

RECEIVED

Care of Young Children

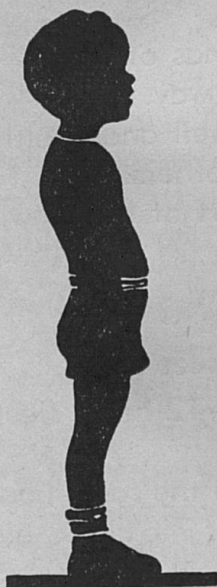
FEB 26 1947

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By Edith Lacy and Florence Imlay

MANY 4-H GIRLS are taking care of younger brothers and sisters, thus helping their mothers who have so many other tasks to do. If you are doing such a job, it is up to you to learn how to do it better, and in such a way that the child you help to take care of develops into a happy, healthy boy or girl.

Take a look at the children around you, with whom you play and work. Are they happy and contented? Are they rosy cheeked and full of energy? Do they stand straight and tall? If not there must be something wrong. See if you can find out why.



This little boy is cranky and cross much of the time. He is thin, pale, and quiet. He slouches and looks tired. He is an example of an under-nourished child.



This little girl is happy and good-natured most of the time. She is strong and likes to play. She stands straight and moves fast. She is a good example of a healthy growing child.

Circular 425

University of Kentucky • College of Agriculture and Home Economics, Extension Division • THOMAS P. COOPER, Dean and Director

HINTS FOR YOU

When you speak to a child, speak in a low tone. A loud, high-pitched voice excites him.

Speak slowly and clearly. Don't use "baby talk."

Be friendly and pleasant.

Give directions in as few words as possible. Tell a small child exactly what to do, instead of giving general directions.

Instead of saying "Now get undressed," say, "First, pull off your shoes. Now this sock; now that one."

Make your suggestions positive. Tell the child what you want him to do instead of saying, "Don't" do this or that. Do not bribe or threaten.

Interest the young child in doing the right thing. He likes to pretend. You might make a game of putting toys away.

Teach the young child to take care of himself — in dressing, in playing, going to toilet, and so on.

Help the child to like his playmates.

Don't talk about a child in his presence — even a small child knows what goes on around him.

Watch out for the child's safety. Nails, glass, knives, medicine, matches, or toys with sharp edges, or anything which can do him harm should be kept out of his reach.

Remember children enjoy all kinds of activity, books, and music.

Keep yourself clean and neat. Wash your hands often.

Learn to do your job in the easiest and best way.

Watch your own diet and health. If you are well and healthy you can do a better job of taking care of others.

Play and have a good time yourself. Some sort of hobby will make you a more interesting person.

SLEEPING

Sleep and rest for a child under seven.



A child under seven needs 12 hours sleep each night.

He should be put to bed at the same hour each night, usually 6 or 7 o'clock, according to age.

It takes sleep and rest to make a happy, healthy, growing child.

He also needs a nap in the afternoon; right after lunch is a good time for a rest.

A very young child should have a nap in the morning and in the afternoon.

Put the child to bed while he is in the right mood

If a child is cross and naughty he may be tired. It may be a sign that he should have had his rest sooner.

Noise, rough play, and scolding upset a child and prevent sleep.

Quiet games, bedtime stories, and songs are good for getting the child quiet and in the frame of mind for sleep.

Make the child comfortable before putting him to bed

Take him to the toilet.

Wash his hands and face.

Undress him and put him into comfortable sleeping clothes.

Put him in his own bed. His bed should be long enough for him to stretch.

See that the bedding is smooth and free from wrinkles.

Put on cover so he will be comfortable.

Raise the window so the room will be ventilated.

Draw the shades to keep out light.

Close the door to keep out noise, but do not latch it.

Remember that noise, lights, drafts, uncomfortable sleeping garments, and poor beds can prevent sleep.

Quietly put the child back to bed, if he gets out.

See that he rests in bed at least 30 minutes, if he doesn't take a nap.

DRESSING

Clothes play an important part in the life of a child. If the clothes look well and fit well they make him a happier and healthier person. If clothes are too tight or too big they hamper a child in his play and may prevent him developing as he should.

The kind of clothes a child should wear—

Attractive and well fitting.

Comfortable — loose enough so that he can climb, stretch, reach and stoop.

Pants big enough and not too tight through the stride; elastic not too tight around the waist.

Not in his way when he plays; no long ties or frills.

Easy to get into.

Easy to fasten; big buttons or zippers and front plackets make for ease in fastening.

Made of firmly woven material which can be washed as often as necessary.

Clean.

How to dress a young child

Let him help to dress himself. It will take longer but he will learn by doing. A child 2 years old will want to try to put on his clothes.



Talk to him about what you are doing. Your remarks might go like this, "Hand in here; other hand in there; now button this button," and so on.

Good habits taught through dressing

Get him to pick up his clothes. Low hooks and small hangers make it possible for him to hang his clothes. Low shelves can be used for folded clothes; an orange crate can be used for shelves.

Let him help to select the clothes he shall wear. A child likes choosing the socks or the ribbon to go with the suit or dress. This teaches him pride in his clothes, and something about colors which look right together.

See that he learns about cleanliness. He should wash his hands often.

Toilet Rules

See that the child goes to the toilet at regular hours. The following may be the schedule for a young child:

On arising in the morning.

Mid-morning.

Before lunch.

After lunch.

Mid-afternoon.

Before going to bed.

Let him help to unbutton and button his clothes.

Provide a stool or box for a step and for a foot-rest if the toilet is too high.

See that he washes his hands with soap and water after going to the toilet.

EATING

A normal healthy child should be hungry and relish food at mealtime, but many children have to be trained to eat the foods they need without dawdling.

Getting the child ready to eat

Suggest to the child that he play a quiet game, look at a picture book, or rest 10 or 15 minutes before meal time.

Have the child wash his hands and face before eating.

Keep a quiet atmosphere before the meal. Don't get the child excited by tossing him into the air or by playing "rough-house" with him.

Make the child comfortable in a chair of the right height for him. There should be a rest for his feet.

Give him utensils that he can handle — a small glass with a handle; a short-handled fork and spoon (ordinary forks and spoons to a child are as long cooking forks and spoons to an adult); a plate with a rim; a flat dessert dish.



Planning the meals for a child

During the day a child should have the following foods:

One quart of milk

One egg

One serving of tomato, orange, or grapefruit

An extra serving of fruit and of a nonstarchy vegetable

A serving of whole cereal

A serving of meat

Butter or fortified margarine

Other foods to satisfy the child's hunger and to keep him growing, such as enriched bread, potatoes, more fruits and vegetables, easily digested desserts.

The following foods should not be included in the young child's diet:

Fried vegetables and fruits

Fried meats and eggs

Pies, cobblers, and rich cakes

Rich gravies and sauces

Highly seasoned foods

Some suggestions for getting child to eat food he needs:

Serve the child as soon as he is seated at the table.

Serve small amounts of food, and if he wants more give second helpings.

Have food warm but not hot. Let it be well seasoned but not salty, highly seasoned, or greasy.

Mash the food for a young child, and then as he grows older cut or chop it until he learns to chew pieces of ordinary size.

Have vegetables eaten and milk drunk before serving dessert.

Change the flavor of a disliked food, by serving it with a favorite one such as carrots with a cream sauce, greens sprinkled with crisp bacon, chopped egg in sandwich, and so on.

Give milk or fruit juices between meals if the child is hungry; but not sweets, because they take away the appetite for other foods.

Interest the child by letting him help prepare food (especially foods he dislikes), and set the table. Do not nag and keep telling him to eat.

Serve only one disliked food at a time.

Be a good example and eat all the foods yourself that are needed for good health.

PLAYING

Play helps form good habits

Play is an important part of a child's life. He spends most of the hours he is awake playing either by himself or with other children. It is through directed play that he learns (1) to share toys with other children, (2) to take turns, or cooperate, (3) to take care of toys and other things, (4) to have ideas of his own, (5) to respect the rights of others, (6) to stick to a job until it is finished.



He should have the toys which help him to learn these things, and he should be directed so that he does learn to share, to play happily with others, and to respect their rights.

Toys for children

Children should have a few well-selected toys or simple, well-chosen play equipment. Some of the points to keep in mind in selecting or making toys or play equipment are:

Is it safe? For the young child, toys should have no sharp edges or points nor tacks and buttons that can be pulled loose and swallowed.

Is it durable? Toys which break or come to pieces easily teach the child to be destructive.

Is it adapted to the age and interest of the child? For example, a little girl should have a small doll which she can handle easily and which can be dressed and un-

dressed. A child $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 should have blocks large enough to build roads, bridges, garages, and so on.

What can the child do with it? Is it something to be wound up so that it runs only a few minutes? Can it merely be pushed around, or is it something "to do things with," as a doll that can be bathed, doll clothes which can be washed and ironed, or tools that can be used in making many things?

Will it hold his interest? When a child plays with one toy for only a few minutes and then flits to something else, he is forming a habit of not staying at a job until it is finished.

Is it suited to the temperament of the child? A quiet child needs toys that will make him active, and a nervous child needs toys that will give him quiet play.

Toys suited to children of different ages

Baby: All toys should be washable and have no sharp tacks, sharp edges, or buttons. Soft dolls and animals, balls, spoons, pans, clothespins, and string of spools, are suitable.

2-3-year-olds: These children like push and pull toys, animals on wheels, doll buggies, wagons, small blocks that can be piled, balls, nests of blocks, pegboard with mallet, stuffed animals, small dolls.

4-6-year-olds: Children in this age group like transportation toys — large wagons, wheelbarrows, auto trucks, balls that bounce, dolls with clothes that can be taken off; and also household toys, cooking and laundry equipment, carpenter tools, crayons, paints, and blunt-pointed scissors for cutting pictures.

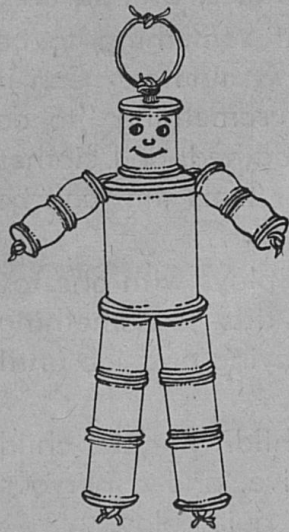
Homemade toys

Odds and ends around the house may be used to make worthwhile and interesting toys for children. You may want to make some of those pictured on the next page.

For children 15 months to 3 years, make blocks from wood. Put a hook on one plank and a staple on the next into which the hook will fit.

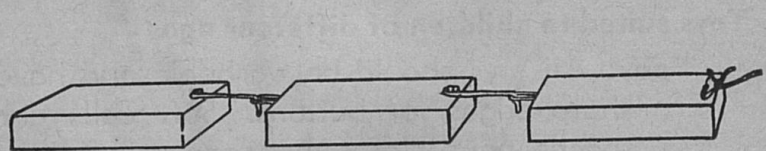
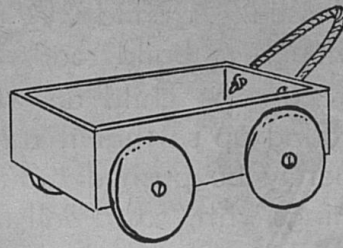
Teaching the child to care for toys

A box on casters with rope handle is a good device for teaching neatness and order to children. They can be taught to pick up toys and to care for them if there is a place to keep the toys. Children 3 years or older should have shelves for this purpose.



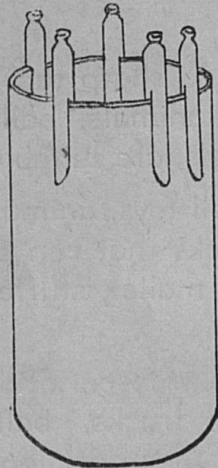
(Above): Simple, substantial cart made by mounting soapbox (about 8x14x20") on axles. Wheels 6 inches in diameter cut from wood 1 inch thick. Bolt the front axle to the wagon at center for easy steering, and attach at center a tongue for pulling. Every child needs a cart. For children 18 months to six years.

(Left): Empty spools of various sizes, sandpapered and polished, left plain or painted, make good playthings. Make a string of spools, or with spools of various sizes make a doll. Use strong tape to hold the spools together. For children 6 months to 1 year.



(Above): Make blocks from wood. Put a hook on one plank and a staple on the next into which the hook will fit. For children 15 months to 3 years.

(Left): Select a smooth-edged can, put tape around edge, and paint it. Paint clothespins (those without springs) various colors. For children 15 months to 2 years.



BOOKS AND READING

Little children like books with pictures, large prints, short sentences, and stories about things they do, or about animals. Very young children like stories about themselves or other boys and girls. Repeating words or ideas adds to the child's interest in a story. Ask your Extension Agent for a list of suitable books for the different age-groups.

Reading to a small child before he goes to bed or before meals is soothing and quieting. Never read frightening stories to children.

Lexington, Kentucky

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics: College of Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Kentucky, and the United States Department of Agriculture, cooperating. Thomas P. Cooper, Director. Issued in furtherance of the Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914.

December, 1946

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