

Unnoticed vision problems can slow child's progress

(Editor's note: This article is the second in a series discussing handicaps of preschool children. The series is written by Jayne Stana Deye, coordinator of Project Child Find for the Clarendonville School District.)

VISION

I met Joannie's mother, Mrs. Davis, at a preschool parent's meeting. Joannie was almost five at the time. Mrs. Davis said that she and her husband wondered if Joannie had a coordination problem.

She rarely ran and seemed to do everything slower than other children her age. When she was younger, Joannie had actually run into walls. She still stumbled often.

When I visited Joannie and her parents at home, I noticed when Joannie listened to me she would tilt her head to the side.

Sometimes she closed one eye while using coloring crayons. When she stacked one-inch blocks, she approached the task cautiously.

Joannie was referred for a vision screening. Mr. and Mrs. Davis had not considered having Joannie's vision tested because they felt she was too young to tell someone what she saw.

THEY LEARNED it wasn't necessary for Joannie to tell what she saw. Instead, Joannie watched a cartoon while the doctor looked into her eyes.

The doctor explained that Joannie had a vision problem that was affecting her depth perception. The messages getting back to Joannie's brain were not correct.

This meant that when she reached for things, they often weren't there, and when she walked or ran, she often stumbled and ran into things.

Mr. and Mrs. Davis were relieved. All their child needed was a pair of corrective glasses and some vision training. Joannie would be able to start school with the other children her age.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR. Does your baby respond when you enter the

room? Can his or her eyes follow a moving object that is less than two feet away? At 18 months of age, can he or she recognize him or herself in a mirror? Can he or she easily pick up a small toy?

At two years, does he or she bump into things or stumble over easily seen objects?

When your child is three years old, can he or she lace his or her shoes (generally not in the correct sequence) or string at least five large beads?

Are the colors red, blue, yellow and green correctly identified by your child when he or she is four?

WHAT YOU CAN DO. The following are suggestions from the Vision Conservation Institute that can help provide some experiences a child needs to develop vision skills.

Leave a dim light on. When your baby awakens, he or she will learn to point his or her eyes at the light.

Move the crib periodically so your baby can learn to view objects from different perspectives. Place a mobile

six to eight feet from the side of the crib until your child learns to reach. Place your baby on the floor so he or she can learn distance and make size judgments. Creeping and crawling are prerequisites to good use of the eyes. Have a variety of safe household objects and toys available for your child to learn sizes, shapes and textures.

If you think your child has a vision problem, call your local special education office or your intermediate school district for information about programs for the sight impaired child.

Before a child is three, a special vision program can be developed with the child and family in the home. At the age of three, children with vision impairments may enter a daily preschool program.

For information call the Wayne County Intermediate School District at 381-4188 or Oakland County Schools at 858-2082.

The Macomb Intermediate School District is at 286-8800, and the Washburn Intermediate School District is at 768-6522.



By
MARGARET
MILLER



m.m.memos

A fashion writer I know comes up with word that this week marks the 25th anniversary of wash-and-wear fabric. It all began, she says, when a fellow jumped into a pool and came out not only unruined but unwrinkled while a host of fashion types looked on amazed.

Now I certainly wish Dacron polyester and all its relatives many happy returns, but I can't help wondering if the celebration may not be a bit subdued. Poor polyester must be feeling a bit out of it these days, what with all the accolades for natural fibers.

Since on anniversaries you go nostalgic, I find myself thinking back to my early days with permanent press and

wash-and-wear. I still remember the absolute ecstasy that came with realization that I could avoid lots of ironing and still have my small daughters in ruffled-sleeve dresses on occasion and the man of our house appearing neatly-pressed when he went to work.

So I was taken aback when one of the first contributions I edited after beginning work for this paper took a dig or two at this brave new invention.

The writer contended it was no longer possible to pick out the conscientious mothers when looking over a classroom of children because now EVERYBODY'S shirt or dress looked neatly pressed.

Being of the unconscious type, I

was only too glad to fool the world when my offspring went out in permanent press. In fact, I was figuring the no-iron halcyon days would last forever and ever until I happened upon some madras material in a fabric store.

"What does the label mean when it says guaranteed to bleed?" I asked the saleslady.

"It means," she answered with just a trace of bitterness, "that the colors will run and the fabric will shrink and wrinkle and do all those things we thought we were through with."

I didn't buy any madras that day. And through the years I learned to stay far away from any fabric that

didn't contain a pretty substantial percentage of polyester.

But now the little girls whose puffed sleeves looked so much better when permanent press made its appearance are fashion-conscious young ladies, better acquainted with the racks of gauze dresses and blouses than with the iron and board.

And I'm supposed to admire the creations of natural fiber they bring home when shopping summer sales.

"It's beautiful," I tell them these days. "It looks so WRINKLED!" So happy anniversary, polyester. Many happy returns. FAST!

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Kohn

Christine R. Washburn of Grand Rapids, daughter of John and Lynn Washburn of Farmington, married Thomas W. Kohn, son of Allen and Janet Kohn of Edmore, on June 3 in Alma College Chapel.

Pastor Paul Parlow conducted the ceremony.

The bride wore a full length white gown with a sleeveless bodice of embroidered lace. Her veil was white chiffon attached to a headpiece which was a garland of white sweetheart roses and baby's breath. Flowers carried were a nosegay of pink tea roses, white carnations and baby's breath.

Carol A. Washburn of Farmington was the maid of honor. Bridesmaids were Karen Cann of Auburn Heights and Jane Schleimer of East Lansing. Best man was First Lt. Allen E. Kohn, Jr. of Tampa. Ushers were Dennis Mungar, Roger Holton, David Washburn and Phillip Kohn. The bride is a graduate of Farm-



ington High School and Alma College. She is a tax accountant for Michigan National Bank in Grand Rapids. Her husband is also an Alma graduate. He is an assistant manager of the Montcalm Central Bank in Edmore. The couple plan to live in Grand Rapids.

Ms. Harjes gets vote from church

Patricia Harjes has been selected as "Sunday School Worker of the Year" at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills. Mrs. Harjes was recommended for the honor by the Board of Christian Education, and the recommendation was unanimously supported by the Voters' Assembly this spring.

Her name will be submitted to the 7th annual Lutheran Sunday School Convention to be held in Chicago in July. Delegates at the convention will then select a single individual to be honored throughout the church body.

R. A. St. Pierre, pastor of the church, said, "Through her concern and efforts, the Sunday School program at Prince of Peace has been strengthened, and there has been a 50 percent increase in student enrollment in the past year."

Parents form to allay grief

"Parents In Grief" a YWCA support group for bereaved parents, will meet on Monday nights at 7:30 p.m. at the YWCA of Pontiac-North Oakland, 269 West Huron, Pontiac.

This group, open to all parents of deceased children, regardless of age and circumstances of death including miscarriage, meets on alternate Monday evenings and is also open to those who are supportive of grieving parents.

For more information, call Myra Cowlishaw at 334-0973.

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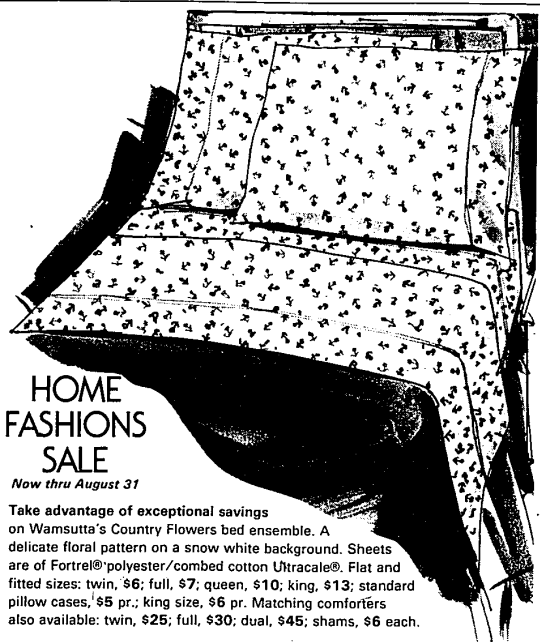
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