



SOCIAL STUDIES

Lesson

Lesson

3

UNIT – Relationship with Significant Others

Consequences of the Breakdown of Communication in the Home

INTRODUCTION

I much prefer good news to bad. I like smiles more than frowns, laughter more than tears, encouragement more than criticism. Stories that have happy and wholesome closure interest me more than those that end unfinished and sad. All my listed preferences show the kind of reports I would like to receive about family life in the Caribbean. The truth is that effective family life does not just happen; it's the result of deliberate intention, determination and practice.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- Identify factors and situations that contribute to the breakdown in communication
- Make suggestions that can be used as solutions for problems caused by a breakdown in communication
- Pretend that you are a counsellor giving advice to a fourteen year old boy or girl complaining about a lack of communication in his/her home.



GETTING STARTED

There is an obvious link between the many problems plaguing our society and the problem of a lack of communication among family members.

In this lesson, let us take some time to examine the reasons for the breakdown of communication in the Caribbean family. Before doing so however, I invite you to make a list your own to compare your reasons with those to be presented.

REASONS FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNICATION IN THE CARIBBEAN FAMILY

A very important reason I would like to point out is “Low self- esteem in parents” When parents possess very high, wholesome, confident self- esteem, they are able to love and give of themselves. They are able to pull out what is best in each family member thus passing on a sense of security to their children. Children of parents low in self- esteem are usually lacking in self confidence as a result of constantly being nagged and harassed at home. Parents with low self- esteem do not believe that they are able to solve family problems because they have failed to gain the respect and confidence of their spouse and children. With such feelings of not being able to do a good job, they do not ever communicate about matters which may require them to advise or discipline their children.

Another reason for the breakdown in communication is the difficulty of teenage years. Teenagers have a very difficult time in their relationship with family members during that period of their development. Their need to be independent of the family and conform to peers and a general rebellion against their parents’ way of life makes it easy for them to isolate them selves and limit their communication in the home.



ACTIVITY 1

Read the following passage and identify some of the needs of teenagers discussed. Match each need to a specific behaviour or attitude from the passage.

Sheila was invited to her best friend Joan’s birthday party. At school, all her class mates were already talking about outfits and hair styles for the occasion. You could well imagine Sheila’s disappointment when her parents informed her that on that date, there was going to be a family reunion at her grand parent’s home.

Sheila told her parents that her choice was to be with her friends because family reunions bored her, and that because she was young, she needed some excitement in her life. Sheila’s father told her very politely, that she had no choice in the matter.

When you have completed the above exercise, answer the following questions:

1. Suggest three ways in which Sheila might respond to her father’s decision.
2. If you were a friend of Sheila’s father, what advice would you give to him?

REASONS FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNICATION IN THE CARIBBEAN FAMILY (CONT’D)

We are now going to look at two other reasons for the breakdown of communication in the home. The fact that family members have to play different roles from time to time is another reason why communication breaks down in the home. For example, an older brother or sister may be given authority when looking after younger siblings. The following day that authority could be taken away when some decision made pertaining to siblings might be changed by mother or father who might be present at that time. This situation may lead the older sibling to be angry with both the younger siblings and the parent involved.

Finally, I want to suggest that the changing roles and responsibilities of family members contribute significantly to breaking down communication in the home. Turn to page 23 of your Study Guide and go through the list of changes. Select those that you think can be considered causes of communication break down. Choose any three from your selection and for each, state two reasons why it can cause a break down.



ACTIVITY 2

CASE STUDY ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF A COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN IN THE FAMILY.

The Peters family lives in a tiny village called Sobo. The family of seven comprises of five children: two boys and three girls with their parents Tommy and Jane. Because Mr. Peters works in Port-of-Spain, he leaves home every day at 5am. He returns at approximately 7pm. His wife, Jane, is employed as an accountant at the Pointe-a-Pierre office of Petrotrin. She too has to leave home very early to meet one of her co-workers who transports her to work.

The two oldest children Ray and Gladys are also employed although they work within the area. Fifteen year old Kyle and his two younger sisters Marge aged 9 and Terez aged 7 usually have to prepare for themselves before leaving for school. Some how under Kyle's supervision they manage to get by though most times they are late for school.

The rooms and kitchen are always untidy and there are many conflicts over whose turn it is to do chores. The Peters' family hardly spends time together because everyone is interested in their personal affairs.

Answer the following questions based on the above Case Study.

1. Suggest to Mr. Peters three things he could do to communicate with his family.
2. What are two things Kyle and his sisters would have to do in preparing for themselves each day?
3. As Kyle supervises his sisters, write any four things you think he might say to them.
4. What part do you think Ray and Gladys could play in helping to ease the situation in their home?
5. Tell Mrs. Thomas three things she could do to let her children know that she loves and cares for them
6. What are some of the dangers that could face children in a home like the Peters?