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ABSTRACT

The booklet is the second in a series on the ways that child care centers can contribute to the healthy growth and development of preschool children, and focused on is the mothering teacher. The child care teacher is thought to be a mother substitute who can help the child learn to trust the world. Mothering is seen to involve a natural drive to care for and protect the young, and consideration of individual differences. The teacher is warned against competing with the mother's love for the child to prevent emotional problems. The mothering teacher is seen to fill emotional needs by offering affection, comforting the hurt child, showing interest, appreciating accomplishment, and helping build a positive self image. The mothering teacher is also shown to meet physical needs such as nourishment, toileting, sleep, and exercise. Aspects of social development such as self control, consideration for others, and accepting responsibility are other functions encouraged by the mothering teacher. The mothering teacher is said to build language ability through such activities as talking and listening, story telling, and singing. (For other booklets in the series see EC 052 600, EC 052 602 through EC 052 604). (DB)

MORE THAN A TEACHER

caring for children—number two

MORE THAN A TEACHER

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HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
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preface

The influence of a good child care center is not limited to the children who are cared for, the staff itself, or the mothers who participate. Older and younger brothers and sisters, friends, neighbors, volunteers may all gain from changes brought about by the child care center. In some instances, the neighborhood is brightened up, inspired by the attractiveness of the center, and pride emerges to spark new efforts. School teachers and principals, ministers, and local agencies also grow more helpful, more interested in children.

This comes from the friendliness of the center staff to the whole family and to the neighbors. It also comes from the quality of every aspect of the child care center—the cheerful setting, the good food, the well-organized space for activity, the children's progress in learning and self-control, the experience of helping to improve the center itself and the neighborhood, the resulting good feelings, and a contagious sense of progress.

At one child care center on a dirt road full of deep ruts and holes, with some adjacent yards full of junk and neighboring houses in a run down condition, major changes occurred. The city street department improved the road; the real estate agent repaired and painted nearby houses while resident owners painted their own; and volunteers from the police department cleaned up the junk. Yards bare and full of scraggly weeds were seeded and made neat. It all takes effort, but the response releases new energy.

Thus child care centers have the opportunity of providing massive help for the nation's children through contributing to wholesome physical, mental, and social development, and also to an improved environment for the children. The child in a good center all day will receive good food, exercise, and rest to build a healthy body, as well as assistance in correction of physical problems.

Through constant communication with teachers and aides, language is developed, vocabulary is enlarged naturally, thought is stimulated, and a healthy self-concept evolves. Use of toys and other play and work materials involves exercise and development of sensory-motor skills, along with many concepts of color, size, shape, weight, balance, structure, and design. Stories and songs encourage integration of feelings, action, and ideas, while developing imagination.

Spontaneous play in the housekeeping corner or with blocks allows the child to play out his observations of the family and the community. Other children may broaden their ideas and skills through watching and joining in the play.

Neither health, nor adequate mental development, nor constructive social behavior can be guaranteed for the rest of the child's life if the following years do not also meet his needs adequately. But good total development in childhood can provide prerequisites for further growth and can help to prevent the beginnings of retardation, disorganized behavior, early delinquency, and emotional disturbance.

acknowledgments

I owe most to two groups of workers with young children: first, my former colleagues at Sarah Lawrence College, who taught the children at the Sarah Lawrence Nursery School—Evelyn Beyer, long time director of the nursery school, and Marian Gay, Rebekah Shuey, and also colleagues at Bank Street College for Teachers with whom at different times I shared teaching and research experiences. But in addition, I owe much to the directors and teachers of many nursery schools and day care centers across America and around the world. Especially exciting to me were the Basic Education schools of India, initiated by Gandhi and Zakir Hussain; and Bal Ghar in Ahmedabad, india—a unique integration of the best American nursery school concepts, Montessori principles, Basic Education, and some traditional Indian patterns, organized with a special balance of good structure and flexibility that I came to know as Kamalini Sarabhai's genius.

I am equally grateful to the creative staff of the North Topeka Day Care Center—Josephine Nesbitt and Forestine Lewis, who "dreamed up" the center to meet the needs of deprived children in their area; and among the intercultural group of teachers and directors, Sarita Peters, Mary Wilson, Jane Kemp, Connie Garcia, Chris Smith—each of whom had special talents in handling the children, stimulating and supporting their growth. Cecile Anderson has been especially generous in sharing her unique story—techniques, observations of children's favorite stories, and ways of looking at children's constructiveness and pride in achievement. Among the volunteers, Lillian Morrow was an inspiration to all of us with her sensitive, skillful, and quietly warm ways, and Carol Rousey contributed expert and helpful assessments of the children's speech and language development.

The leadership of the local OEO director, Robert Harder, and later J. A. Dickinson, stimulated staff, parents and neighbors, Girl Scouts, occupational therapy groups in local hospitals to help paint, plant shrubbery, build outdoor play equipment, provide toys so as to make possible a pleasant and well-furnished environment for learning and for total development. Shirley Norris, director of Kansas State Day Care, Anna Ransom, wise dean of Topeka day care efforts, and Mr. S. Revely, the local realtor who renovated the neighborhood houses for the Center, all gave time, energy, and warm interest to the development of the Center.

I also want to express my appreciation to the responsive mothers whose progress along with that of their children gave me a new understanding of human potentialities in children and adults of all ethnic groups in America and the urgency of making it possible for these to be expressed.

These guidelines were initiated by Dr. Caroline Chandler, former Chief, Children's Mental Health Section, National Institute of Mental Health, and were supported by PHS Grant R12–MH9266, the Menninger Foundation, and Children's Hospital of the District of Columbia. They were prepared under the supervision of Mrs. Franc Balzer, Director of Head Start's Parent and Child Center Program.

Lois B. Murphy, Ph.D.

MORE THAN A TEACHER

In frontier days when settler families were separated by miles from the nearest school, it was taken for granted that a child learned much of what he had to know at home. The jobs of mother and teacher overlapped because mother was teacher through most of the child's early life.

In modern times, too, even though the school may be just around the corner, mothers are more teacher than they may think. By the time a six-year-old goes to first grade he has learned about many things just from living with his family. No one in the family may have thought he was teaching the child. Mother, father, brothers, sisters, and grandparents were just "doing what came naturally," and the child learned along the way. He not only learned many facts about the world, but also formed attitudes toward the world and other people based on his experiences at home.

If his home was a loving, trusting one, chances are the child trusts the world. If his family has always been willing to help him, probably he is willing to help others. While his mother was feeding him, dressing him, putting him to bed, playing with him, and doing all of the things a mother does every day, she also was molding his outlook on life.

Some children are not so fortunate. Many families face overwhelming difficulties that often lead to unintentionally harsh treatment of their children. A parent may suffer from a long illness, or steady work may be hard to find and financial worries pile up. The mother of many children may simply be so exhausted from bearing and looking after so many little ones that she does not have the strength to give them the attention they need.

When adults are worried, ill, or tired, they tend to become angry at the world that has been harsh with them. In different circumstances they

probably would be good parents, but they are so crushed by life's problems that their behavior toward everyone, especially those closest to them, shows resentment. Children, who are weak and cannot fight back, often become the targets of such anger.

A child who learns at home to expect only abuse from the world may enter first grade with well-formed attitudes of anger and suspicion toward everyone around him. By the time he is six years old, it is sometimes impossible to change his outlook.

This is how the child care center holds great promise. When a child comes to a center he is only three or four years old. A teacher who displays the love and consistent care of a mother at home can show such a child that his first impression of the world was true for only a part of the world—for only some people. Such a teacher can open for him the vision of a wider world populated with warm people who care about him.

These children in a child care center need more than an ordinary teacher. They need a "mothering" teacher.

what is mothering?

A Natural Drive—Have you ever watched a mother monkey look after her baby at the zoo? She feeds it and cleans its fur, but she does much more. She keeps an eye on it while it scampers around the cage and investigates the higher perches. She allows it to be free to explore until she thinks it is in a dangerous spot, or until a larger monkey attacks it. Then she runs to its rescue, carrying it away from danger and soothing its frightened feelings at the same time.

A human mother does the same things for her baby. She feeds him when he is hungry; changes him when he is dirty; rocks him when he is upset; protects him when he is in danger; and provides whatever is needed in the way of physical and emotional comfort. That is mothering.

Mothering is what might be called "doing what comes naturally." Monkeys and people and all other animals are born with instincts that let them know how to look after their young without being told. A loving mother knows what to do without reading it in a book. She wants to soothe her baby when he cries.

There was a time when modern ideas of child care said that picking up a baby when it cried spoiled him. Now we have learned that the old-fashioned way is best. Loving does not spoil a child. In fact, it is the children who have been deprived of love who are spoiled in a different way. They are not spoiled because they expect too much from the world. They are spoiled because they expect too little. Their lack of love and good mothering has made it impossible for them to respond to people in a positive way.

As these spoiled ones grow older, they begin to hate school and teachers, the law and police. These institutions represent the world that mistreats them, and they show their contempt for it by dropping out of school, breaking the law, or generally behaving in a way that is unacceptable to the society that they feel has rejected them.

Melting Distrust—Good mothering on the part of the child care teacher means giving personal attention, warmth, and care to the children who need it most. A child from a home without love will need mothering more than one who comes to the center with the security of his family behind him. Mothering may mean taking a child by the hand as you go into the play yard, or holding him on your lap at storytime. In his first days at the center he may need you by his side while he eats lunch or he may want you to take him to the toilet.

If you work with him and show a steady feeling of affection, you gradually will be able to melt the wall of distrust he has built between himself and the world. He will begin to be friendly, and his responsiveness will lead him into many wonderful learning experiences. It may take time—possibly a few months—to build the relationship you want, but it will be worth the effort.

Learning Individual Needs—No two children are alike. A mother at home realizes this and consequently treats each child a little differently, according to his particular weaknesses or strengths. The child care teacher realizes, too, that each child must be handled in a slightly different manner. If Amondo does not speak well, he needs extra time alone with one teacher for conversation and play. But Joan may become overexcited when activities become too noisy and need to sit quietly alone with a book. Sally and Sam may have to get up early in the morning so that their father can drop them off on his way to work, and maybe what they need most, first thing, is a snack or a nap to give them energy for the morning's fun.

A teacher, just like a mother, needs to know about a child's handicaps so that she can help him. If Johnny never answers a question, it might be that he is hard of hearing and needs medical care. Familiarity with the child's home

The warm interest of the mothering teacher makes a child feel wanted and stimulates his interest and attention.

helps a teacher to understand the child too. James may hide every day when the milkman comes because his father beats him and has made him afraid of all men.

Teachers must know their children well to group them properly. A timid, withdrawn child may be more outgoing in a group of younger children, while an aggressive, bolder type might find more challenging outlets for his energy in a group of older children.

how is mothering different from mother love?

Many Kinds of Love—The word love can be used to describe many different kinds of feelings. A man and woman fall in love and get married. They have children and love the children, but the feeling is different from the love they feel for one another. At the same time this man and woman love their own parents and brothers and sisters, but again it is a different feeling. They may have close friends whom they love, but not in the same way they love their children or their parents. All these kinds of love are wholesome feelings, but they are not the same.

A good child care teacher is said to love her children. This means that she shows them warm affection and is interested in their growth and well-being. A mother, on the other hand, loves her children with a special closeness because they are her own flesh and blood.

If a teacher, unfortunately, were to compete with the mother's love for a child, it would place the child in an emotional tangle that would be beyond his understanding. He would be unsure just how to feel toward either his mother or his teacher. If he found himself loving his teacher more, he would then feel guilty about his love for his mother. No teacher can allow herself to cause such a difficult situation.

A healthy kind of love for a teacher to give is one that shows interest and an affectionate response to a child's accomplishments and growth. It never casts a doubt in the child's mind about his own mother's love for him or her capabilities to care for him. Teacher's love encourages the child to keep on learning and guides him toward a wholesome attitude toward life. When the child moves out of her group and into a more mature one, she continues to be interested and to rejoice at his advancement, but also gives her love to other children who need it.

Home Is the Base—Child care centers never were intended to replace homes. True, the children remain at the center a great part of their waking hours, but it should never be thought of as displacing home. The child care center supplements home.

The atmosphere of a good center is warm and friendly like that of a good home. The teacher is affectionate and helpful like a good mother.

A "double decker" lap lets teacher show her love for two children at once.

But the center does not take the place of the home, nor the teacher the place of the mother.

Ideally, the teacher and parents think of themselves as a team working together for the benefit of the child. The mother sees her child in a different environment and with different people than the teacher does. His behavior at home may not be the same as his behavior at the child care center. If mother and teacher can keep each other informed about how the child acts in each place, it can help both of them to understand what might be troubling the child and how to help him. A child who is talkative at home but silent all day at the center may need some extra time to talk alone with the teacher to help him feel more at ease with so many people.

The understanding teacher must remember that the child she is concerned with may be only one of several children demanding mother's attention when she comes home tired after a day's work. While mother may not handle the child the way the teacher does, she may have reasons of her own for treating him differently. If mother and teacher can meet frequently to exchange ideas about the child's needs, it would foster the development of a mutual respect that would carry over in a sense of security in the child.

mothering fills emotional needs

Offers Affection—"Look what I found on my way to school, Mrs. Jackson." The teacher smiles, "What a perfect bird's nest, Julian. The other children will be interested in looking at it later this morning." Julian goes off proudly. Barbara runs in and throws her arms around Mrs. Jackson. About the same time Mrs. Jackson notices that bashful Juan has arrived, and she gathers him together with Barbara into her arms for a share-a-hug. Playful Nicky sneaks up behind her and tugs at her skirt. Quiet Gene gives a timid wave from a distance.

In such a natural fashion the child care center begins its day. Each child has greeted and been greeted in some special affectionate way. Some need a good morning hug to tell them that there will be warm feelings for them all through the day. Others keep their love at a distance with a wave or a playful tap.

Every child (and every human being, for that matter) needs affection in some form. A smile may be enough for Christina, while Bert needs repeated hugs throughout the day to reassure him. Teacher is mindful of this and does not object when Bert interrupts a game to ask for his hug. She realizes that some children, particularly those from homes where the adults are too upset, or busy, or unhappy to offer love, may be starved for affection. It is important to give affection when it is needed. There is no need for a big display. A quick squeeze will make Bert happy, and the game can go on.

After a while an observant teacher learns a kind of "love language" with each child. She knows just the personal attention needed to make each child feel he is important to her, that she cares about him.

Bedtime is the period of the day in some families that mother devotes exclusively to her children. She reads a story, or sings, or talks quietly with them before they settle down for sleep. This is when the children know mother has no other chores to take her attention. Her time is all theirs. If anything is bothering them, this is the time to talk it out with mother.

Just before naptime can be the quiet period in the child care center when the children enjoy teacher's full attention. It is a good time for a story or a record, and a time to show each child that he is indeed loved.

Comforts the Hurt Child—"Let Mommy kiss it and make it better," croons the mother whose toddler has just banged his knee on a table. Mother knows the knee is not badly hurt, and she also knows that a kiss has no medical value. Yet, a kiss can bring about miracle cures in a child who needs the reassuring comfort of his mommy when he hurts.

Also, in a child care center children get hurt—for real, or in their imaginations. Either

way, they have a right to expect comfort from the adults around them. The mothering teacher shows her concern and soothes his hurt feelings. She might help her miracle cure along with a bandage, even though there is no cut to mark the injury. Bandages, sympathetic words, and kisses-to-make-better all tell a child he is worth caring about.

Shows Interest—George has found a cocoon attached to a twig in the play yard. He runs to show his teacher. "Oh, that's just some kind of cocoon. Throw it away now, George, it is time for lunch," one harried teacher might say. But another teacher might pause for a moment, look carefully at George's find, and say, "That is a cocoon, George. A cocoon is a home for a baby insect. I don't know what kind of insect lives in this cocoon, but let's talk about it after lunch. Bring it inside with you."

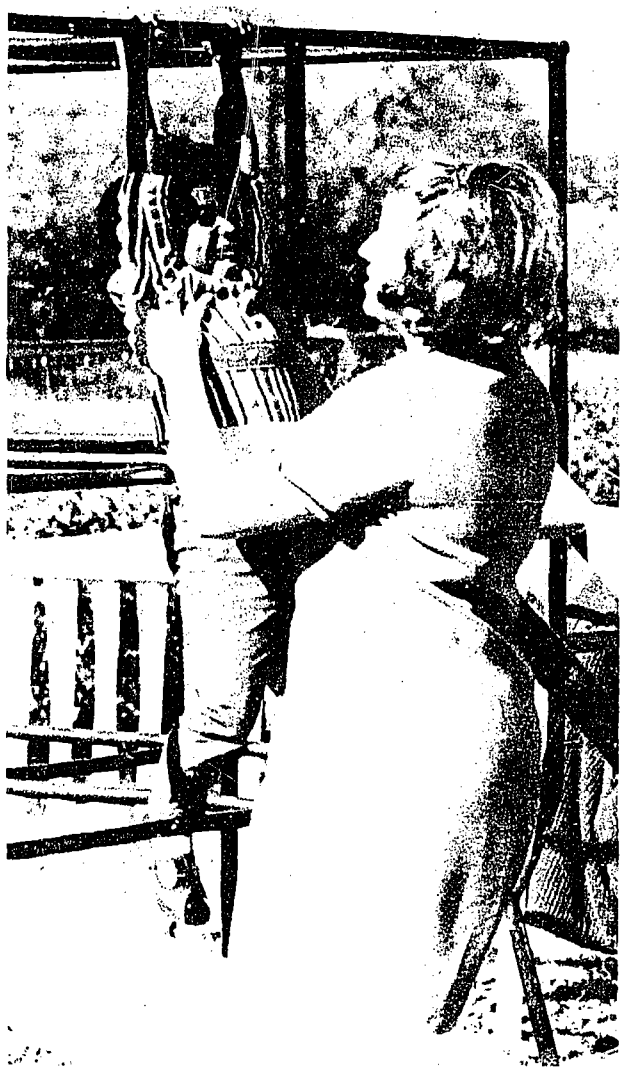
Which teacher has spurred George's natural desire to find out about things? The teacher who showed interest, of course. Her interested response took no longer than the other teacher's bored response, but it did much more for George and his outlook on life. If this same teacher makes George's cocoon the topic of an after-lunch discussion with the class, she will be bolstering George's idea of his own importance and will be showing the other children something new in nature as well.

An alert teacher is always ready to take advantage of every new situation that arises to broaden the children's experiences. The teacher who is so tied to her schedule that she cannot find time for a class conversation about something that turns up unexpectedly, like a found cocoon, is denying the children the interest that a good mother shows.

Some teachers withhold enthusiasm for a child's discovery for fear of showing their own ignorance. They feel that if they don't know the name of the insect, or the kind of tree a leaf has fallen from, or what kind of rock a child has found, they are showing themselves up before the children as being stupid. Far from it! George is not interested in hearing that his cocoon actually contains a lepidopterous insect in the pupa stage. What he wants to hear is how wonderful his teacher thinks his discovery is. "What a beautiful pink stone!" is a rewarding exclamation to a four-year-old who has picked it up along the road. Teachers and mothers who understand children realize how important it is to show an interest in what the child is interested in—but at his level.

Appreciates Accomplishment—No matter how lowly the job, we all like to hear the words, "Well done!" This need to have other people appreciate what we do is not limited to children. Adults, as well, will try harder to do their best for the boss who shows them he notices their efforts and likes their work. On the other hand, there is little reason to try to please the boss who never has a good word to say about anyone's efforts.

Children need encouragement all along the way. Many times their first efforts are clumsy. It may take a three-year-old a few months to learn how to use paints without dripping them on the table and how to stay within the edges of the paper. Scolding him for the mess he made will



Climbing high is fun, but sometimes needs a helping hand.

only make him stop trying. Praising him for each small success will keep him working hard to do better.

Teachers soon learn that every child is different in his skills and speed of learning. While one three-year-old may be able to build a tower of blocks right off without help, another one may need weeks of help and practice. The slower child may be slower because his muscles have not developed so much as those of the quicker child, and because of this he is more awkward in his handling of the blocks. Or perhaps he has never seen blocks before and needs to be shown what he can build with them before he uses them freely. However simple his first constructions, a little praise from the teacher will encourage him to experiment with new arrangements.

Helps Build a Positive Self-Image—The term "self-image" covers many feelings about ourselves. It is the way we think we are—whether we are worthy individuals or not. It is wrapped up with the place we think we hold in our families—whether we are important to them or not. Do we hear our own names with a sense of satisfaction? Or do we believe that we, ourselves, do not amount to anything? Are we proud of who we are, or do we wish we were somebody else? Everybody at some time is envious of somebody else, and at that moment wishes to trade places with him, but the person who constantly feels he is a nobody in the eyes of others is half defeated from the start.

We get our first ideas of ourselves within our families. Children from small families with loving, attentive parents become quite clear about who they are by the time they are four years old. They know they have a big sister and a little brother and that they are in the middle. They have a definite place in the family, and they already recognize their relationship to every other member of the family.

Unfortunately, a child in a large family whose parents are too tired or busy to talk with him or pay attention to him may not even have a clear idea of his own name. He rarely hears his name spoken. Some children have no possessions which are truly theirs. They come to the child care center without any awareness of themselves as individuals in a society of other individuals. Looking at themselves in a full-length mirror and finding themselves in photos of the group help children to have a clearer picture of how they look.

The teacher can start by impressing each child with his own name. She always uses his name when speaking with him. She goes out of her way to single a child out for special comment, as "Karen has on a pretty red dress" or "Don just got a haircut." She sees that their names are on every drawing they make and are posted over the cubby where they hang their coats. Birthdays are full of opportunities to build a positive sense of self. Singing "Happy Birthday" to a child and giving him a toy of his very own to take home makes him somebody special.

mothering meets physical needs

A mother's first responsibility is to the physical needs of her baby. Before she can think about his mental development, she must think about his body. Has he had enough to eat? Is he clean and dressed? Is he comfortable—not too warm nor too cold? Is he protected from strong sunlight or rain? The child care teacher also must be mindful of a child's physical needs. It is difficult to capture a child's imagination about the world around him when he cannot take his mind off of his empty, gnawing stomach.

Nourishment—Providing a well-balanced noontime meal is a very important part of the child care program. For many children, it is the only real meal of the day. In addition to the immediate effects of better health because of improved nutrition, the midday meal can add new experiences for the young child. It is another time when mothering is needed.

There are families where full dinners are seldom served. A family may not be able to sit down to eat a meal at a table because there is no table. A bag of potato chips and a coke may be a meal to children in such families. When a child with such a limited knowledge of food sees a plate of chicken, mashed potatoes, and green beans in the center, he may not know what to do. Both the food and the entire mealtime atmosphere are strange to him.

Teacher can help him meet this new situation by encouraging him to "take just a tiny taste first and see if you like it." As the child grows more accustomed to the lunchtime routine, teacher can help him find out what he likes and dislikes by talking with him about the food. "Aren't these peaches good, Randy? Which do you like better—peaches or pears?" Developing definite likes and dislikes contributes to a child's self-image, as well. If Randy likes peaches and Tony doesn't, Randy is a person distinct from Tony.

As the child becomes more at ease during mealtime, teacher, like a mother, tries to broaden his eating experiences by encouraging him to taste a variety of foods. It must be gradual, for the food we eat is a very important part of our lives, and we want to be comfortable with it. A child cannot be expected to try every new food immediately, but with teacher's help, he can be led into many new taste experiences.

Stories of the boyhood of President John F. Kennedy tell of dinnertime in the large Kennedy family. This was the time of day when father, mother, and the children got together for conversation about events in the world. President Kennedy was quoted many times as saying that these family dinners and conversations did much toward creating his concern for the country's problems.

In some homes, however, there is no fixed dinnertime. The children may grab a snack and eat it on the street or while watching television. When a meal is prepared, it may be shoved in front of the children without a word to be eaten in silence. There is no feeling of warm human relationships associated with eating.

At the child care center lunchtime can be similar to a family gathering made pleasant by good food and interesting talk. If teacher sits with the children, she can direct the conversation into dozens of topics related to food.

"I wouldn't be surprised if these potatoes came to the store in a big truck from the farm. You know, a truck like our red one over there." This could lead into a conversation about how food is brought from the farm to the supermarket.

"Did you know that potatoes grow under the ground, and the farmer has to dig them up?" From here teacher can lead the talk to how vegetables and fruit grow.

After such a lunch, children leave the table filled with pleasant feelings tied to an orderly family-like meal and also to new ideas and facts.

Toileting—Just as a child gets hungry during the day at the center, so he also must use the toilet. Some children come to the center without having experience with a flush toilet. They may always have used a potty. Or they may live in the country

without running water and have to depend on an outside privy. Whatever their experiences, the teacher must help them adjust to the center's toilets and toilet routine. She lets a child use the potty for a few days and gradually suggests that he "do as the other children do" and use the toilet. Teacher is ready to go with the frightened child and assure him that he won't fall in. She reminds him always to wash his hands after using the toilet and shows him how to soap up and rinse off.

Teacher, like mother, knows that when excited or worried, children may wet their pants and cannot be blamed for such accidents. Like a mother, she has an extra pair of dry panties on hand for such an emergency.

Sleep—Some children can fall asleep in the middle of a noisy playroom surrounded by exciting things to do. Others will play hard until practically forced to lie down and rest. All children have different needs for sleep. While Tony may not need more than a half-hour's rest with a picture book, Andy may need a full two hours of sleep. Teacher can tell how much sleep each child needs. She does not punish Tony for not sleeping, but neither will she allow him to awaken Andy, who needs his afternoon nap.

The child care center, by having established time for rest every day, helps the children to accept the idea of a regular bedtime at home.

Exercise—Young muscles need lots of exercise to develop in strength and skill. The big muscles in the arms and legs need to be used vigorously in such activities as running, jumping, catching, and climbing. The smaller muscles in the fingers need to work with small pieces, like puzzles or Lego. The muscles of the eye and hand or eye and foot have to learn to work together as in throwing or kicking a ball. Good mothers and teachers see that the young child has many opportunities to use all of his muscles in active and quiet play. They also recognize the danger in some vigorous activities and keep a close watch so that no one gets hurt.

Teachers must remember that a child cannot stick to one activity too long. Attention spans in young children are short, and, if the play is very vigorous, a young child may become overtired. An alert teacher recognizes signs of restlessness, fatigue, or overexcitement and helps the child to shift to a more restful activity, such as play in the sand box or with water.

On nice days when the children can play outdoors, exercise comes naturally. The healthy c[illegible] wants to run across the yard or roll down a [illegible]sy slope. Exercise is fun, and most children hardly need urging to use their large muscles in active play.

If the child care center does not have adequate outdoor play space, some special arrangements may have to be made to use a nearby park or vacant lot. In some communities a local civic organization or the neighbors themselves have cooperated to build a vest-pocket playground on a lot that is too small for any commercial use. In cities where unused land is scarce, some centers have made arrangements to use a fenced-in portion of the roof of a nearby organization, like a YMCA or church, as an outdoor playground.

What teacher must remember is that young children need to spend some time outdoors in the sunshine. The benefits to the children are worth any extra efforts that may be necessary to make arrangements for a play area away from the center.

A rainy day also may be a problem unless teacher realizes that the weather does not change a child's need for exercise. She must arrange for some indoor action games, like "The Muffin Man," or dancing, or playing "Animal" to music to keep growing muscles in shape when the weather is bad.

Helping Out in a Fix—"You want me home when you come home from school," complained Mother to Marilyn, "yet you hardly speak to me you are in such a hurry to go out to play."

"Yes," agreed Marilyn, "but I know you're here when I need you."

That is largely the function of a supporting mother. She allows her children to grow up and become independent, yet she is there when they need her. That, too, is the job of the mothering day care teacher. She is on hand to get Billy's zipper unstuck, or to help Thomas dry his hands, or to tie Jane's hair ribbon. If Maria can't think of something to make with play-dough, teacher can help to get her thinking by sitting down next to her and making something herself while she talks about objects that Maria can make. When

A child without skill needs teacher's help to make a start.

Carlo and Davy want to be furniture moving men with the wagon but can't think of anything to use for furniture, teacher can suggest that the cartons from the grocery store could become make-believe tables and chairs.

There is no end to how a mothering teacher can help. One of her goals is to help the children accept responsibility, so while she helps out she also teaches her children how to use utensils safely and correctly. She shows them how to carry scissors with the points down and how to tell the sharp edge of a knife. She can help their muscle development and coordination by playing ball with them, cautioning them at the same time never to run into a street after a rolling ball without stopping first and looking both ways for cars. If Bobby gets stuck up a tree, teacher rushes to help him down and points out a safe way to get down by himself next time. In countless little ways the teacher, like the mother, prepares a child to take care of himself as he grows older.

mothering helps social development

Self-Control—Did you ever have an urge to drive down the left side of the street? Did you do it? Probably not. You have learned that you must give up some individual freedom in order to live in harmony with other people. You have learned to exercise self-control in order to avoid an accident.

Though we practice self-control in countless ways every day, we were not born with it. The newborn infant is aware only of his own wants and needs. He couldn't care less if he wakes the entire family at 2 a.m. because he is hungry.

As the infant grows older he gradually learns what he may do and what he may not do. His parents set the limits of his behavior, and he knows he can go just so far before he is stopped.

The same limits must be clearly understood in the child care center as well. Although a good center gives the child a considerable amount of freedom in choosing what he does and with whom he does it, it must insist on certain standards of behavior. Parents sometimes worry that the child care center will spoil their child. They are reassured when they find out that the standards of behavior in a good center are the same as those of a stable home. The children must learn that they cannot hurt other children, or throw toys or sand or anything else that might injure someone. They have to find out that shouting does not bring them more attention, nor are aggressive acts like slamming doors or kicking blocks rewarded.

There is universal agreement among adults that children must learn self-control. Sharp differences of opinion, however, develop as to how to encourage this. The goal always must be to *help* the child learn, not to punish him. Too often the adult loses his temper and lashes out with angry words or physical violence, hitting, spanking, or shaking the child. None of these forms of punishment has a place in a good child care center or an understanding home. Such treatment only makes the child angry and resentful and usually brings out more unacceptable behavior.

The adult who meets a child's violence with more violence is not practicing self-control himself. He is copying the child's behavior. He actually is telling the child that violence is all right if you happen to be bigger. This is the philosophy of a bully. No adult consciously wants to teach a child to grow up to be a bully!

Yet there are children who come to child care centers bearing ugly red welts from harsh beatings at home. These children who have learned to expect this kind of treatment from all adults are afraid of the teacher. Their anger at the world may come out in some form of aggressive behavior at the center.

Whenever and for whatever reason a child behaves aggressively, the mothering teacher must set the example. The child is upset and needs comforting. She must be firm, but kind. She must explain why the behavior was wrong and let the child realize that he would be happier if he practiced self-control. She must offer him protection and assure him of continuing love in spite of his outburst. Her words are very important.

"I won't let anybody else hurt you, and I won't let you hurt anyone else."

"Come to me, Betsy and let's see if we can't talk about it and find out what the trouble is."

"Let's sit over here for a while, Jose. When you can remember not to throw the cars at Mary, you may play with them again."

Some children calm down more quickly if they are held in teacher's arms. Others resent being touched, but will respond to a calm voice. Mothers and teachers both learn what approach works for each child.

After the teacher has had some success in helping the angry child to cooperate in response to encouragement and positive rewards, she might suggest a talk with the parents about methods of discipline. Some parents feel the only

way to get a child to behave is to whip him into submission. A visit to the child care center to see for themselves the ways the teacher helps a child to develop self-control might lead the parents to adopt more positive disciplinary methods at home.

Remember, children learn by imitating the people around them. A child who is constantly around an angry mother or teacher will often be angry himself.

Consideration for Others—Josie sees a doll she likes and snatches it out of Jenny's arms. George is in a hurry to get to the playground and shoves Vincent out of the way. Norman pays no attention when Pam asks him to help her move a box.

This may seem to be fairly normal behavior for four-year-olds. Yet when the same attitudes appear in an adult, he is called "rude," "indifferent," "selfish," and "thoughtless." He is said to have no consideration for others, to think only of himself. Helping a young child learn to be considerate of others is another responsibility for the mother and the mothering child care teacher.

In families where the children have many toys, the conscientious mother will teach her small child to share his toys with his brothers, sisters, and friends. She knows that the unselfish child or adult is a happier and more pleasant person.

However, sharing does not come naturally to most humans. We are born with a drive to take care of ourselves, and the desire to share comes only after we have had enough experience to know that there is enough for us as well as our neighbors. When Mother insists that Marguerita pass the cookies to her friends first and take her own last, she is asking her to go against her natural drive to look after herself. Marguerita, however, will willingly do what Mother wants once she knows there are enough cookies for everyone.

Often in the child care center a child comes along who has had no toys to share. Or perhaps he has no brothers or sisters and never had to share his toys. When he sees the delightful things at the center, he wants to keep them for himself. He may grab at the things he wants without a thought for the other children.

"You will have a chance to play with the doll, Josie, as soon as Jenny is through with it," teacher says. "All the toys here belong to all the children. You'll have a turn soon."

Learning to wait is hard, especially for a small child who has no idea of time. Teacher can encourage it by words such as, "You're really growing up. It is hard not to get upset about having to wait."

Helping others can be a joy or a chore, depending on our early experiences. Generally, the child who has lived with helping parents will want to be helpful. Mothers can encourage brothers and sisters to help one another at home, and the child care teacher can do the same at the center. Encouraging a child to help is different from assigning a child to help. When big sister is made to watch little brother every afternoon, she may grow to resent the chore and hate the child.

It is useful in a child care center if the older children can be with the younger ones some time every day. Teacher can suggest that four-year-old Julie might want to show how strong she is by pushing three-year-old Timmy on the swing. Older children can help to serve food at lunch or set the table for the smaller ones.

Most parents are extremely concerned about manners. Often the first words a child is taught are "thank you." However, manners can become mechanical unless they are an expression of a genuine consideration for others.

Accepting Responsibility—Every mother can use some help in the house, yet in many homes a source of help is left unused because mothers do not recognize the abilities of a small child. Too often the three- and four-year-olds are not permitted to help for fear they'll break or spill something. But when they reach their teens, they are berated for not being helpful.

A child who has been shown that doing useful tasks can be fun is more likely to grow into a responsible teenager and adult. In the child care center children can do many simple housekeeping chores. They can and should put their playthings away. They can clear off the tables after lunch and can put the covers on their cots at naptime. If teacher holds the dust pan while telling Tommy how to handle the broom, the task will be even more fun.

Children will repeat the acts that bring them pleasure and rewards. Praise for a job well done will make a child want to be helpful in the future. Appreciating and respecting a child will help him to respect himself and feel proud of what he can do.

mothering builds language ability

Talking and Listening—"Now it's time for Ricky's bath. Oh, the water is too hot. Mommy must add some cold water." The young mother bustles about getting her baby's bath ready, chatting to him the entire time, even though he is only three months old and a long way from being able to answer her. Mothers like this don't need answers. They enjoy talking to their babies, and they know that even though baby may not yet understand the meaning of "water" or "hot," he likes to hear his mother's voice.

Gradually the sounds of voices take on meaning for the baby. When Mommy says, "Is Ricky hungry?" Ricky may know that is the cue that food is on its way and he claps his hands. He is beginning to communicate. Mommy, delighted with his new trick, repeats her question at every mealtime and makes a fuss over his cleverness. Ricky, enjoying the attention, responds every time, and his ability to communicate with his mother, even without words, grows.

This is how babies learn to talk. As their world broadens, so do the things mother talks about. Gradually the baby begins to say syllables. If they make some sense to mother, she will show her appreciation, and baby will repeat the sound. His language has taken another step forward.

Teacher, in her mothering role at the child care center, can continue this language development by talking, asking questions, and listening. Communication is a two-way street, and young children need to practice speaking as much as they need to hear and understand. Everything that happens in the center becomes a topic of conversation.

"Trudy has drawn a purple horse. How many children have seen a real horse? What colors are real horses? Do you suppose there are purple horses too?"

"We cannot go into the yard today because it is raining. What did you wear on your feet this rainy morning? Joanie's boots are red, and Hugh's are black. Did you see Charlene's blue umbrella?"

"That is really a fine road Orlando has made with the blocks. Do you remember when we took the bus to the zoo? Remember that wide road with the grass in the middle?"

"Tomorrow Judy's mother is going to bring her baby brother to visit us. Do any of you have babies at home? What do tiny babies eat? Can any of you remember being a baby and drinking milk from a bottle?"

A natural way to start up a conversation with a child is to show interest in something he is doing. "I like the bright colors in your painting, Susan. That building looks good and strong, Mark." Pointing out such positive qualities is a surer way to get a response than opening the conversation with "What is that you are drawing?" Sometimes even professional artists are unable to put into words the feelings they express on canvas, and it may be asking too much for a child to answer. Instead of encouraging conversation, such a question may turn it off.

Often things look quite different through the eyes of a child. We must be careful not to ridicule his creativity. In a certain light, a black horse could very easily appear to be purple. A child, without the knowledge of an adult who knows very well there are no such things as purple horses, may quite honestly think the horse really is purple.

Story Telling—Young children adore stories whether they are told by mother or teacher. The story teller gives her entire attention, and each child feels she is telling it just for him. The end of the story can be the beginning of a lively discussion about many subjects.

"The Three Little Kittens were being helpful when they washed their mittens, weren't they? Do you think you are big enough to wash your mittens, Clare? How else can we help at home, Ellen? They really liked that pie, didn't they? What kind of pie do you like best, Chris?"

Singing—Through the ages mothers have put their babies to sleep by singing them lullabies. Many a fortunate baby has been able to associate

Books are more interesting if teacher shares in the story and talks about the story.

the words of the song with the security of his mother's arms and the comfort of her voice. So too, singing is an important part of a good child care program.

As the child grows older, songs help to teach him about many commonplace things. All the household chores are accounted for in "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush," and he must know all the names of the farm animals to sing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm."

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In so many small ways children's basic needs can be cared for in a child care center. So much depends on the child's experiences during these years that mold his outlook on life. The mothering teacher can become a lasting influence for good that will give him strength in the years ahead.

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