

Historic, archived document

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

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Saturday, April 30, 1938.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "NEWS NOTES FROM WASHINGTON". Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

--ooCOoo--

Today's letter from Washington starts off with these words--"Speed Children on the Road to Health". And from that you may guess what the rest of the letter is about. For those words are the official slogan for Child Health Day-- May the first.

Our Washington correspondent continues.

"This year May Day will be celebrated all over the United States--and in Alaska--and Hawaii. Public and private schools--health agencies--interested groups of citizens--the children themselves--all are joining in its observance. For May Day has been proclaimed by the President of the United States as National Child Health Day.

"For children, the celebration of May Day will probably be the same as always. It will be a time of hanging baskets on doors--then running away to hide and watch. It will be a time of getting gay baskets--full of fragrant flowers and maybe a sweetmeat or two--then guessing the ones who left them at the door.

"And of course there will be dancing around the Maypole. And then--as a climax of the whole day--the crowning of the Queen of the May.

"But grown-ups will observe May First--Child Health Day in a more thoughtful manner. For them, there will be educational programs on child health. At special meetings, parents will consider the health needs of their children. And they will make plans for improving child health the year 'round.

"Even in communities where there are no official observances of Child Health Day many mothers will be taking a check-up on the health of their children. And in any such a check-up they will consider food.

"In a program to better or maintain child health you can't emphasize too strongly the importance of diet. For the food the child eats is the raw material for building his body. If his diet is adequate and he has an abundance of the right kinds of foods he will truly be "Sped on his way to health".

"Ideas for feeding children have changed a lot in recent years. For day by day we are improving upon our knowledge of what makes for good nutrition. Now we know that a child should begin early in life to get and like a wide variety of wholesome foods. And we know pretty well what foods supply his needs--the ones that are necessary to help him build muscle--bones--and teeth.

"Feeding children is a subject that mothers will do well to study carefully. But for the sake of a quick inventory right now, here is a general pattern for the food a child should get each day.

"First--milk is a good starting point in planning a child's diet. It is well known for its food value. And most nutritionists recommend a quart a day for every child.

"Next--vegetables and fruits--both of these are important for their mineral and vitamin values. See that your child gets a good variety. Every day it's a good plan to have two servings of vegetables--that's in addition to potatoes. If possible, have one of these vegetables raw or quickly cooked. And serve leafy green vegetables and yellow ones often.

"Two fruits a day aid good nutrition. These may be used to advantage for children's desserts. Try to get a wide variety of fruits, both raw and cooked. And if possible, have citrus fruits or tomatoes once a day.

"Eggs and meat are good building foods. The yolk of an egg is one of the first foods given to supplement the milk diet of the very young child. Young children should have either eggs or meat each day. And older children may have both more frequently.

"Naturally there'll be cereals in the diet each day. For these are important energy foods. Each day there will be a cereal dish. And at every meal bread and butter. Whole-grain cereal products are recommended for growing children.

"No diet for children would be complete unless it included a few sweets. But use these with discretion. They shouldn't crowd out the appetite for other foods. As a safeguard to the appetite, let the children have their sweets in small amounts at the end of the meal--not in between meals.

"That in general is a pattern for a child's diet. There is a lot more to be said. But if a mother sees to it that her child gets these basic foods each day she may be pretty sure she is 'Speeding him on his way to health' by way of the diet route."

And here our Washington correspondent ends her letter by quoting some of President Roosevelt's proclamation setting apart May 1 as Child Health Day. In view of the fact that child health is of vital concern to the nation the President made the following proclamation,

"I hereby call the people of the United States to the peaceful task of considering whether the children in their families and in each community are receiving the full benefit of our knowledge of how to promote the health of mothers and babies at the time of birth and of children throughout the period of growth and development, and ask them to plan how the child-health work of our public and private agencies can be extended and made more effective."

And that ends the quotation from the President's proclamation of Child Health Day--and also our Washington letter for today.

