

# EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Human Relationships and Learning

EIGHTH EDITION



READ • GARDNER • MAHLER

# **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

## **Human Relationships and Learning**

*EIGHTH EDITION*

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TO DOCIA ZAVITKOVSKY  
who has worked unceasingly over the years  
for quality programs to meet  
the needs of children.

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# PREFACE

The eighth edition of *The Nursery School and Kindergarten* brings with it a new title. As the title, *Early Childhood Programs* suggests, this edition includes the increasing varieties of centers that care for young children today. There are all-day centers to meet the needs of parents who work outside the home, while other centers offer educational experiences in half-day programs, mainly for three- and four-year-olds. Some centers care for infants, and some have special programs for toddlers and parents. There are home-care programs. After-school care has become part of some programs. This text is appropriate reading for teachers in each of these programs.

We have added two new chapters in this edition, one on "Computers and Television" and another on "Becoming a Professional Person." In "Computers and Television" we discuss some of the many questions being raised today about the use and value of computers and television in programs for young children, and we present recent experiences with using a computer in a center. In "Becoming a Professional Person" we discuss practical questions related to teacher training, experience, and professionalism. The rapid increase in numbers of centers has brought an acute need for more trained professional teachers.

There are changes in organization in this edition with six main parts: Part One, The Setting; Part Two, Basic Teaching Skills; Part Three, Guidance in Experiences Common to Everyone; Part Four, Understanding Behavior; Part Five, The Program Evolves Through Experiences; Part Six, Concerns of Parents and Teachers. Each part contains new material which will serve as an introduction to the various topics introduced. We have tried only to suggest possibilities and to stimulate thinking. Every teacher will select what is best for his or her needs in particular groups. Teaching and learning are part of a creative process, a process of exploring and constant discovery.

We have tried to present the material in as simple and direct a way as possible so that it may be easily understood by anyone interested in young children. We start with essential points, things most necessary to know in dealing with young children. We then return to these points, amplifying them in later sections, adding more information which can lead to more advanced or profound thoughts. We have tried to spiral our way up to more complete understanding in a process that never ends. Although the material is based on research findings, we have not stressed the academic approach. An annotated bibliography at the end of each chapter and references in the bibliography at the end of the book provide material for further study.

The emphasis in this edition remains as in previous editions on understanding human behavior, the child's behavior and our own, as well as on the process of learning. Everyone working with young children needs to gain more understanding of the significance of behavior and the needs of individuals if she or he is to guide a child wisely and help him learn.

We have faced the dilemma caused by the lack of a pronoun to cover both the male and female genders. We have decided to resolve it by using *she* for the teacher and *he* for the child on the basis that more teachers of young children

are likely to be female and the child is about equally likely to be a boy or a girl. We realize that this may not satisfy every one.

We express our thanks to Millie Almy for her suggestion of the title and its definition. We continue to be indebted to Betty Lark-Horovitz for her gift of children's drawings to be used as headings in the chapters of the book. We are also indebted to the professional organization, The National Association for the Education of Young Children, for many quotations from their recent publications and for their emphasis on quality education for young children. We are also grateful to the many colleagues who have helped us in writing this book, as well as those whose thoughtful reading and comments have helped to shape it: Martha Abbott-Shim, Georgia State University; Nancy Andreasen, Cabrillo College; Thomas W. Draper, Brigham Young University; May Kanfer, Sarah Lawrence College; Grace Mills Koopmans, Fort Steilacoom Community College; Susan W. Nall, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville; Catherine M. Prudhoe, University of Delaware; Mary Carolyn Pugmire-Stoy, Ricks College; Helen Warren Ross, San Diego State University; and Billie Warford, Montana State University.

We appreciate the valuable contribution Jean Berlfein has made by the photographs she has provided for this edition. Our thanks are also extended to Laurie Schneider for her skill in capturing children in action at John Adams Children's Center and Hill 'n Dale Family Learning Center. Other excellent photographs were contributed by Deborah Hansen and Denise Maldonada, teachers at First Step School in Santa Monica. Louise Dean and Marc Pettigrew were generous in providing fine pictures of the outdoor setting and children at Los Angeles Valley College Campus Child Development Center. Barbara Mahler provided pictures from Chico State Child Development Program. Carol Sharpe sent pictures from her nursery school class at Bakersfield College, taken by Jim Fisher and Pat Schroeder. Dorothy Hewes contributed pictures taken by a student, Jim Hollander, in the Child Development Laboratory at San Diego State University. Carol Chamberlin supplied pictures from the Santa Monica Child Development Center and Laboratory Preschool. We owe a debt of gratitude to the photography department at Santa Monica College for their assistance with the photography.

We acknowledge the contribution our husbands have made by their support and patience, and we give special credit to Charles Gardner, who took on the task of preparing the index.

We also express our thanks to Nedah Abbott and Herman Makler, our editors, and to the staff members of Holt, Rinehart and Winston who worked with us on this edition.

The three of us, as authors, have pooled our knowledge and our different experiences in the production of this edition. Communicating from a distance has often been difficult but we have found the process stimulating. We have enjoyed our contacts. We hope that we have produced a more useful book than any one of us might have achieved alone.

K.R.  
P.G.  
B.C.M.

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**PART ONE**  
♦  
**THE SETTING**





Mommy and Maya  
(girl 4 years 1 month)

## 1♦ Introducing the People in the Center

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*Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. (DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, UNITED NATIONS)*

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### INTRODUCTION

“The single most important thing in human cultural behavior is literally and specifically the way we bring up our children.”<sup>1</sup> This statement by an anthropologist points to the significance of the task of those responsible

<sup>1</sup>W. LaBarre. (1949). The age period of cultural fixation. *Mental Hygiene*, 33, 200, 221.

#### 4 Early Childhood Programs: Human Relationships and Learning

for bringing up children, whether they are parents, or teachers, or members of any other group relating to young children.

For many years people have been concerned about meeting the needs of children. Today their concern is based on more knowledge. However, with more knowledge comes increased responsibility for providing each child with what he or she needs for sound growth. Research findings have emphasized the importance of the first year of life and the necessity of meeting adequately the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of the young child.

The educational programs we shall consider support, complement, and supplement parental care and enhance the child's development. They are programs in which children learn as they play and share their day-to-day life experiences with other children, guided by adults who have an understanding of child growth and development and of the learning process. These are also programs in which adults learn more about human behavior and relationships as they observe and participate.

The material presented here is addressed specifically to those who are beginning to teach in centers, but it can serve those who care for young children anywhere. Anyone with young children, even the most experienced person, needs to learn as well as to teach. The two processes are inseparable.

For convenience and to avoid tedious sentence structures, we will use the pronoun *she* for the adult and the pronoun *he* for the child. As Donaldson states it, "While the word 'child' does not convey any information as to sex, there is no similarly neutral personal pronoun in English. We have followed here, though not without some heart-searching, the tradition of using the masculine 'he' when a neutral sense is intended. It is particularly desirable when one is speaking of education not to suggest that boys are somehow more important. The ideas in this book apply equally to boys and to girls."<sup>2</sup> As Smith added, "We wish to acknowledge the known fact that teachers and students are both male and female. Their excellence in either of these positions is not determined by their sex."<sup>3</sup>

What promotes optimum overall development in young children? What do teachers need to know about development and learning? What skills do they need in guiding young children? We shall be looking for answers to these and other questions—even though the answers may often be incomplete.

There is a tendency today to try to hasten a child's intellectual development by teaching, for example, what may be more appropriate for first grade children to much younger children. Pushing children in their development may shortchange a child, depriving him of firsthand ex-

<sup>2</sup>M. Donaldson. (1978). *Children's Minds*. New York: W. W. Norton.

<sup>3</sup>A. Smith. (1985). From a personal paper, "Mistakes, a tool for learning."



periences on which later learning depends. The best preparation for all children lies in their completing each stage, having as full and as rich a variety of experiences as possible, consistent with each child's own style and pace of learning. Each child should feel more self-confidence because of successful learning.

Young children's needs are the same, whether at home or in a center. Young children are in a crucial period of development, physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Each child is an individual, different from any other. Each child needs understanding guidance that respects his own rate and style of growing and learning. Each child needs a rich variety of experiences in exploring and discovering as he tries to make sense out of the world.

The emphases in this book are on human relationships and learning and on teaching as a creative process. The order of presentation of the



Young children's needs are the same whether at home or in a center.

Valley College, Campus Child Development Center