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# OUT OF BABYHOOD INTO CHILDHOOD

1 TO 6 YEARS



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
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## NO LONGER A BABY

When your child begins to walk and talk he is no longer a baby. Though he is still dependent on you for almost everything he is daily becoming less so and learning to do more for himself. Encourage his increasing desire for independence. He develops rapidly between the first and sixth years, and during these years he should strengthen the foundations of a healthy body and mind that have been laid during infancy. Parents who help their child to do this are giving him an endowment for his whole life that will be of more value to him than any other kind of wealth. Parents who look upon the young child as "too little to be taught" or "too young to understand" are piling up trouble for him as well as themselves. Most life habits are learned during the early years. The child's first and most important teachers are his parents. They must work together and plan consistently for the child.

*Healthy living* depends largely on practicing health habits and avoiding disease. See that the child's habits of eating, sleeping, eliminating, bathing, and exercising are good. Do not let him go near a sick person even if the sickness is "only a cold" or "just a cough." At least twice a year take him to the doctor and to the dentist for examination and advice, so that defects or early signs of trouble may be corrected. Have the doctor give him such special protection against disease as vaccination and immunization.

*The home* has an influence on the child that can scarcely be overestimated. A clean, orderly, and hygienic place to live is needed for the child's health, but this is not enough. The home is where his character develops, where he is constantly learning by imitation and experience. Listen to a child's play and notice how he imitates everyone around him. Now he is mother, hushing his doll to sleep; now father, lying on his back under a chair, "fixing the car." A child will do what he sees others do and say what he hears others say. Be sure that he finds good examples in his home. (See Child Care, Children's Bureau Publication No. 30, and Child Management, No. 143.)

**ARE YOU HELPING YOUR CHILD TO GROW UP?**

## HABITS

*Habits* are learned by doing the same thing again and again. Children readily learn habits of talking, thinking, feeling, and acting. It is no harder for them to form good habits than bad ones. The more satisfaction there is in doing a thing the first time the easier it is to do it the second; if there is no satisfaction at all in doing it the child probably will not do it again.

*Smiles and words of approval* give children much pleasure. When the child is learning to feed himself praise his efforts and do not scold if he spills his food. Do not hurry him when he is learning; it takes time to get skill in handling a spoon or lacing a shoe. Bedtime, naptime, and mealtime are too often times of scoldings and tears because the mother is in a hurry or the hour is late. Plan your day so that you can take time to be patient, firm, and gentle in guiding your child.

*Attention* is what every child wants. If you ignore him when he is good and fuss over him when he is naughty he will be naughty in order to get this attention. Watch for opportunities to praise the child, not to punish him. Punishments are useful only in teaching him what he must not do. They do not teach good habits and may even stress bad ones too much. Never punish a child when you are angry and never make threats that you can not carry out. Punishments that can well be used with a little child are putting him into a room alone (not in the dark) and taking away some pleasure. Keeping him away from other children for a while is a fair punishment for quarreling with them; the most effective punishments are closely related to the misdeeds. Punishing to-day the same misdeed that was ignored yesterday is worse than useless; discipline to be effective must be consistent.

*Regularity* is a great help in habit building. A child finds routine pleasing and restful; discipline to be effective must be consistent. If his habits of eating, sleeping, and going to the toilet are regular he is laying the foundations of health.

**PARENTS MUST WORK TOGETHER TO GIVE THE CHILD GOOD HABITS**

## PLAY

*Active play* teaches the child to use his mind and his body. When he runs, climbs, and throws his ball he is learning to move with balance and skill. His muscles are growing strong and quick to act. Playthings with which the child can do something—balls, blocks, wagons, tools, dishes, dolls, and crayons—stimulate his imagination and ingenuity. Large apparatus, such as a seesaw, a smooth board for coasting, a short ladder, helps in developing muscle balance and control. Every child should have a box or a cupboard where he may keep his toys and other possessions, and a room—or at least a corner—where he may play undisturbed.

*Play* with other children helps the child to venture out of the protected life of the home and meet a larger social group. Through this kind of play he learns to take his part in the game and wait his turn. (See Backyard Playgrounds, Children's Bureau Folder No. 2.)

*Outdoor sunshine* helps children to grow and to keep healthy. Every child should get well tanned on the face, neck, chest, arms, and legs, and, if possible, on the rest of the body as well. To tan the child the sun must shine on his skin directly—not through window glass or clothing. (See Sunlight for Babies, Children's Bureau Folder No. 5.)

In selecting a house where a small child is to live choose one, if you can, with some rooms that have a sunny southern exposure and with a sunny porch or yard where the child can have a sand box and other play materials that do not take much space. A southeast or southern exposure is the best for the nursery, or children's room, which should be kept well ventilated. In the city it is well to select a home near a park, if possible, so that there will be space for free running and games. An apartment in the city is not the best home for little children, as usually there is no porch or yard, and frequently the only playground is the street.

### CHILDREN NEED SUN ALL THE YEAR ROUND

## SLEEP AND REST

A child needs much more sleep and rest than a grown person. Until he is 6 or 7 he usually needs to sleep at least 12 hours every night, and he should have a nap of an hour or two in the late morning or early afternoon, depending on the family dinner hour. An undernourished child especially requires rest during the day. Let such children have rest periods both in the morning and in the afternoon. Even if the child does not sleep he should undress and lie quietly on his bed during this time.

At night bedtime should come so regularly that the child will expect it and know that there is no use begging to stay up. He should be in bed early, by 6 or 6.30, and he should go to sleep alone without coaxing or rocking or having mother lie down beside him. He should sleep in a bed by himself; with windows open and lights out.

Some children refuse to go to sleep without a nipple to suck, or a special toy or blanket to hug, or mother's hand to hold. A child who has grown to depend on something or someone to help him go to sleep must be taught to overcome this habit. It will be hard to teach him to go to sleep without the aid that he is used to, but the parents must not give in to him. They must make him realize that crying will not get him what he wants, whether nipple, toy, blanket, or mother's hand. Success depends on the parents' firmness, gentleness, and consistency.

To get the most good from sleep a child must be undressed and in his own bed. Sleeping at the motion pictures or in an automobile does not take the place of rest in bed. To deprive a child of sleep is as bad as to deprive him of food. Do not keep him up to amuse visitors or for evening rides or entertainments, for these only excite and fatigue him. Only a serious emergency should be allowed to interfere with the regular bed hour.

Many children are restless or cross and some seem stupid or sick because they are tired. Be sure that your child is not one of these.

### TEACH YOUR CHILD GOOD SLEEP HABITS

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## CLEANLINESS

*Toilet habits.*—Many children can be trained to use the toilet by the end of the first year. If your child has not yet learned this habit, begin to train him. Most children have a bowel movement at the same time every day, such as after breakfast. Always take the child to the toilet about this time. Soon he will learn to have his bowel movement at the toilet. Do not allow the child to play at the toilet. Leave him alone until his bowels move; it may take as long as 7 or 8 minutes. The toilet should have a low seat or a step for the child's feet.

To train a child not to wet his clothes is harder, but you can deal with this problem in the same way. Take him often to the toilet (every half hour, if necessary, for a few days) and praise him for urinating at the right times and for keeping dry at other times. It will be some time before he learns to show his need, but he should learn this by the time he is 18 months old. If he is to learn the "dry habit" he must not remain wet at any time, day or night; therefore if he wets his clothes change them at once.

Forming the dry habit by day is the first step in preventing bed-wetting. Keep the child from drinking much water or other fluids after 5 p. m. and see that he is not overtired nor excited in the late afternoon. Wake him at 9 or 10 o'clock and take him to the toilet. Be sure he is fully awake before he urinates; otherwise he is forming the very habit of urinating during sleep or half sleep that you are trying to break. Do not leave a child in a wet bed. If a child 3 years old continues to wet the bed consult the doctor. (See *Child Management*, pp. 11-17.)

*Keeping the body clean.*—The little child needs a daily bath as much as the baby. Under any circumstances he must have it two or three times a week. The genitals should be kept clean and free from irritation. Hands and face should be washed before meals and at bedtime, and hands washed after using the toilet. A child should learn to brush his teeth night and morning.

## CLOTHING

Soon after the first birthday, or even before, dresses are usually replaced by rompers or two-piece suits, and diapers by drawers or bloomers. (The latter change helps in forming the "dry habit." for many children continue to wet their clothes only as long as they wear diapers.)

Simple clothes, easily washed, light in weight, and loose enough to allow freedom of movement should be worn. The amount of indoor and of outdoor clothing varies, not merely according to the season of the year but according to the exercise the child takes and the temperature, indoors and outdoors. An 18-month-old child needs more and warmer clothing than a 4-year-old who plays vigorously. In warm weather a child is more comfortable if he wears very little indoors or outdoors. Even in cold weather warm clothing should not be worn indoors if the house is well heated. For cold days outdoors a warm outer coat, leggings, overshoes, and wool gloves are needed. Sweaters provide an easy means of adjusting the clothing to slight changes of temperature, but a sweater may be too warm indoors unless the room temperature is below 65° F. A sweater should not be worn under the dress or suit, for if worn thus it can not be taken off easily when the child comes indoors. Children are more often too heavily than too lightly dressed. A "built-up" neck is best for a child's underwaist; if it has shoulder straps instead they should be wide and and should cross in the back. The bloomers should be buttoned to the underwaist; and side garters, not round ones, should be worn.

Shoes of the "blucher" type (having the tongue and the toe of one piece of leather) and straight along the inner side are best for children. The soles should be firm, flat, moderately flexible, and not slippery. Select shoes that are about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch longer than the feet and about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch wider. Stockings, after shrinking, should be about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch longer than the feet. When either shoes or stockings are outgrown replace them with larger ones.

### WASH THE CHILD'S CLOTHES OFTEN

## FOOD HABITS

When the child is a year old he should have been weaned from the breast and from the bottle. He can begin to hold his cup and spoon and should be encouraged to help himself. If a child is healthy his appetite will be good, though no anxiety need be felt about an occasional meal refused.

Parents should take the attitude that every food offered will be eaten without question. Never force food on a child, especially when he is cross or tired. Food will be eaten as a matter of course if meals are served with absolute regularity and without emphasis on the importance of eating. Meals should be served attractively to the child at a table where he can sit comfortably. A little child may grow tired while feeding himself and may be helped but should not be coaxed. If a fussy child eats well, praise him, but if he eats poorly pay little attention to him. If he refuses a food do not give another in the hope of getting him to eat something. Teach him to eat what is put before him. If your attitude is consistent he will learn to eat everything that is good for him. If the regular meal is not eaten sweets should be withheld and no food permitted before the next regular meal.

Children imitate grown-ups in their habits of eating. Be careful not to make your child finicky by letting him know that you do not like this or that food or that it does not agree with you. Words are not the only way by which dislike may be shown. A child understands a look quite as well as a word.

A child who has had little solid food before the end of the first year should be started gradually with cereals, dry bread, mashed vegetables, and egg. Offer only one new food at a time. When a new food is given offer a very small amount and later increase it to the amounts indicated in the food plan on page 10. These amounts will vary with the age of the child. Give no food between meals except milk or plain bread and butter once a day, and not even these if the child does not have a good appetite for his regular meals.

### SERVE CHILDREN'S MEALS REGULARLY

## DIET

The right foods in sufficient amounts are necessary if a child is to be healthy and grow as he should. Certain foods build bones and teeth and make the child strong and rosy. These are: Milk, eggs, meat, bread and cereals, green leafy vegetables, fresh fruits such as oranges, butter (which is better than butter substitutes), and cod-liver oil. Fruit and green leafy vegetables should be eaten twice a day, meat or fish three or four times a week. An egg should be given daily, at any meal. A glass of water should be taken two or three times a day.

*A quart of milk a day* should be given to children 1 to 6 years of age. Some of the quart may be used on cereals, in milk soups, or in milk puddings. For children under 2 all milk should be boiled. For children over 2 all milk except that which has been pasteurized should be boiled. (See *Why Drink Milk?* Children's Bureau Folder No. 3, Revised.)

*Vegetables* should be cooked until tender—as a rule about 30 minutes—in a little salted water in a covered kettle. Spinach, young beet tops, or young turnip tops need a shorter cooking; no water need be added (enough remains on the leaves after they have been washed thoroughly). Young green cabbage should be cut in small pieces or shredded when raw, and cooked a very short time in boiling salted water in an open kettle. Do not cook vegetables with fat meat, as this makes them hard to digest. Potatoes may be baked or boiled. For children under 2 all vegetables should be finely chopped or mashed.

*Cereals*—wheat, oats, or corn—should be cooked at least an hour. Hot cooked cereals are much better than cold ready-to-serve ones. Of wheat cereals and breads, the dark ones are better than the light. Bread should not be served fresh; it is best dried or toasted.

*Meat and fish* may be broiled, boiled, or baked.

*Cod-liver oil* (two or three teaspoonfuls a day) should be given during the second year at least. It may be given before or after breakfast and supper.

*Forbidden* are coffee and tea, rich desserts, fried foods, nuts, and all highly seasoned and greasy foods.

## A DAILY FOOD PLAN

The child's mealtimes depend on the circumstances of the home. The following plan is suitable for many homes and many children:

### BREAKFAST, 7-8 O'CLOCK

Fresh fruit: Orange, grapefruit, apple.  
Whole milk (1 or 2 cupfuls).  
Bread with butter.  
Cereal (3-6 tablespoonfuls).  
Egg or bacon.

### DINNER, 12-1 O'CLOCK

Green vegetables, one or more (1-3 tablespoonfuls):  
Chard, spinach, beet tops, turnip tops, or other cooked greens.  
Lettuce, raw.  
String beans or lima beans.  
Green peas.  
Asparagus.  
Tomatoes, raw, stewed, or canned.  
Cauliflower.  
Cabbage, carrots, or celery; raw or cooked.  
Meat or fish, finely cut up (1-3 tablespoonfuls); sometimes egg may be given instead.  
Potatoes, rice, or plain boiled macaroni (2-3 tablespoonfuls).  
Bread with butter, if the child is still hungry after the other foods are eaten.  
Whole milk (1 cupful). This may be omitted if a quart is taken during the day.  
Simple dessert, such as:

Puddings—	Fruits—
Bread pudding.	Prunes, stewed.
Rice pudding.	Apples, baked, in sauce, or raw.
Tapioca pudding.	Oranges.
Junket.	Bananas, fully ripe.
Custard.	Rhubarb, stewed.
	Pears, stewed or baked.

[Plain ice cream made of milk or cream that has been pasteurized may be given occasionally as dessert.]

### SUPPER, 5-5.30 O'CLOCK

Whole milk (1 or 2 cupfuls).  
Cereal (3 or 4 tablespoonfuls), milk toast, or egg.  
Green vegetable or fruit as at dinner.  
Bread with butter.

*The younger children* (from 1 to 2 years) may do better on four meals a day, as follows: Milk and toast at 6 a. m., breakfast at 9, dinner at 1, and supper at 5. When a child has learned to feed himself his breakfast and dinner may be eaten with the family. Until the child is 4 or 5 years old he should be given his supper before the family, whenever possible, so as to avoid the excitement of the family meal just before going to bed. All preschool children should have supper by 5.30.

## KEEPING THE WELL CHILD WELL

*Half-yearly examinations.*—When the doctor examines your child (at least twice a year) he not only will look for signs of disease but will see whether the child's nutrition is good, his body developed normally, and his posture correct.

With the child completely undressed, the doctor will observe his posture, weigh and measure him, examine his head, eyes, nose, mouth, throat, ears, heart, lungs, abdomen, genitals, back, arms, legs, and feet. He will ask about his food and his habits of eating, sleeping, exercise, and elimination. He will compare his weight and height with the average weight and height for children of his age. (During the preschool years the average child gains annually about 5 pounds in weight and nearly 3 inches in height, but all children do not gain at the same rate.)

At the dentist's half-yearly examination he will clean the teeth and fill any cavities. The "baby teeth" need home care and the dentist's care just as much as the permanent teeth. The first permanent teeth (the "six-year molars") usually appear in the sixth year.

*Protection against communicable diseases.*—The doctor can prevent certain diseases. He can vaccinate the child against smallpox and immunize him against diphtheria and against typhoid fever. Every child should have this protection. The child should have been vaccinated before he was 1 year old, and he should be vaccinated again before entering school. When he was 6 months old or soon after he should have been immunized against diphtheria. Six months later he should be given the Schick test, which shows whether he needs a second immunization. When he is about to enter school he should have the Schick test again, to see whether he is still immune from diphtheria. If a case of typhoid fever is found in the neighborhood or if your child is to travel have him immunized against this disease.

The child may get other communicable diseases—common colds, measles, whooping cough, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, and infantile paralysis. To protect him against these keep him away from all sick persons and out of crowds. Build up his resistance with a good diet, outdoor play in the sun, and plenty of sleep.

**TEACH THE CHILD TO REGARD THE DOCTOR AND THE DENTIST AS HIS FRIENDS**

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## IS YOUR CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL?

The child who is to enter school for the first time in the fall should have a thorough examination by a physician and by a dentist in the spring or early summer. This will allow the summertime for correction of defects and for vaccination; also for immunization if needed. (School brings added danger of getting communicable diseases.) If the child has not been having half-yearly examinations up to this time a thorough examination is especially needed.

A physical defect puts a child at a disadvantage with his schoolmates. Poor sight or hearing may make him seem dull in school and cause him to become discouraged and uninterested. Do not let your child reach school age with a handicap that can be removed. Ask yourself these questions:

Does my child see and hear well?

Are his teeth sound and well kept?

Are his nose and throat in healthy condition?

Does the doctor consider his weight correct for his height and age?

Are his eyes bright, his cheeks rosy, his muscles firm, his posture erect?

Has he been vaccinated against smallpox and immunized against diphtheria (also against typhoid fever if this is necessary)?

Has he good habits of eating, sleeping, bathing, elimination, self-control, and obedience?

### THE HEALTHY CHILD

A healthy child has pink cheeks, red lips, and bright eyes with no circles under them. His body is straight and strong; he has smooth skin, clean teeth, and firm muscles. He grows tall and gains in weight. He is active—runs, shouts, jumps, and climbs—is always interested in something, and is often noisy. He is hungry at mealtimes, and he sleeps soundly and long. His bowels move daily. He has no abnormal discharge from eyes, ears, or nose. He breathes with his mouth closed. He does not have pains or aches. To keep him healthy he needs plenty of good food, plenty of sleep, and plenty of vigorous outdoor play.

