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EC5554 Your Daughter's Future

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK

IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

Extension

1930

U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating

Circular

W. H. Brockaw, Director, Lincoln

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YOUR DAUGHTER'S FUTURE

Many of you who are mothers love to remember some of the thoughts that passed thru your mind when you first held the little daughter in your arms. As she kept changing from day to day you dreamed and dreamed about her future. You hoped she would grow into a useful, happy woman who would successfully take her place in life and that she would leave the world better because she had lived in it. If her life was to be blessed with a family you hoped she would be wise in her family relationships and that she would be a sympathetic, understanding mother.

As she grew from babyhood to the "runabout" age and then on into school life, one of your big problems as well as one of your greatest joys was to help her grow into a healthy wholesome girl with a splendid outlook upon life. There are few satisfactions that one can have in life which equals the feeling that the girls and boys in a family can be depended upon to fulfill these early dreams of the mother.

But the problems were not all solved when the daughter reached the adolescent age for that is the period in a girl's life when she most needs a wise, tactful mother. Happy is the mother who can help her daughter make satisfactory mental adjustments during this period of stress and strain. A part of this period will be spent in high school and during these years the question will arise about further study. Does a girl need to go to college? If so, what value will it be to her? What course will help her to have an abundance of "satisfactions" thruout her life? What course will prepare her to support herself should that be necessary and at the same time give her splendid cultural training as well as prepare her for the responsibilities of home life? Is there a college course which may do all of these for her? Many would answer, "Yes, a Home Economics course will".

As one meets homemakers over the state one very seldom, if ever, finds a homemaker who will say she regrets having taken even a part of the Home Economics course. On the other hand one frequently hears homemakers say, "I wish my training in college had been such that I would know how to manage my home more easily, that I understood more about adequate meals, and that I had been given training in child development and in managing the family finances. If I had taken such a course then I would have had training which would have helped me solve some of the difficult problems which have come to me. Why didn't some one tell me there were courses which I might have taken along these most important lines?"

The Need of Training for Homemaking

There is a growing recognition all over the country that women need training for homemaking and particularly for rearing children. The belief that being a mother makes a woman all wise in developing a child is not considered true any longer. The lives of young children are so precious and the training so important that both parents need preparation for this responsibility. Training for parenthood is one of the newer developments that is receiving more and more the attention of thinking people.

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Is your daughter planning only for the period when she may be a wage earner? In the lives of most girls this period is short. Then why not spend the years in college on a course which trains for a variety of possibilities in earning a livelihood as well as for satisfactory living thruout one's whole life. Those who have read the Nebraska University bulletin called "What a Girl Can Do", realize that after completing the Home Economics course a girl may teach, if that is what she wishes to do, but there are many other fields she is prepared to enter and which she may especially enjoy. In these days when there may be an oversupply of teachers, and women are entering other fields of activities, fortunate is the woman who is trained to do more than one thing.

The following quotation is taken from an article written by Clara M. Brown in the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN. In it she tells of a woman who came for a private interview with the head of a Home Economics department and the conversation ran something like this:

"You probably do not remember me, but my son was in your nursery school last summer and so I learned something about home economics. Now, I am coming to you for help. If you can not help us, my husband and I see nothing ahead but suicide!"

"After this startling introduction she painted their situation in a few brief sentences. Her husband was earning a salary of _____ thousand dollars a year and they could not make ends meet. She was not sure what they owed, because she had reached the point where she no longer had the courage to look at the bills. When the second of their two children was born, she had been in the hospital for several months and they had contracted debts. Until then everything had run smoothly; frequent increases in her husband's salary had permitted them to raise their standard of living as they desired, but nothing had been laid aside for an emergency. They had tried to keep accounts, but they did not know what to do with them after they had kept them. She had tried to do her own work but could not manage it - two small children, a big house, and no knowledge of how to do the job had landed her in the hospital again. She and her husband were both graduates of the university to which she came for help, but said she tragically, 'Neither of us ever learned anything in college that seems to help us live and rear our children. I taught mathematics eight years before I was married and I can not manage the finances of a household of four!'

"Thousands of young women who are graduating from colleges and universities all over the country may have trained minds, but unfortunately they are too seldom trained to cope with the situations with which modern life confronts them.

The situation in which the above woman found herself was so different from that written by a successful homemaker in the letter that follows which we have called "Letter A". The situation is also different from that of Mrs. _____ who graduated from the college Home Economics course and who has taken an old farm house and made it into an attractive home. She and her husband are planning and spending their income according to a budget they have worked out. A man recently said he would hate to think of what a difference it would have made in his home if his wife had not taken the Home Economics course.

Perhaps you are asking, "Should all girls go to college"? The answer to this may be "Not all should go to college for this will depend upon the girl, her

previous experience, and her ability, also upon her attitude toward life and on her vision of what she hopes to be in the future." A home economics training aims to help a girl to become useful as well as to be cultured. It will give her poise and help her to be unselfish and considerate of others, truthful, sincere, and cheerful. It will help her to dress herself and her family attractively and economically. The same will apply to making her home restful and satisfactory. She should be a good cook and have high standards about the health of herself and her family. Her training should be of help to her in her family and community relationships. Above all it should help her to live at peace with herself. Every one realizes that the Home Economics course will not appeal to all girls, so fortunately, there are other courses which may be chosen. However, since most girls become homemakers eventually, should they not include some home economics in their training? Will they not be happier and more efficient homemakers if they have studied physics, chemistry, botany, etc., and at the same time have been applying it to the "why" in homemaking?

Recently Miss Margaret Fedde, chairman of the Home Economics Department of the University, had an occasion to write to some mothers and ask them about the value of home economics training either for themselves or for their daughters. Miss Fedde has kindly let us use parts of these letters. In the first letter below we find:

Letter A.

Dear Miss Fedde:-

I am asked by many young girls, who are about to enter college, what course they shall pursue. To most girls I usually reply involuntarily 'Home Economics'. I would suggest to the girl who is planning her college course, that she take what she will but that she include something of the many and interesting things that home economics has to offer. The chances are ten to one that she will some day preside over a home of her own and she will be grateful for any assistance that she may have acquired in enabling her to make it a truly livable home.

I graduated from Nebraska University fifteen years ago and have always been a "strong devotee" of home economics. To say that I enjoyed the work while in college is putting it mildly; I loved it! My enthusiasm has not waned thru the years that have followed. Immediately after commencement I entered into home economics extension work. The contact with the homemakers of Nebraska is something that will always be remembered and gratefully appreciated. If I was able to carry to them a bit of our home economics work, I was repaid a hundred fold by their friendships and made richer by their experiences which they kindly gave to me.

In less than two years from the time of my graduation I entered upon a career of homemaking and this I did with much less fear and trepidation than I might have, had I not been backed by a four year college course in home economics. Many, many times during the years that have followed have I been thankful that somehow, some way, I was guided into a college course that would ever prove useful, no matter what the test. I have wondered often now I would have removed the obstacles that constantly confront the homemaker had I not to some extent been trained for the profession of homemaking.

Fortunate indeed is the girl of today who has an opportunity to acquire home economics training. The courses offered fifteen years ago were the very best of their kind at the time but what a change and improvement has come with the recent

years! So many new discoveries in nutrition! The study of child care and development was in its infancy fifteen years ago. Now the girls have the responsibility of really studying and caring for children in the home management house and nursery school - a privilege not even dreamed of a few years ago. In the study of art comes the application of principles of proper house arrangement and home beautifying and home furnishing. These things and many more that were denied to the girl of yesterday are being offered to the girl of today.

Home economics to me is the source of a joyous, companionable home life. Without it I might have reached the goal by drawing more heavily upon life's experiences, but the years have been happier and pleasanter because of it. Do you wonder that I urge every girl to take all or part of a Home Economics course?

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. _____

Letter B

Dear Miss Fedde:

When my two daughters decided upon the Home Economics course in the University, I rejoiced, as I felt it was the very best all around education a girl could receive. I do not know why they decided upon this course, I had not urged it as I felt every young person should be privileged to decide for herself the vocation she wished to follow. In my own home life, I had felt the need of better training along this line and had endeavored to supply this need whenever opportunity offered. Perhaps, this may have had some influence.

And now that my daughters have finished their course in Home Economics and are filling positions in home economics, I am still enthusiastic about this training for girls. Many people have the idea that a course in Home Economics is a course that teaches cooking and sewing. While these are some of the main studies in the course, we also find that it trains for every department of housekeeping and home making.

If a girl who completes this course wants a position, she finds she is trained for many lines of work instead of one only as in some other courses. I knew of one girl who trained for teaching. After teaching for a time she grew tired of it but her training had not prepared her for other lines of work. Had she taken the Home Economics course, she could have filled other positions without further training.

The personal value of home economics training for girls can not be over estimated. The girls are trained to select designs and materials and to make their own clothing which equips them for dressing themselves properly thruout their whole life. The education, culture and development of home economics training fits the girls for their years of maturity and prepares them to take their place in the work of the world and to do their part in its advancement.

The girl who decides upon home economics training will find her time and money and effort well spent and will be able to go out into the world fully equipped not only to care for herself but to fill honorable positions or to go into a home of her own a successful housekeeper and homemaker.

Yours truly,

Mrs. _____

Letter C

Dear Miss Fedde:

In thinking about the value of home economics training for my daughter, the first thought that comes to my mind is the fact that a girl thus trained does not only have a knowledge of the subjects taught her but is ready and able to learn and to apply all new material that will come to her later. This may be true of education in general but how could a young woman be better equipped than to start out in life with a knowledge and with a desire to learn more of what we usually refer to as the common things in life, but what we must admit are the most necessary ones for the problem of food, clothing and shelter will always be with us and it is a problem that must be solved before we can direct our attention to anything else.-----

While I am writing this letter from a homemaker's standpoint I fully realize that the variety of vocations represented by this field of work are many and while the home economics graduate may have her choice of any of these, yet the average girl will eventually have to manage a home of her own and then her training will enable her to better keep her house, manage her family and keep in touch with the world. She will enter into her work with a confidence in her ability that will save her a great deal of worry and unhappiness. She has learned to budget her time and her money, she has been taught to make cheaper things do the work of the more expensive, in fact she will understand the fundamentals of homemaking so well that she will forget the details of routine and will have time for the essentials that lead to the family's growth and progress.

We all agree with Phillips Brooks that "The future of the race marches forward on the feet of little children" so we are glad to see that child care receives its due share in a Home Economics course. I know my daughter, although the oldest of several younger children has been a great deal more interested in children since taking her training in the home management house and in the nursery school.

I feel that the training received by my daughter will enable her to take her place in the world as a useful citizen, both in professional life and in the home.

Sincerely,

Mrs. _____

Letter D

Dear Friend:-

True education does not consist in the mere memorizing of facts. It is rather a mental growth marked by the development of reasoning powers, the ability to correlate ideas to reason from the known to the unknown and thus to arrive at definite conclusions, and to so assemble facts as to clearly outline definite action. That man is best educated whose mind and hand are best trained for the work which is his in the world. Measuring the results by these rules we have never been sorry that our daughter majored in Home Economics.

There is no occupation at once so complex and so important as homemaking

the mental drill and the culture which it has given her. While these things are not to be belittled we feel that our daughter has not only obtained them through her chosen college course, but that she has also gained that practical knowledge and skill which shows her how to solve the problems of her life. Her training has enabled her to work out a practical system for the handling of household funds which has made her a helpful partner of her husband; by her knowledge of the chemistry of foods and the needs of the human body she so plans the daily food as to preserve the health of her family and the sound bodies and happy faces of her children attest her success; her study of coloring and design show its results in the arrangement of her house, and in the family attire; while her knowledge of child psychology gives her sympathetic understanding of her babies' mental processes and gives her wisdom in their training.

One of the most important results of her home economics training is to be found in the feeling of confidence which it gives her in her work. She knows, she knows that she knows, and when her own knowledge fails, she knows where she can find out - and that is another test of an education. I have but one daughter, but if I had a dozen I would want them all to include at least some home economics work in their college course.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. _____

Letter E

No doubt many of you are going to college with the idea of fitting yourselves to make a living in some profession or business. Some one has said, "It is a bigger job to build a life than it is to build a business". To the womanhood of the world is given the task of building not only a life for themselves but also responsibility for moulding the lives of little ones in the home. In view of this, may I bespeak your interest in the Home Economics course? It not only prepares one for making a living, in any one of a number of fields, but it prepares for richer living in the years beyond, when many of you will be "making lives" instead of a "living".

As you look forward to founding a home of your own, you would not consider choosing a partner who was not trained in some way to earn an income. Then is it any more than fair for you to prepare yourself as well for your job as the homemaker? Houses are built, but homes must be made, and it takes vision and skill to make them. Both of these are to be acquired by Home Economics education.

In our home, there are four children, ranging in age from one and a half years to six. The problems which arise each day are many and varied. We believe the mother of the home is helped immeasurably in solving them by the training received in home economics. The father of the family has this to say, "I shall always be a booster for Home Economics training for what it has meant to our home".

Very truly yours,

Mrs. _____