

CHILD HEALTH

School-Starting Advice

Health check, including dental examination, should be made before opening day. Suggest youngsters be allowed to tell of new experiences their own way.

► IF YOU want your child to do well at school—and what parent does not?—you will see that he has a health check by the doctor before school starts.

This is particularly important for the boys and girls starting school for the first time. If a child cannot see the blackboard or hear the teacher distinctly, he cannot be expected to learn well. Besides getting poor marks, he may grow discouraged or bored or both. Bad behavior and the label, "stupid," may come next.

The young child may not realize that he does not hear or see as well as he should. His parents may not realize it, either. But the doctor who gives the pre-school examination can find out by testing hearing and eyesight.

A toothache can also keep a child from paying attention to his lessons. The aching tooth may be "only a baby tooth," but it should be cared for so that it stays in the mouth long enough to keep the jaws in right shape for the permanent teeth. By the time a child is ready to start school he usually has acquired his six-year molars.

These are the first and most important of the permanent teeth and should be carefully watched and any cavities filled promptly so that these important grinders will last throughout life.

First Time Exposures

When children start school is the time many of them are exposed for the first time to measles, whooping cough and other "catching" diseases. They can be protected from many of these ailments and the family doctor or pediatrician will advise about this. Every child should be vaccinated against smallpox before entering school and he can be protected against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus, or lockjaw. If the child has already had "shots" for these, the doctor may want to give a "booster shot" before school starts.

Bright eyes, rosy cheeks, firm muscles and an erect posture are signs of health the doctor will look for when he gives the child his pre-school check-up. Heart, lungs, nose and throat will also be examined for signs of disease or defects that need attention. Weight and height will be checked, but the important thing about these is whether the child has continued to grow and gain steadily. He may be shorter or thinner than others of his age and still be perfectly healthy.

When six-year-old Junior and Sister go off to school for the first time, they are going there to learn, of course, but there

are some things their teachers hope they already have learned.

This may come as a surprise to some parents, but the wise ones will check over the list and start right now teaching their youngsters these necessary facts and skills.

Pre-School Preparation

1. A child entering school for the first time should know his name (last name as well as first or given name and family pet name), where he lives and his telephone number.

2. He should be able to put on and take off his own clothes, particularly coats, snowsuits, overshoes, rubbers and so on. Any parent who finds it a chore to get her own youngsters into and out of these clothes can imagine how impossible it would be for a teacher to do the job for 30 or more children for each recess period plus the beginning and end of each morning and afternoon session. And if mother wants to be sure that Johnny gets his own hat, cap, coat, mittens and so on, she will have his name sewed or clearly printed on each—overshoes included. Further aid to this clothes problem is buying overshoes and rubbers large enough so the child can get them on and off by himself.

3. A child of school age should be trained to wash his hands before and after eating and after going to the bathroom. He should also be taught to flush the toilet after using.

4. By the time a child is ready to go to school he should have learned how to cross streets or roads safely and, if he lives in the country and must walk, how to walk safely on a highway. This means walking on the left hand side of the road, facing the oncoming traffic.

In addition, it helps if the child has learned how to tell time, to handle scissors, crayons and pencils. Six-year-olds are seldom models of deportment, but they should have gotten at least a start on learning to obey persons in authority.

Quizzing Not Recommended

"Well, what did you learn today?" is a question too often asked of children when they get home from school. It is particularly likely to be the greeting to Junior or Sister after the first day at school.

Mother and Daddy naturally want to know all about what their child did and how he liked the new experience. But nothing can be quite so bewildering to the young child as this quizzing right after he

gets home from school, a report from the Minnesota Tuberculosis and Health Association points out.

When the child is ready, he will tell all about school. Wise parents will wait until he is ready and then will listen to what he chooses to talk about. Going to school for the first time takes quite an adjustment for the child and he needs to feel that everything at home is just the way it always was and that Mother and Daddy still love and trust him.

Because school is such a new and different experience, it is a good idea to prepare the child for it emotionally as well as physically. School should be something to look forward to and enjoy, not something to be feared or disliked. It would be well for Mother or Daddy to visit school with the child before that first day when school starts.

Background Preparation

Show him the buildings, playground and what a schoolroom looks like and let him sit at one of the small desks or in one of the little chairs. Maybe he can meet his teacher, too. Then things will not seem so strange and he can be sent off on the day school starts in a casual, matter-of-fact way, just as he is sent out to play after breakfast. He will be in better shape to start learning and those painful scenes when crying youngsters refuse to let mother leave them at school can be avoided.

Remember that every child is different. Do not compare him or his performance with other children and what they do, especially older brothers and sisters. On the other hand, do not coddle him and tell him how much you miss him when he is at school. When you start him off to school that first day, start him on the road to becoming a happy, independent grown-up.

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INVENTION

Baseball Club Owner Patents Vending Machine

► FRED M. SAIGH, JR., owner of the St. Louis Cardinals, is now a fully certified inventor. He has received a patent from the government for a coin-controlled vending machine, presumably suitable for installation in ball parks.

The vending machine is unique in that it can contain various kinds of merchandise at various prices of from 10 to 25 cents and that it has an automatic refunding mechanism. If the merchandise is, for any reason, not delivered to the customer, the correct amount of money is refunded. This happens within a certain time limit. Similarly, if the customer puts too much money in the machine, it is automatically refunded. This is done through switches and cutoffs attached through solenoids. Mr. Saigh received U. S. patent number 2,607,463 for his invention.

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