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# Children bear the promise of a better world . . . . .

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Are we defending  
their right to health?

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PERIODICALS



# *Give our children*

AMERICANS have done a great deal in the past to make the United States a better and safer place in which to be born and in which to live the important years of childhood. And yet today we are not ready to say we have done enough. We can never be satisfied with our efforts for child health so long as a single baby dies whose life might have been saved or a single child grows up handicapped physically or mentally or unable to make the necessary social or emotional adjustment, who might have had a full and healthy adult life.

Last year in the United States more than 110,000 babies died in their first year of life, 1 out of every 21 Americans born alive. Tragic as those figures seem, they represent a great advance since 1917, when 1 baby out of every 11 died. Even before 1917—indeed, since the early part of this century—some of the best minds in this country have attacked the problem of how to reduce the number of child deaths, of how to help each child become a healthy, well-adjusted, cooperative member of society.

In spite of all these efforts American childhood has not yet been made wholly safe. The defense emergency naturally heightens dangers that already exist. The distribution of existing health services for children is exceedingly spotty, and shifts in population resulting from the defense effort are creating need in new areas. Deferments under the Selective Service Act have brought home to us how far we fall short in our protection of child health. There is real national concern today over lack of health services available to all people, without regard to geographic location or economic status.

The scientists have shown us how to make life safer for mothers and children. As parents and as citizens we are not yet applying this knowledge as fully as we should. We must begin to do so. That is the big job that lies ahead. We cannot do that job by sitting back and waiting for the doctors to discover still more new things. We cannot do it by being satisfied in our own homes or communities with the way things have always been done. The only way we can do it is by determining that whatever promotes the welfare of children shall be done . . . and that it shall be done in accordance with the highest standards we know today.

# *to build a Nation*



# *the strength today*

For reasons of true democracy Americans cannot afford to have neglected children in their communities. Those who are fortunate enough to be able to give their children good medical care will feel impelled to take an interest in the health of other children besides their own. Health is a right and a necessity for all children, no matter what the economic status of their families. Communities whose citizens fail to safeguard all children in this right to health may pay a heavy penalty. Epidemics that start in neighborhoods where neglect and poverty contribute to unwholesome and unhygienic conditions will not necessarily spare the children of well-protected homes.

All parents must realize that raising child-health standards is a job for them especially. The thoughtful mother should say to herself, "It is no longer good enough simply to feed my family, now that the best scientists are able to tell me precisely what my children need in the way of foods to be healthy. I am going to give my children the foods they should have. I am going to take them to a physician or a child-health conference regularly for health supervision. It is better to keep them from getting sick than to try to save their lives when they are ill."

We are raising health standards for our children by getting clearly in mind what a child requires to be healthy and strong and to live a normal life. He needs to be born of healthy parents under favorable conditions, to have a happy and affectionate family life in a home that provides adequate shelter, and to have the right food for his age and special needs. To grow normally to the fullness of his powers and take his place as a cooperative citizen in our democratic life, he needs intelligent guidance in forming good habits, in learning at each stage of his development to play and work with others, and of course he needs proper health supervision and protection against diseases. It is easy to remember . . . good parents, good home, good food, good health supervision, good daily care, good companionship, good guidance. Easy to remember, but hard to attain, unless the spirit of real neighborliness enters into the building of the community's health program. Are all the children in your community getting these things?

# *strong tomorrow*



**Every community should protect its children's health  
by providing at least the following services:**

1. A full-time health department with a medical director; a physician in charge of children to be responsible for supervising the child-health program; a public-health nurse for every 5,000 people—preferably for every 2,500 people; sanitary officers, and other staff as necessary for the control of communicable diseases.
2. Prenatal clinics and child-health conferences for infants and preschool children conducted regularly, at least once a month, in places convenient to all families receiving the service.
3. Health supervision for every school child.
4. Immunization against smallpox and diphtheria for all children.
5. Medical and dental care available for all children.
6. Adequate hospital and clinic facilities for care of the sick.

**THE FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH** is laid in the first 6 years. Most babies are well when they are born. To keep them well there should be continuous supervision by a doctor trained in the care of babies. Supervision should begin as soon as the baby is born and should continue through the years before the child enters school and through school years. During the first year the baby should be examined by the doctor at least once a month.

Up to the age of 6 the child should have an examination every 6 months by a doctor and by a dentist. Besides giving a child regular physical examinations, the doctor will give him protection against certain diseases and will tell the parents what *they* can do to guard against other diseases. He will advise the parents how to establish the health habits that will give the child a chance to grow up well and strong. This continued health supervision is the aim of all health agencies, public and private.

It must not be forgotten that good medical care for the mother while she is pregnant is tremendously important for the child's future health. Information on proper care in this prenatal period has already been presented in the second leaflet of this series, "The Right Start in Life."



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## Does Your Community Have a Child-Health Conference?

A child-health conference is a clinic for well children conducted at least once a month by a doctor with the aid of public-health nurses. The conference may be held in a school or town hall or community health center.

The purpose of the child-health conference is to educate parents in better methods of child care and to provide continuous health supervision for all children from birth to school age. Its function is to keep the well child well.

At a child-health conference these things are done:

1. The doctor examines the child.
2. The doctor talks with the mother and advises her concerning the child's growth, food, and habits.
3. At the proper age, the child is immunized against diphtheria and smallpox.
4. The public-health nurse assists at the conference, and by talking to the mother at the conference and in the home helps her to understand and carry out the doctor's advice.



## *Guard your child's health resources*

1. Take your child regularly for a health examination by a doctor experienced in the care of children.
2. Ask the doctor to give him special protection against smallpox and diphtheria and to advise how to guard against other diseases.
3. Take him to a dentist regularly for examination and care of his teeth, beginning at the end of the second year.
4. Give him a well-planned diet, including milk, green vegetables, fruit, cereals, meat, and eggs.
5. Be sure that he has enough sleep every night and, if he is under 5, a daytime nap.
6. Send him outdoors every day for exercise and play in the sunshine.
7. See that he has good habits of eating, sleeping, cleanliness, and elimination.
8. Weigh and measure him regularly, and keep a record of his growth.

### **Children's Bureau publications on child health:**

Publication No. 4. Prenatal Care.

Publication No. 8. Infant Care.

Publication No. 30. The Child From One to Six.

Publication No. 143. Child Management.

Publication No. 202. Are You Training Your Child To Be Happy?

Publication No. 219. Good Posture in the Little Child.

Folder No. 9. Keeping the Well Baby Well.

Folder No. 10. Out of Babyhood Into Childhood.

Folder No. 11. Your Child's Sleep.

Folder No. 14. The Well-Nourished Child.

Folder No. 16. The Healthy, Well-Nourished Baby, Birth to 1 Year.

Folder No. 17. The Healthy, Well-Nourished Child, 1 to 6 Years.

Folder No. 18. The Healthy, Well-Nourished Child, 6 to 16 Years.

Folder No. 21. Your Young Child's Health.

Folder No. 22. Your School Child's Health.

Folder No. 25. Substitutes for the Sun.

Baby's Daily Time Cards.



*Our Nation is mobilizing its resources  
for the welfare of children  
as an important part of national defense:*

To coordinate health, welfare, medical, nutrition, recreation, and related services bearing on the defense emergency, the President of the United States has established by executive order the

*Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services,*  
**Paul V. McNutt, Director.**

To assure effective coordination of Federal relations with State and local governments engaged in defense activities, to facilitate constructive civilian participation in the defense program, and for other purposes, the President has established the

*Office of Civilian Defense,*  
**Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Director.**

The *Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor* is responsible for promoting the welfare of children at all times through—

Studies and advisory services	Child-labor administration
Cooperation with State agencies	Bulletins, leaflets, and radio talks

The Chief of the Children's Bureau, Katharine F. Lenroot, has been designated child-welfare consultant to the Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services, and the Assistant to the Chief, Charles I. Schottland, has been made liaison officer with that office. The Associate Chief of the Children's Bureau, Dr. Martha M. Eliot, has been designated liaison officer with the Office of Civilian Defense. Other Federal, State, and local agencies are working for the promotion of child welfare, in cooperation with many privately supported organizations.





## *The Defense of Children Series:*

### “CHILDREN BEAR THE PROMISE OF A BETTER WORLD” *includes:*

1. What Are We Doing To Defend Them?
2. Are We Safeguarding Those Whose Mothers Work?
3. Are They Getting the Right Start in Life?
4. Have They the Protection of Proper Food?
5. Are We Defending Their Right to Health?
6. Their Defense Is the Security They Find at Home.
7. Their Education Is Democracy's Strength.
8. Through Play They Learn What Freedom Means.
9. Our Nation Does Not Need Their
10. Are We Helping Those With Special Needs?
11. Protect Them From Harmful Community Influences.
12. Is Their Safety in Wartime Assured?

“CHILDREN IN WARTIME,” a radio program on defense of children, prepared by the Children's Bureau, is presented by NBC every Monday at 11 a. m. E. S. T. (Blue Network)

*Preb.-*  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ● CHILDREN'S BUREAU

### *Defense of Children Series No. 5*

For sale by Superintendent of Documents, \$3 per 100