



"Let Your Head Save Your Heels"

Careful Study Results in Saving
A Great Deal of Labor and Time



Open shelves in the passageway between nursery and bathroom make it easy to get the articles needed.

How to Save Time

One of the questions to which Harriet Hansen Allred tried to find the answer last year was: "How can time and energy be saved in bathing the baby?" To do this, she first had to find out how this task was being done and where the supplies and equipment for it were stored.

She made a floor plan of the house and located all the equipment and supplies used in bathing the baby. Now she was ready to make a record on the floor plan of the trips the girls were taking in doing the job and to record the number of steps and the work procedure.

After observing the procedure for the first bath and plotting the trips taken, Mrs. Allred had a conference with the worker. Together they went over the "picture" of the trips and the record of how the work was done and decided what parts could be combined and what could be left out. They examined the equipment, also where and how it was stored in relation to the place where the bath was given, to see whether a different choice of equipment or a change in the storage plan would make the job easier.

The changes decided upon were incorporated in a revised plan which was then tested for efficiency. Conferences in which further changes were made followed the testing of each new plan by successive baby directors.

The results were very interesting. An analysis of the first chart showed that it took 16 trips, 95 steps and 25 minutes to bathe the baby. The bath was given in the nursery but the tub

was filled in the bathroom which was reached by going through the dining room and kitchen-hall. Supplies were kept on top of a chest of drawers in a closet off the nursery and the clothes, towels, etc., were in the drawers of the chest.

Work sequence "B," the plan that had evolved at about the mid-point of the project, required 5 trips, 46 steps, and 15 minutes. Changes largely responsible for the reduction in time and energy were: giving the bath in the bathroom on a table placed close to the wash bowl, filling the tub by means of a short length of hose, and having soap, towels, and wash cloth stored in the shallow drawer of the bath table.

Save Steps

It was found that 76% of the steps taken in work sequence "A" and 87% of those taken in "B" were used in walking from the nursery through the dining room and hall to the bathroom. If further increase in efficiency was to be secured this trip would have to be shortened.

To accomplish this, a doorway opening directly into the bathroom was cut in the nursery closet which was located between the nursery and the bathroom. Open shelves for storing the baby's clothes were installed on the wall of the passageway thus formed and a shelf was put up above the bath table for soap and wash cloths.

Work sequence "C," the final plan developed, took 6 trips, 22 steps and 12 minutes. This meant a saving of 63% in trips, 77% in steps, and 52% in time over that necessary for the first work sequence. This illustrates the truth of the saying "Let your head save your heels!"

—B. Eleanor Johnson is Director, School of Home Economics.

By B. Eleanor Johnson

How can we save time and energy in carrying on routine household tasks? This is a question often asked in connection with the laboratory work in our Home Management course at the University.

Home Management House has been a temporary laboratory since 1934, and only partially meets the needs of the girls who live there as a family group. When the old residence was remodeled for our use, caring for a baby in the house was not a part of the laboratory work, and a nursery was not included in the plan. As a result, the care of the baby, which is now a part of the course, seemed to take an unnecessary amount of time.