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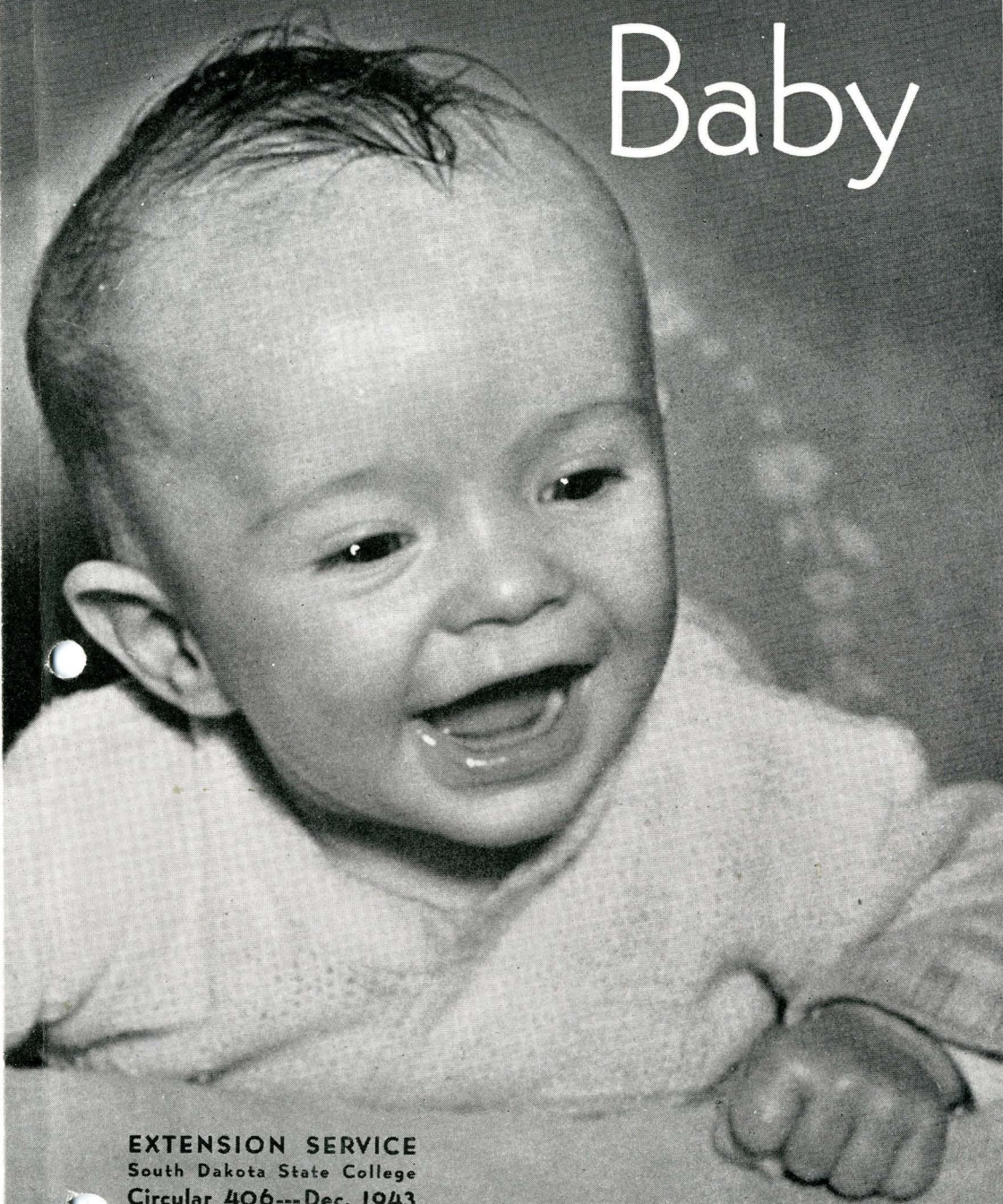
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The FAMILY'S Baby



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The Family's Baby

By LYDIA ANN LYNDE*

Baby culture in our modern world has become much safer as well as more complex. Through scientific study we have learned how to safeguard the baby's health and how to help him grow up into a happy, capable person who can live successfully

in a world of people. The information presented in these pages is intended to stimulate group discussion. If we pool our experiences and observations with research findings we can develop a practical and workable plan for the best care for our babies.

A Baby Coming?

Babies are fun but they do change the family's plan of living. They need space, time and equipment. The whole family should plan together for the many necessary adjustments in their home. The very first baby must be considered a member of the family who must as far as he can, share in the give and take of family life. Because he is at first helpless, his family will have to make some concessions for his benefit.

A. Space

1. Where shall the baby sleep? At best he should have a room of his own. At least his crib should be in a quiet corner which is airy but not drafty and where he can sleep peacefully while the rest of the usual family life goes on.

2. Where will his clothing and other equipment be kept? Much time and energy used in the baby's care can be saved if the family plans carefully for convenience.

3. Where will he be bathed? This should be a room that is easily heated. The family can plan for convenient and easily handled bath equipment.

**Extension Specialist in Parent Education*
This publication was prepared by Mrs. Lynde at the request of the Agricultural Extension Service.

B. Time

1. What will be his schedule? The doctor or nurse will help determine the feeding rhythm. This will be the basis for the baby's daily living program of eating, sleeping, bathing and playing. It will have to be fitted into the family schedule and some adjustments will need to be made. By planning it together the entire family will help in the changes. Each member will carry his share.

2. Who will be responsible for his care? He will need one person to consistently care for him. Others may help but usually mother takes this responsibility. The family can plan with her so that she has the needed time released from other household duties. It is better for the baby to have one person to do most of his "chores" because it makes life less confusing for him and helps him make the shift from his natural self-interest to interest in another person. This is one of the first very important things he must learn.

C. Equipment

1. What shall he have for a bed? He must have his own bed. It would be too dangerous for him to sleep with anyone. The family can make or buy a crib. Per-

haps an old one can be fixed up and repainted. Who will do it?

2. What will be used for his bath? Perhaps the family already has a basin, pitcher, etc., that can be used.

If the family will plan together for baby's care and comfort before he comes they will all enjoy him more and help him become a participating member of the family. This will make a happy baby.

Baby's Special Needs

If baby is to be happy there are some things he must have.

1. He needs frequent sucking periods, unlimited and uninterrupted in time—preferably at his mother's breast. If bottle feeding is necessary he should be cuddled as fed.

2. He needs to be held securely and gently, cuddled often.

3. For many months he should have one person give him most of his care. This will make it easier for him to learn to love someone besides himself.

4. He needs to get the feel of his father

holding him and doing for him. He will find comfort in the strength of his father's hands and learn to turn to him for help.

5. He needs a father and a mother who have a harmonious relationship and who set a good pattern for the love development.

6. In the members of his family he needs truthfulness, honesty and sincerity.

7. In all learning he needs to be allowed to use his own innate rhythms.

8. He should be accorded the dignity of a separate individual, with his own rights and feelings.

Helping The Baby Grow Up

Baby comes into the world knowing nothing and unable to do anything for himself at first. His only method of communication is crying, later on he will learn to smile and chuckle. He has so much to learn about this world, so many skills and habits to master that he will need the patient cooperation of the entire family. He will learn easier if his folks plan together how they will help him, how all persons who care for him can handle him in the same way.

1. To help the baby grow they must be patient. Learning is hard. Each child has his own learning speed. It is best not to push him faster than he can go.

2. The family should appreciate his individuality. He is a person like themselves, not a toy to be manipulated to suit others. Naturally, then, he is different from every other baby. He will not learn anything until he is ready. Learning involves the whole body, brain, nerves, muscles and senses. They must all work together.

The new baby can maintain life, if his environment permits. This means that he has controls that work without his direction. They take care of digestion, circulation, respiration and the control of body heat. He has, in addition, some defenses. He protests against restraints, and he demands comfort and food. And, equally important, he has ready within him forces which will urge him to talk, to walk, to play, to learn and to behave like a human being. Every aspect of human activity will unfold according to an orderly plan which is his alone. All of his learning will depend upon this plan.

The new baby cannot control his head. It takes three or four months before his nerve and muscle hook-up is ready to hold it steady. Then he is ready to learn some control of his arms and legs. After three or four months more he may be able to sit alone. We can tell when he is ready, for if he is placed in a sitting position, instead of flopping forward in a frog position, he

He tends to push over backward. His next activity will be crawling and he will start himself when his body is ready. When sitting and crawling have developed his back and leg muscles sufficiently, he will stand and then gradually learn to balance him-

self and walk. No one can predict when he will be ready for any of these activities. He will show his family when he is ready. Until then it is best not to hurry him. Remember he has an inborn plan for growth and he has to follow it.

Helping The Baby Learn

His physical accomplishments tell his family that he is becoming ready to learn. Really he has been learning all along. His physical acts are dependent upon mental control as well as muscle and bone, and every act is greatly influenced by his emotions. When he is born the baby's senses do not function at par. Even if they did their impressions would be meaningless to him until he had had some experiences as a background for understanding them.

The feelings of the baby change rapidly as his eyes, ears, nose, palate and skin complete their development and teach him what to expect from his world. He finds that he is constantly having to adjust himself to the life in the home. He has to begin learning the rules of living. This is hard because he must follow his own development plan at the same time. When this plan is not crossed he responds quickly and

sweetly. If our demands oppose his inborn plan we must expect him to resist us.

His growth in understanding then takes place, first, by his increasing ability to receive impulses through his sense organs; second, through the gradual growth of his brain in its ability to interpret his sensations and hook up the nerve centers needed; and third, his increasing power to respond purposefully with motor activity. All of this orderly progress is necessary for the growth of a human being but for each baby it must happen at the proper time according to his own plan.

He will gain control over behavior gradually as his brain completes its connections with the rest of his nervous system. This means that many of the things we want to teach him, he would learn in time anyway. Our efforts make it easier for him if we adjust our teaching to his indications of readiness.

Learning To Eat

Eating habits are important in growth and development. Unfortunately many families make it difficult for the baby to learn good eating habits. They forget that appetite is natural and needs only reasonable direction. It depends upon the cycle—the pain of an empty stomach plus food equals relief or pleasure.

He seems to know when he has had enough, and he usually lets his mother know. The baby cries when hungry. During the first few days any liquid seems to satisfy the hunger pains but he soon learns to discriminate and warm water will not satisfy him. If he is to learn good eating habits the family should understand how baby learns and plan the teaching together. There are some methods suggested:

A. Establish pleasure in eating

1. Respond to his hunger cry. Note when the baby cries and try to adjust his feeding schedule accordingly. He will be happier if his rhythm is followed. It may mean occasionally feeding him ahead of schedule.

2. Make his meal time comfortable and pleasant, never hurried. While nursing he needs to be held gently and lovingly.

3. Let him stop eating when he has "had enough."

4. Respect his evident dislikes. Do not force him to eat the disliked food at the time. Serve it again at the beginning of hunger, and serve it smilingly.

5. In his second year he will not need as much food as before for the rapid growth.

ing period is over. Be willing for him to eat less.

B. When introducing new foods:

1. Remember he is conservative.
2. The baby notices the different feel of new foods more than the taste. He may push it out of his mouth because it feels different.
3. If new foods are given in very small amounts and offered with a smile he will respond more readily. If he pushes it out, give him a bit more.
4. When he is learning to drink from a cup use two cups, one for him to hold while he is fed from the other. When he begins to put his cup to his mouth he is ready for a bit of milk in his cup. In time he will manage for himself.
5. Use two spoons in the same way.
6. If he has difficulty in learning to

swallow foods with new texture, gently stroking his throat may encourage swallowing.

C. Feeding problems have causes

1. Frequently they are due to parents' eating patterns or to the parents' fear that the baby may not like "what he should have."
 2. Whoever feeds the baby should be in good humor and certainly not determined.
 3. Being forced to eat stirs up rebellion.
 4. Food that is unpleasant looking or tasting or too highly seasoned is hard for him to take.
 5. Illness may cause him to refuse to eat.
- D. When ready he will learn to feed himself.** At first it is best not to let him get tired. Let him eat a few mouthfuls himself, then feed him the remainder.

Baby's Sleeping Habits

Sleeping habits are closely tied to feeding habits.

A. They change as his food needs change

1. Some babies before they are six weeks old forget to waken for the 2 a. m. feeding.
2. During the second month he may waken a little before his 6 p. m. feeding. This is a time for play with the family—his social hour. Gradually he awakens earlier and earlier and the afternoon play time becomes longer.
3. After six months he may miss the 10 p. m. feeding—but that means he needs more food at the other feedings.
4. At 13 and 15 months some babies give

up the two-nap schedule and sleep only in the afternoon. This leads to the three-meal-a-day schedule.

B. Good sleeping conditions

1. Sleeping time should be fairly regular.
2. Comfort and freedom from restrictions should be watched.
3. Baby should always sleep alone.
4. He may not go to sleep immediately when put in his bed. Most people don't.
5. As he gets older, if he wants to talk when put to bed, let him, but do not question him or contribute much to the conversation.

Training in Toilet Habits

Like eating, toileting should be a pleasant experience for the baby. The cycle, however, is reversed. There is the unpleasant pressure of a full bowel, or bladder + elimination = comfort. This inward pressure should be the stimulation to which the baby responds. No artificial external stimulus should be used, for, as the baby grows and the external stimulus is stopped, he is apt to have lost his ability to respond to his

own inner pressure and constipation may result.

Our greatest opportunity in helping him to learn cleanliness is his own natural rhythm. Training means that his brain takes over control and he takes on a definite behavior, when he feels that inward pressure. Often we undertake training too early. The baby should be able to sit alone before we start.

Bowel Control. This involves the fitting together in the child's mind his natural responses to inward pressure to a set plan and position. First, for a period of days keep a chart of the times when elimination occurs. This will indicate the rhythm of natural responses which tells when training efforts should occur. Dr. C. Anderson Aldrich, M. D., says: "The development formula for true training is simple and efficient. After a few weeks of life, automatic evacuations gradually because less frequent so that only one or two occur daily. Their time and number vary in different children but the tendency for them to come at definite periods in each day is steadily more pronounced. As soon as it is possible to discover the exact moment at which the mass movement takes place, it is reasonable to put the baby on a chamber or toilet-seat. . . . When he is placed over the toilet-seat at his right time, his brain naturally develops the necessary association between the mass movement, the toilet-seat and his own satisfying effort."

"Our cooperation in this growth process is merely to observe the baby's own rhythm, in selecting the time of day for a bowel movement. Such synchrony leads to training at a reasonably early date and does not subtract from the baby's innate capabilities. When this is done, real, permanent training becomes a fact and his future health is protected."

2. Bladder Control. This involves the inhibition of a natural impulse. The tiny baby wets frequently since his diet is largely liquid. A small stomach needs to be filled often, and a small bladder emptied often. As he gets older urination will be less frequent and more copious. The two-year old usually urinates only five or seven times daily. Dr. Aldrich has outlined the following plan:

"Bladder training consists in giving the baby a chance to take on the responsibility for his own comfort and cleanliness by inhibiting urination except when on the toilet. Since this implies considerable maturity of attitude on his part, it is clear that an important feature of the process must be in waiting for the necessary degree of development."

"Soon after he is firmly balanced on his legs, an accomplishment which tremendously increases his self-esteem, his maturing mind is ready to accept the assignment of keeping dry, and we may discard diapers for training pants in the day time. To help him to understand what is expected of him, he is usually introduced to the toilet for urination at frequent intervals for the first two or three days. If he responds quickly to the suggestion, in even a few days, he will tell us of his needs. . . . When, therefore, one or two days' trial shows us that the baby is not yet ready for this step, the 'Watch and wait' plan seems to be indicated. In another month he may be all set to go. . . ."

"His next step is to attain control while sleeping. This acceptance of responsibility for his acts even while asleep is not usually achieved until late in the second, or even in the third year. It is easy for him to begin at his nap time because of its short duration. Again, his diapers, the last symbols of babyhood, may be removed with the remark that he has now grown up enough to keep his bed dry during the nap. If at first he shows he is not ready, diapers may be worn for a few weeks longer, when the opportunity is given to him again. Since his plan of growth has arranged that he will ultimately be reliable in this matter, it is possible to follow such a policy with absolute confidence. Failure may be met with the remark that he is not yet old enough but that he will soon take over the job himself. We all do. Punishment of any sort has no place in this process, which goes on to success with all babies who are given the opportunity for control when they are ready for it. In the same way, night control will be accomplished when the baby has learned by his experience at nap-time that it is possible for him to remain dry even when asleep. Many people feel that they must wake him up during the evening or at some time later on in the night for a visit to the toilet. It has seemed to me that this practice delayed complete control. If he is going to take the responsibility for his behavior while asleep he must be put upon his own resources. . . ."

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