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# PLAYING WITH CHILDREN I

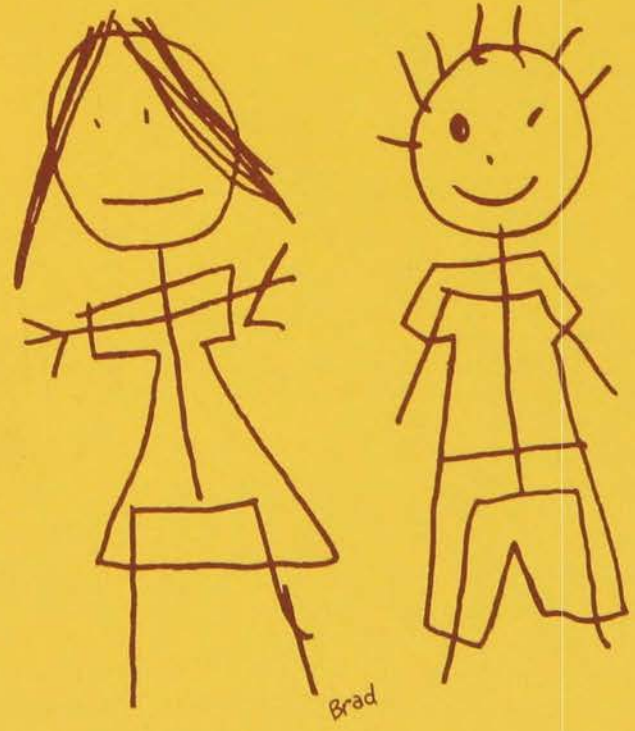


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## A 4-H CHILD CARE PROJECT

for  
baby sitters  
child care helpers  
big sisters and brothers  
school assistants

Member's Guide



Prepared by Barbara H. Beatt, Assistant Extension Specialist,  
Family Living, and Marilyn J. Olson, Extension Specialist,  
4-H Youth Development,

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Current information available from University of Minnesota Extension: <http://www.extension.umn.edu>.

# LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Special Person,

Although I do not know you and perhaps will never meet you, I am sure that you are a special person. The qualities you were born with and the things that you have done make you different from anyone else. There is no one else like you. That's very special!

I'm glad that you are interested in children because they are special too. They are natural and excited about life. When you get to know children, you will find that their ideas and ways of doing things are interesting and fun.

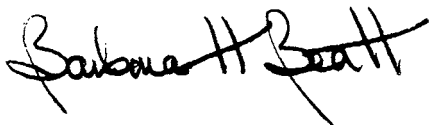
You may be bothered by what children do when you do not know why they act as they do. When you know what to expect of children, you will be more sure of yourself and less bothered by what they do.

Learning about children will help you understand your own and other people's feelings and reasons for doing things. Because children are very honest, they can teach you how you affect them when you are with them. Children will copy things you do. Some things you do are like the things that children do.

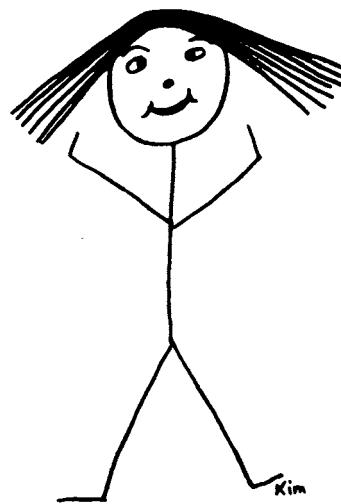
Begin your project by reading the member's *Planning Guide and Record*. Then come back to this *Member's Guide*. Read it, talk about it at your project meetings and at home, and do the activities suggested.

As you use the *Member's Guide* and the *Planning Guide and Record*, I hope that you will like children even more and get to know more about yourself as a special person.

Sincerely,



Barbara H. Beatt



P.S. When I am writing, it is hard to always say him and her. I have both boys and girls in mind when I use "him" in this *Member's Guide*.

Children are \_\_\_\_\_

Children are \_\_\_\_\_

Children are \_\_\_\_\_

Children are \_\_\_\_\_

# BEGINNING TO LEARN ABOUT CHILDREN

Let's look through magazines and newspapers for pictures of children. Cut out four pictures that you like. Paste them on this page. Look at them and fill in the blanks.

You will want to come back to these ideas later.

# WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

“Mom, what was I like when I was little?”

That’s a big question. Your mother might have said:

“You were cute.”

“You were always on the go.”

“You were a very serious child.”

“You were shy.”

“You always wanted things your way.”

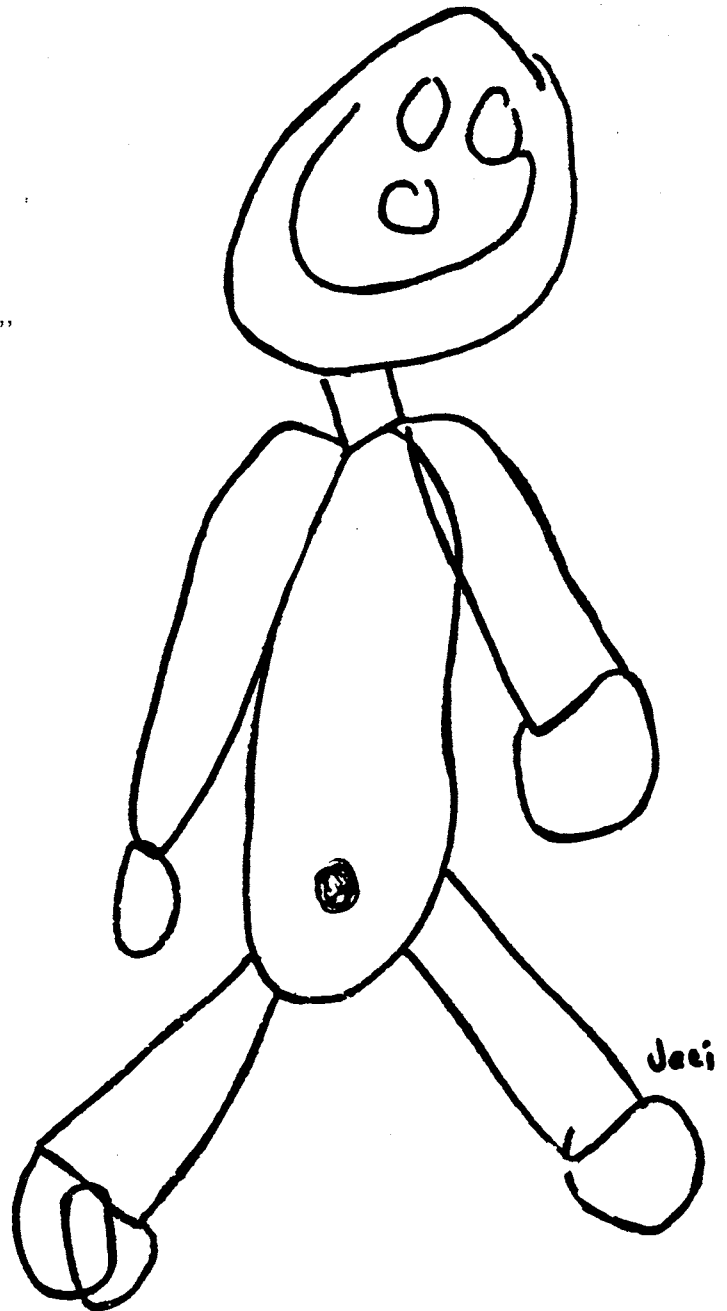
“You were fun to be with.”

“You were different from the rest of our kids.”

These answers describe how other people saw certain things about you—physical things about your body, emotional (feeling) things, intellectual (thinking) things, social (getting along with others) things. All are parts of every child.

We were all children once! We were little and didn’t understand our world. We needed love and care from others.

As we grew, we began to understand our world. But, we also forgot that we did the same things that we see children doing today. We had to grow and develop into who we are now. People who took care of us helped us grow and develop. When we work with children, we can help them learn and grow too.



## Basic Human Needs

All people have needs that help them grow and develop. The newborn baby has needs. These needs never change and they never go away. These basic human needs are:

1. **Survival**—staying alive.
2. **Safety**—security.
3. **Love**—I am special and needed by others.
4. **Self-worth**—I think I am OK.
5. **Recognition**—others think I am OK.

### 1. SURVIVAL

For survival we need food, clothing, and a place to live. We depend on other people for these.

List the people who help you get them.

1. **Food:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. **Clothing:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. **Place to live:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. SAFETY

We need to know that the world is a safe place. Babies and young children are afraid of being dropped and of loud noises. They don't know that a person will return when he leaves the house. Three-to five-year-olds sometimes believe that the monsters they imagine are real. They can't separate real things from make believe things. We need to help children feel safe and secure.

When we feel unsafe, we depend on other people. Think of times when you felt unsafe. Who helped you?

I felt unsafe when...

I depended on...

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_





### 3. LOVE

All people need love. As a word, love means a lot of different things to people. It really is made up of four parts: 1) responsibility 2) care 3) knowledge and 4) respect.

Being responsible means that a child can count on us to be there when he needs us. We learn to care for his well-being, to appreciate his feelings, and to spend time with him. By being with a child, we begin to understand and know him. We learn how to hold him, what makes him smile, when he wants to eat and his special way of sleeping. From all these experiences, we learn to accept and respect him as a special person.

Loving someone means behaving specially towards him no matter how old he is. We do this by cuddling, rocking, patting, listening and hearing him out; doing things together; or by being there but letting him do his own activities. Sometimes loving someone means that you disapprove of what he does because you believe that it is hurting him. Eating between meals, hitchhiking, or wearing unwashed clothes might be things that those who love you disapprove of because of their concern for you.

Think of someone who loves you. How does this person take responsibility for you, care for you, know you, and respect you?

1. The person is \_\_\_\_\_

2. He takes responsibility for me by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. He cares for me by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. He knows me by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. He respects me by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 4. SELF-WORTH

Self-worth means how we feel about ourselves. People who feel loved feel that they are worthwhile. When we are about four or five, we realize that we are different from anyone else. We need others to tell us that we are OK, that we can do well, and that we are loved.

Write something that makes you proud of yourself. Why are you proud of this? How did others help you learn to feel proud?

\_\_\_\_\_

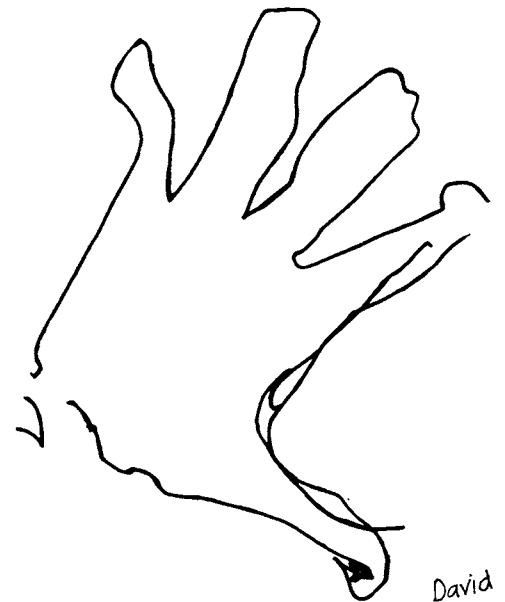
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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_



## 5. RECOGNITION

When others think that we are OK and they praise us, they recognize that we can do things well. At all ages, we need persons to encourage us to be as good as we can be and then to do even better things.

Write something that someone praised you for. How did they tell you that you had done a good job? How did you feel?

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## Children and Families

When we were little, the love and care we needed came from our families and from others. They made sure that we had what we needed for survival, safety, love, self-worth, and recognition. They were very important people to us.

A family means people who live together and care about each other. There are many kinds of families:

1. Mother, children
2. Father, children
3. Mother, father, children
4. Stepmother, father, children, stepchildren
5. Mother, stepfather, children, stepchildren
6. Grandparents, children
7. Parents, grandparents, children
8. Foster parents, children

Others who took care of us were babysitters, people at day care homes, people at child care centers, and other relatives. They took care of us when our families could not. When we play with children and care for them, we are very important because they learn many things from us.



## Understanding Children

1. Children are not alike. Each child is unique. This means that each child is different from anybody else. Some children may be very active while others are more quiet. This is not good or bad. It is just the way they were born.
2. Children are just like us with the same needs, wants, and feelings. Like us they have good days and bad days. We all need other people to help us grow and develop.
3. Each child is a combination of heredity and environment. His heredity means the things about him such as hair color and body size that he got from his parents. His environment means the people who spend time with him, where and how he lives, and the things that happen to him. The combination of all these things make him the person that he is.
4. Each child has his own interests. Some interests we may like, and others we may not. We need to help him feel good about him-





self by helping him follow his interests, and by watching and listening to him when he is doing things he likes.

5. Each child is growing and developing. His feelings, thoughts, and things he does (called behaviors) are changing as he grows. Children at different ages will do different things. Noticing these changes will help us help him.
6. Things children do affect them through their lives. When we work with children we affect them too. We help children learn about themselves and about their world.

### Big Ideas About Children

1. They need to learn to survive,
2. They need to feel safe,
3. They need to feel loved and be able to love back,
4. They need to feel good about themselves,
5. They need to feel important to other people,
6. They learn by being with other people,
7. They are different from each other,
8. They are constantly growing and changing,
9. They need to follow their own interests,
10. They are like us with the same needs, wants, and feelings.

### To Think About and Write

Write about your feelings and ideas as you think about the following questions.

How does my childhood affect who I am today? \_\_\_\_\_

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How do you feel about how parents, teachers, or other persons help you grow? \_\_\_\_\_

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Turn to the pictures of children that you labeled on page 3. Do you want to add any words or change some? Go ahead if you do.

### Activities For You To Do

1. Discuss what you have read with your project group or an older person. Ask questions.
2. Write out your ideas about children on page 2 of the *Planning Guide* and *Record* if you have not already done so.
3. Watch the child you have chosen to work with. Complete page 3 of the *Planning Guide* and *Record*. Fill in the spaces below.

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_

Child's age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of observation \_\_\_\_\_

A. Describe the child. \_\_\_\_\_

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B. What can he do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. How does he get his needs met? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. What things was he born with and what things has he learned? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. What does he like to play? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Fill out your journal number one about how you felt as you observed your child. See page 5 of the *Planning Guide and Record*. Add extra pages if this is not enough space.

5. Think about yourself this week. Answer the questions below.

A. How do you get your needs met? How do you feel at these times? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. How do you show recognition of other people? How do you feel then? How do you feel when you could show recognition and don't? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Get a book about children from your school, public, or church library. Read it and tell your project group or an older person about it. Some books you might choose are:

*Evan's Corner* by Elizabeth Hill  
*Willy Is My Brother* by Peggy Parish  
*Just Me* by Mary Hill

**Activities To Do With Others**

**1. BRAINSTORMING**

Have your project members or members of your family tell their ideas of what children are like. List these ideas on a large piece of paper with a felt marker or a crayon. Be careful not to judge ideas. Both good and bad opinions about children are all right. Talk as a group about what you learned about children from each other's ideas.

**2. MAKING A POSTER**

Draw pictures of what children are like. Use these pictures to decorate a clinic or hospital waiting room or a school.

**3. VISTING A SHOPPING CENTER**

Visit a shopping center, a county fair, or a school yard where your group can watch children. Each person can write how the children are behaving. Talk about the things you have written. Decide what children's behavior tells you about them.

**4. INTERVIEWING**

Ask some adults—parents, teachers, nurses, social workers—who live and work with children to tell you what they think about children. Ask them what they like and don't like about children, ages they like best, differences in boys and girls, why they decided to work with children, why they wanted to be parents.

# ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN

## What Are Activities With Children?

Play is the work of children. Activities are the things children do in their play. Working with children through activities we have planned is helpful to them and fun for us.

Children learn from their play. They learn some things on their own from activities they think of and other things from activities we plan. We can open their world to new things and be with them when they need us—to work with new materials, to complete activities step-by-step. But, if we planned everything for children, they could not use their own ideas. They need a good combination of free play and planned activities.

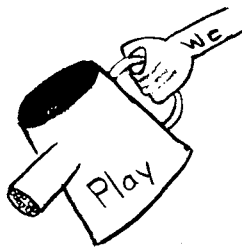
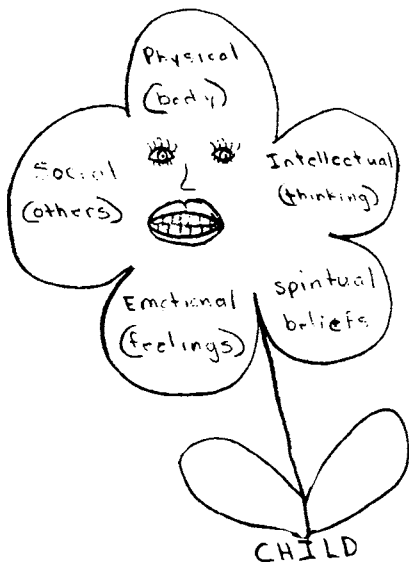
Think—

How would you feel if your parents planned your whole day for you, or your summer vacation, just because they knew what activities would be best for you? \_\_\_\_\_

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## What Do Children Learn From Planned Activities?

We want children to grow so they can get along in our world. This growth should happen in all the parts of a child—body, thinking, feelings, beliefs, getting along with others. The section “What Are Children Like?” talked about these. Different play activities help different parts to grow.

Children grow in five ways like the five petals of the flower. They need play activities to learn and develop just as flowers need water to grow.

Planned activities for children can help them learn to:

1. Think about other people.
2. Understand their world better.
3. Work and play without someone always telling them what to do.
4. Let others help them.
5. Do their own activities while other children do theirs.
6. Know that they can do things.
7. Be proud of what they have done.
8. Try something and be able to do it.
9. Be curious.
10. Be physically strong.
11. Handle and use their feelings.

It takes children lots of time and lots of practice to learn these things. Play is their work. We can help them in this work when we plan enjoyable activities for them.

1. What activities do you like to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What do you learn from them? \_\_\_\_\_

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## What Happens During Children's Activities

When a child is playing, three things are happening at once! He is **DOING** something, he is **FEELING** something, and he is **WORKING WITH** something or someone.

This child is **DOING** with a shovel (using a tool).

He is **FEELING** satisfied and hardworking.

He is **WORKING WITH** the sand in the sand-box.



This child is **DOING** roller skating.

He is **FEELING** brave and adventurous.

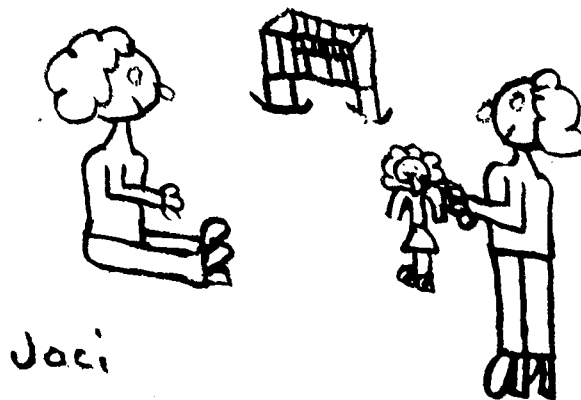
He is **WORKING WITH** space itself—the long hill.



These children are **DOING** by playing house.

One child is **FEELING** motherly and loving.

These children are **WORKING WITH** each other and working in the world as they know it.



## What Kinds of Activities Can Children Do?

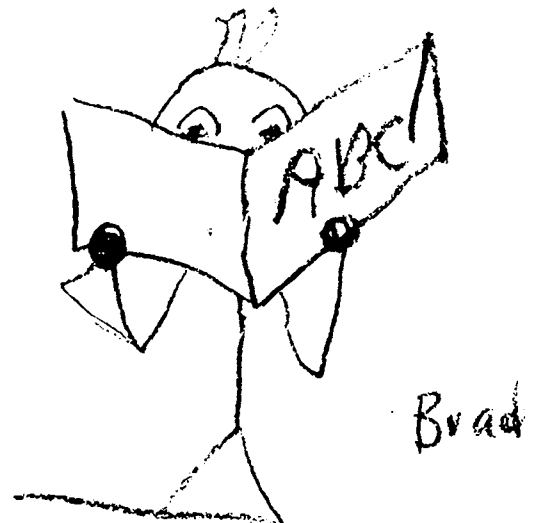
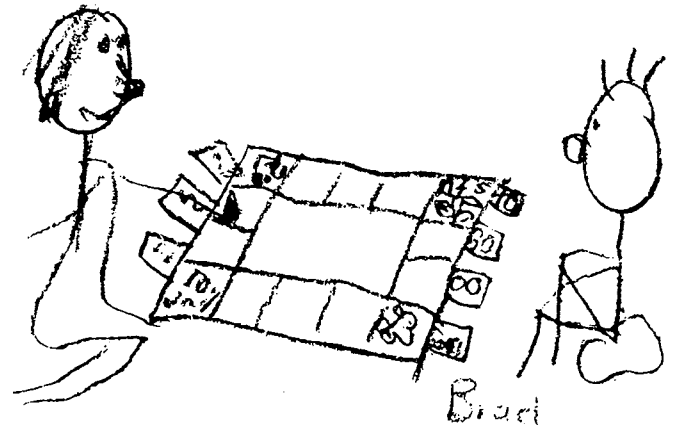
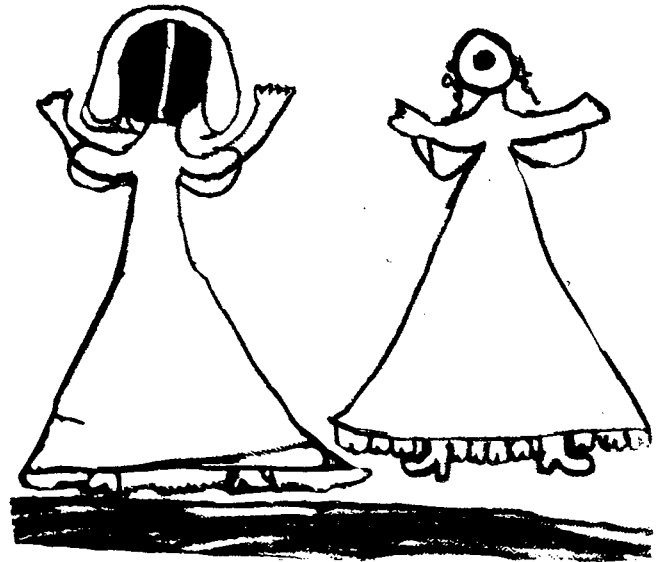
Children's activities can be put into four groups:

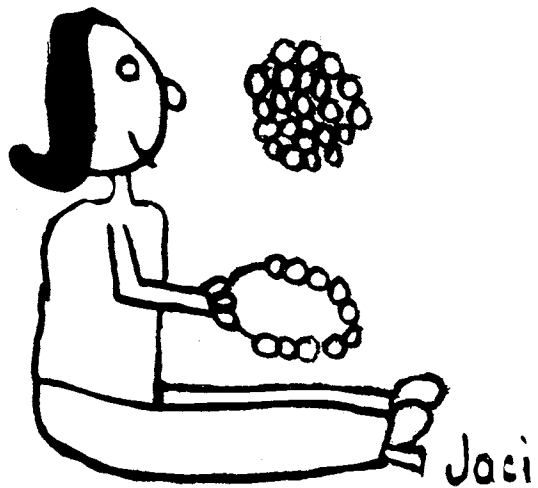
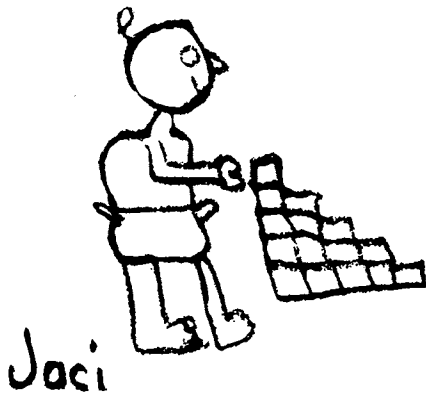
1. Imitative
2. Manipulative
3. Exploratory
4. Expressive

1. IMITATIVE activities are when children try out being real persons like mothers, fathers, factory workers, farmers, truck drivers, nurses. They also try out being make-believe people like monsters, space men, animals. Sometimes they copy a person from books, TV, or movies. This is how children practice becoming adults.

Some imitative activities we could do with children are:

1. Dramatic play—collect adult clothes for costumes and let them dress up and act out simple stories from favorite books or TV shows.
2. Games—play let's pretend, treasure hunt, grocery store, etc.
3. Books and stories—read them stories about people like their families and friends.
4. Television—watch programs together and talk about what it would be like to be the person in the program.

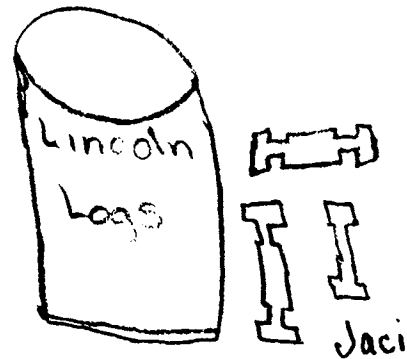




2. MANIPULATIVE activities are when children move things around to make them go, to fit together, and to build things.

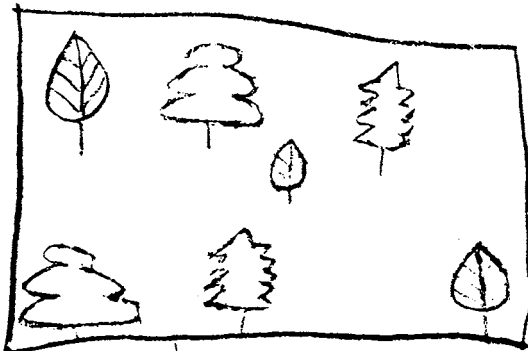
Some manipulative activities we could do with children are:

1. Blocks—build block towers, bridges, airports, or towns with them.
2. Puzzles—put together jigsaw puzzles while talking about colors, shapes, and sizes. (Have big pieces for young children.)
3. Everyday skills—string beads or buttons, sew on sewing cards or cards punched with holes, tie shoe laces, work with an activity board with doors, clocks, push buttons, etc., use a cloth how-to-do-it book.
4. Construction toys—use commercial building sets (Tinker Toys, Lincoln Logs, Leggo blocks).





Jaci

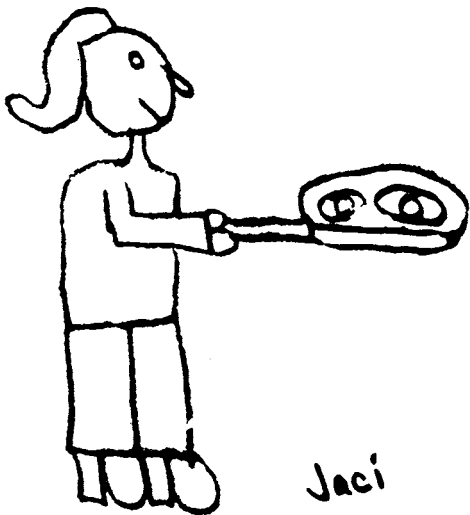


LEAVES

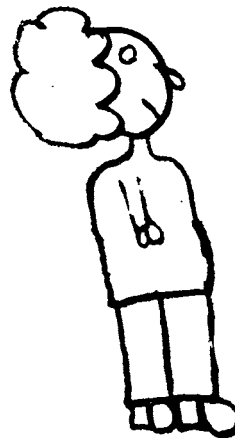
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Water  
air  
rock

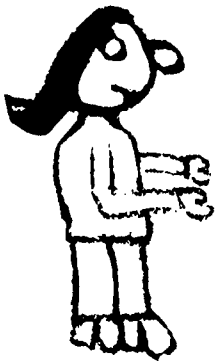
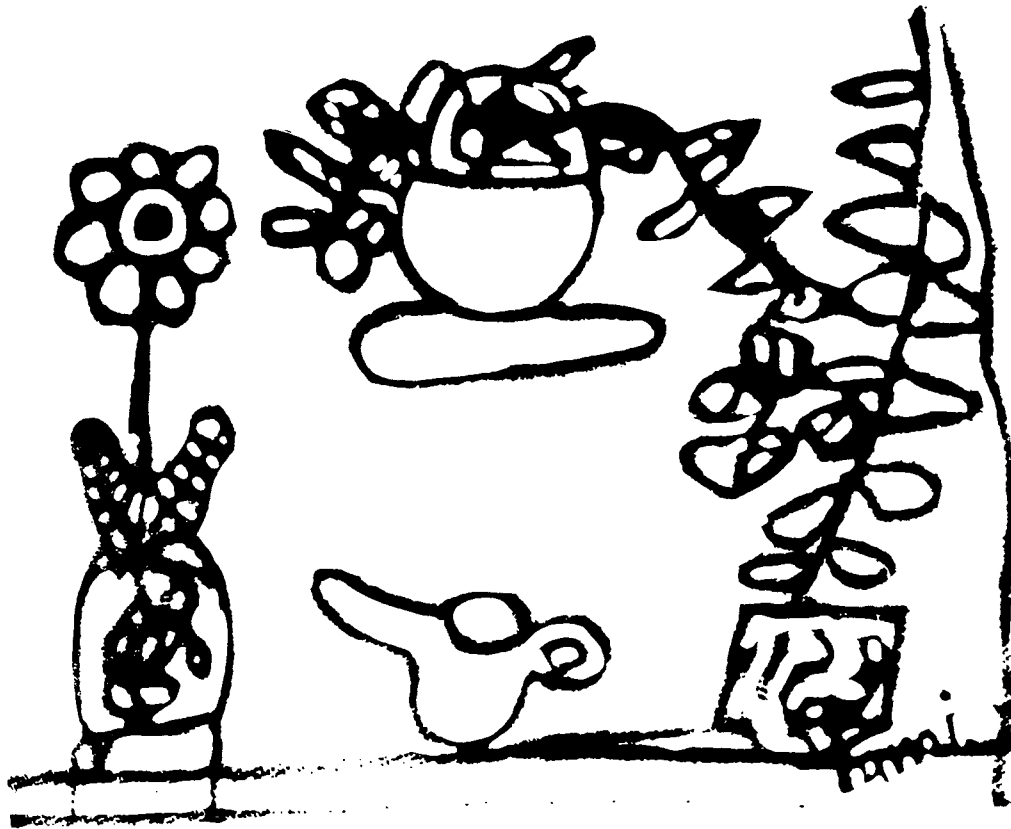


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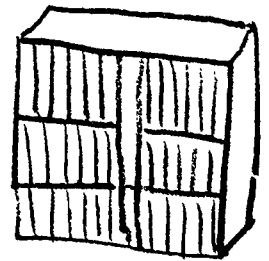
3. **EXPLORATORY** activities are when children learn what things are made of, how things are made, and what they can do as persons. Young children are curious and need to find out about things. As they get older, they need to do experiments and activities that show “what would happen if . . .”

Some exploratory activities we could do with children are:

1. **Sensory experiments**—have them smell, touch, taste, hear, and see common things and compare them.
2. **Collections**—pick up and label different kinds of rocks, feathers, leaves, seeds, and things in nature.
3. **Exploring nature**—go on nature walks, study parts of a flower, compare groups of animals.
4. **Cooking**—fry an egg, cook pudding, mix soda and water, make yeast bread, measure things.
5. **Science experiments**—watch and keep track of weather changes, study what makes up dirt.
6. **Plants and pets**—sprout beans, root a plant in water, watch a pet (dog, cat, bird, hamster).
7. **Competitive games**—run races, catch a ball.
8. **Books**—read and explain the “How and Why Wonder” books found in grocery and variety stores.

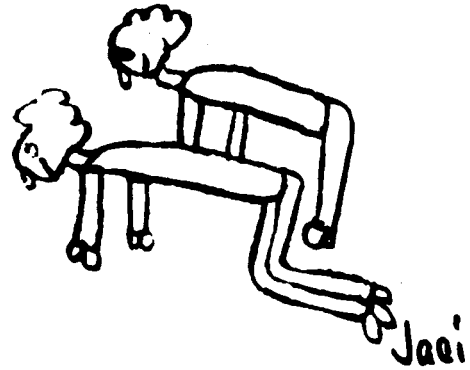
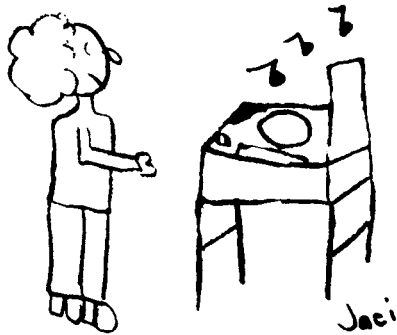


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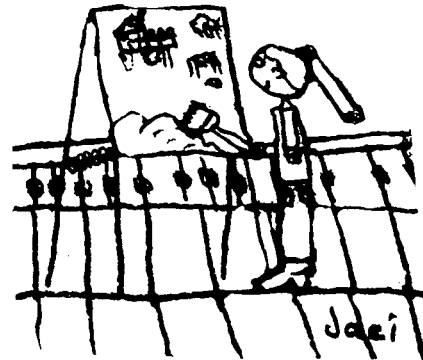




4. EXPRESSIVE activities are when children show their feelings and their imaginations.

Some expressive activities we could do with children are:

1. Music and rhythm—play homemade and purchased instruments, sing, listen to records.
2. Movement—dance with scarves, do physical exercises, play leap frog.
3. Art—make things of play dough or homemade clay; make pictures with crayons, finger paints, water colors, marking pens.



## Activities Help Growth and Development

Any of these suggested activities can help a child grow and develop:

1. His body when he does things that exercise muscles.
2. His thinking when he thinks about sizes, shapes, colors, putting things together.
3. His feelings when he makes a mistake or feels proud of something.
4. His beliefs when he learns to do things his family likes.
5. His getting along with others when he plays and shares with them.

A child will learn different things at different ages. He learns to use large body muscles first and then smaller muscles. Step by step he also learns how to think, feel, and act. We can help a child's growth and development by talking with him about what he is doing.

## How Do We Choose Activities For Children?

When we choose an activity for a child, we should choose one that interests him and one that he is able to do, but is neither too easy nor too hard. We can get good ideas for a child's activity by picking up clues from him, by watching what he is doing on his own or during his "free play" times. Watch him, listen to him, talk with him about what he is doing, how he is feeling, and what he wants to do. You will get a pretty good idea of what activity would be pleasing and possible for that particular child.

Here are some questions we can ask ourselves about a child when we are working with him:

1. What are his favorite activities?
2. What are his special interests?
3. How does he think of himself?
4. What does he do in a new situation?
5. How does he act with persons who are new to him?
6. What is he working on now in his own development?
7. How does he try to solve problems?

## Where Can We Find Activities For Children?

Within each group of activities there are really hundreds of ideas for things to do.

When we are trying to choose a certain activity to do with a child, we can get help from:

1. Our own imaginations
2. Books about children's activities
3. The child's ideas
4. Our project leader
5. Magazines for children
6. Our own family
7. People who work with children

Look at this list of children's activities. Number them 1,2,3 in order of which activities you would like to plan and carry out with the child you are observing. Next, write down where you will look for the particular activity idea.

My preferences are:	The type of activity is:	I will look for particular activity ideas from:
_____	art	_____
_____	music and rhythm	_____
_____	physical exercise	_____
_____	sensory	_____
_____	collecting	_____
_____	nature	_____
_____	cooking	_____
_____	science	_____
_____	plants and animal care	_____
_____	games	_____
_____	construction block building	_____
_____	puzzles	_____
_____	drama	_____

**Note: Please leave books, stories, and TV activities for another time. If you are interested in these areas, you can read about them in following sections.**

## How Do We Plan Activities For Children?

Planning an activity is very important when working with children. We will know what we are going to do and that the activity will be fun, safe and will help his development. The child will learn to plan activities by watching us.

### ACTIVITY PLANNING CHART

Of the three favorite types of activities you just listed, choose one where you already know a particular activity you can do. Write plans for this activity here.

1. What will I call this activity? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What age is it for? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many children will share in the activity? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How much space do I need? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How much time will I need? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What materials will I need and how much?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How will I arrange the materials? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What will I need to watch for safety? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. How will the activity be cleaned up? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What steps will the activity take? \_\_\_\_\_  
 A. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_  
 C. \_\_\_\_\_ F. \_\_\_\_\_

11. What will the child be able to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. What will I have to help with? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. What do I think the child will get out of the activity?

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**Note:** For most activities, we do not need fancy equipment.

1. Make some simple materials such as finger paint, play dough.
2. Look at throw-aways and think of how to use them—clothes, jewelry, containers, wrappings, fabrics, etc.
3. Collect, sort, and store throw-aways for future use.
4. Look at some of the craft books for ideas about using everyday things.

What is one way you can use a throw-away for a child's activity? \_\_\_\_\_

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## What Should We Do During Children's Activities?

In an activity for children, we can join in or watch how things are going (including how safely), organize the steps, and share our thoughts or feelings about the activity.

When we wonder whether or not to join in or just how much, these questions can help us:

1. Am I helping the children?
2. Am I adding something to the activity?

3. Am I taking away from the activity?

4. Am I keeping them from being themselves?

Children usually like to have us join in their activities, but they are more interested in what we think about what they are doing than in our playing with them. They want our attention, approval, and praise.

Our questions and comments increase children's learning about their own feelings and thoughts, make them curious about what they are doing, and sharpen the way they solve problems.

We can help children learn by using thinking statements and questions like these:

Statements or Questions to Ask	What a Child Does
1. This box is square.	names it, tells what shape
2. Can you find another square box?	classifies it, matches it
3. Would all these crayons fit this box?	tries out sizes, relationships to space
4. Is your road straight or curved?	increases vocabulary and ideas about shape
5. I wonder what would happen if you put one more block on top?	leads to experimenting and testing
6. How many colors did you use?	counts for a purpose
7. Can you get out 3 small bowls and 1 large?	develops memory, counts for a purpose
8. This blue piece fits right beside the red one.	shows relationships, increases vocabulary, identifies colors
9. What happened when it rained on your fort?	starts conversation, increases observation
10. I wonder how you could use these scarves for your dancing?	develops imagination, leads to experimenting

## How To Do Activities With Children

When we work with children in any activity, we should remember:

1. We like children and want to work with them in a way that helps them.
2. We care about their needs and interests.
3. We will have bad days and will feel less happy about working with children than we usually do.
4. We need planned activities that help them follow directions and also experiment on their own.
5. Directions must be simple.
6. We must have open minds and be willing to change plans.
7. Children understand the expressions on our faces and the ways we move as well as they understand words.
8. Children like to try new things and enjoy ideas.
9. Children like to show off, and they like praise for their work.

## Big Ideas About Children's Activities

1. Activities refer to our planning for children's play.
2. Play is the work of children. We help children develop by preparing interesting activities for them.
3. When a child is playing, he is thinking, feeling, and doing. Children understand better what they are doing when we talk about it with them.
4. There are four kinds of activities for children—imitative, manipulative, exploratory, and expressive.
5. The best guide for choosing activities is the child himself. He shows us what he is interested in and what he can and cannot do.
6. Planning allows us to be comfortable with the activity, have the right materials, and make sure the activity fits the child.

7. We can best participate in children's activities when we allow it to be theirs, not ours.
8. Children grow and change in five ways—physical (body), intellectual (thinking), emotional (feelings), spiritual (beliefs), and social (getting along with others).

## Activities For You To Do

1. Talk with your group or an older person about what you have read on children's activities. Maybe you will have some questions.
2. Carry out the activity you planned on page 17 with the child you are working with. Go back to pages 17 and 18 and complete your planning in writing if you have not already done so. After the activity, write about it in journal number 2.
3. Look at books for ideas on activities with children. Some books you might look for are:

*Better Homes & Gardens Junior Cookbook*

*How & Why Wonder Books* (paperback at supermarkets and variety stores)

*McCall's Craft Book* (available at drug-stores and discount stores)

*Snips, Snails, and Walnut Whales* by Phyllis Fiarotta

*The Toy Book* by Steven Caney

*I Saw a Purple Cow* by Ann Cole

*Fun in the Making* by the U.S. Children's Bureau

4. Plan and carry out another activity with your child or another child.
  - a. Choose another type of activity that you found in the books you looked at. Think out plans for doing this activity using the planning form on page 17. Add any of your own ideas that help in doing this activity.
  - b. In the member's *Planning Guide* and *Record* on page 4, write in space 1 at the top of the page the activity you plan to do. Write in space 1 on the lower part of the page what you have to do to prepare for this activity or to prepare for your project meeting. Add your own extra pages when these are full.

c. Write in your journal number 3 on page 6 of the *Planning Guide and Record* how you felt when you were carrying out this activity. Make other notes to yourself about what you liked and what you might do differently another time.

## 2. PRACTICE AN ACTIVITY

Talk to each other about each person's ideas for activities with children. Choose one activity, plan it, and do it together. Talk about what you liked and didn't like about the activity.

## 3. HAVE A CHILDREN'S PARTY

Have an "unbirthday" party for children. Ask the children what they thought about the party. Write what they said on a big poster and talk about what the party meant to the children.

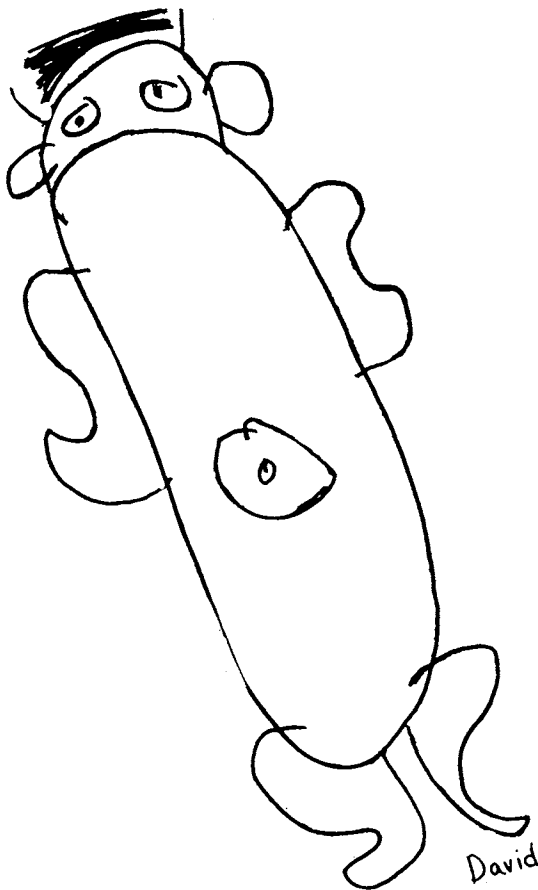
## 4. MAKE A BOOK OF CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Collect your group's activity plans and make up an activity book to share with parents, teachers, and your own family.

## Activities To Do With Others

### 1. VISIT A DAY CARE CENTER

Arrange to visit a day care center when the children are doing a planned activity. Find out from the teacher how she organized the activity and how she felt about it.



# BOOKS AND STORIES FOR CHILDREN

## Importance of Books

Do you remember sometimes when you sat close to someone and listened to a story?

How old were you? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Giant's Sister*

Can you remember being with other children and being read to? \_\_\_\_\_

What was it like to see the pictures? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What were the pictures like? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel listening to the words? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some books can be good friends. We learned from books before we read. First, we looked at pictures and heard a few words. Then we learned to hold books, to open them, to turn their pages. Later, we listened to short, familiar stories. The story books made us feel secure. It felt good to laugh with them. When we were about three, books helped us know about ourselves and about other people, places, and things.

Books are not the only way to share stories of the world. Listening to stories or hearing stories set to music are also important. Books are nice because we can go back to them again and again to find enjoyable words and pictures that go together.

### Meeting Children's Needs

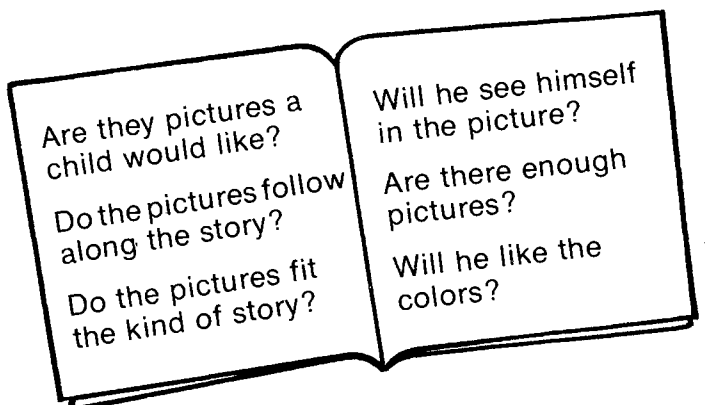
Books mean more to children than just having good times and learning interesting things. Books for children also help them to:

1. Feel safe—A quiet story lets a child share the comforts of the person in the story. (Example: *Bedtime for Frances* by Russell Hohan)
2. Feel secure—Sitting close helps a child feel close to the reader. At the same time, he puts himself in the place of the story person whose mother is always close by. This is called identifying. (Example: *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise)

3. Feel sure they can do things (self-confidence)—Adventures show that courage works and helps him become brave enough to try something new. (Example: *Little Bear* by Else Holmelund Minarik)
4. Feel proud of themselves—Reading about another person doing something that is hard helps a child do the same. Children identify with the people in the stories they hear. (Example: *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* by Virginia Lee Burton)
5. Have a sense of belonging—A child sees himself when he reads about a story book person getting along with other people. (Example: *Grandfather and I* by Helen Buckley)
6. Deal with special problems about hard feelings and getting along with people—Being little, growing up, being afraid, or being ill are problems for most children. Some children might find divorce, adoption, being of a minority group, being in the hospital, having a stepparent difficult. All of these subjects can be found in books. Ask your librarian or project leader about them. (Example: *The Dead Bird* by Margaret Wise Brown)
7. Satisfy their curiosities—Books help them know how people are, how things are made, and how things work. (Example: *Heavy is a Hippopotamus* by Miriam Schlein)

### Developing Interest Through Pictures

This is very important for all ages, but even more important if a child doesn't read himself.



Most young children like drawing better than photographs.

## Different Kinds of Books

### 1. FAIRY TALES

Some experts think that fairy tales are too scary for children because 1) children really believe these stories 2) the bad things that happen put wrong ideas into children's heads 3) young children might be upset by their feelings about the stories.

For children who are very afraid, have troubles, or can't control strong feelings, fairy tales are not good. For many 6- to 7-year-olds, however, fairy tales have something to offer.

1. They are good stories that show what people are really like.
2. They show strong feelings that all real people have at one time or another and that children need to know about.
3. The stories are magical just like young children think the world is.
4. The stories often show good against bad. ALL children must learn about this as they grow.
5. The people in fairy tales have strong feelings that are opposite—wanting to go to the party, being afraid of the possible punishment but deciding to go anyway. Other feelings such as loving and hating one's sisters at the same time happen to many children. Children can learn self-understanding when they know that the fairy tale people have the same feelings they have.
6. The messages of good and bad are clear. These opposites of good and bad, right and wrong help children think of their own ideas of right and wrong.
7. Fairy tales use wishing as a way to overcome fears and troubles. It makes a child with problems feel that it is all right to wish for things even though wishing will not change things.
8. Fairy tales act like a bridge from a child's inner world of feelings and imagination to real life. The heroes and heroines in fairy tales try their own ideas. This gives children the courage to try new things.

Start children with easy fairy tales at 4 to 5 like *The Giant Story* by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers, to a little more difficult stories as in *Anderson's Fairy Tales* for 7- to 9-years-olds, to the most difficult stories of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* for ages 10 through 12.

### 2. ADVENTURE STORIES

Choose adventure stories for children according to their ages. Begin with simple stories that have few people in them. Then go to stories that have more people and more things happening.

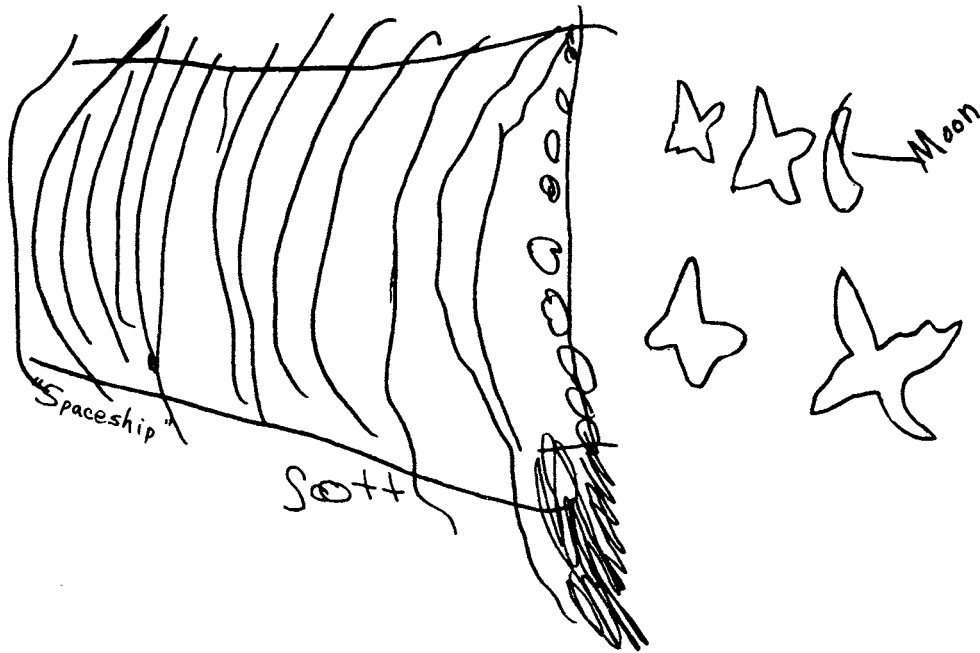
Animals become persons to young children. When the animal does the same things over and over, it helps them understand the story such as in *Ferdinand the Bull* by Munro Leaf. *Peter Pan* or *Pinocchio* are longer with more characters and are better for children ages 7-9. *Alice in Wonderland* and *Gullivers Travels* are hard to understand and can be suitable for 9- to 12-year-olds, but also are enjoyable and worthwhile for adults.

### 3. FOLK TALES

Folk tales are stories of make believe that have been told for many years. Many folk tales come from particular countries or religious groups and can help a child understand these groups of people. Folk tales have rhythm when they are told and help children hear the beauty of language. Folk tales have ideas of right and wrong, and they are full of humor. Some simple folk tales are found in *The Tall Book of Nursery Tales* which includes *The Three Bears* and *The Little Red Hen*. Five-to seven-year-olds will enjoy *Pelle's New Suit* by Elsa Beskow, *The Little Gray Wolf* translated by Marguerita Rudolph, or *Perey and Martina* by Carlos Sanchez. *The Wave* by Margaret Hodges, *Rokubei and the 1000 Rice Bowls* by Yoshiki Uchida and *Uncle Remis* will appeal to 7- to 9-year-olds.

### 4. HUMOR

Humor is an important part of life. In books it comes in many kinds of smiles, giggles, and laughs. Sometimes situations are funny because they are so unreal and different. And sometimes the things people do and the everyday things that happen are funny.



Think about the humor in these:

1. Wacky circumstances—*Cat in the Hat* arrives to babysit you. *The Gingerbread Man* and *Cyrus the Unsinkable Sea Serpent* by Bill Peet.
2. Impossible situations—Your little brother is determined to fly!
3. Other mishaps (misadventures)—*Little Black Sambo* loses all his clothes, but his enemies turn into butter for his pancakes.
4. Predicaments (tight situations)—You want to play and your mother is calling you for supper. *Owl at Home* and *Frog & Toad Together* by Arnold Lobel. *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing* by Judi and Ron Barrett.
5. Jokes on morals—*The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter and *No Fighting, No Biting* by Else Minarik.
6. Out of placeness—*Curious George Takes a Job* by H.A. Rey and *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey.
7. Mishaps—*Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkin and *Alexander & the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Ray Cruz.
8. Handling bad feelings—*Cheer Up, Pig!* by Nancy Jewell.
9. Jokes about good and bad behavior—*Was So Mad!* by Nord Simon.
10. Humor in words—*Puns, Gags, Quizzes & Riddles* by Ray Doty and *Riddle Me, Riddle Me Ree* by Maria Leach.



fighting SCOTT



## 5. POETRY

Poetry is ideal for the littlest of children. It is written by persons who have not forgotten their own childhood. Poetry can remind us of something we had forgotten. Poetry is a means of enjoyment. Do you remember these kinds of poetry.?

### Ages 1-5

Lullabies

Mother Goose

Little Everyday Verses

Prayers

### Ages 6-10

Humorous Verses

Nonsense Ideas

“Corny” Romantic Tales

Stories About Heroes

## Matching Books to Children’s Ages

Do you remember how you felt when a book was too hard for you to understand? A child will not be interested in a book that is too hard or too easy. Here are some general rules to follow when looking for a book that fits a child of a particular age.

1. Very young children (2 and under) enjoy stories of people like themselves and of things they know. Their books should be simple with clear sentences and pictures that follow along with the words. Colors like red, blue and yellow are eye catching. Cloth or cardboard books can be handled without being torn. Simple stories, quiet stories or stories told with pictures are enjoyed by very young children.
2. Three-year-olds like true things told in story form. Books about everyday happenings are interesting and can be read over and over again. The whole story should be read at one time. Words or actions that are repeated are enjoyed by 3-year-olds. Using imagination is important. It may start by thinking up things that are not real, or are not here now, or are new ideas. They are just beginning to know the difference between real and pretend so talking animals or machines are fun.
3. Four-year-olds like riddles or guessing games. They also like silly language such as in Dr. Seuss books. Four-year-olds are becoming able to tell the difference between real and pretend so stories of imaginary adventures are fun.

4. Five-year-olds ask the many “why” questions that they did when they were four. Books with how and why in their titles are popular. So are the books about how people are made and how they grow.
5. Six-year olds want to keep on learning new words and finding out new things so “how” books still are favorites. Unless a child is really afraid, fairy tales take hold of a child’s imagination and can be read over and over again.
6. Seven-year-olds like fairy tales and folk tales when the good against the bad is easy to understand and worth learning. Books about getting along with others also are enjoyed.
7. Eight- and nine-year-olds become friends with the story persons. They like books in series such as the *Hardy Boys* or *Nancy Drew*. These books satisfy their search for adventure, mystery, and history. In these years, children often have special interests so they will want to read many books about the same subject such as space, dinosaurs, ecology, or a sport.



## Choosing The Right Book

The best way to pick out the right book for a child is to know your child and think about a book he would like.

Children need books that are about people like themselves. They also need to learn that some other people do not live the same way they do.

It is important for you to read their books first so that you will know how the child might feel. Test the book with these questions:

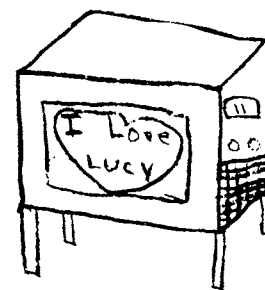
1. Will the story mean something to a child? Is it fun and exciting, or is it boring? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
2. Will it help the child see how he is like other children? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
3. Will it help him see how he fits into the world? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
4. Will it help him understand his own feelings? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
5. Is the place understandable to the child? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
6. Is the story real? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
7. Is the story true? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
8. Are characters realistic as we would like children to know them? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
9. Will the story make him think or get some new interests? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
10. Is the story too violent or brutal? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
11. Can the book be read at one time or be easily divided for several times? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
12. Do I know what I want the child to get out of the book? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

You will have some "yes" answers and some "no" answers to the questions. Use your check marks to give you a general idea of the book and then decide if it is good or not.

## Making Books

Maybe the best kind of storybook for children is one you have made yourself! It means a great deal to a child to know that you have taken the time to write out a story, and add your own artwork (pictures pasted in from magazines can be just as interesting as your own drawings). If you can trust your real interest in a child and want to share your own ideas and feelings, you are offering a great gift—a piece of YOU!

Children like to make their own books too.



You can help them:

1. **Tape record their story.**
2. **Put their story on a "TV screen".**
3. **Tell you their poems (over time, they can become a fine collection).**
4. **Paste their pictures in a notebook ready for "telling" their own story.**

Homemade books are special, fun, and cheaper than printed books.

## Sharing Stories With Children

When children have stories read or told to them, they feel safe and secure, and they also like the stories. Stories can be read or told to children at different times in different places, for different reasons—at bedtime or before naps, while bathing, when sick, while traveling, under a tree, at the beach. Whenever you decide to read a book to children, choose a quiet spot and see that everyone is comfortable. Plan only 5 to 10 minutes for reading to children or they will get restless and lose interest.

Reading and re-reading a book ahead of time will help you use your voice. This is important so that you can comfortably act it out by changing your face, hand movements, and voice to go with the story.

Hold the book so children can help by looking at the pictures, pointing to things, turning the pages, sometimes patting the pictures.



Children like to move from a story into actions of their own. You might want to have puppets around to replay the story, or a trip planned where children can see and learn more about the subject. Children also like to hear your ideas about the story.

### Big Ideas About Books and Stories For Children.

1. Written words and pictures are magical friends for children of all ages.
2. Books help children feel good about themselves, learn about other people, and explore the world.
3. It is important to match books to the children—by their age, their interests, and the moods they are in.
4. Fairy tales and adventure stories help children use their imagination to work out hard feelings and create new ways to do things.
5. Books with humor add zest, vigor, and whimsy to life.

6. We should not overlook poetry with its very special language for seeing, touching, smelling, hearing, and tasting.
7. Careful choice and practice in reading a story to children makes your time with them more relaxed, more interesting, and more fun for everyone.

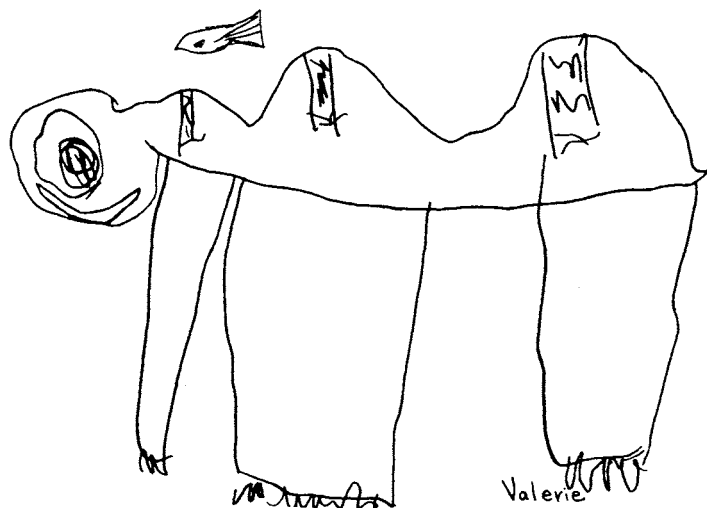
### Activities For You To Do

1. Talk with your group or an older person about what you have read on books for children.
2. Spend an hour with your child and make a list of all the things you discovered he was interested in. Decide on one kind of book that you think would appeal to him. Write out your plans and your preparations for this activity in space number 2 on page 4 of the *Planning Guide and Record*. After the activity, write in your journal number 4, page 6. Then spend time with two other children to see what they are interested in and what kinds of books might fit them.

3. Choose a book to read to the child you are working with. Write your plans in space number 3 on page 4. Read it to yourself first. Answer the questions on page 25 about it. Then read it to him. Write about this in your journal number 5 on page 6.
4. Take your child to the library and help him choose a book that he likes. Keep track of how you discovered what he was looking for, and find out what he likes about the book that he chooses. Write out your plans and preparations for this activity and how you felt about it.
5. Volunteer at a day care center or a church nursery to come in and read stories with two or three children at a time. Practice different ways to use your voice and your body to make the stories "come alive." Write out your plans, preparations, and feelings about this activity.
6. Help a child to write his own "book". Write down what he says and leave space on the papers (or cardboard) for him to add his own drawings. When the child is finished, help him to bind his book together. Write out your plans, preparations, and feelings about this activity.
7. Ask a child what kind of a book he would like to have and then make one for him. After you have written your book, use the checklist on page 25 and decide how you like your efforts. Then share the book with your young friend. Write out your plans, preparations, and feelings about this activity.
8. Go to the library and make up lists of five or six books that you think the children you know would enjoy. Next time you babysit, plan ahead to get one of the books from the library. Write out your plans, preparations, and feelings.

## Activities To Do With Others

1. Give a puppet show—Find a favorite story for children in your neighborhood, in a school or play group. Plan a time with this group of children when you can treat them to your version of this story in a puppet show.
2. Visit a bookstore and/or a library—Visit a bookstore or library and interview the salesperson or librarian about how he or she helps a child select a book. Make up a catalog of interesting books for children of different ages. Pick out a children's book to judge. Have one person read the book out loud before you judge it. Use the check list on page 25 and talk together about each book.
3. Plan a book fair—Plan a book fair for young children. Bookstores and librarians are often very eager to help with this.
4. Hold a story hour—Hold a regular story hour—open to the public—in your community park or library. Advertise this in your newspaper, school newsletter, church bulletin, etc.



Camel



# COMPLETING PLAYING WITH CHILDREN I



*"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder..., he needs the companionship of at least one (person) who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in."*

Rachel Carson

**A Sense of Wonder**

**In this project you:**

- 1. Read and talked about children.**
- 2. Watched and listened to children.**
- 3. Talked and did things with children.**
- 4. Thought and wrote about children.**
- 5. Shared with others what you have learned about children.**

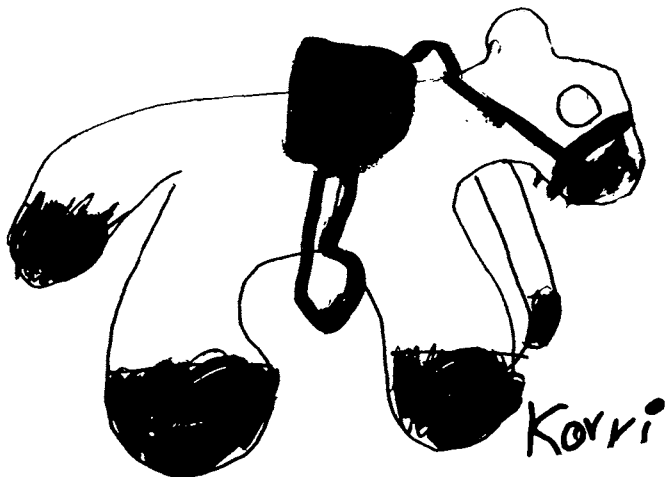
In doing these things we hope that you have rediscovered a sense of wonder about yourself, about children, and about the world. Being that special person to a young child, rediscovering life together, and sharing your own excitement about the world with him makes the world much more fun for both of you.

Now that your sense of wonder about children is awake, continue your work with children by doing more of the activities suggested in this *Member's Guide* or by continuing on to *Working with Children II*. Ask your project leader about this. And always remember that:

*"If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world."*

Dorothy Law Nolte

**Children Learn What They Live**



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