work assigned to them. Such coordination is essential to comply with one of the provisions in the revelation: “And every decision made by either of these quorums must be by the unanimous voice of the same; that is, every member in each quorum must be agreed to its decisions, in order to make their decisions of the same power or validity one with the other” (D&C 107:27).

Because the function of the Seventy in the administrative affairs of the Church remains flexible, future adjustments to accommodate changing situations may be expected.

DEAN L. LARSEN

SEX EDUCATION

Latter-day Saints are instructed that parents have the divinely appointed responsibility and privilege of teaching their children moral and eternal values associated with human sexuality and reproduction. Except in unusual cases, they cannot ignore or shift the ultimate responsibility for educating their children about sex to any other person or entity.

The scriptures define the union of the spirit and the body as the soul of man (D&C 88:15) and declare that marriage and family in the highest degree of heavenly glory are eternal (D&C 131:2, 132:19). Therefore, LDS discussion about sex respects the physical body, life, marriage, family, the intentions of God the Creator, and the shared creative powers he has entrusted to a heterosexual husband and wife (see PROCREATION). The spirit of the Lord’s law of love and righteousness requires one to keep sacred and appropriate all sexual desires and all related behaviors. All people are admonished to remain chaste before marriage and totally faithful in marriage (see ADULTERY; CHASTITY).

At an early age, children begin to recognize sexual differences. The Church encourages parents to establish open communication by providing their children correct information and by being aware of each individual child’s readiness for specific instruction so that children will feel free to talk with their parents about sex differences and functions.

Parents are counseled to help their adolescent and older children understand the need to stay in control of their emotions and behaviors relative to physical desire and to teach them how to make personal decisions about sexual behavior based on moral awareness, with the realization that virtue and moral cleanliness lead to strength of character, peace of mind, lifelong happiness, and a fulness of love. LDS scriptures counsel, “See that ye bridle all your passions, that ye may be filled with love” (Alma 38:12).

A Parent’s Guide was developed by the Church to provide information and suggest teaching methods to parents. It helps parents teach children in the home about sacred and personal matters appropriate to each age through all the stages of childhood, adolescence (see DATING AND COURTSHIP), and marriage. President David O. McKay taught, “The home is the best place in the world to teach the child self-restraint, to give him [or her] happiness in self-control, and respect for the rights of others” (IE 62 [Aug. 1959]:583).

Latter-day Saints view the home as the proper place for teaching children about care for the body, gender roles, sexuality, changing physical and emotional needs, prevention of sexual abuse, and enjoyment of proper and virtuous intimacies.

Where schools have undertaken sex education courses and programs, the Church believes the materials used should advocate abstinence from sex before marriage and should teach correct principles that will produce long-term happiness. Thus, the Church believes that public education should in no way promote or encourage sexual promiscuity, a lifestyle that is unhealthy, immoral, and fraught with potentially serious consequences. The Church takes the position that when sex education is taught in the schools, the teacher and the course materials should encourage parental involvement in sex-educational discussions to foster respect for the family, human life, and natural differences between the sexes. When educators teach about human sexuality, they should feel that they have been entrusted by the parents of their students with the privilege of discussing and teaching a subject that has eternal significance to the family and family members.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


DARLENE CHIDEISTER HUTCHISON