

A FUTURE
FOR EVERY CHILD



1979 - INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF THE CHILD

DID YOU KNOW

Twenty years ago, the United Nations issued the DECLARATION of the RIGHTS of the CHILD. Every child all over the world has the right to:

- affection, love and understanding
- adequate nutrition and medical care
- free education
- full opportunity for play and recreation
- a name and nationality
- special care, if handicapped
- be among the first to receive relief in times of disaster
- learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities
- be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood
- enjoy these rights, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national or social origin

In this, the Year of the Child, let us all take a close look at our own children, as well as those in the underdeveloped countries, to see if all children really enjoy these rights.

PLAY TODAY?

You say you love your children
And are concerned they learn today?
So am I - that's why I'm providing
A variety of kinds of play.

You're asking me the value
of blocks and other such play?
Your children are solving problems
They will use that skill everyday.

You're asking what's the value
of having your children play?
Your daughter's creating a tower;
She may be a builder some day.

You're saying you don't want your son
to play in that "sissy" way?
He's learning to cuddle a doll;
He may be a father some day.

You're questioning the interest centres
They just look like useless play?
Your children are making choices;
They'll be on their own some day.

You're worried your children aren't
learning
And later they'll have to pay?
They're learning a pattern of learning;
For they'll be learners always.

Thought for International Year of
the Child:

"It'll be a great day when our nursery
schools have all the money they need
and the Armed Forces have to hold
a bake sale"

EARLY LEARNING

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It used to be assumed that the first six years of a child's life was a time for fun and physical growth. It was preferred not to "educate" a child until he was of school age. "Let the kid alone. He'll never have it so good again for the rest of his life" was a familiar refrain that typified yesterday's philosophy of early childhood.

The philosophy was not completely wrong. Children DEFINITELY do grow physically and play (or having fun) is the most important aspect of a young child's life. But THAT PHILOSOPHY was not completely right either. It was thought that play and education were opposite things. Now we know better. In the past thirty years educational experts and early childhood specialists have discovered that PLAY IS LEARNING and that play is one of the most EFFECTIVE kinds of learning known. It is now an accepted fact that the FIRST FIVE YEARS of a child's life are the MOST IMPORTANT during which time the FOUNDATION OF ALL LATER DEVELOPMENT is formed. In other words the young child is one of the best learners. During his preschool years a child learns more- faster - than at any other time in his life. Some educationists have estimated that by the age of FIVE a child's I.Q. is basically ESTABLISHED. By this age attitudes toward learning and patterns of thinking have settled in one's mind; these attitudes and patterns guide a person's thoughts for the rest of his life.

"A child at play is a child at work." We say that adults in the community work, boys and girls study and little children play. In actual fact play provides for the child every thing that the adult gains through education, work, recreation and social life.

Play is the natural way a child learns. It is the way he learns to concentrate, to exercise his imagination, to try out new ideas, to practise grown-up behaviour and to develop a sense of control over his world. Children at play are "little researchers" working at a job they love; they combine a seriousness with an enjoyment that adults often envy.

Nature has always been on the side of early learning. When children are born they are graced with an insatiable sense of curiosity. They want to touch, smell, taste, see and hear everything. The more they learn the more they want to learn. They want to talk; they want to imitate others; they want to explore. Because of this strong urge young children are exceptionally open to environmental influences. In a home where discovery is discouraged children often learn how not to learn, a tragic outcome. In homes where early explorations are encouraged the minds and personalities of children grow and develop the potential that is each child's legacy.

A child's spirit is that unique combination of curiosity and pleasure with which he seeks to learn. This spirit can be weakened or strengthened depending on outside influences. It is best for the adult to accept a child for what he is and to encourage him to develop his potential AT HIS OWN PACE.

The first formal school experience of many children today occurs as early as at 2½ - 3 years of age. Nursery

school serves many purposes and for most children is an extremely valuable experience.

The Nursery School's main purpose is to provide experiences which invite a child's interest, stimulate his creativity and satisfy his desire to explore and discover. The equipment of the Nursery School is chosen to help the child to grow, learn and care for others as he develops at his own speed.

The physical appearance of the playroom is set up to create an atmosphere free of confusion to allow the children to take as much responsibility for themselves as possible and thus reduce the need for adult interference.

The HOUSEKEEPING CENTRE is set up to look as much like a child-sized home as possible with enough detail to be realistic. In the FLOOR BLOCK area children work co-operatively constructing buildings, roads, etc. A variety of CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT (hammer set, lego) allows development of imagination, motor skills and eye-hand coordination.

MANIPULATIVE TOYS are used in a limited area and often appeal to a shy or new child. They increase experience with colour, shape, weight, size. Included are puzzles, stacking or nesting sets, beads and peg boards.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES provide a rich media for sensory experiences and an opportunity for real exploration. There is no end to the possibilities of progress in the use of art material such as paints, crayons, play doh, glue, material scraps of varied textures.

WATER PLAY and SAND PLAY are the most relaxing and absorbing creative activities. There is magic - there is discovery, development of coordination, fantasy during dramatic play, experiencing what sinks, floats, is wet, is dry.

The SCIENCE CENTRE encourages interest of the children in the natural world around them.

In the LIBRARY CORNER children quietly enjoy books.

Children are exposed to MUSIC as listeners to a variety of records and as players with a variety of simple home-made instruments. Use of the latter as well as sing-songs and dancing encourage development of their sense of rhythm as well as self-expression.

CIRCLE is an organized activity stimulated by the teacher. It is a formal experience during which the entire group listens to stories or poems, sings together, learns rhymes, plays circle games, etc.

In summary, it is hoped that the child will develop a positive self-image as well as good relations with adults and other children.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

- If a child lives with CRITICISM
He learns to CONDEMN
- If a child lives with HOSTILITY
He learns to FIGHT
- If a child lives with RIDICULE
He learns to be SHY
- If a child lives with SHAME
He learns to feel GUILTY
- If a child lives with TOLERANCE
He learns to be PATIENT
- If a child lives with ENCOURAGEMENT
He learns CONFIDENCE
- If a child lives with PRAISE
He learns to APPRECIATE
- If a child lives with FAIRNESS
He learns JUSTICE
- If a child lives with SECURITY
He learns to have FAITH
- If a child lives with APPROVAL
He learns to LIKE HIMSELF
- If a child lives with ACCEPTANCE and
FRIENDSHIP
He learns to find LOVE in the WORLD.