





THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Clothes, Play and Clothes for Playing In.

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BY

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### INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I have combined a study of children's clothes from medieval times to the present, with a study of children at play to-day. I have tried to answer four questions:

What kind of clothes have children worn since medieval times?

Why do children play and what do they like playing?

What do parents think of present day children's clothes?

What way would I like to see children dressed?

1.



"HAPPINESS OF CHILDHOOD"



The first of the great events of the American Revolution was the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. This document declared the thirteen colonies to be free and independent states, no longer under British rule. The signing took place in the city of Philadelphia, where the Continental Congress was then meeting. The document was signed by representatives from each of the thirteen colonies, including John Hancock, who signed in a large, bold hand.

In the early years of the Republic, the United States was a young nation with many challenges. The government was still in its infancy, and the country was still recovering from the war. Despite these challenges, the United States made significant progress in the years following the Revolution. The Constitution was written in 1787, and the Bill of Rights was added in 1791. These documents established the framework for the government and protected the rights of the citizens. The United States also expanded its territory, acquiring new lands from France and Spain. By the end of the 18th century, the United States had become a major power in the world.

## SECTION I

The first of the great events of the American Revolution was the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. This document declared the thirteen colonies to be free and independent states, no longer under British rule. The signing took place in the city of Philadelphia, where the Continental Congress was then meeting. The document was signed by representatives from each of the thirteen colonies, including John Hancock, who signed in a large, bold hand.



## THE HISTORY OF CHILDRENS' COSTUME AND FASHION

"People simply want nice clothes to wear" declares Ms. Jean Muir, and surely she must echo the demands of children also, for the history of childrens' costume, from swaddling clothes to babygro's is, with the exception of a short period in the 18th Century, one of constant constriction, subjection and discomfort almost into contemporary times. The story begins with the child dressed as a small replica of the parent, and ends with the parent in many cases now dressed as a large edition of the child.

This year of 1979 is the International Year of the Child, an event which would have been unthinkable in grandpa's day. Not only have we a social upheaval between the "haves" and "have nots", the male and female, but we have the child at the centre of a vast and growing attention, which is easily seen by a study of the child's clothes. The amount of say which a modern child has in what it wears is unparalleled in history, and can even be said to have led the adult in the general adoption of comfortable "casual" and "spectator sports" wear, which are such important fashion new today.

The early history of childrens' clothes is rather difficult to make out, as there are very few records of small children either literary or pictorial. Even in later times the few portraits there are of children are those of the nobility in their "best bib and tucker". Childhood itself was not regarded as of any great importance; large families and high infant mortality tended to play it down. As soon as a child could get firmly on it's feet it was dressed in similar fashion to it's parents, and either set to work if poor, or rigorously and harshly educated if rich.

### Chapter II

#### SWADDLING BANDS

The infant in history had a particularly rough time, and since it's clothing changed little over many centuries, we will examine its progression first.



From lack of records we must presume that Cavewoman wrapped her baby in a piece of her own tigerskin to make a handy parcel of him. Certainly from all over the world, primitive records show infants tightly wrapped and constrained, either for protection or in the mistaken belief that it would keep baby's limbs straight. "The Virgin Mary brought forth her Son, and she wrapped Him in swaddling bands, and laid Him in a Manger" (Luke).

A memorial church brass of 1605 A.D. at Wormington, Glostershire, shows a mother and swaddled baby. These frustration-inducing bands were wound around the new born infant from shoulder to feet. In various widths and lengths, sometimes as long as thirty feet, they persisted in modified form into the present century, when finally Elastoplast modernised the umbilical dressing.

2



A Tudor Family.



In Tudor times the number of garments worn by an infant increased, and they became elaborately decorated by the developing arts of needlework and embroidery. The Victoria and Albert Museum in London has many 17th Century baby clothes in fine embroidered cambric, a vest in fine knitted wool almost like a modern matinee coat, and little shirts all sensibly open down the front. Little cloths and caps covered the head, which it was deemed important to cover, then and in later times.

In 1707 A.D. Madame de Maintenon wrote of the children of King James II of England, "when they are two or three months old, they are no longer tightly swaddled, but under their dress they wear a wrapper and a loose nappy, which are changed as soon as they are soiled, so that the infants never remain, as ours do, tightly swaddled in their own mess. In consequence they never cry, or are upset, suffer from sores, or ever have their little limbs deformed". Perhaps it was the Royal Family's good example, but from this time onwards opposition to swaddling on health grounds began to make some impression. Mothers in history have recorded their dislike of it, but were intimidated into acceptance by midwives of their times, even as at present many mothers have to fight hard against a mostly male-dominated medical-obstetrical profession to have some of their maternal instincts regarding the care of themselves and their infants respected.

The first of a long line of best-selling "baby books" was published in England in 1769 A.D. titled "Domestic Medicine or the Family Physician", it was written by a Doctor William Buchan, who continued the campaign against the "excessive amount of tight coverings" suffered by infants. In spite of the book's popularity, infants' clothes remained much the same into the 19th Century. The wearing of heavy caps and head coverings and the number of petticoats increased.

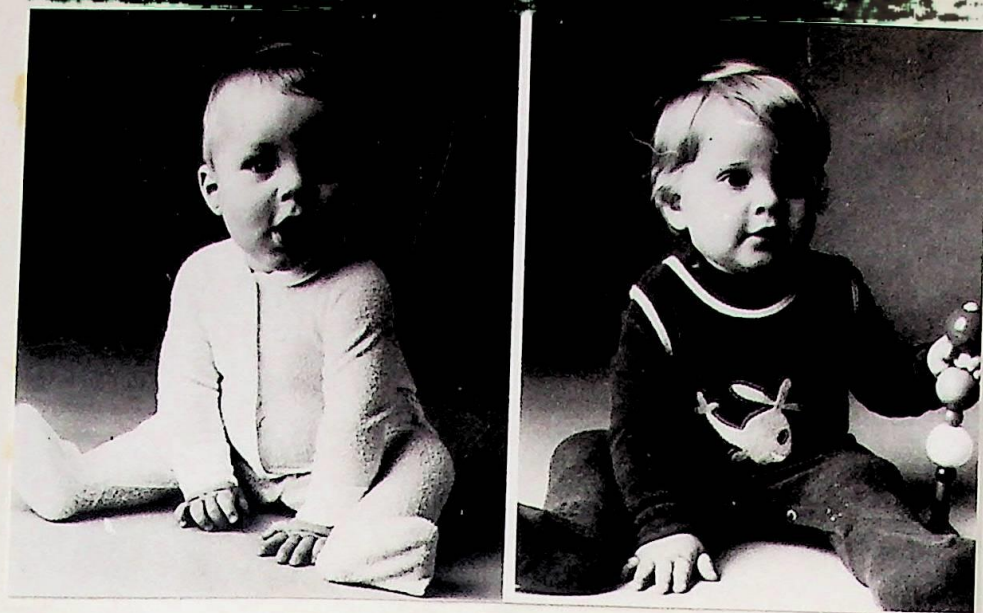


The length of baby dresses reached over a yard by mid-Victorian times.

Mrs. Merrifield, a reforming lady writing in 1854, condemns "dresses that expose neck and shoulders to the cold, tight sleeves tied with ribbons, which hamper circulations, thick napkins which restrict movement, long clothes worn for too long a time". In spite of much writing in similar vein, baby clothes did not improve until the social reforms of the years between the 1830's to the 1880's got under way. The ideals, which led to the freeing of children from the terrible abuses of child labour and from the dreadful conditions of orphanages and institutions, eventually also brought about a growing recognition of children's rights and needs.

The revolutionary German Doctor Gustavus Jaeger, with his Sanitary Woollen System applying health principles and scientific knowledge to clothing, brought warmth and lightness back to baby with "wool next the skin" in the late 1880's. The inventing around the same time of Aertex, a cotton cellular material, and of Viyella, a cotton and wool mixture, both based on the new health ideas, are still used in children's garments. However, infants continued to wear long clothes until the great trauma of the 1st World War, when they began to shorten and simplify. By the 1930's baby was at last down to a simple vest, petticoat and dress, with shawl or matinee coat to cover. The 2nd World War brought clothes rationing, with inevitable standardisation of all clothing. No distinctions were possible, and for the first time in centuries the offspring of all social classes were dressed alike as to make and materials. Simple knitted cap, coat and "pull-up's" (trousers with feet) became the universal garb of the "pram set" in their now almost universal perambulators, while American influences were felt in improved nappy designs.





Two types of babygrows.

In the 1950's the latest great innovation in infants' wear was invented by Walter Artzt, an observant American grandfather. This is the Babygo, a one-piece coverall suit with feet, made from a new stretch fabric. Poppers (fasteners) between the legs allow for quick nappy changes. No-seam shoulders and armholes ensure comfort for baby and ease in dressing, while the easy care man-made fabrics cut down mothers' laundry problems. Baby is at last free to move and kick to his heart's content in warmth and comfort.



Present day pram suit.



'Blue for a Boy'

The story of babywear would not be complete without a few lines on the custom of dressing baby boys in blue and their little sisters in pink. The first recorded reference is in the 18th Century English Verney family papers, where "pink lace gloves for a girl and sky coloured fringed gloves for a boy" are being ordered. Age old beliefs lingered for centuries as to the new b<sup>o</sup>r<sup>n</sup> infant's susceptibility to the power of evil spirits. The "good fairies" came from the blue skies to protect children as in the story of the "Sleeping Beauty" and others similar, and so the custom seems to have grown of protecting the "important" boys by dressing them in some blue garment. "Pink for a girl" seems to have been an invention of the garment trade.



The Beginnings of Fashion

The Roman writer Tacitus has left us a description of dress in Saxon England around the year 100 A.D., - "In every house you may see little boys, sons of lords or peasants, equally ill-clad, lying about or playing among the cattle". It is good to know that some early children had fun, for as the 14th Century dawned, and garments began to be cut and shaped to fit the figure, the children of the rich became increasingly encased in restrictive clothing. Until then, dress for both men and women was a basic belted tunic and a cloak. Saxon men and boys wore braies, a loose trouser-like garment worn under the tunic in lieu of underwear. Peasants wore hand-spun wool or linen, while silk, satin and velvet from France and Italy were greatly prized by the nobility. A boy dressed in a short tunic over his braies would not be too unlike a modern teenager in Tee-shirt and jeans.

5



Mother and Daughters all the same.  
A church brass of 1550 A.D., at Clapham, Essex, shows a mother and eight daughters dressed almost identically in dresses shaped to the waist with over-skirts, elaborate undershirts and headdress.



This shaping was the start of the cycle of fashion in the present era, and emphasised the growing distinction between the dress of peasant and noble, for though the peasant had been restricted in earlier times as to the number of colours he might wear, the general shape of garments had been similar for all.

Until well into the 18th Century boys and girls were dressed alike in infant style clothes up to the age of five or six. From that age numerous family portraits show them dressed as small replicas of their parents. The child as a miniature adult had arrived, complete with corsets. However there is some evidence that high-born children could adopt peasant dress for play. Echoes of this occur in the way childrens' clothes developed when they took off in their own direction in the 18th Century.

One feature of this time which also continued into the 18th Century was the "pudding", a circle of wadding covered with silk, worn horizontally over the forehead, and tied by ribbons under the chin, as shown by Rubens in an engraving of 1620 A.D. This seems to have been an early example of protective clothing.

As adult fashions became more extravagant, what were to become the first distinctive childrens' clothes emerged from the uniform clothes adopted by charity schools such as the Blue Coat Schools. These clothes were based on the medieval style tunics worn by ordinary children in Tudor times, and were to remind their wearers that they were "objects of charity". Many were dyed blue, as that was the cheapest dye and therefore often worn by servants. It is interesting to note that blue still seems to be a favourite colour for to-day's school uniforms.





Young girls with stiff corsets.

During the 16th Century, small boys wore the same doublet and hose, velvets and neck ruffs as their fathers. At the start of the 17th Century breeches first appeared for men and boys. From about 1640 boys began to wear wigs and powdered hair with large hats. Shaped, full skirted coats replaced the doublet; meanwhile girls followed their mothers with panniers and stiff corsets to under the arms. Change however was on the way, but it was not brought about by fashion leaders, or by the class-consciousness which traditionally underlay the introduction of new fashion by the dominant class in a society. It was as a result of the efforts of enlightened teachers. Erasmus (1466-1536) urged that "teaching should be adapted to the capacity of the young mind". Sir Thomas Elyot urged tenderness, and opposed violence to the young. John Locke urged that childrens' clothes should be warm, light and loose, and advocated open air and exercise. He greatly influenced Rousseau, whose novel "Emile", published in 1762, asserted that childhood has a right to happiness. "Emile" was a childrens' charter, dealing with their upbringing and clothes. "The Plainest and most comfortable clothes, those which leave him most liberty, are what he always likes best".



The Revolution in childrens' clothes is generally dated from about 1770. For some time both old and new styles of dressing children co-existed, because the change was part of a social change. The significant point is that the distinctive clothes, which now appeared, bore no relation to what adults of similar social standing were wearing. For the first time comfort and convenience became the basis of fashion. Children were in the lead in a fashion liberation, which would not become general until the 20th Century.

7



The Skeleton Suit.

Little boys now wore baby dresses only until about 4 years of age. When they reached the breeching stage, which had always been a great family occasion, they no longer went into their fathers' breeches, but instead adopted trousers, a garment worn by peasants and sailors. A simple soft cotton shirt and sash



accompanied the trousers and became known as the skeleton suit. Ironically, one tradition credits Marie Antoinette with the introduction of this type of suit for the Dauphin, as part of the mock simplicity of her Court.

Rousseau and the subsequent Romantic Movement regarded children as of great significance. The many portraits of the time show them happy and smiling in country settings. They appear healthy, although the child death rate remained horribly high. Stuart Maxwell in his "Scottish Costume" published in 1958 notes "not only the children but the working class led the way in adopting the 19th Century fashions, while the upper classes held on longer to those of the 18th Century".

Little girls were freed from their tight stays and began to wear simple straight dresses of muslin or fine cotton, which developed from the baby dresses worn by both sexes. Simple hair styles were adopted, sometimes cropped short for both boys and girls. Colours were pale pastels, with white for special occasions. This gave rise to the white party dress which persisted for the next 200 years, and still survives in the white dresses worn for First Communions and weddings.

When the French Revolution and its aftermath made the leisured aristocrat unpopular, and the rise of industry and commerce made practical clothing necessary for city gentlemen, peacock fashions for men disappeared and the boy's trouser suit became general wear for men by the 1840's. Likewise, the little girls in their simple gauze dresses were anticipating womens' fashions of a generation later. They were to lose that simplicity and freedom as the 19th Century progressed.



THE 19th CENTURY

When peace returned after the Napoleonic Wars, simple fashions began to pall, and Paris again launched out into elaborate fashions. The rising middle classes, created by the Industrial Revolution, proclaimed their self-importance by the ostentatious dress of their women and children. Small boys were kept for longer in baby dresses and from about 1825 girls clothes became fuller with more elaborate shaping. Tight lacing became general from early childhood and this continued into Edwardian times.

8



Typical boy of the Industrial 1860's.

Boys fared better by mid-century in belted tunics, while industrial grime made dark suits popular. By the 1860's the favourite boy's suit had a straight short collarless jacket like that worn by soldiers and labourers. From this jacket



developed the modern school blazer.

9



The Sailor Suit.

The developing art of photography has left us with many records of children's wear in Victorian times. The Queen herself made tartan popular by dressing the little princes in Highland kilts. She also started a world-wide children's fashion still flourishing to-day by having a portrait painted by Winterhalter of the young Prince of Wales, wearing a miniature naval uniform of white bell-bottom trousers, top with large square sailor collar, and knotted 'kerchief. These suits were easy to make and quickly entered the ready-to-wear market, which began with children's wear, and grew apace with each improvement in the recently invented sewing machine.



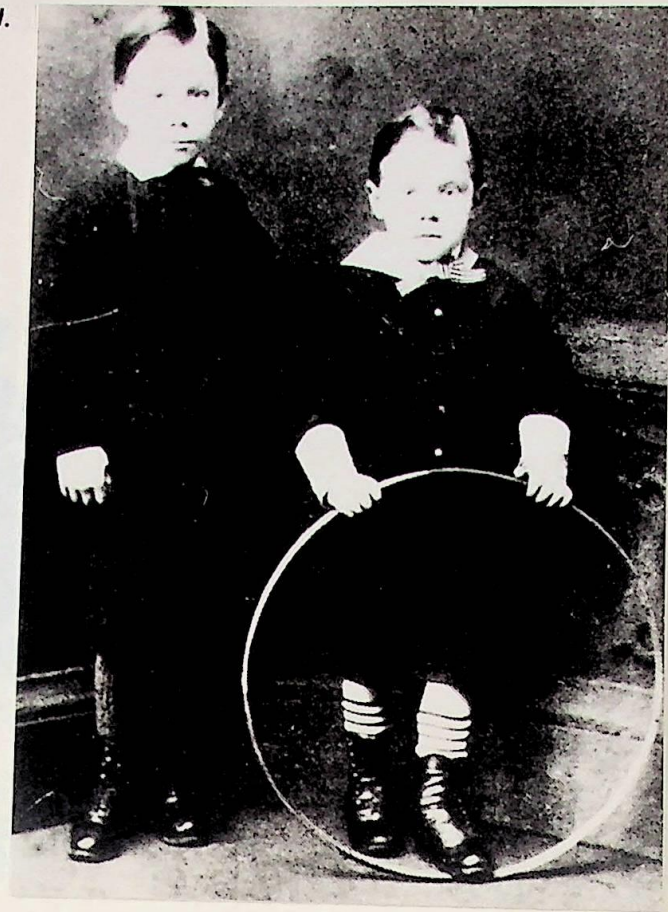


A Version of the Sailor Suit, which appeared in Russia in 1913.

By the 1880's the sailor suit was almost a uniform for boys. It was comfortable to wear, and children seem to have liked wearing it. A version for little girls appeared with a pleated skirt buttoned onto an underbodice. The fashion spread worldwide and was the first which overcame class distinctions, anticipating the classless fashions of this century.



11.



Version of the Knickerbocker Suit.

The American influence on children's clothes began about the 1860's with knickerbockers, which boys began to wear as an alternative to trousers. They were loose breeches gather at the knee and were also worn by men as sporting or country wear. By 1870 they included a straight open-ended version to below the knee, and by 1890 they rose to above the knee in the first version of "shorts", a promise of freedom to come, and another children's fashion, which was to be adopted by adults in this century.





Fashion Plate of 1880.

Although fashion-plates showed elaborate and restrictive garments, there is some evidence from contemporary accounts that simpler dress was worn at home by girls. They were still encompassed by many undergarments - chemise, stays, drawers, stockings and garters, and at least three petticoats. Sir John Tenniel's illustrations for "Alice in Wonderland", which appeared in 1865, show a little girl in a simple bodice and skirt with tucks around the hem to allow for growth. Over this she wears a pinafore with small puff sleeves much like a modern summer dress. Her long straight hair is held by a ribbon such as is worn to-day and known as an Alice Band.

What was to be called the Women's Movement, already stirring in the mid-nineteenth century, did not have any immediate liberating effect on fashion, as the leaders of the emancipation movement were not drawn from the high society, which set fashion. The middle classes were anxious to rise upon the rungs of a stable society, and not to undermine it.



Of course there were exceptions, and a strong intellectual element devoted to social reform. As clothes reform became part of social reform, children's requirements began to gain recognition. The improvements in infants clothing previously described also benefited older children. Mrs. Ada Ballin, editor of the late nineteenth century "Baby" magazine, inveighed against heavy and restrictive clothing. "Dress should be looked upon from a scientific point of view". She advocated the healthy fabrics of Dr. Jaeger. Materials should be light, strong and durable, "so that the child may not suffer from being forbidden healthy play, lest it's clothes should be spoiled" - sentiments which we can still apply.

She advocated white clothes as they "show the dirt", and so are more hygienic, as they must be washed frequently. It was revolutionary for her to write that "little girls should also enjoy the freedom of knickerbockers, but prejudice is against this". There is evidence that some American girls were already doing just this. Louisa M. Alcott writes about a little girl abandoning her fashionable dress for knickerbockers and playing hitherto forbidden games of climbing, running and football with her "Seven Cousins", all boys, in the novel of that name.

The Aesthetic Movement in dress of the 1870's and 1880's in England, failed to attract more than a minority to its loose flowing styles, and did not achieve its basic purpose of becoming a social force, but it did have a lasting influence on girls dress by suggesting a separate category of comfortable clothes, which differed from their mothers.



The illustrations of Kate Greenaway, among other artists, also had influence in separating children's fashions from adult styles. Her designs were never generally adopted either, though their influence can still be seen to-day in the maxi dresses, which little girls wear to parties, or as bridesmaids at fashionable weddings.

#### SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Almost as popular in England and America as the sailor suit, was the Eton Suit, which is the only example we know of a specific school uniform becoming a general youthful fashion. By the 1890's it consisted of long grey trousers, tight black waist-length jacket, stiff white turn-down collar and top hat. This restrictive and impractical suit, the uniform of what had begun as a Charity School, became something of a status symbol. Other developments in school uniforms were moving in a freer direction. The rise of organised games was part of the development of public schools, and these demanded freer-style uniforms, which were to develop into sports clothes. Girls benefited also from the efforts of the new-style head-mistresses of the newly founded girls colleges, and the promotion of gymnastics and games for girls. Some of the early sports outfits for schoolgirls derived from boys school blouses, shirts and ties, worn with skirts. Madame Bergman Osterberg, the Swedish head of Dartford College of Physical Training, introduced a gym tunic in 1885. This garment became the most famous of all girls uniforms, being adopted first for sports wear and later as a general uniform in almost every girls school from America to Russia in the early 20th Century. Throughout the 1930's and '40s it was viewed with ever-increasing loathing by young ladies, who admired the fitted fashions of their day, and who could not appreciate its earlier innovative virtues. It was generally abandoned in the 1960's in favour of less figure-cloaking versions.



THE "CENTURY OF THE CHILD"

The 20th Century, which is often referred to as the Century of the Child, got off to a slow start as regards advances in children's wear. The shorts worn by small boys became general for older ones too, and knees were left bare for the first time. American influences strengthened with the Buster Brown suit, which featured wide knee-length pants and double breasted hip-length jacket.

In 1908 Paul Poiret introduced in Paris a straight up-and-down line, which followed the natural female figure and put an end to the heavily-boned corsets, which had created artificial shaping for centuries. His new way of thinking affected small girls also. The Liberty bodice, of soft stockinette, kept in shape by bands of tape, replaced earlier stays and their dresses with hip-line waists and above the knee skirts anticipated 20's styles and were the first move of fashion towards the young adult.

13.



Simple coat of 1919.



The trauma of World War I put an end to frilly knickers and starched petticoats. Little girls now wore bloomer style knickers to the knee under simple shorter dresses of school uniform style.

The "Flapper" now made her appearance, a young girl of about 15-18 years old. She wore skirts just a little shorter than mother's, and a large taffeta bow tied back her long hair or plaits. The flapper lasted until shortly after the war, and was the first exponent of the teenage fashions of a generation later.

The custom of describing children as "kids" became general in America about the same time. "Romper" developed from the habit of tucking baby girls dresses into their knickers to give them freedom to crawl.

The War brought a simplicity to children's clothes, which remained afterwards. Hats and bonnets were abandoned. Girls wore simple yoked dresses during the 20's and 30's and woollen jerseys, shorts and knee socks were worn by boys. Ankle-length socks were an innovation for summer wear. By the mid 30's, tennis playing ladies had adopted them, another example of children's clothing being adopted by adults.

The huge social upheaval of the war greatly changed the attitude of parents to the young. It was an age of child psychology and a vogue for schools, which rejected the traditional regimentation and disciplines. New concepts of education were put into practice, aimed at encouraging self-expression and allowing scope for individuality.

The idea of sun-bathing began in California in the 1920's and soon Americans were bringing it to the Riviera, attired in American inspired "play-clothes", a quite new fashion scene. Women wore playsuits rather like children's rompers, while men adopted small boys' shorts. Soon women and girls were wearing them also. This sun cult effected the final release



of children from the covered-up look. By the 1930's they were wearing minimal sea-side and hot weather clothes, and brown skin became desirable. Increasing transport systems brought out-door activities within reach of the masses. It might almost be said that adults were behaving like children instead of vice versa.

The jeans and bright shirts were originally the dress of American slaves, and became fashionable with the craze for jazz, which started among the negro population. The return of colour to male clothes derives from the adoption by young people from the 30's onwards of these negro styles. Jean material originated in Genoa and was used for working clothes from the 18th Century. It was also used by cowboys and popularised by Western films. Denims and corduroys are materials also originating in use for working clothes. All became popular in the 30's and are still high fashion for young people to-day.

The long reign of Royal children as fashion leaders entered its final phase in the 1930's, when the small daughters of King George VI of England wore clothes just like other small girls. Royal dress bowed out as a model for other children. Children were now allowed to be children, including little princesses.

The cult of the child found expression in the 30's in a mass adulation of the child film star Shirley Temple. Mothers all over the world modelled their children's hairstyles and clothes on her famous "curly-top" and short colourful dresses. Her clothes were copied and mass-manufactured world-wide. A red and white polka-dot dress became a mass fashion, the first ever to be created by a child for children. No other child performer has ever had as much impact



or had any effect on children's clothes. The notice she achieved must have been connected with the way people were regarding their own children.

14



Shirley Temple.

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 and the subsequent evacuation of thousands of children in England was a shattering experience, which swept away their whole background overnight. Clothes rationing and strict control of design were introduced to save cloth. Utility schemes benefited children in the end by encouraging simplicity.

In America cast-off clothing was collected and shipped to Britain. It was responsible for the re-introduction of long trousers for small boys, the padded snow suit, and many colourful jackets. Children loved them. They were the start of the post-war revolution in children's clothes and the rise of "casual" wear in Europe. A pre-teenage group of children in America



became known as "bobby-soxers", on account of the ankle socks they wore, while teenagers affected a more sophisticated style based on adult dress.

15.



Snow Suit.

By the 1950's the post-war rise in the birth rate was making itself felt in America. Children were an important market for the clothes trade, numerically as well as in the attention being given to them. "Teenagers" were an American invention and their English equivalent was the "Teddy Boy", a teenage working class East Londoner, who adopted an exaggerated Edwardian style of dress, including a long loose jacket, "drain-pipe" tight trousers and "winkle-pickers" pointed shoes. His was the first fashion to



make its start among the lower classes, and which broke the link between fashion and social aspirations. The Teddy Boy cult had disappeared by the end of the 50's, but he had an influence greater than his limited numbers might suggest. Nik Cohn writing in 1971 says "In terms of English teenagers, Teddy Boys were the start of --- a whole concept of a private teen life style, separate from the adult world --- due to the fact that for the first time the young had money!". The permissive society, indulging the young was on its way, and changed adult attitudes had been the start of it.

16.



Small boys of 1952.

The dress of younger children, being economically dependent on their parents, moved more slowly and was more affected by adult tastes. Conventional designs died hard, but die they did by the 60's. The greatest impetus behind the developments in children's fashions in the 1970's came from mass production, large scale advertising and promotion, with the new purpose of catching the child's eye, not that of its parents.



Leading the way in this are mass-market firms such as Ladybird and Marks & Spencers. In general, hard wearing clothes for children are best sellers, but fashion is becoming increasingly important, and fashion means rapid and frequent changes and variations, mainly from the eight-to-ten year olds upwards.

17.



Dressing up and dressing down for play in the 70's.



## SECTION II

It is a well-known fact that the world is a very large place and that there are many different kinds of people living in it. Some of these people are very different from each other in their ways of thinking and in their ways of living. Some of them are very rich and some of them are very poor. Some of them are very smart and some of them are very stupid. Some of them are very kind and some of them are very cruel. Some of them are very honest and some of them are very dishonest. Some of them are very brave and some of them are very cowardly. Some of them are very strong and some of them are very weak. Some of them are very beautiful and some of them are very ugly. Some of them are very young and some of them are very old. Some of them are very healthy and some of them are very sick. Some of them are very happy and some of them are very sad. Some of them are very good and some of them are very bad. Some of them are very kind and some of them are very cruel. Some of them are very honest and some of them are very dishonest. Some of them are very brave and some of them are very cowardly. Some of them are very strong and some of them are very weak. Some of them are very beautiful and some of them are very ugly. Some of them are very young and some of them are very old. Some of them are very healthy and some of them are very sick. Some of them are very happy and some of them are very sad. Some of them are very good and some of them are very bad.

According to the old Chinese philosophers, the world is a very large place and that there are many different kinds of people living in it. Some of these people are very different from each other in their ways of thinking and in their ways of living. Some of them are very rich and some of them are very poor. Some of them are very smart and some of them are very stupid. Some of them are very kind and some of them are very cruel. Some of them are very honest and some of them are very dishonest. Some of them are very brave and some of them are very cowardly. Some of them are very strong and some of them are very weak. Some of them are very beautiful and some of them are very ugly. Some of them are very young and some of them are very old. Some of them are very healthy and some of them are very sick. Some of them are very happy and some of them are very sad. Some of them are very good and some of them are very bad. Some of them are very kind and some of them are very cruel. Some of them are very honest and some of them are very dishonest. Some of them are very brave and some of them are very cowardly. Some of them are very strong and some of them are very weak. Some of them are very beautiful and some of them are very ugly. Some of them are very young and some of them are very old. Some of them are very healthy and some of them are very sick. Some of them are very happy and some of them are very sad. Some of them are very good and some of them are very bad.



## CHILDREN PLAYING



Why do children play and what does it really mean to them? One can easily dismiss it in the way many adults do, as at best rather a waste of valuable time, at worst a messy, destructive, non-productive pastime. Yet play experiences are vital to all children for it is through play they learn to come to terms with their own conflicts, inner terrors, stresses and rages, finding permissible creative and acceptable outlets for their primary impulses.

According to the Policies Commission, National Education Association 1966, "Research shows clearly that the first four or five years of a child's life is the period of most rapid growth in physical and mental characteristics and greatest susceptibility to environmental influence. Consequently it is in the early years that deprivations are most disastrous in their effects ..... Experience indicates that exposure to a wide variety of activities and of social and mental inter-reactions with children and adults greatly enhances a child's ability to learn. Few homes provide enough of these opportunities. The



need is for a complement, not an alternative to family life, but the need is compelling".

18.



Adventure.

The Department of Health and Welfare, Social Security Administration 1949, tells us "play is the very stuff of which a child's life is made, it uses every ounce of his energy, it encourages his imagination, it develops skills of both body and mind, it brings about understanding and sympathy, it offers healing for hurts and sadness, it breaks down tensions and releases pent-up urges towards self expression. Play is the working partner for growth, for activity is as vital to growth as food and sleep". Yet society has been slow to recognise its value. This is perhaps because play appears to the adult to have no end results which are seen as materially useful and productive. As Erikson 1940



puts it "it does not produce commodities, therefore it is not really valued."

The very essence of play is that it is an end result in itself; there is no compulsion about it, it can be taken up or laid aside at will, for it is its own final justification.

Fanning 1967 tells us that in a study of families of Servicemen in Germany in 1967, it was found that the incidence of psychoneurotic disorders was nearly three times higher in those living in flats; the higher the home the higher the incidence occurring. In these homes children under 19 had a higher sickness rate especially respiratory disorders, possibly due to lack of fresh air. On the other hand, the young children who were living in houses formed a link between the mothers by bringing them together when their children played in gregarious bands around the thresholds. He sums up by saying that "the pattern of social withdrawal and confinement to the dwelling of young mothers and children is one which invites chronic ill-health and is against all the tenets of good hygiene".

In a similar survey in Sweden (Sandels 1968) of 2000 mothers interviewed, 98% said they would rather have a safe supervised playground than a car park or any other amenity that they could think of, - "there is no evidence that planners take this into account".

Arnold Jesell believes "children reveal themselves most transparently in their play-life. They play not from outer compulsion but from inner necessity".

Children not only discover themselves in their play, they begin to understand the behaviours of people and things. They are curious and inquiring, they want to be independant and skilful, able to manage the environment in which they find themselves, so that they can feel confident and secure. They find it difficult



to tell us their needs and anxieties in words, and Erikson 1940 suggests "play offers them direct non-verbal modes of explaining themselves."

The BBC 1975 reminds us that when a child does resort to speech one must not forget that feelings and experiences are very complex and difficult to articulate, and cannot be based on adult concepts of schemes of communication. Speech does not necessarily mean the same thing to the child as it does to the adult.



Imagination.

If children are going to have a rich play-life, we, as adults, must provide the space and the materials. Many children now-a-days are cut off from the natural world of living and growing things, surrounded by the concrete jungle of high-rise flats, there is little space for the play they need so badly, while traffic filled streets and harassed mothers add to their problems.



From a child's point of view I think Einstein put it very well:

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious; it is the source of all true art and science".

#### PLAY MATERIALS

In what way do children use the materials made available for them and what do these materials signify?

The world is a hard and difficult place to grow up in and some play materials seem to offer children particularly satisfying outlets for their impulses, of love and hate, destruction and aggression. A child needs to be able to mess and destroy without feeling wicked and guilty, to learn that feelings can be safely expressed and redirected into creative and constructive channels when so desired.

20.



Outdoor Sand Pit.



All the primitive play materials, the earthy things, sand, water, clay, dough, paint, things to build with, are vitally important. They have, for example, as Harlly, Frank & Goldsen point out, "strong emotional links with a child's early toilet training. Most children in the pre-school age range have not yet completed the adjustment tasks set by society in relation to the control of the bodily process. Clay and water in particular provide opportunities to satisfy in substitute fashion legitimate needs, which our child-rearing practices usually frustrate".



Play with water.

Water is one of the joys of childhood, its endless possibilities for play should be fully exploited, - water for most children is for running, splashing, jumping and riding bicycles through.



Boys build bridges and stepping stones over it, sail model boats on it and build rafts to carry themselves on it. Girls generally bathe dolls, wash up after games of tea-sets and house, make bubbles and mud pies, paddle a little more gently than the boys, but the observation must be made - as a child I loved rafts and at present I know a little boy who loves washing dolls as well as helping to wash his little sister. The BBC 1975 bear this out when they say "water can be soothing and restful, offering all manner of sensory and intellectual experiences".

Clay and dough can be used both aggressively and creatively, both have a satisfying feel, particularly clay. It can be worked in anger and love, in quiet concentration or lively talk.

Paint in all its forms often acts as a bridge between the world of fantasy and reality and feelings find release in forms that words (even if children had them) could never achieve.

22



Earth - City children taking advantage of a rare opportunity to play with earth.





PAINT - Creating a secret world.



Building materials, sand, big boxes, planks, trestles, bricks and earth have an explosive quality, -"let's knock it all down!" is a common phrase heard when children are playing. They use a lot of energy; they feel strong and powerful, as they move and manipulate; they can build a boat, a house, a garage and then destroy it.

Allen 1968 discovered that the most popular movable raw materials for creative and imaginative outdoor play were milk crates, large timber cubes, one foot to each side, 2" thick timbers up to 12" by 5' sheets of chipboard, 50 gallon barrels and many other kinds of robust junk. Bricks were used for building, but got broken from being thrown around. Great interest was shown in more fragile materials, such as thin slivers of wood, cardboard boxes, old domestic items, such as clocks, T.V. sets and pram wheels. She observed the children acting out large chunks of every day adult experiences e.g., they constructed a 'milk truck' with milk crates, a 'pepsi cart' with an old loading pallet, with details such as 'headlamps', 'wheels' and 'seats'. Then for a long time they 'drove' their delivery vehicles, chatted to 'store-keepers' and 'housewives' and negotiated 'hazards' on the 'highway.' While this was taking place, the very young stayed closer to the playhouse and spent up to one hour absorbed in making mud pies, using sand and water, saw dust as currants with soap powder as frosting. This was a perfect example of how a manipulative environment can be used for many varieties of imaginative play. "Nothing ever becomes real 'till it is experienced" Keats.

#### Dramatic & Imaginative Play

It is probably misleading to even suggest that imaginative play with all its drama is isolated from other types of activity. This, of course, is certainly not so. There is plenty of drama observable



when a child bangs his clay fiercely or fills his paper with colour. Here, however, in imaginative play we are provided with a mirror that reflects other aspects of a child's personality, perhaps he is showing us, the adult, how he sees the world, as warm and loving, confusing and chaotic or menacing and fearful.

Different roles are taken over by children in their imaginative play and by imitating what they see happening around them they are able to control it. They can act out their fears of doctors and nurses, funerals, accidents, angry parents and frightening animals. Through identification the boundaries between reality and fantasy become clearer and more understandable. They play out real life situations and compensate themselves for sorrow and losses. Noble.....makes the observation "childrens fantasy play in different situations can be observed but not always understood".

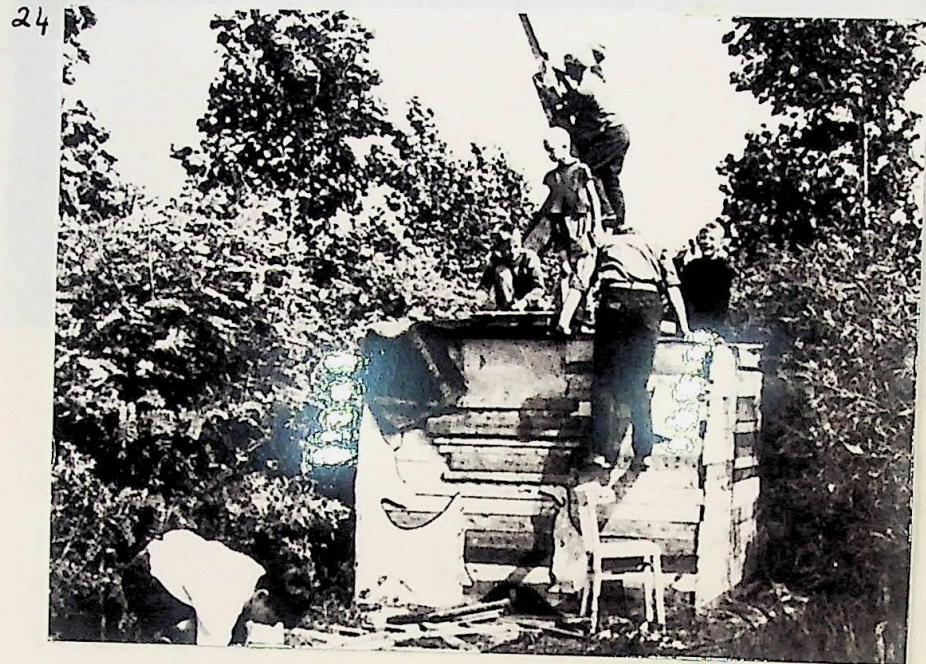
Shaw 1944 wrote on children who had lost, temporarily or permanently the security of normal home life, especially those in hospital - "all children should be tirelessly noisy, playful and grubby handed except at mealtimes, soiling and tearing such clothes as they need to wear, bringing not only the joy of childhood into the house, but the dust and mud as well; in short everything that makes the quiet and order of sickness and nursing impossible".

Noble..... while looking at play by children in hospital gave the children a toy model of a hospital ward to see how they reacted, feeling it might help them work through some fears and guilts being generated. She asks "why did so many of the children pile up the toy lockers, make the doctors stand on top and push them off? Why did they bend the adult dolls into grotesque shapes? Why did they line up the adult dolls head to toe after some very aggressive behaviour with them? Why did they play in a completely chaotic way with no observable themes or completely withdraw from the materials?" Maybe indeed, they were trying to say something!



## MOVING AND GROWING

Although physical movement is often one that is sadly neglected and overlooked, because it is difficult to satisfy, when play areas are restricted, homes are small and play areas are at a premium. Young children are noisy and energetic, they need to shout, to run until they are out of breath, to swing, to climb, to jump, to crawl, to discover what they can do and the limits they can go to.



A den made from large pieces of timber & found objects.

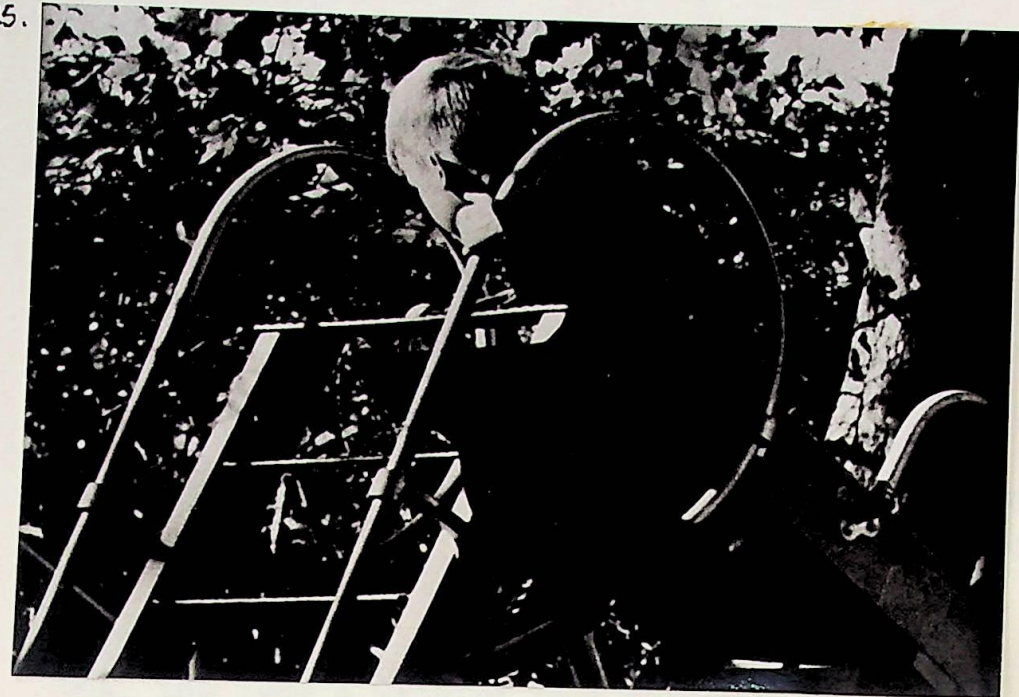
Allen 1968 tells us "children of all ages, all over the world are happiest when they can move things about to their own liking, they have an irresistible urge to build houses and dens, dig holes, make gardens, look after pets, build bonfires and cook meals outdoors. These are all delightfully messy occupations, but we must remember children enjoy making their own order out of chaos. Children don't mind being dirty and untidy - most adults hate it".

Life in cities is so restricted, provision needs to be made for young children's activities in all sorts of interesting and exciting ways, with the space and equipment experience has thought us they should have, where they can be as safe as humanly possible, adventurous and inventive, challenged and stimulated participants



rather than bored passive observers.

25.



Did the designer of this slide foresee this?

I think it is important to note Allen (1968) discovered less accidents happen in an adventure playground than an asphalt playground with fixed equipment, which is supposed to be safe. This is probably because in the more old fashioned playgrounds children can become bored more easily with a piece of equipment, which never moves, especially if the place is crowded and he has to wait his turn. Out of boredom he will climb up a slide from the wrong end, or try to grab a moving swing to insist on his turn.

26.



Swing, the site of many a playground accident.



Children can learn how to handle dangers, but on an unpredictable moving piece of equipment, the child takes much longer to anticipate the coming dangers. On static equipment they set their own standards of, for instance, how high they climb and with that they can cope more easily.

#### LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Children want to learn and the adult must provide a challenging and stimulating environment in which optimum learning can take place. Great care must be taken, as sometimes structures disguised as play equipment can be unimaginative, uninspiring and adult-orientated, - they can sometimes hinder development rather than encourage it.

Many parents have observed their child, at some stage or other, playing with a large cardboard box, the type a washing machine might arrive in. A parent made a comment to me in a joking way on how his child played with a cardboard box incessantly for as many days as it held together, - it was something he wore, crawled into, pushed, sat into and drove, it was somewhere to hide. In short it was the most universally adaptable plaything the child had ever had. But apart from thinking it a good story and a very funny joke on me, as a designer, the parent made no further use of his experience with his child and continued to buy inappropriate, often very expensive toys, which did not last as long or were never used with such enthusiasm as a toy the child discovered for himself. The point that parents often miss is that good toys, that is good in the sense that the child can derive pleasure from self-instruction in the use of them, are not always found in toy stores. Unfortunately, most of the toys in a toy store are designed to look like something an adult 'thinks' his child would like.

Contact with basic materials, experiences of the natural world and the man-made one of shops, streets,



airports etc., enlarge a child's horizons, develop his speech and give him ideas for play. We can provide all sorts of equipment, but we must not inhibit the child's inventive imagination by over elaboration or by providing too much.

27



Animals can bring out gentle instincts if respect for them is instilled at an early age.

Many children these days live in homes, where it is forbidden or impossible to keep animals, - close intimate contact with nature is possible<sup>y</sup> the greatest loss suffered by town children. Rough lands with scrubby undergrowth<sup>h</sup>, wild flowers and worms, butterflies and hedge hogs are an incentive to play and learning. They encourage laughter, discovery, surprise and curiosity. Allen 1968 found the collecting of moths and caterpillars a constant source of fun, the finding of the correct food, the feeding of the insects, and when the time comes to set the butterflies free is tremendously exciting for all.





Gardening, hours of healthy fun.

Allen believes a garden gives a child a continuous constructive interest from the age of 5-12, they have an instinctive desire to grow something, be it food, flowers or pets. The discipline of the seasons, the weather, the type of soil and its feeding are very valuable in showing children that they must obey certain rules in order to get results, and results are what they want. Young children observed in Park Hill Adventure Playground in London by Allen immediately staked out individual claims on the rough ground allotted to them. The young children especially wanted gardens of their own. What the child grew in the garden was his own affair, and advice was given, when asked for, but the children learned as much by their mistakes as by their successes. They favoured bulbs, Sunflowers and Romantics, such as Cosmos, Love-in-the Mist and Gypsophila, delicate flowers with vague misty foliage, Virginia Stock was also popular.





The forming of social relationships, happy and secure in imitation of adult life.

Another very important factor of children's play is the making of social relationships. One can see in young children's play together the desire for power and possession and feelings of rivalry, inferiority and superiority. Yet, on the whole, in a happy secure and warm and protective setting, children's quarrels are shortlived and can generally be left to settle themselves, as children discover the wishes, demands and needs of others.



Play, as Susan Isaacs 1933 points out " is supremely the activity which brings a child psychic equilibrium in the early years in play activities, he externalises and works out in some measure of harmony the different trends of his internal psychic life".

Arron....."Play is a child's work and it's purpose is to develop his knowledge and skills for living".

"Curiosity, wonderment, the unknown and the unfamiliar exploration of new places, all these are part of that mystery we call childhood".



### SECTION III

1. What are the main reasons for the child's behavior?
2. How does the child's behavior affect the family?
3. How does the child's behavior affect the child's school life?
4. How does the child's behavior affect the child's social life?
5. How does the child's behavior affect the child's self-esteem?
6. How does the child's behavior affect the child's future?
7. Do you think your child's behavior is a result of the family environment?
8. Do you think your child's behavior is a result of the school environment?
9. Do you think your child's behavior is a result of the social environment?
10. Do you think your child's behavior is a result of the child's own personality?
11. If so, can you say why he likes this behavior?
12. How often would his clothes go through the washing cycle?
13. Do you come across any particular problems when washing his clothes? e.g. when ironing, drying, etc.
14. Is it difficult to get clothes for a particular occasion? e.g. school, sports, etc.
15. How often do you wash his clothes?
16. How often do you wash his clothes?
17. Can you think of any reason why these clothes should be washed first?
18. Where does your child get his most favorite clothes?
19. Is there any reason why you should not wash his clothes?



## QUESTIONNAIRE

### CHILDREN'S PLAYWEAR (2 - 6 Years)

1. What age is your child?
2. Boy or Girl?
3. Can your child manage to tie/fasten his/her shoes yet?
4. Can your child manage to dress himself yet?
5. Are there any garments he finds particularly difficult to put on?
6. Are there any fastenings he finds particularly difficult -  
easy -
7. Do you find your child's school uniform practical?
8. Does your child have a favourite colour for his clothes?
9. Which colour do you prefer on your child?
10. Does your child have a favourite garment?
11. If so, can you say why he likes this one best?
12. How often would his clothes go through the washing cycle?
13. Do you come across any particular problems when washing his clothes? e.g. when ironing, drying, etc.
14. Is it difficult to get clothes for an particular weather e.g.  
heat -  
cold -  
wet -
15. How would you usually dress your child when playing outdoors in  
a. Summer  
b. Winter
16. In what places does wear begin to show first?
17. Can you think of any reason why these places should wear first?
18. Where does your child get the most bumps and grazes?
19. Is there any game or pastime in which your child hurts himself more than others?



20. Is there any game or pastime in which your child gets particularly dirty?
21. What places? -
22. What were the last 3 garments you bought for your child?
23. Is there any type of clothing you would like to see available in Ireland but cannot get here yet?
24. Which garment do you have to replace most often?
25. Would you be interested in purchasing clothes especially designed to protect your child against -
- scratches & bumps -
  - wear -
  - water -
  - fire -

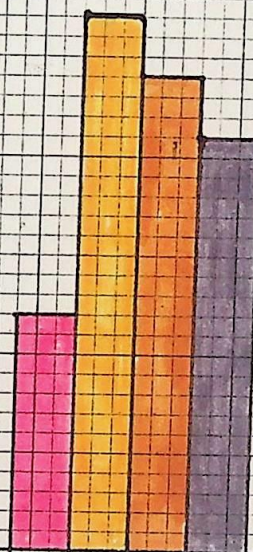
With easy fastenings for small hands -



Q1. WHAT AGE IS YOUR CHILD

OVER SIX  
OVER FIVE  
OVER FOUR  
OVER THREE

YEARS OLD



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q2 Boy or girl

Boy

girl

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q3. CAN YOUR CHILD MANAGE TO TIE/FASTEN HIS SHOES YET?

AGE OF CHILDREN WITH NO FOR AN ANSWER

AGE 3 = 3 CHILDREN

AGE 4 = 3 CHILDREN

AGE 5 = 3 CHILDREN

NO

YES



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q4 CAN YOUR CHILD MANAGE TO DRESS HIMSELF YET.

PARTIALLY  
NO  
YES

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

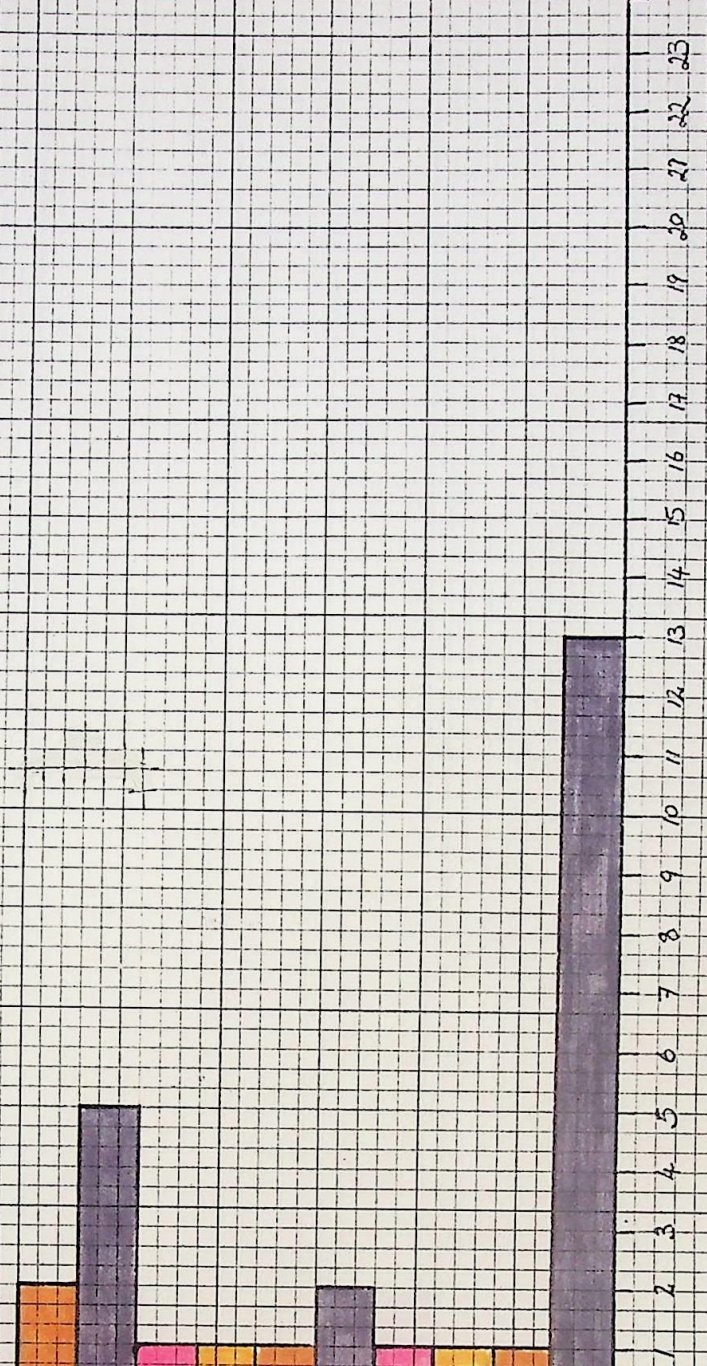
NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q5 ARE THERE ANY GARMENTS YOUR CHILD FINDS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TO PUT ON

JUMPER IN COMBINATION = 7

JUMPER WITH NO NECK OPENING  
 JUMPER  
 SKIRT WITH STRAPS  
 ZIP AT BACK  
 TROUSERS  
 BLOUSE  
 SOCKS  
 ALL  
 UNSPECIFIED  
 No





Q 6. ARE THERE ANY FASTENINGS YOUR CHILD FINDS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT

IN COMBINATIONS

BUTTONS 10

LACES 4

BOWS 4

AT BACK 3

NO ANSWER.

BOW

BOW AND LACES

LACES

RIBBONS BOW AND LACES

ALL FASTENINGS

BRACES

POP FASTENERS

ZIP AT BACK

BUTTONS AT BACK

BUTTONS ON BLOUSE

BUTTONS

YES

23

22

21

20

19

18

17

16

15

14

13

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q6. ARE THERE ANY FASTENINGS YOUR CHILD FINDS PARTICULARLY EASY

IN COMBINATION:  
 BUTTONS 5  
 BUCKLES 2  
 POP FASTENERS 2

YES  
 NO ANSWER  
 UNSPECIFIED  
 POP FASTENERS + BUCKLES  
 BUCKLES + BUTTONS  
 POP FASTENERS + BUTTONS  
 BUTTONS  
 ZIP

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q1. DO YOU FIND YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL UNIFORM PRACTICAL?

NO ANSWER

NO UNIFORM

YES

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q8. DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE A FAVOURITE COLOUR FOR HIS CLOTHES

IN COMBINATION

RED 6  
YELLOW 2  
BLUE 2



YES

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q9 WHICH COLOUR DO YOU PREFER ON YOUR CHILD

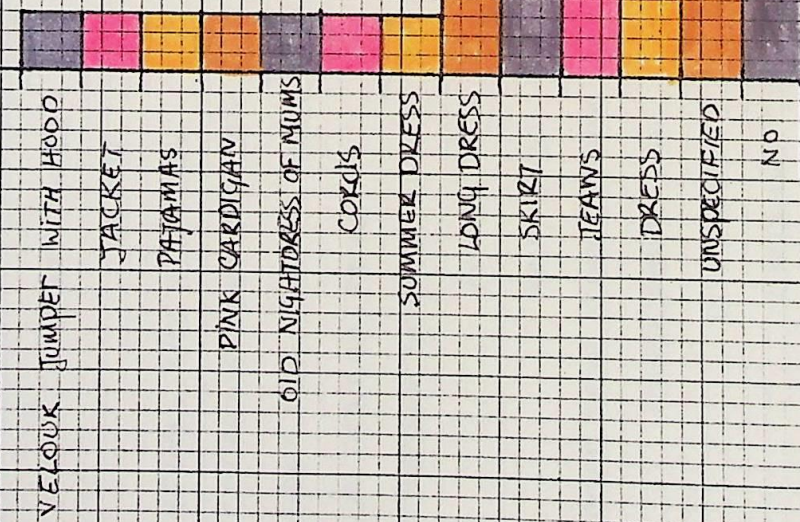
GREEN + BROWN  
 WHITE + YELLOW  
 BROWN + YELLOW  
 WHITE  
 STRONG COLOURS  
 PINK  
 BROWN  
 RED  
 YELLOW  
 NAVY  
 BLUE  
 NO PREFERENCE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



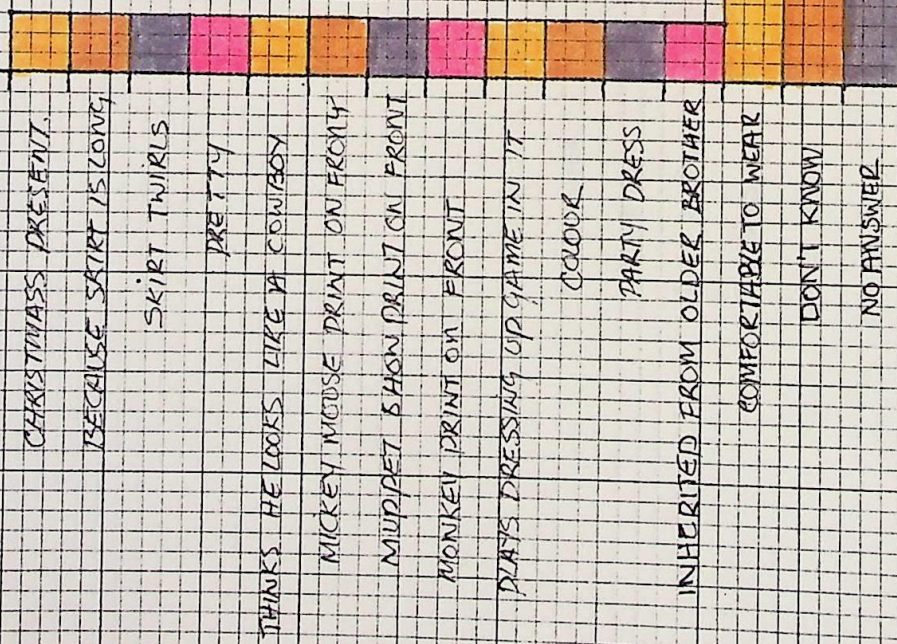
Q10 DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE A FAVOURITE GARMENT.



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



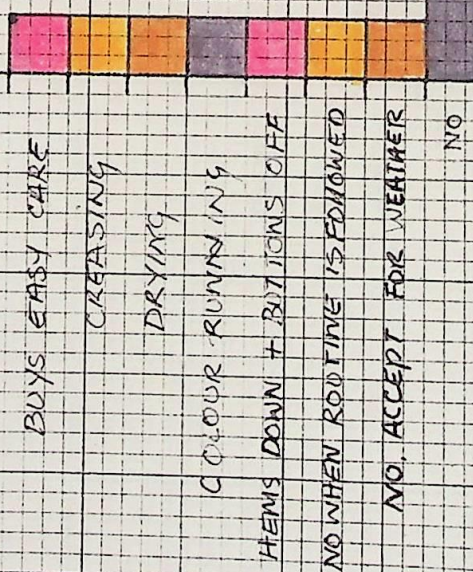
Q11. CAN YOU SAY WHY YOUR CHILD LIKES THIS PARTICULAR GARMENT BEST?



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q 13 DO YOU COME ACROSS ANY PARTICULAR PROBLEMS WHEN WASHING?



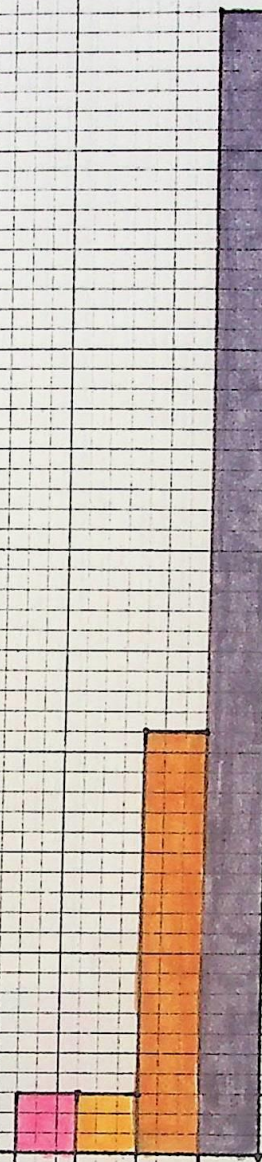


Q14 Is it difficult to get clothes for any particular weather?

COLD  
HEAT  
WET  
No

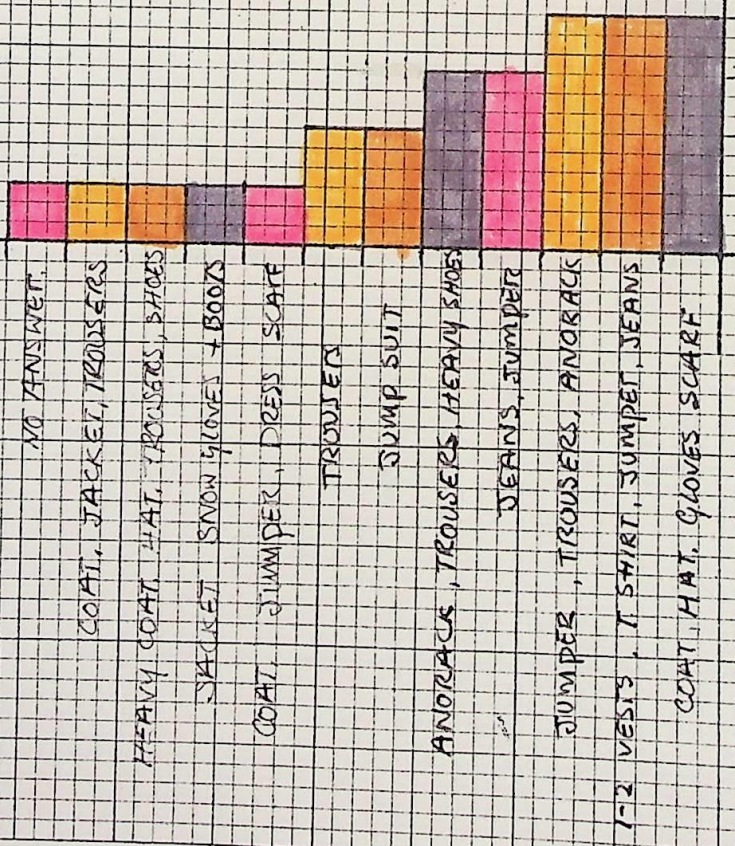
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN





Q15. HOW WOULD YOU USUALLY DRESS YOUR CHILD IN WINTER



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q15 How would you usually dress your child in summer

NO ANSWER

VEST, T-SHIRT + PANTS

DRESS + SANDIES

LIGHT CLOTHES

LIGHT DRESS

T-SHIRT + PANTS OR SHOROS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q16 IN WHAT PLACES DOES WEAR BEGIN TO SHOW FIRST.

IN COMBINATION

KNEES 16

COFFS 4

KNEES + ELBOWS

NO ANSWER

CHILD GROWS OUT OF CLOTHES

CHILD EASY ON CLOTHES

SHOES

SLEEVE + COFFS

COFFS + COLLARS

COFFS + TROUSERS

COFFS

ELBOWS

JUMPERS

KNEES + SEAT

KNEES + TOES

KNEE

1

2

3

4

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6

7

8

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21

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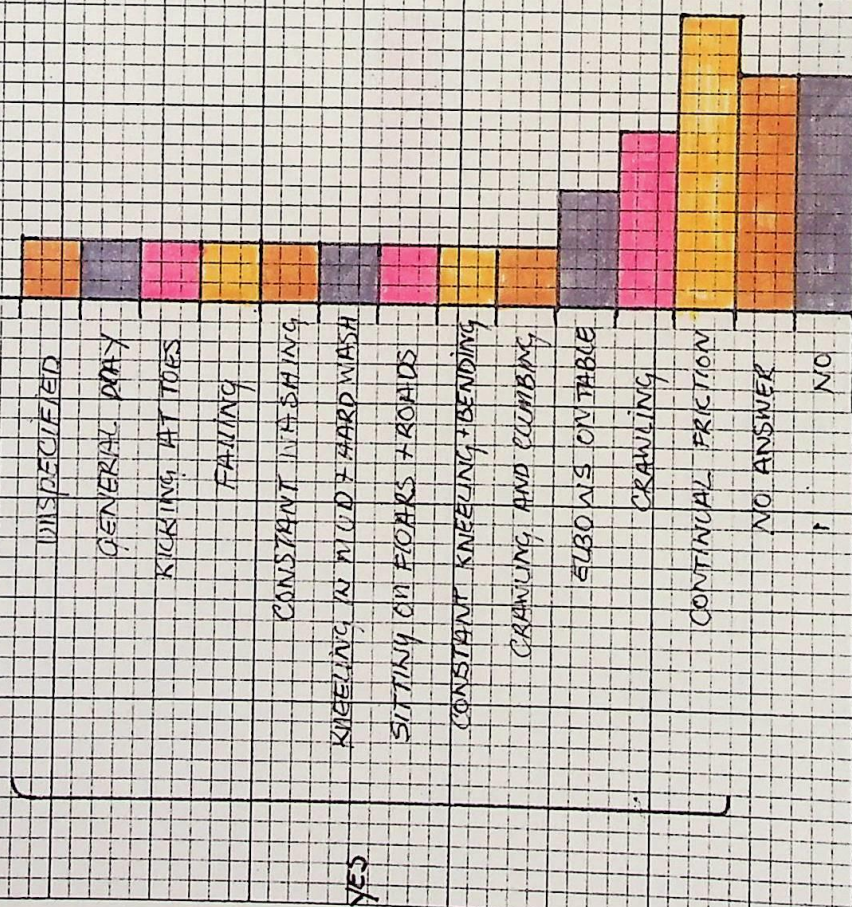
23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q17. CAN YOU THINK OF ANY REASON WHY THIS PLACE SHOULD WEAR FIRST?

IN COMBINATION  
HARD WASH 21



YES  
72

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q18 WHERE DOES YOUR CHILD GET THE MOST BUMPS AND GRAZES?

IN COMBINATION:

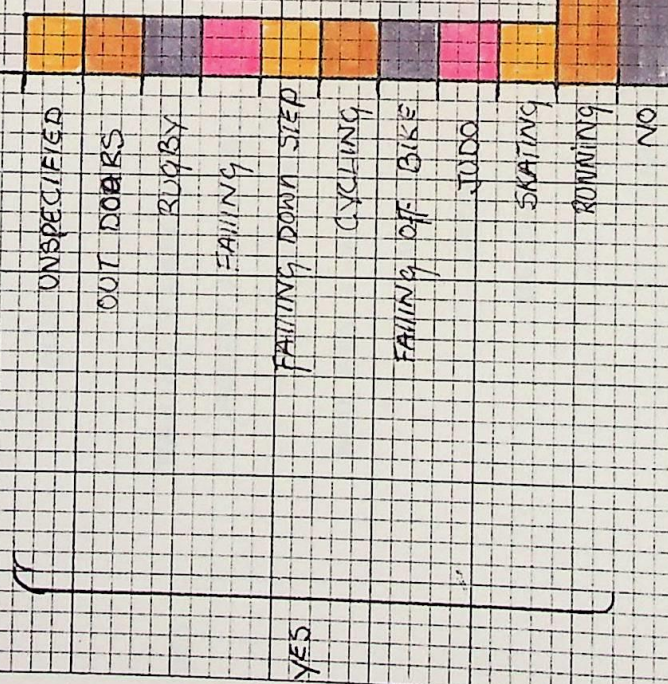
KNEES 20  
CHIN 2  
HANDS 4



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q 9 IS THERE ANY GAME OR PASTIME IN WHICH YOUR CHILD HURTS HIMSELF  
MORE THAN OTHERS.



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q20 IS THERE ANY GAME OR PASTIME YOUR CHILD GETS PARTICULARLY DIRTY

MANV  
PAINTING  
BEACH  
OUTDOOR PLAY  
RUGBY  
BAKING + WASHING UP  
GARDEN + BAKING  
PUDDLES  
MUD PIES + LEAF SOUP  
MUD  
GARDEN  
UNSPECIFIC  
NO ANS  
NO

YES  
75

23  
22  
21  
20  
19  
18  
17  
16  
15  
14  
13  
12  
11  
10  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1

NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q21] WHAT IS YOUR CHILD'S FAVOURITE DRESSING UP GAME?

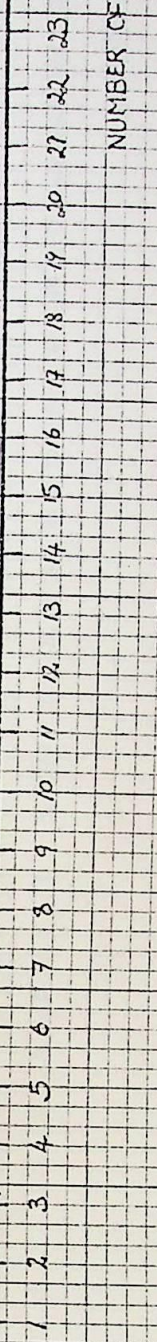


NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q22. WHAT ARE THE LAST 3 GARMENTS YOU BOUGHT FOR YOUR CHILD.

PYJAMAS  
 SKIRT  
 UNIFORM  
 GLOVES  
 CARDIGAN  
 TIGHTS  
 ANORAK  
 UNDERWEAR  
 SHOES/BOOTS  
 SOCKS  
 COAT  
 DRESS  
 PANTS  
 JUMPER





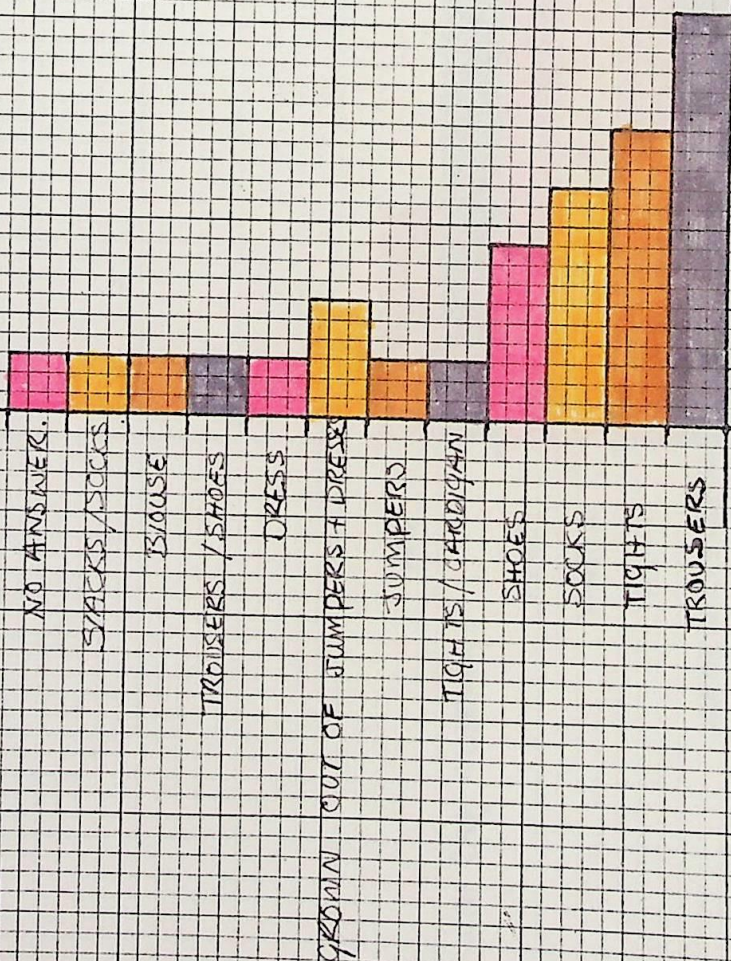
Q 23 IS THERE ANY TYPE OF CLOTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE AVAILABLE IN IRELAND, BUT CANNOT GET HERE?



NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q24 WHICH GARMENT DO YOU HAVE TO REPLACE MOST OFTEN?

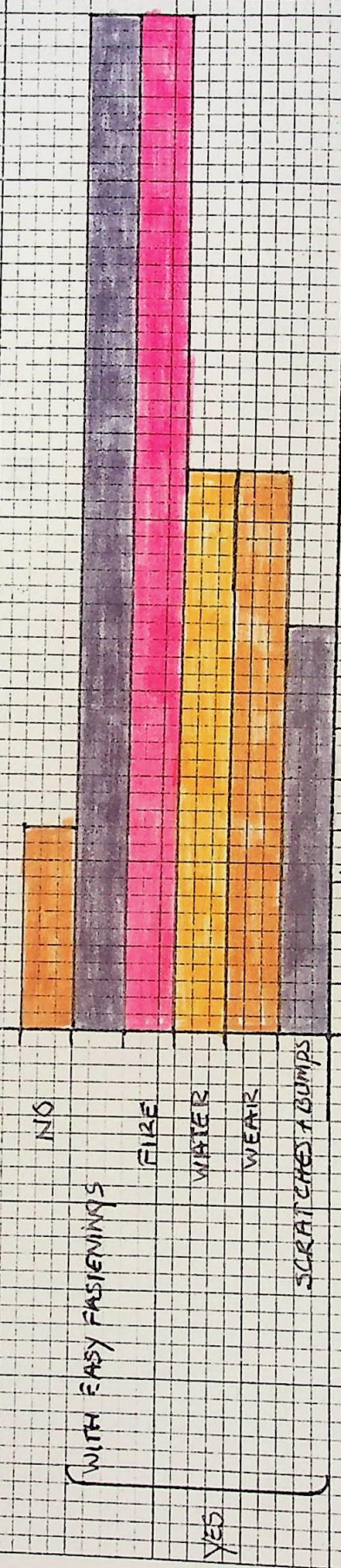


NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Q25 WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN BUYING CLOTHES ESPECIALLY  
DESIGNED TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD AGAINST ANY OF THESE...

80



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

NUMBER OF CHILDREN







PERSONAL COMMENT AND OPINION

I was surprised to see that three five year olds (Q.3) could not fasten their shoes. Is this because it is quicker for their mothers to do it for them or is it that they dote on dressing their child as they would a doll? I was interested to find that children find jumpers without neck fastenings difficult to put on. Are the neck openings knitted very tight or is it that manufacturers have not taken into account that many children just do not like anything tight over their heads?.

In Q.6, I got answers I expected for the 'difficult to tie'. At first glance one sees buttons and zips in both 'easy' and 'difficult' graphs, but the buttons and zips found 'difficult' are either small or at the back of the garment.

Q.7 - Again I was surprised at so many 'yes' answers. In observing the children playing in their school uniforms I did not think they were very practical for winter, - maybe the mothers did not want to criticise, as I was talking to them in the school, or maybe they don't realize what their children get up to in school.

Q.8 & 9 - Parents prefer blue/navy on their children, where as children like reds and brights. Of the parents who said their children had not got a favourite colour, I feel that maybe they just did not know if they had or not.

Children seem to have favourite garments for fun reasons, they seem to like garments in which they can pretend to be something else, and also very popular are those which have cartoons on the front. This again, is food for a child's imagination.

Q.15a & 15b & 22 - In winter children seem to be dressed fairly uniformly against the cold and it is in the summer that the dress for girls is important. Although there were more girls than boys surveyed, the overall impression is of fairly uniform dressing for young children, boy or girl.



30.



Knees take the most wear.

Q.16 - 18 & 24; Knees are definitely the areas, which take most wear and bumps. Q.22 shows that a lot of jumpers are bought for boys and girls. Not surprisingly Q.24 shows trousers as being replaced most often. Q.21 seems to prove the theory that childrens games reflect their immediate surroundings, from mothers at home to 'Wonder Woman' on T.V. I noticed that very few games of violence were played by the children in the sample.

Q.25 seems to show that mothers are not so concerned about normal bumps, scratches and wettings, but they are concerned about dangers such as fire. It is nice to see they are interested in easy openings for small hands.

Parents in general seem not to set great store by what their children wear so long as they are clean, comfortable, and warm and are not put in obvious danger, such as their clothes going up in a puff of smoke.



These are the types of garment I would like to see more readily available for children to-day. The fabric they are made from should be fire and shower proof. They can be made of a light fabric for summer and a heavier one - maybe fleece lined for winter, and perhaps with an anorak to match. In these garments the head is protected by the hat and the chin by the chin pieces on the tie. The tummy, bottom, knees and elbows are protected from wear by padding. These pads could be water-proof and in the case of the bib in Fig. 1 (which is changeable) it would be labour saving in young children, who still dribble and mess their food. In sizes for very young children, pop fasteners can be included to ease the changing of nappies (fig 11). There are big buttons, poppers and zips for small hands throughout. Fig. 1 has large pockets for the many bits and pieces inquisitive children gather during the day.



Fig 1

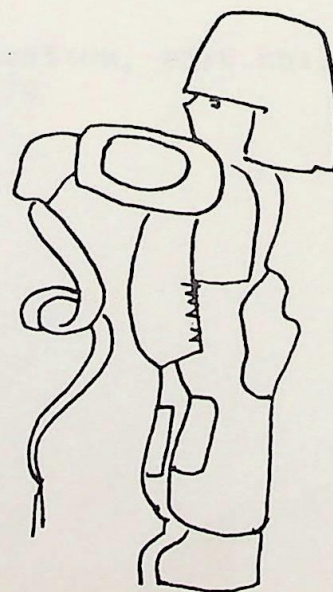
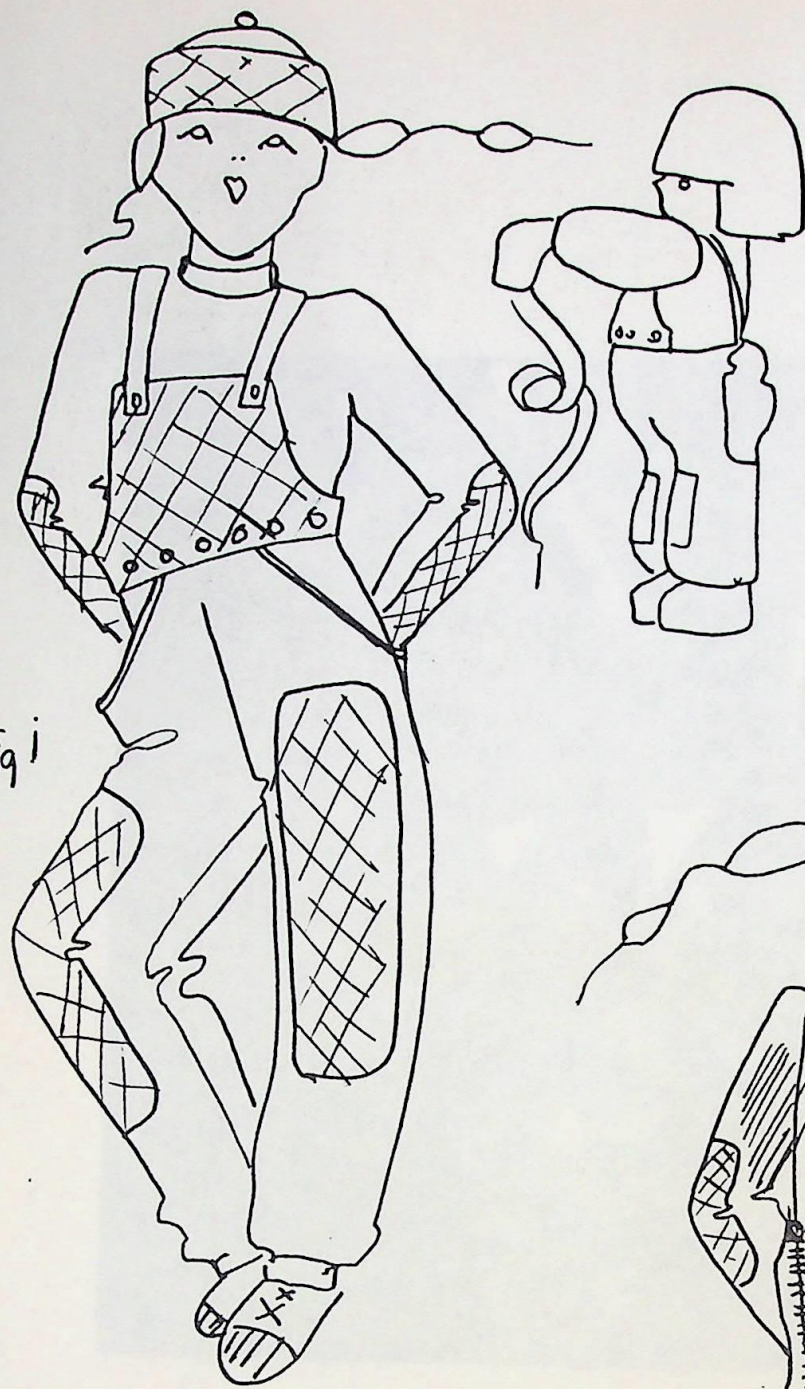
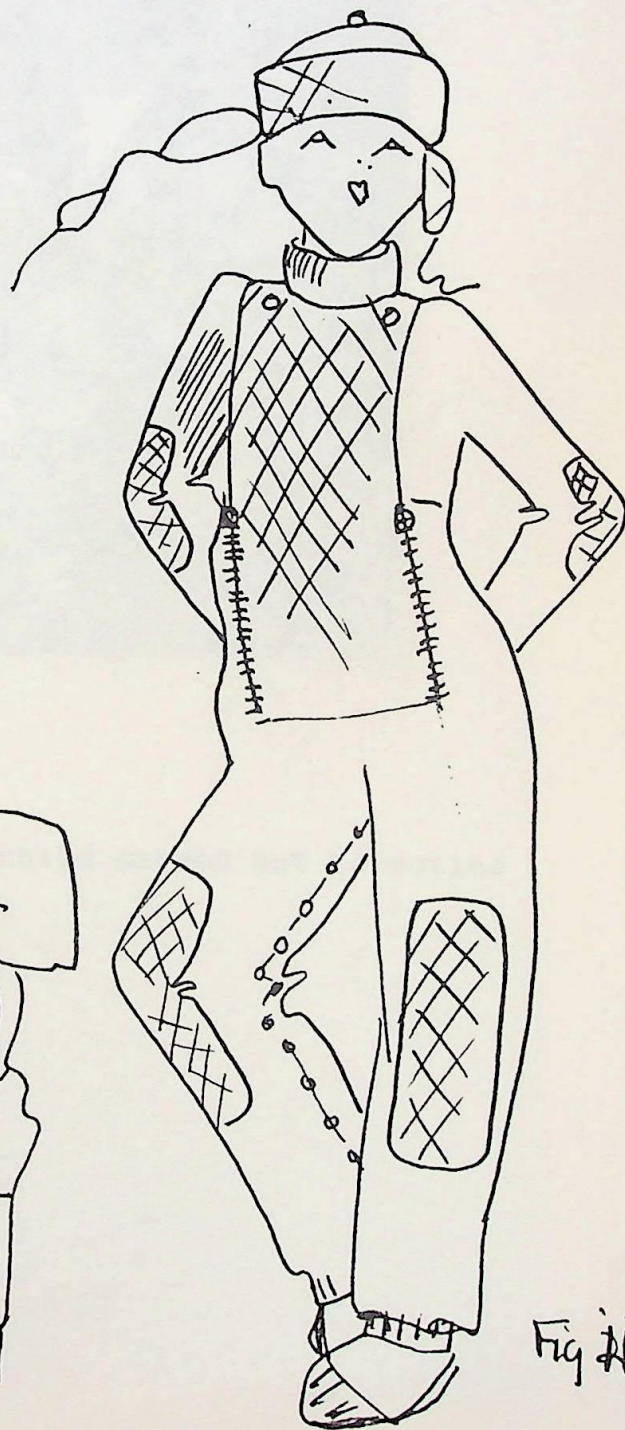


Fig 2





3/.



Deep in concentration, this child seemed not to notice the November cold.





This child found her coat and hat rather difficult to put on.







Very difficult to put on, impractical, protective clothing for a young child.





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