Child Development I

Unit 2 – Analyzing the Roles and Responsibilities of Parenting

Instructional Activity 1-Life Stages Handout

**Life Stages**

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| **Stage #** | **Stage Name** | **Description** | My ideas for how a family would balance work and family in this stage |
| **1** | **Couple** | Couples grow closer as they share activities. They work to establish a home and marriage relationship. A couple in this stage might be focused on establishing their careers and beginning to make financial decisions as a family unit. In general the younger a couple at the time of marriage, the less money they will have. |  |
| **2** | **Expanding** | The arrival of a child signals the beginning of parenthood. The couple prepares for and adjusts to parenthood. A family at this stage is going to be focused on the needs of their young child/children. Families make the decision to either have both parents work outside the home and find childcare for their children or have one parent stay home to care for the children. The decision they make will influence the family’s finances, regardless of their choice. |  |
| **3** | **Developing** | As children grow, parents work to meet children’s changing needs. The focus of the family is the socialization and developing independence of children. A family will be in this stage for many years and will vary greatly depending on the activities, goals and values of each family. Family’s in this stage will divide time among work, social activities (school related, sports, scouts, birthday parties), and family time. |  |
| **4** | **Launching** | Children gradually leave home to support themselves. Parents help their children adapt to life on their own. Events such as graduation signal the child’s independence. A family in this stage may have some children living away from home and some still at home. It is in this stage that children would potentially be starting college which may require financial help from the parents, or a career. |  |
| **5** | **Middle Years** | A couple renews their relationship and prepares for retirement. They have time and money for special interests. This stage is often called the “Empty Nest” stage. Family in this stage may be celebrating and paying for the wedding(s) of grown children or planning for their own retirement. |  |
| **6** | **Retirement** | The couple stops full-time work and adjusts to having more free time. The couple will have more time for hobbies and volunteer work. Life may be slower paced but couples still enjoy each other’s company. A family in this stage may focus attention on grandchildren and their activities. |  |

Additional notes: At any time during these stages, a family/couple could become these:

**“Sandwich Generation” --- couple cares for elderly parents and their own children**

**“Club Sandwich Generation” --- couple cares for elderly parents, their own children, and their grandchildren**