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4-H 311 4-H Child Development Projects : Leader's Guide for the Infant and Toddler Units

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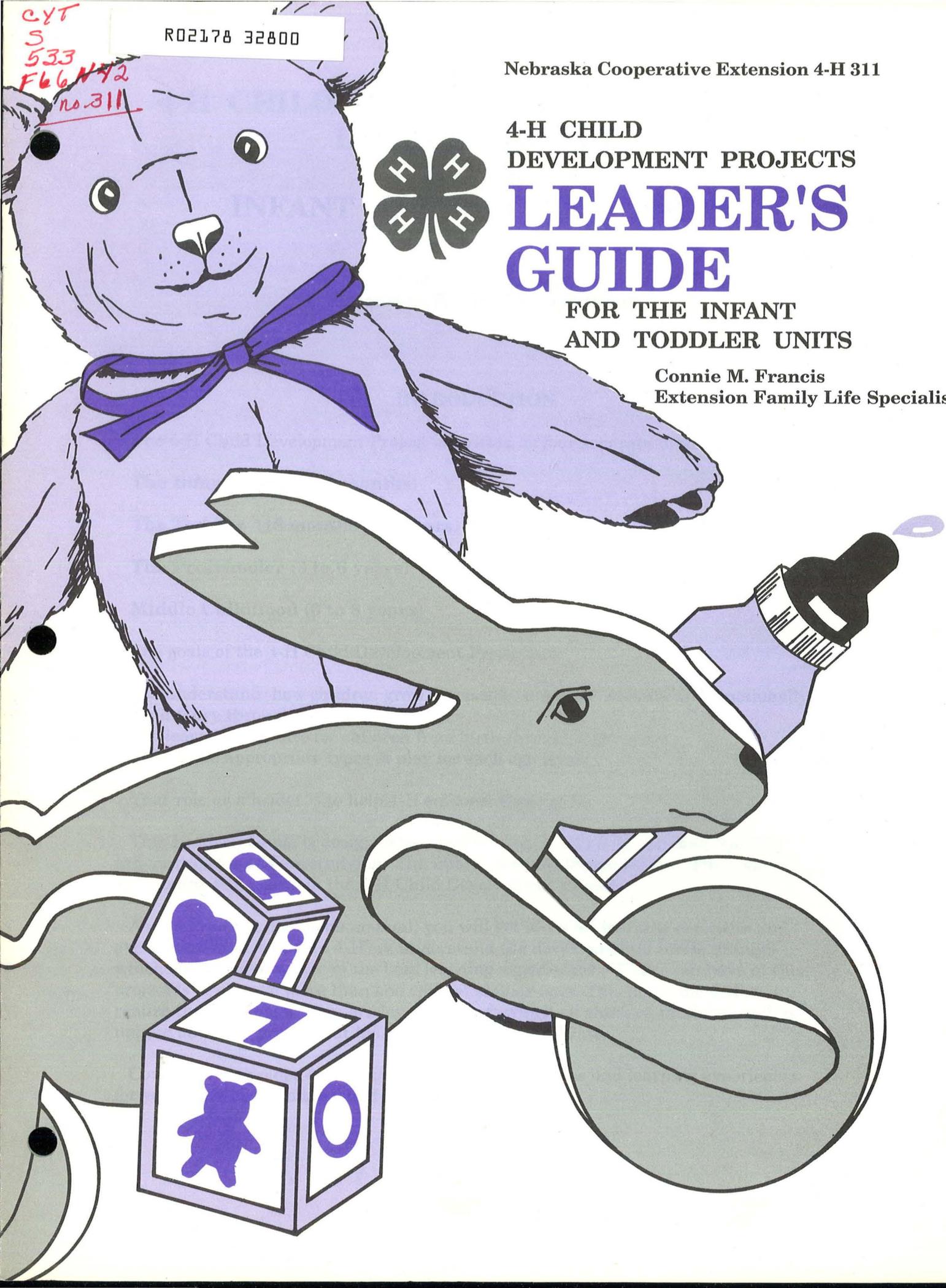
Nebraska Cooperative Extension 4-H 311

4-H CHILD
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

LEADER'S GUIDE

FOR THE INFANT
AND TODDLER UNITS

Connie M. Francis
Extension Family Life Specialist



4-H CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS LEADER'S GUIDE for the INFANT and TODDLER UNITS

**Connie M. Francis
Extension Family Life Specialist**

INTRODUCTION

The 4-H Child Development Project is written as four separate units:

The Infant (birth to 18 months)

The Toddler (18 months to 3 years)

The Preschooler (3 to 6 years)

Middle Childhood (6 to 8 years)

The goals of the 4-H Child Development Project are:

*To understand how children grow physically, mentally, socially and emotionally from infancy through middle childhood.

*To learn how to care for children from birth through eight years.

*To choose appropriate types of play for each age level.

Your role as a leader is to help 4-H'ers meet these goals.

This Leader's Guide is designed as a tool for you. It will help you plan learning experiences for 4-H'ers studying "The Infant (birth to 18 months) or "The Toddler" (18 months to 3 years) in the 4-H Child Development Project.

As you read the member's manual, you will get ideas for learning activities and experiences that will help 4-H'ers understand the developmental levels through which children grow. One of the best learning experiences a 4-H'er can have in this project is to observe more than one child of similar ages. This helps the 4-H'er realize that, although there are levels through which all children progress, each is unique and each proceeds at his or her own individual rate.

Consider using older 4-H'ers to help you with activities and learning experiences for younger 4-H'ers in the Child Development Project.

WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Most young people within an age group have some of the general characteristics typical of the age and developmental stage. However, each child develops at his or her own pace and each is a unique individual. Below are typical characteristics of two age groups with which you will be working. You are likely to observe many of these characteristics in your 4-H members, but you will not find all of them in any one member.

Characteristics of 9- to 11- year-olds:

- * Interest in making things is high.
- * Large muscle control is fairly well developed.
- * Fine finger control is beginning to develop.
- * Peer group is of increasing importance.
- * Independence from adults is important.
- * Have limited decision making abilities.
- * Have abounding energy.
- * Find it hard to sit still for very long.
- * Need to experience early success.
- * Need to feel loved and accepted.
- * Attention span is good for short periods of time.
- * Active participation increases attention span.
- * Searching for self-identity and need assistance in building a strong sense of positive personal confidence.
- * Need help managing their time.¹

Characteristics of 12- to 14- year-olds:

- * Steady height and weight growth continues.
- * Small muscle control is fairly well developed.
- * Abstract thought is possible, and plans can extend over several weeks.
- * Activities can be evaluated with

considerable insight.

- * Attention span increases.
- * Need self-expression and self-directed activities to develop intellectual skills.
- * Need to know and understand the "why" of things.
- * Peer group is very important.
- * Prejudice may be apparent.
- * Both cooperation and competition are enjoyed. Cooperation is more difficult to learn than is competition.
- * Independence from adults is important.
- * Concept of self is enhanced by feelings of competence.

The 4-H Leader Handbook (4-H 38) is a guide to help leaders work with young people and to link them to the Extension office in their area, and to the community. Each module in the handbook provides information on such topics as understanding 4-H, involving parents in 4-H, holding effective meetings, understanding youth and helping 4-H'ers with project records.

¹Rose Marie Tondl, SEWING FOR FUN: LEADER'S GUIDE. (University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension.)

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 4-H LEADER

1. Attend leader training meetings when possible to receive information on teaching 4-H'ers.
2. Plan meetings for project members.
3. Explain what the project can offer. Encourage 4-H'ers to pursue areas of individual interest and share their findings with others.
4. Help individuals evaluate their projects.
5. Encourage participation in presentations and exhibits to gain poise and confidence.
6. Learn and grow with the members. Broaden your own knowledge in child development.
7. Ask your Extension Agent-Home Economics for help in getting bulletins and other materials and resources listed in this guide.
8. Involve parents in this 4-H project. Begin by encouraging 4-H'ers to discuss their project plans with their parents. Parents can take part in 4-H and relieve you of some of the responsibilities. For example, they can help with transportation; work out details for a tour or field trip; have meetings in their homes; or serve as resource persons for games, activities or lesson presentations.

A 4-H PHILOSOPHY

Much of the 4-H program centers around one major learning technique—the project. A project is a real-life learning experience through which the 4-H member establishes personal objectives, sets out to accomplish these objectives and finishes the job. Projects help members learn by doing and are planned to teach life skills. These skills will help 4-H'ers function as adults in our society and accept responsibilities for community leadership.

Life skills help young people and adults fulfill their potential as individuals and group members. The life skills learned in 4-H include understanding self; relating with others; decision making/problem solving; acquiring,

analyzing and using information; managing resources and working with others.

In the 4-H Child Development project, 4-H'ers will learn and practice these life skills. As a leader, you can encourage 4-H'ers to talk about and share what they observe and do, both formally and informally. Urge them to experiment, ask questions and try new things. Give them opportunities to identify problems and attempt solutions, to set goals and make choices, and to evaluate what they have learned. In this way, you will help them develop life skills which will be useful to them long after they have completed this project.

PLANNING THE PROJECT MEETING

Below are suggested activities for club meetings. It is not necessary to complete all the activities and exercises. Select the ones that interest you and your club members the most.

Get members involved early in the meeting through roll call, reports of what they have done at home, simple demonstrations, short talks and actual activities. Provide some opportunity for recognition of and participation by every member at each meeting.

Field trips add variety to a club program. For the convenience of everyone concerned, make arrangements for trips well in advance. Talk to the person in charge about what you want members

to learn and see, their interest and age range, the time of your arrival and departure, and anything else that will make the visit worthwhile for 4-H'ers and pleasant for the host.

Involve Junior Leaders as well as 4-H parents in club meetings. Ask them to do a demonstration, assist with a group activity or help individual 4-H'ers.

Take some time at your first meeting to organize. Introduce the project to members and their parents. Explain the project and, if possible, give examples of what is included in some of the units. Discuss keeping a journal to record project experiences and observations.

THE INFANT

This project is about the development of infants from birth to 18 months. In it the 4-H'er will observe and learn about the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of infants. It is important to remind members that each child is unique and will progress through these stages at an individual rate. Ages given for various stages of development and accomplishment are only approximate.

For more information about the development and care of infants, refer to the following Fact Sheets, which are available at your Extension office:

- * FL11 Your New Baby's Early Life
- * FL12 Milestones of Baby's Growth
- * FL13 Your Baby at Three to Six Months
- * FL14 Your Baby at Six to Nine Months
- * FL15 Your Baby at Nine to Twelve Months
- * FL16 Your Child at Twelve to Fifteen Months
- * FL17 Your Child at Fifteen to Eighteen Months
- * FL40 Toys and Play for Young Children
- * FL50 Baby Sitting
- * FL80 Reading to Your Child
- * Home Furnishings/Interiors Fact Sheet 45 Children's Furnishings for a Safer Environment
- * Home Furnishings/Interiors Fact Sheet 46 Children's Furnishings Safety Check List

The following 4-H publications may also be useful to you:

- *4-H 181 Communicating with Young Children
- *4-H 267 The Sitter, Member Manual
- *4-H 268 The Sitter, Leader Guide

The amount of responsibility a 4-H'er takes for actual care of a child in this project depends on the member's age and experience. The member's manual has project suggestions for members in three age groups: 9 to 11 years old, 12 to 14 years old, and 15 to 19 years old.

UNDERSTANDING INFANCY

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn how an infant grows physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.

Meeting Suggestions: (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

Roll Call Ideas:

- * Why I have chosen to study infants.
- * An experience I have had with an infant.
- * Name one item which would be useful when caring for an infant.
- * Ask each member to bring and show a picture of themselves as an infant.

Topics to Talk About:

* Characteristics of infants. See "I Am An Infant," page 7 in the member manual. Explain to 4-H'ers that developmental materials are generalized information to help us see the various stages through which a child moves. It is important to realize that each child develops at his or her own pace.

* How babies learn to communicate. Talk about forms of communication such as crying, smiling, coos and gurgles, and how a baby uses them to send messages.

* Observing babies. Discuss skills infants learn in each area: physical, social, mental and emotional development. Encourage members to observe as many infants as possible at a variety of age levels.

* Keeping a journal. Have members talk about keeping a Child Development journal in which they can record their observations. With a loose-leaf notebook 4-H'ers could duplicate the Observation Form and make several observations throughout their project. The 4-H'ers might also record other experiences in the project, and include pictures and newspaper or magazine articles about the development and care of babies.

Activities:

* Use project suggestions on page 4 of the member's manual. Discuss what each member would like to learn. Complete the first column of the Project Planning and Evaluation Sheet.

* Make the first journal entry as a group. Record your plans for the project year.

* Using the observation form provided on page 6 of the member manual, have members record changes in one infant over a period of time, and differences between two or more infants of approximately the same age.

* Visit a local day care center where 4-H'ers can observe more than one infant. Each member might select two children of the same approximate age and note similarities and differences in physical, emotional, mental and social development. Record what you see on Observation Forms. Encourage 4-H'ers to ask questions of the day care provider. (You and the members could prepare a list of questions ahead of time.)

CARING FOR THE INFANT

Purpose: The 4-H'er will learn skills such as bathing, clothing and feeding the baby, and promoting feelings of security and safety.

Meeting Suggestions: (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

Roll Call Ideas:

- * One safety rule for caring for an infant.
- * A piece of clothing an infant needs.

Possible Member Presentations:

- * How to heat a baby's bottle.
- * How to feed and burp a baby.
- * How to bathe an infant.
- * How to select an infant's clothing.

Topics for Discussion:

* Feeding an infant. Discuss nutritional needs and how they change, how to hold a baby while giving a bottle and how to burp a baby. Talk about safety precautions for storing and heating baby food.

* Bathing an infant. Talk about how to do it, step by step. Emphasize safety precautions.

* Clothing an infant. Discuss types of clothing which are appropriate for an infant.

Activities:

* Invite a guest speaker to attend your 4-H meeting. Before the speaker arrives, develop a list of questions you would like to ask. Ideas for guest speakers include:

-a nurse to demonstrate infant care skills such as changing a diaper or dressing an infant.

-a mother to show how to feed a newborn.

-a doctor to explain immunization of infants — when and why.

-someone from community action to explain the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

* Demonstrate how to bathe an infant using a doll. Let each member try. Then talk about how to dress the baby and let members practice.

* As members develop skills in caring for an infant, and as they learn through observations and other experiences, encourage them to share what they have learned. This sharing may be done informally through group discussion or through formal presentations.

* Visit a store that sells infants' clothing. Look at size and age ranges listed. Check labels. Look for features which would make clothing easy or difficult to put on an infant.

* Check the price of cloth diapers versus disposable diapers. Considering cost, care requirements and environmental considerations, which type do members think would be the best buy? One or more members may want to make a poster or display showing what they found.

* Discuss safety features to look for in infant furnishings. Visit furniture stores and compare quality of construction, safety features and cost.

* Check prices on items for an infant's layette and decide how much it would cost to clothe an infant for the first three months of life.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn to choose types of play and toys suitable for infants.

Meeting Suggestions: (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

Roll Call Ideas:

- * Your favorite toy as an infant.
- * One way an infant plays.
- * A safety tip for playing with an infant.
- * An idea or picture of an infant toy to make.

Topics to Talk About:

- * What makes a good toy for an infant? Use the section on "Toys for Babies," page 12 in the member manual as a discussion guide.
- * Types of play that encourage an infant's development.

Activities:

* Collect four or five toys for babies. Ask members to evaluate each one for quality of construction, safety and appropriateness for an infant.

* Visit a store that sells toys. Look at specific features and at age recommendations on labels. Compare to recommendations in the 4-H Child Development manual for infants.

* Ask each member to bring supplies needed to make a mobile. Make mobiles at your meeting. You may want to enlist the help of one or two mothers or an older 4-H'er.

AN ACHIEVEMENT MEETING

If possible, share the achievements of the members in this project at a final club "achievement" meeting. This would be an ideal time to invite families to learn about what members have done.

An achievement meeting could include

an exhibit of members' work, displays or posters showing things learned, presentations by members, and sharing of observations about the growth and development of infants.

THE TODDLER

This unit is about the development of toddlers from 18 months to 3 years. In it the 4-H'er will observe and learn about the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of toddlers. It is important for members to realize that each child is unique and progresses through developmental stages at an individual pace. Although ages are given for various stages of development and accomplishment, these are only approximate. Children will reach each level of development at varying ages.

For more information about the development and care of toddlers, refer to the following Fact Sheets available from your Extension office:

- *FL18 Your Child at Eighteen to Twenty-One Months
- *FL19 Your Child at Twenty-One to Twenty-Four Months
- *FL20 Twenty-Four Months and Beyond
- *FL40 Toys and Play for Young Children
- *FL50 Baby Sitting

The following 4-H publications may also be useful:

- *4-H 181 Communicating with Young Children
- *4-H 267 The Sitter, Member Manual
- *4-H 268 The Sitter, Leader Guide

Project suggestions in the member's manual are given for three age groups: 9 to 11 years old, 12 to 14 years old, and 15 to 19 years old. The amount of responsibility a 4-H'er takes for the care of a child in this project depends on the 4-H'ers age and experience.

UNDERSTANDING THE TODDLER

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn how a toddler grows physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.

Meeting Suggestions: (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

Roll Call Ideas:

- * Why I have chosen to study toddlers.
- * One thing I know about toddlers.
- * An experience I have had with a toddler.

Topics to Talk About:

* Characteristics of toddlers. See "I Am A Toddler" page 8 in the member manual. Emphasize that developmental materials are generalized information to help us see the various stages through which a child moves. It is important to remember that each child develops at his or her own pace.

* Observing toddlers. Refer to the Observation Form on page 6 in the member manual and discuss skills toddlers learn in each area: physical, social, mental and emotional development. Encourage members to observe as many toddlers as possible at a variety of age levels.

* Keeping a journal. Encourage members to keep a Child Development journal in which they record their observations. With a loose leaf notebook 4-H'ers could duplicate the Observation Form and make several observations

throughout their project. The 4-H'ers might also record other experiences in the project, and include pictures and newspaper or magazine articles about the development and care of toddlers.

Activities:

* Use project suggestions on page 4 of the member manual. Discuss what each member would like to learn and do. Complete the first column of the Project Planning and Evaluation Sheet.

* Make a journal entry as a group. In it record your plans for the project year.

* Using the Observation Form provided on page 6 of the member's manual, have members record changes in one toddler over a period of time and differences between two or more toddlers of approximately the same age. Have members include these observations in their journal.

* Visit a local day care center where 4-H'ers can observe more than one toddler. Each member could select two children of the same approximate age and note similarities and differences in physical, emotional, mental and social development. Have members record what they see on Observation Forms. Encourage 4-H'ers to ask questions of the day care provider. (You and the members could prepare a list of questions together ahead of time.)

CARING FOR THE TODDLER

Purpose: The 4-H'er will learn how to bathe, dress and feed the toddler and how to promote feelings of security and safety.

Meeting Suggestions: (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

Roll Call Ideas:

- * One safety rule for caring for a toddler.
- * A current issue affecting toddlers and their families.

Possible Presentations:

- * Nutritional needs of a toddler.
- * Clothing for a toddler.

Topics to Talk About:

- * Feeding a toddler. Discuss nutritional needs and how they change as a toddler grows. Also talk about how toddlers begin to feed themselves.
- * Safety pointers. Include safety considerations for playing, sleeping and bathing.
- * Clothing a toddler. Types of clothing that are appropriate for a toddler.

Activities:

* Invite a guest speaker to attend your 4-H meeting. Before the speaker arrives, write a list of questions you would like to ask. Ideas for guest speakers include:

- a parent of a toddler to talk about what the child is like.
- a doctor to talk about childhood diseases.
- a day care provider to talk about day care as a business.
- a state legislator to discuss current legislation affecting families in your state.

* Visit a store that sells toddlers' clothing. Look at sizes, age ranges and features which would make it easier for a toddler to learn to dress alone. Check labels for care instructions.

* As members develop skills in caring for a toddler, and as they learn through observations and other experiences, encourage them to share what they have learned. This sharing may be done informally through group discussion or through formal presentations.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Purpose: 4-H'ers will learn to choose types of play and toys suitable for toddlers.

Meeting Suggestions: (This section may involve two or three meetings.)

Roll Call Ideas:

- * Your favorite toy as a toddler.
- * Name a toy a toddler would enjoy.
- * A safety tip for playing with a toddler.
- * An idea or picture of a toddler's toy to make.

Possible Presentations:

- * Selecting or making a toy for a toddler.
- * Reading a story to a toddler.

Topics to Talk About:

- * Types of play which encourage a toddler's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development.
- * What makes a good toy for a toddler? Use the section on "Finding and Making Toys for the Toddler," page 17 in the member manual as a discussion guide.

Activities:

- * Collect four or five toys for toddlers. Ask members to evaluate each toy for quality of construction, safety and appropriateness for a toddler.
- * Visit a store that sells toys. Look at specific features and at age recommendations on labels. Compare to recommendations in the 4-H Child Development manual for toddlers.
- * Look at toy advertisements and evaluate toys for safety and appropriateness.
- * Encourage members to write in their journals about what they see. By observing a child's imaginative play a 4-H'er can learn a great deal about what the child is thinking and feeling.

AN ACHIEVEMENT MEETING

If possible, share the achievements of the members in this project at a final club "achievement" meeting. This would be a good time to invite families to learn about what members have done.

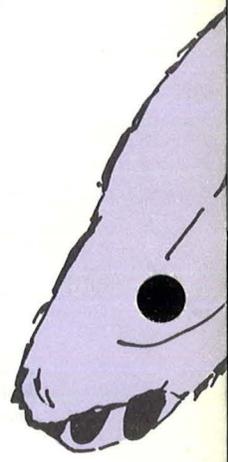
An achievement meeting could include

an exhibit of members' work, displays or posters showing things learned, presentations by members, and sharing of observations about the growth and development of toddlers.

A Guide to Children's Toys

Children's rates of growth differ widely, but the sequence of the development is similar. The following guide is not a timetable. It shows a progression in which each new skill adds to and builds on the mastery of the ones before.

STAGES	EMERGING SKILLS	TOYS THAT ENABLE	WAYS TO ENCOURAGE
ENJOYMENT OF THE FAMILIAR (birth to about 6 months)	recognition of faces anticipation of sequences discovery of own body (hand, mouth and vocal play) staring and listening intently learning they can cause things to happen	stuffed toys with faces reflective surfaces, toys to hold, suck, shake crib decorations, music box mobile that moves as a result of baby moving in bed	make faces ritual games (pat-a-cake) think safety in toys that go in mouth sing/talk to baby react
GETTING AROUND (about 6 mo. to 12 mo.)	action—crawling, standing, walking manipulation with hands and mouth sense of self as doer rhythm of absence/presence	things he/she can crawl under, get inside toys for banging, inserting, twisting, pushing pulling, dropping, squeezing, opening, shutting jack-in-box, toys which hide and reveal	gentle rough housing think safety on anything that can go in mouth knee, lap games, tug-o-war peek-a-boo, hear-a-boo
EXPLORING (about 1 to 2 years)	mobility—use of body exploration and testing of relationships (objects as well as people) look for something that's gone imitation making decisions—choice language	wheel toys, push/pull toys, ball construction toys for putting together, taking apart, blocks, containers for emptying and filling, things to throw simple, sturdy books and pictures	chase and be chased finger and hand games hide and find things pretend
DESIRE FOR MASTERY (about 2 to 3 years)	testing surroundings and physical ability exploration and construction self mastery, desire to do it alone performing pretending sustain play in small groups	pedal toys, punching toys sand and water toys drawing materials, water-soluble paints, block, play dough, pasting, puzzles, threading, lacing puppets, books, records	switch roles act out stories, tell stories be an audience help pretend follow the leader, ring games (around the rosy)
MAKE BELIEVE (about 3 to 4 years)	construct toy worlds portray characters with feelings sort and match take turns, play cooperatively, make rules music and rhythm physical exploration	toy house, village, farm, etc. dress up and make believe props for self, toys and dolls blunt scissors, easel, clay records, books on fantasy, familiar places and rhythms simple music and rhythm instruments	participate in make believe hide and seek
LEARNING ORDER (about 4 to 5 years)	differentiate order/disorder differentiate inclusion/exclusion desire for courage and adequacy establish play rituals have secrets and surprises act out imaginary characters	tinker toys, lego and other detailed construction toys simple card and board games	provide place to keep toys orderly play games of courage allow some privacy
THE DREAMER (about 5 to 7 years)	dream—think of "what if" situations elaborate toy worlds begin collections team play chasing and escaping attack and defense sense of self as separate person	comics and books, paper dolls magnets, compass, magnifying glass simple craft kits—weaving, sewing, construction kits simple tools for clay, etc. rope ladder, skates, stilts two wheel bike	play "what if" games improvise movements, objects, characters, situations, feelings provide safe place to store collection referee
ENJOYMENT OF THE ABSURD (about 7 to 9 years)	guessing, riddling develop pastimes—collections, hobbies desire for correctness—no mistakes	card and board games dominoes, checkers mechanical, simple construction tools for woodworking, crafts, etc. jump rope, stilts	play with double meanings indulge nonsense show your skill
DESIRE FOR COMPETENCE (about 9 to 13 years)	concern with opinions of others sense of self and feelings as unique concerned with success/failure	intellectual games (scrabble, charades) models diaries, journals, notebooks camping and exploring equipment more complex craft tools	dramatize imaginary interactions, conflicts ask about experiences, feelings encourage creative writing play sports allow privacy



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