Toddlers explore their environments

questions and puzzles arise from situa-tions rather than taught as specific les-

Our job as parents is to provide the stimuli and tools for exploration.

THE UNDERWATER viewer is a good tool for exploring the aquatic world. To make an underwater viewer, use a half-gallon or larger milk carton which has been thoroughly washed and dried. Cut the carton in half lengthwise. Next', using the half carton, cut a rec-

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While in the library recently, I watched a child about 2 years old who had wandered away from his mother lee walked to the picture windows overlooking the road, but soon irred never was a was of gum so dirty and faded it was awad of gum so dirty and faded it was obvious many a foot had tread on it. First, he kicked at the gum with his gym-shoed foot. The wad didn't budge. Then he squatted over and scratched at it with his pudgy finger. But the faintly pink gob wasn't even sticky any more and held firmly to the vent in the floor.

Finally, he bent way down and tried

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Finally, he bent way down and tried to pry it off with his last, but very sharp tool, his teeth.

THE TODDLER is an active explorer of the environment. Though his explorations often take the guise of play,
he really is exercising his powers of investigation to learn more about the
world.
Surprisingly, these earliest investigations actually mimic the sophisticated
scientific method. The scientific meth-



od follows a precise method of attack-

od follows a precise method of attacking new data.
First a problem is defined. A hypothesis is formed. There is observation
and experimentation. Finally, the data
is interpreted.
This formula is one of the ways the
todder spontaneously learns and absorbs information. As he roams, be
comes upon things that puzzle him, or
are new to him.

He forms an opinion or theory about these things. Then the toddler tests the theory and either discards his theory, alters it, expands it, or sometimes loses interset

The more stimuli the toddler is ex-posed to, the more questions and puz-zles will confront him. Hopefully, these

tangular-shaped viewing window in the side. Cover the viewing window and sides of the carton with plastic wrap. Make the wrap as tight as possible so, the window has no wrinkles. Now, simply place the viewer inhe the water and look through it to see the bottom of the sink, tub, pool, shore or, if you're very careful, an aquarium. No matter how carefully we direct a child's investigative energies, there

No matter how carefully we direct a child's investigative energies, there will be times when the child's curiosity drags him to places and objects that are less than ideal: the bubble gum, for example.

The little boy had worked at the lump for some time as old as the gum was, it must have retained some flavor, for the child fixed as well as picked at the gum.

Unfortunately, just when his efforts were about to bring success, his mother called and he reluctantly left the hunk for another day.

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volunteers

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GRANDPERSONS — You can help bridge the generation gap. People 55 and over are needed by the TEAM Or-ganization (Talent, Experience And Maturity) to Sare their skills with chil-dren kindergarten through sixth grade. One hour per week is the time commit-ment for a school year.

to support local educational and civic activities? People who can help with typing and office work are needed by the Farmington Community Center. As little as one day per week is hvolved. To volunteer, call Betty Paine at 477-

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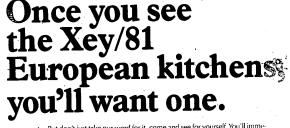
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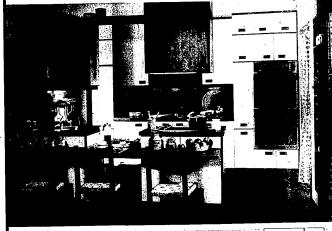
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