



EMPATHIC PARENTING

Journal of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Volume 13

Issue 4

Autumn 1990

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**A positive birthing experience for
baby, mother and father...**

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Well Connected Politicians, Bureaucrats and Lobbyists

There's a big difference between parents who have formed a strong attachment to their babies, and parents who have not. Attachment (love), as those who are able to experience it appreciate, is a very irrational and powerful thing. Someone has even gone so far as to define love as "the extent to which we are willing to be inconvenienced". Love makes you happy to do a lot of things with and for the person with whom you are in love. What is so important about parents falling in love with their baby (becoming attached), is that the hard work of looking after their child feels much less like hard work, or an imposition, or an unjustified intrusion into their lives.

For parents who aren't attached, caring for their baby tends to be felt as mostly work and duty. For this reason unattached parents often fall back on quick-fix formulas to be good parents - like hugging (even when it's not wanted or reciprocated), and repeated "I love yous" (when actions speak differently). Unattached parents are often strong believers in fashionable rationalizations (unconscious excuses) to legitimize delegation of the "work" of nurturing their babies: "We need two salaries just to keep up" (in one of the wealthiest countries of the world!) or, "All the baby needs is some quality time each day" or, "I'm burned out" or, "I'm not happy staying at home to look after my baby, so it's better for my baby to be looked after by someone else" or, "The trained experts at a daycare centre can provide my baby with a more stimulating environment" or, "My baby needs the opportunity to socialize with other children." And all the other 'reasons' to get someone else to do what they feel is the unreasonable "work" of looking after a baby with whom they haven't fallen in love.

We should recognize and accept the fact that there are people who, because of their own seriously inadequate nurturing as infants and toddlers, simply cannot easily fall in love with their babies. Such people should be encouraged and admired when they decide not to have children.

More importantly, such affectively handicapped persons, often capable of achieving high status and much power in our consumption addicted, patriarchal society, should be encouraged and admired when they declare themselves ill-qualified to influence childcare policy.

May the day come soon when all those shaping legislation affecting childcare have a background of strong attachment to both their parents and their children.

E.T. Barker MD

EMPATHIC PARENTING

Being willing and able to 'put yourself in your child's shoes' in order to correctly identify his/her feelings, and

Being willing and able to behave toward your child in ways which take those feelings into account.

Empathic parenting takes an enormous amount of time and energy, and fully involves both parents in a co-operative, sharing way.

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Twenty-eight pages of this issue of
Empathic Parenting have been printed sepa-
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recent video production for parenting educa-
tion "When You Can't Feel No Love..."Special thanks to the IOF-Florence
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Letters

Your latest issue of Empathic Parenting is excellent. I particularly liked Mary Spoeren's idea of Fulbright "motherships".

I wish you had been around when I was raising my own children. Part of those years I was working as a single mother to support us all.

Penelope Leach's suggestions of things to do instead of "spanking" are so practical and believable. I can remember twice being spanked as a child, but not why. I was angry and confused and hurt, not taught anything. With my own children I did occasionally slap them and always because I was at the end of my tether, not because I believed it was right. I don't think they hold it against me now! But I would have been far better off to clap my hands and hold them and talk, walk away, or one of Penelope Leach's other strategies.

The lesson in scripture was also very well done.

I enclose a donation as I have a little extra cash this year. God bless you in your faithful work on behalf of all of us.

Jane
Szepesi

I found Vol. 13, No. 3 ("It shouldn't hurt to be a child") a wonderful issue. I find it tragic that society not only tolerates punishment but actually encourages it. I'm eager to share this issue with many others but my one copy won't stretch that far (besides I'm afraid of losing it). Enclosed is a cheque for \$30 that I hope will cover the cost of 10 copies plus postage.

I always enjoy reading Empathic Parenting and find it fills a real need in society, and it is a refreshing change -- along with La Leche League's New Beginnings magazine -- from consumer-oriented, child-ignoring, popular parenting magazines.

It is distressing to see children treated (by their parents in particular, and society in general) with a lack of respect for them as human beings with all the hopes, dreams, desires, and fragile sense of self-worth that this entails. Many people would not dream of treating their husbands, friends, or even dogs and cats in the way they treat their children. There appears to be (probably historically deeply rooted) a communal belief that these young persons are "ONLY children" and need to be "made" by adults into "real" people.

The thoroughness of the issue in discussing the psychology of spanking, airing peoples' perceived pros and cons of corporal punishment, handling children, alternatives for parents, the Biblical references, and the tie-in to violence in society make for a comprehensive reference piece.

Thank you so much for all your caring and work, Dr. Barker.

Tiina A. Burns
Edmonton, Alberta

Thank you for the wonderful, uplifting and completely truthful journal! You can depend on my permanent support.

Barbara Spraragen
Ravena, New York

Letters

P.S. It would be a great help to the U.S.A. if you could start becoming well known here. There are so many confused young mothers who need a strong, unambiguous statement like yours.

I was so pleased with the CSPCC's journal (Summer 1990) feature on spanking by Penelope Leach. With November being Family Violence Awareness month this material is certainly very timely.

I was also thrilled with the article by Dr. John Valusek "People are not for hitting". I have been promoting his work for the past 15 years and had sent two dozen copies of his booklet, "People are not for Hitting" to many of the decision makers here in Alberta. If you think back to 5 or 6 years ago I also sent his booklet and articles that he had written to you.

When I first started promoting his work I received quite a bit of adverse publicity -- "How dare she promote work that tells parents not to hit their children". His bumper sticker "People are not for hitting and children are people too" is proudly displayed on my car and hopefully the hundred other bumper stickers of Dr. Valusek's that I have given out over the years.

How times have changed! We have certainly come a long way in understanding the root cause of much of the family violence that we see today. Dr. Valusek and several others were certainly ahead of their time. It is really refreshing to see the CSPCC print these articles.

I was also pleased to see that the

committee to "End Violence against the Next Generation have taken a stand on **James Dobson's views on discipline**. His films on parenting are often shown in churches throughout this area. Also a local talkback host has been promoting his work. This has caused me much frustration ever since reading his book "Dare to Discipline", a few years ago.

I am very concerned about Infant Day Care. It really saddens me to think that in today's economy two parents working at minimum wage often earn below "poverty line" income.

Also, Dr. Barker, I would very much appreciate getting extra copies of the journal (Summer 1990) if you have any left, for promotional purposes.

Myrtle Smyth
Leduc, Alberta

JAMES DOBSON

A number of CSPCC members have complained about this popular writer's endorsement of spanking. The following is quoted from *The Last ? Resort*, Newsletter of the COMMITTEE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST THE NEXT GENERATION, 977 Keeler Avenue, Berkeley, California 94708-1498.

DARE TO DISCIPLINE

James Dobson's books will continue to be banned from the library of the Early Childhood/Family Education Program of the ManKato, MN school system. They were removed in 1989 because the staff disagreed with Dobson's view on child discipline which includes an endorsement of spanking.

From the press...

New video aimed at making better parents

by **BARB SKELTON**

The story doesn't have a happy ending. Now in his 30's, "Joe" who killed his stepfather in a rage at the age of 15, has lost his rage but still finds no meaning in the words "love" and "trust".

"When you don't feel no love and you can't trust nobody, you just get mad," repeats Joe's breaking voice, taped at the Oak Ridge division of the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre soon after the murder. Interviewed on videotape more than 15 years after the slaying, Joe considers the words trust and love just "garbage". In marriage, he says, he sticks around only if he's fed. Trust is just a word. It doesn't mean anything."

Joe's early words give the title to a videotape "**When You Can't Feel No Love...**", unveiled last Friday by Midland forensic psychiatrist Dr. Elliott Barker and Maclean Hunter Cable TV for the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (CSPCC).

Since working on special treatment programs for mentally ill offenders during his seven years at the Mental Health Centre, where he is still a consultant, Dr. Barker has also turned his attention to prevention.

President of the CSPCC since 1975, Dr. Barker spends a great deal of his time fighting the social attitudes that produce people like Joe, and promoting alternative values and ways of achieving

them.

Arbitrary male dominance that devalues nurturing, and consumerism that emphasizes material goods, both undermine parenting in our society, he believes. Society needs to give more preparation for the job of parenting "and status for it," he says.

He feels the women's movement has helped change our attitudes to the patriarchal society, but we've made "no inroads to the downside of consumerism."

Parenting education should start in kindergarten and follow right through to Grade 8, he says. "By the time people are able to conceive children, they should know what it (parenting) is all about." So many say after the birth of a child, "nobody told me it would be like this."

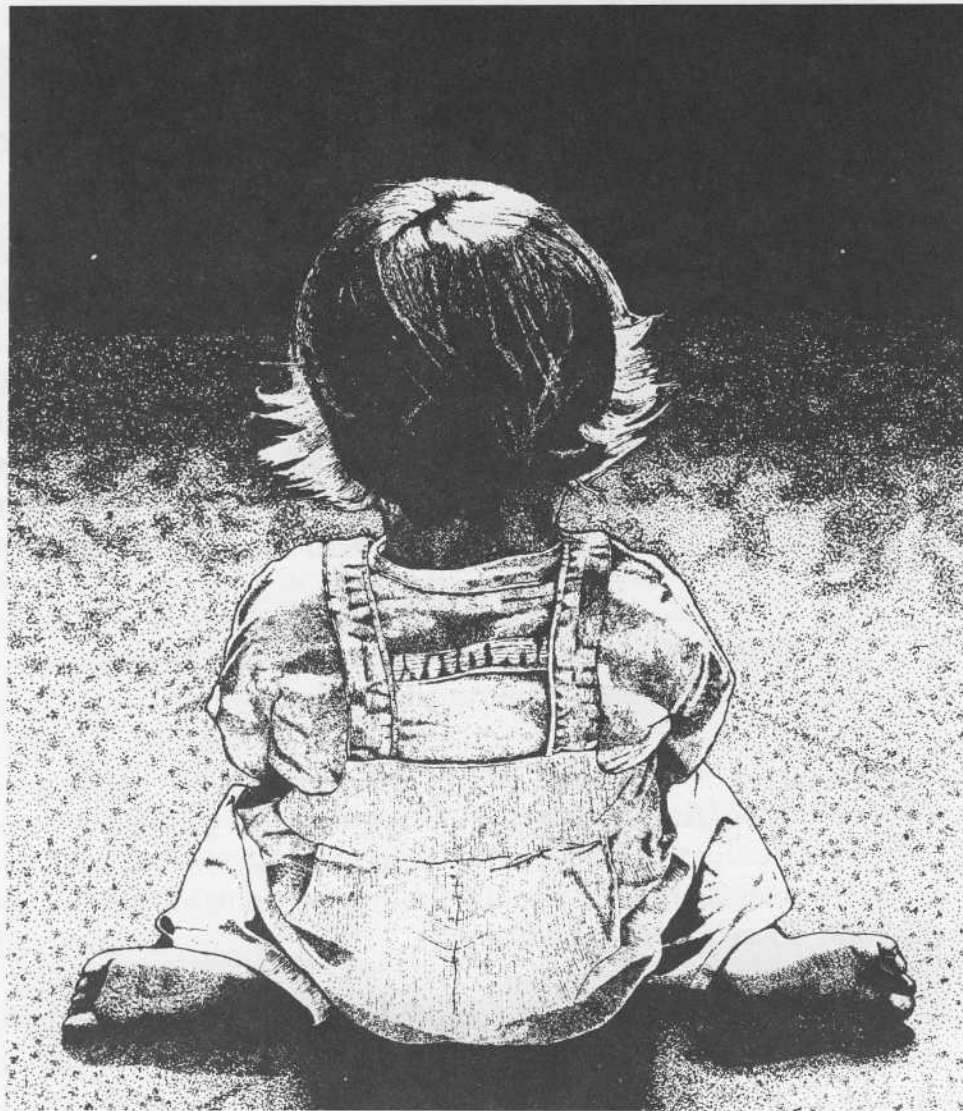
On the videotape, Dr. Barker offers four basic tenets of parenting: a positive birthing experience for father, mother and child; breastfeeding; keeping your baby with you as much as possible; and spacing births so that each child has time to develop a sense of trust.

"A capacity for affection, a trusting, loving relationship is a reflection of mental health," says the doctor. "If we were reared so that those qualities were well developed we'd have a happier, safer and healthier world..."

Reprinted with permission from the Midland Free Press. The film guide which will be distributed with this video consists of the next twenty-eight pages of this issue of EMPATHIC PARENTING.

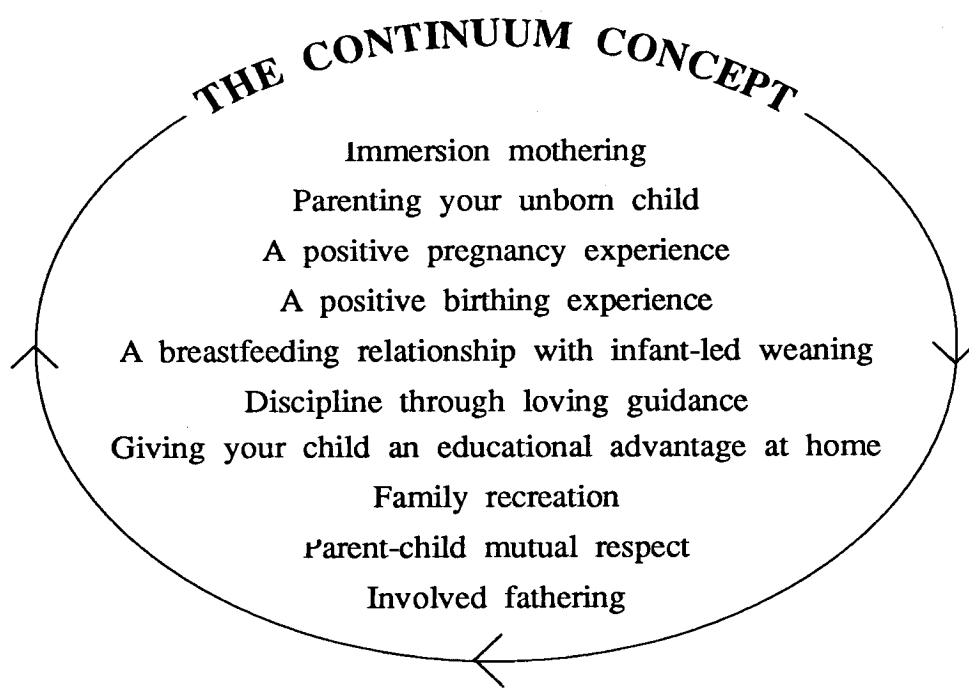
Film Guide...

"When You Can't Feel No Love..."



Dr. Elliott Barker: What I keep coming back to is that it's like pouring cement. If you don't mix the batch right, you are stuck with it, and you have to go at it with a sledgehammer later, and it's a slow, difficult and almost impossible process. In the first three years of the child's life the cement is setting and parents ought to set every other priority aside and do their best.

Excerpt from the Proceedings of the Senate Subcommittee on Childhood Causes of Criminal Behaviour



There are obviously many important things that parents ought to do to raise healthy children.

The four points stressed in the video "**When You Can't Feel No Love...**" are singled out because:

1. **ALL PARENTS CAN** do them, no matter how inadequate their own past experience of nurturing has been.
2. They are **WITHOUT RISK OF CAUSING EMOTIONAL DAMAGE** to the child, as for example admonitions to "tell your child you love him/her" can be (if your actions give a different message), or instructions to "hug your child" can be (if the child doesn't want to be hugged).
3. They have a very powerful potential to make or permit other positive things happen if you **JUST DO THEM**. They each can act like a catalyst, initiating or permitting a continuing chain of positive reactions to occur. They are like a stock brokers dream. A relatively small investment pays enormous dividends.

The original artwork on the cover of this Film Guide was created by 16 year old Jasper Place High School student Vincent Sinclair. This artwork and the logo "It Shouldn't Hurt to be a Child" are copyright and used with kind permission of the Victims of Violence Society whose National Head Office is at B150, 151 Slater Street, Ottawa, Canada K1P5H3 (613) 233-0052. Victims of Violence is a national non-profit organization dedicated to improving the situation of victims of violent crime. It was founded in 1984 by parents and families of abducted and murdered children.

1. Fall in love with your baby through a positive birthing experience for baby, mother and father.

If both parents are present at the birth, and there is a positive birthing experience, the mother and father are very likely to fall in love with their baby.

Now love, as those who are able to experience it know, is a very irrational and powerful thing. It makes you happy to do a lot of things with and for the person with whom you are in love.

If a positive birthing experience had even a remote chance of getting you to fall in love with your baby, it would be worth it. But the evidence is that the odds of that happening are actually very high when there is a positive birthing experience.

What is so important about par-

ents falling in love with their baby, is that the hard work of looking after their child feels much less like hard work, or an imposition, or an unjustified intrusion into their lives.

Sadly, the opposite is also true, for you will hear parents who are not attached (in love with their baby), saying, "Oh this is drudgery, I need a break, I'm burned out, I'm not cut out to be a parent".

Parents who have fallen in love with their baby don't complain about the enormous amount of hard work. They're obsessed with how wonderful their baby is, just like teenagers that have fallen in love for the first time are obsessed and totally preoccupied with the one they love.



A positive birthing experience...

Unfortunately, most births in North America involve a variety of dehumanizing and impersonal procedures and interventions and often take place in settings that do not help the parents and their new baby fall in love.

It seems crazy that parents wanting a positive birth experience sometimes have to arm themselves with information about the risks of interventions, and then be prepared to do battle to have what they want for themselves and their baby - when what they really need is help and support. In the process they often seek out other parents who have had positive birthing experiences and find names of attendants and places which will provide what they want, rather than "leaving everything to the doctor".

A mother doesn't need to be taught how to have her baby. What she needs is to be reassured about her ability to go through this experience. Just as there is a blue print inside her for growing her baby, there are also all the information and instincts inside her to know how to give birth. What she needs is caring support from someone whom she loves and who loves her and also incredible respect; after all, some would say she's doing life's most important work! She needs to be in a situation where those around her will wait patiently letting nature take its course and help her "give birth" not to be in a place where other people are rushing to help someone "deliver" her baby. Her privacy needs to be respected yet she shouldn't be left alone.

Many couples join classes or groups with other couples to prepare for the birth of their babies. The classes are usually fun, and some couples make good friends at these meetings, continuing to

call one another and visit long after their babies are born - kind of a support group.

During the classes a bit of anatomy is learned to reduce fear and to give some understanding of what is happening during the birth and labour and breastfeeding. The teacher or midwife can share stories of what other couples have taught her through their births: working with massage, relaxation and breathing, different possible positions to labour in, and ways to comfort.

Labour is often difficult: really hard work. The contractions that come and go with increasing frequency and intensity usually hurt a great deal, but many women say that contrary to most kinds of discomfort, this is "positive pain" because labour brings them their dear baby. It is very satisfying work.

Many mothers and their partners want to have their babies without pain medication. They say things like "I really want to experience this", "I want to push my baby out myself", "I don't want to be cut", "I don't want to risk the baby's well being", "I want the birth to be as gentle for the baby as possible." The simplest and most non-medicated birth is normally best for the mother, father and the baby. There seems to be no question that babies born without medication are more active and responsive, as are their mothers.

With an unmedicated birth, the mother is so ready for her baby that she can connect, stroke, gaze and breastfeed soon after birth. There is an immediate responsiveness to the baby - and from the baby to her parents - that sets a pattern that can continue throughout a child's life.

When the father can be in physical contact with his partner, holding her as she's pushing, for example, he feels her effort and he sometimes is working so

A positive birthing experience...



hard he knows his participation is significant.

Just as the mother has cared for her baby during the pregnancy, her little one needs to be cared for and respected as a sensitive human being during the labour and ideally should be born into a quiet relaxed atmosphere. Those around the mother and baby need to be so care full - full of care that they not disturb the delicate process of labour and the mother's first contact with her baby after birth. The baby and mother need to be in continuous contact with each other.

The mother is pushing, opening to let her baby come, and her little baby's head begins to show. As her parents see the top of the head in a mirror or reach down to feel their baby's head, they connect with their baby on the outside, con-

tinuing the connection they have had before; feeling their baby move and grow inside. Now there is almost a sense of disbelief - amazement. And as the baby tumbles out all wet, deep pink and beautiful, there is such a release, such a contrast, a rush of feeling. Often the parents cry with joy and then there is such a sense of peace; a sacred moment. And yes, nature is wise - she wants parents to nurture and care for their baby and as the mother and father bathe the baby in their arms, the baby feels so great - skin to skin, is so soft and makes such endearing noises and little cries, smells so good that the baby engages her parents' senses and just makes her parents fall in love with her and care for her.

And if the experience was positive for the mother, she will feel good

A positive birthing experience...

about herself and the effort she made and this seems to have an effect on how confident she feels as a mother.

Although growing, birthing and nurturing a baby are not the only functions of womanhood, they are for many women very significant. Many mothers report a new fullness as women as a result of the positive experience they have had.

Unfortunately the standard way of having babies in our culture can put marriages at risk. If a woman has felt cheated out of a positive birth experience, or mistreated or not respected or needlessly separated from her baby, she can feel anger and resentment, or depression for years. She may direct these feelings towards her husband/partner, herself or society in general.

Birthing a baby is an intense experience - one which calls on the energy and good will of those around the mother. She often needs nurturing care and attention for long hours. Shared intense experiences in life, often help us connect in a very positive way with others. Birth can provide that opportunity. Mothers will say to their men after the birth, "You were there for me... you rubbed my back and wiped my face with cool cloths and encouraged me with such sweet words and told me I could do it. You helped me so much." And fathers will say things like, "I was so proud of how courageous you were, and how you flowed with the labour. You were just great!" There can be a wonderful deepening of feeling for one another.□

Dr. Donna Kontos: ...Perinatal medical care was introduced in this century with the purpose of further decreasing mortality and morbidity by preventing infection and managing physical problems.

There is now a growing body of evidence that these advances inadvertently alter the initiation of the mother-infant relationship...

Maternity hospital routines were established before recent research in paediatrics, anthropology, developmental psychology, ethology and physiology created a new appreciation of the remarkable capacities of the neonate for social interaction and of the importance of the new-born period for a mutual parent-infant involvement...

It has been found that a short period of separation in the neonatal period has impaired permanently, or even eliminated, maternal care-taking upon reunion of mother and offspring among a large range of animal species.

Observations of human mothers of both premature and full-term infants have proceeded far enough to infer that the type and amount of social interaction between a human mother and her infant in the immediate post-partum period can influence the mother's subsequent behaviour and attitude towards her infant.

Excerpt from the Proceedings of the Senate Subcommittee on Childhood Causes of Criminal Behaviour

Special thanks to Mary Sharpe of Toronto for her help in preparing this article.

2. Strengthen that love by breast feeding your child until he or she no longer needs it.

Breastfeeding until the child no longer requires it is another of the things a mother can do which will cause other good things to happen - for free! - as if by magic.

It isn't just the milk, it isn't just the immunological advantage or just the touching. Both mother and child simply grow, individually and together, in intimate and subtle ways through breastfeeding.

You didn't have to have been especially well nurtured yourself, although that helps, you just have to PLAN TO DO IT and the process takes over.

Just like the process of birthing takes over, as though by magic, and makes you fall in love with your

baby, breastfeeding keeps you in love.

Because of the close relationship breastfeeding requires and re-enforces, and perhaps because of the very pleasant sexual-like feelings it can evoke in the mother, extended breastfeeding can help the mother-infant attachment survive rough times which might otherwise lead to emotional unavailability and detachment.

In this way extended breastfeeding can rescue a relatively weak attachment if there has not been a positive birthing experience or if the mother has only a weak capacity for nurturing as a result of her own lack of nurturing as a child.

"They should make bottle feeding a criminal offence."

Ashley Montagu

Taboos and Fears Surrounding Late Weaning and Attachment

The term "infancy" is one that I think is very useful because it not only defines the age of the baby, but refers to a state or condition in the mother. The state of infancy, which means "not talking", imposes upon the observer or the caretaker the capacity to take on the feelings of the baby and to become a part of infancy itself.

During the prenatal period, the mother has an enormous amount of preoccupation with her own body. This preoccupation sets the stage for being preoccupied with the infant's body and is a fundamental aspect of the beginning of the attachment process. It leads to what I think is extremely important, the capacity to be preoccupied with the infant. All of the behavioral studies we've done over the past twenty years would mean nothing if they weren't matched by something inside the mother's mind about the infant.

After birth, there is a sensitive period when the mother is vulnerable and

can go one of two ways - toward preoccupation and attachment to the baby or toward estrangement. Breastfeeding plays an important role in this learning period.

The infant is capable of activating these caretaking roles in the mother, and the baby is not just a passive player in this process. The baby, in fact, becomes joint architect in building the attachment that becomes so important in the infant's development.

The exchange between mother and infant is reciprocal and reciprocity becomes an organizing feature of the relationship, occurring because of care, not just out of the mother's imagination.

This is especially true for the breastfed baby, of course. The baby's suckling affects the mother's body. New research suggests that polypeptides (including endorphins) are produced in the mother's brain - hormones that can change her mood and attentiveness and produce a quietness that facilitates nurs-

These remarks are excerpted from two presentations at the La Leche League's Eleventh International Conference held in July 1987. Dr. Call, a member of the La Leche League's Health Advisory Council, is Professor and Chief of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Division of the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behaviour at the California College of Medicine of the University of California, Irvine. He received his professional training in pediatrics, pediatric pathology and research, child neuropsychiatry, adult psychoanalysis, and child psychoanalysis. Dr. Call is a founding co-president of the World Association for Infant Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines and has served as a consultant to the National Institute of Mental Health.

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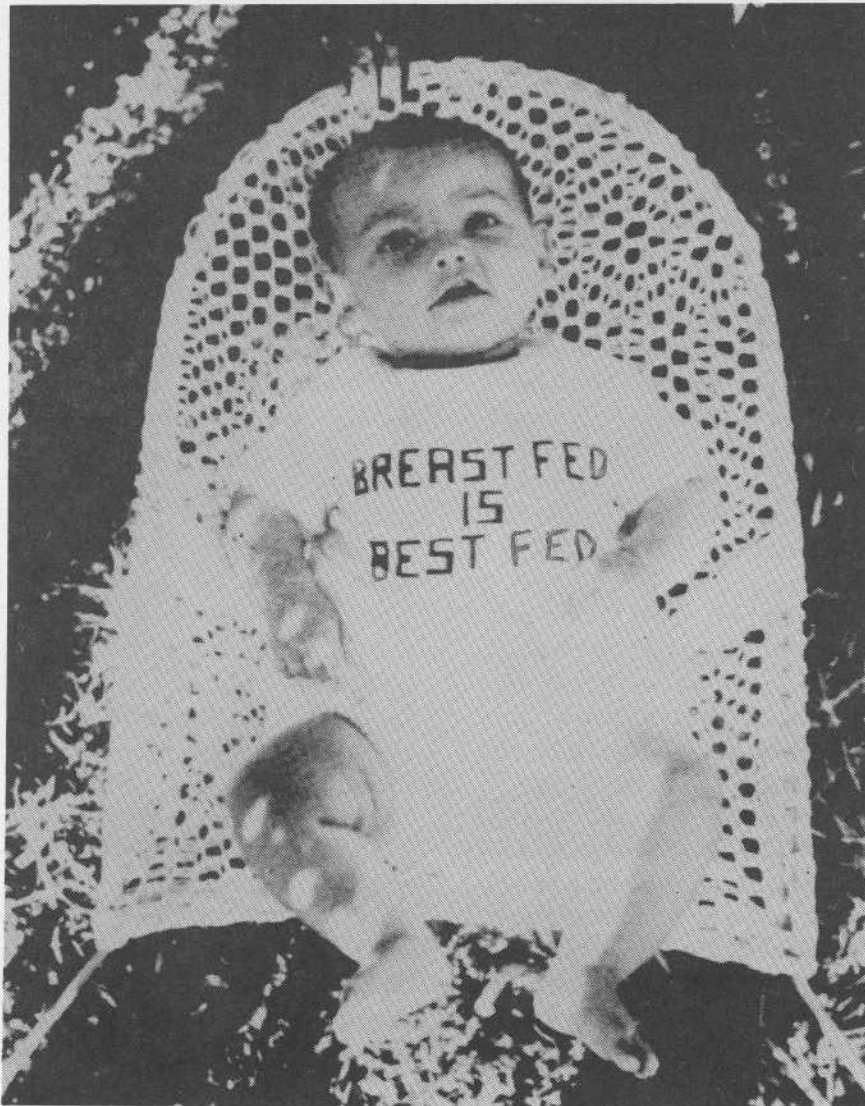
Extended breastfeeding...

ing. These are new areas of research in biology and psychiatry. We're realizing that the "juices" that are set forth by the nursing experience facilitate attachment.

It is almost as if everything in the prelanguage phase is setting the stage for mutual sharing. Sharing is biologically based. The baby is born to share his experience and the mother is set up,

throughout her life, to share her experience with a new human being. Of course, with breastfeeding, there is a physiological base to the psychological circumstances of infancy.

Breastfed babies do not use expressive language or pointing behaviour as early as bottle fed babies, although their comprehension skills are often more



Extended breastfeeding...

advanced. More than the bottle-fed baby, they still regard the mother as part of themselves.

That's also why they tend to wake up more at night, which is not necessarily bad. Babies who share the bed with parents tend to wake up more often but for shorter periods of time and with less distress. In our society, we really don't know any more what normal patterns of sleeping in infancy are.

The idea that most of the people in our society have that a child should be reared toward independence in the first two to three years - that they should be independent at six months - is just not true.

Mary Ainsworth, an excellent researcher in infancy, has summarized the literature to show this. Babies who are firmly attached and who are psychologically dependent upon their mothers at one or two years of age are not helplessly over-enmeshed in the mother/child relationship when they get older. They have less anxiety upon entering school. They have more mastery of themselves at five.

It's one of the big misunderstandings and one of the big issues in our society at the present time. The tendency of our society to try to make babies be independent much too early probably leads to the false self. It means that there has not been sufficient richness in a reciprocating experience with other human beings to define one's true self.

What happens with the baby who is not allowed dependency and a long period of nurturance is that the baby develops a sense of being mother to himself or being parent to the parent. It prevents the child from developing a true self, a sense of being "me", a real person. That true self comes from defining who

one is by making things happen in the outside world, taking control of one's mother, so to speak, during infancy. A period of omnipotence, the illusion of being master of one's environment, strengthens the sense of self and is a very, very important aspect of being a true person and feeling real in the world.

On the other hand, a pseudo-independent attitude gives one a sense of being isolated from one's real self. Many of the people who grow up with this defensive independence are, in deeper layers of their minds that can be discovered in psychoanalysis, just the opposite of what is on the outside. They are very dependent, helpless, anxious people who are unacquainted with who they are, who do not know themselves.

Extended nursing has very interesting applications in finding inner security. During the course of the baby's nursing experience the breast undergoes changes in its meaning for the baby. At first, it is simply a source to be latched onto, meeting the baby's rooting reflex; it's something that makes the mouth work. Then it is something to satiate the child's hunger. Then it is the mother behind the breast, including her face and voice and her reciprocal interactions with her baby, consolidated around the breast.

Any paediatrician can tell you that weaning a baby after the age of eight months is "more difficult" than weaning a baby before that age. The reason for this is that the breast comes to have more significant meaning for the child as a soothing object after that time. That's not bad. In fact, it's very good because nursing continues to enrich the attachment process and to make the experience of dependency more meaningful. And from



"...the amount of time and care a mother invests in her child is directly related to the amount of time and care invested in the mother."

Kathryn Barnard

Extended breastfeeding...

this dependency, that child eventually emerges with a greater sense of independence.

So what happens with extended nursing is that nursing becomes the transitional object, like the teddy bear. Many mothers might be puzzled by this, though most mothers in La Leche League feel comfortable with this and, in fact, participate actively. They somehow intuitively know that there is something important there that needs to be developed and preserved rather than summarily dismissed. I think the reason La Leche League has embraced the concept of baby-led weaning is an intuitive awareness of the fact that something is being created that will have to grow and change, but should not end in destruction. Its evolution involves the mutual process of reaching out, holding on, creating something, letting go, and breaking away many times before the final transition of weaning occurs. Both the mother and the infant, as a result of the nursing experience, have a new creative potential within themselves that can surface in all kinds of other ways that are seemingly remote from that experience.

Another idea about extended nursing in our culture is that boys will become effeminate, will become "mama's boys", and will have problems with gender identity. Of course, some babies do show problems in gender identity, but they're not the children who have had appropriate nurturance and the opportunity to create that special psychological experience that I've been talking about. They are babies who have been tied in very unusual and constraining ways to the parent. It's not related to nursing: it's related to all the other things that are in-

involved in the reciprocal engagements between mother and child. There can be problems when the boy baby is seen as an "extension of oneself" alone rather than a little boy who is learning to be a boy and discovering how it is to be a boy.

Another idea (in our culture) is that the child cannot be trusted to wean himself, that he would cling to the breast forever. That's such a wonderful statement because it's true and yet it's false. Yes, of course, the child clings to the breast, in his mind, but before the child can establish the sense of constancy about his own thinking, the mental apparatus has to be mature enough so that the child can represent the experience without the actual experience.

So this is why a slow and gradual weaning, using intuition as a guide (never the same with any two mothers or with any two babies, as you know) is preferred to artificially imposed weaning. An arbitrarily organized weaning experience can interfere with a child's sense of being able to use his own mind separately and distinctly from others. □

The Canadian Paediatric Society set up a Task Force in 1978 to promote breastfeeding. The Task Force decided that its major task would be to ensure that all key health professionals involved with pregnant women and new mothers be made aware of the importance of breastfeeding and improve their knowledge and counselling skills to meet that goal. This strategy was put into practice by Health and Welfare Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Paediatric Society and La Leche League.

Dr. A. W. Myres
Health Promotion Directorate
Health and Welfare Canada

3. Keep your baby with you as much as possible; separations and changing care-givers make it harder to learn to trust.

The vicious cycle of non-attachment is a very subtle problem that creeps into the lives of certain mothers and babies. A woman who is primarily career-oriented or who lacks confidence in her mothering abilities may have difficulty really getting into mothering. Although she sincerely loves her child, her conflicting feelings about immersion mothering results in increasing the use of substitute care-givers. As a result of the loss of constant feedback from his mother, the infant does not reward the mother with his own feedback which should further stimulate her mothering. This is especially true if there is a mismatch of temperaments between mother and baby. As a result, the baby and mother subtly drift further apart, the mother to her own career and the baby to substitute caregiving. Periodic attempts to get back into mothering are unsuccessful because the continuum of action/response has been interrupted.

One of the inevitable dilemmas of mothering is separation from your baby, either by choice or necessity. The wide variation in individual family situations makes this a very difficult subject to write about. How long and how often to leave your baby depends upon your priorities of parenting and your family situation. A few general considerations may

assist you in making your decision. As long as you consider both yourself and your baby's needs and you feel comfortable with your decision, then you have probably made the right choice. Most importantly, do not feel guilty - it is a very unhealthy emotion that can be harmful to your parenting abilities. If you are feeling guilty you need to explore your situ-

*These six pages on the effects of mother-infant separation are reprinted from Dr. William Sears superb book **Creative Parenting** (ISBN 0-88890-138-0). Dr Sears is a paediatrician practicing in Pasadena California. © William Sears MD and Optimum Publishing International Inc. Reprinted with permission.*

ation to find the cause of the guilt.

We have already discussed the importance of mother-infant attachment in the newborn period, a process called bonding (page 47) through which your baby is uniquely sensitive to your touch, smell, voice, eyes and breast, and rewards you with reaction of his own which further reinforces your mothering instinct. Both infant and mother seem to have biological radar systems which are attuned to each other. Yes, we are finally proving what the common sense of species survival has known all along.

Can you carry this attachment too far? Isn't separation a normal maturing process for the baby? Is my immersion mothering fostering an unhealthy dependence? Caring mothers have asked these questions many times. The question is not so much one of dependency, but one of trust. Your baby cannot trust you too much. In fact, babies who are the product of immersion mothering seem very dependent upon their mothers for the first two or three years. These infants usually become secure in their own self-esteem and their environment and actually become less dependent children later on. Possessiveness should not be confused with immersion mothering. Possessiveness is restrictive, non-constructive, and prevents a child from doing what he needs to do because of some need you have. In the first year of life, tiny babies do not have the resources to parent themselves through their own anxiety periods and I feel that absolutely no good can come from "not making them so dependent".

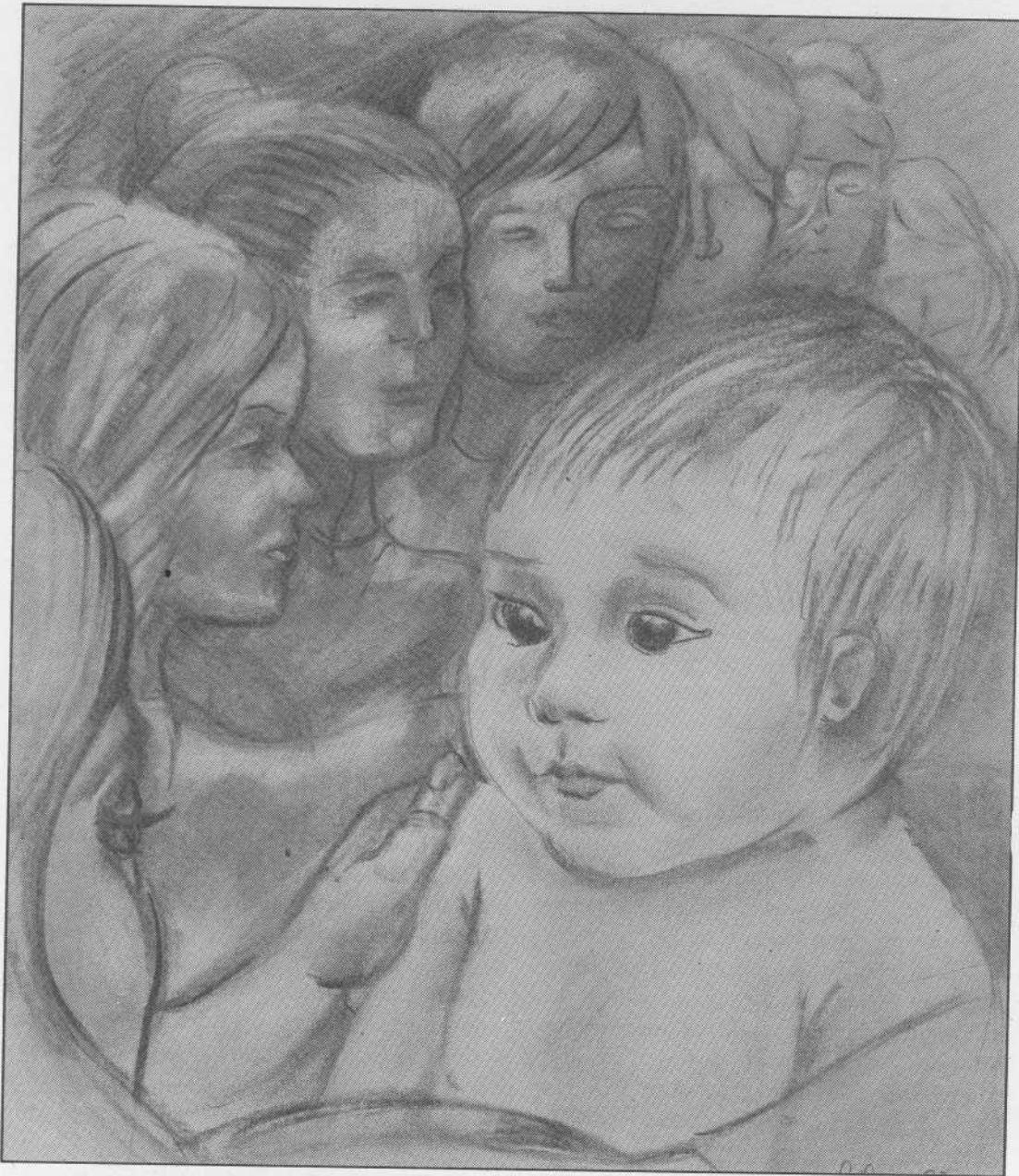
Babies have specific needs. Besides their obvious need for food and

physical comforts which can be provided by a sincere, substitute care-giver, babies need eye-to-eye contact, all of which a mother provides best. If you are breastfeeding, separation from your baby also deprives him of your milk. Even if your breastmilk is left with the babysitter, the feeding relationship is just not the same when a bottle is given by a sitter.

Why is Substitute Caregiving Second Best?

Why is substitute care-giving second best? The substitute mother may not be able to pick up on the baby's cues and sense what he needs. She does not enjoy the same feedback appreciation from your baby, which would further increase her mothering of him. (See page 96 for discussion of the hormonal stimulation of the mother instinct.)

In addition, to these needs, babies also have their stress periods which cannot be scheduled for weekends or after working hours. Only you can effectively parent your baby through these stress periods because only you can be perfectly attuned to his needs. It is difficult to schedule mothering. You may be lucky enough to time your absences during his nap time or sleeping time, or he may not experience apparent stress periods while you are away. Most babies, however, do have some unexpected need periods and stress periods each day. Being away from him during these times deprives him of his most valuable support resource and also deprives you of a chance to further cement your friendship. Babies learn resignation easily.



A baby who does not have anybody special, but is cared for by many well-meaning strangers in turn, or one who is cared for sketchily and without concentration, sharing his caretaker with other needful small people, is like an adult who moves from country to country, knowing the language of none.

Separations and changing caregivers...

They learn to accept unfulfilled needs, but at the price of lowered self-esteem and trust in their environment.

Children are spontaneous, and parenting means being available when children's spontaneous activities occur, infant and child development is a series of actions and responses. The infant performs an action (e.g. makes a sound) and a tuned-in mother responds to the infant's accomplishment by showing delight. An infant quickly learns to expect certain responses to his actions. If he does not receive his anticipated reward, he becomes confused and stops producing. The feedback an infant receives for a developmental accomplishment is one of the most meaningful ways of stimulating infant development. (See section on speech development, page 219 for an example of mother's unique role.)

The vicious cycle of non-attachment is a very subtle problem that creeps into the lives of certain mothers and babies. A woman who is primarily career-oriented or who lacks confidence in her mothering abilities may have difficulty really getting into mothering. Although she sincerely loves her child, her conflicting feelings about immersion mothering result in increasing the use of substitute care-givers. As a result of the loss of constant feedback from his mother, the infant does not reward the mother with his own feedback which should further stimulate her mothering. This is especially true if there is a mismatch of temperaments between mother and baby. As a result, the baby and mother subtly drift further apart, the mother to her own career and the baby to substitute caregiving. Periodic attempts to get back into

mothering are unsuccessful because the continuum of action/response has been interrupted.

As the child grows older there may often be no readily identifiable effects of this non-attachment. However, the older child sees less clearly defined mother-father roles since both have careers. Studies have shown that daughters of career-outside-the-home mothers tend to place more emphasis on non-mothering careers and the cycle continues into the next generation.

An alternative to part-time mothering is immersion mothering, of being consistently available and attuned to the needs of your baby. Your baby, in turn, rewards your efforts with his feedback, which further stimulates your mothering and a full-time mother-infant relationship develops. During the first years of life, the primary need of an infant is to trust his environment, a trust which depends upon a secure attachment to his mother as the primary care-giver. This process is called imprinting. An infant who trusts his primary care-giver is relieved of many of the anxieties of parenting himself through the early developmental stages. He can therefore devote more of his energies to the development skills. Consider the analogy that many adults are not as productive in their professional life if they are unhappy in their personal life. Likewise, a baby's "professional life" (his developmental skills) may not reach its full potential if he is insecure in his maternal attachment. The concept of immersion mothering, being available and attuned to the needs of your baby, is in my opinion, the absolute best for your baby. Whether this concept of mothering is best for your

Separations and changing caregivers...

family situation can be answered only by you.

A common question mothers of young babies often ask is, "What is the effect on my baby if my husband and I go away for a much needed relief weekend?" Babies will often show grief reaction signs at temporary separations - refusal to eat, crying, sleep disturbances and mood changes. Parents often relate that when they return from such a holiday their babies will often give them the cold shoulder. Paediatricians are often put on the spot when asked such questions. We are caught between what seems to be best for parents and best for baby. Since the baby is too young to be consulted, I will represent my little client and offer the following opinion: If your baby does not adjust easily to substitute caregivers, avoid extended absences (more than a few hours) from your baby until he reaches the age at which he can understand the temporary nature of separation (usually around three years). In reality, it is impossible to put a time limit on how long you may leave your baby. This depends on a variety of individual factors such as how separation-sensitive he is, how comfortable he is with your substitute caregiver, how important the reason is for leaving your baby.

An alternative solution to this "relief from baby" feeling (with which I am in complete sympathy) is to take the baby with you on your holiday. On the surface, this may sound like you are defeating the purpose of getting away, but in fact it is primarily the change that offers relief, not just getting away from your baby. (See *Father Feelings*, page 85 and *Family Recreation*, Page 311).

Working Mothers

All mothers are working mothers. In this section, I mean mothers working outside the home. Nearly all the baby books state flatly that full-time mothering is the ideal and I feel the same. However, financial constraints and the attractions of the market place have put a strain on modern mothers, and this stand of "stay at home and take care of your child" is just not that simple. This discussion will centre around two main changes which I feel must occur in order to keep the dilemma of the working mother in perspective. Society must place a higher value on the unique contribution and dignity of the profession of the full-time mother and the working society must become more flexible in order to accommodate the mother who wishes a dual career.

The working mother is nothing new. In past generations mothers worked, but they worked around the home. Their working and mothering were integrated. Women were culturally prepared for motherhood and men were prepared for the work force. Industrialization, urbanization and the current educational system have changed these traditional roles and women now have many options. The educational system prepares girls and boys to "be something" and for girls that something is not motherhood. Career counsellors and women's magazines have marketed the idea that it is difficult to derive satisfaction from mothering alone. Baby books (including my own) and child care experts extol the virtues of motherhood as the supreme career. The government is taking away

Separations and changing caregivers...

more and more money from the middle income families so that economic constraints now weigh heavily upon many mothers. Today's woman is caught in a dilemma between what her instincts tell her (be a mother) and the many attractions outside the home. If she chooses both she is made to feel guilty and is accused of not doing either well. If she chooses a career outside the home she is made to feel guilty for not being an effective mother, and if she chooses full-time mothering she is constantly reminded that she is "just a housewife and mother". The answer to this dilemma is that society must be flexible enough to accommodate whichever role a woman chooses for herself.

The first step is to increase recognition of the value of full-time mothering as a career. High schools and colleges could add seminars on "mothering" to their career-planning courses. Child study courses could be added to the curriculum and the science of imprinting could be stressed to the scientifically oriented. The concept that mothering is a mindless profession consisting of changing dirty diapers and wiping runny noses could be overcome by emphasizing the mind-to-mind relationship that is unique to the mother-infant attachment.

Too often a person's worth is measured in tangible assets. The full-time mother does not get a paycheck or a profit-sharing plan. However, the imprinting of her mother efforts on her child and the child's resulting imprint on society are immeasurable contributions...□

...A complex set of events must occur in infancy to assure a future of love and trust. If the proper bonding and subsequent attachment does not occur - usually between the child and the mother - the child will develop mistrust and a deep-seated rage. He becomes a child without a conscience...

Not all unattached children grow up to be criminals, but most suffer some form of psychological damage. It may be that such children simply are never able to develop a true loving relationship, or they end up "conning" others for their own benefit. These, too, can be considered tragedies, for no child should have to grow up without this trust bond and loving beginning...

We all know the stresses that modern life places on the family. Because of necessity or desire, more and more mothers are returning to work, many just weeks after the birth of their babies. Parents need to know that this may be putting their children at risk for unattachment.

**High Risk
Children without a Conscience
Magid & McKelvey
Bantam Books, 1988**

Spacing children...

4. Allow your child's sense of trust plenty of time to grow strong before having a new baby to claim your attention.

From the Parents Point of View

One way to think about closely spaced children is mathematically. The amount of time and energy required to adequately nurture closely spaced children rises exponentially, not arithmetically.

That is, two closely spaced children require roughly four times the time and energy, not twice as much as that required to empathically care for children spaced four or five years apart.

Similarly, the amount of time and energy to care for three closely spaced children is three cubed - three to the power of three - 9 times, not three times as much.

Since it requires an enormous amount of time and energy on the part of both parents to adequately nurture just one child under the age of three, spacing children is one important thing that parents CAN DO to prevent the exhaustion that occurs when well intentioned parents take on the very difficult task of trying to meet the emotional needs of closely spaced children.

There is little question in my mind that the difficulties associated with having closely spaced children under the age of three, constitutes the single most pressing concern for families of young children.

Dr. Burton L. White

From the Child's Point of View

Want to know how difficult it is for a two year old when a younger brother or sister arrives in the home?

He's in the same situation a woman would be in if her husband one day announced to her, "**Honey, I've got wonderful news for you.** Next week I'm planning to bring home someone else to live with us. It'll be a woman; she'll be a bit younger than you, perhaps a little bit more attractive. In any event, she'll seem that way because I plan to spend more time with her than with you; never the less, we're all going to continue to be a very happy family. You'll get used to her presence and I very much want you not only to love her but to show how much you love her."

Most women would find this eventuality intolerable, so how on earth can we expect a two year old, whose whole life revolves around the home and the people who care for him, to be able to adjust to such a change? The only toddler who wouldn't be extremely jealous and unhappy about the presence of a nine or ten month old sibling would be one who had very little to lose; and the only kind of two year old with very little to lose would be one who had not formed a basic attachment to his own mother. In a sense, then, the resentment of a two year old toward a younger sibling is reasonably good proof that that older child has formed normal, beneficial ties to his mother.

It's very important for parents to recognize that two closely spaced young siblings are living in a chronically difficult state. You shouldn't just hope that the troubles will automatically sort themselves out. They usually do not.

The information on this and the next three pages is adapted from Dr. White's two best selling books, A PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE FIRST THREE YEARS, and THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF LIFE, published by Prentice-Hall Inc. © Burton L. White and Prentice-Hall Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Spacing children...

The problems do not often begin during pregnancy or even soon after the child is born.

Normally, the older child will maintain his good temper until the new baby starts to crawl, at which point the infant not only needs more of the parents' attention, but is also probably getting into the older child's toys as well.

The older child may try to hit the baby or otherwise hurt him. He may re-

gress, that is become more babyish himself: take to crawling if he is walking; go back to a pacifier or bottle; return to negativism and tantrums; return to wetting his pants if he is already toilet trained. Or he may show signs of being unhappy, appear sad, cling to his mother, burst into tears for no apparent reason. The number of different ways in which slightly older children reveal their jealousy in such situations is remarkably large...



"Honey, I've Got Wonderful News for You..."

In terms of the quality of the social environment, the twenty-one month old child will inevitably resent and dislike the nine month old baby at times. What this means concretely is that he will occasionally act toward the nine month old in a hostile and aggressive fashion. The baby will be exposed to a quality of behaviour on the part of the twenty-one month old that has virtually no parallel in the experience of a firstborn child. Let me enlarge on this point. We have seen twenty-one month olds striking their nine month old siblings, throwing objects at them, picking them up and deliberately dropping them, or pushing them about. We have seen repeated snatching of toys, food, and other materials from the nine month old. Think for a minute about what these experiences mean to an infant. I maintain that anger, even hatred, from a two year old toward his younger sibling is normal. This does not mean that such ugliness is not counterbalanced at times by genuinely pleasant interchanges between the two. It does not mean that in every case closely spaced children behave this way. What it does mean is that such behaviour is the rule rather than the exception.

It is difficult to believe that exposure to hostile behaviour does not affect the shaping of a nine month old. Indeed, as we have watched these situations evolve, we have found that the social behaviors and attitudes of the nine month old toward the twenty-one month old toward his mother, and toward other children begin to resemble those of his sibling toward him. What seems to happen is that once the child of nine months learns how to cope with abuses, he begins to adopt some of the behaviors himself. This kind of antisocial behaviour tends to emerge toward the middle of the second

year of life.

There are those who say that all of these negative factors are counterbalanced by the fact that closely spaced children can be companions for each other, both at an early age and as they get older. You may, in fact, be fortunate and pay a relatively small price for such potential companionship. I find it hard to see, however, how an abusive early social experience can be helpful to a nine month old developing human, and it seems relatively easy to see how it can be harmful.

Situation of a nine month old with a sibling more than three years older

In this case, we are dealing with a forty-five month old sibling at the very least, a child who is nearly four years of age. As pointed out in earlier sections of this book devoted to the development of intelligence and to emotional control, what we are talking about here is a rather advanced human being. Not only is the four year old much more able than a younger child to cope with emotions of resentment that emerge when he has to share his parents with a newcomer, but in addition, he has spent at least a year in developing interests outside of the home. He is well on his way with respect to peer interest and general outside the home activities. The cost to him of displacement within the home is considerably less than the cost to the twenty-one month old whose whole life still revolves around the home situation and the primary caretaker. For the four year old, the problem posed by an infant sibling is smaller and capacity to deal with the problem is greater. □

In conclusion, it is very difficult on both young children when they are spaced closely. The closer the spacing the greater the difficulty. Correspondingly, the wider the gap the more delightful the experience. The five or six year old is much more inclined to genuinely enjoy the new baby. Bear in mind that grief or delight between young children plays a large role in determining how much pleasure a mother gets each day. In turn, how happy or distressed a mother is plays a large role in determining how rewarding a marriage will be. Once again, take my advice and space your children.

Dr. Offord: One of the firm findings in the 'delinquent literature' for boys is that they are more likely to come from large families. I did not present the data, but we have statistics showing that that is so in Canada.

Senator McElman: You mean the child feels rejected?

Dr. Offord: That is right, because in the big family there is less to go around.

The Chairman: You say it is more common in the big families?

Dr. Offord: It is a consistent finding in Great Britain and in Canada that large families are more likely to produce delinquents than small families.

Excerpt from the Proceedings of the Senate Subcommittee on Childhood Causes of Criminal Behaviour

As for the advantages of having siblings, I can think of none if the spacing is narrow (less than two and one half or three years).

Father Feelings

I strongly believe that over the next decade more fathers will begin redefining their priorities in life. They will become less concerned with their corporate or peer image and more concerned with their family image. The economic stimulus to work more and earn more is becoming less attractive since the extra money is worth less. An example of this trend can be seen in the push by organized labour for more fringe benefits rather than more money. Pilot studies have found that fathers with increased leisure time from a shorter work week spend a significant portion of it with their children. The following discussion will centre around some of the common feelings fathers have, the concept of priority fathering, and some suggestions about increasing your involvement with your children.

Father feelings During Pregnancy

The earliest father feelings are usually those of pride - pride in their masculinity as well as their fertility. As the reality of the concept of "family" sinks in, the father reflects on his increased responsibilities. Society puts great pressures upon the male to produce and the economic burden of "another mouth to feed" may weigh heavily upon the expectant father. Feelings of dependency on the part of the wife run high during pregnancy and some men may question their ability to both father the baby and "mother the mother".

Many fathers experience pregnancy-like symptoms during their wife's pregnancy, probably due to a subcon-

scious desire to share the pregnancy. Other fathers do not envy pregnancy at all and may regard this period as a necessary nuisance toward having a child. There may be a tendency to focus on the arrival of the baby and to subconsciously ignore the pregnancy. The mother's constant physical and emotional changes, however, serve as a reminder of the reality of the family pregnancy.

In the second trimester, the father can feel his baby move, a feeling which is often a great thrill for the expectant father. Feeling his baby kick often arouses sexual interest and may initiate love-making. Father anxiety increases as the time of delivery approaches. He may become increasingly concerned about the health of the mother and baby. Many

These four pages on Father Feelings are reprinted from Dr. William Sears superb book Creative Parenting (ISBN 0-88890-138-0). Dr Sears is a paediatrician practicing in Pasadena California. © William Sears MD and Optimum Publishing International Inc. Reprinted with permission.

On being a father...

fathers cannot visualize a newborn and often picture their baby at an older age. Feelings that "we are no longer a romantic couple" hit their peak in that last few months and fathers may often have ambivalent feelings about their baby's effect on the marriage.

Involvement is the key to han-

dling uneasy father feelings and this involvement should begin very early in the pregnancy. Remember that as your wife is mothering your unborn child during pregnancy, fathering also begins before birth. The following suggestions are aimed at assisting nervous fathers in handling these common feelings during preg-

1. Involve yourself with the many choices you and your wife will make early in pregnancy: which doctor? Which hospital? Alternative birthing environments?
2. Accompany your wife on her visits to the obstetrician. You will learn a lot about your developing baby.
3. Attend prepared childbirth classes. Father involvement in the childbirth event is one of the major topics in these classes. You will learn about your developing baby, about parenting in general, and incidentally about your wife.
4. Be involved in the birth of your child. (See *Alternative Birthing Concepts*, page 36, *Entering the Hospital for Delivery*, page 47.)
5. Attend your baby's check-ups. Pediatricians encourage fathers to attend these office visits. Unfortunately, fathers do not enjoy the same knowledge of and intuition about babies as mothers do and, because of this, pediatricians make a special effort to discuss particular stages of your baby's growth and development with you. I am greatly impressed with the depth of father intuition men have when they are given the opportunity to express it.
6. Become involved in the postpartum period as discussed in *Coming Home*, page 73.

A common father feeling which has been expressed to me by my caring and involved fathers is the feeling of being "left out" during the first year of their infant's life. This feeling may occur if your wife is breastfeeding, is practicing immersion mothering, and has such a strong mother-infant attachment that you wonder "what can I give my infant?"

Take heart, there is still a very important role for you - the role of supporter, or motherer of the mother. It is both normal and healthy for infants to show a strong mother preference during the first two years. By mothering the mother, you are making your wife happy and relaxed, which enhances her relationship with your child. (See page 76 for tips on moth-

ering the mother.) In this way, you are indirectly fathering your infant and the whole family profits. Even though your wife is your baby's primary care-giver, you can still do a lot with your baby the first year. You can change diapers, bathe him, burp him and play with him, carry him around and comfort him during fussy periods. Initially you may not feel comfortable with these "mothering" activities, but remember our principle of continuum fathering: involvement increases comfort, comfort makes an activity more enjoyable, and your fathering operates on a higher level. (See *Working Mothers*, page 184).

Priority Fathering

There are many obstacles in the world of work which divert a father from the genuine joy of being with his children. Work competes with fathering, and modern corporate man is often forced to choose between his company, his peers or friends, and his children. The economic pressures on fathers make it unrealistic to simply say, "Choose your work or your child". I would like to propose a solution to this "time with your child" dilemma of contemporary fathering.

Many fathers leave for the office before their children awake in the morning and return home just in time to tuck their children into bed. Work thus relegates fatherhood to a weekend and holiday profession. These fathers miss many of the spontaneous joys of parenting that occur when a father is just not around. If you have this type of demanding job, stop and take inventory: What would I like to be in the eyes of my children? What am I in the eyes of my children? What should

my role as a father be and am I fulfilling this role? Are there certain needs my child has at a particular age which the passage of time will not give me a second chance to fulfill? Some of the answers to these questions may necessitate a change in your direction in life. If fathering requires a reorganization of priorities (cutting down on your workload, changing jobs) as a sailor friend once said to me, "Have the courage to follow your compass." I speak from experience, having made a career decision which reduced the size of my practice and my teaching commitments so I could spend more time with my family.

Involve your children in your work. Children love being asked to help Daddy in his job. They feel that they are really worth something in the eyes of their father. I would take my son to the hospital to make hospital rounds with me and even let him write out an occasional prescription (his handwriting is better than mine anyway).

Institute the practice of a special time for each child. One morning each week I take one of my children to breakfast on the way to school. This one-to-one communication is very valuable to both father and child. As we have stated before, it is important for parents to convey their love to their children frequently by, for example, eye-to-eye contact and touching. Mothers do not have a patent on gentling a child. A hug, a kiss, a gentle touch from a caring father will do wonders for your rapport.

A father feeling often expressed to me is, "My wife is too attached to our baby. She won't leave him with a babysitter so we can get away". It is easy to convey subtle messages to your wife such as, "You owe me some time too" and

On being a father...

"People will wonder why we bring our baby to the party". Fathers, trust your wife's intuition and support her feelings. Some babies are more separation sensitive than others and only his mother will know when and how long to leave your baby. (For further discussion on mother-infant attachment, see *Where's My Mommy?* page 181)

Family vacations are a valuable asset to a contemporary father. Years ago, my wife and I fell victim to the "relief holiday disease" when we would temporarily escape into the magic world of child-free make-believe. As our parenting priorities matured, we vowed to make future vacations family vacations. Such vacations increase understanding and acceptance. They allow both parents and children to step back and appreciate the good feelings that exist when one is part of a family.

Father Fun

Early in infancy, a child learns to regard mother as a care person and father as a play person. This "fun to be with" relationship should continue throughout childhood and adolescence and serve as

an entree to improve father-child communications. A feeling I have always treasured is the time my four-year old son said to me, "Dad, you're fun". If a person enjoys your company, he is at ease communicating with you. Doing fun things with your child opens an avenue of communication which improves your effectiveness as an authority figure and a wise counsellor in time of need. One of the most satisfying of all father feelings is sensing that your child feels comfortable seeking your help with a problem. If you have been a consistently involved father, and fun to be with, this father-trust will occur naturally.

Fathers, as a final note, remember that you are a role model for your children, both sons and daughters. Children vividly remember their parents' involvement and are likely to carry these practices into their own parenting. Not only are sons likely to carry on your fathering example, but also daughters seem to have even more vivid recollections of their father's influence on their lives, and are likely to see these values in their own husbands. A truly effective father may pass on his fathering practices through the continuum of many generations. Fathering is indeed a long-term investment.

Years ago, my wife and I fell victim to the "relief holiday disease" when we would temporarily escape into the magic world of child-free make-believe.

**The Canadian Society
for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children**

The basic premise of CSPCC is that the worst of all possible cruelties is to inflict permanent emotional damage on another human being.

Given the evidence that such permanent emotional damage can be inflicted relatively easily during the very early years of life, our concern is with ignorance of, or indifference to, the emotional needs of very young children.

By permanent emotional damage we do not mean only the psychological illnesses of adults which are recognized as having their roots in early childhood. More importantly we mean the less recognizable and measurable deficient capacities for trust, empathy, and affection.

To prevent such permanent emotional damage, the CSPCC is working toward higher status for parenting, greater support for parents with young children, increased emphasis on trust, empathy, and affection in the adult world, and vastly improved preparation for parenthood.

By preparation for parenthood, we mean that, prior to the age when conception is a possibility, both girls and boys should understand and appreciate:

- the permanent emotional damage that can result if the emotional needs of a young child are not met.
- the ways in which our appetite for consumer goods and services can become so insatiable by the time children are conceived, that satisfaction of consumer cravings and status and careerism based on these are easily rationalized as having a higher priority than nurturing one's children.
- that remaining childless may be the most sensible option, given one's interests and priorities.
- that any parent who feels inadequate or inferior is handicapped in providing optimal child nurture; thus, prevailing patterns of arbitrary male dominance threaten the well-being of children, while mutual support and respect between parents enhance their child-rearing abilities.
- the meaning and significance of empathic parenting, namely: being willing and able to "put oneself into one's child's shoes" in order to correctly identify the child's feelings, and being willing and able to behave toward the child in ways which take those feelings into account.
- that empathic parenting takes an enormous amount of time and energy and fully involves both parents in a co-operative, sharing way.
- the importance of a father who is able to relate to his wife and child in a non-arbitrary, co-operative, empathic way.
- the wrong reasons for having children: proving one's masculinity or femininity, making or patching up a marriage or relationship, having a son and heir, having a weapon to use against the other parent, obtaining the love and affection they have been unable to get from the adult world, fulfilling a need to dominate and control.
- the permanent damage to the child that can result from poor nutrition, poor health, inadequate medical care, and substance abuse during pregnancy.
- those birthing practices which facilitate attachment, bonding and engrossment of babies, mothers and fathers.
- up to date knowledge of early human development to the greatest extent possible for their age.
- the importance of breastfeeding until the child no longer requires it.
- the potential dangers inherent in the care of infants and toddlers by changing, shared, hired substitutes.
- the greatly increased difficulty in meeting the emotional needs of infants and toddlers that are closely spaced.
- the need for a network of relatives, friends and organizations such as playgroups, which enable parents to share with other mothers and fathers the stresses, the hard work and the joys that are an inevitable part of the empathic care of infants and toddlers.

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For additional copies of "When You Can't Feel No Love..." (18 minutes, 1/2 inch VHS), this film guide and other videotapes and print materials contact:
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PARENTS SENSIBLES

Journal de la Société Canadienne
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Politiciens, Bureaucrates et Intrigueurs

Il y a une grande différence entre parents qui ont formés des liens forts avec leurs petits et ceux qui n'en n'ont pas. L'attachement, l'amour, comme l'apprécient ceux qui en font l'expérience est une chose irrationnelle et très puissante. Quelqu'un a même décrit l'amour comme étant "là où nous sommes prêt à être soumis aux inconvénients". L'amour nous rend heureux de faire un grand nombre de choses avec et pour la personne que l'on aime. L'importance pour les parents d'être en amour avec leur bébé (d'en devenir attaché), c'est que la tâche difficile de soigner et de garder l'enfant ne semble pas dure ni une imposition ni une intrusion sans justification dans leur vie.

Pour des parents qui ne sont pas attachés, les soins du bébé sont ressentis plutôt comme un devoir et un travail. C'est pour cette raison que ces parents détachés se fient aux formules de bons parents instantanés; embrasser, que ce soit voulu on réciproque des "je t'aime" répétés, quand les actes expriment le contraire. Les parents détachés souvent croient fermement aux rationalisations à la mode, des excuses inconscients, afin de légitimer la délégation de la tâche des soins à leur bébés. "Nous avons besoin de deux salaires pour arriver financièrement...", (et ce dans un des plus riches pays du monde) ou, "Tout ce que le bébé requiert c'est du temps de qualité chaque jour", ou encore "Je suis brûlée...", "Ju suis malheureuse à la maison en gardant mon bébé. Il est encore préférable qu'qu autre s'en occupe", ou "Les experts entraînés dans des garderies peuvent offrir à mon bébé un environnement plus stimulant" ou "Mon bébé a besoin des occasions de socialiser avec d'autres enfants" et tout autre 'raisons' qui peuvent être utilisées pour justifier que l'on cherche un/une aurtre pour faire le 'travail' raisonnable de s'occuper du bébé avec qui ils/elles ne sont pas en amour.

Il nous faut reconnaître et accepter le fait qu'il y a des gens qui, parce qu'ils ont manqué sérieusement de soins émotifs comme enfants et bébés, tout simplement ne peuvent pas tomber en amour avec leurs bébés. De telles personnes devraient être encouragées et admirées quand elles décident de ne pas avoir d'enfants.

Encore plus important, ces personnes handicapés affectivement, souvent capables d'occuper un rang élever et d'avoir un grand pouvoir dans notre société patriarcale habituée à la consommation, ces personnes devraient être encouragés et admirés quand elles se déclarent mal-qualifiés pour influencer les politiques des garderies.

Il est à espérer que bientôt ceux qui établissent les lois affectant les soins des enfants auront une formation d'attachement forts pour leurs parents et pour leurs enfants.

E.T. Barker, M.D.

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pour les dons et pour les abonnements



Recognizing that the capacity to give and receive trust, affection and empathy is fundamental to being human.

Knowing that all of us suffer the consequences when children are raised in a way that makes them affectionless and violent, and;

Realizing that for the first time in History we have definite knowledge that these qualities are determined by the way a child is cared for in the very early years.

CREDO



WE BELIEVE THAT:

- The necessity that every new human being develop the capacity for trust, affection and empathy dictates that potential parents re-order their priorities with this in mind.
- Most parents are willing and able to provide their children with the necessary loving empathic care, given support from others, appropriate understanding of the task and the conviction of its absolute importance.
- It is unutterably cruel to permanently maim a human being by failing to provide this quality of care during the first three years of life.

THERE IS AN URGENCY THEREFORE TO:

- Re-evaluate all our institutions, traditions and beliefs from this perspective.
- Oppose and weaken all forces which undermine the desire or ability of parents to successfully carry out a task which ultimately affects us all.
- Support and strengthen all aspects of family and community life which assist parents to meet their obligation to each new member of the human race.