

Grade: 3.7

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As one of the relatively more [accessible subsets of everyday life information seekers]?, parents have specific information needs. opening sentence is unclear They typically do not receive training, aside from possibly a few child birth and care classes. Their information seeking is closely tied to their self esteem and self definition, especially for mothers. "Parents are especially sensitive to criticism and need to build up a confidential relationship with someone whose advice they have found to be effective" (Nicholas & Marden, 1998, p. 46). They need accurate information quickly, and as such they rarely use the Internet as a source because it simply takes too long to find useful information. "This is one group for whom computers, never mind the Internet, seem to play no role at all in meeting pressing information needs" (Nicholas & Marden, 1998, p. 47).

The top five information needs of parents, as reported in the 1998 Nicholas and Marden study, are as follows: Health for the child, child care, child development, schools, and child behavior. Health issues were the ones most easily resolved, with 60% of parents believing that their needs were met, while information needs related to behavior issues

were rarely met, with only 11% of parents obtaining the sought information. Parents seek information primarily from two sources, books and personal contacts, and according to the Nicholas study both of these sources were often found through organizations such as local services, classes, and medical clinics, but most frequently through ante-natal classes.

This collection seeks to provide formal resources for parents of toddlers. in addressing the four need areas indicated above? clarify It will be housed in a day care setting as a part of their permanent resource collection for parents, which up to this point has had a strong infant focus. Resources such as the *Mayo Clinic Family Health Book* will likely be referenced at the day care, while others such as the Klutz Guide may be noted and added to the parents' individual collections. Many parents, for example, own their preferred medical reference for critical situations; however, resources in this collection could provide an alternate perspective on other issues. Discipline and development texts were included as these information needs have been met less often. good In addition, it should be noted that the collection's placement in a child care setting creates a focus for interpersonal information sharing, and the reference guide to local services might also aid parents in finding human contacts and personal support. excellent

The reference materials can be grouped into a few broad categories: medical reference, growth and development issues, discipline suggestions, and finally humor. No magazines were included as they are not truly considered reference material: "in general media is not a source of information for parents that they consider useful, because they information is too general and does not appear when they need it" (Nicholas & Marden,

1998, p. 45). Also, only one Internet site is included as the Internet is not yet a major source of information for parents. (of course, the Nicolas and Marden study is four years old (so the actual research is probably five years old) – I wonder if they would get different results now) This site, however, operates on the same basic principles as the telephone help lines which were popular in some studies.

### **Bibliography**

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- Geboy, M. (1981). Who is Listening to the "Experts"? The Use of Child Care Materials by Parents. *Family Relations*, 30, 205-210.
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You have chosen some authoritative sources and justify each selection. Talk more about the overall balance. You cover health, development, and behavior with the first seven sources – where do the last three come in terms of your need analysis?

(Digression: I always read Dave Barry's column!)

## **Recommended Sources**

**Larson, David E. *Mayo Clinic family health book: The ultimate home medical reference*. (1996). New York: William Morrow & Co.**

This is a comprehensive, detailed health-care guide which describes nearly every possible illness. It is the ultimate resource for any health-related question that a parent might have. The Mayo guide has sections on “Your Health Through the Years” (describing general human health for newborns, infants, and preschoolers on up to senior citizens), “Staying Well” (general health concerns), “First Aid and Emergency Care” (these pages are color-coded with blue edges for quick access), “Human Diseases and Disorders,” and “Modern Medical Care” (understanding and using modern health care systems as well as coping with cancer and death). This is a complete and definitive resource for family health care; parents can use the first-aid section to take care of an emergency situation and then read up on the diseases the child might have.

**Cisco, J. (Ed.). (1997). *Family first aid: Owwies, boo-boos, and all the things that really happen*. Palo Alto, C.A.: Klutz.**

This book is small but witty and to-the-point. For example, vomiting is divided into two categories: “ordinary” and “serious,” with instructions for the care of “ordinary” vomiting and a shorter instruction to call the doctor immediately in the case of serious vomiting. This is exactly the book for a situation in which there isn’t enough time to search through the Mayo Clinic’s manual, or when the larger reference is too big or heavy. This little handbook will fit neatly in a car’s glove compartment or a purse, and its sturdy card construction will stand up to rough treatment, so parents can keep it handy for an unexpected emergency.

**Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center. Child health advice. Retrieved December 13, 2002:**

**<http://www.seattlechildrens.org/parents/health/online.asp>**

This online database is searchable either by disease or by symptom. Each entry contains links to other related symptoms or diseases (if applicable), instructions about when one should call 911 or the doctor (either immediately or within 24 hours), and what one should do in the meantime. It is a well-formatted, detailed resource for emergencies; also, as it is a web-based electronic database, it can be updated more often than a print resource, which requires the publication and purchase of a new edition. However, because many parents may not think to use resources on the web or may consciously prefer print, we do not consider it a replacement for a print first-aid resource.

**Eisenberg, A., Murkoff, H.E., & Hathaway, S.E. (1994). *What to expect: The toddler years*. New York: Workman.**

The third installment in the immensely popular *What to Expect* series, *The Toddler Years* is a hefty, comprehensive tome that guides parents through the toddler years, month-by-month (13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and so on). An easily digestible format covers all the basics—health care, behavior, social development, safety issues, eating habits—and also devote a section to special needs toddlers. The articles are substantial, and they are bolstered by the authors’ inclusion of actual questions (and their answers!) from readers. One section

in particular catches the eye: it was a lengthy treatise on how to manage a child's television viewing. An extremely handy "Ready Reference" section concludes *The Toddler Years*: it includes simple recipes, toddler CPR, and a simple chart with symptoms for frequently appearing toddler illnesses with clear instructions as to when to call the doctor. This book deserves the standing it enjoys as an excellent childcare reference source.

**Iovine, V. (1999). *The Girlfriends' Guide to Toddlers: A survival manual to the "terrible twos" (and ones and threes) from the first step, the first potty and the first word ("no") to the last blankie*. New York: Berkley.**

The *Girlfriends' Guide* is a down-to-earth companion to *What to Expect*. Iovine assumes that any parent will already have one or more of these child-rearing manuals, so instead she fills her book with personal anecdotes and advice. She by no means neglects the emotional/physical development of toddlers, but most of her advice is about dealing emotionally with toddlers. Her chapters have titles like "Who Are These People, Anyway?", "The Social Life of Toddlers", and "The Comfort Zone (or, Binkies, Bankies, Loveys and Thumbs;" however, she also includes three "Top Ten" lists: "Top Ten Things to Do When Your Toddler Drives You Nuts," "Top Ten Toddler Lessons," and "Top Ten Things We'll Miss Most about Toddlers." Perhaps more important than advice is the permission that she gives parents to make mistakes, to be embarrassed, and to laugh at themselves.

**Silberg, J. (2002). *Games to play with toddlers*. Beltsville, M.D.: Gryphon House.**

This friendly, easy-to-use book is literally filled with games that parents can play with their young children. There is exactly one game per page, the margins are generous, and the instructions are simple and short. Starting with the "12-15" months old section, parents and children can work their way to the "21-24" months old section (the ages are divided into three month age ranges) at their leisure. Each section has approximately 50 games such as "Cereal Fun", "Clapping Games," and "Let's Have a Parade." What's more, each game has its own heading denoting "What your child will learn," e.g.

coordination, listening skills, etc. When parents are weary of Patty-Cake and Peek-a-Boo, *Games to Play with Toddlers* will provide smart, snappy entertainment.

**Baicker-McKee, C. (2002). *Fussbusters at home: Around-the-clock strategies and games for smoothing the rough spots in your preschooler's day*. Atlanta: Peachtree.**

*Fussbusters* is literally about “busting up” the fussiness of young children. It is brimming with creatively constructive plans and ideas for dealing with the endless sticky situations that toddlers and their parents find themselves in. Chapters such as “How to get them up and running in the morning,” “How to deal with sibling rivalry,” “How to get them to take naps,” and “Arsenic Hour” hash out ways that parents can win food fights, prevent or stop sibling fights, put reluctant children to bed, and cope with the grey area before dinner when everyone is tired and hungry. (Failing all that, the chapter “Mush Pot” addresses all-out, general “fussbusting.”) The book’s format is easy on the eyes, the tone is casual, and real life anecdotes (presumably from readers of previous editions) are sprinkled throughout. References to both web resources as well as other books abound. Frankly, this book was fun reading even for this reviewer, a non-parent.

**Fields, D. & Fields, A. (2003). *Toddler bargains: Secrets to saving 20% to 50% on toddler furniture, clothing, shoes, travel gear, toys and more*. Boulder, Colorado: Windsor Peak Press.**

What with the young children’s retail industry booming into the billions per year, budget-conscious parents need all the help they can get. *Toddler Bargains* is an excellent consumer’s guide for parents to start with. Topics covered are clothing, car seats, toys, and almost everything between. The twin focuses (foci?) are on safety—car seats, age-appropriate toys—and value. Many individual products and brands have author-generated reviews, and there is also feedback from the individual consumers who have actually used the products. There is also plenty of home-style advice in this book courtesy of those who have written in with tips for saving money (e.g., “Kids don’t need all the bells and whistles!”). One of the appendixes includes a handy directory of retailer websites.

This book's small size belies the amount of information it presents, making it a "Must Consult" for the economic parent.

***Raising kids in Seattle: The resource directory for Seattle families.* (2001). Seattle: 2<sup>nd</sup> Page Publications.**

The cover of this book calls it "the most comprehensive directory of activities, events, businesses, and services that cater to families living in Seattle." Unlike the other published resources in our collection, this book is specific to this location and contains details of events, activities, businesses, and services in this city. Although each chapter contains a short article about general tactics for attending festivals or encouraging a child's intellectual development, most of the book is simply a child-specific yellow pages of addresses and phone numbers for resources related to fun, "shops-n-snacks," education, health, sports, and pets. Although the calendar of events detailing festivals and theater runs is now out-of-date, most of the information is still current. This is a neat, inexpensive book which concentrates many parental resources in one place and makes them more easily accessible than in the yellow pages.

**Barry, D. (2000). *Babies and other hazards of sex: How to make a tiny person in only 9 months with tools you probably have around the home.* Emmaus, P.A.: Rodale.**

As noted in an LIS 510 presentation on parents' information behavior, there are some taboo topics. However, parents need to be able to laugh about those topics and about the whole experience of being a parent; in other words, parents occasionally need to let off steam. Pulitzer prize-winning writer Dave Barry will help them do just that. He does not do this by detailing at length the psychological necessity of humor or expounding upon the miracle of recently-created life. He does it by making off-color jokes (a lot of them, I'm afraid) and doing it in such a ridiculous way that the reader can't help but laugh at the absurdity. For the parent who does not mind a humor book with the word "sex" in the title, this book is the perfect mental vacation.

