in which cooperation is needed from Pineland citizens in order to make the community a better place in which to live.

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## METHOD OF STUDY:

1. Name of community.....
2. Name of parents.....
3. Number in family.....
4. Age of each child.....
5. Weight of each child.....
6. Height of each child.....
7. How many meals does the child eat daily?...
8. Do you prepare meals for the child different from  
those of grown ups?.....
9. What fresh vegetables do you serve daily?.....
10. What fresh fruits do you serve daily?.....
11. How much milk is the child given to drink daily?...
12. How much milk is used in preparing foods daily?....
13. What does your child eat between meals?.....
14. Does your child have regular hours to retire and arise?..
15. How much sleep does your child get?.....
16. Do they all sleep in beds?.....
17. How many sleep together?.....
18. How many windows are in the bed rooms?.....
19. Do the children assist in cleaning and beautifying the  
house?..... The yards?.....
20. Do the children discuss any health lessons with you?...
21. What health advice do you give your children?.....