



Easter Seal mail campaign gets underway

The Easter Seal Society is here 12 months of the year to help children who have physical disabilities. The month of March, however, is the time of the Society's direct mail fundraising campaign when more than 36 million Easter Seals will be mailed to nearly 4 million households all over Ontario. The Easter Seal Campaign goal for 1991 is \$5 million.

The Seals remind people that the need is there - all the time. The need to help children to achieve their greatest potential.

The outlook for 1991 is formidable as the Society faces the effects of increased costs, tight budgets and serious economic decisions at all levels of government.

"The Easter Seal caseload is larger every year," explains George Doty, the Society's President. "This is because advances in medicine and technology save and prolong lives that would have been lost 10 years ago. And it is important to make those lives as full and rewarding as humanly possible."

There are 7,700 children in Ontario on the Easter Seal caseload. Those children and their families

are helped by a variety of programs ranging from nursing care, summer camps, diagnostic clinics in Northern Ontario, financial assistance for equipment, treatment and transportation; respite care, parent/family support groups, augmentative communication programs; preschools and rehabilitation research grants.

Founded in 1922 as the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, The Easter Seal Society is dedicated to helping families integrate their children in the community through home care programs and other services. This makes a lot of sense psychologically for the child, the school, the community and the workforce - it also saves tax dollars that would otherwise go towards institutional care.

A generous response to the Easter Seal Campaign translates into help for children who need extra thought and consideration to accomplish more than they or you could have believed possible.

"They're pretty wonderful kids," says Doty. "Give them a chance this spring for all year round."

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Defining a fever

By VALERIE CUNNINGHAM, R.N.

Here it is late winter and your baby is burning up. You take her temperature and it is 38.3 degrees Centigrade. That means:

- a) baby has a cold
- b) baby has a fever
- c) baby is normal
- d) the thermometer is broken

Okay, so you are used to Fahrenheit and have not yet become comfortable with metric. Well, if your baby and thermometer are new, you will probably now have to get used to Centigrade degrees. 37.0 degrees C. will be noted as "normal." Therefore, 38.3 degrees must be a fever, right? Well, probably, but not necessarily. 37.0 degrees is normal for an oral temperature, but a rectal temperature can be expected to be higher (and an axilla or under arm temperature can be expected to be lower); so 37.8 degrees might be normal for your baby ... and 38.3 degrees is only half a degree higher in Centigrade. But wait, Centigrade degrees are bigger than Fahrenheit ones, so the difference between 38.0 and 39.0 degrees Centigrade (or Celsius) is much

greater than the difference between 99.0 and 100.0 degrees F. So all answers are possible, although "d" is most unlikely and "b" most likely.

The Physician's Handbook defines a fever as a rectal temperature of 38.5 or higher on at least four occasions over a minimum of a two-week period. So what. You as parents will be concerned if baby is "feverish" for a few days (and you would be wiser to take the temperature of a young baby under the arm). You will want to know the cause of the fever and treat it. Often no definite cause is found, but knowing the elevations and pattern of temperature is one piece of useful information. That combined with an awareness of any other changes in your baby's condition are important facts to report to your family doctor.

Valerie Cunningham is a paediatric nurse who has an independent practice. She may be reached at 877-6390. During April and May she will lead two parenting courses for the Parent-Child Centre. Call the Centre at 873-2960 for more information.

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