

Digest 31

The First Three Years:  
A Sourcebook  
on Early Childhood Care  
and Education

by

Mina Swaminathan

unesco-unicef  
co-operative programme  
paris  
1990



ED-90/WS-28

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## PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

The first edition of this volume "**The First Three Years**" was published in English only by the Unesco Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok (Thailand) in 1989.

But such a high popularity it has rapidly had among early childhood professionals and the general public, especially in Asia and the Pacific, that the Unesco/UNICEF Co-operative Programme has accepted to undertake this second and integral edition in English and French for a wider audience.

A.K.B. Tay  
Unit for Co-operation  
with UNICEF and WFP

Paris, July 1990

## PREFACE

This publication was produced and printed as an activity of the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme under the auspices of Unesco, PROAP, Bangkok.

Primarily addressed to trainers and supervisors of women and girls working in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) centre in developing countries, this book also aims to reach such personnel directly, as well as the parents of young children.

The book grew out of the belief that it is possible for developing countries to provide an economically viable system of day-care and education for the children of the poor, which would offer support both to the working mother and the growing child, while remaining humane and culturally appropriate. The emphasis is on the development of human resources, and the approach incorporates the best in the familial structure, while drawing upon the wealth of possibilities inherent in each environment. Basic theoretical concepts, followed by detailed suggestions for activities at every stage of development, allow the reader flexibility to adapt each idea to her own particular situation. A copiously illustrated appendix provides instructions on making toys and play objects from easily available material.

**Mina Swaminathan** has been for many years involved with early childhood education in day-care centres for underprivileged children, and the training of their personnel. She has published a manual for teachers on play activities for children aged 3 to 6 years and a study of child-care facilities for low-income working women in India, and has been a Unesco and UNICEF Consultant in ECCE in other Asian countries.

The illustrations were made by **Bharati Mirchandani**.

## INTRODUCTION

### Why

Millions of young children today in the developing world live in poverty. Often their mothers have to leave them for many hours a day in order to provide for the needs of the family. These children, whose number is increasing from day to day, are in dire need of alternative systems of early childhood care and education. To help them grow to their full potential is a task which may well seem formidable. Yet no developing country can afford to neglect it, or fail to protect its children, the most precious of its resources. But what are the choices?

This book is written out of the firm conviction that it is entirely possible for developing countries to provide a system of day-care for young children - Early Childhood Care and Education - that is not only **affordable**, offering **relief** to the hard-pressed **working mother**, but is at the same time, **humane**, **culturally appropriate**, and **supportive** of child development.

This conviction is based on the understanding that the most important element in child-rearing is as it has always been, the human resource. Of this, all developing countries, even the most technologically backward, have an abundance. It only needs to be recognized and channelled.

The conviction also grows out of common observation of how women of all sorts and ages, from grandmothers to teenagers, from illiterates to college graduates, in several countries and diverse cultures, learn to draw upon their environment to make it yield all that is needed to foster child development. It grows out of the experience of the way in which the rich fund of daily experience, folk wisdom and practical skills can be harnessed in the cause of child development by those who have become aware of their value. Day-care built upon such resources is not only practical but realistic for the developing world. But such day-care must make use of appropriate strategies and methodologies.



## How

Most people in the developing world believe that children are best brought up in their own families. Yet the hard reality facing millions of families is that family composition, work patterns, economic needs, life styles, occupations and mobility are making it increasingly difficult for many mothers to look after children and at the same time cope with earning a livelihood. The needs of children in a fast deteriorating environment are also becoming more apparent to policy makers. So, strange and disturbing as the idea may seem at first, young children will have to be cared for in groups by others than their immediate family. All the more reason, then, that strategies for early childhood care and education should draw heavily on the institution which is so highly valued by developing societies: the family. These strategies, which seek to incorporate the best of the family while avoiding its weaknesses, also build confidence in the mother and encourage her to look upon the institution not just as a circumstantial necessity, but as a positive support to her own role as a mother.

An approach based on human resources places its faith in the **development** of those human resources - that is, on training in the broadest and best sense, a training which enlarges awareness of potentialities and acts as a magic key that unlocks the door to the wealth of possibilities in the environment. By its very methods, training must strengthen the self-confidence of the workers, making them resourceful and self-reliant, capable of drawing support from within themselves and their culture, and launching them into a process of lifelong learning. A natural outcome of this emphasis on human resources is a low-cost approach to material resources, which asks for the most commonly available local materials to be utilized in a child-care programme.

This is why this book is addressed primarily to trainers (including administrators and supervisors) of personnel working with young children. Also by writing in simple language, it is hoped to reach directly the women and girls who work in ECCE centres and the parents of young children.

## **What it contains**

The first section summarizes very broadly some important concepts in child development. It outlines the philosophy which underlies the practical hints and suggestions found in the later chapters.

The core of the book - Section Two, suggests a programme, including both materials and activities, that fosters and promotes growth and development. Emphasis has been placed on this aspect, which is often the least known and most neglected, especially in relation to children below three. Routine care-giving has been given less emphasis.

There are four chapters in this section, dealing with motor and mental development, personal and social development, language and health.

In each chapter, the basic theoretical concepts are outlined first followed by detailed suggestions for activities to attain the desired goals. Hints and cautions on attitudes and behaviours are contained within each chapter.

The reader can dip into this part of the book and use it as a source of ideas. Each will have to adapt the ideas to her own particular situation.

The last section briefly discusses some issues in the organization of a child-care centre. It is difficult to be specific when addressing people of diverse cultures and situations. Therefore, only general principles have been stressed, leaving the reader to apply them in specific situations. The Appendix gives detailed directions on making toys and play objects from easily available materials.

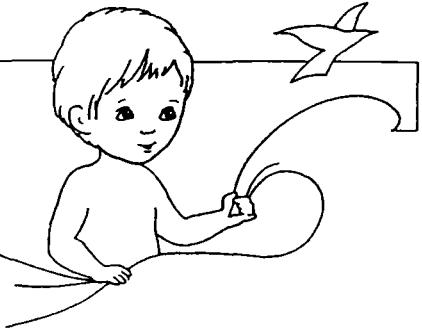
## **What it does not do**

The book does not deal with the care of children above the age of three. Many useful guidebooks and manuals for working with children of the pre-school age-group (3-6 years) are available, some published by international agencies like UNICEF and Unesco.

The book deals only **briefly** with health, hygiene and nutrition, and **not at all** with first aid, care of the sick, or care of the disabled. Again, several useful manuals and reference books on these subjects have been brought out, some by international agencies like UNICEF and WHO.

The book does not give culture-specific hints, examples or illustrations. Those may be useful to some but confusing or useless for others. But being general has the danger of becoming vague. Here we will try to avoid both dangers and stick to the middle path. The attempt is to emphasize universal principles that apply to all situations inviting the readers to use their imagination to find the correct application of these principles in their own culture.

**SECTION ONE**



**THE DEVELOPING CHILD**

- I. Growth and Development***
- II. The Process of Development***
- III. Nurturing Development***
- IV. Points to Remember***

## I.

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The growth and development of the young child from birth to 3 years is a fascinating story. It is the story of the making of a human being.

#### **Human childhood**

At birth, the human infant is helpless, more helpless than the young of most other living things. A new-born calf can rise on its legs and reach its mother to suckle, a few minutes after its birth; even puppies and kittens, which do not open their eyes for several days, can find their mother's teats by using their sense of smell. But the young human baby can do nothing at birth; unless she is picked up and put to the mother's breast she cannot even feed, though she knows how to suck.

Human infancy, the period of immaturity, is also the longest among all living things, in relation to the total life-span. Almost all other living beings mature more rapidly. Within a few weeks or months, a young puppy or kitten or calf begins to behave and act like an adult of the species. But a human being is not a fully grown and mature adult till she is well into her teens, or has lived nearly a fifth of the natural life-span.

Yet the human child is also the fastest learning creature on earth, and in the end, becomes the most complex and advanced of all. And it is because she has so much to learn that she takes so long, relatively, to do so. She has more to learn than any other species on earth and she is equipped with heredity to learn. The outstanding characteristic of a human child, which distinguishes her from all other species, is learning - the ability to learn, the speed of learning, the desire to learn, and the need to learn. In fact, it can be said that the human child actually learns to become the adult human.

If you stop to think a minute, you will realize what

a lot a human baby learns in the first years of life. From a helpless, tiny bundle with no control over her limbs, in one year she learns to control her bodily movements enough to walk; she begins to speak, to communicate, to get her needs fulfilled, to understand her environment, to manipulate it, to use tools - and many more things. In fact, it has been said that a person learns more, comparatively speaking, in the first year of life, than she ever does again during any given year of her life.

To help children grow and develop, then, we must know something about this marvellous process. We must study children closely, by observation, and be able to help them to develop in the right way at every stage.

### **Measuring growth and development**

Growth and development are continuous processes which begin from the moment of conception, and can be observed from birth. Growth refers to increase - in size, in weight, in abilities. Development refers to functions - their complexity, number and degree of control.

Growth and development pass through definite stages which can be measured, and there are observable ways to do so, called indicators.

The main indicators of growth in infancy are height and weight. In the first year of life, weight is the easiest and most used indicator of growth. An average human child may weigh from 2 to 4 kg at birth, though there are many regional variations. A child who is growing normally, and whose birth weight was in the normal range, should double her birth weight at five months, and triple it at one year. From then on, she gains on the average 2 kg a year, till the age of six, tapering off in later childhood till she reaches full adult weight.

The most rapid period of growth is the first few months of life. Then the growth curve begins to level off slowly. So, early childhood is a very important period of life for growth. If proper growth is not achieved at this time, it may be difficult to repair later on. A child

who has been severely malnourished in childhood, for example, may become stunted and even if she gets a good diet later on in life, may never attain her full potential as an adult. Promoting proper growth in childhood is one of the prime responsibilities of a child-care worker.

Development is more complex and more difficult to measure. There are different indicators for each kind of development. For convenience, we can speak of different aspects or areas of development - like physical, motor, sensory, cognitive, emotional, social and personal. But we must remember that all these are interrelated and take place simultaneously. Each affects and is in turn affected by the others. A setback or weakness in one area will affect all others. For example, a weak or malnourished child whose motor development is slowed down will also become apathetic, and her interest in things around her will decline. When she is listless, she responds less to stimuli, and her mental and personal development will slow down also. Similarly, each kind of development stimulates other kinds. A healthy child does more than eat well. She is active and observant. She tries to do things and she relates to the people around her. She receives impressions about the world around her through her senses; and then she groups these impressions in ways that help her to understand them and think about them, that is to say, she forms general concepts.

For purposes of study it is useful to consider each of these aspects of development separately and refer to them as motor, cognitive, social and personal development and similar terms, but it is necessary to remember that they are all linked to each other.

### **Milestones**

Just as a journey on a road is marked at regular intervals by milestones, so is the child's progress on the path of development marked by certain indicators. These are sometimes called developmental 'milestones'. These milestones indicate broadly the age at which children can be expected to do certain things. For example, we have an idea at what age most children will hold the head erect, roll over, sit without support, smile and respond, babble,

crawl, get the first teeth, grasp objects, walk, name objects, utter two-word sentences, climb steps, and so on. But there are no hard and fast rules. Normal children vary enormously in their rate and style of development. In a group of children, some may walk at eight months, others at 18 months - yet all may be considered normal. The same goes for speech and other developmental learnings. The range of variability in human children is very great. So the milestones should be seen as guideposts for the stages through which every normal child passes. Each child may pass the milestone in her own way and at her own pace. Sometimes, a stage may be compressed or skipped and another one stretched out. All of these are acceptable. Each child's individuality must be respected, for all children are different. But if milestones are unduly delayed, it is a signal that the child should be medically examined for any defect, illness or retardation. For example, a child usually begins to smile and coo between two and three months, though some may do so earlier and some later. But if the child does not respond to human voices and faces till she is four months old, then she should be tested for defects in vision or hearing.

For every 'milestone', there is a normal range which experienced people and specialists can indicate. Only delay beyond this range should cause concern.



## II.

### THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

#### **Nature**

How does a child grow and develop? Is it a wholly pre-planned process, unfolding according to the laws of nature, which has been encoded in the child's heredity or genes? Or is development a response to the environment, the care, nurture and teaching of adults around the child; the stimuli and the support that she gets? How much is 'nature' and how much is 'nurture'? This is a very old debate, and there is no easy answer, but there is no doubt that the child needs BOTH.

It is true that development takes place according to a certain sequence, and that many skills and abilities only come with maturation - the process of coming to full development. That is to say, they cannot be rushed or introduced before the child is ready for them. This should always be remembered. It is no use forcing a child to do things she is not yet capable of doing. It is necessary to know about the stages of development and to understand the capabilities appropriate to a child's age.

At the same time, it is equally true that the kind of stimuli and support given by the environment makes a great deal of difference to development. A child develops out of the inter-action between nature, (her inherited potential) and nurture (what the environment provides). A child who has a supportive environment - that is, one who received help and encouragement - will develop more of her potential than one with a less supportive one. Studies of twins, who are born with almost identical abilities, have shown the enormous difference that rearing can make. Twins reared in different environments, though strikingly similar in many ways, clearly display the differences due to rearing. The responsibility of adults, therefore, is to provide the right kind of nurture to enable the child to develop to her fullest capacity.

It should also be understood that stress, conflict

and crisis are part of the process of going from one stage of development to the next. The adult must help the child to meet and resolve the crisis and to go ahead.

### The child as an agent

In the debate between nature and nurture, a very important discovery has been made of late : the child is an active agent who often initiates her own development. So far, the child has always been considered a passive agent in the development process. Those who were more concerned with the environment may have said the child was waiting to be taught by the adults; while those who believed that heredity had a strong influence said she was waiting for her inner potential to unfold. But research shows that right from birth, the child is **actively** engaged in her own development through exploration and learning.

A few examples will make this clearer. An active child responds to stimuli, and to actions or words from her mother. But the child does not only respond. She also initiates interaction with those around her and with the environment. If a child is active, inquisitive, pokes her fingers into things, makes sounds, asks questions, her mother and others around her will respond to her, tell, show, make and do things with her. If the child is listless and apathetic (perhaps because of malnutrition), there will be less interaction, followed by less response from others, less stimuli, and hence less development for the child.

Development is like a spiral going round and round but higher with each circle. The pace of this development and the height of the spiral are affected by the process called 'feedback'. Each action of the child evokes a response from the adult, which in turn becomes a new stimulus to which the child responds. This is positive feedback and makes the spiral rise fast and high. But feedback can also be negative. A child may get little or no response because the adults around her are busy or preoccupied or not available, and so the child too makes fewer and fewer attempts to interact. Now the spiral rises very little or not at all, and moves slowly.

Another example can be given from the area of language. The child does not learn only by imitating adults, far from it. She also experiments with various sounds and tries out different means of expressing herself through sounds. If she gets encouragement and help, she carries it a step further. If there is no response she becomes discouraged and tries less; her own responses decrease and her development slows down. Children reared in isolation often fail to develop language, not only because of their lack of exposure, but also because of their lack of opportunity for practice.

The child is not an empty canvas to be written upon; neither is she a programmed computer merely doing what is already in her genes, or heredity, or destiny. She is an autonomous agent, and to a great extent in charge of her own development. In this respect too, the human child is different from the young of other living things.

### **Socialization**

An important aspect of learning is socialization. What does this term mean? The human being is a social animal, who largely lives and develops through and depends on interaction with other beings. Every human being belongs to some social group. In fact, she belongs to several groups starting from the family, which is the smallest one, through gradually widening circles, upto the largest unit of society, which may sometimes be a tribe, or a nation or state. But most important, every adult is recognized by herself and by others, as belonging to a particular group which may be called a 'culture'. This culture is a way of living expressed through the attitudes, behaviour, values, practices, standards, language, etc. of the people who belong to it.

The young child, who is born as just a human infant, grows up to become a recognized and recognizable person, a member of a particular group. This happens through the process of 'socialization', a process which starts right at birth, (or even earlier through the rituals and practices associated with pregnancy and childbirth). It is expressed in small actions, such as what and when the child is fed

soon after birth, how she is clothed, handled, and addressed, where and when she is put to sleep, and so forth. Each of these small actions tells the child without words, what to expect and how to react, and which of her reactions are acceptable, and which are not. Language is an important element in this process but by no means the only one. It is the **behaviour** of those around the child and the ways in which they suggest, promote, encourage and correct expected behaviours in the child, which form the core of the process of socialization. In this way the child is 'socialized' as a member of a particular culture.

For the young child below the age of three, this process takes place mostly within the family, the small social group to which she is exposed. Later the child is also influenced by the larger social groups in which she participates, the neighbourhood, kin and clan, peer group, etc.

### **Learning is the child's work**

It can now be said that the major aim or task of childhood is learning to become a fully developed human being. The child does this mostly through activities which adults term as **play**. We call it play because it is different from adult work. It does not bring financial or social rewards nor does it create goods and services, nor add to production. But for the child, it is **work**, that is, this is the task or work 'assigned' to her by nature for this stage of her life. Play for the child is her work, her means and medium of learning, her path to growth and development. We can observe that the child is serious about all her activities; she performs them consciously, sometimes trying them repeatedly without getting bored till she attains mastery over them. She takes it all seriously, though she enjoys it too, just as we adults sometimes, perhaps often, enjoy our work.

The child's learning, growth and development go on continuously. There are no set periods for learning; nor are there set places. There are no set topics or actions for the child's learning; everything can be part of her curriculum.

### III.

#### NURTURING DEVELOPMENT

##### **The child's needs**

Good nurturing, or fostering, is based on understanding the child's needs and trying to meet them. What are the basic needs of the young child as a growing and developing person, besides the physical need for food, sleep, rest, exercise, fresh air and sunshine?

The first basic need of the young child is for security and acceptance. The child gets this from the continued love, warmth, and support of the immediate care-giver. In the first year of life, the child's awareness is limited to her immediate care-giver, usually the mother or the adult responsible for her care. Only later does she gradually learn to differentiate between all the other persons she comes across. This sense of security and of being accepted is provided by the first care-giver and it is the foundation for all future development. When it is adequate, the child develops an attitude of trust. She develops confidence in the world around her and in people. She can predict what will happen and she can make things happen. For example, she finds out that if she drops something, it will make a noise, and if she reaches out she can grasp something and put it in her mouth. She notices that when her father appears, food will soon follow. Above all, when she cries out for her mother, she will come. So she learns that the world is an orderly place in which events follow each other in a certain pattern which can be understood. She learns that she can do things to change the patterns around her and make other people do things. From this predictable order and her own ability to manipulate things and people, grows her sense of confidence or basic trust. If these things do not happen, if the mother does not respond sufficiently, then the attitude of basic mistrust or lack of confidence grows, and this leads to negative feedback in the spiral of development.

The second basic need is for exploration and activity,

and for self-expression. Exploration, which forms the basis of learning, is through the five senses. The child, like a scientist, is constantly manipulating, experimenting, trying out, exploring, hypothesizing, problem-solving, discovering and learning about her surroundings and the people in it. This need, though present right from birth, becomes most strongly expressed in the second year of life. It is grounded in the need for security. Research on children's behaviour has shown that a secure child tends to be more active, fearless, confident, interested, curious and exploratory; while an insecure child tends to be fearful, dependent and tends to cling to the mother or care-giver. So the two needs are intimately linked, the one resting on the other.

### **The child in the family**

Who usually meets the child's needs and how? Most children are reared in homes as part of a family, which provides, sometimes well and sometimes badly, for all the child's basic needs. It also socializes her and helps her to grow and develop into a mature adult. What is the family?

The family exists in all cultures and social groups, but varies widely in its structure. One kind is the nuclear family, which consists of husband and wife, and their children. A child born into such a family is reared by both parents, mainly the mother. Older children may help, if the child is not the eldest. But far more prevalent, almost universal, is the extended family, which includes many people of varying ages, and three or more generations. In some societies, the young couple lives with the husband's family, and in others with the wife's family. The family then includes the child's grandparents as well as uncles and aunts. A really large extended family may include several kinds of relatives. Other children in the family may include the child's own siblings as well as cousins.

In most of Asia and Africa, especially in rural areas, some form of the extended family is to be found. In crowded urban areas a child may be reared in a small home by her father and mother, or by the mother alone. But even there,

relatives are found all around or they are frequent visitors, though most of the responsibility of rearing the child may fall on the mother alone.

The concept of the family may vary in different cultures, but they are all variations on a theme. Common to all families is the mother-child unit. This central relationship is the most important one for the young child, though it may be found in diverse contexts.

### **The family**

The family has certain basic characteristics which promotes the child's growth and development and meets her basic needs. Of course, families differ widely, and all of them may not have all these qualities in the same degree. Some families may offer more and some less, and few could be called ideal. But these qualities, which are inherent in the family have little to do with economic status. A family which is very poor in the economic sense may have much to offer in other respects. The larger, extended family may offer more of these qualities than the small nuclear family. But in some way or the other, the following would be found in all families.

1. First, because the child is a loved and wanted member of the family, she usually get **plenty of love and affection**. The warmth and protective care establishes a **basic sense of security and acceptance**, and encourages the child to explore the world around her.
2. The child is usually treated as an **individual** rather than a member of a group. There is **one-to-one interaction**, and close attention is given ungrudgingly to all her needs.
3. Though child-rearing is one of the primary tasks of the family, the members of the family have many other things to do. The child is not always the focus of attention; rather, her development is incidental to the life of the family as a whole. So the child gets numerous **opportunities to observe**,

**imitate and learn** through watching and participating and to **practise skills, perform tasks, and learn responsibilities** appropriate to her age and ability.

4. In a family, especially the extended family, there are usually **people of several ages, and there is no age segregation**. The child does not spend the whole time with children of her own age or with people of any single age group. This is important because the young child loves to observe and imitate older children. In the family, she has many models to imitate.
5. The child can learn **all the time and in all places**. There are no formal teaching periods or places, and no set curriculum.
6. The child is surrounded by **people who are interested in her** and who encourage, help and guide her whenever possible. She observes the language, manners and **behaviour appropriate** to each age and situation. At the same time, she learns rules of discipline and courtesy. She learns to subdue sometimes her own needs and do what is required of her by other members of the family.
7. The child hears the **natural colloquial form of language** spoken among the adults and her, and learns by imitation, experiment, role modelling and practice. She gets ample time and **opportunity to practise language**.
8. The child follows, obeys, imitates, observes, does and learns by these processes within the family. There is **hardly any** formal teaching, but plenty of **chances to learn, practise and develop**.
9. The family structure allows the child not only to observe but **try out in fantasy and play**, different roles, such those of the father and the mother.

The family offers all these characteristics which promote growth and development. These characteristics are



not often found in institutions like schools or pre-schools which cater specifically to children. For example, in a school or pre-school, there are usually a large number of children of one age, who rarely mingle with children of other ages. One adult, who may often deal with them as a group rather than as varied and different individuals is in charge of the group. This may not matter so much in a primary or secondary school, but with children below the age of three such an atmosphere will not foster development.

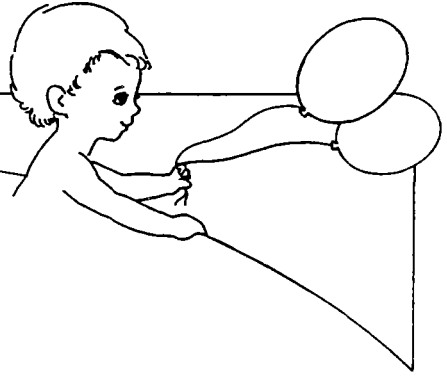
#### IV.

#### POINTS TO REMEMBER

- o Early childhood is a period of immense and rapid growth. In three years, the young child goes from helplessness to mastery of an amazing range of skills including language.
- o Growth and development are continuous processes which pass through definite stages and which can be measured by certain indicators.
- o Development is 'holistic': aspects of development can be studied separately, but all are interrelated and affect each other deeply.
- o 'Milestones' are broad guidelines indicating the stages of development, but not hard and fast rules.
- o There is immense variation among human beings. Children between a wide range of achievement and behaviours in all areas of development can be considered normal.
- o Both 'nature' and 'nurture', or heredity and environment, play significant roles in a child's development, but neither is supreme nor are they independent. The interaction between the two is the process of learning.
- o The child is not a passive but an active agent. She is autonomous and initiates her own development at every stage.
- o The child becomes an acceptable member of a culture which is expressed in the behaviour of others through socialization.
- o The major task of childhood is learning, and the major medium for its achievement is play, or activities which adults deem as play.

- o Learning and development go on continuously at all times and all places and even during sleep. The entire range of experience is the child's curriculum for learning.
- o Good nurturing is based on understanding and responding to the child's basic needs for development.
- o The two basic needs are love, affection and acceptance on the one hand, and exploration, activity and expression as an autonomous being on the other.
- o The child's needs are normally met in the family. The family varies immensely in its structure, but everywhere it is the social unit in which children are reared.
- o The family has several important characteristics which are responsive to the child's basic needs, and which promote development. These characteristics are often not found in institutions.

*SECTION TWO*



*A PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT*

- I. Motor and Mental Development*
- II. Personal and Social Development*
- III. Language Development*
- IV. Health Care*

## MOTOR AND MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

### How the child learns

In the first two years of life, often called the sensory motor stage, the child learns through the senses and motor activity. What does this mean? The five senses are usually taken to mean sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. For the young child, touch covers several aspects. It means feeling, not merely with the hands, but also with the skin surface on the whole body, with the mouth, and with all the limbs. Young children like to put things in their mouths at a certain stage. This is part of the process of exploring the world through the body.

Another important sense, sometimes called the sixth or the kinaesthetic sense, is concerned with bodily movement. This is of two types: **sensation**, which the child experiences when rocking, swinging, being lifted and carried, rolled, etc. and **movement**, which she initiates herself, such as kicking, bouncing, and moving the limbs at first, and later creeping, crawling, standing, walking and running.

In these ways, the child explores the world and acquires experiences; from these experiences grow concepts, language and the sense of self.

### Stages of motor development

Motor development, or the development of control over muscular functions, is one of the major tasks of the first year of life. From birth the child attempts to move his limbs and his muscles and acquire control over them, and he achieves this step by step. Broadly, the directions of development are from the centre to the extremities, from top to bottom, from gross to fine, and towards greater co-ordination. The child first gains control over the head and neck. A new born cannot hold up her head without support

to her neck, but by six weeks she can usually do this. It takes more time for her to control her torso and turn her body over - this may happen between three and four months. The legs and arms are next, and control over the fingers comes last. Similarly, you can observe that the head is the first to be controlled, turned around, etc. while control over the legs and feet, and the movements of walking, come last. These are all voluntary actions on the part of the child. Involuntary actions and movements, however, are evident from the moment of birth.

Finally, the movements become more specific, progress from gross to fine, and are increasingly co-ordinated. As the child grows up she makes finer and more co-ordinated movements. At three months, she reaches out to touch and grasp objects; at one year she can put food in her mouth with a spoon. This process of integration and co-ordination continues in the second and third years of life.

### Stages of mental development

The development of the human brain lays down the foundation for the development of mental abilities. The multiplication of nerve cells in the human brain, which starts in the early months of pregnancy, goes on till the end of the first year of life, while the supporting cells continue to develop during the first two years of life. Through the sensory and motor experiences of the first few months, the child develops perceptual abilities and motor skills. She learns to discriminate between various things through sight, touch and hearing. The child may also be able to experience through taste and smell. But we know very little about these two senses because our own ability to communicate through them is limited.

On the basis of experience and perceptual discrimination, the child develops concepts, the most important being of objects and of persons; that is, she learns to differentiate objects and persons from herself and from each other. To do this, she needs to have a range of experiences and the freedom to explore her environment and to manipulate objects, that is to say, to handle them in as many ways as possible.

Recent research on the brain has shown that the development of nerve cells and of supporting cells and the pathways among them, is greatest from pregnancy up to the first two years of life. Research has also shown that sensory stimulation from the environment affects the structure and functioning of these neural pathways both physically and bio-chemically. The better these are developed, the better the child is able to respond to stimuli. The infant has a great capacity for interaction. So although the child may have an inborn tendency to develop these neural pathways in certain ways, the environment with which she interacts has a profound influence on this development. So these early experiences of the child plays a big role in her mental development.

The years from two to seven are called the pre-operational stage (because at this stage the child cannot yet perform mental operations without the assistance of concrete objects, as she can later). Most important in these years is the development of the child's ability to understand and make use of symbolic functions. The child acquires language or learns the use of words as symbols. She begins dramatic play in which actions and objects stand for other things, and attempts to draw or represent objects. These symbolic abilities, which appear by the age of two, are gradually developed up to the age of four years. During this period, the child acquires concepts like time sequence, spatial relationships, and cause and effect, which lay the foundation for reasoning. She engages in problem-solving through trial and error and manipulation. The years from four to seven, the play stage, show the development of dramatic play, role-playing and imagination on the one hand, and of cognitive abilities like reasoning on the other.

### Goals to development at this stage

Promote motor and mental development by :

- o providing sensory-motor experience
- o stimulating play activity

- o using appropriate play materials
- o giving care, love and attention.

### Points to remember

- o In the first year of life, each of the senses and movements can be studied separately. But in the second and third years, all sensory experience must be taken together because of increasing co-ordination by the infant.
- o In the area of sensation and movement, relatively broad movements are used in the first year. During the second and third year, however, more and more complex, differentiated and co-ordinated movements come into use. Gross motor development and fine motor development have to be taken up separately at this stage.
- o An aspect which becomes more prominent during the second year is manipulation. At this age the child begins to co-ordinate senses and movements and manipulates the objects around her in more skilled and complex ways.
- o Play material and equipment include many things besides toys, which are objects made especially for play. Everything which helps the child to use her body and mind can be play material. Such play material can be found all around you, and need not be elaborate or costly or specially made.
- o Many ordinary things can be adapted for the purpose.
- o To encourage play, the adult's attitude must be playful and relaxed.
- o the activities and materials discussed in the following pages are meant to suggest a wide range of possibilities that already exist around you.



**Concept:** Period of rapid development through the senses.

Need for sensory-motor experience.

Need to interact with others

**Goals:** To provide sufficient stimulation and sensory-motor experience to the child.

Concentrate on:

Seeing

Hearing

Touching and feeling

Sensation and movement.

Establish a warm relationship with the child.

**Points to remember**

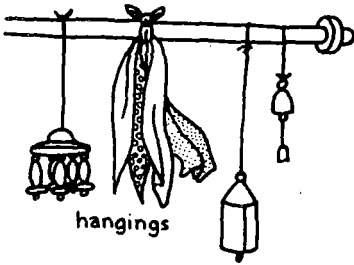
1. Provide sufficient stimulation but do not overstimulate.
2. Many things can be done with no equipment or using simple everyday objects available at home.
3. Keep safety and hygiene in mind.
4. Warmth and attention are as important as experience.

**Things to do**

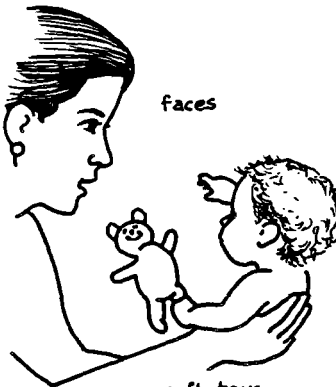
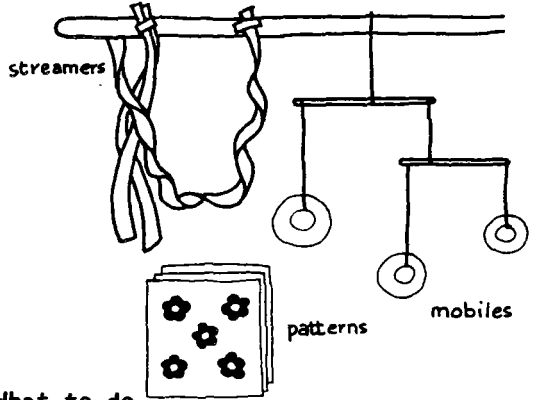
Let the child be with others and see and hear them around her. Keep her in an open cradle or crib or

on a mat on the floor when awake. Use a hammock or covered cradle only when she is asleep. Keep her propped up with pillows so that she can look around. Talk, laugh, play, sing and interact with the child as much as possible - let the child join in 'dialogue'.

Activities

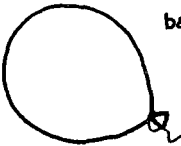


- Looking at
- Turning the head
- Focusing the eyes
- Stretching
- Reaching
- Trying to grasp
- Grasping
- Responding by smiling and talking



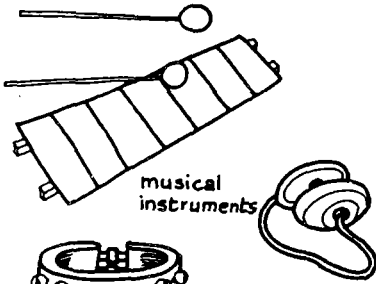
What to do

- . Almost any collection of small coloured moving objects will do but check all for safety;
- . Suspend them across the child's crib, cradle or hammock, and later at a further distance, across the room from nails attached to doors, windows, walls;
- . When the baby is placed on her stomach on a mat on the floor, the objects may be put in front of her to encourage her to look and grasp.



small household objects





musical instruments



ankle bells



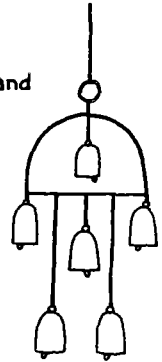
bangles

### Activities

- Listening
- Turning the head
- Grasping
- Shaking
- Banging and kicking to make sounds
- Stretching
- Waving
- Holding
- Responding



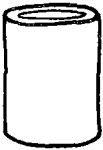
bells and other sound makers



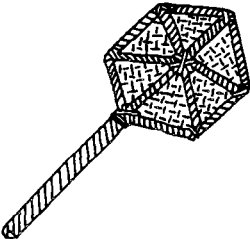
cups, spoons and plates

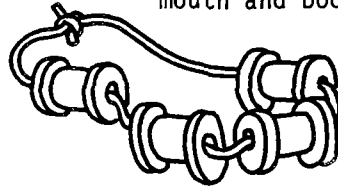
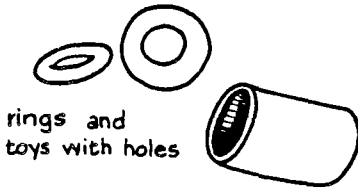
### What to do

- . Suspend, place within reach or in the child's hand, or where they can be kicked with the Legs;
- . Let the child listen to the sound of the human voice, people talking to each other and to the child, music, songs for children, rhythmic sounds, and clapping;
- . Respond to sounds the child makes through her own efforts.
- . Conversation, **with** the child and **around** her is very important.



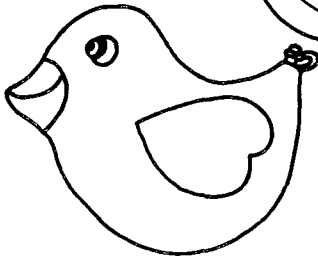
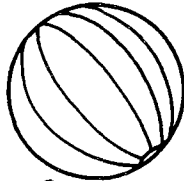
rattles



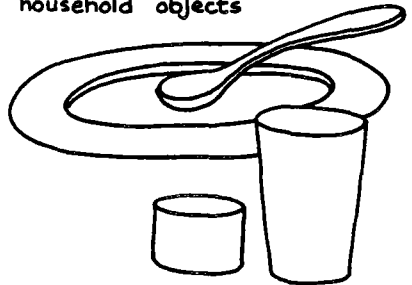


**Activities**

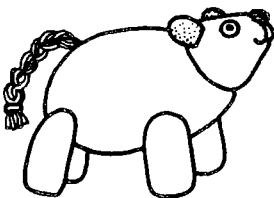
- Grasping
- Picking up
- Putting down
- Squeezing
- Pressing
- Holding
- Exploring with hands, feet, mouth and body



**household objects**

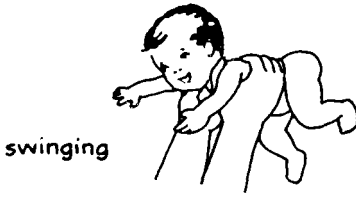


**soft and hard toys**



**What to do**

- . Let the child lie on different surfaces, soft, hard, rough, smooth, etc.,
- . All objects should be clean and safe. Remove sharp, pointed, rough and dangerous objects, easily breakable things and those with toxic paints.

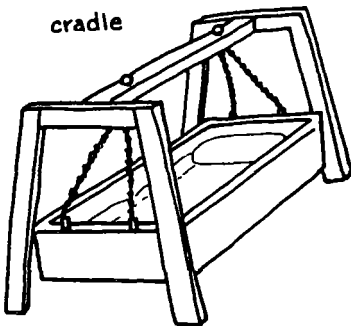
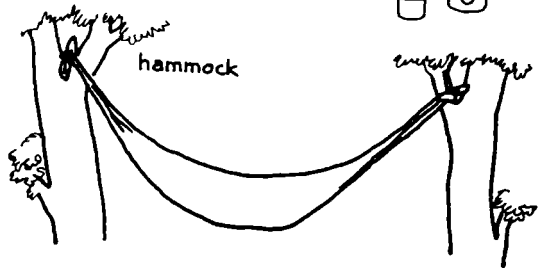


**Activities**

**Soothing Movement Exercises**

- Rocking
- Cuddling
- Picking up
- Patting
- Bouncing
- Rolling
- Tickling
- Swinging
- Swaying
- Rocking rhythmically
- Clapping

- Kicking
- Stretching
- Rolling
- Turning
- Bouncing
- Turning over
- Creeping



**What to do**

- . Hardly any equipment is needed.
- . Find time for all these movements.
- . Have a fixed routine for the daily massage, bath and exercise.
- . Interact with the child during all these activities.

**Concept:** Integration of experience begins. In any given activity, more than one sense is involved. The child begins to manipulate. Naming and identification of objects begins.

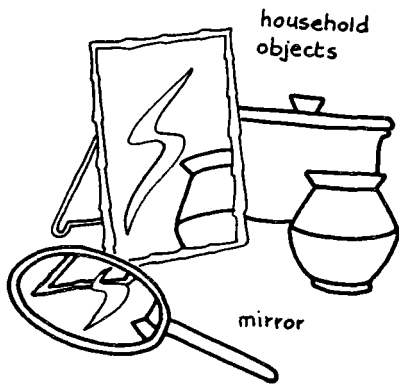
**Goals:** Broaden and deepen sensory-motor experiences  
Promote integration of senses.  
Promote manipulation.  
Encourage concept formation, communication, perceptual discrimination.

**Points to remember**

1. Use the first six months' experiences as a base. Broaden, deepen and strengthen them. Add variety and range to these experiences.
2. Regular interaction with one loving adult is very important at this stage.
3. Give praise and attention for achievement.

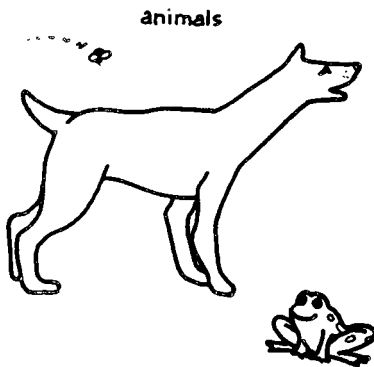
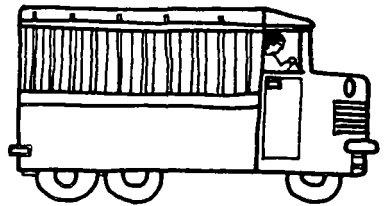
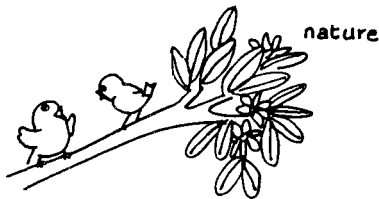
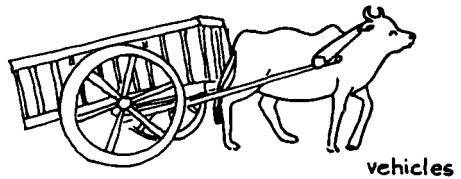
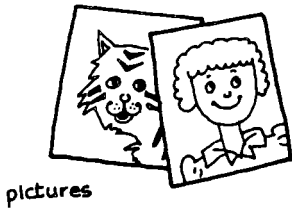
**Things to do**

Many more games and activities without any equipment are possible now. Hiding and finding games teach the child to take turns. Rhythmic games and songs, movement, bouncing, rhymes, imitating sounds and animal noises, naming objects and people, can be introduced now. Name different parts of the body and play games using all these parts like toes, fingers, hands, feet, nose, mouth and ears.



Activities

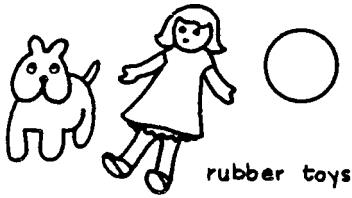
- Pointing
- Naming
- Hiding
- Searching
- Finding
- Rhythmic games
- Imitating sound
- Banging
- Shaking
- Scraping
- Making sounds



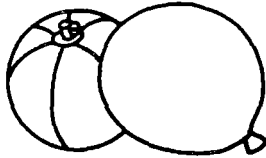
What to do

- . Continue to use the objects earlier used but bring in a broader variety and new things;
- . Use contrasts to help the child discriminate;
- . Take the child outdoors to observe surroundings;
- . Name things and talk about them.





rubber toys

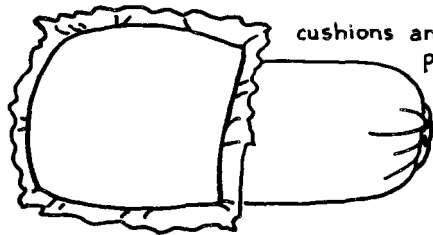


**Activities**

- Grasping
- Punching
- Rolling
- Squeezing
- Pressing
- Banging
- Bouncing
- Carrying
- Dropping
- Lifting
- Hitting
- Holding
- Hiding
- Finding

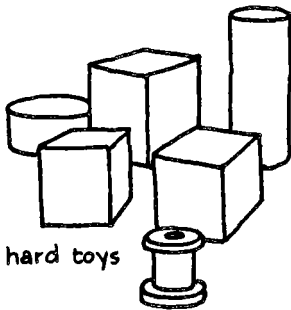
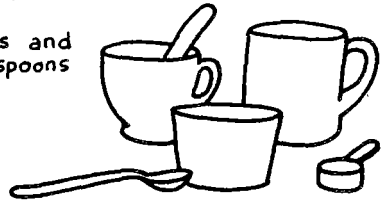


stuffed toys



cushions and pillows

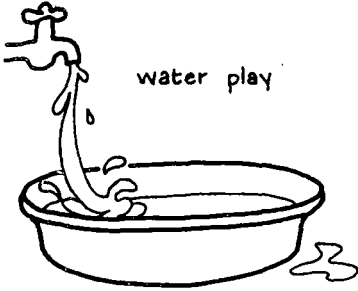
cups and spoons



hard toys

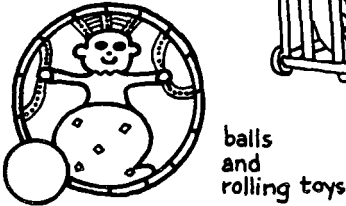
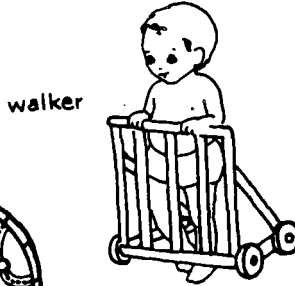
**What to do**

- . Use objects of different shape and texture - rough and smooth, hard and soft, hot and cold.
- . At this stage, almost everything goes into the mouth. Remember safety and hygiene.



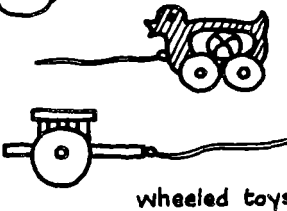
**Activities**

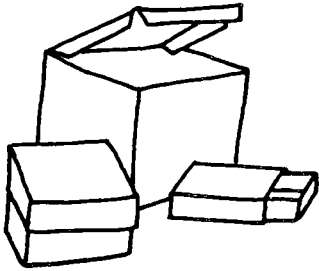
- Splashing
- Throwing water
- Patting water
- Shaking
- Lifting and carrying
- Rocking
- Rolling
- Throwing
- Hugging
- Pushing and pulling
- Picking up



**What to do**

- Besides the activities mentioned, the child should be encouraged to sit up by herself, then crawl, move, stand, walk with and without support in the natural sequence, and use all the limbs and the whole body;
- Use music and clapping for rhythmic games.

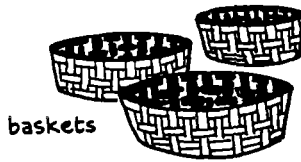




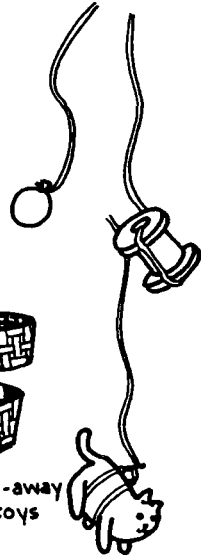
boxes  
and  
things  
with  
lids

**Activities**

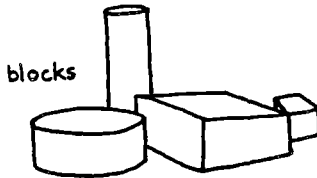
- Opening
- Closing
- Putting in
- Taking out
- Stacking
- Dropping
- Picking up
- Finding



baskets

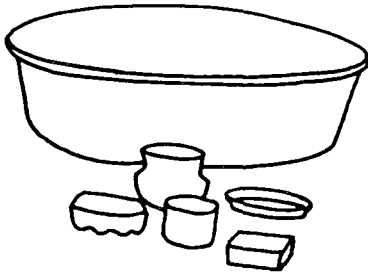
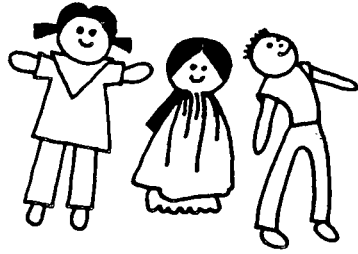


throw-away  
toys



blocks

## collections



### What to do

- . Throw away toy - attach a cup or spoon to a long string and let the child throw it away, or out of the crib and then retrieve it herself;
- . Provide a large cardboard box or basket with a collection of household and natural objects from pebbles, shells and seeds to toys, reels, spoons, matchboxes, worn out household things, small toys and dolls. Objects should not be too small or the child may put them in her mouth, nose or ears.
- . Things for stacking should be two (and later three) objects of the same type, such as blocks, cups, or small baskets to put one on top of another.
- . Provide small boxes with lids that can be opened and closed.



**Concept:** Coordination and integration of all the senses proceed rapidly.

Basics of language are acquired.

Concept formation and imagination develop side by side.

**Goals:** Promote co-ordination and control of bodily movement

Pay attention to gross and fine motor skills and manipulation.

Strengthen concept formation, imagination and communication through language.

Promote problem-solving, curiosity and confidence.

### **Points to remember**

1. The same activity or play can serve several different purposes. For example, when the child is manipulating, she is also using her mind and imagination.
2. The same materials can be used in different ways at different times.
3. Interaction must still be one-to-one. The child needs to be engaged in constant dialogue. She is not yet ready for group interaction.
4. Loving attention and praise for achievement and problem-solving are needed.

### **Things to do**

- Experience should be broadened. Take the child outside and let her get acquainted with the sights and sounds of the locality and with people within as well as outside

the family.

Use language constantly and appropriately, letting the child take part in conversation, ask questions, make statements and try out new words.

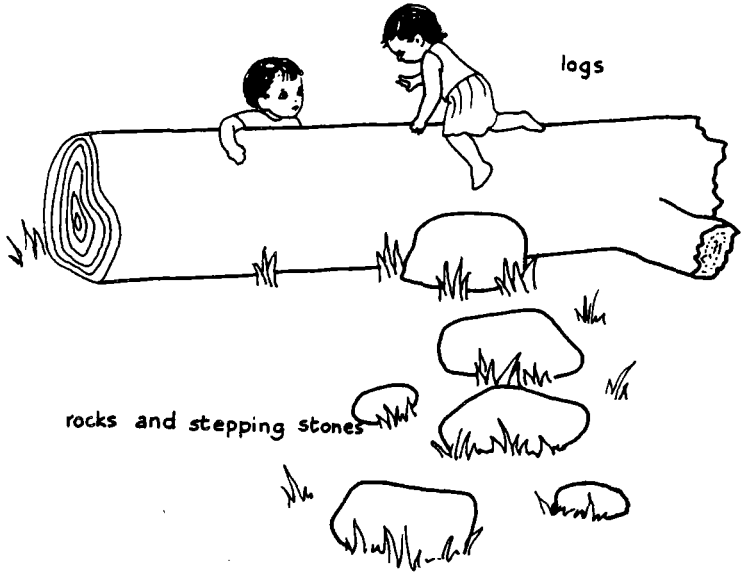
Continue with earlier materials and activities but find more complete and challenging ways of using them.

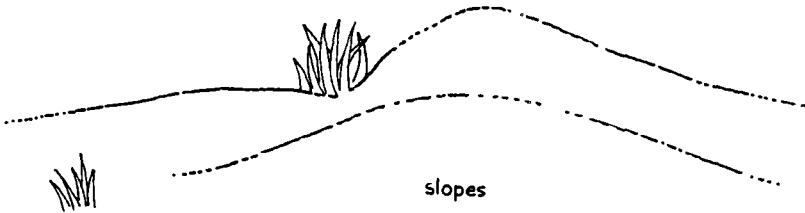
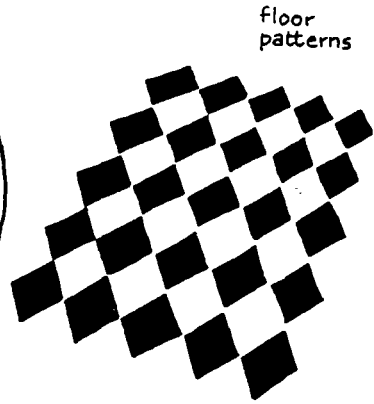
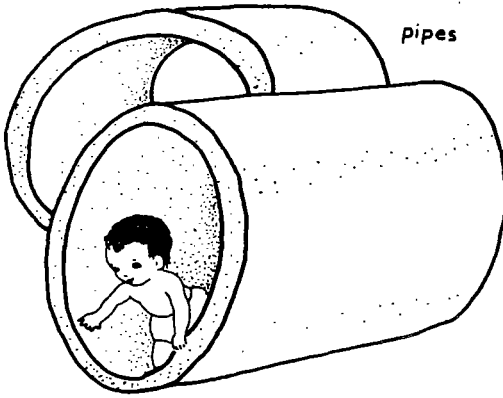
Activities

- Walking
- Jumping off, on and over
- Running
- Climbing
- Crawling
- Sliding
- Bouncing
- Rolling
- Stepping on and over
- Boundaries



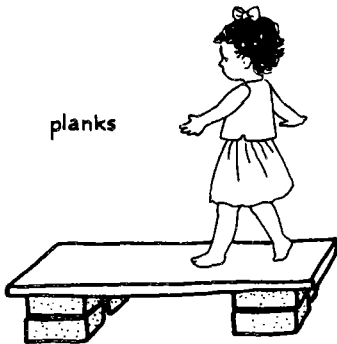
steps and stairs





### What to do

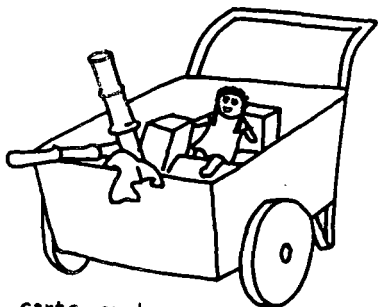
- . Provide opportunities for the child to use her body in every way.
- . Use the environment - open spaces, features of the building, natural objects and everything around you.
- . Adapt - draw lines on the floor to create patterns, or use low stools or planks to create steps.
- . Suggest games and activities. Let the child always go on to more difficult things when she is ready.



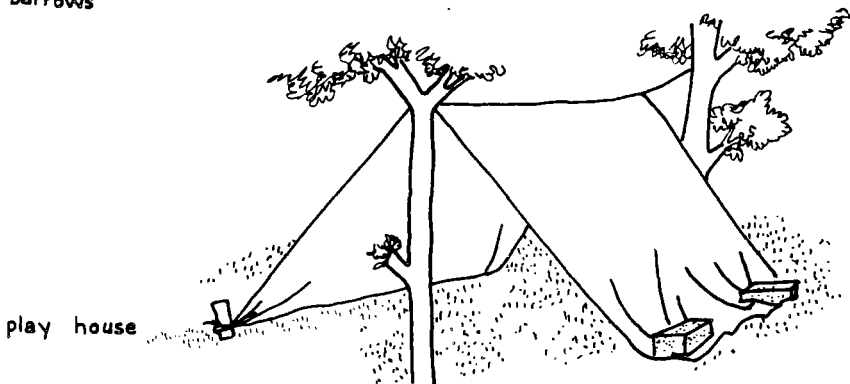


Activities

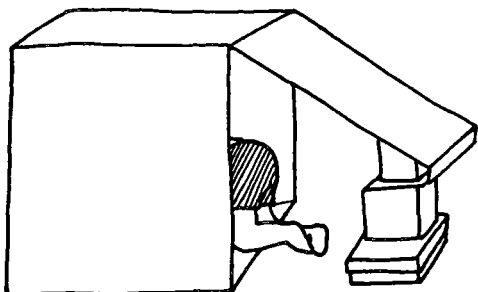
- Climbing into and out of
- Jumping into and out of
- Crawling over and under and  
crawling through
- Sitting still
- Hiding and finding
- Arranging
- Stacking
- Upturning
- Imagining



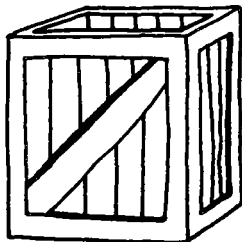
carts and  
barrows

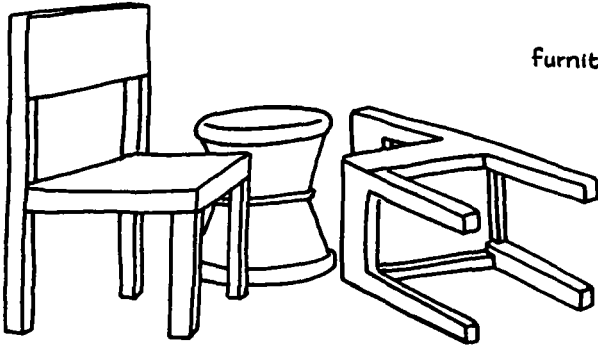


play house

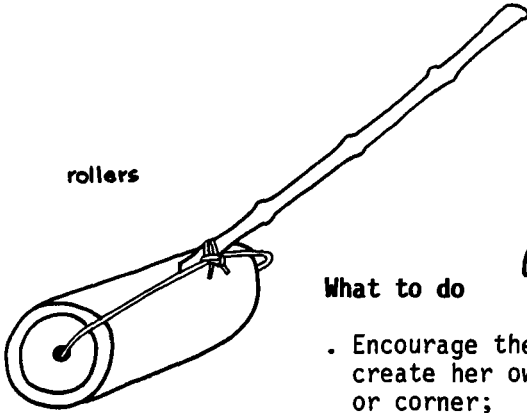


boxes and  
cartons

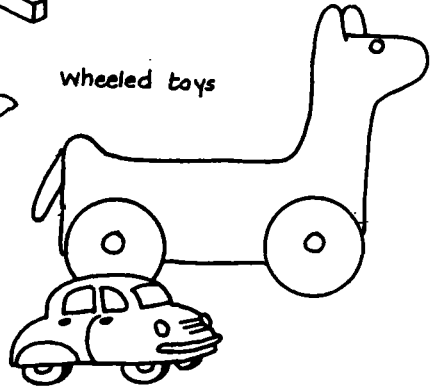




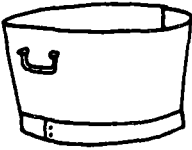
furniture



rollers



wheeled toys

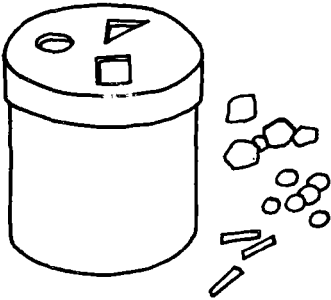


tubs and drums

#### What to do

- Encourage the child to find or create her own special space or corner;
- Besides easily available objects, there are certain things which you can easily make or buy. For details on how to make them, see Appendix;
- Suggest activities, stimulate and encourage through language;
- Talk to the child about what she is doing. Name things and activities. For details, see Section Two, Chapter III.

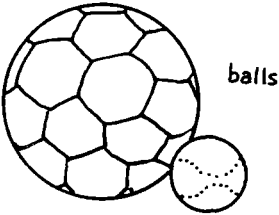
tin with holes  
and small objects



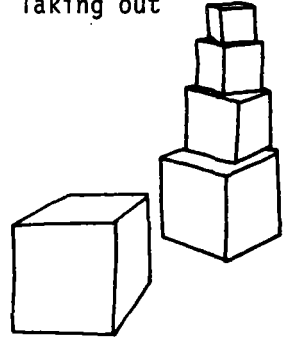
Activities

Fetching  
Carrying  
Throwing  
Rolling  
Arranging  
Stacking  
Filling  
Emptying  
Hiding

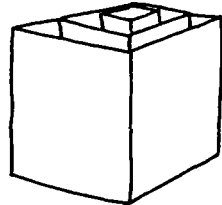
Finding  
Building  
Lining up  
Pushing and pulling  
Taking part  
Joining  
Fitting  
Taking out

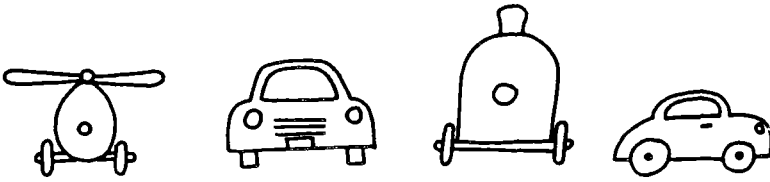


sets



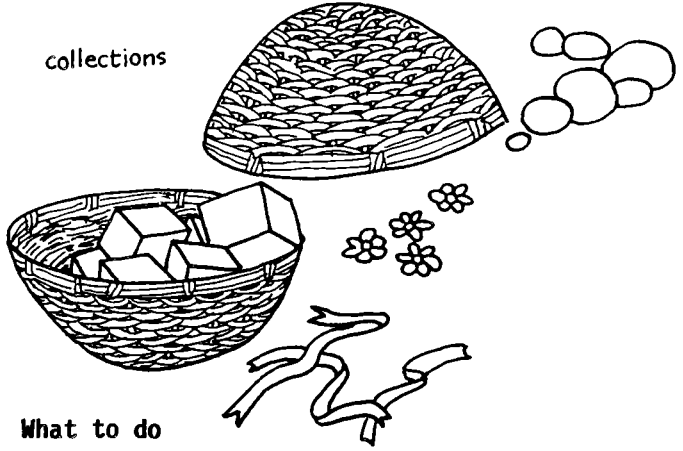
nesting sets





wheeled toys

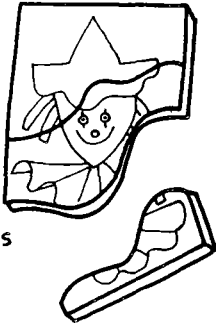
collections



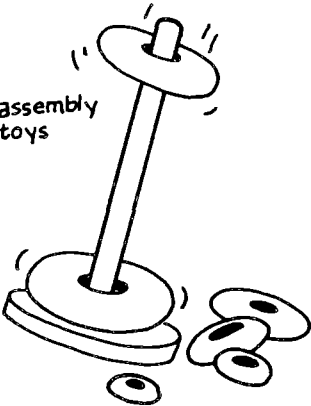
What to do

- Some of these things can be collected, others made. For instructions on how to make them see Appendix;
- Suggest problem-solving activities like stacking, making towers, taking apart and putting together. At this stage, stacking or assembling toys should consist of only two, and later three parts;
- Encourage the child to manipulate toys. If the activity is too difficult, change to a simpler one, but do not do it for the child; Dropping small objects into a tin or box with holes in the lid combines motor co-ordination with problem-solving.

puzzles



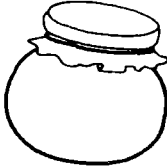
assembly toys



Activities

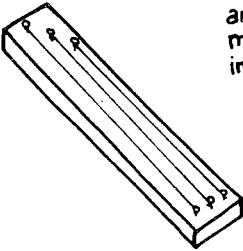


- Splashing
- Pouring
- Emptying and filling
- Banging
- Making sounds
- Keeping time
- Putting in and taking out
- Clapping
- Stamping
- Rhythmic games



sound  
makers  
and  
musical  
instruments

What to do



- Provide various sizes and shapes of containers like mugs, buckets and funnels for more elaborate water play;
- Collect different types of simple musical instruments and sound makers. For details on how to make them see Appendix;

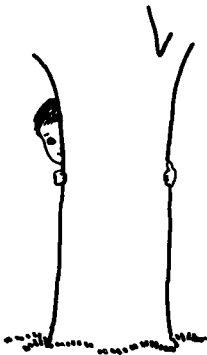


- Suggest activities, and teach songs, rhymes, finger plays and movement games;
- Use the collection of objects for sensory exploration. Let the child collect and put things in the container. Be sure they are clean and not too small.



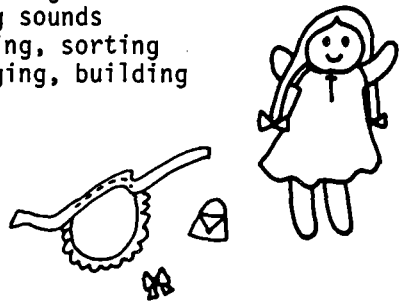
collections

hiding places

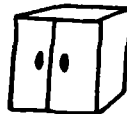


Activities

- Holding
- Cuddling
- Talking to
- Hiding and finding
- Imitating
- Pretending
- Making sounds
- Matching, sorting
- Arranging, building



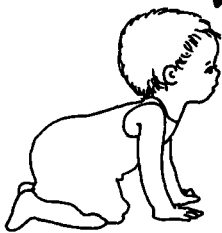
dolls and accessories



What to do

- . Finding two of the same kind (matching), separating different kinds of things (sorting), and arranging in line, promote concept formation and discrimination;
- . Hiding and finding, imitating, pretending and using doll accessories, promote imagination and communication;
- . Collect and use locally made toys and accessories;
- . Begin 'pretend' games like being an animal or train.

**WRUFF**  
**WRUFF**



pretending

**Concepts:** Bodily movement and communication skill progressing well.

Entering a new phase and ready for a larger environment.

Needs to consolidate and improve skills.

Begins to play alongside or with other children.

Rapid development and testing of language, imagination and concepts take place.

**Goals:** Broaden the base of experience.

Provide opportunities to consolidate and improve skills - both bodily and mental.

Introduce social play and interaction in small groups.

Promote development of language, imagination, manipulation, concepts and confidence.

**Points to Remember**

1. This is a time for curiosity and explorations into the larger world. Be watchful of safety and attentive to experiments which may be dangerous.
2. Since activities and senses are becoming more and more integrated and co-ordinated, they will no longer be referred to separately. Play of different kinds will be mentioned - each includes sensory and motor activity, manipulation and imagination, language and concept.

## Things to do

Add new materials and activities but continue to use all the old ones in new and more complex ways.

One-to-one interaction is still important, but now gradually let children interact in small groups of two or three taking turns to play and participate in some group activities.

Begin to refer in talk to things not present and events which have happened earlier. Encourage questions, answer them and explain how things work or happen.

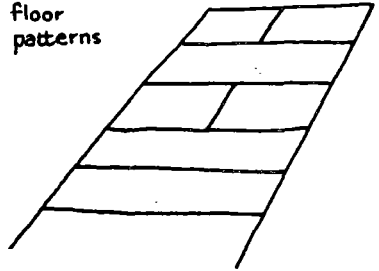
Give the child small duties to perform, like fetching and carrying, putting away toys and cleaning up.



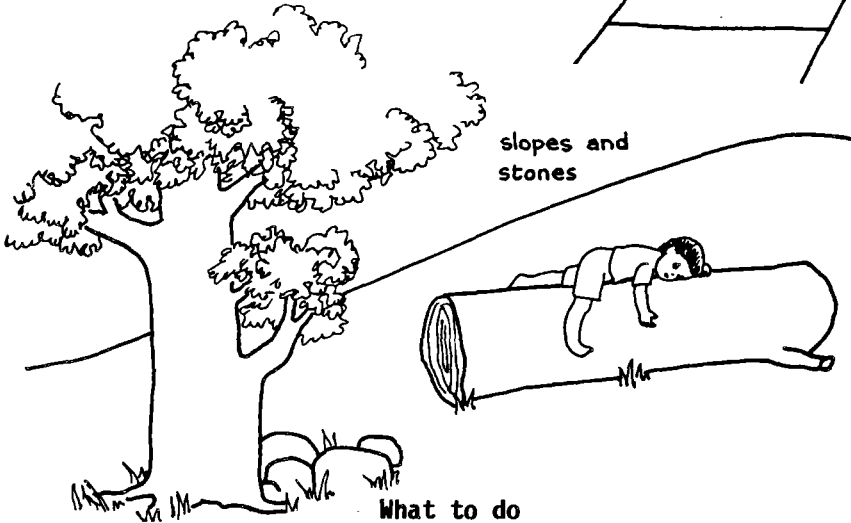
Activities

- Jumping and hopping across boundaries
- Climbing
- Balancing
- Imitating
- Crawling
- Fetching
- Running

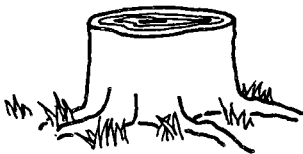
floor patterns



slopes and stones



trees,  
logs and  
stumps

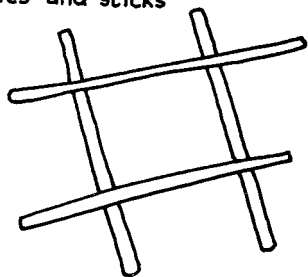


What to do

- Make up more difficult games for jumping over, on and across boundaries. Use rope, wood, or bamboo to make patterns on the floor, or draw lines on the ground.
- Use all the naturally available features of the building and surroundings for motor activity.
- Begin imitative and following games in small groups, so that children learn to play together

Activities

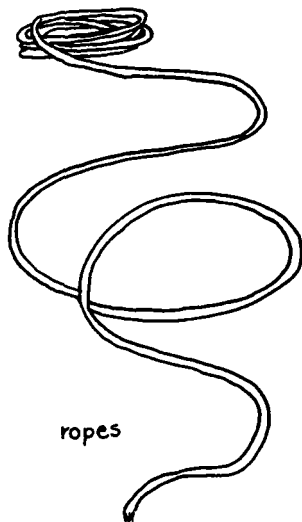
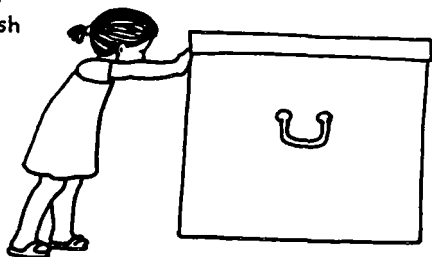
poles and sticks



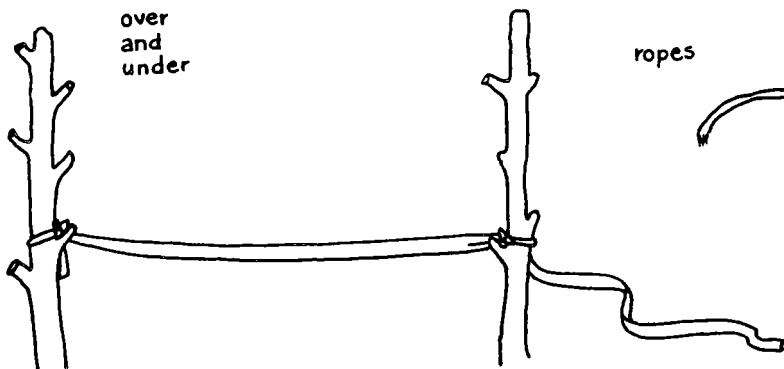
- Jumping
- Rhythmic action
- Crawling
- Fetching
- Carrying
- Pushing and pulling
- Pushing along

- Balancing
- Passing under and over
- Making patterns
- Getting into and out of
- Climbing
- Construction
- Throwing

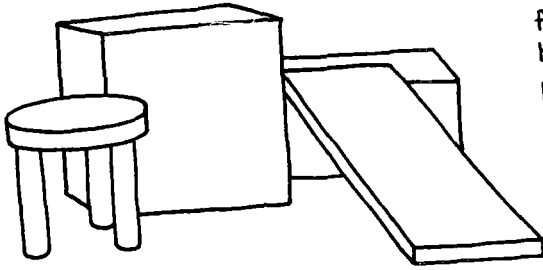
things to push



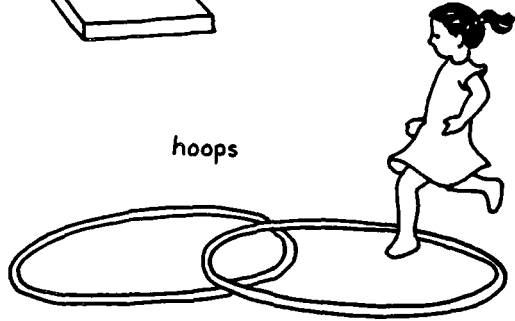
over and under



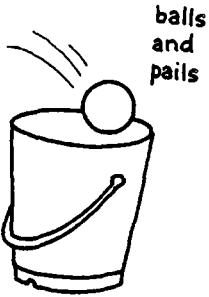
ropes



furniture,  
boxes and  
planks



hoops



balls  
and  
pails

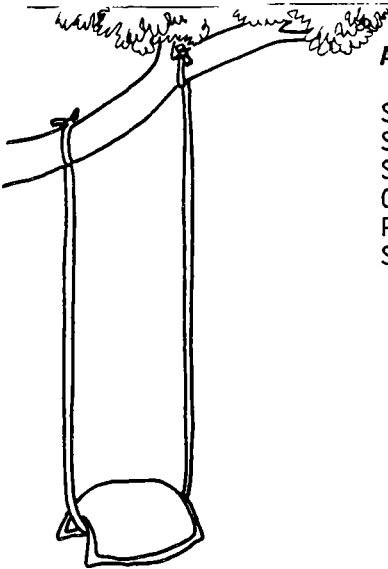


things to  
carry

### What to do

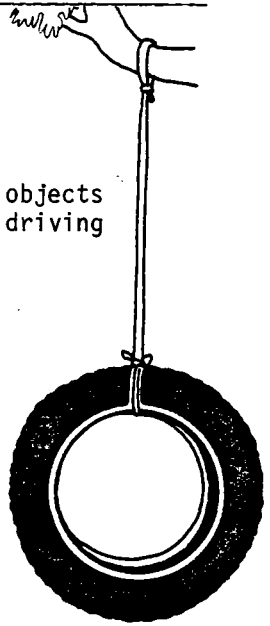
- Develop more complex and challenging activities. Raise the level of difficulty gradually. Suggest new problems to be solved - for example, raising the level of the rope to be jumped over, or putting several hoops together;
- Let children help to fetch and bring things and arrange them for games. Let them watch you do it first. Talk about what you are doing;
- Use traditional songs, rhymes, jingles, and rhythmic sounds to co-ordinate the activities and describe them in words.

PLAY WITH EQUIPMENT



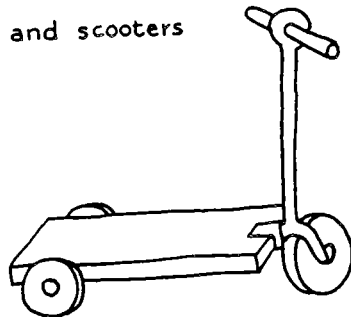
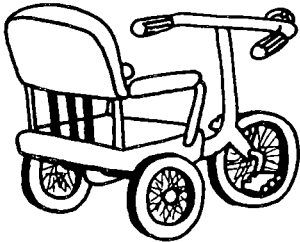
Activities

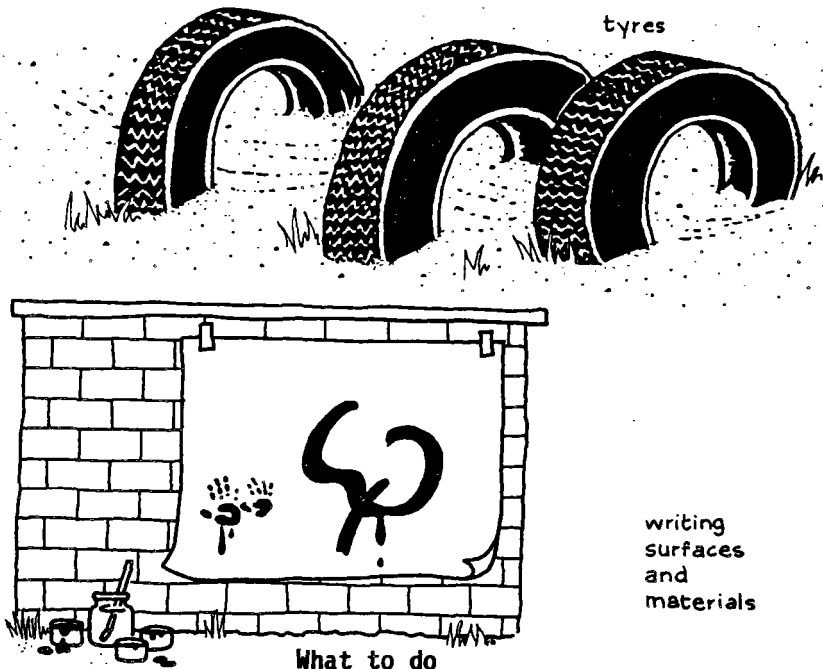
- Swinging
- Sliding
- Sitting
- Cycling
- Pushing
- Scribbling
- Drawing
- Writing
- Crawling
- Following objects
- Imaginary driving



swings

cycles and scooters





What to do

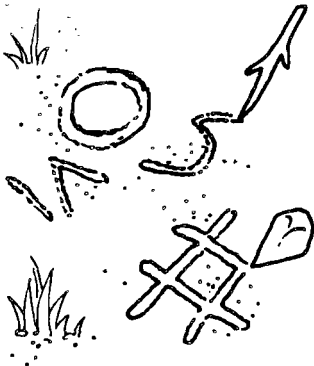
writing surfaces and materials

- The equipment described above can be made easily and cheaply by local workers with local material. For instructions on how to make them see Appendix;

- Try to make as many of these as possible a regular part of the play environment;

If you can afford it, get readymade toys and equipment too, like toy cars, slide, balancing bars, climbing frame, etc.

- Adapt - use, for example, sticks for writing on sand or wet earth if wall surfaces are not suitable. Paste paper on walls to make writing surfaces.



Activities

Scraping  
Digging  
Feeling  
Pouring  
Measuring  
Filling

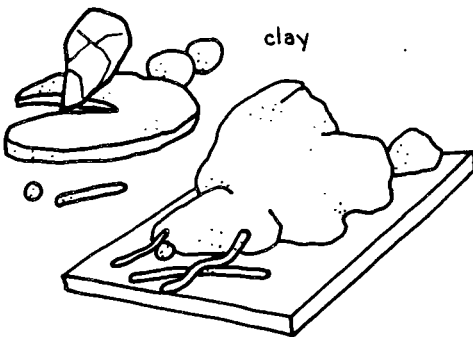
Emptying  
Squeezing  
Pressing  
Punching  
Rolling  
Putting in  
Taking out  
Sorting



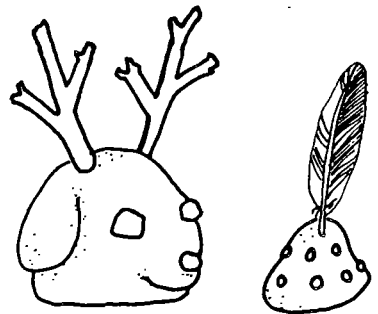
water play

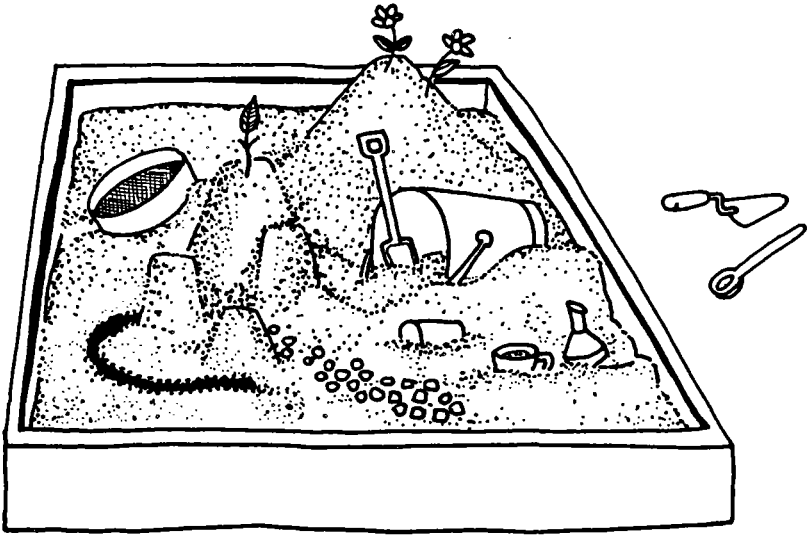


collections



clay





play with sand

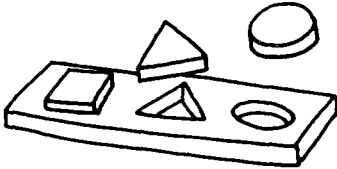
### What to do



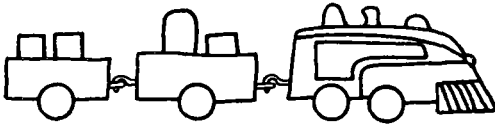
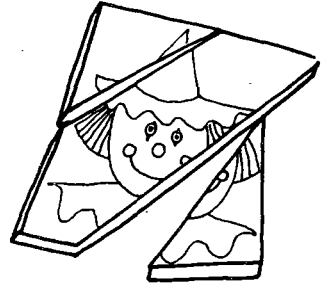
- . Make a sand pit - keep the sand clean and moist in an enclosed pit. Provide things like cups, sieves, funnels, spoons, containers and tools for play;
- . See that children do not throw sand in their own mouth, eyes and nose, or in those of other children;
- . Keep clay moist and provide a wooden board and sticks for working. Never mind if the child does not make anything - the experience of working with clay is important;
- . Collect seeds, stones, pebbles, flowers, leaves, shells, etc. and keep in a container. They can be used in sand play too.



beads

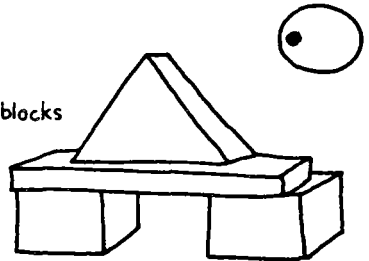


puzzles



moving toys

blocks



**What to do**

- Make as many things as you can from easily available or waste materials. For instructions see Appendix;
- Puzzles should be of two pieces at first, later three or four;
- Use local toys and dolls whenever you can. Accessories for doll play are: a doll or playhouse, toy utensils and furniture, clay fruit and vegetables and other small-scale things.



dolls and accessories





## A note on left-handedness

Most people are right-handed, that is, they prefer to use their right hand most of the time, and are better at doing things with their right rather than with their left hand. However, some people are left-handed - they prefer and are better at using their left hand.

How soon does this preference develop?

Most babies feel equally at ease with and able to use both hands, but by the age of two, most babies will show a definite preference for either the left or right hand. Once this is established the brain resists change, and the later a change is made, the harder it will be. Right or left-handedness does not make any difference to a person's intelligence, skills, or personality. But children who have been forced to change show some difficulties. Since most people are right-handed, and since tools, equipment and materials are usually made for right-handers, it is more convenient and practical to help children to be right-handed. Should left-handed children be made right-handed? And if so, how?

### Points to remember

- o While the child is still equally comfortable with both hands, encourage the use of the right hand.
- o Once the preference is established, it is difficult to change.
- o If it is decided to change, start when the child is as young as possible. Do it gently and subtly, and watch for difficulties. If there is resistance or difficulty the effort should not be pursued.
- o Once it is decided to allow a child to stay left-handed, provide lots of opportunities for practice with the

left hand to develop strength and skill.

- o Never make a child feel inferior, or scold her for being left-handed.
- o Work closely with parents and agree on a common policy so that the child is not confused.

## PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The human infant is born with the innate ability to interact with others. Through this process, which begins soon after birth, the child's personality develops. Social and personal development go together. By interacting with the environment in general, and with other people in particular, the child becomes aware of herself as a person, and also learns to adjust herself to others and become an accepted member of a social group.

### The sense of self

Soon after birth, the baby tries to attract attention to her needs by her cries. She cries out when she is hungry, in pain or in distress, and responds when she is comforted, held or fed. From the sensations associated with being held, picked up, soothed, rocked, cuddled, etc. the baby gets not only a sense of security but her first physical sense of herself. She also uses several means to express herself - at first through mere aimless movement of limbs, which later develops into eye contact, gestures, grasping, reaching and smiling.

Initially the child responds to the environment in a general way. She asks for satisfaction of her own needs, and responds to stimuli. Around the age of six weeks, she is able to differentiate her mother (or main caregiver) from others, and responds to her by smiling, cooing and initiating physical play. Usually the mother responds, and this strengthens the child's ability to interact and builds her sense of self.

Up to about six months, the child though attached to the mother or principal caregiver can still accept another caregiver who provides the same kind of stimulation and security through loving care. But by six or seven months, special attachment develops to the mother. The child will

now show signs of distress when separated from her. A little later, at about eight months, appears the response known as 'stranger anxiety', the fear or avoidance of unfamiliar people.

### Stages of personal development

In infancy, or the first year of life, the basic task of the child is to acquire confidence, hope and trust. This grows out of the loving relationship and interaction with the mother or caregiver. The kind of 'mothering' that the child receives in the first year of life affects her ability to form healthy relationships with others throughout life, and gives her positive or negative expectations from the world around her. As her ability to move grows, the child begins to explore and moves further away from her mother, returning to her frequently for reassurance and security.

Up to about 18 months of age, the child relates primarily to adults. She becomes aware of other children, and will show curiosity and interest in them and even enjoy playing with them, but in the same way as she takes interest in playthings, objects, and animals. She is not yet aware of them as distinct individuals, similar to herself in so many ways.

In the next stage, called early childhood, which lasts from the first year up to the third or fourth year, the child learns to be an autonomous being. She learns to express herself and to control her body. She can now move about freely and communicate. She has learnt to differentiate herself from others and may now come into conflict with them. The central task of development at this stage is autonomy.

In the third stage, also called the play stage, which can be from three or four years up to six or seven, the child learns about the world, about others, and about herself, through play. She also develops as a social being and begins to play with other children co-operatively and in groups. She now needs a sense of belonging, to be an

accepted member of the group. She also needs challenge and achievement, and mastery of skills to maintain self-confidence. This is the period of trial and error and she needs to exercise initiative and yet remain part of the group.

It is also after the age of three or four that the child develops 'pro-social' behaviour like sharing, co-operation, helping, learning to follow and to lead, to conform and to accept, and to resolve conflict in the group. But the foundation for good habits and values in these directions can be laid even earlier by exposing the child to such behaviour.

### Stages in play

In the second year, the child demonstrates her growing sense of self by her possessiveness. She names toys and objects, and refers to them as 'my' things. She is unwilling to share toys, and will protest or cry if she has to do so. At this stage, she engages in **solitary play** with or without playthings, and explores the world with the help of adults and older children. By the age of two, she engages in **parallel play**, where two or more children may play separately but amicably side by side, occasionally interacting briefly.

In the third year, the child becomes aware of herself, her body and its different parts, and by the end of the year, may be able to identify herself and others as a girl (or boy) on the basis of several indications such as clothes, voice, etc. She becomes more independent and aware of her own powers. She knows what she can do, and gets a thrill out of doing it, and out of trying to do still more. She loves to do things by herself and seeks mastery of skills by repeating them till she is perfect. She also begins to relate to other people besides her mother and immediate caregivers. Now comes the stage of **associative play** in which several children play together, accepting and responding to each others' needs. However, truly **co-operative play** in which children can play together in a

group, according to rules, organize games and work towards common goals, is usually developed only after the age of four.

### Stages in development of imagination

Fantasy and imagination are very important in the development of a clear concept about oneself and socialization. By about 18 months, the child begins simple forms of 'pretend' play. For example, she may push a piece of wood along as a cast, or drink imaginary milk from a cup. As the ability to think beyond the 'here' and 'now' grows, that is, to think about objects and people not physically present, to remember past events and later to anticipate future events, the child begins to play all sorts of imaginative games. In these games, she relates to imaginary partners and repeats, rehearses and comprehends the various actions and events that she has experienced. For example, she makes actions like eating, or cleaning up the dolls, as she sees her mother doing with her, or she scolds the doll for being naughty or says 'no' to the doll to forbid a wrong action. In this way, she learns the limits for herself. Similarly, as objects begin to stand for other objects she learns about the qualities and powers of each, and of herself in relation to them. With a stick for a horse, she practices riding and carries out all the actions associated with it.

By the age of three, the child can comprehend the concept of the future. As a result of repeated past experiences, she can understand that certain events take place regularly and is prepared for them before they happen. The ability to imagine and the use of language to express herself, help her in understanding the concepts of space and time. The child can begin to reason, see relationships and patterns, and bring order into her world.

Between the ages of three and seven, socio-dramatic play becomes a powerful and absorbing activity. Through role playing, the child tries out what it feels like to be different people, and to play different roles. In this way, she not only learns who they are, but also who she is, what she can and cannot do, and works out the consequences

of various kinds of actions. Socialization, or learning to live according to the rules of the social group to which one belongs, is also learnt through role play. In socio-dramatic play, the child engages in co-operative role play, learning to respond, interact, judge others' intentions, make demands and to adapt to rules.

### Goals:

To promote personal and social development, its aspects being :

- o self-care - or action: promote habits and skills for competence;
- o self-awareness - or thought: promote concepts;
- o self-confidence - or feeling: promote positive attitudes.

### Points to remember

- o Be aware of the level the child is at and what can be expected of her at each stage;
- o Foster the skills, concepts and attitudes appropriate for each stage and help the child move on to the next stage;
- o Do not expect or force the child to attain levels she is not yet capable of;
- o Continue in each stage activities begun earlier;
- o Remember that one-to-one interaction, individual time and attention, loving care, praise and encouragement are the most important elements in personal and social development.

What to do

0-3 months

- o Help the child to exercise all the limbs through play.
- o Give the child a finger to grasp.
- o Respond to smiles and coos and play cuddling and feeling games.
- o Talk to the child during feeding, dressing and other routine activities.
- o Provide a sense of warmth through plenty of physical contact.

3-6 months

- o Encourage the child to laugh, smile, babble, coo and exercise the vocal chords.
- o Offer small hand toys for feeling, grasping, holding, touching.
- o Place the child on floor and encourage movements like turning over and attempting to crawl.
- o Place things just outside her reach to encourage movement.
- o Help the child to drink from a cup held by the caregiver.
- o Encourage the child to hold a bottle or a cup with both hands.

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Skills  
Self-Care

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Concepts  
Self-awareness

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Attitudes  
Self-confidence

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What to do

6-9 months

- o Motivate the child to move by offering toys and playing appropriate games.
- o Give the child hard foods to hold and chew.
- o Encourage the child to play with hands, fingers, toes and learn about parts of the body.
- o Let the child hold a bottle or cup for drinking with support from an adult, and reduce the support gradually.
- o Provide things for the child to pick up from the floor and manipulate.
- o Play games of hiding your face behind a cloth for the child to find you.
- o Begin naming people and letting the child recognize her mother and her own self.
- o Begin holding the child up over a pot after feeds and naps, to give her toilet training.

9-12 months

- o Teach the child her name and that of her mother and other members of the family.
- o Let the child identify parts of the body by gestures.
- o Encourage crawling and movement of all sorts.
- o Let the child begin to feed herself with easy-to-handle solid foods.

- o Teach the meaning of 'no' by gently and firmly using the word whenever you forbid or prevent her from any action.
- o Play games of hiding and retrieving objects.
- o Encourage the child to respond to simple instructions.
- o Teach common forms of greeting.

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Skills  
Self-care

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Concepts  
Self-awareness

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Attitudes  
Self-confidence

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What to do

12-18 months

- o Let the child feed herself with a spoon or fingers (as much as possible).
- o Let the child co-operate in dressing herself by holding out arm or leg when required.
- o Begin regular toilet training by asking the child when she needs to use the pot.
- o Play games of taking things out and of putting them back.
- o Encourage the child to collect and put away toys after play.
- o Provide simple manipulative games like putting blocks on top of one another, boxes into one another, dropping pieces into holes.
- o Play hiding and finding games.
- o Let the child interact with other children.
- o Begin simple games of pretence like being a train or animal, etc.

18-24 months

- o Encourage the child to refer to herself by name.
- o Encourage her to name parts of the body, clothes etc.
- o Let the child remove her own clothes or help you to do so.
- o Encourage her to tell you when she needs to go to the toilet.

- o Let the child feed herself, except when she needs help.
- o Provide more manipulative exercises like things to put in and take out, push and pull, build, assemble.
- o Let her play with others and watch others.

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Skills  
Self-care

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Concepts  
Self-awareness

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Attitudes  
Self-confidence

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What to do

25-36 months

- o Let the child feed herself.
- o Let her undress herself (with as little help as possible) and help to dress herself.
- o Let her help with her bath by scrubbing different parts of herself, pouring water, etc.
- o Let her begin to use the toilet by herself (with as much help as needed).
- o Let the child play with other children for short periods.
- o Let her begin to help in simple household tasks like bringing things, fetching and carrying.
- o Provide props for 'pretend' play like dolls and old clothes.
- o Let the child try out more difficult skills like jumping, hopping, going up and down stairs, pouring water from one container to another.
- o Let her express feelings of love in words and gestures and show your feelings in the same way.
- o Give praise and encouragement for achievement.
- o Be prepared for the child to be negative and uncooperative at times.
- o Have few and simple rules but be firm about seeing

they are followed.

- o Give simple reasons for what you want or expect from the child

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Skills  
Self-care

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Concepts  
Self-awareness

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Attitudes  
Self-confidence

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## A note on problem behaviour

Starting around the age of two and up to about the age of four, children often behave in strange and difficult ways. The child may be difficult, negative, unco-operative. She may refuse to obey, have temper tantrums, be aggressive towards others, or sulk. Children who are toilet-trained may go back to passing urine in their sleep, or even when awake; they may return to thumb-sucking or to other forms of behaviour which they had given up. They may demand attention in several ways.

All these 'problems' have their roots in the struggles of the developing child to understand and control her emotions. For example, this is the time when she is struggling for mastery over bodily skills. Often she may not be able to do what she wants to do, and this leads to great frustration and anger. Or she may be denied something and she cannot yet understand why. This too leads to frustration. It may show itself as aggressive behaviour. The child is testing out her own powers in every way. She is seeing how much and what she can get out of others, and how far she can go. She is still self-centred and cannot understand that others have needs like her. She may refuse to share her toys. This too may lead to conflict with others. In attaining autonomy, the child has to come into conflict with others and faces stress. In time, she will learn to respect the needs of others. Meanwhile she has to learn to define both herself and others.

Sometimes the child may feel a lack of attention and become insecure, as for instance, when a new baby is born in the home. Then she may resort to behaviour which will get her the attention of her mother or others in the family. The child may behave that way whenever she has difficulty in adjusting to some new situation.

### Points to remember

- o try to understand the cause of the behaviour before you tackle it.

- o Stress and conflict are necessary aspects of the process of growing up, and the child has to learn to deal with them.
- o Most of these behaviours are part of the normal process of growing up. Only if such behaviour persists or seems excessive, should it be considered a problem that needs special attention.
- o It is necessary to tackle such problems in an indirect manner, because emotional problems show themselves indirectly.

### Things to do

- o Accept the negative behaviour and try to find out its causes.
- o Give lots of love and attention to the child and give praise and encouragement whenever possible.
- o Be matter-of-fact about things like bedwetting or thumb-sucking. Clean up, but do not make a big fuss about it.
- o Give opportunities in play for the child to be aggressive without hurting herself or others. Give lots of practice for newly developed skills.
- o Provide opportunities for role play with dolls and toys so that the child can express her inner feelings.
- o Be patient and gentle, but firm. Make simple rules and insist on their being followed. Give the child lots of time to co-operate.
- o Explain reasons for things whenever you can, as simply as possible.
- o Do not give in to temper tantrums. Ignore them and suggest alternative activities for the child to do.



### III

#### LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

All of us know that a young child learns language fast. It is so common that we may not think much about it. Yet this is one of the most amazing examples of the speed and complexity of development. At birth, the infant communicates only through cries; in three years the child has learnt the basics of her first language, and can use it for several purposes. This happens to all children reared in all cultures; perhaps it is a natural process. What are the main stages of language development?

At about one year of age, most children speak their first words. This is also the time at which most children learn to walk. Talking and walking are the most significant achievements of the first year. In the second year, the child begins to join words and communicate in longer utterances. In the third year, the child's vocabulary and grammar grow by leaps and bounds, and at the end of this period she can skilfully perform the basic functions of language. How does all this happen?

#### How language is learnt

There are several theories about how children acquire language. It used to be thought that children learnt language by imitating what they heard around them. However, recent research has shown that children do much more than imitate; for example, they produce new sentences using words in different ways. They say things which they could never have heard before. They make grammatical mistakes which they do not hear around them. Children seem to be able to draw out rules of language or grammar from their experience and apply them to new situations. So what they are actually doing is learning a **set of rules** about language. Linguists came out with the idea that children have an innate capacity to abstract rules, or an ability to learn languages.

There is still much debate going on about these two theories. It is enough to remember that language learning is not a mechanical task, but related to the growth of mental processes.

### Elements of language

There are three elements of language - **sounds**, **words** and **meaning**. Words are made up of sounds, but are much more than combinations of sounds, since each word has a meaning. Similarly, sentences are made up of words, but are more than just words linked together. Grammar is the structure by which words are linked to give meaning to what is said. No child tries to learn grammar consciously. Instead, she learns to express herself **meaningfully** through the use of language making grammar a tool.

There are two levels of language - **comprehension** and **production**, and the former is usually far ahead of the latter. For example, a child who can speak only 20 words may be able to understand many more and show her understanding by doing things.

### Stages of language development

The baby is exposed to a variety of sounds including the human voice from the very beginning of her life. The new-born infant turns her head towards a source of sound and seems to prefer human sounds. She can **recognize** her mother's voice within a few days, and at one month she is able to **discriminate** among **different kinds** of sounds.

The baby next learns to **associate meaning with sounds**. Within three or four months, she responds to different tones of voice (such as loud, angry, gentle, soothing). Next she begins to understand the meanings of simple utterances. She responds by pointing, gesturing, smiling, stretching out her hand, hiding or finding, and other actions. By one year, when she may speak her first words, the child can understand from 20 to 50 words.

**Production of sounds** also begins soon after birth,

with the characteristic rhythmic crying of the new-born. Mothers can soon distinguish the different types of cry, signifying hunger, pain discomfort. Besides, the child makes other gurgling, sucking and swallowing noises. At about two or three months, the child begins to 'coo', usually in response to mother's smiles and talk. This **cooing and gurgling** gradually develop into what is called **babbling**, in which the child makes a variety of pre-speech sounds. Babbling grows in quantity and variety between six and nine months, reaches a peak just before the child begins to speak in words, though it continues even afterwards. The child is using babbling to practice speech sounds and get control over the speech organs.

At this stage, the child can produce a tremendous variety of sounds, because the human organs are capable of making all the sounds found in all human languages. After some time, the child makes only the sounds which she hears in the language around her. Most children have difficulty with certain sounds. Just as a child learns to speak only when she is physically ready, she acquires certain difficult sounds only when she is ready for them.

But the child can **communicate** a great deal **even without words**. With the use of gestures, movements, smiles, facial expressions, sounds and intonations, she can perform the basic functions of language: she asks for the things she wants, demands attention, expresses her feelings, and relates to people around her. This stage is often called '**proto language**', when the child communicates without using all the elements of adult language. Most children speak their **first words** at approximately one year of age, or anything from 9 to 15 months, since there is great variation among normal children. At this time the child may already be able to comprehend many more words. At about 18 months (or about six months after she says her first word), she may have an 'active' vocabulary of about 50 words and may be able to understand about five times that number.

What are these **first words** about? They are the names of the important people, things and events in her life - her parents and other family members, foods, parts

of the body, clothing, favourite objects around the house, animals and their noises, every day events, and action words, especially things which affect her - like give, get, eat, show, go, play, sleep. Besides, the child also learns the basic words for 'No' in her language, some social words like greetings, some adjectives, and a few all-purpose words. With these and her earlier stock of 'non-verbal' language, the child can say all that she needs to say.

At this stage, often the child's utterance may contain only one word, but **single-word sentences** can say a lot. The child may use a word not merely to name an object but as a question, a command, a desire, a greeting or an expression of feeling. To understand what a child means by a particular word, you have to know the context in which it is said. Also, one word may be used to name several objects. For example, all four-legged animals may be called by the word for 'dog'. Only later will the child learn the names for cow, goat, or donkey and learn that these are different from a dog. This is not because the child has confused the animals but because she still has too few words.

By the middle or end of the second year, the child begins to link **words together into sentences**. The first sentences usually of two words only, in the order adults would do though without the smaller words. The sentence may usually say who did what or what happened to what. Other relations expressed in sentences are of possession, like 'my doll', 'Mama cup', and so on; of location; of repetition; and of discovery. Sentences are used to name and label things, and also to express the negative, like 'milk gone'. By the second birthday, the child may be able to produce a hundred words or more, and of course, she can understand five or six times that number.

In the third year, the child really learns the use of grammar, or different structures which help her to **express different meanings**. She also learns that words have more than one meaning, and she learns to use them in different ways in different contexts. Both vocabulary and the use of different structures grow rapidly. At the end

of the third year, she may have command over 1000 words.

In the third year, the child learns to **combine words by using rules of grammar**. Since she cannot form a single complicated sentence, she produces several short sentences linked in a row to complete her meaning. She expands words into phrases with the help of descriptive words. She uses three and four word sentences, and learns the use of pronouns, adverbs and other connecting words. She learns to use the question words - where, when, what, why, who, which, and to use the negative in several ways. She also learns to use the past tense and to talk about events which are over. But she does not yet use the future tense.

Through all these stages of language development, the child communicates not only through language, but also through 'non-verbal' elements. The child had already learnt to 'converse' or to carry on a dialogue, long before she did so in words. Through games, pointing and gesturing and responding, she has learnt the 'rules' of conversation - that is, to listen as well as to speak, to take turns, to wait for the other and so on.

### Measuring language development

Many methods have been tried to measure children's language learning and to judge their progress. At first, the number of words a child knows was used as a measure. But this is not good enough because children may know many more words than they use. Besides, it is hard to tell if they know how and when to use them. Later, measures like the length of sentence or the types of grammatical forms used were tried out. All these methods have their weaknesses. It now seems that the best way to judge is to look at the ways in which the child **uses** language, and what **meanings** she can convey or extract from it, and to ask: what can the child **do** with language at each stage?

Goals: To promote performance of the following seven basic functions of language by the age of three.

o 0 -18 months

(0-9 months - non-verbal)

(9-18 months - verbal also)

- To get things she wants and needs (instrumental);
- to command or alter the behaviour of others (regulatory);
- To relate to other people and express togetherness (interpersonal);
- To express feelings and play

o 18 months to 3 years

- To explore the environment and learn (heuristic);
- to construct alternative possibilities and explore the world beyond here and now (imaginative);

o 3 - 4 years

- To convey information (informative);

**Concepts** : Language is normally acquired in the family setting.

No formal teaching - the family uses informal methods.

The child is allowed to learn all the time, at all places, in her own way and at her own pace.

**Goals** : To enable the child to effectively perform the following functions of language in an appropriate way:

- |               |                                   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| instrumental  | - get things and get things done; |
| regulatory    | - affect the behaviour of others; |
| interpersonal | - relate to other people;         |
| personal      | - express feelings.               |

**Points to remember**

1. Imitate as closely as possible the methods, style and approach of the good, supportive family.
2. Treat every child as an individual. Give every child a chance to speak and interact on a one-to-one basis.
3. Give praise, encouragement and approval often. Rarely correct directly. Never scold, punish or reprimand.
4. Children who are isolated, who have disabilities like deafness, or where adults are too busy, or too few

to talk to them enough, are weakest in language development.

5. Listen attentively and try to make out what the child is trying to say. Often only the mother or the person closest to the child can make out what she is saying - to others it seems a collection of meaningless nonsense syllables.

### What to do

- o **Start 'conversing'** with the child **very early**, at one or two months of age, as soon as the child begins to smile and respond. Use regular speech as well as cooing and loving sounds, imitations of the sounds the baby makes, gestures, baby talk, tickling and cuddling. The child learns to 'converse' or interact with others, through sounds, gestures and expressions long before she can speak.
- o **Accompany** all the daily routines and events of the baby's life with talk, from feeding, bathing, cleaning, to being picked up and put down or taken out, dressed and played with. Name foods, colours, objects, parts of the body, etc., at these times.
- o **Adapt** to the child's level. Speak in short and correct but simple sentences, use only easy constructions, speak in clear tones, enunciate words carefully, use intonation and stress to convey meaning, pause between sentences, and select vocabulary to suit the child's comprehension. Speak about concrete events and things which the child can comprehend.
- o **Expand and enrich** what the child has said, putting it in a bigger and more correct form to provide the child with a model. If the child has said, 'milk gone', expand as, 'yes, all the milk is gone'. Enrichment can be made in several ways : (a) Make a related comment, as for example, if the child says 'milk gone' say,



'milk is good' or 'baby loves milk'; (b) Change the form or recast in a different grammatical structure. For example, ask, 'where has the milk gone? and pat the child's stomach; (c) Continue the conversation about the same topic, bringing in new words and concepts.

- o **Correct errors indirectly.** As far as words are concerned, supply the correct word in expansion. As far as pronunciation is concerned, it is connected with physical maturity. Children pass through stages in trying to master different sounds. The child will gradually master all the sounds. And if a child conveys her meaning in a grammatically incorrect form, accept it.
- o Ask **questions**, encourage the child to ask questions, and respond to questions.
- o **Supply** words to help the child enlarge her vocabulary and new constructions when the child seems to need them.
- o **Expose** the child to normal social forms of greeting, address and manners appropriate to the community as parents would do.
- o **Reinforce** the learning process by good example, repetition and good models.

### Some hints

- o Speak naturally, using a variety of language forms. Surround the child with language.
- o Remember to use gestures and respond to the child's many forms of non-verbal 'talking'.
- o Pay close attention to the young child, look at her and let her look at you. Point out objects, parts of the body, etc., and follow the direction of gaze.
- o Give encouragement and approval to special events like

first words, new words, and new constructions.

- o Expose the child to other speech by letting her listen to adult conversations, older children, visitors and the radio.
- o Talk about things which children like, understand and see, the things, people and events of every day.
- o Use repetition not only in speech, but also through songs, rhymes and jingles.
- o Listen attentively and respond precisely to the child.
- o Encourage children to play with one another and talk to each other.
- o Encourage the child to talk to other adults, visitors and members of the community. But remember that it is often difficult for a newcomer to understand what the child is trying to say. Offer help when necessary.
- o Use simple games - 'peekaboo', 'hide and seek', 'let's pretend' - to encourage the child to use language as a way to symbolize her thoughts. She will learn to speak about things which cannot be seen immediately, about things which have happened before and will happen again, and about making one thing stand for another.
- o Use rhythm, finger play, hand play, body games, making faces, movement and mime along with language.

**Concept** : The pace and range of language learning expand very fast at this stage.

The child is now able to interact within small groups.

Aids and materials can be used to enrich her experience.

Symbolic functions of language now become stronger.

**Goals** : To enable the child to perform the first four language functions in a more skilled and complex manner.

Help her to perform the two following functions effectively:

Heuristic - to explore the environment for learning

Imaginative - to explore the world beyond here and now by imagining alternatives.

Ask questions to help the child start performing the function of giving information.

**Points to remember**

1. Informal one-to-one interaction is still the best and most effective way for a child to learn a language.
2. Continue with earlier approaches, style and activities.
3. Add some formal activities in small groups, using aids and materials.

4. Offer a rich variety of language forms and sustained conversation.
5. Personal attention, interest in the child, love and warmth will have the greatest effect.

### STORY TELLING

**Goals** : to introduce relationships like time sequence, cause and effect and continuity and the appropriate language in relation to these.

#### What to do

- o Stories which are short, simple, easy to understand and about things which the child has seen or knows about like animals, people and things in the environment.
- o Stories which have finger, hand, body and head movements built into them.
- o Stories which have an element of rhyme, rhythm and repetition in them.
- o Traditional children's stories.
- o Even two or three favourites will do as the child enjoys repetition at this stage.

#### How to do it

- o When telling, speak clearly, slowly and simply, using dramatic gesture, intonation, movement and action.
- o Use pictures, picture books or story books, to add to the interest and help the children relate the spoken word to another medium.

### When to do it

- o For groups of four or five children at set times during the day. As a spontaneous activity whenever needed for individual children.

## PICTURES

Goals : To enable the child to understand visual symbols and to relate them to language.

### What to do

- o About things which the children know and like, such as animals, people, vehicles, and things in their environment.
- o Large, clear and bold so that children can recognize that they stand for real objects.

### Where to do it

- o In albums or books and taken out for showing whenever needed.
- o If hung on the wall, they should be near the children's eye-level.
- o Place on the floor or hold in the hands to show.

### How to do it

- o Talk about each picture, drawing attention to the whole and to the parts, to actions as well as objects.
- o Use questions to stimulate different answers and different kinds of language use.
- o Let the children ask questions too.

## DRAMATIC PLAY

Goals: To enable the child to explore imaginary alternatives and to use language appropriately.

### What to do

- o Pieces of cloth, old clothes, shoes, hats, sticks and other accessories for the child to put on and 'pretend'.
- o Finger puppets or hand puppets to help the children observe different roles being played out.

### Where to do it

- o Dolls house or quiet corner where children can play.
- o Sandpit, to construct and explore materials.
- o Dolls, toys, animals, vehicles and furniture for doll play.
- o Blocks for building with.

### How to do it

- o Encourage children to play in small groups so that they can talk to each other, though at this stage most children still play alone or side by side.
- o Dialogue between puppets, teach the child the give and take of conversation.
- o Talk to children individually to stimulate language.
- o Suggest themes and characters for dramatic play.

## CONVERSATION TOPICS

Goals : To provide new experiences to talk about.

### People

Meet and talk to -

Visitors	Workers
Neighbours	Family members
Parents	Community members

### Places

Go for short walks and visits to :

Garden	Street corner	Field
Courtyard	Shop	Pond
Neighbour	Park	Farm

### Things

Every new object.

## LANGUAGE PLAY

Goals : To play and create with language

To enjoy the sounds of language.

### What to do

- o Songs, rhymes and jingles.
- o Puzzles and riddles

- o Music and dance.
- o Movement and rhythm.
- o Games.

*THE SECOND STAGE*

*19-36 MONTHS*



## A Note on Bilingual Children

In many societies, children get a chance to hear more than one language from the beginning and may grow up bilingual or even multilingual. There may be several minority languages in a country. How can young children be helped to learn more than one language effectively?

Language is learnt with tremendous speed in early childhood. Some people even believe that this is the 'critical' time for language learning. As people grow older, the ability to pronounce different sounds diminishes and the 'accent' becomes fixed. Adults are generally slower at learning a new language than young children.

A child who hears two languages spoken regularly may be a little slower at first in vocabulary growth since she has to learn two expressions for each new thing or event. But many children learn only one name for each thing or event and use it in both languages. Those close to the child can usually understand what she is referring to. However, by the age of two or at the most three, such children can usually converse separately in each language with the appropriate person, and they rarely mix them up. For example, if the parents or the grandparents speak different languages, the child will automatically pick the right one when speaking to a particular person.

Generally, one language tends to be stronger and more used than the other. This may be called the child's first language and is most often the language of the mother, hence the expression 'mother tongue'. Other languages will be used for specific purposes, for specific times and situations and with specific persons, while the first one can be used for a wider range of communication.

### What to do.

- o Give emphasis to the child's first language while providing exposure to the second. If you do not know

the child's first language, try to learn at least a few words of it so that you can communicate. Exchange, and learn each other's language.

- o Expose children in a natural way to people who speak different languages through visitors and other workers. Let children from different language groups interact with each other freely.
- o Use 'non-verbal' language to help in all situations of difficulty.
- o Do not try to correct or force children to use one set of words rather than another. If the child mixes up two languages, do not correct, but provide the correct model yourself.
- o Work closely with the parents, report back to them regularly and listen to what they say. Help each other to help the child.
- o Encourage the child to 'babble' or indulge in 'nonsense talk' whenever she feels like it, as this is how the child's learning goes on. Never mind if you cannot understand.
- o Help children to understand that there are two or more ways of saying the same thing. This awareness usually comes only in the third year, but bilingual children find out earlier than others. Do this by repeating both words while identifying the thing named.
- o Play naming, rhyming and other verbal games in both languages, if you can.

## IV

### HEALTH CARE

Good health is the foundation of growth and development, and is one of the prime responsibilities of the child-care worker.

#### What is good health

Good health is not just the absence of disease, illness or deficiency. It is the physical and mental well-being of the child. A child can only be said to be healthy if she has a healthy mind in a healthy body.

How can you recognize good health? A healthy child has :

- good posture
- free bodily movement
- sparkling eyes
- clear glowing skin
- shining hair
- good appetite
- no discharge from nose, ears, eyes, mouth.

And she is :

- physically active and alert
- mentally curious and eager
- cheerful and happy.

If a child is dull, listless, sleepy, irritable all the time, you can guess that her health is not good, even if she has no symptoms of any particular illness

Goals : To promote and maintain the child's good health  
To prevent or remedy poor health

## Methods/strategies

- o Meet the child's basic physical needs;
- o Maintain personal and environmental hygiene;
- o Build up habits, practices and attitudes for health;
- o Provide adequate and balanced nutrition;
- o Prevent communicable diseases and avoid accidents;
- o Recognize and treat ill health.

## Points to remember

1. The co-operation of the parents and the family is essential.
2. Educating parents about health and nutrition is a part of the programme of health care.

## MEETING PHYSICAL NEEDS

Concepts : The basic physical needs for growth and development are:

Food	Water	Exercise
Rest	Sleep	Fresh air
Sunlight	Space	Activity

## Things to do

Provide enough, neither too much nor too little of the above; balance all of these in the course of the daily programme.

## A note on sleep

A new-born infant spends about 23 hours sleeping. As she grows, she spends more and more time awake. At one year of age, a child may require two naps during the day, besides 10 to 12 hours of sleep at night. By two years of age, the child may require only one nap in the afternoon.

There is great variation among children; some may need more sleep and some less. No rule should be forced on all children. It is necessary to judge when a child is sleepy, when she has had enough, and when she does not wish to sleep. If one child is awake, when all the others are sleeping, she can be given some quiet activity or toy to play with and left alone.

Children who spend most of their time sleeping or sitting still cannot be healthy. An over active and restless child is also not healthy. Most children can regulate their own level of activity, so follow the child's lead and alternate activity and rest in a balanced way.

## MAINTAINING PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE

Concept : Hygiene refers to habits and skills as well as to cleanliness.

**Bath and wash**

**Inspection**

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**What to do for  
PERSONAL HYGIENE**

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- nails
- hair
- eyes
- ears
- nose
- teeth
- hands
- feet

## **Grooming**

- hairdressing
- brushing teeth
- cutting nails

## **Clothes**

- washing
- mending

## **Points to remember**

1. Have everything you need for the various activities ready in advance.
2. Let children help and participate as much as they can.
3. Help them to become self-reliant in personal matters.
4. Personal hygiene of the adults is important too.

### **Premises**

- sweeping
- cleaning
- dusting

### **Garbage**

- collecting
- disposing

### **Water**

- fetching
- storing
- sprinkling
- boiling
- filtering
- covering

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## **What to do for ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE**

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### **Toilets and bathrooms**

- cleaning
- disinfecting

### **Food**

- storing
- sunning
- airing

### **Utensils**

- scrubbing
- sunning
- airing
- covering

### **Garden & surroundings**

- cleaning
- weeding
- watering

## BUILDING HABITS, PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES

<u>In what</u>	<u>Things to do</u>	<u>Demonstration</u>
Personal hygiene	Maintain regularity and repetition	- set a good example
Environmental hygiene		- show how things are done
Meeting physical needs	- do the same thing - in the same way	- do things together
Nutrition	- at the same time	- game follow the leader
Toilet training	- every day	

### A Note on Toilet Training

An important area of habit formation is that connected with the regularity of bowel movements. Toilet training is not only a healthy habit, it is one of the ways in which the child is socialized into the habits and practices of her culture. Each society has found its own ways to teach children culturally appropriate patterns of behaviour relating to it. Differences in approach towards toilet training have sometimes become a matter of conflict. The caregiver must know how to handle it.

The young child cannot control the sphincters of either the rectum or the bladder and passes urine or stools whenever the body has a need to expel the matter. A breast-fed child may pass stools five or six times a day, immediately after each feed. Within a few months, this settles down to about twice a day, though even then a greater

frequency is not a matter of concern. When the child starts eating solid foods, the stools become more solid in consistency and turn darker in colour.

By the time the child is able to sit up by herself, she has more or less fixed times for passing stools. She can be held over or placed on a stand, chamber pot, or whatever method is culturally acceptable and will usually empty her bowels. This is not because she can control the sphincter or co-operate in complying with the adult request. It is more due to predictable timing and association of certain events, in other words, it is habit formation. But the child should not be made to sit for a long time, or be coaxed, bullied or scolded, as this can have negative consequences. Between the first and second year of life, the child gradually learns to control her bowel movements, and to indicate when she wishes to pass stools.

Later, the child begins to indicate when she wishes to pass urine, but not always. She may continue to make 'mistakes' for a long time afterwards. These occasions can be reduced by taking the child to pass urine at regular intervals, before and after eating, before and after a nap, and so on. In these ways, regular habits are built up.

Toilet habits should be gently and slowly inculcated, with understanding of the child's ability, stage of development and needs, and in the style and manner of the home. The child should not be punished for her failures or made to feel inferior if she cannot comply. There should absolutely be no pressure, no force, and no scolding. If a child spoils her clothes, she should be cleaned up in a matter-of-fact manner and no fuss made. She should not be ridiculed and made to feel ashamed.

## PROVIDING PROPER NUTRITION

### Nutritional needs

From birth, for the first few months of life,



the child's total nutritional needs are met through the mother's milk, if the mother is in normal health. Breast milk is the most complete, nutritionally adequate, pure, safe, clean and satisfying food for the baby. Unless there are difficult circumstances, such as death or illness of the mother, or her inability to breast-feed the child, the baby should be reared on breast milk.

The child who attends a child-care centre for the whole day, must inevitably be put on breast milk substitutes during the day. These may be fresh or powdered milk, according to local preference and availability. The child may be fed by bottle and later on with cup, spoon or glass. But may still be breast-fed at home.

After about four months, however, breast-milk is no longer adequate to meet the baby's requirements in full. Now the child must be introduced to semi-solid and then solid feeds gradually. However, she may continue to be breast-fed for as long as possible, though she may get less and less of her nutritional requirements from it.

### Quantity

By the age of one, the child needs about 1,200 calories a day or nearly half of what an adult requires. From then on, the child needs roughly an additional 100 calories every year, and by about the age of 12 may be eating a full adult diet.

Yet the child cannot consume large amounts of food at one sitting. At any one time, an adult can eat about four times as much as a child. So the young child needs to be fed five or six times a day in order to meet her daily requirements. This means that she may eat three meals, as is customarily done by adults, and in addition would need two or three small snacks between meals. Frequency is very important in a young child's diet.

## Quality

The child also cannot eat the regular adult diet till she is five or six years old. It may be too heavy, too rich, or too spicy for her, or cooked in a manner that is difficult for her to digest. So children's food needs to be specially prepared. It should be tasty but not spicy, and easy for the child to chew and swallow. At the same time, the child should not be reared on soft foods alone. She needs plenty of hard things to chew on, to develop strong and clean teeth.

## Points to remember

1. Quantity is only one aspect of the child's diet.
2. Seeing that all the nutrients are present in the right quantities is even more important. The child needs calories for energy, but also needs body-building foods for growth, and protective foods to build resistance.
3. Basic foods and dietary habits vary from culture to culture, and community to community. So it is not possible to indicate a single ideal diet for young children.
4. In each situation, the care-giver must be able to draw up a suitable diet chart for children of each age-group, keeping in mind the principles of balanced diet, the availability and cost of different foodstuffs, and the recommended daily intake of nutrients (see table page 88).

## What to do

Provide

- o enough food for bodily needs;
- o balanced food, containing all the nutritional

requirements;

- o good in quality, fresh, tasty, well-prepared, clean and appetizing
- o with enough variety;
- o as frequently as needed.

### **A Note on Meals**

Meals and eating are important ways in which all people socialize their children and teach manners and habits. How and by whom food is prepared and served, is itself a cultural lesson. Meal times are occasions when children learn the manners and behaviour appropriate to their age in their society. They learn to share food, to eat with others, and to be sociable.

Children can also be taught habits of hygiene connected with food at meal times. They gradually learn to become self-reliant and feed themselves. At first, they may be fed entirely by the adult, with the help of a spoon or fingers. Slowly they learn to pick up hard foods and eat them, and still later, to handle soft foods with a spoon or fingers. It is only gradually that the child will learn to eat without making a mess.

Meal time atmosphere should be pleasant, friendly and cheerful. Meals should not be delayed till children are irritable due to hunger. Small children should not be made to wait too long. New foods should be introduced in small quantities and talked about before, during and after eating. When the child gets used to the taste, she will begin to relish and enjoy it. A change of menu every day is good for children, as it gets them accustomed to variety in food.

**Table : Recommended Daily Intakes of Nutrients**

Age	Energy			Protein	Vitamin A	Vitamin D	Thiamine	Riboflavin	Niacin	Folic acid	Vitamin B	Ascorbic acid	Calcium	Iron
	Kilo-grammes	Kilo-calories	Mega joules	Grammes	Micro-grammes	Micro-grammes	Milli-grammes	Milli-grammes	Micro-grammes	Micro-grammes	Micro-grammes	Milli-grammes	Grammes	Milli-grammes
<b>Children</b>														
0-1	7.3	820	3.4	14	300	10.0	0.3	0.5	5.4	60	0.3	20	0.5-0.6	5-10
1-3	13.4	1 360	5.7	16	250	10.0	0.5	0.8	9.0	100	0.9	20	0.4-0.5	5-10
4-6	20.2	1 830	7.6	20	300	10.0	0.7	1.1	12.1	100	1.5	20	0.4-0.5	5-10
7-9	28.1	2 190	9.2	25	400	2.5	0.9	1.3	14.5	100	1.5	20	0.4-0.5	5-10
<b>Adult man</b>														
Moderately active	65.0	3 000	12.6	37	750	2.5	0.2	1.8	19.8	200	2.0	30	0.4-0.5	5-9
<b>Adult woman</b>														
Moderately active	55.0	2 200	9.2	29	750	2.5	0.9	1.3	14.5	200	2.0	30	0.4-0.5	14-28

Handbook of Human Nutritional Requirements, WHO, 1974.

Children differ widely in their eating habits - some may eat more and others less, some may be more fussy than others about taste, some may need to eat more frequently. All these are acceptable. The daily timetable and schedule should allow for some individual variation. All children will not respond in the same way and none should be forced to eat.

If a child consistently rejects food, then her health should be checked first. It may be due to illness, fatigue or other physical causes. A change of diet, change of surroundings or manner of feeding may also help.

### PREVENTING AND TREATING ILL HEALTH

Concept : Illnesses in childhood have several causes

#### Nutritional deficiencies

Accidents  
and  
emergencies

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#### CAUSES OF ILL HEALTH

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Minor  
ailments

#### Major communicable diseases

#### What to do

#### Prevention

1. Immunize - several communicable diseases can be prevented by timely immunization.
2. Offer proper nutrition and nutrition education to parents.

3. Take safety precautions to avoid accidents and emergencies.

### Treatment

1. Learn and practise first aid.
2. Learn home nursing of sick children.
3. Learn to recognize the symptoms of common ailments and diseases.
4. Learn local home remedies for minor ailments.
5. Learn to recognize the symptoms of malnutrition and nutritional deficiency.
6. Know where the nearest doctor and medical help is available.
7. Know the experienced people in the neighbourhood to call upon for help in emergency.

### Points to remember

1. Prevention is better than cure.
2. Seek medical help when in doubt.

### A note on immunisation

1. Diphtheria
2. Whooping cough
3. Tetanus

All three are usually handled by a single vaccine called D.P.T. Where only diphtheria and tetanus are protected against it is called D.T.

4. Polio (this vaccine is given by mouth)
5. Measles
6. Tuberculosis (the vaccine is referred to as B.C.G. and is given in a single dose).
7. Typhoid
8. Cholera

### Immunization schedule\*

Each country frames its own immunization schedule keeping in view the epidemiological pattern of the diseases, the types of vaccines available, and the administrative and economic feasibility of providing the services. The following schedule is recommended in India.

Beneficiaries	Age	Vaccine	No of doses
Infants	3-9 months	DPT	3
		Polio	3
		BCG	1
	9-12 months	Measles	1*
	18-24 months	DPT	1 (booster)
		Polio	1 (booster)
Children	5-6 years	DT	1**
		Typhoid	2
	10 years	TT	1**
		Typhoid	1**
	16 years	TT	1**
	Typhoid	1**	
Pregnant Women	16-36 weeks	TT	1**

\* Measles vaccine is available only at selected centres

\*\* Booster, give two doses if not vaccinated previously

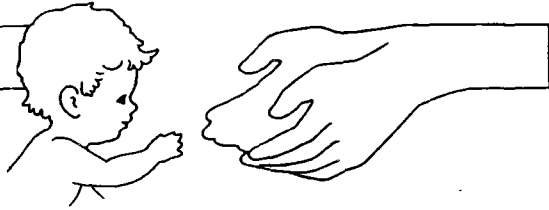
\* The Immunization Programme in India - A Handbook for Medical Officers, Govt. of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

## Note

- o Interval between doses should not be less than one month.
- o Minor coughs, colds and mild fever are not a contra-indication for vaccination.
- o The recommended courses of each vaccine must be completed as early as possible. If for some reason, the child did not get the scheduled dose in time (within 4 to 8 weeks) she may be given the dose as soon as this is possible without starting the course again.
- o DPT and Polio vaccines are given to the child at the same time. BCG vaccine can be given with any one of the three doses, but the sites of the injections of the DPT and BCG vaccines should be different.



**SECTION THREE**



**THE CHILD-CARE CENTRE**

- I. The Role of the Caregiver*
- II. Organizing the Child-Care Centre*
- III. Working with Parents*
- IV. Involving the Community*

## I.

### THE ROLE OF THE CAREGIVER

The family is the natural environment in which children are reared. Most families have the qualities necessary to meet the child's needs and foster growth and development. So the good child-care centre should be organized to contain the best, most positive aspects of the home and family. Of course, it must try at the same time to avoid the negative qualities and weaknesses of the home. The child-care centre aims to foster growth and development of the young child as fully as possible through the activities, programmes and the daily routine of the centres and through the relationship between the caregiver and the child.

The most important contribution to the child's development comes from the adult caregiver. Whether providing for health, safety, comfort and nutrition, providing equipment, materials and activities, or whether interacting and providing love, understanding, stimulation and guidance, the caregiver's role is vital. A child can grow up in a small or large space, with or without equipment, eating any kind of food, speaking in any language. But all over the world, under whatever circumstances, the child cannot grow into a healthy and mature adult without this attentive and close relationship with a loving and thoughtful caregiver.

The child's first and natural caregiver is usually the mother but it need not always be so. It could be any other person - the father, an older sibling, a grandparent, or a foster mother. What is important is the relationship, the attention and the concern, guided by proper understanding.

The caregiver in the child-care centre can be such a person. She is both a teacher and a substitute for the parent. Her behaviour towards the child will deeply affect the socialization of the child, the process by which the child becomes an acceptable and accepted member of the society into which she is born.

If she is also responsible for organizing the programme of the child-care centre, she must remember that:

(a) The child is a **whole** person

Though different aspects of development have been described separately, the child grows and develops simultaneously in all directions. She cannot be divided into compartments. So the programme for the child should be planned holistically, that is, as a whole, within which all the parts too must be attended.

(b) Each child is an **individual**

Every child is different, and her special needs and characteristics must be known. There must be a one-to-one relationship between the caregiver and the child. Even though group activities ought to be provided, sufficient time should be given to each child.

## II

### ORGANIZING THE CHILD-CARE CENTRE

There are several ways to organize a childcare centre, but in each case the principles are the same. There could be :

- a) **A family-sized unit**, located in a home, which may contain the caregiver or mother-substitute and a few children. If the children are of varying ages then the number could be as many as five or six; if all of them are of the same age, perhaps only three or four. If there is an additional adult to help for even part of the time, the number may be as much as eight or ten. It would vary with the circumstances, the space, the equipment and several other things. There cannot be a fixed rule. But it should be possible to maintain a **family atmosphere** for each child to receive **individual care** and attention, and for a **holistic programme** to be carried out.
- b) **An institutional centre**, in which several adults take care of a group of children. A small unit of 20 children may have two or three adults in charge, and larger units at least one adult for every five to eight children. The number and ages of children will vary according to space, facilities and needs. It is hard to make rules about the ratio of adults to children. But workers must provide love, care and attention to each child. There are many ways to do this. For example, each worker can create an informal 'family' of six or seven children who are her special responsibility, and try to be with them constantly.

#### Age and grouping

In a centre, there may be children of all ages, from newborn babies to those of school-going age. This

book covers only children from birth to three years. All over the world it has been noticed that mothers try to keep children with themselves or with members of the family, for the first few months of the child's life. This is partly because of the need to breast-feed, but that is not the only reason. Mothers instinctively know that a young child primarily needs love, close attention, one-to-one interaction and personal relationship for healthy development. Often this type of care may not be available in an institutionalized setting. So in most child-care centres, infants below six months are rarely to be found.

But the first year of life is a very important stage in the child's development, perhaps the most important stage of childhood. And the caregiver has also to guide and direct parents through both informal and formal means. So she must have the knowledge to show parents how to foster the development of their own children in their homes.

With children of various ages, it is important to know how to group them. Same age grouping is convenient for several purposes, such as meal times, nap times, and bath times, since children of the same age may have the same needs. But mixed grouping is useful for play and developmental activities, because older children get a chance to lead and help, and younger children get models to follow and obey, as in a family. So a good practice is to combine the two. Use same age grouping for certain activities and mixed-age grouping for others. But see that younger children are close to or in touch with their regular caregiver so as to build up their sense of security.

### **Space and facilities**

It is difficult to lay down fixed standards for space. A child-care centre should have sufficient space, indoors and outdoors, for all the needed activities. In warm climates, outdoor space should be shady, protected and clean. There should be facilities for cooking, cleaning, washing and bathing, toileting, sleeping and playing. But much of this is related to the customs and conventions of the culture the children belong to.

Small spaces can be well-used. Flexible space is best, so that the maximum number of activities can be carried out in the same space. For example, roll-up beds or mats can be used for sleeping at nap time, so that the space can otherwise be used for play and other activities. Beds and cribs take up a lot of space which is then wasted, because it cannot be used for anything else. Similarly, in cultures where it is common to use the floor for seating, small chairs and tables for the children are not necessary. They take up space, are expensive, and distance the child from the practice followed in the family.

Toilets, bathing facilities, etc. should also follow the practices and pattern common in the community, so that the same habits can be followed up and practised at home. The utensils, furnishings and materials should also be culturally appropriate. Not only will the child be familiar with them, but so will the parents. The child-care centre will then harmonize with the home while providing things which individual homes may not be able to offer.

It can also demonstrate how simple household objects such as mats, cushions, baskets, ladles or cups can be used to foster educative play.

Children need space and freedom to carry out activities, especially the large motor movements. An enclosed courtyard, or a small garden or open space outside the centre is ideal for free play. If there is little or no outdoor space, many of these needs can be met in an indoor space with imagination and planning. The environment itself can provide for activity. Floor, walls, beds, and furniture for example can be used to provide motor activity. This is anyhow the way a child normally would behave in a home, which has no special equipment for the purpose.

Children should not be confined to a small cramped indoor space all the time. So in a very cramped environment, at least once or twice a week, the children should be taken out to a nearby park or open space to play. Maybe only three or four children at a time can go. Rotation of groups will help every child to get a chance to play outside once or twice a week.

## Planning and daily programme

The daily programme must :

- o Meet the biological needs of young children, for food, sleep, rest, exercise, activity and learning;
- o Maintain safety and hygiene;
- o Be flexible and let the very young set their own schedule without being forced into activities;
- o Understand and follow each child's individual needs;
- o Provide a variety of stimuli and activities in the course of the day along with opportunities for interaction.
- o Take individual needs into account and allow time for all;
- o Have a balance between various activities.
- o Introduce group activities, games, rules and drills for short periods in the second year and increase them in the third year;
- o Provide some activities for the child to observe, not directly related to child-care, such as production of a tool or household object, music and dance, festivals and rituals, and crafts; let volunteers from the community come in to show or take the children out whenever possible, to observe activities like agriculture, gardening and building;
- o Be in harmony with local cultural practices. When you do things differently, explain why to the parents.

## Managing play time

- o Provide a rich variety of experiences and activities through the day, using whatever materials and equipment you can get.

- o Keep all toys and materials clean and **stored in easily accessible** space; besides taking them out regularly, encourage children to take them out and put them away as soon as they are able.
- o Remember that many activities and experiences can be **created with no equipment** at all. The child's own body and all its parts and the bodies of those around her can be used to create different experiences as in climbing games.
- o Allow and encourage the child to be active and to **initiate games** and activities. Initiate activities and teach new concepts. But remember that the child is an autonomous and active agent. Showing and demonstrating is useful but cannot be enough.
- o Remember also that the young child is **playing all the time** except when she is asleep. But there are different kinds of play - large movements and small, quiet and active, alone and in a group, with and without materials, with and without adults. See that all of these take place at one time or another and that **some balance is maintained**. It is not wrong for a child to be sitting quietly for some time by herself in a corner; but if she is doing this all the time, then something is definitely wrong.
- o Besides activities specially planned for the children, allow them to watch and slowly **participate in all the drills and routines** of the centre - from opening and closing doors, taking out and putting away toys, to setting out plates for lunch, picking flowers, sweeping, cleaning, washing clothes, and washing cups. Food preparation activities are the most difficult for the young child and should be left to the last, but fetching and carrying can be introduced as soon as possible.
- o **Do not be rigid**. Allow children to move freely from one kind of play to another, even if it is not the set time for it. With younger children, the routines will be set by their times for sleeping, waking and eating.



- o **Repetition is essential and enjoyable.** Children do not get bored with an activity when they are absorbed in it. But repetition at one time should not go on for too long. Children will tire of an activity and would like a change. Their attention will wander. So you must watch carefully to know how much to repeat an activity at any given time. You can come back to it later.
  
- o **Every activity need not be supervised.** Your role is to provide time, space, equipment, material and encouragement for the activity. But you must keep an eye on free activity and be aware of each child's level of development and her need.

### WORKING WITH PARENTS

The caregiver often acts as a second parent. But she cannot be a substitute for the parent nor should she ever try to be so. Each has her place in the child's life. Both are necessary. It is important for them to understand each other and co-operate for the good of the child. The relationship of the caregiver with the parents must be strong and based on mutual respect and trust.

The child brings parent and caregiver together and is their common interest. So both must understand the child well and then agree on ways of doing things. This is true also of other members of the family, like grandparents, who are involved in rearing the child.

The caregiver should meet parents regularly and talk to them in a friendly way to know what the child did, ate, said, whether she was well or sick, and what happened at home. She must also tell the parents about what the child does in the centre. This will help to increase their knowledge and understanding of the child, and lead to harmony in their approach towards the child. Parent and caregiver will then act together as a team and not contradict each other.

The best time for such informal talk is when parents, (or other family members) come to leave and take their children from the centre.

If parents lack knowledge of some aspects of child development, the caregiver can help to increase their knowledge and awareness and guide them in the right direction. At the same time, she can learn more about traditional ways of rearing children and adopt them as far as possible in the centre. Where there is an area of dispute, it should be discussed in depth and honest attempts should be made to find a solution. Teaching and learning are two way processes. The teacher learns and the learner teaches. So the caregiver has much to learn from parents.

This kind of sharing and learning from each other can often be done in a group. So parents' meetings should be held regularly and become a means of learning, both informally and formally. Aids like films, books, lectures, demonstrations and exhibits can be used for more formal occasions.

All of this applies not merely to the parents but also to others in the child's family - the grandparents, aunts and uncles and older siblings. Both formal and informal meetings can help build attitudes and an atmosphere of trust and co-operation. Every opportunity must be taken to get closer to the family, establish good relations with them, understand each other and the child better and work together for the child's development.

## IV.

### INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

It is equally important to work with and involve the wider community around the child. As the child grows, she needs to be introduced to the wider world, to the community, or the larger family of which her own family is only a small part. At the same time, this larger family too can be a source of support to the caregiver in her tasks of bringing up children.

The community may include several kinds of people - the people and families in the immediate neighbourhood, many of whom may even be related to the children in the centre; fellow-workers and colleagues, other functionaries, public servants performing various services in and around the centre, and local officials. Thus older people, grandparents, and siblings in all the families are members of the community. So are also the school children, teenagers, and functionaries in the locality.

The community can help in several ways. Here are some things the community can do:

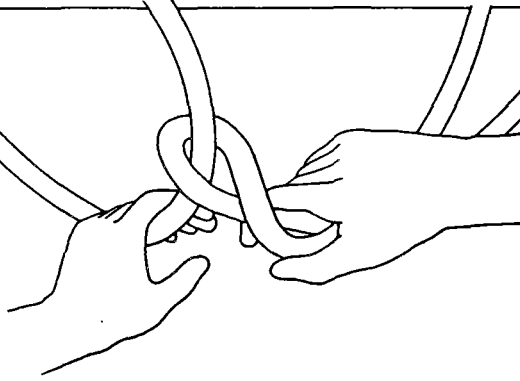
- o collect, make and maintain play equipment and materials;
- o provide locally available foodstuffs and things of daily use;
- o provide help on outings and special occasions;
- o spare time for regular activities with children and assist the caregiver.

For example, at parents' meetings and other community gatherings, the caregiver can inform everyone about what kind of things are useful as play material. She can organize activity groups to make paint, and repair equipment. She can request for the supply of special foodstuffs which are produced in the locality.

Whenever a visit or outing is arranged, functionaries can be of help, whether a temple priest, a gardener, a park attendant, or a railway or post office employee. Children love to watch all sorts of work and activity, and if workers just allow this and answer questions about their work, it is enough. Let children help in adult work when they can, for example, in picking up leaves in a garden.

Older siblings may come in after to help cleaning, dressing the children, playing with them, helping to feed or toilet them, bring or fetch them from home, etc. Older people, of the grandparents' generation, may have time to spare to take part in story-telling or watching and helping children at play.

The child-care centre and the caregiver are useful parts of the community. The caregiver in the centre must learn to build up good relations with all members of the community and make them understand that they can help and play a useful role. It is up to her to approach them and to draw upon their support. Such help will come only when it is asked for. At the same time, it will give satisfaction to those who give it.

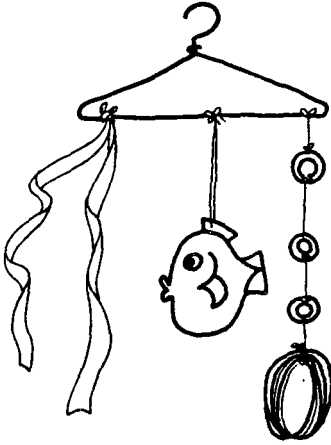


MAKE YOUR OWN TOYS AND  
PLAY MATERIALS

1. *Things to See*
2. *Musical Instruments and  
Sound Makers*
3. *Touching and Feeling Toys*
4. *Aids for Motor Activity*
5. *Toys for Manipulation and  
Problem-solving*
6. *Dolls*
7. *Aids to Imagination*

1. THINGS TO SEE

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**Hanging toys**

Make a wooden cross-bar on which you can suspend things, or use a coat hanger.

On the arms of the cross piece, hang different things like strips of cloth, paper and foil, bunches of bottle tops

shakers and rattles

small light toys

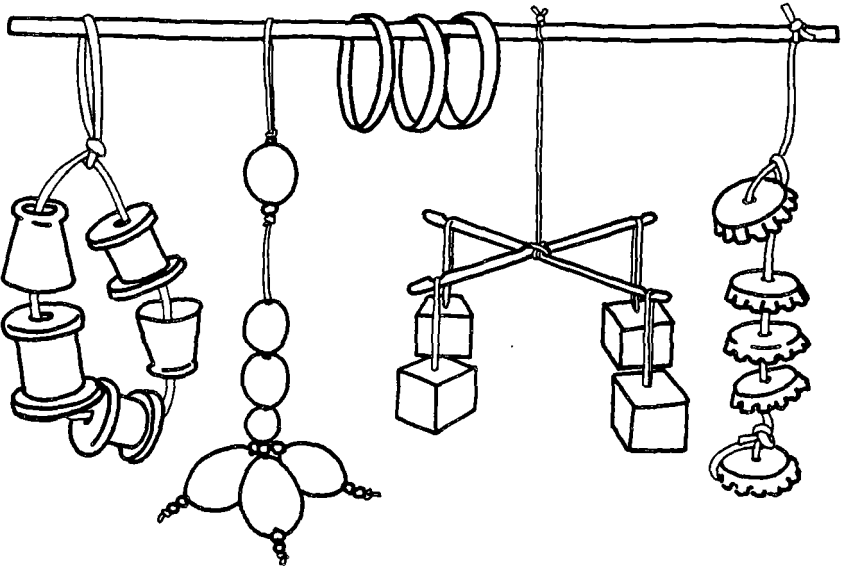
shiny objects like spoons and rings

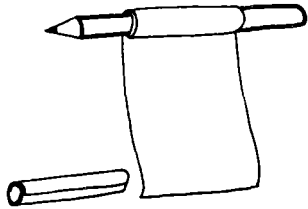
cardboard cut-outs in bright colours

paper toys, beads and patterns

and other light decorative objects including

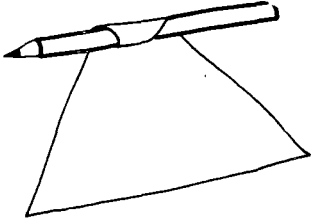
tinkling objects like bells, beads and bangles.





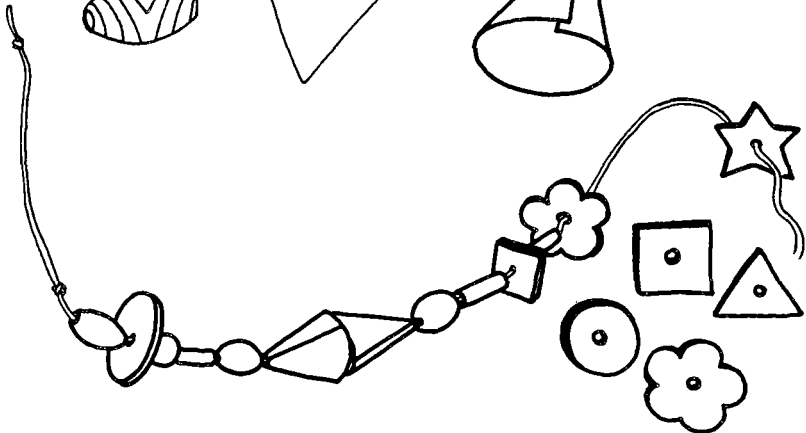
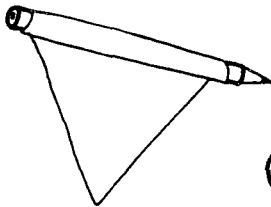
### Paper Bead Chain

Cut strips of old magazine paper, about one inch wide and five or six inches long. Place a knitting needle or a thin stick at one end and roll the paper round it into a tube. Paste the edge down, remove the stick and leave to dry.

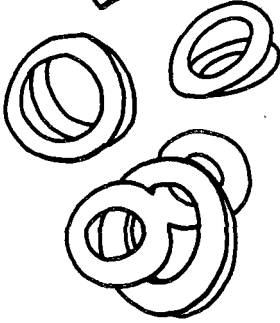
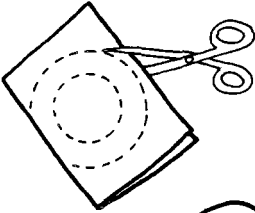


For an egg shape, cut the paper into triangular strips and roll round a stick. You will have a bead thicker at the centre than at the edges.

These beads, as well as cardboard cut-out shapes, paper cones and paper rings can all be strung together to form hanging chains and mobiles.



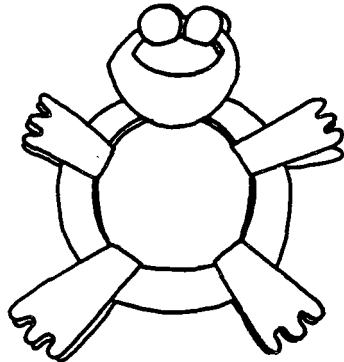
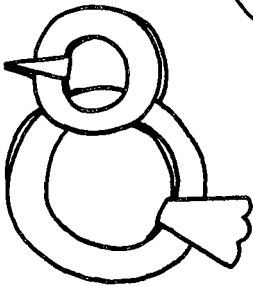
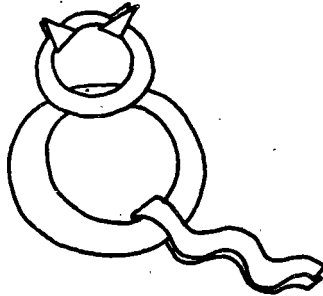
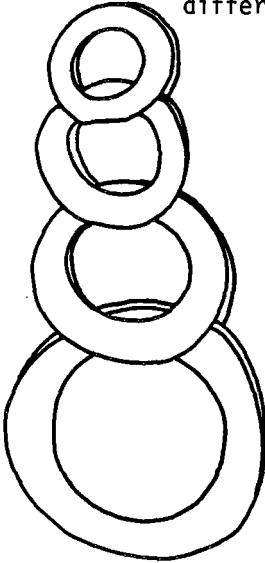




### Ring Chain

Fold an old greeting card in two. Cut out ring shapes of different size. Be sure to keep the two edges joined at the fold. Pass half a folded ring through another ring and then fold so that one ring hangs from the other.

Continue to make a chain. Use smaller rings each time. You can also make birds and animals like this by using different shapes.

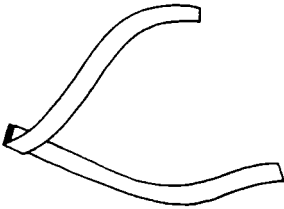
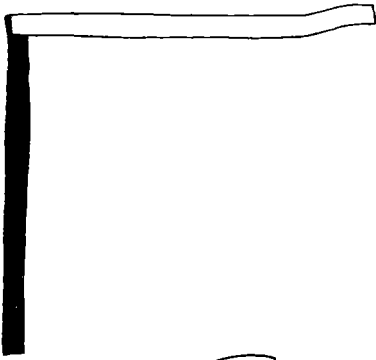


## Streamers

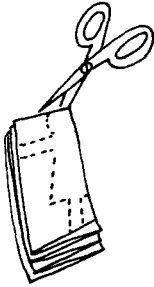
Cut or tear strips of coloured paper about 1 inch wide and paste together to make long strips about 1 to 2 feet long. Place the ends of two strips together at right angles to each other and paste down.

Now fold them back over one another. Go on folding till the ends of the strips are reached, then paste the ends together.

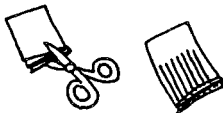
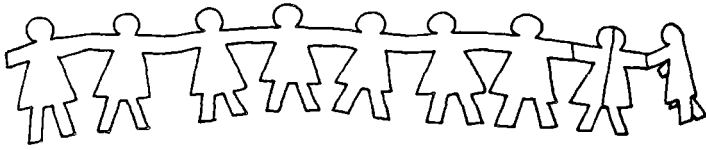
Open out to get a lovely streamer to hang across the room.



Take a long strip of paper, about three feet long and three or four inches wide. Fold it from one end to the other in a concertina fold. Draw the figure of a person in profile, on one edge. Now cut along the dotted line. Be careful not to cut through the folds on either side where there are no lines. Now open out and you will get a chain of people joined to each other.

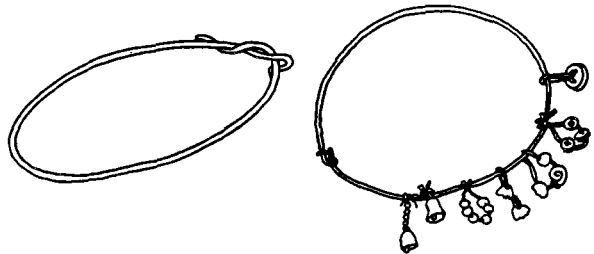
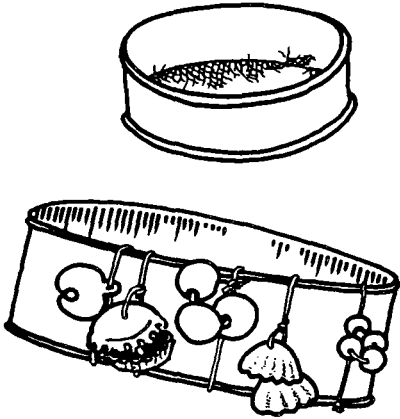


Below are some more ideas for different kinds of streamers.



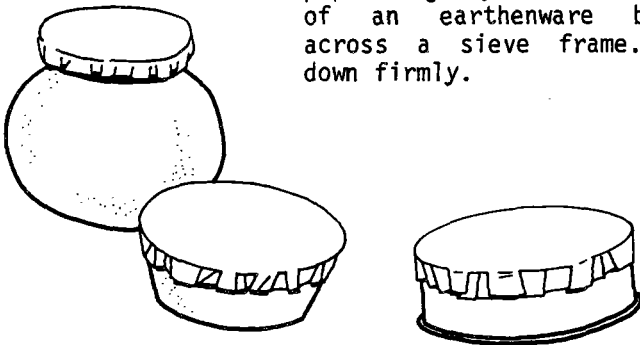
### Clappers

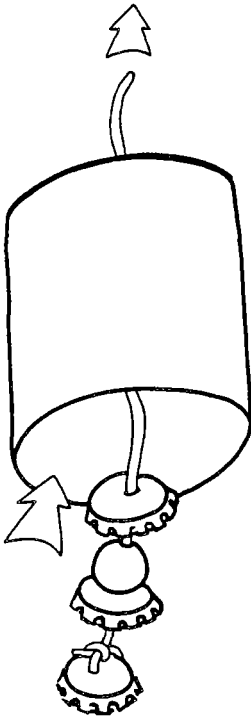
Remove the wire netting from an old sieve. Attach things like bells, beads, seeds, bottle tops to the frame with string to make a jingling sound. Thread bells, beads, bottle tops, shells, and other such material on a thick piece of wire or a bent piece of green bamboo or green twig.



### Tambourine

Stretch a large piece of thick paper tightly across the mouth of an earthenware bowl or across a sieve frame. Paste down firmly.

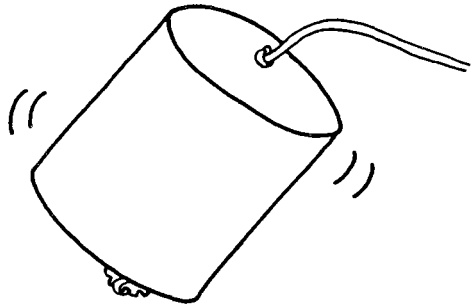




### Bells

Make a small bunch of jingling things like bottle tops or metal beads.

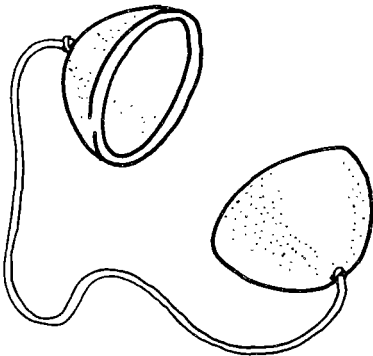
Take a small tin and pierce a hole in the bottom. Hang the bunch of sound-makers inside the tin with a string and make a knot in the string outside the hole to prevent it slipping.



### Cymbals

Pierce holes in two coconut shells.

Pass a string through each hole and tie a knot outside to prevent it slipping.



### Gong

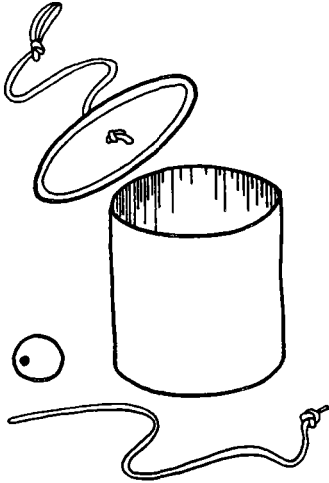
Use a metal plate and wooden stick or spoon to strike it with.

## Little drum

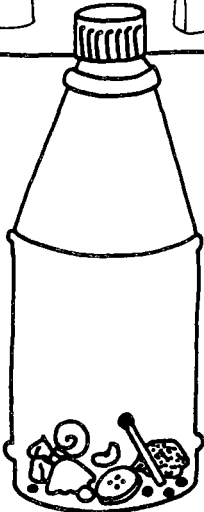
Pierce holes in the bottom and lid of a small tin with a well-fitting lid.

Pass a piece of thick string through each hole and make a knot on the inner side to hold it in place.

Fix a small bead at the other end of each string. When the tin is swung from side to side, the beads will strike the sides of the tin and make a sound.

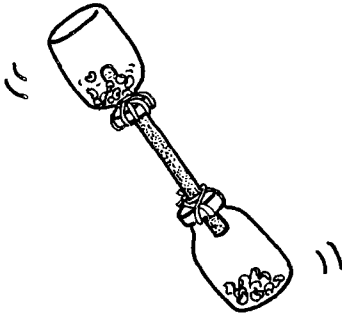


### Other containers



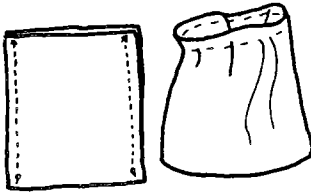
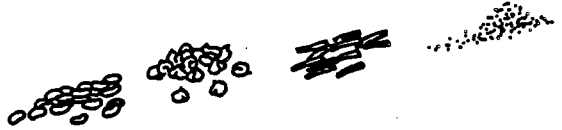
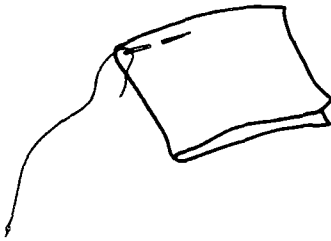
## Shaker

Put a few beans, seeds or pebbles into a small clean plastic jar or bottle and close the lid tight. When it is shaken, it will make a pleasant noise. Instead of a plastic jar, you can use matchboxes, small metal tins and containers, or cardboard boxes. Be sure the lids can be tightly closed. For fillers, use different sizes and amounts of things like sand, pebbles, sticks, matchsticks, beads, seeds, beans, pebbles, or buttons. By varying the amount, you can vary the sound.



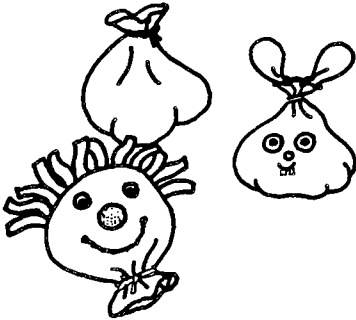
### Rattle

To make a rattle from a shaker, attach a handle that the child can grasp in its hand. Use a strong smooth rod or stick for the handle and attach firmly with glue or string. Dumb bell shaped rattles, with the rod in the centre and round containers at each end, are most convenient for the young baby to grasp.



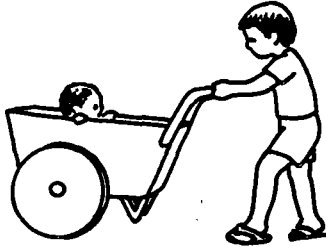
### Bean bags

Prepare small rectangular cloth bags which when filled will be the size of a fist. Fill each one with something like seeds, beads, sand, pebbles, beans, twigs. Put different things in each. Keep the bags almost but not quite full. They can be used for feeling, picking up, throwing, carrying, etc. and will also make different sounds besides having different weights and textures.



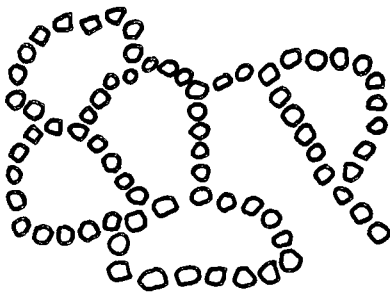
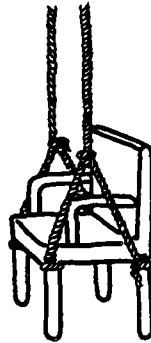
### Barrow

Make a small wheel barrow, trolley or handcart with the help of packing cases or cartons. If it is big enough, the child can sit in it or let others sit in it for pushing or pulling. Or fill with toys, dolls or blocks for pushing and pulling.



### Swing

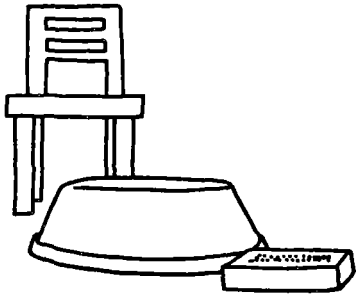
From thick rope, suspend -  
small plank  
child's chair  
thick cushion  
section of tyre -  
to make a swing.



### Floor patterns

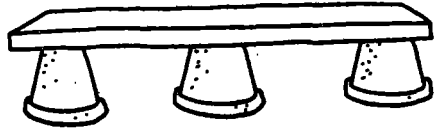
Draw lines and geometrical designs like tiles on the floor. Use -  
chalk on cement floor  
sticks on wet earth or mud  
lines of stones or pebbles  
rope or string  
hoops  
poles and sticks





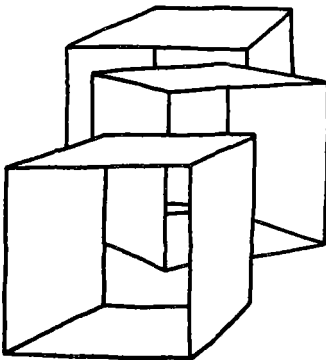
### Climbing frame

Prepare a two or three level set of stairs for climbing with the use of upturned tubs, flat bottomed canisters, bricks, wooden boxes or planks, flower pots, stools and tables.



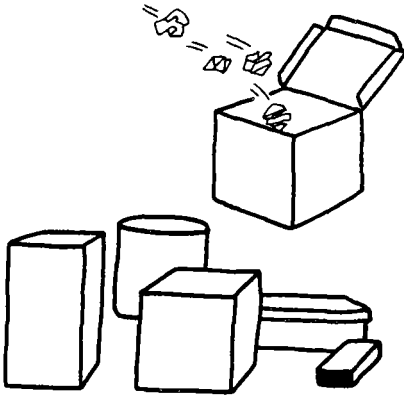
### Balancing board

Put two bricks a few feet apart and place a plank across them supported by one brick at each end. Let the child walk on the plank. As the child gets older, raise the level by using two more bricks or upturned flower pots as bases and increase the distance.



### Tunnel

Half bury a tyre in the earth, so that it stands firm and upright and the child can crawl through it. Make a line of two or three tyres to make a longer tunnel. You can also use cardboard cartons, wooden boxes, large tins, canisters or tubs with the bottoms taken out.

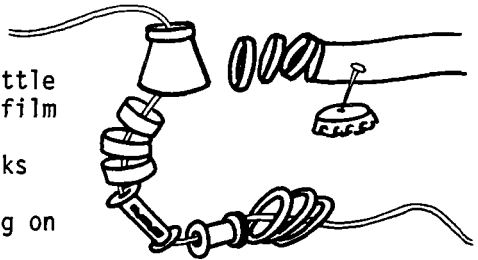


### Hollow building blocks

Stuff a box full of light waste like rags, torn and crushed newspaper or straw. Paste down firmly and decorate with coloured paper. You can use tea packets, cigarette packets, medicine boxes, match boxes and other cardboard cartons.

### Large beads

You can use cotton reels, bottle tops, plastic bangles, used film spools, cardboard tubes, section of plastic hose, necks of small plastic bottles as beads for the child to string on thick string or plastic wire.

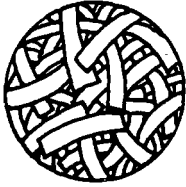
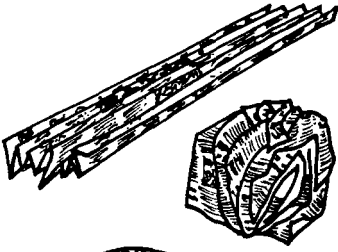


### Paper beads

Tear up newspaper into pieces the size of your palm. Then crush and squeeze a piece in the palm till it becomes the shape of a marble. Cover the ball with a little glue and paste some more pieces of paper on it. Continue rolling till the ball is tight. Repeat two or three times. Leave to dry. When dry, pierce right through with a nail and you have beads. You can prepare beads in the same way from clay and papier-mache.

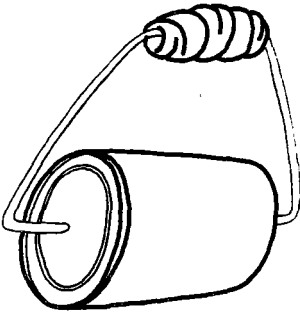
## Light balls

Crush a sheet of newspaper diagonally. Then roll and squeeze into a ball the size of a melon. Paste small strips of paper all over the ball with glue till the ball is firm and tight and the surface fully covered.



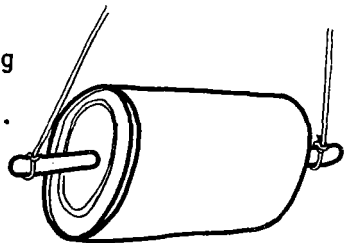
## Roller

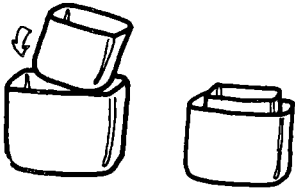
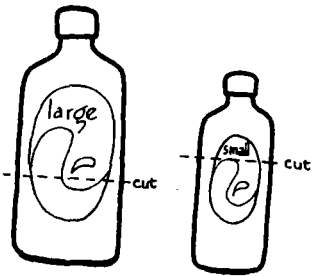
Put a few small objects like seeds or pebbles inside a long cylindrical tin like a beer can or talcum powder tin. This will make a nice sound when the tin rolls. Pierce a hole through the bottom of the tin and through the lid. Pass a piece of thick wire through the two holes and close the lid tightly. Join the two ends of the wire together and knot them firmly to make a handle.



Cover the handle with tightly wound strips of cloth to make it soft to the touch. Let the child push or pull the toy along as he walks and listen to the sound.

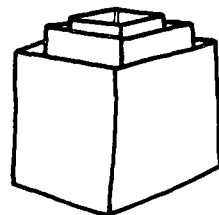
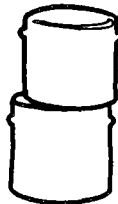
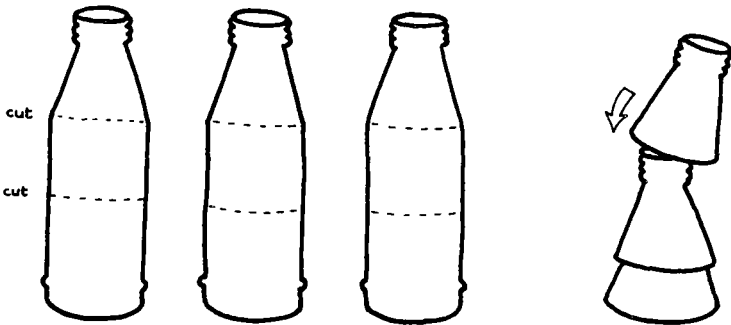
**Note :** To make it roll still better, make the holes big enough to pass a long stick or rod through them. Attach the handle to the two ends of the stick. This will make it roll more smoothly.

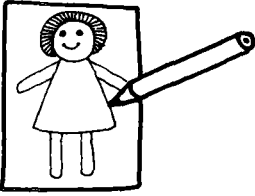




### Nesting and stacking toys

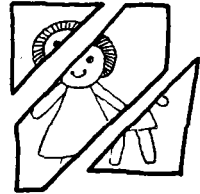
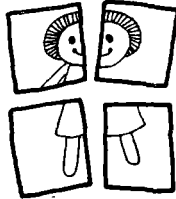
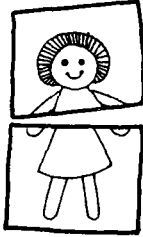
A set should be of two or three things, and not more than five. The objects should not all be the same size, but graded in a series, so that they can be placed one inside the other, or one on top of the other. You can use plastic cups or bowls, plastic jars, lower halves of plastic bottles, baskets, cardboard boxes, and ice-cream cups.





### Jigsaw puzzles

Paste a bright picture on a sheet of card, or draw and colour simple things like a human face, a tree or a house. Cut into two or three regular pieces, which the child can put together. Store in a large bag or envelope.



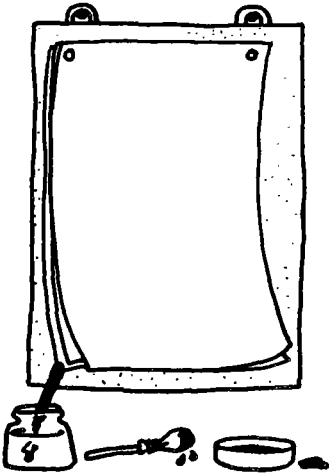
### Wall writing board

Fix an old blackboard, or a wooden door or window frame to the wall, from floor level to a height of about three feet, convenient for the child.

Cover with several layers of newspaper and paste them into place. If it is not possible to make or find a wooden frame, paste the newspapers directly onto the wall.

Start with two or three layers. As the child goes on scribbling and the paper gets covered, add another layer. Where possible, you can use brown paper or other kinds of waste and used paper.

Writing can also be done with sticks on wet earth, clay or sand and with chalk on cement floors.



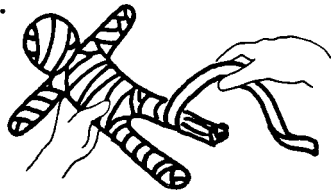


### Newspaper doll

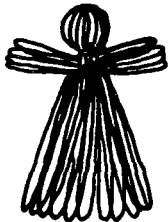
Crush and roll paper into a ball the size of a small orange. Cover with another piece of paper and tie tightly at the neck to form the head. Leave the lower edges loose to cover the body. Prepare long tight rolls of newspaper. Fold one roll to form the legs of the doll. Fold the second smaller one through the first to form the trunk. Pass the third roll through the second to form the arms. Remember to adjust the sizes properly. Join all the pieces by covering with loose paper and twisting. Use the loose edges of the head piece to wrap and squeeze the pieces together.

Using thin long strips of cloth, bandage the limbs and trunk tightly. Start at one hand and work across to the other. Then start at one foot, work up to the trunk and down to the other foot. Paste thin strips of cloth on the head and face to complete.

**Note :** You can use rolls of cloth instead of newspaper.

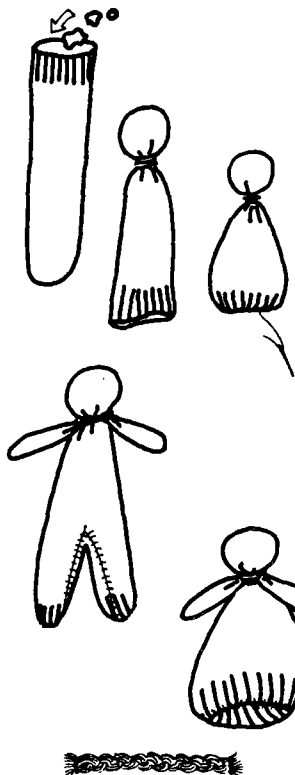


### Rope doll



Prepare a thick hank or skein of rope about 15 inches long by winding the rope around your arm. This will make the head, trunk and legs of the doll. Prepare another smaller hank of rope for the arms. With the same rope, start from the neck and bandage tightly down the trunk. Divide the hank into two portions to form the legs and bandage down, turning up the feet. Wind the rope tightly around one end till the head is formed and tie tightly at the neck. Attach the second smaller hank to form the two arms and bandage tightly to the ends, turning up the hands.

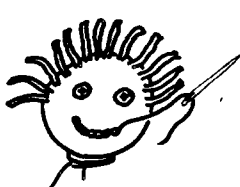




### Sock doll

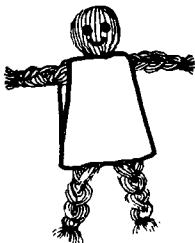
Stuff one sock of the pair with rags to form the head, trunk and legs. Tie tightly around the neck. Place a piece of cardboard at the bottom and sew it up. This will make the doll stand firmly. If you like, you can cut the lower portion into two halves, stuff each and then stitch up to form two legs. Now take about half of the second sock and stuff with rags to form the arms. Tie the arms crosswise to the trunk just below the neck and stitch firmly into position.

Use rags, buttons, and pieces of waste to make the face, and wool or thread for the hair. Decorate and dress the doll.

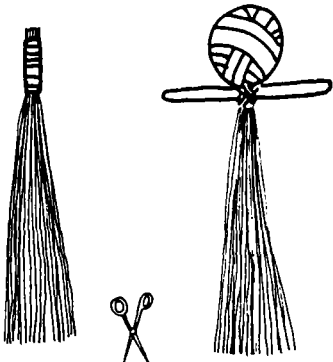


### Plated wool doll

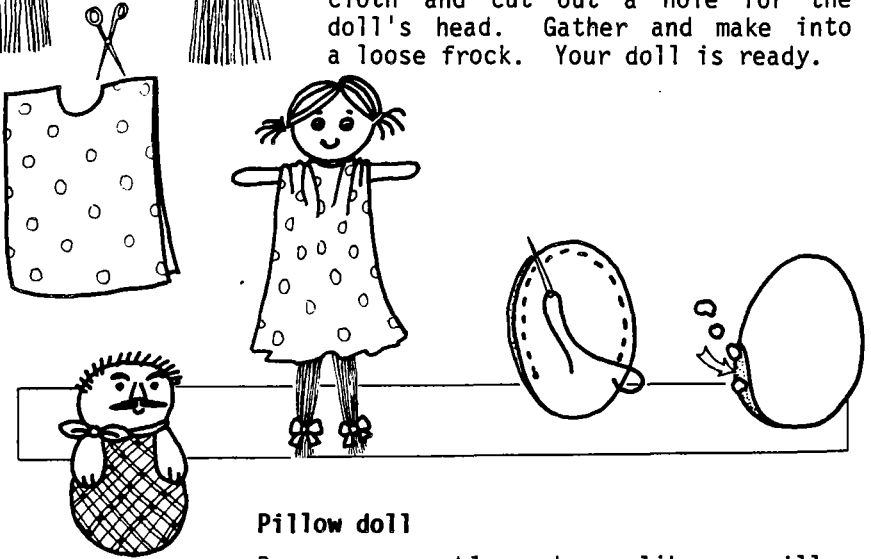
Prepare a hank of wool of whatever size you want by winding it round and round a piece of card or your arm. Stuff one end with rags or crushed paper and tie tightly at the neck to form the head. Divide the lower portion into three equal portions and plait tightly to form the body. Divide the plait again into two and make two plaits for the legs. Make another plait of a suitable size for the arms and tie it tightly crosswise just below the neck. Tie all the loose ends to form the hands and feet. Make the face, decorate and dress.



## Broom doll

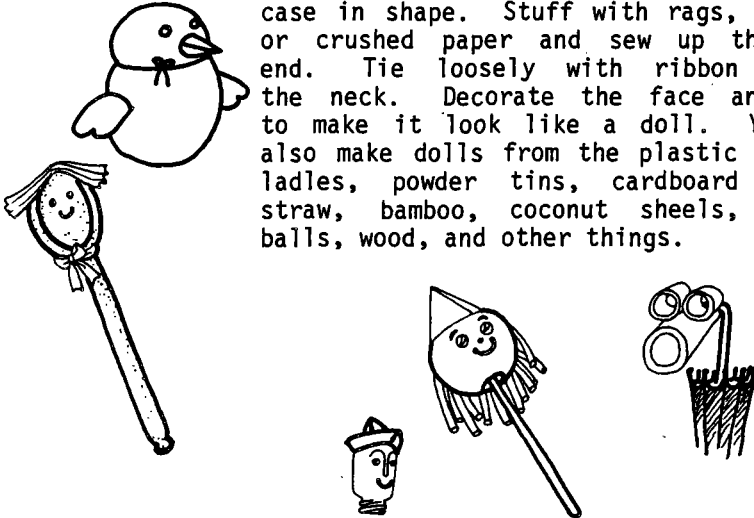


Tie one end of the broom tightly with string. Bandage the upper portion with a strip of cloth to form the head. Decorate the face using wool or yarn for the hair and buttons for the eyes. Tie a stick crosswise at the neck to form the arms. Fold a piece of cloth and cut out a hole for the doll's head. Gather and make into a loose frock. Your doll is ready.



## Pillow doll

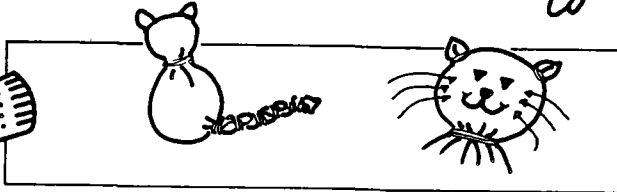
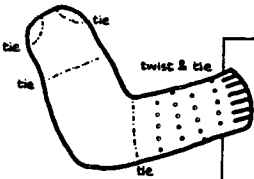
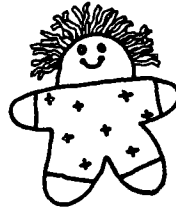
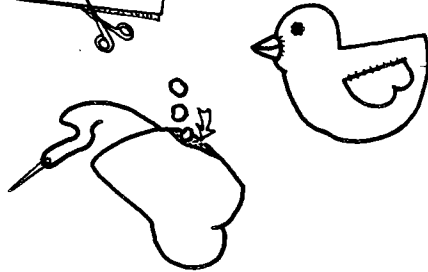
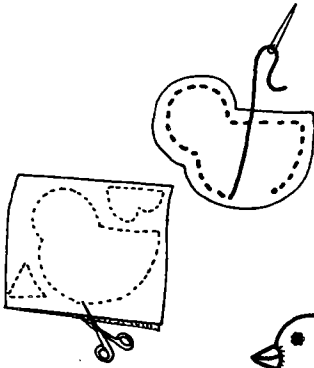
Prepare an oblong bag, like a pillow case in shape. Stuff with rags, cotton, or crushed paper and sew up the open end. Tie loosely with ribbon around the neck. Decorate the face and body to make it look like a doll. You can also make dolls from the plastic bottle, ladles, powder tins, cardboard tubes, straw, bamboo, coconut shells, rubber balls, wood, and other things.





## Stuffed toys

Draw the shape of an animal on a piece of cloth which is folded once and cut the shape out. Stitch around the edges, then turn inside out. Stuff tight and stitch up. Human and animal figures can be made the same way.



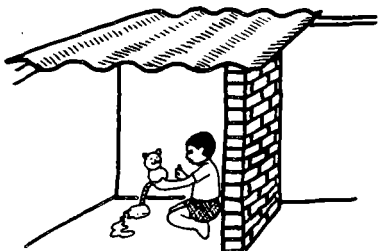
## Toys from socks

You can make these from old socks. Cat - stuff one end of the sock with rags and tie at the neck to form the head and body. Leave the other end loose and twist to form the tail. Attach ears and decorate the face. You can make other shapes like rabbits and fish.

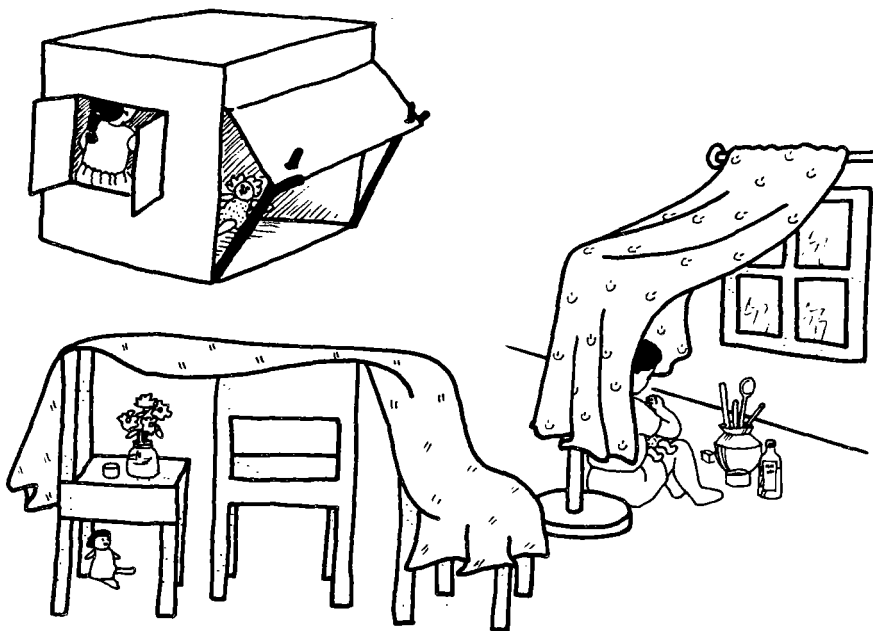


### Play house

In a corner formed by two walls, make a third wall with bricks. Cover with a thick sheet of cardboard and decorate the roof and three walls to look like a house, large enough for a child to enter. Large cardboard cartons or wooden boxes like apple crates or tea chests can also be used. Remove one side to make a three-sided house and decorate suitably.

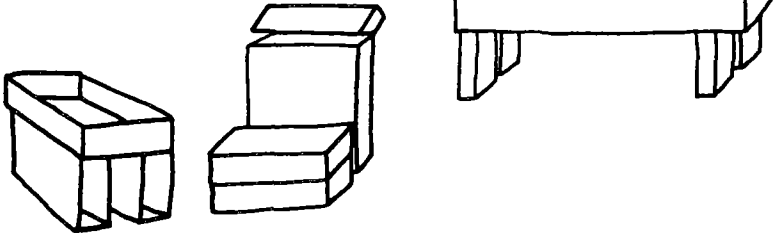
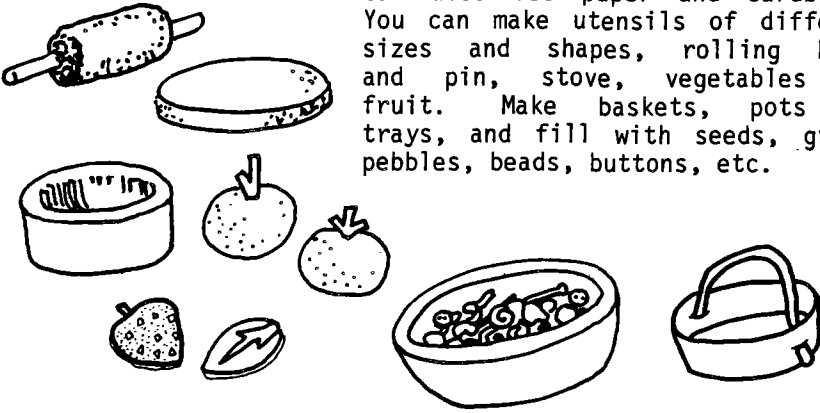


Use hangings, curtains and sheets to form such corners under a table, or in an alcove formed by arranging furniture.



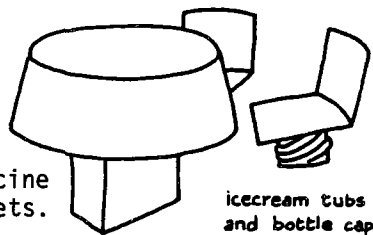
## Kitchen toys

It is best to use clay, but you can also use paper and cardboard. You can make utensils of different sizes and shapes, rolling board and pin, stove, vegetables and fruit. Make baskets, pots and trays, and fill with seeds, grass, pebbles, beads, buttons, etc.

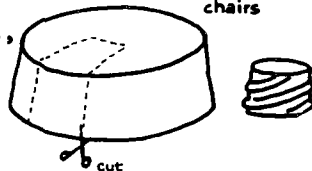


## Furniture

Doll furniture can be made from medicine boxes, matchboxes and cigarette packets. You can make beds, sofas, cupboard, chests, stool and benches with these. Use scraps of cloth to make mattresses, pillows, cushions and coverlets.



icecream tubs  
and bottle caps  
for table and  
chairs



### Driving seat

Make a mock steering wheel for the little 'driver' with a used wheel from an old tricycle, small bicycle or scooter. Fix a wooden or metal rod to the central hub and fix it firmly in the ground. Dig a small hole in the earth and bury the rod firmly so that the wheel is about 10 inches above the ground. The child may sit on the ground or on a low stool in front of the wheel.



### Dressing-up clothes

Make a collection of all kinds of old clothes for dressing up. Best are large pieces of cloth like shawls, towels or small tablecloths which can be wrapped in different ways. Accessories such as shoes, hats and caps, bags, umbrellas, necklaces, bangles, belts, scarves, spectacles without lenses, can all be used.

