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Children's Games and Play Equipment  
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Robert W. McIntosh, Conservation Institute  
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# Children's Games AND PLAY EQUIPMENT



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ROBERT W. McINTOSH, *Conservation Institute*

**MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE**

**Agricultural Experiment Station • Cooperative Extension Service**

**EAST LANSING**

## WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR THE YOUNGSTERS?

To a child, "Let's play" are the magic words which bring to him all the joys of games and group fun.

You as a resort manager can provide opportunities for the children to get the maximum enjoyment during their stay at a surprisingly small cost and effort. To entertain the children, some leadership, ingenuity, and home-made equipment are all that are needed to do a wonderful job.

When on vacation, parents want a rest and a change from their regular daily living. If your resort provides some games, equipment, and facilities for the children, parents will be relieved of some responsibilities. This will give them a better vacation.

Group participation teaches children to follow directions and also helps to develop their personalities. They make many new friends, and these friendships are probably the most important reason of all for a good children's program.

Learning about nature, identifying trees and animals, making collections of feathers, flowers, butterflies, stones and rocks, leaves, shells, and similar objects are all wholesome and enjoyable pastimes. Treasure hunts are exciting and will keep the children busily occupied for some time.

A planned recreation program is a necessity on rainy days. Then is when your planning of these activities really pays off! Indoor fun can be made ready quickly and will "save the day" for the children.

Providing these opportunities and facilities for the children's benefit will pay off in a steadier, sounder business. Also, it is of real value to the children as a contribution to their health and happiness. The family trade is a good trade and is increasing. The resort manager who has a well rounded entertainment program for all ages will reap the benefits in a more profitable business. When the children are sold on your resort, they will make great efforts to see that mother and dad

return there next year. Knowing that the children will have a safe and happy vacation at your resort is a powerful factor in building repeat patronage.

These children are your future grown-up patrons. The children that you know now will be married and bringing their own families to your resort in a few more years. Thus you are building future business for the resort. Many Michigan resorts are now catering to third and fourth generations.



Try some of the suggestions given in this booklet! Some will likely be more successful than others for your patrons. Find out which types of activity appeal most and use them often. There are additional references, containing more detailed information about children's games and equipment, at the end of this circular.

ROBERT W. McINTOSH  
*Extension Specialist, Tourist and Resort Service  
Conservation Institute*

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# PLANNING THE PROGRAM

By all means, fit the program to your own particular needs! In making up a program, attention should be given to certain important considerations. The most successful program will be one which is well planned and thoughtfully put into effect. Experience, too, will be invaluable in finding out what types of activities the children enjoy the most. Here are the main things to consider:

1. **Number of children.** A great deal will depend on whether there are 60 children to entertain or only 6. Many activities are not suited to large numbers and conversely, there are some activities not so well adapted to small groups.

2. **Ages of the children.** Plan games and other activities for the children in two different groups: Up to 8 years and 8 to 12 years. There is not much use in arranging organized play for those over 12 years old. They usually prefer their own ways of having good times.

3. **Children aren't all alike,** so recognize that some are responsive to suggestions and others are not. Activities should provide something enjoyable for all types.

4. **Facilities available.** Plan the activities in accordance with the space and equipment you will have available.

5. **Amount of supervision.** Who is going to do the supervising? Usually parents are glad to help out when they are needed. Ask them. A teacher who is skilled in handling children can often be employed during the summer months. Assigning her to an additional job, such as office manager, stenographer, bookkeeper, or hostess, usually works out well. Another possibility is the use of college students majoring in recreation, physical education, or child development.

6. **Length of periods.** Usually 30 to 45 minutes is long enough for most planned activities.

7. **Weather conditions.** Be sensible — don't plan vigorous exercising games on extremely hot days. Have a variety of activities ready, and fit them to a particular day. Rainy day suggestions are found in another section of this circular.

## Steps in Planning the Program

1. Decide on type and kind of program desired. Get an over-all picture of what you are

going to do and the exact number of periods to be held during the week.

2. Decide on time of day that the periods will be held.

3. Decide on the length of each period.

4. Set the age group.

5. Choose type of games to be played.

6. Decide on where the program will be held and the meeting place for the group.

7. Get your program posted so that folks know when and where all events will take place. The entire week's program probably should be prepared and announced the first day of the week. Call special attention to the children's activities. *Suggestions as to how the program can be publicized are:*

Use an attractive bulletin board in a central location.

Use bottom of menu.

Verbally announce events at some convenient time, such as during the lunch period.

Inexpensively reproduce the week's program and give a copy to each guest as he comes in to register.

## Precautions

1. Spread out the activities, allowing plenty of free time during each day. For example, don't have afternoon games and evening movies on the same day.

2. Have periods short — 30 to 45 minutes is enough.

3. Have a variety of games during each period. For example, plan a combination of circle games, relay games, and musical games.

4. If promises are made for rewards, be sure that such promises are carried out.

5. Be sure that policies adopted are not contrary to parents' wishes.

6. Children should not be urged or forced to participate. Let them enter into the activities on their own accord.

7. You cannot usually plan on having a definite number of children turn out for the games. Make your plans flexible and adaptable, so that if a smaller or larger group appears you can adjust your program accordingly.

8. Have a rainy day program ready at all times.

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

In planning games for the children, remember that they have lots of energy, are full of fun, and there may be some mischief-makers among them. The leader must be one step ahead and have plenty for all to do. Overlook much of their misbehavior unless it is in bad taste or infringes on the rights of others.

### Games for Children up to 8 Years Old

#### \*Flowers and the Wind

In this game, the players are divided into two groups. Each group has a home line marked off at opposite ends of the space where they are playing. There is a long neutral space between the two homes. One group is represented as being flowers. The children decide which flower they wish to represent, such as a pansy, lilac, daisy, and so forth. This group then walks over towards a line which represents the home line of the other group. The opposite players, who represent the wind, stand in a row on their line and are all ready to run. As the group representing flower approaches, all of the players standing in a row start to guess the flower which has been chosen by their opponents. As soon as the right flower is named, the entire group which are the flowers must turn and run home, the wind chasing them. Any players which are caught by the wind before reaching home become prisoners and join them. The remaining flowers repeat the play taking a different name of a flower each time. The game continues until all of the flowers have been caught.

#### \*Puss in the Circle

A circle about 5 or 6 feet in diameter is marked off on the ground. One player, who is designated as Puss, stands in the center of the circle. The other players stand outside of the circle surrounding him. These players may be tagged by Puss whenever they have a foot inside of the circle. They will make opportunity for this by stepping in and out of the circle, teasing Puss in every possible way to get her to tag them. Puss circulates about within this area attempting to tag anyone who steps within the circle. Anyone Puss touches

becomes a prisoner and is another Puss, joining the first Puss in the circle to help tag the others. The last one tagged is the winner of the game.

#### \*Midnight

Of the group, one player is selected as the fox. All the others become sheep. The fox may catch the sheep only at midnight. The game starts with the fox standing in a den marked in the corner of the playground and the sheep marked in a fold in a diagonally opposite corner. The fox leaves his den and wanders about the playground, whereupon the sheep also come forth and scatter about, approaching as near the fox as they dare. The sheep keep asking the fox "what time is it?" The fox answers with any hour he chooses. Should he say "3:00 o'clock" or "10:00 o'clock," and so forth, they are safe, but when he says "midnight" they must run for the sheep fold as fast as possible, the fox chasing them. Any sheep caught change place with the fox, and the game is repeated.

#### \*Shadow Tag

Out of the group playing this game, one child is selected to be "it." The children all get out in the open, and then they move about within a limited space such that their shadows fall on the ground in a limited area. "It" then tries to jump on the shadow of one of the children and if he is successful, he calls out the name of that child. The one whose shadow was stepped on by "it" then becomes "it" and the game continues as before.

#### Jack Be Nimble

This game is suitable for very little children. A bottle or small box is placed upright on the ground to represent a candlestick, or if you should have a good sized candlestick about 5 or 6 inches high, that should be used. The players line up single file and run and jump over the candlestick with both feet at once. While the players are running and jumping over the candlestick, all of the children repeat the old rhyme, "Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack jump over the candlestick."

When there are more than ten players, it is advisable to have several candlesticks and several groups running and jumping over each.

\*From GAMES FOR CHILDREN, National Recreation Association, and the National Recreation Association.

# OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

## \*Call Ball

All of the children but one form a circle. The extra child stands in the center of the circle holding a volley ball. He tosses it high in the air, calling the name of a player. The player called must catch the ball before it bounces. If he does he becomes the leader; if he does not, he returns to his place in the circle. Small children may vary the game by allowing the ball to be caught on its first bounce.

## \*Stool Ball

A stool, small box, or inverted pail is set in an open place, in which 10 to 20 feet away, a throwing line is drawn. One of the children is designated as a defender for the stool and stands beside it. The leader must keep the score, and also see that no one steps over the line when he throws the ball. A small rubber ball is used, about the size of a tennis ball. The players, in turn, throw the ball from the throwing line in an effort to hit the stool. The stool defender tries to prevent this by batting the ball away with his hands. If the ball hits the stool, the one who threw it changes places with the stool defender. If the ball is batted by the

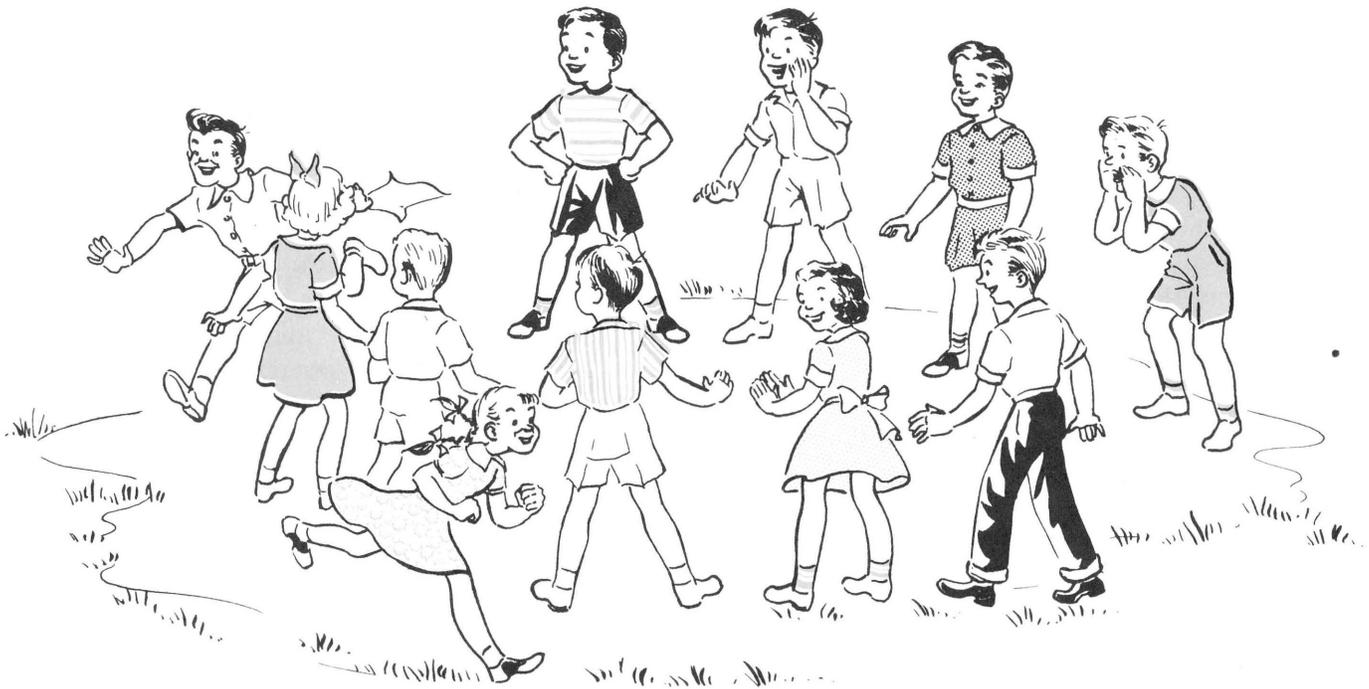
defender and caught by another of the players, the one catching it changes places with the stool defender. The object of the stool defender should therefore be not only to hold his place by preventing the ball from hitting the stool, but to bat it in such a way that the other players may not catch it.

## Games for Children from 8 to 12 Years Old

### \*Whip Tag

In this game, the players form a circle. There is one extra player who is known as "it." In his hands is placed a man's stocking which is stuffed with cotton and used as a policeman's club. "It" starts walking around the outside of the circle. All players place their hand behind their backs. "It" places the sock in the hands of one of the players standing in the circle. That player immediately turns to chase his right hand neighbor, beating him as much as he can find opportunity for while he chases him around the circle and back to his place.

The player now holding the sock takes the place of the one who was first "it." The first "it"



## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

now joins the ring. The new "policeman" in turn, walks around the outside of the circle and drops the sock into any other player's hands and the game continues as described above.

### **A Tiskit, A Tasket**

This is a form of drop-the-handkerchief. The children are arranged in a circle. They do not clasp their hands together, and must not look around when "it" is walking behind the players. One player is chosen to be "it." He stands outside of the circle, holding the handkerchief and starts to walk around the outside of the circle singing the following verse: "A tisket, a tasket, a green and yellow basket, I wrote a letter to my love and on the way I dropped it. Someone of you has picked it up and put it in your pocket; it isn't you—it isn't you—" This last phrase is repeated until the player reaches the one behind whom he wishes to drop the handkerchief. When he says, "it is you!" He then immediately starts on a quick run around the circle. The one behind whom the handkerchief was dropped picks it up and at once starts running around the circle chasing "it." If "it" can reach the vacant place first, he takes that place in the circle. The one with the handkerchief then becomes "it." However, if he is tagged before getting around he must be "it" again. The game is often played without the song.

### **\*Kaleidoscope**

This game may be correlated with geography, history, literature, and many other subjects. The players are all seated with the exception of four children who stand in line in front of their fellow players. Each of those standing is given or chooses a name of a color—red, green, yellow and so forth. The seated players then close their eyes, and those who represent the colors change their places in the line. When they are rearranged, those who are seated open their eyes and upon being called upon individually, try to name the colors in their new arrangement. This game is a test of memory.

More activity can be given to this game by having the colors run around a limited area after being named and halted upon a signal. The player

who is to name them then runs around the room or area to each color as they are scattered about, naming each as he reaches him.

Instead of using colors, the names of capital cities, nations, rivers, birds, trees, flowers, or other similar words can be used.

### **Plain Straight-away Relay**

Two or more teams, each with the same number of players, are lined up, one behind the other on a starting line. A goal line is indicated some distance away, depending upon the age of the players and the available space. At a given signal, the first player of each team runs and tags the goal line, returning to his starting line and tags the second member of his team who then runs to the goal line and returns. He then touches the next player in line on his team. All players run in turn, the team which has its last player cross the finish line first wins the relay.

### **Two Runner Relay**

The relay is played exactly as described for the plain relay, but players have partners who must act together as a unit at all times in the relay. Some ideas that can be worked into such a relay are as follows: walking, hopping, skipping, lame duck limping, or running.

### **Equipment Relays**

There are almost an endless variety of relays which can be undertaken by means of accessory equipment. This is a good chance for the leader to use imagination. Objects can be carried skillfully by the players, such as placing a pebble or a peanut on a knife while walking to the goal and returning, or placing a potato on the extended right hand, (palm down) of each player. Another idea is putting obstacles on the ground over which each player must hurdle. You can divide the team so that half of the team is at the goal line and the other half is at the starting point. Each player that runs across must perform some operation on the opposite player, such as tying a necktie around his neck, tying a scarf around his waist, lacing up his opponent's shoe or some similar act.

# PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

So far, we have been discussing activities which are largely of an organized nature. The amount of time which is devoted to such play is a rather small proportion of the number of play hours in the day. There must be "come and use it" types of facilities that can absorb this time and the children's excess energy. This outdoor play requires its appropriate objects—tools, medium, partner, and playmates. These things are not self-providing. It is extremely important to the welfare of the child that these "tools of play" be provided for him.

## Type of Equipment

Selection of the right kind of equipment is the most important aspect of the problem. What is chosen will depend upon the number of children likely to be at the resort at any one time. As the children will probably be of all different ages, there should be some equipment for each age group.

For the very small youngsters of from 1 to 6 years, a fenced-in play area is best. Mothers can put them in this enclosed area and not worry about their safety. Size of the area will depend upon the amount of play equipment which you are providing.

## Sand Box

All small children seem to enjoy a sand box. It should be placed so that there is shade during the hot hours of the day. The recommended size is about 8 feet square and about 1 foot high. There should be a flat, broad seat around the edge. Fine white beach sand is best. Equipment for the sand box should include molds such as are used for gelatin desserts, spoons, pails, wooden blocks and sieves. A cover for the box is desirable.

## Playhouse

There are all kinds of playhouses, but whether it is crude and rough or a charming miniature cottage, it will delight the children. A variation of the more conventional playhouse could be an Indian tepee, the House of the Three Bears, or a grocery store or robber's den.

## Apparatus

Children love to swing, slide, climb, and do all manner of stunts. These activities are enjoyable and also of benefit to the development of the child. Thus, a slide, a swing, a climbing rope or pole, climbing tower and a horizontal bar are recommended.



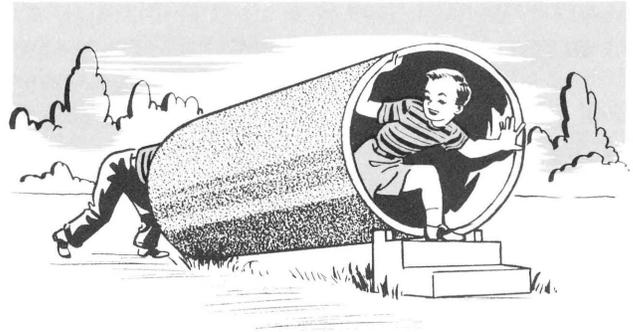
# PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

## Toys

For imaginative play, some orange crates and planks can be used to play store. A large barrel open at both ends will give many hours of active play and fun. A large section of sewer or drain pipe raised somewhat at one end is another possibility. An old junked car will give lots of hilarious fun for the "play" drivers and passengers. Large-sized wooden blocks, the size of bricks or larger, will provide great satisfaction. Take a new clean two-by-four and cut off blocks from 8 to 12 inches long. If you paint the blocks, be sure the color is harmless. Square boards with holes bored in them into which twigs can be stuck to represent trees in a forest is a popular device.

## Games and Equipment for Older Children

The older children want to play with the same equipment as the adults. Such equipment might include softball, croquet, tetherball, volleyball, badminton, horseshoes, quoits, ring toss, shuffleboard, and tennis. These games are all excellent and will receive their fair share of attention. Having some bicycles available is recommended, but they are somewhat troublesome to maintain.



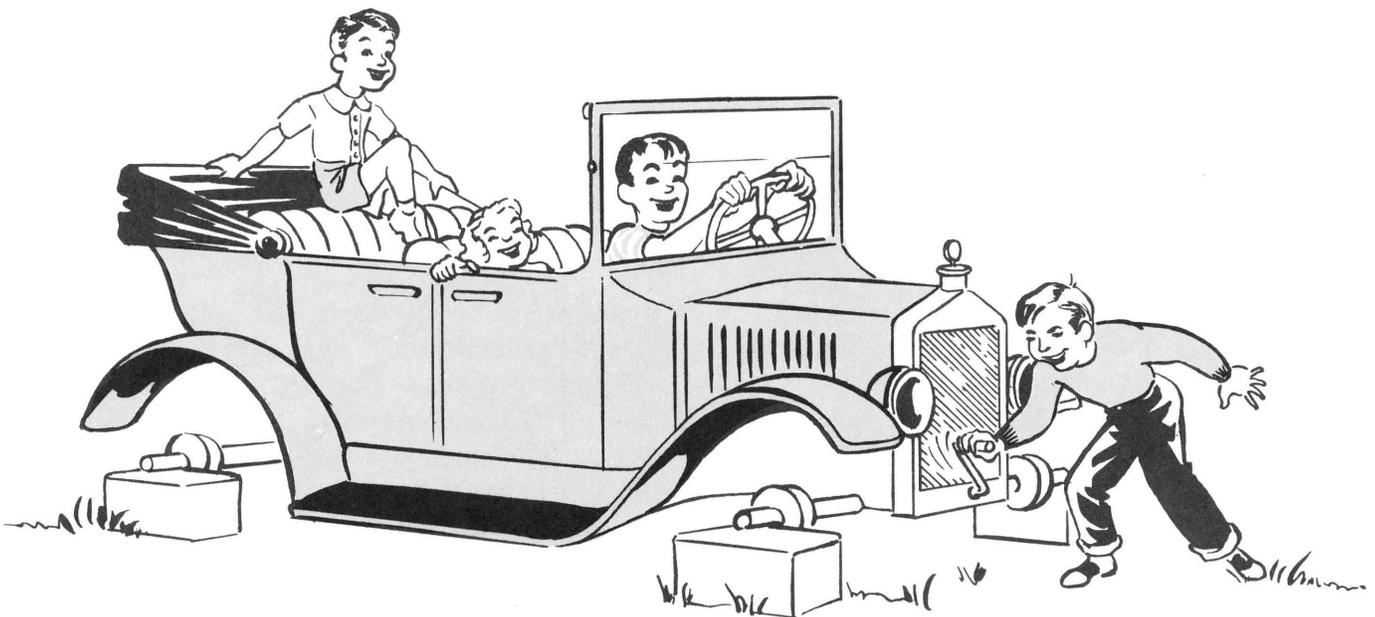
## Beach and Water Play Equipment

Children of all ages love to play in the water. Your beach is the most valuable and intensely used part of your recreation area. Thus, equipment to capitalize on the enjoyment offered at the beach is good business.

Some of the equipment which has been found very popular and practical are:

**Benches and settees.** Have sufficient number placed so that onlookers can enjoy watching the activities.

**Tetherball outfits.** This game consists of a pole 10 feet high to which a string is tied. A ball is fastened to the other end of the string. Ball is



## PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

batted with paddles or with the hand to wind the ball around the pole.

**Swings.** Place these so that they swing out over the water.

**Slides.** Slides may be located on the beach so that the children slide into the water or they can be placed completely in deeper water. If placed in the water, there should be a pitcher pump so located that water can be pumped down the slide. This makes it much more slippery.

**Docks and Diving docks.** The diving board can often be placed at the end of the dock. Mak-

ing an extension on the dock for sun bathing is a popular feature.

**Diving floats.** These are not so accessible as the diving docks but are very much appreciated by the teen-age youngsters.

**Floats.** Cork or rubber floats are most useful and are a lot of fun just to sit on or hang on to.

**Water wheels and water tops.** These are novelty items which will afford much sport for your guests.

**Deep water marker floats.** Small floats strung together, marking the deeper water are helpful in keeping the smaller children within a safe depth.

## NATURE GAMES

If you are going to try some nature games, the first thing to do is to inspect critically the natural surrounding at your resort for ideas. Take a mental note of the different species of trees, shrubs, mosses and flowers. Note the various wild animals which frequent the property. Check on fish, birds, frogs, and toads. See if you can find a spot where they can be easily observed.

### Identifying Trees

Make a list of the principal types of trees and shrubs present. If you cannot identify most of the trees, your county agricultural agent, extension forester, or nearest conservation officer will be glad to assist you. Then have identification plates made. The easiest way to do this is to go to a newspaper or printing shop and have zinc plates made. These plates are used in one common type of addressing machines. They are about 1½ inches by 3½ inches in size. The plates are not very attractive, so they will not be stolen as souvenirs. Also, they will not rust. Wire the plate around the tree or shrub.

Identification signs can also be made of wood or pressed wood. Do not nail the sign into the



tree. Use wire to fasten the sign to the tree. Any place where trees have been cut by beaver or where some other interesting animal works should be labeled also.

## NATURE GAMES

### \*Spot the Tree

Give each child a sample of a twig, fruit, leaf, or bark. This should be done prior to a walk through the woods. Then as the hike progresses, see which child can find a tree to match the sample which he has, in the least amount of time.

### \*Tree Tagging

Give each child from five to ten paper tags with the names of ten trees common to the area. Each tag should have the child's name on it. Give each one 20 minutes to pin these tags on the north side of the trees named. No tree is to have more than one tag. The child tagging the greatest number correctly wins. A second game, "Calling in the tags", may then be played. A player may bring in any tag except his own. If he finds a tree incorrectly tagged, he leaves it and on the following tour of inspection obtains two points for correcting the mistake.

### \*I See

This is a good game to play between active games or while on a walk through the woods or on a lake shore. All the children are seated. One child is designated as "it." "It" says, "I see something yellow" (or some other color). The players, in turn, try to guess what "it" sees. The player who guesses correctly then becomes "it" and the game is repeated.

### \*Spot Spy

Lots of fun is possible with this game, especially on hikes. When the group has come to a point where they are going to take a rest, the leader says "I can see five black spruce trees." The group is given one or two minutes to spot the spruces. All those who see them may indicate this fact by sitting down, taking off their hats, or some other signal. All those who see the objects receive a point.

### \*Blind as a Bat

One of the children is blindfolded, and one end of a stout 5-foot cord is tied to his belt. The other end of the cord is held in the hand of another

child who is designated as the keeper. Several players are blindfolded and harnessed in this fashion. Each one of the blindfolded children then have 10 minutes to walk about and touch things which are found in a woody area. As he identifies these objects, he tells his keeper what he has found. The longest correct list made in the 10 minutes wins the game for the couple. The keeper may not talk to the one who is blindfolded but may guide him with the string. In playing this game, be sure there are no hazardous objects near, such as poison ivy or sharp needled plants.

## Nature Hikes

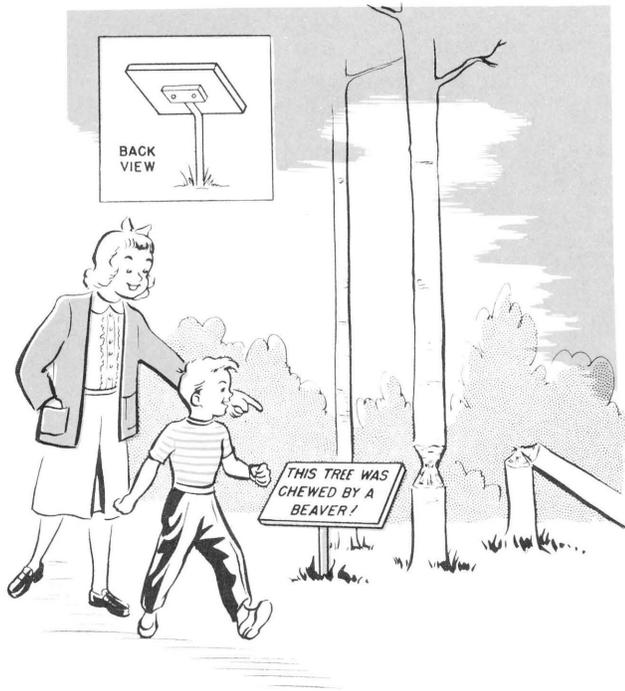
This game is a great deal of fun because several teams compete with each other for a prize or reward. Trees and shrubs must be identified and labeled as previously suggested. Several teams are formed, depending on the number of children wishing to participate. Three to five children per team is about right. A leader is selected who can write legibly. Each team leader is given a blank card and a pencil. The object of the game is to see which team can find the largest number of different kinds of trees and shrubs while on the nature hike. Watches are checked so that each leader has the same time. At the end of one hour, the teams return to the starting point. The team having the largest number of different kinds of trees and shrubs listed on their card wins. A treat is given to them or some other form of favor or recognition. *Caution:* have a master list of the trees and shrubs which have been identified on the property. You can then check this list to be sure none of the teams have "faked" names of trees not existing at the resort.

## Nature Tours

This type of activity will be a highlight in the week's play program! Children from cities very often have little understanding of natural things and such a tour will give them an opportunity to enjoy a supervised trip out into the surrounding country.

Probably the easiest to conduct is a tour to see some outstanding natural feature, such as a waterfall, a lake, a huge tree, a sand dune, bluff, gravel

## NATURE GAMES



pit or mountain. Other points of interest, of course, could well be included. Sanctuaries, parks, recreation areas, camps, lumbering operations, fish docks, and many others are additional possibilities. A card index file on local points of interest is a very good thing to have, as questions are often asked "what's there to see around here?"

A farm tour is excellent and should be planned

several days in advance. The farmer should be contacted and all arrangements made for the children to visit his farm. Cars or station wagons are usually used. Parents will volunteer the use of their cars and also to help supervise the group. A person well familiar with the things to be seen should be present in each car. Stops can be made frequently and explanations offered. Care must be taken that the group stays together. One overall leader or guide should assume the responsibility for the group. Such things as orchards, fields of crops, tree nurseries, or soil conservation practices can be explained. At the farm to be visited, arrange for the farmer to meet the group as they drive into the yard. The children will be most interested in the barn, stalls, pens, and the animals. It is best for the farmer to give the explanation as he can add lots of information of interest to the children. Such experiences will become very vivid memories, long remembered after the vacation is over.

Your small guests find themselves in a totally different environment than that with which they are familiar when at home. They are interested in the world about them, particularly animals. Anything you can do as a host to make the vacation experience joyful and also instructive will be well worth it in guest satisfaction. There is nothing which makes parents happier than to know that their children are having a wonderful time at the resort. Doing these few simple things for their especial enjoyment is one of the finest and most valuable contributions which you can make to your guest's vacation.

# TREASURE HUNTS

If you really want to give the children something exciting to do, organize a treasure hunt! In order to obtain the highest interest in the hunt, it is best to divide the children into two competing groups. The group which reaches the treasure first will receive a reward. This involves two separate trails and two complete sets of clues.

Plan the treasure hunt well in advance. Such an activity is very strenuous, and the children will run from clue to clue. Thus, each clue should be carefully located in relation to the next one, so that they are all a reasonable distance apart.

Be sure to give the treasure hunt plenty of publicity so that all children who may want to participate will be reminded of the time and place.

## Making the Clues

The clues should be legibly written on slips of paper. The number of clues probably should not exceed eight, particularly if there are groups of children with wide ranges in ages. Older children can have more clues and a longer hunt.

Clues can be of several types, but for the smaller children the poetic type of clue is best. An example is as follows:

*"You know where they play croquet  
That place is not so far away."*

Clues should be numbered in one corner and lettered Team "A" or Team "B" in the other corner. Thus, each set of clues for each team will be numbered and designated either Team "A" or Team "B." Near the middle of the hunt, make the clues a little more difficult. This will help to slow up the hunt and allow stragglers to catch up with the rest of the group.

For small children who can't read, a picture-type clue can be developed. Cut out pictures from your folder, showing different places around the resort. Mark locations with a red pencil. Then the children can find the spot where the clue is hidden and start looking for it. When they find the clue, it will consist of another slip of paper upon which is pasted another picture showing where the next clue is located.

## Hiding the Clues

As previously mentioned, the best way to run the treasure hunt for children is to have two separate trails laid out and two separate sets of clues. All clues except No. 1 are hidden. It is recommended that the treasure hunt be laid out backwards. If there are eight clues, go to the place where the treasure is to be hidden and accurately write the directions for clue No. 8. Now walk to the hiding place of clue No. 8, and place it there. When this has been done, write No. 7, describing the hiding place of clue No. 8. Go to the next hiding place and hide clue No. 7. Continue this procedure until reaching the place where the treasure hunt is to begin.

When hiding the clues, be sure that they are reasonably well hidden, but not overly well. It is best not to overrate the ability of the treasure hunters.

Don't hide the clues too far in advance of the time for the treasure hunt. Some curious child may see you hide the clue and may take it away. Loss of one of the clues would ruin the hunt.

## Starting the Hunt

Divide the group into two teams, selecting a captain for each team. The teams should be as evenly divided as possible. Give clue No. 1 to each of the captains, who reads it out loud to his team. Each team then starts out (on the run) to find clue No. 2 and the hunt is on!

## The Treasure

The last clue (in our example, clue No. 8) will direct the treasure hunters to some place where a reward awaits them. This can be ice cream cones, candy, gum, marshmallows toasted over a bonfire, or a similar treat. The team first reaching the treasure should be promptly rewarded. The losing team might share equally in the prizes, or be given a smaller reward, depending on the nature of the hunt being provided. Knowing that the winning team will get the treasure will put a lot more enthusiasm into the hunt.

## RAINY DAY FUN

"Oh heck, it's raining—we can't go swimming, what *can* we do?"

Such a situation certainly calls for all the ingenuity possible on the part of the resort manager. Ideas must be immediately forthcoming in order to save the day!

The best plan is to make advance preparation for rainy days. Have a program all worked out and ready so that as soon as it appears necessary, it can be put into operation. Shown here are just a few of the many games and other activities suitable for rainy days. Use the references at the end of this circular. They contain almost innumerable suggestions and ideas.

If possible, provide a recreation building. Then you will have an ideal place to keep folks busy and happy, regardless of the weather. Such a facility can be used for a wide variety of games for guests of all ages. An ordinary plain rectangular building with a floor space of about 20' x 30' will accommodate a large number of persons. Of course, the number accommodated will depend upon the activities in which they are engaged. If no recreation building is available, a part of the lodge can be used. In addition, games and equipment for each individual cottage or cabin could be provided.

### Indoor Games for Children up to 8 Years Old

#### \*The Little Mouse

This game is for small children. It is a good game for a group of about five or six youngsters. One child is chosen as "it" and sits with his eyes closed. The other children tip-toe noiselessly around him, and someone (who will be the "Mouse") taps "it" on the shoulder. When "it" feels the tap, he calls, "Stop!", and all stop where they are. "It" says, "Little Mouse, Little Mouse, what are you after?" The Little Mouse says, "Cheese", and "it" without opening his eyes, guesses who is the Mouse. If he guesses correctly, the Mouse becomes "it;" if he does not, he is "it" again.

#### I Spy

This game is one of the favorites with small children. It can be played by just two children

or by several. One of the children has a small bright-colored object, usually a silver thimble. The child places this thimble in plain view in a place that should be obvious to anyone when looking in that general direction. He places this thimble while the other children are out of the room. When all is ready, he calls them back, and the searching for the thimble begins. The first one spotting the thimble cries out, "I spy." The finder then takes the thimble and proceeds to place it in the room while the others are out. This is continued as long as interest is maintained in the game.

#### \*Musical Magic

Most children are fond of this game. Seat them in a circle. One child is chosen to be "it." He is asked to leave the circle. He goes far enough away so that he cannot hear what the others are deciding upon. The group agree on what "it" must do—untie John's shoe lace, for instance. "It" is called back and everyone starts clapping his hands softly. "It" walks around the circle and as he approaches the victim, in this case John, the clapping becomes louder, and as he goes away from John the sound diminishes. By the change in the volume of the sound of the clapping, "it" discovers that something must be done to John. He asks the group if this is so, and he is told that such is correct. The clapping begins again very softly as "it" moves his hands near John's head, but becomes louder and louder as he nears John's feet. The clapping becomes very loud as "it" bends down and unties the shoe lace. Then another player is chosen to be "it."

### Indoor Games for Children 8 to 12 Years Old

#### Simon Says

The children are grouped before a leader who says, "Simon says, wiggle your thumbs." The players must wiggle their thumbs at once as the leader does. The leader continues saying, "Simon says, — — — —," (making up different things to do). He changes these directions rapidly. Suddenly he says, "Stamp your foot", stamping his foot, but

## RAINY DAY FUN

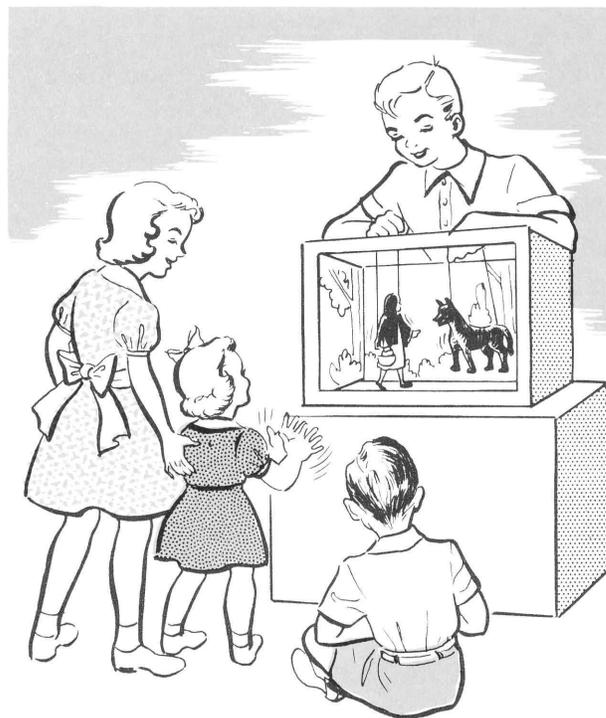
omitting the words, "Simon says." Any player making a move is out of the game. No player should move except when the words, "Simon says", precedes the directions. The leader confuses the group by doing the action whether Simon says it or not. The last player left wins, becoming the leader for the next round.

### \*Black Magic (Mind Reading)

All the players are seated except "it" and his confederate, who announce that they can read each other's mind. There is usually some doubt on the part of the group. To prove their ability "it" sends his confederate out of the room. The group then decides on something in the room for the confederate to guess. He is called back into the room. "It" asks, "Is it — — — ?" "Is it — — — ?" During this procedure, he names a number of things about the room, to each of which the confederate answers, "No." Finally "it" asks about the object chosen. The question is always answered, "Yes." The secret is that "it" always asks about something black before he asks about the object chosen. Anyone who knows how to mind-read or thinks he does may be permitted to go out of the room and try. When a number of children are told the secret, the "clue" may be changed, and the children try to find out, through playing several times, what the new clue is.

### A Marionette Show

Such a show is an excellent way to amuse children on rainy days. All that is required is a rectangular cardboard box, such as gelatin desserts or cocoa is shipped in. Some old magazines, scissors, paste, and string are also required. The children must necessarily use their own ingenuity to make a marionette show using such materials. To start off with, the box is cut along one side to make an opening that they can see into. A picture of a room or outdoor scene is cut from a magazine and pasted around the sides of the box on the inside. Animals, people, and objects commonly found in a room such as furniture, toys, and many others are cut from these magazines and placed in the box. Supports may be made from triangular-



shaped cardboard to hold up the various pieces of furniture and objects in the room. Animation can be obtained by tying strings to the top of the people or animals, and then the child who is manipulating these movable objects holds them by means of a string and creates the marionette show for the interested on-lookers. Stories which children like can be enacted, such as the story of The Three Bears, The Three Pigs, Little Red Riding Hood and many others.

## Games Equipment

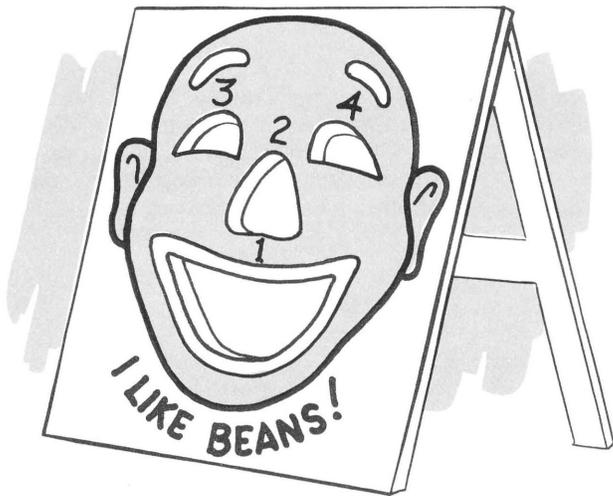
### Hobby Horses

One of the most successful items for rainy days is a hobby horse. If several can be made available, these can be brought out and some horse races organized. It is recommended that these hobby horses be used only on rainy days—not at other times. This will heighten the interest in the use of the horses. The children will have a hilarious time riding the horses.

# RAINY DAY FUN

## Bean Bag Board

Just an ordinary piece of plywood with a face cut in it and some bean bags will amuse children for hours. Write value of each part of the face above the holes. Have a sloping support. The front porch makes a good spot to locate the bean



bag board. Bean bags should be made of very strong twill cloth. Fill them about half full of beans. Four bags should suffice.

## Miscellaneous Equipment

Ping pong, checkers, dominoes, Chinese checkers, rope quoits, darts, yo-yos, anagrams, and picture puzzles are other possibilities.

## "Making Things"

Children like to make things out of common everyday materials. It is a wonderful opportunity to use the imagination! Some suggestions are: raw carrots, potatoes, turnips, beets, toothpicks, pieces of colored cloth, papers of different colors, string, et cetera. Other possibilities are pine cones, evergreen sprigs, acorns and shells. Such materials as modeling clay and wallpaper cleaner are lots of fun to work with.

## Story Telling Hour

If one of the staff or a parent can be obtained to tell a story, it goes over very well with the children. The smaller ones will be most attentive. Your librarian can suggest several good stories and books to have on hand when such an event is appropriate.

Spontaneous stories are fun. The leader tells the first portion of a story, giving the principal characters. Following this, one of the children tells a portion, then another, and so on. The story develops a lot of interest as it goes along, much to the enjoyment of the listeners! Of course, each child makes up his portion of the tale as he goes along.

\*From GAMES FOR CHILDREN, National Recreation Association, and the National Recreation Association.

## FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

### Games for Children

(Unless otherwise designated, a charge is made for the publication.)

Barnes and Company, A. S., 67 West 44th Street, New York 18, N. Y. Publishes numerous books on games for children.

Forbush, William Byron, and Allen, Harry R., *The Book of Games*, the John C. Winston Company, 1006 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 1946. Excellent reference book having games described separately for little children and larger children. Includes helpful suggestions on leading games for teachers and parents.

Gardner, Ella, *Handbook for Recreation Leaders*, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. 1936. This handbook is full of games for children.

*Games for Children*, National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 1943. An excellent little booklet containing singing games, tag games, relays, ball games, and other interesting activities for children.

*Handy*, Cooperative Recreation Service, Delaware, Ohio. Excellent pocket-size manual on all types of children's games.

National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., have large selection of games, books and leaflets successfully used at resorts to entertain children.

### Play Equipment

*American Playground Equipment*, American Playground Device Company, Anderson, Indiana. Free.

*Ever Wear Playground Apparatus*, The Everwear Manufacturing Company, Springfield, Ohio. Free.

*Game-Time*, The Game-Time Corporation, Litchfield, Michigan. Free.

Hutchinson, Alice, *Homemade Toys and Play Equipment*, Extension Bulletin 216, Michigan State College, East Lansing, 1946. This bulletin shows methods of making toy cupboards, settees, tables, child's room furniture, and many other toys and game equipment.

Lundin, P. G., *First-Year Handicraft Club Work*, Club Bulletin 11A, Michigan State College, East Lansing. Guide for handicraft projects for children 10 to 20 years old. Woodworking and plaster casting methods are described.

McIntosh, Robert W., *Outdoor Games for Guest Entertainment*, Cir. R-701, Michigan State College, East Lansing. 1949. Free. Descriptions of 14 games suitable for resorts. How game is played and instructions for making the equipment are included.

*Multiple-Use Recreation Building, The*, National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., 1945. Contains numerous suggestions for utilizing a building for multiple recreation uses including use by small children.

*You Can Make It for Camp and Cottage*, Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., 1930. Instructions for making many types of useful articles such as bean bag targets, dart targets and many other games equipment.

### Nature Games

Gaudette, Marie E., *Leader's Nature Guide*, Girl Scouts National Organization, 155 East 44th Street, New York 17, N. Y., 1942. How to study nature with a minimum of equipment and instruction, especially suited for children.

*Junior Natural History Magazine*, American Museum of Natural History, 66th Street and Central Park West, New York, N. Y. Fascinating pictures and stories for children describing the world of nature.

*Outdoors Illustrated Magazine*, National Audubon Society, 1000 5th Avenue, New York, N. Y. One of the best sources of information on nature. Written for children.

Price, Betty, *Adventuring in Nature*, National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 1939. Practical help on making nature studies an interesting pastime for guests of all ages.

*Treasure Hunts*, National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. 1942. Really full of pointers for fun with treasure hunts. Detailed instructions for twelve different kinds of treasure hunts which will delight the children.

**For further information, call on your county agricultural agent, or write to Conservation Institute, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.**