Family Life Education
Once upon a time...

There was a village built upon the edge of a river where the water churned roughly over the rocks.
There were signs at the river’s edge warning of the danger, but people often ignored the signs & fell into the river.

They either drowned or flowed downstream to a waterfall & were never seen again.
The villagers came up with a plan

A net was put downstream to catch those who had fallen in the river.
A full-time crew was hired to watch for villagers floating downstream, pull them from the river, dry them off, & get them to ambulances.
A new hospital was built closer to the river’s edge.

All these efforts increased the survival rate but many were still injured or drowned.
A couple who moved to the village watched what was happening & asked if something more could be done to save them. *(Collaboration)*

The villagers explained that they had developed a good system, & while they weren’t able to save everyone, things had improved.
The couple decided to take matters into their own hands by...

- Helping to build a large fence along the rough part of the river (*Prevention*)

- Offering swimming lessons (*Education*)
• Speaking to villagers about the dangers of going into the river without a life jacket (Prevention & Education)

• Conducting classes to teach people how to maneuver their boats around the rocks (Prevention & Education)
Soon...

Fewer & fewer people were falling into the river and those who did fall in were better able to help themselves out.
Family Life Education

Is any organized effort to provide family members with information, skills, experiences, or resources intended to strengthen, improve or enrich their family experience.
Operational Principles of FLE
Family Life Education is...

- Prevention
- Education
- Collaboration
FLE is relevant to individuals and families throughout the life span because it focuses on prevention.
FLE takes an educational rather than therapeutic approach
Collaboration

• FLE is based on the needs of individuals and their families through professionals and family members collaborating together

  – FLE is a multi-disciplinary area of study and is multi-professional in its practice

  – FLE programs are offered in many different settings

  – FLE presents and respects differing family values
FLE Content Areas
Individuals and Families in Societal Contexts

Understanding families and their relationships to societal institutions

- Structures and functions
- Cultural variations
- Dating
- Courtship
- Marital choice
- Cross-cultural and minority families
- Kinship
- Changing gender roles
- Demographic trends
- Historical issues
- Work-family relationships
- Societal relations
Internal Dynamics of Families

Understanding family strengths and weaknesses and how family members relate to each other

• Internal social processes
• Communication
• Conflict management
• Normal family stresses
• Family crises
• Special needs in families
Human Growth & Development Across the Life Span

Understanding the developmental changes of individuals and families throughout the life span

- Prenatal
- Infancy
- Early and middle childhood
- Adolescence
- Adulthood
- Aging
Human Sexuality

Understanding the physiological, psychological, and social aspects of sexual development throughout the lifespan

- Reproductive physiology
- Biological determinants
- Aspects of sexual involvement
- Sexual behaviors
- Sexual values and decision-making
- Family planning
- Sexual response
- Influence on relationships
Interpersonal Relationships

Understanding of the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships

- Self and others
- Communication skills
- Intimacy
- Love
- Romance
- Relating to others
Family Resource Management

Understanding the decisions individuals and families make about developing and allocating resources, including...

- time
- money and material assets
- friends and neighbors
- space

- Goal-setting and decision-making
- Development and allocation of resources
- Social environment influences
- Life cycle and family structure influences
- Consumer issues and decisions
Parent Education & Guidance

Understanding of how parents teach, guide, and influence children and adolescents

- Parenting rights and responsibilities
- Parenting practices and processes
- Parent-child relationships
- Variation in parenting solutions
- Changing parenting roles over the life cycle
Family Law and Public Policy

Understanding of legal issues, policies, and laws influencing the well being of families.

- Family and the law
- Family and social services
- Family and education
- Family and the economy
- Family and religion
- Policy and the family
Professional Ethics & Practice

Understanding the character and quality of human social conduct and the ability to critically examine ethical questions and issues

- Formation of values
- Diversity of values in pluralistic society
- Examining ideologies
- Social consequences of value choices
- Ethics and technological change
- Ethics of professional practice
FLE Methodology

Understanding the general philosophy and broad principles of family life education in conjunction with the ability to:

- plan
- implement
- evaluate
- educational programs

- Planning and implementing
- Evaluation
- Education techniques
- Sensitivity to others
- Sensitivity to community concern
Family life educators work with individuals and families in varying capacities. They have specific training in family systems and development that enables them to bring a family perspective to their chosen career, regardless of the employment sector.
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

Caregiver & Long Term Care Programs

Faith Communities
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

Marital and Pre-marital Education
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

Schools & Educational Settings

Family Law Settings
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

Adoption Agencies

Curriculum Development
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

Emergency Preparedness
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

Non-profit Administration

Grant-Writing
Where do Family Life Educators Work?

- Public Policy Settings
- Medical Settings
Family Life Education Venues

**Practice** - teaching, education, program or curricula development,

**Administration** - leadership or management, organizing, coordinating, and

**Promotion** - public policy, lobbying, advocating for system change and awareness
We have two cars and three teenagers. How do we share? My child came home with blue hair. What do I do? My in-laws are coming for Thanksgiving. Help! My husband and I both like to sleep on the right side of the bed. Can this marriage be saved? My five year old is asking about sex. What do I tell her? There’s always too much month and not enough paycheck. How can I budget my money more effectively? He never does the dishes and there are always dirty socks on the floor. How can I teach him to help out? My son and his wife are getting a divorce. How do I maintain a relationship with my grandson? My child throws terrible temper tantrums. Does this make me a bad parent? My mother thinks my house is hers. How do I tell her to stop rearranging the furniture? She wants to go back to work. Who’s going to clean the house? My daughter is a drug addict. How can I help her children to cope? My son won’t respect the family rules. What is a good method of discipline for teenagers? My parents won’t listen when I tell them about important issues in my life. How can I involve them in my life? My brother and I haven’t spoken in years. Is there a road to reconciliation? I just found out I’m pregnant. How do I tell my family? My sister steals all my clothes. How can I make her stop? My daughter is having her first child. How can I be a wonderful grandmother? My child isn’t walking yet. Is this normal? I may have to put my father in a nursing home. How can I make a good decision? I’m a single mom. How can I be the best parent for my kids? My parents fought constantly when I was a child. How can I make my marriage more stable? My three year old has an imaginary friend. Should I invite him to dinner or banish him from the house? My husband wants to hang a moose head on the living room wall. How can I tell him no? I hate my wife’s best friend. Will I have to deal with her forever? My children can’t go one hour without fighting. How do I know when to intervene? My daughter is fourteen. Is that too early to start dating? He doesn’t like my dog. Is there hope for the relationship?
Family Life Education

Teaching Families, Changing Lives

For more information visit www.ncfr.org