

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Homemakers' chat

FOR USE IN NON-COMMERCIAL BROADCASTS ONLY

U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Monday, March 20, 1944.

Subject: "MAKEOVERS FOR CHILDREN." Information from clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Spring-time is sewing time for mothers---and as long as the war lasts, every stitch homemakers put into successful repairing or remodeling of clothing already on hand is real "war work", because it helps prevent waste. "Wear it out---make it do" is still a good pin-up slogan for the sewing-room.

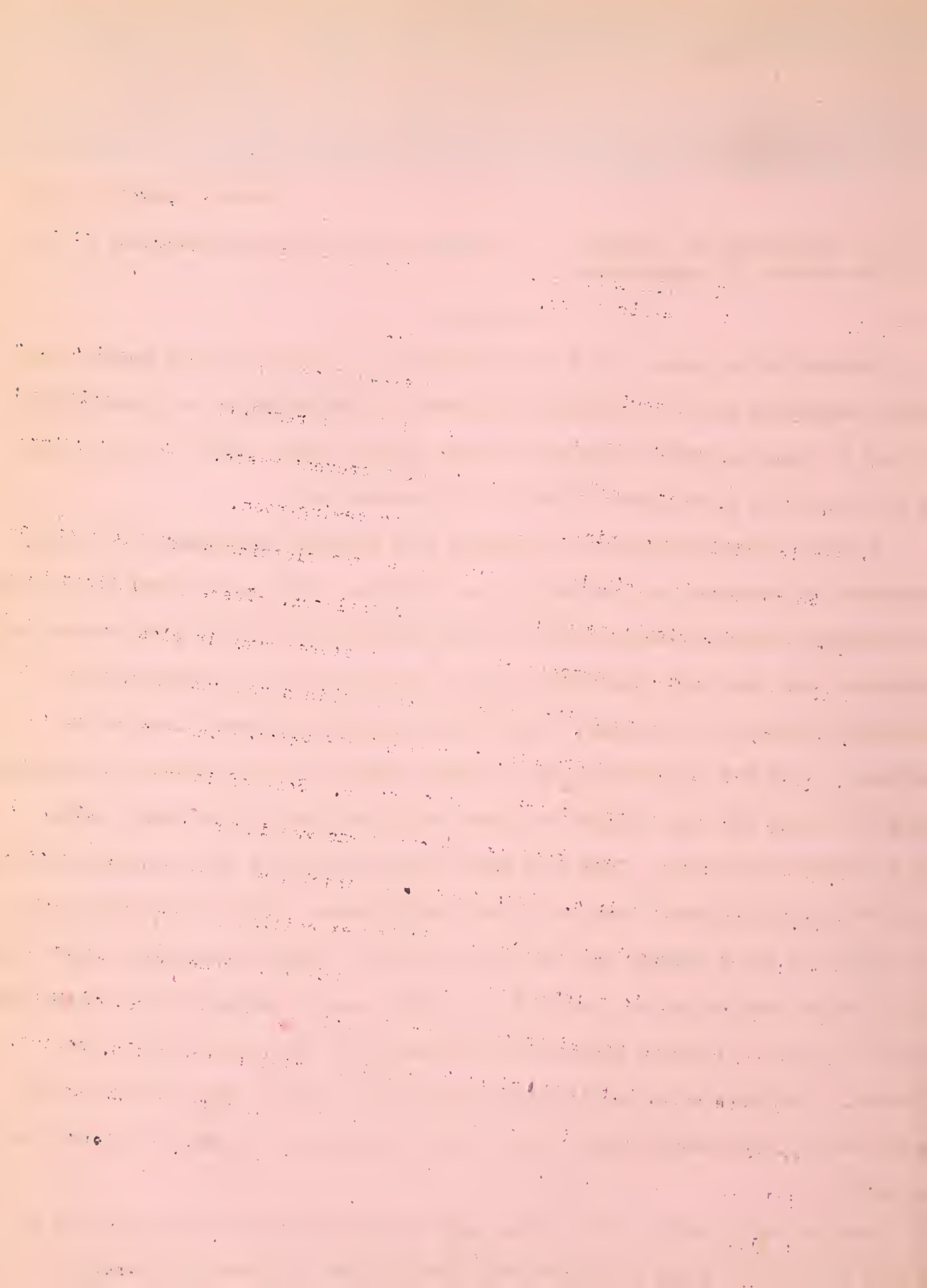
So today we're bringing you some ideas from clothing specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture on makeovers for children. These specialists have worked on discarded grown-up garments that had been stored away in closets and attics and forgotten, and they have discovered a lot of things you can do with seemingly hopeless articles. For example, they found old knitted underwear much of it shrunken out of fit or stretched out of shape. Some of it was waiting to be mended some of it just put away because the owner was wearing some other kind. Maybe "G.I." shorts and shirts. Then they found thick sweatshirts that had served their time for high school athletics and fishing expeditions, terry cloth sweaters, and any number of men's shirts, both white and colored. Some were outgrown around the neck; others were frayed or thin near the collar, and the edges of the collars and cuffs were worn, but there might be sound material in the tails, bodies, and sleeves. One woman had a cotton knitted nightgown, worn in the upper part and still strong in the skirt, and a knitted dark wool skirt, too long and skimpy for herself.

Another had a pair of white linen golf knickers, maybe 15 years old, and a mother unearthed 4 pairs of summer camp bloomers made of French blue cotton broadcloth in good condition. Outmoded dresses, coats and suits turned up too--

LIBRARY
CURRENT SERIAL RECORD

MAR 13 1944

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



all with possibilities as makeovers for children.

Of course no two families will have the same kinds of garments on hand to start working with. Some may not have any. A little inquiry among relatives and friends will often swell the supply. Anyway here are some of the ways the clothing specialists used the garments we've just described:

The old knitted articles worked up amazingly well. After ripping apart, washing, and pressing knit material, you can cut knit material out by a pattern just like any other cloth. Your seams and finishes have to be governed by the nature of the material. Sometimes you have to bind or overcast the edges to keep them from fraying. Often it pays to tint or dye old material so the color will be even and fresh looking.

Out of the skirt of the long knitted cotton nightgown with the worn top the clothing workers made a suit of pajamas for a five-year old child. From the knitted wool skirt they made the same child a nice little between season coat with a matching bonnet. From men's light weight knitted underwear they made shorts and vests for boys of various ages---the kind we couldn't get in the stores the last few months. They dyed pieces from one suit of heavy underwear in two shades of green to make a suit for a little boy four years old. They had enough material for the child's tunic and trousers for outdoor play.

The clothing workers found that you can get a child's nightgown or "wrapper" out of the good parts of two or three men's knit undershirts, and they discovered heavy sweatshirts make fine bibs, if you turn the material soft side out. Cut the bib large, and bind the edges. If you make an eyelet on each side of the neck of the bib and pass long tie-strings through the opposite eyelets, you have a "self-help" bib the child can manage all by himself.

From a suit of fleece-lined underwear, turned fleecy side out and dyed red they made an excellent skating jacket for a girl. They cut over a white terry cloth pullover sweater which was outgrown to make a child's bathrobe. The specialists

finished the edges with a narrow band of the ribbing from the cuffs and lower edge.

So much for using knitted materials. Men's shirts and other woven materials have many uses, too. The specialists warn however, look over all old clothing to make sure the material is strong enough to justify the work of making it over.

Men's shirts are generally made of such materials as broadcloth, madras, or percale. Any of these fabrics are good for children's pajamas. If you haven't two alike, make the tops and bottoms different, just as ready-made pajamas are often made. You can also make shirt materials into guimpes or blouses for little girls to wear with jumper dresses or separate skirts. Or make pinafores to protect their clothes at meals, to help with work at home, or even to wear to school.

If you don't have much good material, maybe you can get at least a sunsuit for a small child out of a shirt. When the material seems unlikely to wear well, the clothing specialists suggest using it where it won't be strained. For example, such material would make a collar, or a dicky for an older girl, or shields for your dress backs to cut down dry cleaning.

One woman found four pairs of blue broadcloth bloomers and made four pairs of much-needed tailored shorts for her grandsons out of them. The white linen golf knickers made a pretty unlined summer jacket for a high school girl.

When it comes to making over grown-ups' wool suits and coats for children, each mother can see a dozen possibilities, and choose the one she feels she can use best and make most easily. To mention just one example, a mother produced an up-to-date looking pleated skirt for a twelve-year-old girl out of a Scottish plaid shawl woven years ago, but still strong and bright colored.

Successful makeovers like these suggest other ingenious ways of using really good "before-the-war" materials, and at the same time they prevent waste, save expense, and add to the children's everyday wardrobes.

