

DAVID CASSIDY (Continued)

people took him seriously in his television role — which he hadn't expected.

Eventually, he said, nothing was real about either his professional career or his private life. His family situation at home was nothing like *The Partridge Family* circumstances. "My parents got divorced when I was four years old," he said.

Son of actor

He is the son of actor Jack Cassidy and an actress mother, Evelyn Ward. Their careers kept them busy and David says he saw little of them during his boyhood years. He felt shunned.

There is still a good relationship between him and his former stepmother, Shirley Jones (who played David's mother in *The Partridge Family* series and is now divorced from Jack Cassidy). But he says he is not speaking terms with his father.

"I've never known him and I never will. You can't miss something you never knew," he says.

His own mid-teen experiences were quite different from the wholesomeness he expressed as Keith Partridge.

When he was 16, he dropped out of high school and joined the thousands who converged on San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district. He admits to experimentation with various drugs — marijuana, amphetamines, LSD — but he never became a serious user.

Stricken with mononucleosis, he returned to his mother's home in Los Angeles. When he recovered, he returned to school, but decided against college and sought an acting career in New York.

He got a job as a mail room worker with a textile firm in the interests of survival, while he took acting lessons from Philip Burton, Richard's mentor and father-figure.



His father, Jack Cassidy, gave young David probably the most attention ever at that time. He asked his agent, an experienced showbusiness person, to assist his son. This intercession landed him a part in a Broadway bomb, *Fig Leaves Are Falling*.

The agent then advised him that he might become an actor in New York, but in Los Angeles, he could become a star. So David went to Los Angeles and soon managed to get several good television spots.

The television exposure that did the most for him was a role as a hemophiliac on an episode of *Medical Centre*. It provoked a flood of fan mail, six months before the premiere of *The Partridge Family*, in 1970.

The period of "fabrication" and frenzied crowds of young girl fans began.

Now, when he goes to New York, there are no groupies littered in hotel hallways and he can walk Manhattan's streets without being molested.

Cassidy says he prefers it this way.