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Family Life Education: Identity, objectives, and future directions

Abstract

Family Life Education is a new profession. As such, it has a history, and is developing a body of knowledge, standards and style of practice, areas of research, and a vision of its future. This paper reviews the literature in these elements and assesses the status of the profession in its identity.

Résumé

L'enseignement de la vie de famille est une nouvelle profession qui de cet fait, a une histoire et se constitue une somme de connaissances, de normes et de démarches, en plus d'offrir des possibilités de recherche et une vision de son avenir. Le présent article fait l'analyse de la documentation parue à ce sujet et évalue la situation de la profession par rapport à son identité.

Family Life Education, a relatively new identified profession, particularly in Canada, is devoted to enabling adults to increase the effectiveness of their skills in daily living, that is, in relating to others, in coping with life events, and in realizing personal potential. Practitioners refer to themselves as family life educators, and view their profession as a process of offering information to people of any age on a variety of life issues, usually using the format of a small group to do so.

This article is an attempt to inform educators and to present a variety of perspectives on family life education which will ultimately provide a comprehensive picture of the profession – its history, its present, and a glimpse of its future. This article will review the roots of family life education found in the work of Malcolm Knowles and Rose Somerville. It will examine the current practice in terms of its style and purpose, definition, and identity. Elements of content and process will be explored, as well as the state of research in the field. A look at future concerns and implications will follow.

Sources used in this article are American and reflect that context; there is no Canadian counterpart. Explanations and differentiations have been made where necessary.

Historical perspective

Malcolm Knowles believed that adult education is the instrument by which mature people are produced and, through them, a mature society is developed (Knowles, 1950, p. 8). In his book, *Informal Adult Education*, he lays out many concepts upon which the educational philosophy and practice of family life education is based.

First of all, Knowles looks at the needs and motivations of adult learners. Understanding of these is essential for educators to successfully plan programs. In addition to the compelling motivation of physical needs, he identifies the growth urge – a future-oriented motivation for learning which he explains is growth in knowledge, skills, attitudes, understanding, and appreciation. Adults also have the need for security, the need for new experience, the need for affection, and the need for recognition. Knowles says that these needs are natural and that the educational challenge is "to help people find socially acceptable and personally beneficial ways of satisfying them" (Knowles, 1950, p. 14). This, then, is the challenge to which family life education programs attempt to respond – by identifying areas of concern in people's life cycles, in relating to others, or in realizing personal development. In addition to needs and motivations, Knowles identifies certain conditions or assumptions about how adults learn. The first requirement is a desire to learn the differences between which is naturally present and that which can be aroused. Another is that the context of the learning should most effectively be relevant, life-centred, and experience-oriented. Adults also have a need to be active and self-directing, engaging in a process of inquiry rather than passively receiving information (Knowles, 1973, p. 31). These are all concepts which have been incorporated into the design and method of family life education programs regardless of the age of the participants.

After identifying the needs of adult learners, Knowles presents some principles of adult teaching which were the outcome of an analysis of effective learning experiences. These are listed here because they too are part of the educational philosophy which is reflected in family life education programs.

1. The students should understand and subscribe to the purposes of the course.
2. The students should want to learn.
3. There should be a friendly and informal climate in the learning situation.
4. Physical conditions should be favourable (i.e., pleasant, comfortable).
5. The students should participate and should accept some responsibility for the learning process.
6. Learning should be related to and make use of the students' experience.
7. Teachers should know their subject matter.
8. Teachers should be enthusiastic about their subject and about teaching it.
9. Students should be able to learn at their own pace.
10. The students should be aware of their own progress and should have a sense of accomplishment.
11. The methods of instruction should be varied.
12. The teacher should have a sense of growth.
13. The teacher should have a flexible plan for the course.

(adapted from Knowles, 1950, pp. 33-35)

This list of principles indicates that there are roles and responsibilities of both the learners and the teacher. The forum through which this interaction takes place in family life education programs is "the group," and the leadership style advocated in family life education is basically "group-oriented."

Knowles looks rather briefly at the dynamics of group development and identified three stages:

1. The early stage – where members seek guidance and approval from the leader, and also a "place" or status and a feeling of belonging in the group.
2. The middle stage – where there is a struggle for independence and individual influence and yet a fear of getting too much of either. This period can be quite stormy.
3. The later or mature stage – when the group functions as a well-integrated, interdependent organism. It accepts

responsibility, it solves problems, it accepts and utilizes the individualism and abilities of its members. (Knowles, 1950, p. 56)

Knowles also identifies three leadership styles which he says have things in common, but each of which has a special emphasis. In fact, the Socratic-type or very directive style is not usually part of a family life educator's style. Leader-centred leadership regards the facilitator as a kind of democratic director of the group's development, and this is contrasted with group-centred leadership in which group members determine the direction and the facilitator simply helps them realize their goals.

It would be fairly accurate to say that leaders of family life education groups provide a fair amount of direction in the early stages of the group and gradually decrease this direction as members become more comfortable with one another and the program format, and take on the leadership tasks themselves.

This rather lengthy report on Malcolm Knowles' ideas is essential to an understanding of family life education. Many of its principles and practices are strongly influenced by him. For instance, a group setting is always used. Although a general program topic and goal is set, a needs and interests assessment is done during the first session to determine the specific concerns of the group members. Groups are most often homogeneous so that experiences around common concerns can be addressed for the benefit of all members; thus learning activities, such as small group discussion, role playing, written learning tools, and experiential exercises make the process an active one. Family life educators model acceptance and facilitate a supportive group climate which respects individuals' experiences, abilities, and concerns.

Rose Somerville's book, *Introduction to Family Life and Sex Education* (1972), is one of the early works in the field. It treats family life education as a complete and separate entity, at the same time recognizing its interdisciplinary nature and its links to history, sociology, psychology, economics, counselling, and even the arts. The title of the book reflects Somerville's (and the profession's) belief that sexuality is an important issue in family life and, indeed, all human relationships. The book also emphasizes the importance of our changing social and economic climate and the impact this has on family life.

Somerville depicts the family as a primary group which offers four essential contributions to individual development. These are: (a) individual emotional support; (b) mediation with the larger environment; (c) recognition of individuality, needs and characteristics; (d) confirmation of goals and purpose (Somerville, 1972, pp. 41-42). The performance of these

functions creates roles for family members and it is in the interpretation and acting out of these roles that relationship issues arise. Class and cultural differences further complicate the norms, values, and practices that the family follows and expresses within their social environment. All of this contextual information is used to illustrate the complexities of family relationships and the understanding that some kind of education or assistance in coping with them is natural and desirable. Development of good communication skills is one of the most important means.

Much of Somerville's book consists of approaches, methods, and exercises that have been found useful in the presentation of various family issues and interpersonal skills. It is a comprehensive review and provides an excellent starting point for those newly interested in the field of family life education. It is, however, more limited in scope than the field has now become.

Family life education has traditionally addressed issues of life within a family – communication, roles, feelings, responsibilities, and sexuality. Because family members interact in society as well, the attitudes and skills taught are, of course, useful and applicable in other settings. Family life education programs today do reflect the climate and concerns of our rapidly changing social structure and this diversity has caused consternation among some professional practitioners. This point will be discussed in the next section of this article.

Current perspectives

In 1984, Pauline Gross, Director of the Family Life Education Certificate Program, at Concordia University in Montreal, published a handbook called *On Family Life Education: For family life educators*. Her purpose was to produce a textbook which would guide students in designing programs for family life groups. It presents an overview of the profession with suggested readings and exercises for further investigation and learning.

This review of Gross's book will concentrate on those sections of it which explain family life education's role as a helping profession. According to Gross's review of the literature, there are three central hypotheses relative to family life education:

1. At each stage of the human life cycle, there are understandings to be sought, adjustments to be made, problems to be solved, and crises faced.
2. Family life programs are a means for lessening the demand for treatment by maintaining and strengthening the individual as he/she moves through the life cycle.

3. Educational programs in family life are one of the most promising avenues for helping to raise the standards of home life. (Gross, 1984, p. 2)

These hypotheses clearly explain the rationale and purpose of family life education, and also necessitate a distinction between family life education and treatment or therapy. Table 1, on the following page, is reproduced from Gross's handbook.

Expanding upon some of the characteristics of family life education will help to clarify the format, purpose, and approach, as well as the role of the educator. Family life education programs always work with groups on the belief that active participation fosters the learning of skills and the development of new attitudes. Groups are usually as homogeneous as possible so that shared experiences are relevant and topical, and learning is cooperative and reciprocal.

The role of the educator is demanding and multifaceted. Educators are required to:

1. Provide information and learning experiences or activities which help participants increase their knowledge, awareness, or skills effectively.
2. Create a supportive and accepting atmosphere which will enable the free exchange of information, thoughts, and feelings, and enhance receptivity to learning.
3. Maintain a balance between the presentation of information and the personalization and clarification of it through learning.
4. Effectively and tactfully deal with any interpersonal problems which arise in the group.
5. Attend to the needs and interests of each group member as well as the group as a whole, in keeping with the goals of the program.

It is in the performance of these functions that family life educators need to be competent in the skills of attending and communicating, of asking questions, and of listening-paraphrasing, perceptual checking, reflecting feelings, and summarizing. It is also important to have the personal characteristics or belief systems as outlined by Combs and Avila (1985) – sensitivity or empathy, positive beliefs about the self and others (awareness, acceptance, respect, and autonomy), a purpose of helping aimed at enabling growth and independence, and authenticity or openness about the self and the methods used.

This, then, is an overview of what family life educators do, and of how and why they do it.

TABLE 1
Distinctions between Family Life Education and Therapy

	Family Life Education	Therapy
Aims	Preventative; growth-oriented	Treatment of psychological or social problems; aims to be curative
Duration	Usually once a week for 8-10 weeks	Varies greatly depending on type of therapy. Can last for several years
Number of participants	10-15 individuals	Individual, couple or family therapy Can also be group therapy
Recruitment	No formal screening necessary	Screening and assessment necessary for formulation of treatment
Methodology	Group discussions, lecturette, role plays, film	Varies, based on diagnosis and theoretical approach of therapist
Orientation	Deals with "here and now" behavior	Varies, may focus on present issues but could also delve into the past, including early childhood
Goals	To increase knowledge and awareness; and to enhance skills	To reduce social and psychological dysfunction, may also be to enhance personal growth

Reproduced from Gross, 1984, p. 26.

It can be seen how Knowles' theories on adult education have strongly influenced the practice of this profession. Gross's book serves to explain and explore the details of the individual and family life cycles, of program content and design, of leadership goals and skills, and the practice of family life education in schools and the community. It is extremely informative for the uninitiated and helpful for the new practitioner.

In spite of this recent and seemingly clear and concise depiction of family life education as a profession, there still seems to be some confusion about what it is, and what it can and should be. In *Family Life Education: Generating cohesion out of chaos* (1981), Fisher and Kerckhoff suggest that the field has diversified into so many subspecialties that its credibility and identity are at risk. This results in confusion concerning the "content" data base, duplication in services, and complications in the preparation of professional practitioners.

TABLE 2
Classification of family education specializations by objective and focus

Objective	Focus		
	Life Skills	Life Theme	Life Transition
Education	Courses about specific life skills, e.g., -parent education -FLE in high schools	Courses focusing on cognitive understanding of critical life themes, e.g., career planning	Courses about specific life transitions, e.g., mothering & fathering
Enrichment	Programs in skill training, e.g., -marriage enrichment -problem solving -decision-making -assertiveness training -communication	Programs examining and resolving life themes, e.g., -marriage encounter -values clarification -intimacy and sharing	Programs that facilitate passage through specific transition, e.g., -step-parenting -newly single -widowed -retirement
Treatment	Therapy for problems relating to life skill inadequacy, e.g., marital & family therapy	Therapy for individuals, e.g., individual therapy	Therapy related to adjustment due to transition, e.g., premarital or divorce

Reproduced from Fisher, B.L. and Kerckhoff, R.K. (1981). Family life education: Generating cohesion out of chaos. *Family Relations*, 30(4), 507.

Fisher and Kerckhoff outline a classification scheme which integrates and categorizes the various subspecialties on two dimensions – objective and focus.

Life Skills programs focus on the acquisition or refinement of new skills; Life Theme programs focus on the development of personal understanding; and the Life Transition programs deal with "restructuring the past, completing important life transitions and facilitating adaptation to altered life styles" (Fisher & Kerckhoff, 1981, p. 506).

There are also three levels in this classification – Education, Enrichment, and Treatment (referred to in the table as **therapy**). It is this designation that must be challenged as "belonging" to family life education, as previously pointed out in the table taken from Gross's book. Family life educators in Quebec do not practise therapy, although many do go on to acquire the knowledge and credentials to do so. In any case, this classification scheme is useful in illustrating that the many subspecialties

do have roots in family life education and that the same "content" data base is used by all. The variation occurs in the objectives and focus, and the strategies for implementation.

To enrich their content base, Fisher and Kerckhoff suggest that family life educators could augment the research-oriented data from psychology and sociology as applied to the family by drawing from the fields of philosophy, theology, law, biology, medicine, and education, as well as confidently using knowledge from non-research sources, namely the "wisdom, intuition and experience of the practitioner" (Fisher & Kerckhoff, 1981, p. 508). Of course, this is precisely what Somerville and Knowles suggested, only adding (as do family life educators today) that the wisdom, intuition, and experience of all group participants also provide an important resource to learning.

The effectiveness of family life education, at least as it is taught in American schools, is questioned by Gaylin (1981). In a brief historical overview, Gaylin points out the interdisciplinary nature of the field, saying that this makes it both unique and confusing, the domain of everyone and of no one. This, he says, leaves both the consumer and practitioner in doubt as to what it really is. Although critical of education in general, he believes that some family life educators spend considerable time and energy making their programs truly educational – integrative, applied, and experiential. Nonetheless, he wonders if we are not preparing and presenting programs which sound good and are full of promise, but which lack substance, that is, concrete and specific behavioural outcomes in improved preparation for family life and more effective interpersonal relationships.

Gaylin believes family life education is not taken seriously enough in schools; it is often the first to be replaced by a field trip or academic experiment. Teachers in the programs are often drawn from diverse disciplines with too little or no training in family life education. He suggests that family life education should not be separate at all – that it should be an integral part of all education, beginning with the youngest grades. This, of course, is representative of the views of many family life educators.

In Quebec, family life education falls under the moral and religious education umbrella which in most schools consists primarily of sex education, taught by teachers who are willing and/or available, but not necessarily trained. Only the Jewish schools and a few private schools consistently employ certified family life educators to present programs which are comprehensive and age appropriate.

Gaylin's concern about the teaching of morals, ethics, and values is also a concern of this article. The multi-ethnic and rapidly changing society

makes this area of teaching a difficult proposition for both the family and the educational system, but it is important to know that family life educators try to respect others' thoughts, experiences, and points of view and tend to teach the process of making choices and decisions, rather than the content or direction of the choices to be made.

The preceding section has provided a look at the current state of the profession. In spite of Gross's ability to clearly and concisely articulate what family life education is, there still seems to be a problem in defining it precisely. Perhaps because of its interdisciplinary nature, family life education is still relatively unknown, confusing, or undervalued by most consumers. The implication of this problem will be discussed later in this article.

Perspective on content and process

Arcus (1987) builds on and "fills in" certain aspects of Fisher and Kerckhoff's (1981) classification scheme, as described previously, in an attempt to clarify and specify the content of family life education. The purpose of doing this was to: "1) organize current knowledge in the field; 2) guide program development, delivery and assessment; 3) improve the training of family life educators; and 4) facilitate the development and testing of theoretical models in family life education" (p. 5). Topic areas included are Human Development and Sexuality, Interpersonal Relationships, Family Interaction, Family Resource Management, Education about Parenthood, and Ethics. Age-appropriate (e.g., children, adolescents, adults) key concepts are proposed for each, suggesting that "each topic area can be addressed at each age level by varying the focus and the complexity of the key concepts" (Arcus, 1987, p. 8).

Arcus' framework does not claim to include all family life content but does identify major concepts in each area. The author and those practitioners who formulated the framework also recognize that changes and additions will be made as new knowledge and issues of concern develop. It is a comprehensive and useful one for practitioners – particularly those new to the field – and provides a starting point for program content and design.

Family life education, as it is practised in Quebec, tends to be diversified and specialized in many areas dealing with individual life cycle concerns as well as family concerns. Nevertheless, many concepts, particularly those dealing with interpersonal communication and self-esteem are always essential and are, therefore, included in most programs. Because everyone is or has been part of a family of one sort or another, this context is central to whatever issues are being discussed. Arcus' framework is a useful reminder of important concepts in program planning.

Hills and Knowles (1987) and Olsen and Moss (1980) exemplify two of the "process" concerns of family life education programs; that is, how to present material so that it can be effectively learned and integrated into each participant's repertoire of skills.

Hills and Knowles (1987) report on a research study which proposes that "personal meaning" (understanding of, positive attitude towards, and situational relevance of) was essential before a new skill could be effectively integrated, used, and retained. They suggest that the optimal time to ensure that this personal meaning was linked to the skill itself was during the actual learning of the skill. They compared an integrative approach with a technique approach. The integrative program encouraged the learners to explore the meaning of the skills used in the context of their own experience and relationship with their children, and to develop ways of using the skill that seemed natural and comfortable. The techniques groups were given a description and demonstration of the skill and practised it, comparing their performance to the "formula response." Posttest results indicated that "interactions with children improved for parents in both training groups, but maintenance of the improved level occurred only in the Integrative Group" (p. 161). Little change in attitude or self-concept was reported but these were found to be positive in the beginning.

Olsen and Moss (1980) look at the interaction between affective and cognitive motivation and learning, and the importance of creating a learning environment which facilitates this process. They identified strategies and techniques which help to link the cognitive and affective components, as well as additional steps which blend the two into personal and meaningful learning. These are as follows:

Techniques	Additional Steps
1. Identify concepts; define principles.	Invite students' perception (affective and cognitive).
2. Illustrate the concept or principle.	Invite student reaction (affective and cognitive).
3. Demonstrate the use of or practice the application of the concept.	Invite students to link the idea, the example, and the practice.

(adapted from Olsen & Moss, 1980, p. 391)

These authors provide an accurate and useful view of some of the educational concepts and concerns of family life educators. It is interesting to note how closely the methods and concerns presented in these papers support and utilize the principles of teaching and learning that were outlined by Malcolm Knowles much earlier. Two basic tenets of family life education are represented here: 1) make it meaningful by linking it to personal experience, and 2) practise until it feels comfortable.

As in other forms of helping relationships, family life educators and groups are concerned with both the content and the process. What is being presented and discussed is only as important and useful as the way it is personalized and integrated in the complex process of learning.

Perspectives on research

As a profession, family life education relies primarily on family research conducted by psychologists and sociologists. These data form part of the content base used in programming. Research in the field of family life education, particularly by family life educators, is relatively scarce. There is, of course, a reason for this situation. Research and education are mutually dependent. Research discovers information and produces knowledge. In disseminating and clarifying this knowledge, education raises questions of information yet to be discovered.

Miller, Schvaneveldt, and Jenson (1981) present an historical perspective, saying that "the practice of family life education as folklore, religious dogma, and general wisdom is ancient, whereas formally developed family life education using goals, evaluations and empirical data is recent" (p. 625). They suggest, however, that it is old enough to be seriously addressing the relative paucity of research – particularly into family life education programs that have demonstrated positive outcomes.

The four approaches suggested by Miller *et al.* are: (1) move from descriptive studies to cause and effect designs to deal with the question of "so what?", (2) examine exceptional cases rather than simply assessing central tendencies, (3) ask family members more directly about events being studied, and (4) develop "action research" designs to discover what current family concerns exist and what strategies would be most effective in dealing with them. This type of research would probably increase the information base and expand the horizon of practitioners, as well as help clear up myths, misconceptions, and outdated information. Family life educators need to become more adept at understanding how research is conducted, interpreted, analyzed, and applied so that they can use it competently, accurately, and effectively.

As well, Miller *et al.* say the field needs "greater collaboration of family life educators and researchers in studying the family life education process to determine what learning takes place (that is, what attitudes, behaviors, or understandings), and how long do these changes last?" (Miller *et al.*, 1981, p. 629). Many family life education classes and programs are taught but there is little evaluation of their effectiveness.

Looking at research from the perspective of a consumer, Blood (1976) discusses areas of family research which are overdone, and others which are still deficient. He contends that research has concentrated on popular subjects, on descriptive rather than predictive studies, on variables that are easy to observe and measure, and on norms rather than exceptions. He counts topics such as mixed marriages, family power structure, and child rearing methods among those which are overdone. Some neglected areas are affectional involvement, readiness for marriage (personal maturity), leisure time companionship, and togetherness vs. separateness of marriage partners.

Blood suggests that some of the books which have been written on these topics need to have their theories and theses subjected to testing. Acknowledging the "softness" of the data involved, he asserts that these same variables deal with the way people relate to one another and represent the types of issues covered in marriage and family courses or counselling sessions. According to him there is a need for studies which address the question "so what?" – studies which investigate the effects of various issues on partnerships and families. He also believes there is much to be learned from exceptional marriages and families, and that action research which could identify educational strategies or clinical interventions most helpful in improving family life or ameliorating problems would be useful.

Both Miller *et al.* and Blood agree on two points : 1) more research is needed relative to current family relationships and concerns, and what kinds of strategies are effective in dealing with them; and 2) research is needed about the education process itself, and what leads to positive outcomes, and sustained effective behavioral changes.

As in any profession, some family life educators do keep abreast of family oriented research and are able to competently evaluate and apply it; others are not. It is certainly obvious through a review of the literature that there is very little in the way of family life education research. In Canada, there is a **National Council of the Family**, and in Quebec, **Le Conseil de la Famille**, whose mandates are family concerns. Budgets are small. Research and education are not yet high on their list of priorities – intervention rather than prevention better describes their approach. Research is an area which definitely needs future attention.

Perspectives on future concerns

It was noted earlier that family life educators try to plan programs which reflect current social and family issues.

Macklin (1981) describes eight possible and increasingly popular alternatives to the traditional nuclear family. These are: 1) never-married singlehood, or nonmarried cohabitation; 2) voluntary childlessness; 3) single-parent, joint custody or step-family; 4) renewable contracts-divorce, remarriage; 5) androgynous marriage – open, dual-career, or commuter marriage; 6) same-sex intimate relationships; 7) extramarital relationships; and 8) multi-adult households. Each of these, she says, presents new choices and it will be the family life educator's role to facilitate this process – to provide information; to foster awareness of the choices, the values upon which they are made, and the consequences of making them for the individual and society; and to help develop the skills necessary to translate the choice into effective action.

This exemplifies what family life educators do. Macklin raises new issues around which to focus new concerns to be dealt with and perhaps introduces new subspecializations which, according to Fisher and Kerckhoff (1981), is not necessarily a good thing for the profession. But, these new concerns do reflect our changing society and are still rooted in the content data base as described by Arcus; and the process of helping people handle them, as described by Macklin, is definitely within the mandate of family life education. In addition, these new concerns raise questions for research, for investigating their impact and implications, for discovering the most effective strategies for education, and for enriching the lives of those asking and living with these alternative choices.

Implications and conclusions

In discussing the implications of the findings in the literature on the profession of family life education, a few facts about the current training and certification of practitioners in Quebec (in the English sector) will be presented.

In terms of training, there are two basic programs – a certificate program at Concordia University, and a post-degree diploma program at McGill. A master's degree program at McGill, directed by Prof. Rachelle Keyserlingk, was approved in late 1988 under the educational psychology umbrella, and the first students started in September. The content of these programs involves interpersonal and group dynamics, leadership, family communication, sexuality, social problems, and other elective courses from psychology, sociology, and education.

There is an **Association of Family Life Educators of Quebec (AFLEQ)** which offers a supervised internship program for new graduates and culminates in an official certification by the association, indicating proved competency. Family life educators are employed in many settings, among them being the **Centre Locale de Santé Communautaire (CLSC)**, **Jewish Family Services**, the **Golden Age Association**, churches, synagogues, some schools, and community agencies. Many work independently on a project basis; many work part-time. **Few make a living wage practising family life education.** Perhaps because of conditions of employment, many continue their education in fields of counselling, social work, human relations, or adult education.

The skills learned as family life educators are broad-based and readily transferable, but as suggested by some writers, the profession seems to lack identity, validity, or credibility with the government, employers, and consumers. This may be due to several causes, such as its interdisciplinary nature, its relatively short history as a profession, the problem of definition, or overspecialization. It may be because family life education is based on "soft" data and thus it is difficult to identify or measure knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it may be because it is prevention- rather than treatment-oriented, and therefore is more difficult to justify.

In any case, practitioners and the AFLEQ recognize that they have a large job to do in raising the profile of the profession, in educating the public about its services and benefits, and in the professional development of its members. Members must formulate a clear statement of purpose, become a visible presence with other professional organizations and with the public, speak out with authority on matters pertaining to the family, undertake research, and present papers at scholarly conferences.

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