if his hair is (at least once in a while) combed and glossy, and I never forget those eyes that are sparkling with eagerness and anticipation for every school-related task. There isn't a uniform in the world, no matter how bland, that can deaden that spirit. And, conversely, there isn't one piece of designer clothes that can bring that sparkle for learning to a disinterested and jaded student.

The only thing uniform about a school uniform is its color or plaid. The human body and spirit just wasn't designed by The Master Designer to be uniform. And no uniformity of apparel will make it different. Every shape, every curve, every sashay down the school corridor will give that same uniform quite a different look. Let's face it, some students will make those uniforms sing, while others will only get a stammer out of it. I have seen girls with little money for clothes arrange a simple scarf so bewitchingly that it almost borders on indecency, and I have seen girls with scads of clothes manage to look only dull and overdressed.

And has it been any different since time immemorial? Some mothers and children are very clothes conscious, and other mothers will continue to hold the line on clothes, not giving in one thread's width to the wheedling daughter's desire to buy that expensive pair of designer jeans. This is the way it has always been, this is the way it will always be. Nor should this interfere with the real work in school, that is, getting an education.

But one thing is sure — let's save our uniforms for the Gulag.

READERS' FORUM

Dear Christian Friends,

Many thanks for continuing to send your excellent paper. I appreciate the fine articles very much. I believe the enclosed cheque value will cover a two-year subscription.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
(Rev.) Philip Rawson

Dear Don,

Keep up your faithful work on this most interesting magazine. For me, the real test of a good magazine is if I lay everything aside, put everything on the back burner, and read it right NOW! I always do that, to the inconvenience of my family, when *Perspectives* arrives.

Mary Beth Lubbers

Dear Friends,

I don't think I've ever shed a tear over a *Perspectives* issue

before, but the Summer '88 issue nearly did it. It's a very special issue dealing with difficult-to-teach students. Very few parents out there are even aware of or interested in the problem because they don't experience it in their families. This issue of *Perspectives* has been extremely uplifting to me as a parent – mainly because now I know for sure that there are some (let's hope *most*) teachers in our schools who recognize this very frustrating and complex problem and are finding ways of overcoming the difficulties by using different ways of explaining academic concepts and determining how well these students are retaining and can use the material taught, without labeling them as "lazy" or "don't care."

Few people realize the problems also encountered at home when these children return after school with loads of unfinished work to complete and their school days are extended by 2-3 hours (or more) – and weekends, too. This is *normal* for these children (but how *necessary*?) and creates an extremely tense situation in the family life. I prayerfully hope that each and every teacher from kindergarten through high school is fully aware of children with these problems and is not too intent on requiring all the students to perform in the same way academically, or too intent on getting every day's lesson plan completed on time at someone else's expense.

It seems that often times a child is intensively supported in the primary grades, but as he gets older the support diminishes to a point where, by the time he reaches junior high, it is assumed that he doesn't need the reaching out by the teacher and he must be fully responsible for himself. Granted, the maturing process is such that the ability to assume responsibility usually *does* come with age; but if a child has had problems as he climbed up the academic ladder, those problems generally will persist in the upper and secondary grades. *Don't leave them to do it alone.*

Educate, by your attitude and your words, all the other children in the class so they can help the slower children and not ridicule them – all through their school careers. Personally, I hope the teachers' lounge is rarely used just for sitting, or that any teacher sits alone in his classroom at any break times. Avail yourselves to help other teachers who have students staying in for recess. See if some junior high students would like to help younger ones instead of standing around with nothing to do at recess. Form a caring network of people throughout the school. Be outside at all opportunities with the students, teaching and supervising their

play, interacting with them in that way also. This will cut down on peer "cruelty" on the playground and allow teachers to let off steam, too. (Who needs a "playground duty" list?) The presence of teachers on the playground helps students learn to get along with all kinds of other children in a less structured situation. As parents, we rarely shut ourselves away during the day and leave the children to themselves. It is a relief most times to have them in bed, asleep at night; and your relief from the physical teaching comes at 3:15 PM. At school, you are all a family unit, since school is an extension of all our homes. A family that doesn't pull together, fails! Never forget I John 3:18: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." Teach through God's strength and grace.

Shirley Gunnink

Book Review

The Plug-in Drug, Television, Children, and the Family (revised edition) by Marie Winn, Penguin Books, N.Y., $6.95, 288 pages. (Reviewed by Mrs. Faith Noorman.)

Marie Winn is the mother of two and author of many books for parents and children. Her book, *The Plug-in Drug,* is based on interviews with mothers, families, teachers, and child specialists. Writing from a refreshingly different point of view, the author says it's not necessarily *what* you watch, it's the very fact that you *are watching* TV that needs to be examined.

Here is a sampling of the valid points Winn raises with regard to children and television. Television viewing takes away from a child's free time in which he finds opportunities to reduce his dependence on his parents. Television watching produces a "feeling of activity" where there is none. Also, TV and its control, or lack of it, becomes a source of unresolved struggle between the parent and child. For example, with TV present, parents are less capable of interacting with their child directly; they find themselves competing with the set for their child's attention. Restricting television viewing as a disciplinary measure almost always fails because parents are inconsistent and ambivalent about their control of TV and their own lack of discretion in viewing habits.

Marie Winn compares TV watching to drug use, stating that