

## Two Strong Pressures: Nursery School, Career Moms

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — During the past months a number of parents have approached me with questions about whether or not to send their child to nursery school. This particular question surfaces each year as parents hear about other children ages 3, 4, or 5 who are enrolled in some preschool program for the fall. There are various opinions about sending a child to a preschool program and a number of considerations need to be made when talking about enrolling a child in a program.

First, the individual child needs to be considered. The questions I always ask are: "Does your child need such an experience? In what ways will he benefit? Is the child ready for nursery school? Why do you want to send him, or not send him?"

Then I encourage the parent or parents to survey the programs available in a particular community. Some programs are basically play programs, others concentrate on social experiences, and still others emphasize the intellectual aspects of the child's development. Some programs give the child a well-rounded experience. There are morning and afternoon programs. Some programs allow you to enroll your child for a few days a week, while others insist on a Monday-to-Friday schedule.

The best way to find out about the program is to talk first to the teachers and then search out some parents whose children were in the programs last year. Even though you get almost a 100 percent favorable consensus on a specific program, it doesn't mean that your child will automatically fit. Children are different and your child may, through his or her behavior, indicate that the program just isn't meeting his or her needs.

I also discuss the pressure that sometimes builds up in a neighborhood to send the child to a preschool program. One mother said that she was convinced that her son was not ready for preschool but that she felt guilty that she was not sending him because everyone with children of that same age sent them. She felt as though she was depriving her son of something. She indicated that this was the most difficult part of the decision.

Every child does not need to attend a preschool program,

regardless of how tremendous a program is. The home provides many opportunities for the growing child; and if a parent feels that the child does not need to attend such a program, then the parent needs to stand firm in that decision. However, it can be mentioned that the child who is alone at home might very well benefit from association with other children his or her own age.

Another consideration is the cost. Many families, for a variety of reasons, get into a real financial bind by sending a son or daughter to a preschool program. The financial aspect needs careful thought. In the end, only the parents can and should decide whether their child should be enrolled. But, as I indicated earlier, be careful of the subtle pressure that sometimes abounds.

Not unrelated is the pressure exerted on mothers to develop what used to be called "cabin fever." Magazine article after magazine article today tells or implies that in order to have a full life, to be completely happy, contented, and satisfied, a mother really should move out of the home. Many times these magazines or media pitches are telling mothers how many of their kind are out working, how happy they are, etc.

The implication is that to be really "in" a mother must have a job or at least be dissatisfied with staying home. Hardly an example is ever given of a happy mother who has a young child and who is not working outside the home. The fact is that there is a very large number of mothers who are not working and who are very pleased with life. Some of these women are made to feel guilty because they are told they are not being productive, they are not very much alive, not stimulating, or, in a word, they are sort of wasting away their life. Again, the pressure is present and this pressure to get into the labor market is strong.

The idea of mother working or not working is related to preschool programs but these two ideas need to be considered on an individual level as separate ideas. I know one mother who started feeling guilty about staying home, yet she felt strange talking about getting a job with a youngster age three. So she picked up the idea of how good it

would be for her daughter to attend a preschool program. Once this decision was made to send daughter to nursery school, she then moved back to her original idea. She reasoned that if Suzy was off to nursery school five mornings a week then she could take a job, at least part time. But Suzy seemed so excited about nursery school that the mother looked around for a babysitter to care for Suzy in the afternoon. Then she could work full time. And, according to her, she wouldn't feel so bad about working since Suzy was getting so much from all these experiences.

The final act of this little human drama, which didn't occur until much later, had mother and daughter both back home — mother being much the wiser.

Her thoughts as she reflected on

her experiences were, "I really did a 'snow job' on my husband, myself and worst of all, I did something very compulsive — I mean, I let my guilt about staying home rule my life." Later she indicated that she has found numerous ways to be productive and creative, and has found that happiness so often talked about.

It goes without saying that many mothers must work. Single mothers, particularly, must support their children. A mother whose husband is out of work will probably have to work. These situations are not what I'm referring to. Children usually adapt very well in these situations. A working mother is capable of being a very good mother and there is no indication that just because a mother works it means her child or children will suffer. What it gets down

to is the relationship between the parent and the child and the quality of the relationship.

In considering either of the above ideas — a preschool program for the child, or the job for the mother — serious, honest, and sincere consideration needs to be given to all aspects, especially the amount of pressure being exerted on the parent with respect to nursery school and joining the labor market.

If you're content where you are presently, then "stick to your guns." Be firm and recognize that in America today there is not one path for every person. Some work, other mothers of young children don't and both can be happy. The same goes for the children — some need a preschool program, others don't — and each can grow and be happy.

## Prevent, Control Mildew

are some suggestions from the USDA to prevent mildew.

- Keep things clean. Soil may supply food for mildew to grow so keep closets, dresser drawers, basements - any place where mildew is likely to grow - as clean as possible.

- Get rid of dampness. Dampness in a basement, or any other structure, is often caused by condensation of moisture from humid air onto cooler surfaces. Excessive moisture may indicate that repairs or additional insulation are needed.

- Try drying the air using air conditioners or dehumidifiers. Heat-

ing the house for a short time then opening door and windows to let out the moisture-laden air also helps.

Use chemical that absorb moisture. Silica gel, activated alumina, and anhydrous calcium sulfate are types that work well.

- Get rid of musty odors. Musty odors usually indicate mold growth so work on getting rid of the smell immediately. Musty odors will usually disappear if the area is well heated and dried. If the odors remain, you can thoroughly scrub the area with a dilute solution of chlorine bleach and water.

SCRANTON (Lackawanna Co.) — Summertime is a perfect time for mildew to grow and flourish. The hot, humid weather creates the right environment for mildew to develop.

Mildew is a thin, usually black or sometimes white, growth produced on many kinds of surfaces by molds. Molds are simple plants belonging to the group known as fungi. Though molds are always present in the air, those that cause moldew need moisture and certain temperatures to grow.

Mildew flourishes wherever it is damp, warm, poorly lighted, and where air is not circulated — in cellar, crawl spaces of houses without basements, and clothing closets. You'll find mildew on draperies and rugs in basement recreation rooms, on shower curtains, and on old leather shoes in the cellar.

Mildew will grow on anything from which they can get enough food. In homes they develop most often on cotton, linen, rayon, silk, wool, leather, wood, and paper. Many synthetic fibers are resistant to mildew.

As the molds grow, they cause considerable damage. They discolor fabrics and sometimes eat into them so severely that the fabrics rot and fall to pieces. They also discolor leather and paper and leave a musty odor.

The key to controlling mildew is to prevent it from forming. Here

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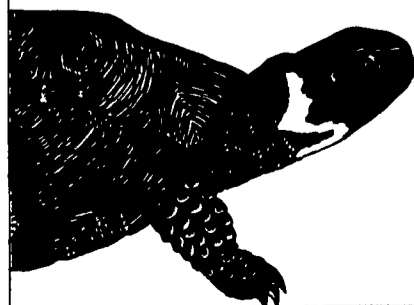
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