

Day care not child's play to professionals

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"It parallels the fast-paced society we live in," he added. "It's an immediate rush and hectic pace from the moment you wake up. Where's the quiet, relaxing time? That's what I think is missing."

"We live in a jungle out there. It's affecting us in many ways."

A PROFESSIONAL who works with children and parents and helps train day care providers is Elizabeth Marriott. She is director of the Wayne State University Child Development Lab, a division of the school's psychology department.

The lab provides day care services for WSU staff, students and the community, and also provides on-site training.

When Marriott began working in the early childhood area, she had a



Child Care Puzzle
 Thursday
 Some suggestions on how to resolve the child care puzzle.

negative view of day care. That changed.

Marriott does not believe a "day care elite" has more anxiety, but becomes more active when offered the many opportunities afforded by day care.

"It's a curiosity factor," she said. "They're so stimulated, they're looking to be stimulated elsewhere."

The 40-50 hours per week a child spends in a day care center is bound to have an effect, Marriott added. And the noticeable increase in children receiving day care services in the past three to four years will add to that.

"But I see a lot of positive things," she said. "Overall, they're very comfortable."

ALL PROFESSIONALS interviewed agree, the more parent and family contact the better. Stephen Nugent, a West Bloomfield psychologist, said close personal contact is the most important ingredient for the child's well-being.

"There's no question, the closer the contact the better," he said. "It's

been proven. The children are emotionally stable and intellectually stimulated. It all goes back to the same thing. The more care and personal attention, the better they will be as adults."

He suggests parents select day care providers carefully and be aware of the provider to child ratio. Because of his feelings, Nugent is a proponent of home day care, where the ratio is usually smaller.

Claudia Rose, an early childhood veteran in the education system for 17 years, recently began consulting in a day care setting at the Federal Child Care Center, in the McNamara Building in downtown Detroit.

The program is affiliated with the Merrill-Palmer Institute of Wayne State and provides day care services for the children of federal employees.

Rose stresses the long-term development of children and calls for a better understanding of the day care system and better training for providers.

How a child is affected "really depends on the center," she said. "It's important for people to understand child development and provide an environment where a child can express himself."

DAY CARE systems have survived in other countries, successfully, for many years, she added.

"I'm very hopeful about it. These are the formative years. What they're learning is who they are as individuals."

And how these children are raised in day care settings will influence the future of our society, psychologist Nugent added.

"It will change our culture," he said. He noted our high-stress society that pushes for achievement brings "unreal expectations of perfection," which are passed along to these very young children.

Although the future may appear bleak, Nugent said there are measures that can be taken to change the outcome.

"There needs to be more quality time with the nuclear family," he said. "Too many parents are stressed out — they come home they want to relax and cool off. If there's only a small amount of time, it should be quality."

"We need to do our best to present a role model and a reality without fatalism. We need to tell them, 'You can be one of the good ones' and 'You can make something of yourself.'"

Parents find their day care solution right at home

By Arlene Funk
 Special writer

Jan Sproul recently left a job she liked to become a stay-at-home mom to her toddler son.

Sproul's decision freed her husband, Steve, to get on with his career in architecture. Until this fall, Steve had remained at home as primary caregiver for the couple's 20-month-old son, Jacob — known to most as Jack.

The Sprouls, a Redford couple in their 30s, said it was paramount for either mom or dad to be at home with Jake during his early years. It was that means sacrificing income, so be it.

"Yes, it's a sacrifice," said Jan, nuzzling her dark-eyed son perched on her knee. "It's a long-term investment. It's providing that fundamental foundation in Jake's life. I want him to know I'm mom and dad is dad."

When Jake was born, Steve was on the threshold of graduating from Lawrence Institute of Technology with a bachelor of science degree in architecture. Jan was a technical editor at Burroughs in Detroit.

After an eight-week maternity leave, Jan went back to work. Steve stayed home. He changed diapers, fixed bottles and took Jake for daily wagon rides in their Redford subdivision.

"WERE NOT your typical couple," Steve said.

The Sprouls, who hail from Saginaw, are self-admitted "late bloomers." They met while attending community college in Saginaw and married seven years ago. Both have worked hard to complete degree requirements, moving several times to meet those goals.

Jan, who has a degree in elementary education from Michigan State University, discovered her priorities had changed after Jake's birth. Earlier plans to put the baby in day care seemed no longer feasible.

"When he came, it was a different story," Jan said. "Until that baby actually arrives (and) you don't have a name or a face and you don't have an opportunity to hold that baby. To let somebody raise him wasn't for me. We were fooling ourselves."

Jan returned to work, secure in the knowledge that Jake was being cared for by dad, "not a stranger."

"I'd call home," Jan said. "I'd ask questions. 'What did Jake do? How did he eat?'"

Jan's heart lurched when Jake ran to Steve to have his cut finger kissed. On weekends, she'd have to consult Steve about Jake's routine. Which jacket does he usually wear to play outdoors?

"It didn't fit the normality mode," said Steve, adding that some people considered him peculiar for staying

home while his wife worked outside the home.

The Sprouls decided to postpone some high-ticket purchases until the family income is fattened. A new couch and carpeting are at the top of their wish list.

STEVE'S DAYS at home were full. While Jake napped, Steve would update his resume or line up free-lance work or make household repairs.

"I was going to stay home for six months and overlap (both work) for six months so we could build up savings," Steve said. "Plans are great, but reality is day to day."

As the months went on, Steve began to feel isolated and restless. He was anxious to find a job that would allow him to fulfill internship requirements for eventual licensing as an architect.

"You feel shut off, and you develop a better sense of understanding of how housewives feel shut off from the world," he said.

Steve recently was offered a job as an architectural draftsman for a Farmington Hills firm. Initially, the Sprouls hired a middle-aged woman to come to the house to care for Jake.

The sitter, sensing she couldn't meet the couple's very high expectations, backed out. Jan quit her job to be home full time with Jake.

"I feel as though I owe her something for her perception and honesty," Jan said. "I think she forced me

to open my heart and be honest with myself. I knew all along I wanted to be home."

After initially feeling like a fish out of water ("I didn't have a routine") Jan now revels in her time at home with Jake. She enjoys spending time in the activities of a toddler's life. She can read to him and watch his vocabulary.

Eventually, Jan expects to take outside employment.

"BEING at home has opened a new door for me," Jan said. "I've never been happier."

Steve, who enjoys his work, said he and Jan have chosen a less frantic path with less emphasis on material possessions and more on quality time.

"It's a comfortable living," he said. "(With both working) you both come home (and) neither of you made supper. Neither cleaned the house. Neither have a grasp of what's going on in the household."

"It seems that once you make the commitment you are both going to work, you need two cars and two wardrobes. You're climbing and rushing, and there goes your stress level."

Jan emphasized that day care "has its place."

"I just opened my heart and knew what was best for our guy," she said. "The real issue was Jacob's well-being."



Steve Sproul returns home from work and discovers what Jan and Jake were up to while he was gone.

business briefs

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion, are planning a new venture or project, or have information about other business-related happenings — and there's a Farmington-area connection — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news with other Observer readers. Send items to: Business Briefs, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

● SHE'S PROMOTED
 Linda McGill of Farmington Hills was promoted to divisional manager of communications for General Motors' Hydra-matic Division.

She began her career with GM in 1977 at the Milford Proving Ground, working in salaried personnel administration with the engineering staff.

In 1979, she was transferred to personnel administration and staff development at the GM Tech Center in Warren.

In 1985, she was transferred to the Hydra-matic Division Office as a senior salaried personnel representative. She later was appointed salaried personnel supervisor, then human relations and development consultant, the position held before her new assignment.

In her new capacity, McGill assumes responsibility for divisional public relations and communications.

● NETWORKING FORUM
 Jim Napier of the Ann Arbor-based Center for Corporate Training will speak on "Networking" Thursday, Jan. 21, at a luncheon of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

The noon luncheon will be held at Clamdiggers, 30555 Grand River, Farmington Hills. Cost is \$10 per person. For reservations, call the chamber: 474-3440.

● NAMED MANAGER
 Glenn Kittleson of Farmington Hills was named corporate manager at Hess & Eisenhardt Co.

In his new position, he will be responsible for manufacturing and quality control operations at the Madison Heights and Cincinnati plants.

He previously managed both plants. He also served as assistant manager at the Linden, N.J., plant. Hess & Eisenhardt, founded in 1876, is the oldest continuous coachmaker in the United States. Headquartered in Cincinnati, the company has manufacturing facilities in

Wapakonetta, Ohio, and Madison Heights.

The company has manufactured its own line of touring sedans and roadsters, and the first air-conditioned ambulance. It developed the first vinyl roof, built limousines for government leaders worldwide and manufactured the 1987 Jaguar XJS convertible.

● NEW JOBS
 Paul Levine, third generation builder and president of the Irvine Group in Farmington Hills, is on his way to becoming a megadeveloper in the style of A. Alfred Taubman.

In 1984, the Irvine Group generated \$2 million in gross sales. In 1985, that figure tripled. In 1986, the figure swelled to \$10 million. By 1987, gross sales had increased 100 percent over the previous year to \$20 million. In 1988, the Irvine Group predicts 20 times the gross sales of 1984, or \$40 million.

"Diversification is the key to increased growth," Levine said.

The Ann Arbor center will create custom homes, the Irvine Group expanded its interests to include condominium and commercial developments.

One example of the diversification that Levine advocates is Business Center Network of Ann Arbor, a shared services prototype for up to 200 such facilities across the nation over the next six or seven years, 10 of which will be in Michigan.

"Each center will generate 50 new jobs," Levine said. "We don't want to relocate local businesses. We want to bring new business to Michigan."

The Ann Arbor center will celebrate its grand opening with a party in mid-January for tenants, community leaders and the media.

Condominium developments are another example of the Irvine Group's effort to reach a changing market. With an increasing number of two-provider families and empty nesters, the condominium is the answer for those who want their own home without the work.

Ground was broken for Sierra Pointe in Farmington Hills the week of Nov. 23. It is the most recent development undertaken by the Irvine Group. Initial sales are due to begin this month for the 81-cluster condominium project valued at \$6.7 million. The condominiums range from \$119,900 to \$139,900.

In addition to developments within Michigan, the Irvine Group has projects under way in Charlotte and Hilton Head, in North and South Carolina.

● NEW IN TOWN
 Elegant "Park Lane" a women's clothing store at 29325 14 Mile in

Farmington Hills, opened in September.

Owner Allen Sadik has two years experience in the fashion industry. His telephone number is 737-4483.

"Ahhh, Cashmere" has opened its fifth store in Hunters Square/Tally Hall, 14 Mile and Orchard Lake roads, Farmington Hills. A sixth store will open in downtown Detroit soon.

With other locations in Chicago, Florida and Birmingham, all opened in the last six months. "Ahhh, Cashmere" is one of the fastest-growing specialty retail chains in the Detroit area market.

"Ahhh, Cashmere" carries its own in-house label of 100-percent cashmere clothing, for men and women, in classic basics and contemporary designs. Says Karen Allerman, area representative: "New designs and styles are constantly being designed and added based on customer requests and needs and seasonal changes."

Everything in the store is geared to a soft approach, both in merchandise and presentation. Cashmere, long synonymous with the word soft, is showcased in a soft, quiet atmosphere.

Scheel Brothers & Co., managing and leasing agents for Hunters Square/Tally Hall, has opened nine new stores in the center in the past eight months. It also has renovated Tally Hall, a 30-merchant food court.

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