

Pediatric nursing

**LATHAM
HECKEL
HEBERT
BENNETT**

Third edition

Pediatric nursing

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To
ALL CHILDREN
everywhere

PREFACE

Many changes have been made in this third edition: new chapters have been added and other material has been revised and expanded.

Dr. Vermeersch contributed a new chapter, Nutrition During Pregnancy and Lactation. Dr. Bennett has rewritten Chapter 2, Toward Good Health of the Neonate, and Chapter 4, Physical Assessment and Care of the Neonate. She also assisted in the revision of Chapter 1, Home Environment. Dr. Ives has enlarged the chapter on adolescence by adding pertinent new material. Also, there are a number of changes in the chapter on psychological assessment of children.

To emphasize the role of the nurse in promotion of health, the various sections on this subject relative to the infant, the toddler and preschool child, the schoolchild, and the adolescent have been brought together in one chapter. To this chapter are added suggested guides on assessment of the child's health as well as a discussion of differences in growth and health problems at various stages of development.

Although the emphasis in Part II is still on the care of the child with common conditions, Dr. Hebert has added a discussion of several others, including hemophilia, Hodgkin's disease, infectious mononucleosis, hyperthyroidism, omphalocele, and congestive heart

failure. Dr. Hebert has greatly expanded the section on the abused child and revised the material on congenital heart disease.

I wish to express my thanks for the cooperation and patience of the co-authors and contributors: Dr. Heckel, Dr. Hebert, Dr. Bennett, Dr. Vermeersch, and Mrs. Harrison. For her many suggestions and contributions, special thanks go to Dr. Margaret Ives. Appreciation goes also to Dr. Mary D. Rastatter, Chief of the Speech Pathology and Audiology Branch, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, for her contribution to Chapter 10, Psychological Assessment of Children.

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All of the secretaries who helped typed material for the book were helpful, but the services of Mrs. Laurel McDonald, Miss Vickie Bayham, and Mrs. Andrea Carter deserve special mention.

Helen Cabot Latham

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**Growth, development,
and promotion
of health of children**

1

HOME ENVIRONMENT

It is particularly important for the nurse to understand how features of the environment can influence the physical and emotional health of children in order to plan effectively for their care. In this respect there is not a more significant environmental circumstance that will determine the success of those efforts than a complete understanding of the child's home.

INFLUENCES ON BEHAVIOR

Certain features of the home environment will influence the behavioral development of the child. Among the most important modifiers of behavior are the culture, the community, the subgroup membership, and the family.

Culture

The development of children occurs within an environment that is influenced by a cultural heritage. No matter where in the world a child is born, he finds himself in an environment that affects who and what he will be and how he will behave.

Cultures have different ways of viewing pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing; however, in no known culture are they ignored or treated with indifference. Each culture has to be studied to develop a deep understanding of the influence of tradition on behavior. Behavior of women and those who assist them in childbirth and child rearing are patterned by customs and are regulated by traditional practice. The mother-child relationship is prescribed by cultural norms. For example, a culture that favors male children creates difficulty for the mother when the child is a girl. Societal acceptance and approval are withheld from both mother and child.

Culture influences the attitude toward illegitimate pregnancies. In the United States and Great Britain there is evidence that increased

mortality and morbidity have occurred with illegitimate pregnancy largely because the prospective mothers have sought and obtained illegal abortions. If the abortion can be performed legally, this problem virtually disappears. Prematurity rates are higher with prenuptial than postnuptial conceptions. In other parts of the world conception prior to marriage is viewed as physical evidence of the ability to bear children. Morbidity, mortality, and prematurity rates are unaffected. These biological events are influenced by culturally imposed attitudes. Where attitudes and reactions are dictated by culture, the large majority of members of that society react virtually the same way.

Since cultural characteristics vary around the world, a home environment desirable for fostering a particular behavior in one country may not be desirable in another. For example, the economic independence of married children from their parents valued in the American culture is facilitated by the custom of maintaining separate living quarters. The child grows up seeing his older brothers and sisters marry and move away. Although parents may continue to support some young couples for a time, the ones who can "make it on their own" are the most admired; thus the child learns to expect and accept responsibility for his own future economic welfare. This value is supported by the American legal system, which does not insist that well-to-do relatives be responsible for their less fortunate kin. The state has established elaborate systems of loans, insurance, and welfare programs to which individuals can turn in times of financial need.

On the other hand, some societies that stress economic interdependence find the extended family system more conducive to maintaining this value. Here the child grows up with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in the house-

hold and learns to feel responsible for their support. Legal codes may enforce this standard by holding relatives responsible for the debts incurred by other family members, thus making organized financial assistance programs largely unnecessary.

It can therefore be seen that culture is the way a society prescribes the behavior of its members. Its institutions, laws, and mores are the means by which the desired behavior is perpetuated and maintained.

A closer examination of the culture of the United States reveals several identifiable attitudes and values. Derived mainly from the Judeo-Christian tradition and the spirit of private enterprise, the American ethos recognizes individual freedom, self-discipline, competition, and productivity. An individual is expected to make continuous attempts to better himself through education, occupational advancement, and spiritual development while maintaining a high level of integrity in his dealings with others. Those who exhibit such qualities are supposedly accorded the highest rewards in terms of socioeconomic status and prestige. However, recent political events have shown that many of those to whom we have looked for leadership have not lived up to these ideals, and the resulting disillusionment of our youth may have serious consequences for the future of the United States.

Community

Within the broad definitions of the culture, certain behaviors of the child will receive impetus from the physical and social circumstances of the community in which he lives. There are established differences between urban and rural life-styles that leave their mark on personality development.

Country and small town living in the United States has traditionally been typified by provincialism; throughout history its most conspicuous feature has been isolation. The agricultural way of life makes for a thinly scattered population where outside contacts on a day-to-day basis are limited. In his developmental years the child may see little of the world beyond the farm. The social contacts he does have are mainly with family and friends with similar

backgrounds, similar goals, and similar problems. Such homogeneity has usually meant that the country child tends to develop a conservative outlook and intolerance toward new or unfamiliar persons, places, and ideas.

Limited contacts outside the community foster an intricate network of relationships within the community. The child learns to recognize others in a number of established roles. For example, he sees the local storekeeper not as an anonymous man who merely takes his money in exchange for a new pair of shoes but perhaps as the father of one of his schoolmates, a friend of the family, the husband of his piano teacher, a member of the town council, and so on. In other words, the child's perception of other people is extended to include more of their total personalities as the result of frequent contacts in a variety of situations. This can be contrasted to the urban child who is more likely to relate to individuals by categorizing them in single-faceted functional roles. To most urban children the storekeeper *is* an anonymous man who merely takes their money in exchange for a new pair of shoes.

Another distinction between rural and urban environments that undoubtedly has some effect on personality and behavior is the general pace of living. Sociologists suspect that the noise, the traffic, and the bustling impersonal atmosphere of the city produce more tensions and anxiety than the quiet, less regimented life of the country. The city child must constantly compete with others for recognition in crowded schools, for a seat on a crowded bus, for a place in line at a crowded theater or department store. He needs to develop a set of aggressive and self-assertive behaviors to cope with the social pressures of urban life.

It must be noted that the advance of technological progress into the countryside has blurred the traditional clear-cut differences between American rural and urban life in recent years. Movies, television, freeways, and the "consolidated" school have reduced the isolation of the country child and have brought him into contact with the city. The adoption of scientific farming techniques has forced a change of attitude on the part of many rural parents toward the value of formal and advanced education.

Perhaps today provincialism is a more apt description of the urban slum or the metropolitan suburb than of the modern rural community. Social distance and physical separation have segmented the city so that children growing up in one neighborhood may have little opportunity to meet and experience the life-styles of people of a different race, level of education, or socioeconomic status.

Subgroup membership

A sense of belonging is a universal need. Within the generalized classifications of culture and community, society sees to it that each individual is associated with various subgroups, which serve to establish his identity by anchoring him in time, in space, and in relation to other human beings. For the child, subgroup membership provides a frame of reference through which he can form perceptions of himself and others. It establishes a blueprint for behavior by defining who the child is and what he believes.

Most of the subgroups to which the young child belongs are the result of nonvoluntary associations. For example, the child has no control over the date and place of his birth and hence over his age, sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, and family. In most cases the child's religion and socioeconomic status are prescribed by virtue of his membership in the family. Early socialization to the attitudes and values of these nonvoluntary groups lays the foundations of behavior that will guide the child's choice of voluntary subgroup memberships in later years. They may influence his choice of friends, his choice of occupation, his choice of whether or not he will go to college, and his choice of the college he will attend.

Membership in a subgroup implies that the individual must learn a set of expectations regarding the manner in which he is to behave toward other members of the group and toward people outside the group. He also learns to expect how others will behave toward him. This establishes the individual's role in the subgroup. The child learns his role by observation and imitation of appropriate role models. This is becoming increasingly difficult and causes confusion because of the rapidly changing mores

in this society. For example, the strict role distinction between boys' and girls' activities no longer holds, and even in dress it is sometimes hard to differentiate. The child who is a member of a racial minority group will form perceptions of expected behavior by observing the manner in which other group members respond to their treatment by people outside the group. Minority group membership, however, which formerly often conveyed a feeling of inferior status, is now becoming a source of pride and allows the individual member to acquire status because of his membership, for example, as shown in "Black is beautiful."

Another significant pattern of behavior that can be linked to the child's ethnic background is the way he learns to handle emotion. Overt expressions of love, joy, sorrow, and fear are typical of people of Latin descent. The child learns that the pleasures and pains of life are accompanied by an appropriate set of physical gestures and verbal expressions. To the uninitiated the intensity of the reaction may sometimes appear disproportionate to the actual situation. On the other hand, children of Anglo, Germanic, or Oriental backgrounds learn that the emotions are not a matter for public display. Their reactions are likely to be more restrained and internalized. To someone who is unfamiliar with the pattern such behavior might be misconstrued as indifference, but this too is changing in the present generation.

Religion is also a powerful determinant of a child's attitudes, values, and behavior. Membership in a particular church group will provide the child with a rationale for living, a code of morality, and a set of limitations for tolerance and compromise. The church may infuse the child with a sense of responsibility for his own destiny, or it may lead him to believe that his lot in life and ultimate fate are preordained. Most churches also take definite stands on the value of education. Scholarly inquiry may be promoted as a means of revealing truth, or it may be denounced as a threat to faith in God. The child's religious affiliation might determine the kind of school he attends, which in turn might influence his peer group associations and eventually the partner he will choose in marriage.