

**Mental Health**  
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**Prevaricating Parents Have Liars For Children**

Children are Highly Imitative -- and Copy the Worst in Us -- With the Best

In a recent article in the column I stated that parents unwittingly or unwittingly, are responsible for many of the later mental troubles of their children. Some parents are unwilling to believe this; they feel quite competent to bring up children in the way they should go. If a child later finds himself in jail, in a mental hospital, or any other of the institutions which society maintains to take care of those who fall by the wayside, parents usually find a way to shift the blame to other shoulders.

Here is a typical case quoted in Dr. Blatz's and Mrs. Bott's book, "The Management of Young Children."

"A little girl of three and a half was very fond of sugar. At breakfast one morning her mother had just filled the sugar bowl when she was called to the telephone. When she came back the bowl was half empty. She said:

Marjorie, did you touch the brown sugar?"

"No, mother."

"Are you sure you did not touch the sugar?"

"No I didn't, mother."

"Now Marjorie, you told your mother you did not touch the sugar when you did. Mother knows you did, because God told her you did. When you say you have not done a thing that you really did do, that is what we call a lie. A lie is very naughty, and mother will spank you for telling a lie."

"The child was spanked."

This may seem to be an extreme case, but it really is not. If the average mother (this applies also to fathers) will carefully think over her attitude in similar circumstances she will find that she is often quite as inconsistent.

Of course there are circumstances when the truth is perhaps not advisable, but they are probably rare. And certainly the best way that a respect for truth can be developed in a child is for parents themselves to show a healthy respect for it, especially in their own lives from day to day.

The same principle holds good in all other phases of life. Children are highly imitative; they not only imitate the things in which we should like them to follow us, but often to our dismay they imitate us in the things of which we are not so proud and which we had fondly hoped were hidden from sight.

High winds, rain and warm weather have helped to soften up the ice on the lake and it looks as though it will be all gone this week.



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**Health Service**

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**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.**

The communicable diseases are so named because they have certain characteristics in common, the most outstanding and important being that they all spread from one person to another.

Communicable diseases are caused by living agents called bacteria, parasites or rickettsiae germs. Each disease has its particular germ. The germ of diphtheria never causes any disease except diphtheria, and so it is with others in the group.

The germs are usually passed directly from one person to another. Most of the communicable diseases from which we suffer in this country are spread in this manner. The germs leave the body in the secretions of the

nose, mouth and throat. In the acts of coughing, sneezing, expectorating or loud talking, these secretions are thrown out into the surrounding air, into the faces of persons who are nearby and who receive the germs in this way.

It is obvious that we should cough and sneeze only into a handkerchief, and that we should not talk directly into another person's face.

The saliva is, of course, deposited on all eating and drinking utensils which are placed in the mouth or which come into contact with the lips. If these utensils are used by another person before they have been cleansed, that person takes into his mouth the first individual's saliva, which

may contain the germs of disease.

That is why it is unsafe to use common eating or drinking utensils, the common drinking-cup constituting a very real danger. It is also why dishes should be thoroughly washed after use and why there are laws requiring the sterilization of dishes in public eating places.

You may agree that such care is reasonable, providing some person in the home is ill and that it appears sensible to be careful outside the home, but you are apt to feel, when everyone in the home is apparently well, that no particular care is necessary; that it is quite all right for everyone to use the common cup at the sink when drinking between meals.

The reason why this is not all right and why you need to take care at all times is, first of all, because it is only by remembering to be careful always, that you continue to do so when it is necessary. The second reason is that it is not possible to tell which persons have disease germs in their noses and throats. The germ is, of course, present in those suffering from the disease caused by that particular germ, but germs may also be present in

persons who have recovered, and in the case of some diseases, even when the person has not been ill. The spread of communicable diseases may, to some extent, be arrested by the control of coughs, sneezes and expectoration, and by the avoidance of common eating and drinking utensils.

Questions concerning Health, addressed to the Canadian Medical Association, 184 College Street, Toronto, will be answered personally by letter.

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