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Playthings Make Learning Fun

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Playthings Make Learning Fun

Laura Brenner suggests stimulating the child's imagination with a "well balanced diet" of toys

IT'S NOT the quantity but the kind of toys that determines how happy a child is made. According to one authority in child development, children need a "well-balanced diet" of toys. A variety of toys is necessary to meet the developmental needs of the child.

The greatest value of a good toy is its help in developing the child physically and mentally. Building blocks, for example, stimulate the imagination of the child and encourage initiative.

A new type block which gives a relatively permanent structure suitable for doll houses or even play houses is made with interlocking sides. Nested blocks in six different colors are valuable because of their many uses by different age levels. Long before a child learns how to "nest" them, he has used the blocks to carry smaller playthings about, he places them in irregular rows, puts them in wagons or even sits upon them.

Color cones made of six or twelve rounded discs of bright colors that vary in diameter by only three-sixteenths of an inch, are excellent in developing the child's size discrimination as well as the finer muscles of the hand. The child must learn to select the right discs to build the cone. An appreciation of color values is gained.

A new type of peg board is designed as a pull wagon and contains pairs of ball, cylinder and cube shapes. The child is given an opportunity to become acquainted with various forms through matching. He must insert dowels in holes bored in the cart, and then place the six forms on top. This process develops manipulative skill.

The push toy used to encourage a child to take his first steps has been redesigned for greater play value. Two series of colored discs are arranged so that they form a double color cone. The old type of push cart had but one use while this new toy can

be taken apart and put back together again, as well as be pushed about.

Not to be forgotten in any list of toys is the baby rattle. Replacing the celluloid type of rattle is one made of a rubber ball containing small beads or bells, attached to a handle. The toy can be used for pounding and is valuable for its aid in developing the larger muscles of the hand and arm.

A toy called "Flip-Flop" has proved interesting to the toddler. It is a pull toy which will flop around in any position and always right itself.

Beautifully constructed wooden toys which are



Toys are important for development of muscles as well as the mind. Boys love to climb a wood or steel structure like this

strong and durable are made to resemble horses, tiny trucks, buses, automobiles, trains and boats.

"Wind-up" mechanical toys which can be put to but one useful purpose are not desirable. The best toy lends itself to a variety of uses. New toys on the market are gay with color. Bright red, yellow, blue or green is preferable to pale pinks and blues and is much more likely to catch the child's attention.