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EC5522 The Important Job of Homemaking

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Nebraska

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

1935

U. of N. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

Extension
Circular
5522

THE IMPORTANT JOB OF HOMEMAKING

To the person who is to be the
leader the day this circular is studied:

This study will mean more to your group if you will ask each homemaker to make a list of her homemaking responsibilities sometime before the meeting at which the circular is to be studied. You might explain how you would like to have them make an outline. This suggestion can be given the homemakers at the meeting preceding the time when they are to study the circular. Homemakers who give careful thought to the importance of their responsibilities will especially enjoy the day's study.

As a homemaker, what is your job?

What are your responsibilities?

What do you do that takes your time and energy?

These questions were asked of the county chairmen who attended the eight home demonstration conferences held in different parts of the state last February. Usually the first answer given would be, "Oh, I cook and prepare the meals for the family." As they discussed what they did in feeding the family, besides the cooking, they decided to call the heading for that part of the work "Food and Nutrition" rather than "Cooking."

In thinking about the homemaker's responsibilities for food and nutrition, they said there was the planning, preparing, and serving of well-balanced meals. A good number of the women also had to prepare lunches. Then there was the canning, drying, pickling, and the jelly making to do. Other women suggested that they have to give time and thought to refrigeration and also to butchering. The storage and care of food takes time and thought.

Homemakers have a big responsibility in the purchasing of foods and in the use of left-overs so there will be no waste. In most homes the training of the family to have good food habits and to be courteous and interesting at the table are important factors for the homemaker.

The list of food and nutrition responsibilities also included the food problems which arise when there is sickness in the family or when there is company. No doubt there are other food and nutrition responsibilities, but these were the ones suggested in the short time given to the discussion on foods.

The women were then asked what else they did and nearly always the answer would be "Keep the house clean." This was then discussed and they decided the best way to list it would be to classify the work as daily, weekly, and seasonal cleaning. Methods of cleaning were discussed, for some homemakers do their cleaning more easily than others. Each homemaker has a responsibility to study her methods and to learn how to improve them. Homemakers need to study their equipment and supplies to be sure that what they have serves the purpose as well as it should.

Next came a discussion of laundry, and the different phases of that home responsibility were listed. The following outline contains the responsibilities as they were suggested by the county chairmen. No two lists were the same and no two had the same sequence. These lists were suggested within a short time and no previous study was given to analyzing the job of a homemaker.

The lists from the eight conferences were typed and then given to the students in the Extension Methods class consisting of ten girls who were studying how to become county home demonstration agents. The girls in the class combined them into one list similar to the one which follows.

Before reading any farther, you would enjoy this circular more if you would take a pencil and paper and make a list of your homemaking responsibilities if you have not already done so. No doubt you who are reading this circular will think of additional responsibilities which homemakers have. After this list has been studied, add others to it if you think some have been omitted.

Foods and Nutrition

- Well balanced meals
 - Planning
 - Preparing
 - Serving
- Lunch baskets
- Preservation
 - Canning
 - Drying
 - Pickling
 - Jelly making
 - Refrigeration
 - Butchering
- Dish washing
- Storage
- Use of left-overs
- Purchasing
- Develop good meal time habits
 - Healthful eating habits
 - Etiquette
 - Conversation to form a happy time
- Food for sick
- Company meals

Cleaning

- Daily
- Weekly
- Seasonal
- Equipment and supplies
 - Selection
 - Care
 - Storage
- Methods

Laundry

- Equipment and supplies
 - Selection
 - Care and upkeep
 - Soap making
- Methods
 - Stain removal
 - Setting colors
 - Washing
 - Hand
 - Machine
- Repair
 - Patching and darning
- Ironing
- Storage
- Dry cleaning

Clothing

- Planning
- Selection and purchase
- Construction
 - Use of patterns
 - Remodeling
 - Dyeing
 - Shrinking
- Care
 - Cleaning
 - Pressing
 - Repair
 - Patching and darning
 - Storage
- Equipment and supplies

Child Training and Family Relationships

- Character development in
 - Honesty
 - Responsibility
 - Self-reliance
 - Respect for the rights of others
 - Cooperation
 - Confidence
 - Obedience
 - Patience
 - Appreciation
- Develop individual responsibilities in:
 - Care of personal belongings
 - Choice of associates
 - Desire for wholesome food
 - Use of time and money
 - Sympathetic understanding and interest in people.
 - Appreciating beauty and nature
 - Practice of Golden Rule
- Sex education
- Teach and practice everyday courtesies
- Family councils
- Happy home atmosphere
 - Keep and develop family affection
 - Mutual confidence
 - Family cooperation in work and play
 - Table conversation
 - Evenings at home
 - Music
 - Recreation
 - Privacy
- Progressive attitude
- Adult and parent education
- Personality development

Health

- Develop health habits
 - Physical
 - Food habits
 - Cleanliness
 - Exercise
 - Relaxation
 - Sleep
 - Regular physical examination
 - Mental
 - Spiritual
- Creates healthful environment
 - Sanitation
 - Lighting
 - Ventilation
 - Heating
- Care of sick
- First aid

Management

- Finances
 - Budgets
- Time
 - Work schedule
- Household engineering
 - Methods
 - Labor saving devices
 - Equipment
 - Purchasing
 - Care and repair
 - Arrangement
 - Upkeep of house and improvements

Homemaker Herself

- Keep fit
 - Physically
 - Health
 - Appearance
 - Mentally
 - Spiritually
- Develop pleasing personality by:
 - Self-control
 - Humor
 - Poise
 - Tact
 - Open-mindedness
 - Appreciations
 - Radiating happiness
 - Hospitality
 - Sympathetic understanding
- Keep right mental attitude
- Practice Golden Rule

Education

- Secular education
 - Create an interest in:
 - Education
 - Literature
 - Music
 - Art
 - Travel
 - Develop talents
 - Social contacts with cultured people
 - Keep up-to-date
 - Cooperate with teachers
 - Courtesies
 - Be members of organizations
 - Project clubs
 - Others
 - Plan for education of children
 - Preparation for homemaking
- Religious education
 - Develop a Christian personality
 - Make use of religious agencies, such as worship services, Sunday School, young peoples' organizations, etc.
 - Practice stewardship
 - Religious training in the home
 - Bible reading
 - Prayer
 - Grace at meals
 - Religious songs

Recreation

- Individual recreation
 - Hobbies
 - Reading
 - Vacations
 - Radio
 - Wise use of leisure time
 - Nature study
 - Handicraft
- Family recreation
 - Play space and equipment
 - Reading
 - Music
 - Picnics
 - Games
- Community recreation
 - Play space and equipment
 - Music
 - Picnics
 - Dramatics
 - Parties
 - Games
 - Clubs and organizations
 - Commercial entertainments

Gardening

- Planning
- Equipment
 - Selection
 - Care
 - Storage
- Preparation
- Care
 - Cultivation
 - Weed control
 - Pest control
 - Moisture control
- Utilization
 - Harvest
 - Storage
 - Preservation
 - Marketing
- Small fruit

Dairy

- Equipment and supplies
- Purchase and upkeep
- Sanitation
- Management
 - Production of quality products
- Handling
- Storage
- Marketing

Poultry

- Equipment and housing
- Care
- Management
 - Selection and care
- Marketing

Hired Help

- Feeding
- Housing
- Influence on family

Home Beautification

- Interior beautification
 - Selection, color, and arrangement
- Exterior beautification
 - Arrangement of farmstead
 - Landscape
 - Front yard
 - Back yard
 - Garden
- Roadside

Community and Civic Responsibilities

Participation in community life
Neighborliness and sociability
Community cooperation
Respect for others
Help in community organizations
P. T. A.
Project clubs
Women's clubs
Farm organizations
Social clubs
Lodges, etc.
Leadership in community affairs
Church and school activities
Recreation

Organizing and sponsoring youth clubs
such as 4-H Clubs, Camp Fire, etc.
Supporting civic projects
Library
Recreation
Community betterment projects
Beautification
Health and sanitation
Civic responsibilities
Know and obey laws
Know lawmakers and officers
Know property rights
Temperance education
Intelligent voting

In the conference after the county chairmen had talked about the various responsibilities, they were asked to select the group which was the most vital. The one which meant the most for the mental, physical, and spiritual well-being of the family, not only today, but for all time, even on and on through eternity. For what the homemaker is and does has a part in the lives of those around her, so the job of homemaking is important not only now but on down through the future ages and ages.

How would it be for each of you homemakers to look over your list and mark the most important one "A", then the one next in importance "B", and so on through the list. Perhaps you will wish to mark more than one "A". It will be interesting in the club to discuss which are the most important and which are of about the same value.

THE HOMEMAKER'S CREED

I believe that the home is the greatest institution in the world.
I believe that the homemaker has the most important task in the world.
I believe that it is my responsibility as a homemaker:
To insure the purity and sanctity of my home.
To exert such a moral influence in my home that those
whose lives I touch may be properly influenced thereby.
To provide for the health of my family by cooking properly
and by keeping my home clean and sanitary.
To maintain a real home of cheer, comfort, and attractiveness which my family will enjoy.
To help lead my family in the paths of culture, that it
may seek and appreciate the better things in life.
I believe that carrying out these duties will require an unlimited amount of determination, patience, perseverance, and self-control, but I believe that for this expenditure I shall receive ample and satisfactory returns.

--Mrs. Clyde Barkell

(Prepared by Mary-Ellen Brown).