

Girls need and deserve encouragement, help as much as boys do

When boys are especially bright and do well in school, they usually get encouragement to go on to successful careers. Similarly, when they show special promise in non-academic skills like athletics or electronics, the adults around them often wonder if this will lead to an adult career.

In the past this has not been so true for girls. While this is changing today, many gifted girls who are skilled are not receiving the encouragement they need to make full use of their intellectual talents. This is a loss to them and their families and a loss to our whole country; we could use their talents.

Natural abilities are just as common in girls as in boys. Many parents, however, are less likely to encourage the skill or intellectual talents of their daughters. The girls themselves are also less likely than boys to express and nurture their own intellectual skills. Girls often

hide their abilities, to avoid appearing socially different. In sum, many girls have somehow learned that competence or intellectual recognition are for boys, not girls.

When girls are placed in special classes for gifted children, some researchers have found that the classes do not help the girls' achievement test scores very much. But the girls in these classes develop much higher career aspirations. For example, they are much more likely to want to become a medical researcher or doctor, rather than a nurse. Children with higher aspirations—with lofty goals for themselves—are more likely to work harder and attain success.

Parents play a crucial role in developing the special talents of their children, especially in the case of their daughters. Two general pieces of advice can be offered. First, fight against stereotypes and attitudes that limit women's poten-

tial. For example, point out your disapproval of incompetent "dumb blond" stereotypes on television and your admiration of truly competent women.

Second, find opportunities for your daughter to develop her abilities. If she has a special interest, find a program or lesson to develop that interest.

This is a common characteristic of both girls and boys who go on to national recognition in science, music and sports: Their parents recognized their interest and talent in a specific area when they were about eight to 12 years of age and managed to find special tutoring or other opportunities for them.

For example, if your daughter has a special interest in astronomy, you could subscribe to an astronomy magazine; buy an inexpensive telescope; drive her to dark hill-tops, if necessary for observations; take a community college astron-

omy course with her; find out if there are any adult astronomy hobbyists (amateur observers) in your area who she could learn from. You could nurture her in different ways if she showed interest in drawing, or insects, or photography or whatever. Your daughter has the interest and ability, but they will only develop if you make the effort to connect her with the wider world of stimulation and opportunity.

Don't wait for your child to be labeled "gifted" by the school psychologist. Remember that giftedness comes in many varieties. Look for the "small gifts" and unique enthusiasms that your child brings. Psychologist Barbara Kerr studies girls who went on to successful careers. She wrote about them in her book, "Smart Girls/Gifted Women" and offered the following advice to parents.

With school girls—
Dress her for activity, not for sitting on the sidelines.

Select day care and preschool settings that are non-sexist (that treat boys and girls as equally capable). Avoid sexist children's books, movies, etc.

Expand her sex-role models. Point out and challenge the limiting stereotype on TV.

With elementary girls—
Encourage her to read. Provide her with math puzzles, challenging games, a home computer, if possible.

Watch for signs of boredom with school. Talk with her teacher. She may need acceleration, or an individualized program.

With junior high girls—
Don't be surprised if she wants to be like "all the other girls". But continue to encourage her special talents and goals.

With high school girls—
Insist that she continue to take math and science courses, which usually become optional in high

school. These courses are required for many college programs.

Help her find good college information. Make sure the career guidance she receives is non-sexist.

Let your daughter know how

proud you are of her abilities. But also remember that your love should flow freely, not just when she has performed well. Praise her accomplishments, and love the whole person.

How to chop nuts

Use a plastic bag, fill with nuts and roll lightly with a rolling pin.

Use a few on-off bursts of power from an electric blender or food processor. (Do not overblend or you'll have nut butter.)

Use a metal chopper or wooden bowl set.

Spread walnuts on chopping board. Keep the tip of a French knife stationary against the board;

raise and lower the handle end, sweeping from side to side in an arc, until all the nuts are chopped. Yields:

For an easy way to measure nuts, use this list of approximate equivalents: 10-ounce bag equals 2½ cups. Four-ounce can equals one cup. One-pound bag, inshell, equals 2 cups shelled. One-pound bag shelled equals four cups nuts.

Plan holiday purchases

Holiday shopping doesn't have to be the first step toward a long winter of overdue department store bills and cutting corners to make up for overspending on gifts.

A realistic shopping strategy is the key to keeping spending in line with your resources. Ask yourself these questions:

- * Who do I want to remember with gifts?
- * What price range is appropriate and affordable?
- * How much, if any, savings can I use for holiday gifts?
- * How much of my current income can I afford to spend on gifts?
- * How much, if any, can I afford to buy on credit?

If these questions reveal that the amount of money available is less than you need to compete your gift buying, give the gift list a second look.

You may be able to find less costly alternatives to what you planned to give. You also may want to discuss budget limits with family members. If funds are tight this year, letting everyone know will prevent disappointments.

Not all gifts have to be purchased. Food and crafts are always appreciated. Gifts of service are especially thoughtful. Babysitting

coupons for young parents or window washing "gift certificates" for older friends often are welcome gifts. You may have gifts among the things you already own, special family heirlooms make memorable gifts.

Gift giving should be a joy for you as well as the receiver. Planning to make the cost of gifts fit within the limits of the family budget makes the holiday more pleasant.

Join 4-H! It can make life easier

Growing up isn't as easy as everyone thinks it is! Seems like you always have to try new things—take chances—maybe be a failure. And everyone wants you to be the best; your parents, friends, teachers. Want some help? Try 4-H!

You can learn to be the best you can be—and have a great time doing it! 4-H teaches you self-confidence—you'll meet people, have new experiences, learn new skills and ideas and you'll find that no matter what you try, you really can be your best!

Call your County Extension office today—get into 4-H!

Apples are a healthy food

Apples are a natural source of vitamins A, B1, B2, C, Niacin and the minerals iron, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, iodine and sodium.

They contain very little sodium and no cholesterol.

Dietary fiber and pectin (a fiber component) are found in apples. Some researchers believe fiber and pectin aid digestion and may also help limit the absorption of cholesterol in the body.

The average size apple contains only 80 calories of food energy. They are filling due to their high fiber and water content.

The apple is also a detergent

food, cleansing the teeth and exercising the gums.

Vitamins	
A	90 International units
B1	.03 milligrams
B2	.02 milligrams
Niacin	1 milligram
Ascorbic Acid	.4 milligrams

Minerals (Milligrams per 100 grams)	
Calcium	.7
Phosphorous	10
Iron	.3
Sodium	.1
Potassium	110

Houseplant care differs during the winter

It's time to winterize houseplant care practices.

Winter weather alters the indoor environment. For your houseplant's sake, adjust how you care for the plant accordingly.

Houseplants usually aren't too vigorous during the winter because

The "In" things

Remodeling magazines list the following features as the "in things" for today's home buyers:

- Kitchen islands instead of appliance walls.
- Counters with curves and round edges; no squares.
- Task lighting rather than single overhead fixtures.
- Clear glass shower doors.
- Mirrored bathroom walls.
- Earth-tone color schemes.

growing conditions indoors are poor.

Houseplants require less water during the winter. Let the potting soil dry slightly before watering with most plants. The soil should be moist after watering, not saturated. Let excess water drain out the bottom of the pot.

Do not leave drain water standing in the dish or other container the planting pot sits in.

Also during winter months, the fertilizer needs of indoor plants are less than at other times of the year. Letting houseplants go without fertilizer from late November to early April is best.

Remove seed pods, wilted flowers and leaves from the plants, and prune back long, straggly stems to within one-eighth inch of a leaf

joint. Also keep houseplants free of dust, and pick any insects that may be hiding on foliage or stems.

Some plants may need transplanting to larger pots to maintain their maximum growth. Most vigorously growing plants require repotting every year or two.

To find out if a plant is pot-bound, examine the root system. Place one hand over the soil surface, turn the pot upside down, tap the rim softly against the edge of a table to loosen the soil and remove the old pot. A solid mass of roots with little or no soil visible means the plant is potbound.

When repotting, use a new container about two inches deeper and wider than the old one. This is usually one size larger in clay flower pots.

An iron is an essential tool for sewing

An iron is an essential sewing tool. In fact, you may use it more in sewing that you do for pressing clothes.

Careful pressing as you construct a garment can do as much for a professional appearance as good sewing techniques.

Press unnecessary wrinkles from your fabric before you cut out the garment. When the fabric has been folded on the bolt, a crease is sometimes visible at the fold. Be sure to press this crease before you lay the

pattern on the fabric. If the crease cannot be removed, avoid cutting out a garment on the crease line.

As you sew, the areas of fabric that need the most pressing attention are those with more than one fabric thickness—seams, facings and hems. Press seams flat, the way they were stitched, then press the seam open or to one side.

While pressing, exert the most pressure on the line of stitching, rather than at seam allowance edges, so the edges of the seam allowance don't show through to the right side. This is best done with a press-

ing cloth and the very edge of the ironing board, or over a seam roll or rolling pin.

Always press facing seams from the wrong side so the seam line will not be seen on the right side of the garment. Sewing techniques, such as seam grading and understitching will help, but careful pressing can complete the professional appearance.

The hem of a circular or flared skirt will need careful pressing to shrink out as much fullness as possible. Be sure to press along the grainline so the hem is not stretched

out of shape as you press.

Most man-made fibers require low heat, so there is a tendency to use too much caution and under-press. These fabrics should be tested before pressing to determine the amount of heat and steam needed for a smooth appearance.

A steam iron may not give enough moisture for most permanent press fabrics and synthetic knits, so also use a dampened press cloth. The press cloth will help protect the surface of the fabric and prevent shine and flattening that can develop from too-high heat.

Pressing requires time and patience. It also requires good pressing equipment. Check the condition of your ironing board. If it is warped or if the cover and padding are not smooth, you will have a more difficult time achieving professional results.

November is Alzheimer's disease month

November has been recognized as National Alzheimer's disease month to help the American public understand the seriousness of the disease and its impact on those afflicted with it and their families.

The families of Alzheimer's disease patients suffer almost as much as the afflicted family member in many cases. Coping with changes caused by Alzheimer's disease in a loved one often places tremendous strain on the family.

Family members have said, "It's very, very hard to watch someone you love die—very, very slowly," and "It's like a funeral that never ends."

The disease causes a gradual shift of day-to-day tasks and responsibilities from the patient to the caregiver. These added responsibilities can be overwhelming.

Social and emotional isolation overtakes many caregivers. As the disease progresses, the caregiver may not be able to leave the patient alone at home. The patient may become easily upset in public, or be unable to tolerate being around other people.

One spouse stated, "I have become a prisoner in my own home." Another caregiver said, "To go out is scary, not knowing what I'll find when I get back. My last night out

was four years ago."

Friends and family sometimes stop visiting if they do not understand the disease, find it difficult to see the deterioration in the person, or can't accept the changes in behavior and personality caused by the disease.

Because caring for a person afflicted with Alzheimer's disease can be so stressful, it's important that caregivers not try to "go it alone." Two major needs of caregivers are moral support from others and periodic breaks from caregiving.

A chance to get away allows the caregiver to rest physically and emotionally. Such a break is as important to a caregiver's health as a proper diet and exercise.

Many caregivers feel it is selfish

of them to want a break from their daily routine. They should not feel this way.

Family and friends can be very important sources of support and relief for the caregiver. If you know someone who is caring for a person who has Alzheimer's disease or similar disorder, ask "How are you doing?" and "What can I do to help?" Too frequently we only ask how the patient is doing.

Be willing to sit with the patient for one or two hours a week or even a month. This can make a difference in the life of the caregiver.

Although Alzheimer's disease destroys one life—the life of the afflicted person, it's important that it not destroy a second life—that of the caregiver.

What is worsted?

Have you ever wondered what a carded or combed cotton is, or what worsted wool might be? These terms all describe how a fiber yarn is processed.

Combed cotton yarns come from longer fibers that are lined up parallel to each other by a combing process before they are twisted and spun. Combed yarns are smoother, stronger and more lus-

trous than carded yarns.

Wool yarns that go through this combing process are called worsted. The yarns are harder to the touch and stronger. You'll find this term used to describe material for men's suits such as twills and gabardines.

Carded woolen yarns are used to make softer fabrics such as sweater knits and light-weight flannels.

Large fashions need not be dull

Large women no longer have to feel out of step with the fashion parade.

Fashionable styles in larger sizes are now available at many specialty shops, and at special fashion salons with department stores. Pattern companies also are creating more fashion-oriented designs especially suited to large women.

Large women can forget the old clichés about dressing in the dark colors and dowdy fashions. They now can develop a positive image through careful use of styles and colors that are flattering to both their size and personality.

Looking one's best is simply a matter of taste and appropriateness for any person—large, medium or small.

Oregon State University offers a few guidelines for the large person to use in establishing an appropriate style.

***Avoid bulky fabric.** Ideal fabric for classic styles are soft tweeds, wool challis, gabardine, poplins, stretch wovens and crepes. These

fabrics have enough body to avoid clinging, yet they are smooth and drapable.

***Know to choose prints and plaids.** Avoid the largest and the smallest of prints or plaids. Neither extreme will be appropriate. Select subtle, simple designs.

***Keep your surroundings in mind.** Wear colors that blend with the background rather than those that stand out and define your shape. Avoid extreme color contrasts in fabric designs; they create a spotty effect.

***Select fabric and accessory colors** that flatter your personal coloring. Avoid stark colors such as all-white or all-black.

***Create an illusion of height.** Select fabrics and styles that have a vertical emphasis. Avoid contrasting tops and bottoms, avoid contrasts at waist. Use flattering contrast near your face to create an illusion of height.

***Choose styles that don't add bulk.** If you are short and plump, do not choose fuzzy, fluffy styles

that add bulk. Loosely fitted, softly tailored fashions will provide flattering vertical lines. Avoid fabrics that cling.

***If you are large or tall.** Choose loose-fitting styles with simple lines that outline rather than define the body. Layered styles are ideal for tall women.

***Keep clothes well defined** but loose-fitting. Uncontrolled fullness exaggerate size because it creates a large silhouette.

***Simple trimming and flat lace** around collars and cuffs are appropriate. Tucks and pleats at the bust and hips cause the illusion of fullness and are best avoided.

Strive for a low-keyed fashionable, but simple, look. Play up your assets by selecting fashions that lead the eye where you want it. Wear clothes that create a vertical, slender feeling.

Most importantly, wear the styles most appropriate for your figure and follow fashion only when it is right for you.

Childrens' middle years can be trying

Children aged from six to 11 are living through what are known as the middle years of childhood.

During these years, a child changes from being almost a baby to almost a teenager.

Volumes of material have been written on how parents can better understand babies and teenagers. Unfortunately, much less information is available on six- to 11-year-olds. This may be due to the lack of upheaval children in the middle years experience. They make plenty of racket all right, but their growth and development seem more subtle and less demanding. Physical growth is less spectacular and accomplishments are more gradual.

However, the six- to eight-year-old makes momentous progress in graduating from the closely supervised world of the home or daycare tenders. Most six- to eight-year-olds are eager to find out who they are and what they can do "out there".

Learning to answer the question "Who am I?", during the middle years is an exciting adventure for both parents and children. Before children can find answers to this question, they must experience many difficult and exhilarating moments.

Parents, friends, school, media and the child's personality all play a part in children's discovery of themselves as a participant in real life. There are conflicts, too, with the need to grow up and a recurring desire to have the privileges of a child. They want to grow up so they can stay up late, wear adult clothes and be in on adult confidences and discussions, but they often want to be cuddled like babies.

On the other hand, boys quarrel and roughhouse, and girls dress up in their mother's clothes and makeup in amusing ways that are seldom tolerated in teenagers.

In the middle years, children learn to take care of themselves in many ways. But when interacting with the six- to eight-year-old, adults must not be over-optimistic in their expectations of responsibility and wisdom. Parents should

realize that children in this age group cannot behave as if they they were 10-year-olds.

Never before has a child had so much to tell. Later they grow less communicative as they become more matter-of-fact or too busy to share their impressions of friends and activities.

Each bit of information they gather from feeling well-dressed, talking in "share and tell," or being smiled at by a friend, becomes part of their growth picture.

There's special value in their conversations as they have an opportunity to sort out information they are storing in their minds. They get practice talking about thoughts, feelings and impressions from the experiences they are having.

At the same time, parents find out how their children view situations and can help them make sense out of what is happening. Parent-child sessions of "share and tell" build confidence and trust that help families survive times of difficulty later.

Generally, six-year-olds are active and self-centered. Sometimes giggling and pushing activity goes too far, because they don't know when to stop. They can play organized games but as yet are unable to look ahead to the results of their choices, such as a move that causes them to lose in a game of checkers. You can expect six-year-olds to be clumsy and dawdling when you want them to hurry. At the same time they expect you to meet their needs at once.

Although each child's temperament and rate of growth makes a difference in the rate at which they adopt certain behavior styles, most of them experience the general characteristics described.

Parents and teachers find these observations helpful for understanding and guiding the developmental probabilities for this adventurous period of a child's life.

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