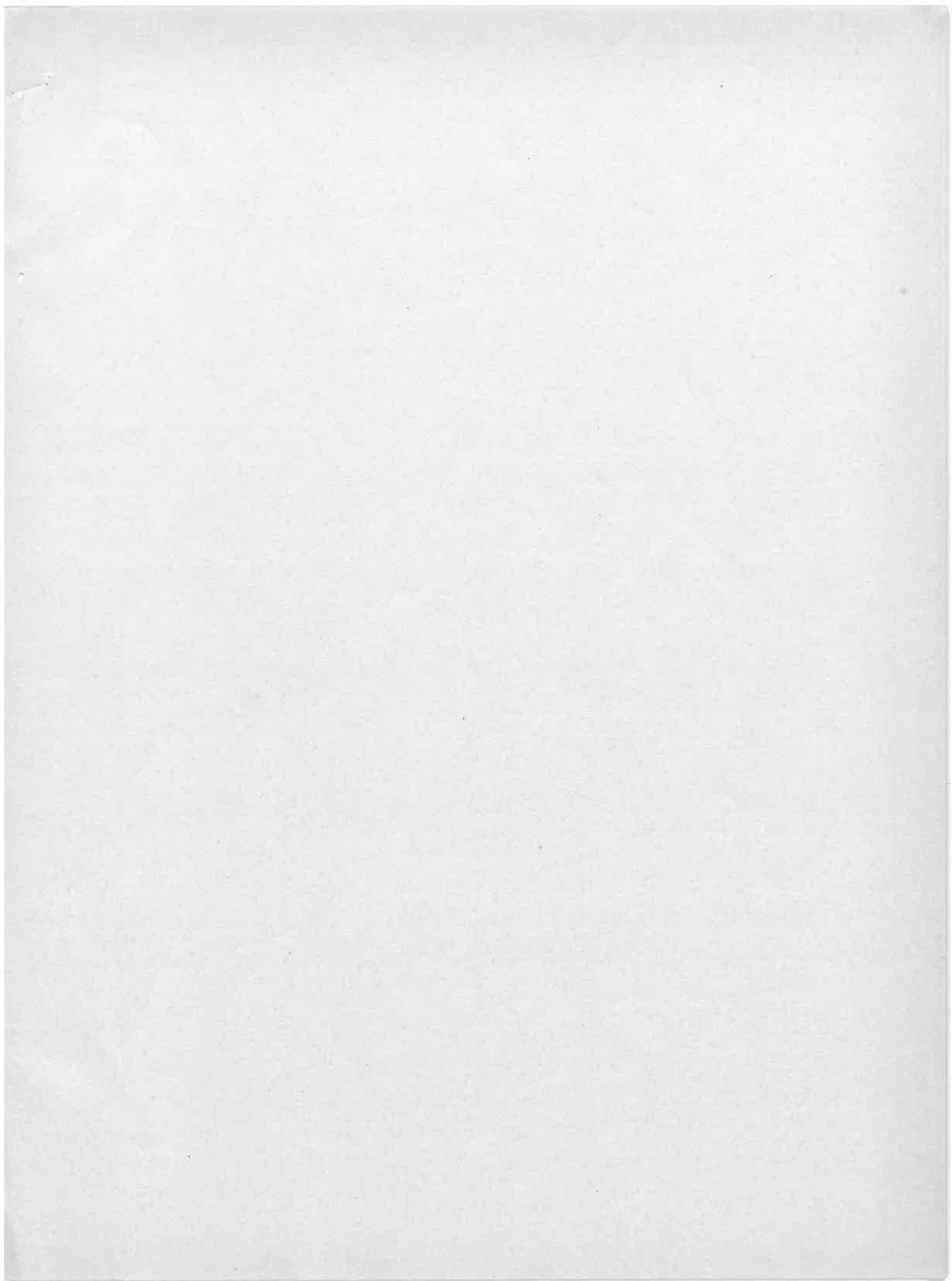


THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

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"Mamma! Ma-mma!" How many times do we hear this loving cry, and how often has it echoed down through the ages! Yet, never before has normal development, wholesome environment, controlled heredity and the crying need for parental guidance in the problems of the very young child been so strongly emphasized. But, never before has scientific information, professional advice, and even clinical help (if indicated) been as freely available as it is today. We have a better understanding of the factors necessary for normal bodily growth and mental development. But what of the child who is physically handicapped? What chance has he to grow and be happy, particularly if his parents cannot finance the necessary medical care? Or what of the mentally handicapped, what future have they? Until now, these have been perplexing problems. They are not solved by any means, but the solution is nearer than it has ever been.

During the preschool period, the child undergoes more growth than his family can actually realize. To them, he has gotten over being a baby and isn't yet ready to go to school, but they aren't sure what to do with him until he is old enough. All this time his mind is growing rapidly and he is getting into all kinds of mischief. He needs direction, and he needs to be encouraged to develop independence and free activity. Both parents must combine their efforts and work together to bring out the best in the child, to help him form such habits that will develop his mind and body to full capacity.

In order to create an environment that will encourage optimum

growth of body and mind, the parents should first develop favorable personal attitudes. They must decide long before the birth of the baby that their home will be a happy one in which to rear children. And with that in mind, they should endeavor in their relations with one another to be pleasant and agreeable. This will not be easy because in any relationship there are bound to be disagreements or misunderstandings. But these little ruts can be ironed out with very little friction if the parents make an honest attempt. And, having acquired the habit of so smoothing out their difficulties, the presence of the child should make very little difference in the easy-running parental relationship. Parents who have developed this philosophy between themselves find it relatively simple to instill it into the child. He achieves a certain feeling of stability, of being wanted and appreciated. It is unlike the uncertainty of the child who has to grow up by himself because his parents "can't be bothered." The love of parents for the child represents to him care and comfort, shelter and tenderness, all of which can be developed into strength or weakness for the future adult.

Next to happy parents, this little developing child needs a happy home. He needs fresh air and sunshine and plenty of outdoor space in which to run and play. If his home is in a section of the country that is clouded most of the year from open sunlight, his body will be starved of the important growth Vitamin D which is so necessary for the normal development of his bones and teeth. To supply this, it is often necessary to give him cod liver oil or some preparation which will include this important element.

And blessed is the child who has the freedom of a field to play in. "What a pity that every child can not spend at least part of each year in the country! Parks are indeed a godsend to city children, but they can never take the place of country woods and meadows. A child's education is broadened if he has explored woods and meadows, built dams and bridges across brooks, watched the behavior of insects, birds, and animals. A child who has seen seeds planted and crops harvested, who has waited eagerly for the cat to have her kittens or the sheep to have her lamb, who has watched the robins build a nest and raise a family, has learned all unconsciously lessons of fundamental importance.

The country child spends long hours in the sunshine. He brings into play many muscles as he climbs trees or weeds the garden. He is free from the constant strain of city noises. For the children who are brought up in the city the parents should, if possible, choose a home with a park or playground nearby, a roof made safe for play, or a sunny back yard."*

The family who realize the importance of and can afford to establish a permanent home have given the child another limb of security on which to depend. It is true that under the present strain of economic conditions many families have been forced to give up their homes for buildings with cheaper rents. Once a family has given up its permanent home, they usually move about from "pillar to post" in an effort to regain their former satis-

* The Child From One To Six, Children's Bureau Publication #30, P.6

faction. The children who are drawn through this tiresome knot-hole barely have time to make new friends and playmates before they are torn away and "planted" somewhere else and then have it all to do over again. It is no wonder that they are maladjusted when they enter school. The child who spends most of his childhood in one house develops a respect not only for its occupants but for the building itself. He learns to recognize "his home" and differentiate it from the homes of his playmates. The quality that makes a home restful and desirable depends more on its orderliness and cleanliness than on its luxuries. Teach the child to be proud of his home. Let him help to keep it pretty and well cared for. Let him learn by experience the restfulness of order. The surroundings of early childhood set standards that often last a lifetime. The child becomes accustomed to seeing things neat and learns that in order to keep it so he has to do his part. If the child is allowed to have his own room, his realization of responsibility is increased. He soon notices how mother and father care for their room; and, being an imitator, he tries in his simple way to do likewise. If there is a noticeable clutter of things about the house, young son thinks that is as it should be and acquires the habit of leaving his toys in even more of a clutter. The mother of this child has herself to blame for setting a poor example. Youngsters learn readily. Their little minds are eager to develop, and they often grasp things that their elders do not intend for them to know. It is in the home that the child's interest begins. He will learn all that is given to him to learn within certain limits. Intelligence and

reason make him responsible. These powers are arrived at gradually as a result of remembering past experiences and then adapting such experiences to new conditions. Each experience in the past is important and capable of great modification. With the aid of a vivid imagination, and the many experiences a child has, he is able to conjure up new experiences and spend many happy hours in playing "lets pretend". He does not outgrow this quality until he has been in school for several years and can enjoy life to such an extent that he no longer has to pretend.

But the child must not be the pivot around which the household moves. He must be taught that he is only one part of a family, all of whose members make up the household. He, like each of the other members of this cooperative association, has his responsibilities. He must learn to do his share in the give and take process by which the family is run. And don't think you are being hard on him when you do expect this cooperation. Remember, you have the responsibility of directing his personality development. At no period of life is the scope of promoting mental health greater than during these years before the child enters school. And yet we pay little attention to them because we don't realize the pressing need for organized supervision of his life before he enters school. For this reason, the child needs to know both parents and to know the security of their affections. If his mother is at home with him, helping him to play and to adjust to other children, she can supervise his activities and his associations. He can observe her behavior and listen to her conversation as she reasons with him. As he listens and observes, he

reflects the activities she is engaged in and does his best to imitate her speech. Most of his actions are patterned after his mother and father, the neighbors, and the little children with whom he plays. If these contacts are at all undesirable, the child will show it in his manner. But it is not his fault. It is the duty of his parents to select for him companions that will teach him good habits. For this reason, wise parents will see to it that their child is adequately supervised at all times. To do this, one of them will have to remain in the home. This discourages both parents from working away from the home; and, unless it is an absolute necessity, the mother of the family should be the one to stay in the home and direct the business of the household. As the mother works, the child watches her. He asks many questions about what she is doing. To these queries he expects to receive answers that will satisfy him. By satisfying him, we mean answers that will fit into the description of each article in his association. Soon he begins to see the articles clearly defined. But, before he can associate one article with another, he must first ask more questions about each. In this way, he can begin to see the relation of one object to another. And thus his learning process develops. Before long, his questions become more sensible. He has begun to reason things out for himself, and, as he reasons, the more intricate meanings and uses demand further explanations. At this point, he usually consults his father. True, his mother could probably give him a satisfactory answer; but when things become complicated he seems to feel that father, who has to stay away all day and work, must have a superior intelligence and would be better able to

deal with his problems. This may be grounded in the fact that because father is home only in the evening, his time must be used in only the more important things. The child should be allowed the free association of relations with his father. He ought to be permitted to enjoy companionship with him so that he may learn to enjoy his father's pastimes almost as soon as he has learned to walk and to put words together. A large number of the new words in the vocabulary of a three year old are those pertaining to his relations with his father. While ~~he~~ is attempting to understand his father's activities about the car, in the garden, fixing the plumbing or building a fence, he learns new words and his vocabulary assumes more technical proportions. Until now, his relations have centered around his mother, his home, and homely things. From this time forth he fills in his language. He has at his command the basic words that are necessary to use with all of the new ones he is now adding to them to produce coherent sentences.

And before we go on, we should emphasize the importance of enunciation to the child who is learning to talk. He looks to his parents to teach him. And because he does not yet know what good English is or sounds like until he hears it, it is of utmost importance that those around him speak distinctly and use the finest English they know. If the developing child never hears baby talk or bad grammatical usage, it will be impossible for him to use it. If the language spoken in his presence reflects good former teaching, it is natural that he will imitate it.

But sometimes, with all of the advantages of a good environment and wise parents, a child does speak incorrectly. He may lisp or have difficulty in pronouncing some letters or combinations of letters. This is often due to a physical defect

and should be called to the attention of the family physician. Frequently, if this is not taken care of in early childhood, the child develops emotional problems in later life due to self-consciousness and a feeling of difference from other children. This is a sad situation which could have been averted if treatment had been started before the child was conscious of his difference from other children. And if we can teach mothers the value of having abnormalities looked into, perhaps we can reduce the number of these misfortunes.

And if the child has learned well, he will not have to unlearn when he goes to school. One of the cruelest pranks a parent can play on a child is to do him the injustice of teaching him baby talk, wrong names of objects, or faulty grammatical usage, with the idea of his being cute when he uses them in company. Eventually the same child will have to go to school. Instead of being lauded for the "cute" things he has been praised for at home, he will be mocked and laughed at. Besides the emotional upset he suffers and the time lost in the relearning process which is necessary, he loses faith in his family. True, his first impulses will make him angry with the teacher and the students. But eventually it will reflect upon his parents. As a result, he will either have a bad impression of and a poor adjustment to the school, or his first big disappointment in his family. He may have both.

Parents often tell you that they can't understand why little Alice is afraid of the dark or has dislikes for certain foods, or will not do certain things they think she should do. Much less often do they admit that they never have eaten those same foods or that they never could stand to be alone in the house,

let alone when its dark! Most of the likes and dislikes of a child are grounded in previous suggestions. He is easily influenced by the suggestions made, whether they be good or bad. He hears his father say that he wants a second helping of spinach and he concludes that spinach must be pretty good. On the other hand, if father should remonstrate because mother served carrots, it stands to reason that carrots wont rank very well in the child's estimation. If his mother sees a snake and screams, the child is led to believe that snakes are to be feared. His response will probably be to clutch at his mother's skirts and scream. Do you blame him? Take it for granted that he will approve of things and give him no reason for doing otherwise. The mother who expects trouble will usually get it. It is unnecessary to instill fear in a child to make him behave. It should be a natural impulse. The child learns to know what is expected of him; and, as long as he lives up to expectations, he has nothing to worry about. He learns to do things for the approval they bring from his loved ones. The child who is reared in this atmosphere, realizes that it hurts his parents to know he is misbehaving and he will do his best to avoid misbehavior. If his family fulfill their promises to him he will learn slowly to believe in truth. It will mean a world of difference to him if he can trust them in everything they do. If Johnnie misbehaves and you have promised to spank him for it, don't destroy his confidence in you by not spanking him. You have promised a punishment, and however slight it is, you are obligated to exact it. If you do not, the child will never know when to depend upon you. He can not trust you now in his smaller difficulties, and later he will find it hard to rely upon you in larger problems. If

you can avoid making your child's life one of perplexing "don'ts", you will develop a stronger character with a safer feeling when acting independently.

From the time a baby begins to notice objects, you must help him to establish a sense of ownership. Help him to recognize which things belong to him and for which articles he is to be responsible. An early development of this habit will avoid confusion later when he shares his toys with other children. When he mixes his cars and marbles with similar ones belonging to the neighbor children, he should be able to recognize his own as separate from theirs. He should learn to know the value of property and the ease with which some of it is injured and destroyed. Some time he may have his toys broken while other youngsters are playing with them. Or, he may break theirs, not maliciously but by accident. If he has an understanding of values, he will have the proper attitude toward the broken toy, regardless of who is at fault in damaging it. The give and take philosophy tends to avoid petty quarrels that are the foundation of later jealousy. And jealousies are to be avoided at any expense. One of the most fertile fields in which to grow the seeds of jealousy lies in the mind of the little child who is knocked off of his throne of popularity by the arrival of a new baby sister or brother. Let us say it is a little brother who has been the pride and joy of the family and the recipient of all the family affection. A new baby arrives to absorb most of the time and soft caresses that used to be showered on him. No one pays a speck of attention to him except to ask him what he thinks of the lovely new baby. Well, he'd certainly like to tell them! But instead, he has to smile and mumble that he

"thinks she's nice". They think he is so excited that he can't think of anything else to say. But that's where they have misjudged him. As soon as he can get away, he retreats to his playroom and sulks. At that point, unless his feelings are nipped in the bud, the little green-eyed monster will grow very rapidly and become a definite complex. If this is allowed to continue, it may later become an enmity. The thing to do with that young man is to begin preparing him ahead of time for this wonderful event that will soon take place. Play up to him that he will soon have a new playmate who, at first will be very delicate and will need his love and protection. Show him how it was that he came into the family when there were no other children to teach him and so his mother and father had to do it. Then point out to him the responsibility he is to share in teaching and training this new little playmate. He will sense the trust you put in him and will feel his importance in this new act which is about to take place. There will be no time for jealousy, Instead, a spirit of love will be developing for the unarrived playmate, and a sense of responsibility will be enkindled that will endure throughout his childhood.

If the new baby is of the opposite sex of the first child, there is a good opportunity to begin sex education. There have probably been numerous questions about anatomy in observing his own body, but the small boy will be even more puzzled to discover that little sister is "different". The intelligent mother can explain this very simply and without confusion. She should be careful to supply only the information asked for at the time. Later, when more details are necessary, she can supply them to the extent that she feels her child is prepared to accept them.

It should not be as difficult to satisfy the child as many mothers imply. Their difficulty is that they lack enough correct information to satisfy themselves and are afraid the youngsters will ask them something they can not answer. But few pre-school children have advanced that far. At that age, the child wants an answer that he can understand at the time. If you do give him more it will either confuse him or go completely over his head. Give him just what he wants until he asks for more!

The parent should be careful in the attitude she takes toward her child's trend of interest. He has a right to know a few things about himself. There is, however, no need to shame him because he does ask questions. He will soon learn that there are some things that are discussed only in private. Observation will teach him to realize that he should refrain from doing some things in the presence of company. Dressing should be completed in his own room. If he can't manage to tie his shoestrings, it is permissible to come out to mother and ask her to help him. Although his body is a beautiful structure for him to be proud of, it is the custom to protect certain parts and, therefore, to keep them covered. In that connection, we may discuss toilet training of very young children. It should not be difficult early to establish the habit of using the toilet chair. At about five months, the mother can begin training the baby to defecate at a certain time of day. If she will seat the child at the same time each day, she will find that it is not long before he understands his duty, and there will seldom be difficulty thereafter. If there is an occasional slip-up, she should realize that babies are apt to forget when they become excited. Their habit patterns are not yet well defined and the mother should expect an occasional error. By

the time a child is two years old, he should be reliable enough not to wet himself. It is not hard for him to comprehend that he can be dry if he will accept responsibility for toilet habits. If he does not seem able to control himself, the Doctor should examine him to rule out physical defects.

Often a child will be so engrossed in play that he will forget. The result is an avoidable accident. The child realizes it and feels ashamed. If this happens once or twice, he learns that he can't avoid it by forgetting. He must stop and take care of himself. This opens another problem, which has been the foundation of worry to mothers of little boys: Can he take time enough out from play to go inside to the lavatory? It is so much more convenient for him to go out in that corner behind the garage, or behind the woodpile on the vacant lot next door. To the mothers who have never had this difficulty, it may seem to be a worry unfounded. But, it is the source of much consternation to the mother whose little boy follows the above reasoning process. It is more frequently found when several little boys are playing together, for there is much amusement in it for them, at least for a while. And then perhaps father takes the problem in hand. He points out to young son that an action of that kind is frowned upon by real boys. Personal pride enters the discussion; and, while father may not call it that to his son, he talks around it and tries to draw out the manly features in his little man that will rebel against such conduct. For this reason, problems of this kind are more effectively handled by the boy's father. Each little problem, if it is handled and solved before it becomes more serious, helps to direct the child's mental grooves so that he will develop normally.

Our child is developing a feeling of security in his own ability. His emotions are becoming fairly well oriented: he is acquiring habits of honesty, truthfulness, cooperation, personal achievement, possession and responsibility, and most important of all, he has come to know and appreciate the value of love and of having someone to whom he can show affection. These we shall call his social development. But what about his growth and bodily needs. Let us not omit the very important physical side. In order that the development of habits and emotions may be normal, we must help to keep our child in perfect physical condition. If we expect to have a son we can be proud of later on the football field, or a daughter who will be a star tennis player, we must look to the first six years of their lives and lay a foundation for health. To do this, we must plan for regularity in forming good health habits, well-planned meals, sufficient sleep at regular hours, vigorous exercise and plenty of fresh air and sunshine. These are the primary stepping stones to good future health.

No longer do people allow their children to grow up like Topsy. "To let them have diseases young and get over them" is a fallacy we hope is forever behind us in our modern health standards. And, therefore, the parents are going to demand the best in scientific advantages for keeping their children well. Every six months after the child is a year old, he should pay a visit to the Doctor to have a complete going over. This habit is established early in life and the child comes to look upon the Doctor as a man to be admired like his father. Not once is it suggested that the physician or the dentist are people to be feared. The child has no temper tantrums when told he is going

to the Doctor, but takes it more as a matter of course. This makes it easier for the examining physician and certainly more profitable for accurate results. No one can form a correct opinion of the condition of the child's chest if he is wiggling and yelling. There is only one sure conclusion, you can determine the "lungpower".

At the time of his physical check-up, the child's mother will want to give the Doctor a correct account of the child's condition during the past six months. If he has had any illness, the Doctor will want a description of it to help him in his findings. In addition, he will want to know the program of sleeping, eating, playing, exercise, habits, elimination and general physical feeling. He will then proceed with the examination. The eyes will be checked for proper accommodation. With the existing state laws for preventing Ophthalmia neonatorum, we seldom see children's eyes that are seriously infected. Very young children sometimes have one eye that turns inward more than another. If these children are fitted with glasses or given early treatment, the later condition of "cross-eyes" often can be avoided. Occasionally a delicate operation is necessary. Children should be taught to keep their fingers away from their eyes to guard against infection. Their little hands are into so many places that they could easily pick up an infection. They must also learn to protect their eyes from pointed objects. Mothers should be careful to keep harmful solutions tightly corked and away from the curious hands that are reaching for everything. In the last few years, much emphasis has been placed on proper lighting in order to save vision. Little children do not use their eyes to read letters, but they do look at picture books. Most often they sit on the floor or

lie tummy down and spend hours in a dimly lighted room looking at pictures or coloring. Mothers should watch for this and try to correct the lighting and posture before they become bad habits. "A vicious circle is established by the reciprocal action of eye-strain and bad posture. Disturbances of eyes produce postural defects, and postural defects predispose to eye lesions. Eye-strain produces mental and physical fatigue. One must use the eyes correctly or one cannot relax.

"There are many elements involved in this problem including the intensity and purity of color and the direction of the rays of light. Regardless of how perfect the light may be, however, faulty sitting postures in reading, studying, painting or playing the piano may injure the eyes."*

Next, the Doctor will examine the child's ears. He can determine whether there has been a previous disturbance in the drums; and, if scarring is present, can pick up past infection. If the child has complained of head noises, ringing, itching, pain, heat, blocked feelings in the ear, or has had to have words repeated, the Doctor will do a more thorough examination of the ear. Cases of the type just mentioned are infrequent, but often present serious problems. Sometimes a hearing difficulty is picked up, which, if left to be discovered until the child entered school, would interrupt his school performance and cause an emotional upset.

The nose and throat will be inspected for possible evidence of inflammation and for enlarged tonsils and adenoids. If the child snores or is a mouth-breather, the Doctor will be particularly interested in arranging for tonsillectomy to remove the obstructions in the breathing passage. Tonsils are frequently

*Guardians of Eyes and Health at School" American Seating Co.

the seat of infection. The infection sometimes effects the bones producing rheumatic pains and, arthritis. Bad tonsils make a child more susceptible to colds and throat infections and are often the cause of loss of weight, irritability and a general run down condition. Persistent mouth breathing throws the tongue against the roof of the mouth causing a deformity in the palatine bone. This often results in a speech defect. The occlusion of the teeth is usually affected, and that requires even more expense. Eventually the teeth will have to be straightened for effective use and for esthetic reasons.

At the same time that the nose and throat are being inspected, the Doctor will observe the teeth for a general impression of their development. He has an opportunity to see whether they have been well cared for and are in good condition. After the child is two years old, he should be able to brush and care for his own teeth. Mother should supervise him to be sure that he does a good job. She should urge him to chew hard foods such as dry toast or carrots to stimulate the flow of gastric juices and encourage the development of bones and teeth. Gum chewing is an excellent exercise to strengthen the jaw muscles. From the time the child is two years old, his teeth should be examined by the dentist every six months, any small cavities filled, and the stains cleaned.

The child should be tuberculin tested at the time of his examination. If at any time there is a question about the reaction being positive, an x-ray should be taken to rule out the possibility of tuberculosis. When there are many friends and relatives about the home fondling the child, it is easy for him to come in contact with someone whose case is unknown, and

yet who is spreading the germs that cause tuberculosis. The Doctor might pick up lung sounds that would make him question, but if he had really heard and picked up a case of tuberculosis as diagnosed later by x-ray, the case would have already advanced to a serious point.

If a child has suffered from communicable disease, it is possible that he may have a slight heart complication. In his regular examination, this can be diagnosed and treated before there has been enough lapse of time for damage to result.

An abdominal examination will help to reveal the presence of a hernia. In the course of play and growth, the abdominal muscles are exercised and tend to strengthen so that the child will usually outgrow a hernia. If he does not, the repair is a relatively simple surgical procedure and should be taken care of as early as indicated. A ptosis of the abdominal muscles is frequently found, particularly in the child from two to six, and is not to be worried about. If, however, the ptosis is exceedingly pronounced and resembles a "pot-belly", it is usually an indication of rickets. If this be the case, the problem is one of nutrition and can be traced to the child's early development as an embryo in the uterus of the mother. All of the body building elements essential to construction of a sturdy child are set up during this period. If the mother was in good physical condition before she became pregnant, and maintained an adequate diet during pregnancy, the resulting child should represent good nutrition and the mother's body should not suffer to any great extent from the drain of pregnancy. On the other hand, if the mother was run down before conception, had to worry about making ends meet, and had only a very sketchy diet during

pregnancy, the child would sap from the mother's body those elements demanded for bodily construction and leave the mother in a weaker condition. After delivery, a mother in this condition would be susceptible to uterine hemorrhage and it is doubtful if she would have any breast milk. Postpartum recovery is usually delayed and the mother would most likely develop anemia. It is questionable whether she would be able to have another child. There would certainly be no heritage of strength to pass on to a child if she were able to have one. She has on her frail hands the little infant who is partially responsible for her condition. True, he sapped her strength for his own good, but he was also shortchanged. As his mother is slow to recover, he is slow to develop. The fontanelles in his head are slow to close; his bones are slow in hardening and his walking delayed; teething does not occur until much later than normally; there is a characteristic rachitic rosary along the terminal portion of the ribs and a Harrison's groove or rib-flare in addition to the "pot-belly" we have mentioned. Even a diet rich in all of the elements he should have with added minerals and cod liver oil will not make up for the loss in his mother's diet during the months of his early development. And what mother who has been forced by circumstances to go without necessary food during pregnancy, ~~will~~, no matter how much she would like to ^{will} be able to afford to feed her child the kind and amount of food he should have? Will she understand the need? If she does, where will she get the money to provide the necessary food?

Poor posture is closely correlated with faulty nutrition. The child who has a pot belly from rickets will most likely have other postural defects. He is noticeably round shouldered, hollow

ched, flat footed and chronically tired.

"The body may be compared to a watch. Every wheel and spring inside the watch must be in its right place. If the tiny wheels and springs are bent and out of position, the watch does not keep good time, and wears out quickly.

So it is with the growing child. The bony framework must not be allowed to get out of its proper position. If the bones do get out of place, then various organs inside the body are crowded out of their natural positions. They cannot do their work properly. When one part of the body is out of place, it leads to the injury of other parts.

For instance, if the chest is flat, it means that the heart and lungs are crowded. Then the large muscle, called the diaphragm, cannot do its work. This muscle is between the chest and abdomen and pulls the ribs during breathing. This leads to other troubles.*

Among the diseases which cause malnutrition are chronic heart and kidney diseases and constipation. Each of these problems requires medical supervision. Constipation is usually the outgrowth of bad habits and occasionally of faulty diet. Correct these situations and regulate the fluid intake and you may have very little trouble. Sometimes a defective routine or an absence of routine causes the child's system to get out of order. The mother's first thought is to give him an enema, or, more reliable, a laxative? What would mother's do without laxatives? The first thought in stomach aches, head aches, or general aches, seems to be a laxative! They seem to feel it is a panacea for all ills-- and the one home remedy that is most easily done without--according

* "A Tip From Goldilocks", Wright, R.M., Osteopathic Magazine, Dec. 1934

to the medical profession. The Doctor may outline a corrective program to establish good health habits in the little child. If followed, it will be more effective than all of the laxative that is manufactured. The program will follow this general plan:

"1. Teach the child to eat slowly and to drink but little water with meals; plenty between meals.

2. Teach him to eat what is put before him or go hungry.

3. Give him no fried food, tea or coffee.

4. As a rule, he should be allowed no food between meals unless ordered by a physician.

5. He should be taught to brush his teeth after each meal and before going to bed.

6. Give him milk that is safe. Pasteurized, certified, evaporated or dried are all free from disease germs. Milk should always be kept covered and cool.

7. The child should receive cod liver oil regularly. Sun baths may be substituted for this under the physicians orders!"

In addition, his diet should include foods rich in carbohydrates and fats. These are the source of most of the boundless energy of childhood. Milk is the best source of energy for children. Other good sources which should figure largely in a child's diet are, bread, cereal, butter, vegetables, sugar and dried fruit.

Rickets, a disease of childhood, is caused either by a lack of mineral salts in the diet or the inability of the body to assimilate them. Vitamin D., which protects against rickets, is found in eggs, milk and cod liver oil, and is developed in the body by exposure to sunlight. Children in most parts of the

*"Out of Babyhood Into Childhood" Metropolitan Life Insurance Pamphlet

country, particularly in Oregon where unclouded sun seldom shines, need cod liver oil practically the year round. Milk, the most nearly perfect food, supplies large quantities of Vitamin D as well as a high percentage of carbohydrate, protein and fat and other minerals and vitamins.

At the child's mealtime, it is important that he is not rushed, and that there are no detracting influences. If he sits at the table with older folk, much ado is made of his eating habits and he develops a maladjustment. It is easier for the child if at mealtime he can eat in his room on his own small table. Of necessity in keeping his schedule, his hours of eating are different than those of the older members of the family. In this way, his routine is maintained and he is free to take as long as he wishes in eating. Not that his meals should drag out for more than an hour, but that he should be allowed to take his time in the quiet of his room or the sunroom in which he is surrounded by familiar playthings. His chair and table should fit his size. If the chair does not allow him to rest his feet on the floor, there should be a small footstool. A youngster cannot help slouching forward if his feet have nothing to rest on. Just prior to his going to school, the child may begin eating with the family. He feels that he has grown up, and realizes the importance of proper behavior. He associates this with the privilege of going to school.

The one to six age is one of so rapid development and mental growth that the child can not be expected to develop all the social niceties that his family should be proud to exhibit. He will naturally learn a few of the proper manners that are associated with his age group, but his habit patterns are yet so uncertain

that he is liable to forget. His little mind thinks up things that he says without attention to their meaning, and frequently embarrasses his parents. Therefore, it is just as well for the family, and certainly better for the child, if these family exhibitions are postponed until he is kindergarten or school age. Then, he is surely young enough to settle down into society.

At no period of a child's life is the scope of promoting mental health greater than during the pre-school period. Mental health may be defined as follows: "The adjustment of individuals to the world and to each other with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behavior, and a happy disposition."* The mental development of the child is so closely tied up with his physical development, his home, his parents, brothers and sisters, and all that goes to make up his environment, that all these factors play a definite part in forming and moulding him. The end result we express in the word "personality". We know that the basic fundamentals from which personality is derived are laid down in early childhood. Probably at no other period of life does the individual develop and learn so rapidly as during the first five years. It is imperative, therefore that these years be consciously utilized for developing physical and emotional habits which will be useful and constructive and which will not handicap and constrict the proper evolution of personality. Our personalities are continually changing and

*"Personality Development of the Preschool child", Gee, A.M., M.D.
The Canadian Nurse, December 1938.

we continually add to them as a result of every life experience.

Personality is derived from five basic elements. The first of these is physique. We look upon physique as being a basic inherited quality inasmuch as we inherit a definite physical type of body. In an analysis of a group of problem children, physical defects rank high as causative factors. These handicaps are barriers to successful school work and ultimately create an intolerable situation from which the only means of escape is running away. Normal people have other means of escape in art, music, hobbies, and so on. Johnny's only method of escape is to run away. The first requisite, therefore, in the personality development of the pre-school child is a healthy, properly functioning physique.

Intelligence, the second element of personality formation, is again an inherited quality. We are born with certain definite pre-determined potentialities for mental development. Children whose minds are younger than their age indicates present real problems in school. Often it is necessary to change the school situation and redirect the child's interests along mechanical or other lines adapted to his mental ability so that he may become not a menace, but a useful member of society.

In addition to a sound mind and a health body, the child must have a healthy and mature emotional life. As he develops from the dependent infant to the toddler, and on to sturdy boyhood into independent manhood, the child progresses through the various stages of emotional growth and maturity to emotional security and independence. The success with which this kind of weaning is achieved is to a large extent a measure of sound

emotional maturity. The attitude taken by the parents directs the course of progress. Since the preschool period is one in which the child begins to form his personality, much time and thought must be spent in helping him to construct a sound emotional mechanism.

Instinct is unlearned behavior. Animals live by instinct, but we are superior to them in having a mind and intelligence to govern our actions. Unfortunately, some people lack the intelligence to govern their instincts. Only proper early training will prevent their later becoming social problems.

Habit, the only personality element which is acquired, absorbs the greater part of our lives. These habits may be good or bad. The foundation that a child receives in habit training during the pre-school period will to a great extent form the pattern to which his later life will conform. Parents cannot hope to live one way and instruct their children in another. As soon as a child is born, the home itself begins creating in him a spiritual climate, teaching him basic reactions to life which will later govern his conduct.

We wish our children to be sane and we wish them to be civilized. Mental health should be the ultimate goal of all civilization, whether it be applied to individuals, communities, or nations. Applied to individuals, it promotes health and happiness. The most important part of life, in so far as mental health is concerned, is the pre-school period.

The relationship of parent is no longer looked upon as one of ownership. It is a trusteeship. You cannot rear your child as you like simply because he is yours. In taking the responsibility of parenthood, society entrusts you to develop his mind and his soul to the

and his body to the best of your ability, and to illuminate his soul with all of the beauty of a christian home, so that he may take his rightful place in the world and later pass on the rich heritage you have given him.

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