

Title I Workshop Today Fair Shows Moms and Dads Care

By Dick Ulmer

World-Herald Staff Writer

The people who run the Omaha School District's Title I program say they hear it all the time: Low-income parents don't care enough about education to spend time working with their children at home.

If it's true, Director Melvin Mobley asks, why do hundreds of parents show up every year for the Title I Parent Fair?

To be held today from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Jackson School, 630 S. 31st St., the fair is called a "make-it-take-it" workshop.

Using inexpensive materials, the school district's 40 Title I aides help parents make 16 different games meant to be taken home and used to improve children's reading skills.

The aides developed most of the games themselves, Mobley said, and they explain to parents what reading concepts each is supposed to teach.

'Anxious to Help'

Since the parent fair for primary-grade youngsters started five years ago, attendance has been as high as 549 and never lower than 350, Title I official Mercedes Bullard said. "These parents are very anxious for the opportunity to help their children."

A supplementary program to regular classroom instruction, Title I is funded by the federal government. Pupils served are underachievers who attended schools in low-income neighborhoods.

All children tend to forget



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Teacher aide Gwen Breakfield, 4025 Newport Ave., from Kennedy School . . . will help parents make educational games.

some of what they've learned over summer vacation, said Ms. Bullard. That is why the fair is held this time of year.

Teaching Games

Each child whose parent attends the workshop gets three games specially tailored to teach reading skills he is having trouble mastering.

This year's effort is called "Caught Up in Reading."

Mobley said parent-involvement is key to the Title I program. Some smaller make-it-take-it workshops are held during the school year and parent advisory councils meet periodically.

The Title I budget this year is \$2.2 million, but the Reagan administration is seeking to cut its funding 25 percent next year.

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