

Daar is vier artikels in dié uitgawe van CURATIONIS (Volume 2, No. 4) wat die klem laat val op onderwerpe wat vir almal wat met die versorging en welsyn van kinders gemoeid is, van die allergrootste belang is.

Die onderwerpe is: die mishandelde kind; aannemingsprosedures; die kind wat met 'n gesplete verhemelte gebore is; en die outistiese kind. En almal word met die insig en gevoeligheid behandel wat eie is aan dié wie se kundigheid en kommunikasievermoë mekaar ewenaar.

Daar is reeds baie oor **die mishandelde kind** geskryf. In dié bepaalde benadering tot die onderwerp onderstreep die skrywer die belangrike bydraes van die verpleegster, veral die vroedvrou en die gemeenskapsgesondheidsverpleegster — faktore wat daartoe bydrae om van 'n ouer 'n potensiële of werklike kindermishandelaar te maak, en om verder die ouer te help om die faktore te identifiseer en hom die nodige hulp en leiding te gee om dit te bestry.

Daar is te baie mense, verpleegsters ingesluit, wat geen duidelikheid het oor die belangrikheid van **aannemingsprosedures** nie. Hier werk professionele praktisyns, met inbegrip maatskaplike werkers en verpleegsters, as 'n span om te sorg dat 'n baba volgens die bepalinge van die Kinderwet, by ouers geplaas word wat hom 'n stabiele gesinslewe met die nodige liefde kan gee. Die maatskaplike werker help die ongehude moeder om oor haar baba se toekoms te besluit — 'n traumatiese tyd wanneer sy professionele steun baie nodig het — terwyl die verpleegster versigtig is om subjektiwiteit te vermy, maar die moeder 'n simpatieke oor en die baba die liefdevolle sorg gee wat elke kind van sy geboorte af net so nodig het as voeding en liggaamlike sorg.

Die artikel oor **die outistiese kind** word gewy aan die kind se onvermoë om die ontmoeting met sy moeder en ander persone in 'n voldoende mate te verwesenlik — wat die grondliggende kenmerk van outisme is. Die skrywer beskryf die wanhoop van die moeder wat voor die situasie te staan kom, met begrip — haar verwerping deur die kind en die traumatiese uitwerking daarvan op haar en haar houding teenoor die kind omdat sy die situasie nie begryp nie. Dit is daarom noodsaaklik dat die gemeenskapsgesondheidsverpleegster as lid van die professionele versorgingspan die kenmerke van outisme moet ken sodat sy enigermate in staat sal wees om die ouers in hulle nood by te staan. Sy kan dit alleen doen as sy ten volle bewus is van die implikasies van 'n outistiese kind se verwarde, ankerlose, onsekere bestaan.

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Four articles in this issue of CURATIONIS (Volume 2, No. 4) highlight subjects of top-level significance to all concerned with the care and welfare of children.

The subjects are: the abused child; adoption procedures; the child born with a cleft lip and palate; and the autistic child. And all are treated with the sensitivity and insight inherent in those whose scholarship matches their communication skills.

Much has been written on **the abused child**. In this particular approach to the subject the writer stresses the major contributions which can be made by the nurse — in particular the midwife and the community health nurse — contributing factors which may make of a parent a potential or actual child-abuser; and, further, by assisting the parent to identify these factors, to give her/him the help and guidance necessary to combat them.

Too many people — including nurses — are vague on the tremendous importance of **adoption procedures** whose professional practitioners, including social workers and nurses, work as a team to ensure, within the provisions of the Childrens' Act, the placing of a baby with parents who can give him a stable, loving family life. The social worker helps the unmarried mother to come to a decision about her baby's future — a traumatic time for her in which she needs professional support badly — while the nurse, careful to avoid subjectivity, both gives the mother a sympathetic hearing and the baby the loving care which every child from birth needs no less than nourishment and physical care.

The article on **the autistic child** is devoted to this child's failure to actualise adequate encounter with his mother and other persons — the fundamental characteristic of autism. The writer describes with understanding the desperation of the mother faced with this situation — her "rejection" by the child and the traumatic effect upon herself and her attitude towards the child, failing comprehension of the situation. It is therefore essential that the community health nurse, as a member of the professional caring team should be clearly aware of the characteristics of autism so as in some measure to be able to lend support to the parents in their need. She can only hope to do so if she is aware of the full implications of an autistic child's confused, anchorless and insecure existence.

The article "**Helping Parents Cope with a Cleft Lip and Palate**", written by a mother who is herself a speech and hearing therapist, is extraordinarily moving. In no way consciously dramatic in the telling, the author's experiences come through with stark realism highlighted

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