

Creche

A Day-Care-Centre

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IN India a large number of women are employed in various employments and there is a great felt need among them that there should be an Institution/Day-Care Centre which can look after the baby while the parents are in their jobs. This measure is tremendously time suited and welcome for the parents.

The joint family system is decaying in India and as a result what was the solace place for the children is almost non-existent. The system of other members of the family to take the responsibility of rearing the children while the mother was busy with family chores and now a job outside, is disappearing.

The joint family system is breaking up at a rapid speed due to various unavoidable reasons: a large number of women are getting engaged in the organized and unorganized sectors. Due to these factors, it becomes impossible for the parents to rear the child as it was before. As an alternate measure mothers are looking forward to some institution as Day-Care-Centre to come up.

Though not in a very scientific manner, a few organizations or individuals are making attempts to establish such care centres for the children whose mothers are unable to take care of their children. The few Day-Care-Centres that are existing

at present are suffering from lack of personnel, standards and facilities for the children.

An overview is given for those who are interested in opening a Creche for children.

There is hardly any Creche that could be seen within the campus of the factory but the Factory Act, 1976 provided for creches in factories where more than 30 women workers are employed.

To avoid the establishment and maintenance cost of the Creche most of the factories are keeping the number of women workers' number below 30.

The present age needs Creche in its true sense and some Nurses may come forward for opening a Creche for children.

The present is a period of considerable experiment in various forms of Day-Care-Centre for young children such as Day-Nurseries, Nursery School Classes Creches and other forms of Day-Care for young children.

The primary objective of day-care services is to provide adequate care for children during the mother's absence at work, while maintaining close ties with the family. Day-Care Centre caters its services generally to children before school age.

Their effectiveness as a supplement to family care depends to a large extent on the working conditions of the mothers which should be such as to enable them to fit in their work with their domestic du-

ties and to take time off. If the children are ill they can not be accepted in a centre.

Children should not stay in the Centre for longer periods than it is necessary. Parents should have opportunities for visits to the centre and discussions with the staff.

In principle, only healthy children should be admitted to Day-Care-Centres. Children suffering from non-infectious diseases, malnutrition, anaemia, certain behaviour disorder or even physical handicaps may be admitted where necessary. The essential point to bear in mind is that their admission should not jeopardize the programme for the other children.

Ideally, the children should be assigned to small groups of constant composition and with the same staff so as to preserve continuing relationships.

Groups are like: (1) 2 months to 1 year; (2) 1 year to 3 years; (3) 3 years to 6 years.

Children learn through the stimuli of contact with their immediate environment, their playmates, those in charge of them, and their material surroundings, and this contact should help and guide them in their behaviour in the acquisition of self-control and in the development of constructive social relationships.

A Day-Care-Centre, particularly in a developed country, carries a definite responsibility for physical and emotional health of the children.

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The things needed in a Day-Care-Centre are:

Motherly affection is needed very much and so a well trained nurse with feelings of affection should be appointed here. The children attending these (what type of Day-Care-Centres may be) are getting a sense of security and communal living, freedom but firm control exerted by the staff who understand and respond to children's needs.

Medical supervision (daily check and dress change by nurse; an interval check by Doctor, and immunotherapy).

Supply of food (either from the institute or from home or even from mother's breast).

Food habit creation and social training under some hygienic conditions.

Favourable environment.

Preparation of children for community life and preparation for primary education.

No formal type of teaching but something should be taught through games, music, pictures, stories, etc.

Training centre for nursery Nurse.

Research for child behaviour.

The place should be accessible to parents.

The care is given to children when mothers are away and so the centre should be supplementary to home care.

Site of the Centre

A Day-Care-Centre should be sited to meet the convenience of the parents and the needs of the children. It is not necessary for the premises to be elaborate but that should be safe, spacious, well lighted, properly and hygienically equipped and conducive to the well being of the children.

A Day-Care-Centre must be supervised by authorities and required to meet specified minimum standards

particularly in relation to staff premises and factories.

The Minister of Health Department of Scotland gave recommendations for Day-Care-Centre for its location and other facilities:

(1) Location convenient to parents.

(2) Number of children should not exceed 40 to 50.

(3) Premises should have spaces: for under 1 year children - 40 sq.ft. per child; for 1 to 2 years - 30 sq.ft. for over 2 years - 25 sq.ft. per child.

(4) Provision of clothing, chamber pot, bathing facility, play facility.

(5) Kitchen and Pantry.

(6) Laundry facility.

(7) Sufficient water provision.

(8) Isolation Room.

(9) Supervisor.

(10) Attendants in different groups.

(11) Medical Supervision.

(12) Emergency Care. ■

Assembly of God Hospital & Research Centre Calcutta

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