

edited by

**DAVID R. MACE**

**prevention  
in  
family  
services**

**approaches to  
family wellness**

**prevention  
in  
family  
services**



## NEW PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY

Published in cooperation with National Council on Family Relations

**NCFR**

- Series Editor: **Maximiliane Szinovacz**  
*University of Illinois, Urbana—Champaign*
- Series Editor-Elect: **Linda Thompson**  
*Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University*

Books appearing in *New Perspectives on Family* are either single- or multiple-authored volumes or concisely edited books of original articles on focused topics within the broad field of marriage and family. Books can be reports of significant research, innovations in methodology, treatises on family theory, or syntheses of current knowledge in a subfield of the discipline. Each volume meets the highest academic standards and makes a substantial contribution to our knowledge of marriage and family.

**SINGLES:** *Myths and Realities*, Leonard Cargan and Matthew Melko

**THE CHILDBEARING DECISION:** *Fertility Attitudes and Behavior*,  
*Greer Litton Fox, ed.*

**AT HOME AND AT WORK:** *The Family's Allocation of Labor*,  
*Michael Geerken and Walter R. Gove*

**PREVENTION IN FAMILY SERVICES:** *Approaches to Family Wellness*,  
*David R. Mace, ed.*

**WORKING WIVES/WORKING HUSBANDS**, *Joseph H. Pleck*

**THE WARMTH DIMENSION:** *Foundations of Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory*,  
*Ronald P. Rohner*

**FAMILIES AND SOCIAL NETWORKS**, *Robert M. Milardo, ed.*

**FAMILIES AND ECONOMIC DISTRESS:** *Coping Strategies and Social Policy*,  
*Patricia Voydanoff and Linda C. Majka, eds.*

*Other volumes currently available from Sage and sponsored by NCFR:*

**THE SOCIAL WORLD OF OLD WOMEN:** *Management of Self-Identity*,  
*Sarah H. Matthews*

**ASSESSING MARRIAGE:** *New Behavioral Approaches*,  
*Erik E. Filsinger and Robert A. Louis, ed.*

**THE VIOLENT HOME**, *Updated Edition*, *Richard J. Gelles*

**SEX AND PREGNANCY IN ADOLESCENCE**, *Melvin Zelnik, John F. Kantner,*  
*and Kathleen Ford*

**prevention  
in  
family  
services**

**approaches to  
family wellness**

**edited by  
DAVID R. MACE**



**SAGE PUBLICATIONS**

*The Publishers of Professional Social Science*

Newbury Park London New Delhi

Copyright © 1983 by Sage Publications, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

*For information address:*



SAGE Publications, Inc.  
2111 West Hillcrest Drive  
Newbury Park, California 91320

SAGE Publications Ltd.  
28 Banner Street  
London EC1Y 8QE  
England

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd.  
M-32 Market  
Greater Kailash I  
New Delhi 110 048 India

Printed in the United States of America

**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

Mace, David Robert.

Prevention in family services.

(New perspectives on family)

“Published in cooperation with the National Council on Family Relations.”

1. Family—United States—Congresses. 2. Family Social work—United States—Congresses. 3. Marriage—United States—Congresses. 4. Parenting—United States—Congresses. I. Title. II. Series.

HQ536.M23 1983

306.8'5'0973

83-17854

ISBN 0-8039-2154-3

ISBN 0-8039-2155-1 (pbk.)

**FOURTH PRINTING, 1989**

# Contents

Series Editor's Foreword	JOHN SCANZONI	9
Prologue	DAVID R. MACE	11
<b>Part I: Theory, Research, and Policy</b>		<b>13</b>
1. What This Book Is About	DAVID R. MACE	15
2. Strong Families <i>A Portrait</i>	NICHOLAS STINNETT	27
3. Promoting Family Wellness <i>Implications and Issues</i>	TED W. BOWMAN	39
4. Prevention as a Profession <i>Toward a New Conceptual Frame of Reference</i>	LUCIANO L'ABATE	49
<b>Part II: Marriage Enrichment</b>		<b>63</b>
5. How Effective <i>Is</i> Marriage Preparation?	DAVID H. OLSON	65
6. The Critical First Year of Marriage	EDWARD BADER CAROLE SINCLAIR	77
7. Preparing Couples for Mid-Life and the Later Years	ROBERT P. TRAVIS PATRICIA Y. TRAVIS	87
8. The Marriage Enrichment Movement	DAVID R. MACE	98

9.	Enriching Marriage as a Reciprocally Resonant Relationship	BARBARA FISHMAN ROBERT FISHMAN	110
<b>Part III: Parenthood and Whole Family Enrichment</b>			<b>121</b>
10.	Preparing for Parenthood During Pregnancy and Early Infancy	ANN ELLWOOD	123
11.	Transforming Early Parenthood To Promote Family Wellness	THOMAS GORDON	133
12.	Preventing Parent-Adolescent Crises	DAVID CATRON SARAH CATRON	148
13.	Whole Family Enrichment	MARGARET M. SAWIN	161
<b>Part IV: Special Services to Families</b>			<b>173</b>
14.	Promoting Effective Communication in Families	DANIEL WACKMAN	175
15.	Training Families to Deal Creatively with Conflict	DAVID R. MACE	190
16.	Promoting Family Wellness Through the Churches	LEON SMITH	201
17.	Promoting Family Wellness Through the Educational System	BERNARD GUERNEY, Jr. LOUISE F. GUERNEY JANET M. SEBES	214
18.	Growth-Promoting Family Therapy	CLAUDE GULDNER	231
	Epilogue	DAVID R. MACE	250
	About the Authors		254

# List of Tables and Diagrams

Table 3.1	Family Wellness Indicators Identified by Three or More Sources	45
Table 5.1	Services and Programs Offered to Premarital Couples	69
Table 5.2	Goals of a Three-Phase Premarital Program	72
Diagram 9.1	The Reciprocally Resonant Relationship	113
Diagram 9.2	The Reciprocally Resonant Relationship Across the Life Cycle	118
Diagram 15.1	The Quest for Intimacy	193
Diagram 18.1	A Model for Growth-Promoting Family Therapy	239



## **TO CLARK VINCENT**

**Whose clear vision and sound judgment pointed to the future need to reorient our services to families toward a new focus on prevention.**

# Series Editor's Foreword

The National Council on Family Relations is composed of persons from a wide variety of disciplines—research and theory, social policy, clinical and therapeutic projects, and education. Education, taken in its broadest sense, is a mutual concern for most all of us. No matter what field we specialize in, it is our goal to share research information and clinical insights for the benefit of individuals, families, and the society. With that goal in mind, David R. Mace and his colleagues have prepared this book on what they term “family wellness.” Through detailed descriptions of many different strategies and programs, they offer a positive and practical approach to the challenges facing marriages and families today. We welcome these distinguished authors to the growing NCFR-Sage Series.

—John Scanzoni



# Prologue

David R. Mace

In October, 1981, a national conference was held in Milwaukee under the title "Toward Family Wellness: Our Need for Effective Preventive Programs." It was jointly organized by the Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment (ACME) and The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), and given strong support from the Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) which has its headquarters in Wisconsin and had at that time a section on family health.

The project was developed because some of us had become interested in a change we had begun to observe in the kinds of services which are now being offered to families. This took the form of a shift in emphasis from an almost total preoccupation with remedial services to a new goal of matching our remedial services with corresponding preventive services. This was particularly evident in the development of the marriage and family enrichment movement.

The purpose of the conference was to seek out people across the country who were experimenting with the new preventive approaches, and to bring some of them together to exchange views and experiences.

A program was planned, and invitations were sent out to persons selected as possible speakers and leaders of workshops. Their interest may be judged by the fact that all of them accepted our invitation, and came at their own expense. Other participants in the conference were mainly members of the sponsoring organizations.

The conference went very well indeed. Those who participated were excited and enthusiastic. It became clear to us all that "family wellness," the term we coined to describe what we had come to discuss, represented a new approach which was not only greatly needed but was already being promoted here and there and seemed likely to become what someone called "the wave of the future."

The planning group made an important decision—to prepare a book which would try to make the message of the conference more widely known and understood. Putting this book together became my responsibility, and I now have the pleasant task of introducing it to its readers.

I should explain that the chapters do not reproduce exactly the material that was presented at the conference. Some chapters do so, others go beyond what was covered in Milwaukee, and some of the writers had not even been present. However, the aim of the book is exactly the same as that of the conference—to present what we believe are very promising new approaches to the services we are currently offering to North American families.

The title of the book perhaps requires some explanation. “Wellness” is a new and unfamiliar word. It will not even be found yet in some dictionaries.

That is exactly why we chose it—both for the conference and for the book. “Healthy families” might have seemed a more obvious choice, but unfortunately the word “health” had come to be associated in many of its uses with illness. You can be in a state of either good health or bad health. The word can be qualified positively—vigorous, robust, or even perfect health—but it can also be qualified negatively—poor, indifferent, or even miserable health. Wellness can also be qualified positively, but not negatively. Wellness is unequivocally a term describing a good and desirable state, and that was what we were looking for. We think the term “family wellness” will catch on, but of course only the future can tell.

I wish to express here my gratitude to all the writers who took the time to put their chapters together and, by doing so, made the book possible. My opinion may be biased; but I think we have come up with a good and timely publication. And I hope, dear reader, that you will find it so.

I have decided to dedicate this book to Clark Vincent. His many friends will agree that he is one of the most brilliant behavioral scientists of his generation. It was my privilege to work with him at the Behavioral Sciences Center attached to the Bowman Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem from 1967 to 1977. Unfortunately a serious breakdown in health forced his early retirement. Otherwise, he might well have been editing this book. We who know him recognize him as an outstanding pioneer in the promoting of the cause of preventive services to families, and we believe that the vision he shared with us will one day, and hopefully soon, be translated into action.

# Part I

## Theory, Research, and Policy

*The meaning of the term “family wellness” is explained, and the need for a shift in our professional services from a remedial to a preventive emphasis is advocated. New information and new attitudes supporting this change in approach are reported. The possibilities of such a change in policy are assessed at the professional level.*



# 1

## What This Book Is About

David R. Mace

“As every good chairperson should know, you must define your terms.”

That is the purpose of this chapter, We are embarking on an investigation of something that is relatively new. A vast literature exists on what are called “family problems”—the events that lead to trouble and stress, to conflict and crisis, to disorder and disruption, to maladjustment and dysfunction, to misunderstandings and misdemeanors, to quarrels and hassles, to breakdowns and break-ups, and to divorce and dissolution. We have a rich and varied vocabulary to describe families failing to fulfill our hopes, expectations, and ideals. Books have been written that describe every conceivable disaster that can befall a family and prescribing the appropriate remedy—whom to call in, where to go for help, what to do until help arrives, and what the chances are for recovery.

In this extensive literature, the assumption seems to be that family problems just happen and represent a fact of life. Consequently, it is implied, we need to provide a whole network of “services” which will be in constant readiness to deal with every kind of crisis. In recent years, these services have been undergoing a vast expansion, and they now offer an impressive army of “experts” whose dedication and skill are not to be questioned. However, their cost in time and money is becoming so great that we may soon have to consider whether the issue might not be approached from a different angle. Would it not be



possible to cut down the flow of pathology which is making such heavy demands in terms of *remedial* services, by supplementing these services beforehand with *preventive* services? As one college counselor expressed it: "I've spent the last ten years fishing troubled youngsters out of the river. Now I'm beginning to ask why they got into the river in the first place, and whether something might be done at the other end."

The logic behind this statement is clear and convincing. Consider two of our major remedial services—one very old, the other relatively new.

First, consider the field of *medicine*. According to Charles Dull, who represents a major life insurance company (the AID Association for Lutherans), over 96% of health care costs in the United States today are spent for diagnosis and treatment and less than 4% for prevention.

This was dramatized in a report in the *New England Journal of Medicine* (summarized in the September 1980 issue of Reader's Digest, page 9) that described a survey of 2,238 patients who, in the course of a year, were treated by six Boston hospitals. It was found that 13% of these patients taxed the hospitals' resources as much as the remaining 87%. Since only 10% of Americans enter a hospital in the course of any given year, this suggests that half of our total hospital resources are being consumed by 1.3% of the population. What was significant was that these particular patients proved to have high incidences of smoking, drinking, and overeating—all considered bad habits from a health point of view, and all of which are preventable.

A similar situation was described by the Surgeon General in his 1979 report on *Health Promotion and Disease Prevention*: "Perhaps as much as half of U.S. mortality in 1979 was due to unhealthy behavior or life-styles, 20% to environmental factors, 20% to human biological factors, and only 10% to inadequacies in health care."

These facts illustrate how far medicine will have to travel in order to develop effective preventive services. Alex Comfort has declared that "the United States has a sickness industry, not a health service" (*Psychology Today*, December 1981, page 112). Many physicians are aware of this and are eager to do more in the area of prevention.

Second, consider the field of *mental health*. It will be sufficient to quote George W. Albee, an authority in the field, from a lecture at the University of Minnesota on May 21, 1980: