

On Rearing Children from Crib to College—with Special Sections on

The Family Home
Feeding The Family
Family Fashions
Family Fun

PARENTS

Two-Thirds Million Paid Circulation

MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1943

25¢



THE WAR NEEDS WOMEN
HELP YOUR CHILD
TO SUCCEED AT SCHOOL

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This twenty-year-old girl is a top-notch mechanic. She rebuilds airplane engines and holds a pilot's license



Women are desperately needed in unusual as well as commonplace civilian jobs if community life is to run smoothly

THE WAR NEEDS WOMEN

How can married women meet this growing demand for workers without endangering their homes and families?

By FRANCES FRISBIE O'DONNELL

THE LENGTH of the war, authorities agree, depends largely upon whether or not the United States achieves very soon what is called "total mobilization." It is reasonable to expect peace in our time only if every American at once enters whole-heartedly into the task of winning the war and puts into this task all of the energy he or she can muster—this without endangering health or evading inescapable responsibilities.

This means women as well as men are absolutely essential to the war effort. It means married women as well as unmarried women, mothers as well as those who have no children. While it does not mean a conscripting of women for factory work or for military work of an auxiliary nature,



Official insignia of the U. S. womanpower program

it does mean that women are desperately needed in civilian jobs. The fact is that civilian life runs the risk of a serious breakdown unless women can be recruited, now, in large numbers to take over necessary work and thus make it possible for our everyday living to go on in orderly fashion. What

is needed are women as grocery clerks, waitresses, elevator operators, taxi drivers, bank clerks, saleswomen, telephone operators, garage mechanics, gas station attendants, farmers, bus and truck drivers, ticket agents, conductors, and a countless number of other workers. No glamour jobs these! But strenuous and highly important and as truly "war work" as jobs which are more obviously so. Thousands of communities are in

need of women for such work now. Thousands on thousands more will turn to women for help as the weeks go by. The question is, how can women arrange to step into the emergency without endangering their homes and families?

What a mother should do to help in this emergency depends upon several considerations. The conditions prevailing in the place where she lives are of primary importance. On an average, the United States over, approximately 2 out of every 3 persons between 14 and 65, or substitutes for them, should, according to present estimates, be either in the armed forces or at work by the end of 1943. This is the staggering proportion of our population which is needed either to participate directly in the war effort by serving in the armed forces and producing the supplies and equipment needed by these forces or to participate indirectly by keeping up the production, trades and services which support our war industries and our civilian life. This estimate does not include the millions of workers required in agricultural pursuits at seasonal peaks; nor does it include the additional millions needed for volunteer work—in the Red Cross and other relief agencies, in home defense, sal-



Mothers with young children are not free to take regular nurses' training, but some can help out as nurses' aides



This young Navy wife had no home responsibilities. She is doing her bit inspecting airplane engine parts in a war plant

vage, volunteer nursing, volunteer policing, local welfare and other fields in which most of the workers are not paid and therefore, although they are rendering vital service, are not counted as workers in the technical sense.

The problem of distributing the burden of war work equitably and without drawing too heavily upon women who are mothers and homemakers is greatly complicated by the fact that the need for workers is not spread over the country evenly. In areas of tremendous industrial or agricultural activity all sorts of dangers are involved if hordes of outsiders are brought into the community without adequate provision for housing, feeding and transportation, or for wholesome recreation or proper supervision and education for their children. These dangers are as great as would be those involved if the homemakers of the community were asked to assume a heavy load of war work thus running the risk of neglecting their children and homes. In some areas where there is a serious shortage of labor there is no way of getting essential work done except to draw into service many resident mothers who can work when proper day care is provided for their children. Upon a woman living in one of these communities an obligation to try to order her life so that she can do whatever phase of war work is needed of her rests as it does not upon her sister who lives in a community where there is no critical scarcity of labor.

A woman's strength and abilities must also be taken into considera-



Helping on the family farm is as important war work as any woman can do



Mothers with grown children work full time assembling planes for Douglas Aircraft

tion. Some mothers cannot carry a double load, much as they would like to help in this emergency. Some mothers can. Plenty of women have proved that it is not only possible but in many cases desirable for mothers with executive ability to work outside their homes; they are able to work and yet give their children all the motherly care they need. Many more women than have ever exercised such ability can, without dangerous strain, do so now when their help is desperately needed. The local Employment Service of each community will help these women to find either full-time or part-time work which will aid in the war effort.

Although employment of vast numbers of mothers in paid work is not desirable socially and probably will not be necessary if proper steps are taken to avoid drawing them into the most strenuous war work, there are certain important facts which must be considered when we are trying to clarify a mother's obligation in this crisis. Many a mother is actually engaged in a war job without recognizing it as such. A few days ago a friend, who is the mother of three small children, expressed regret that she has no time for war work. I learned that she is doing all her housework, including laundry for her husband and children, although customarily she employs a full-time cook and a laundress two days a week. When over a year ago she learned of the serious shortage of help in a near-by hospital, she encouraged her cook to take a position in the hospital. For a time my friend kept her laundress. But when there came a great demand for help in laundries serving the war workers of the city, she raised no objection when her laundress decided to go to work in a public laundry. Inadequate facilities for getting laundry done outside the home is one cause of absenteeism on the part of women who work in war plants, and in this way are indirectly responsible for decreasing the production of supplies and equipment needed in the war. My friend betook herself to the washing machine and the ironing board, and yet she feels that she is contributing nothing to the war effort! Having willingly given up two strong and able servants so that they might do work vital in wartime society, this mother when she does the work they would gladly do in her home is performing a patriotic service as truly as if she were molding shells. She is a war worker.

If such willingness to undertake the work of one's home were more widespread on the part of women able to do so, the labor shortage in many communities would be appreciably eased. If the war is not to be dragged out, most of us must at least care for ourselves and our families as far as

possible, simplifying our lives so that we are able to keep our homes running smoothly without help from outside. The woman who, for personal gratification and ease through habit or because she does not stop to think, makes any drain upon the precious labor supply of a community in which there is an acute shortage of workers is, although she may not realize it, impeding the war effort.

The government is now stressing the need of women in so-called civilian services. A community devoted to war production ought to have stores manned to give workers prompt service, laundries prepared to deliver their work within a reasonable length of time, restaurants and cafeterias prepared to serve workers with wholesome food promptly, hospitals adequately staffed to give patients proper care, transportation facilities to carry

First Letter To A Daughter At College

By REVAH SUMMERSGILL

My dear: How strange it seems that pen and ink
Must carry you my love, the thoughts I think,
The very hopes I hold so high for you.
I know you're liking each new task you do.
You left your pen behind. I'll send it on.
The frost is thick tonight out on the lawn.
The puppy misses you, and so do I.
But soon you will be back again . . . I lie!
This is a severing of a close-held bond.
This is a moving toward the things beyond
Childhood and youth, and you will not return.
For children travel on, while mothers yearn.
God guard and keep you while you are away,
My daughter—started off to school today!

workers to and from work, as well as many other aids to healthful and happy life in the community. Schools, libraries, playgrounds, clinics, blood donor banks, now require more workers than they have ever required before. Newspapers, magazines and other publications are essential; workers, many of them women, are needed to provide the reading without which our nation would not be ready to meet the vexing problems of today or those to be faced after the war. The list of indispensable services is long. At present a woman in most communities can find plenty to do toward winning the war although she can spare only a few hours a day for employment outside her home. Part-time workers are now welcome in many necessary industries and services. Every woman who helps by her labor to make life less nerve-racking and taxing for those engaged in the industries of wartime or to make life less hazardous, more healthful and happy is making an essential contribution to the war effort and therefore, according to the President's definition, is a war worker.

The sooner we cast off prejudice against doing work regarded as menial, the more speedily will the war be won.

In an overcrowded and unsanitary community which has grown up like a ghastly fungus near one of our great shipyards there works a woman known as "the Exterminator Queen." She is a person of means and social standing in the town which, once quiet and dignified, now forms the nucleus of the booming war town; moreover, she is a recognized artist. Five days a week, while her children are at school, she is employed by a shipyard to go about the dwellings of its workers exterminating such pests as bedbugs, roaches, mice and rats. Strange work, this seems, for one of the most prominent and gifted citizens of the town! But this labor which under other circumstances might appear almost degrading takes on the dignity of the one who performs it. It is an essential task and this woman is willing and glad to do it, since no one else could be found to undertake it. She is doing what needs to be done in this emergency to safeguard the health of workers as well as of her own children and friends.

Practically all our national and local leaders recognize the necessity of protecting the home and are making no effort to recruit mothers of young children for war work except in places where proper care can be given them. The War Manpower Commission is trying to enlist workers who do not have heavy responsibilities at home and excludes the majority of mothers with children under 14 years of age from the roster of people considered available for paid jobs. Also, those who favor a National War Service law point to the fact that mothers of children under 18

would, in general, not be needed to do the work connected with the war if such a law were in force. Unfortunately the Austin-Wadsworth bill now before the Military Affairs Committees in both houses of Congress, has not been discussed widely enough. This bill, if enacted, would place a legal obligation upon every American between the ages of 18 and 65 who is able to do so to take work essential in winning the war. The bill specifically exempts mothers having in their care children under 18 years of age. If every able citizen without such personal responsibilities were utilized in the war effort, there would, in most communities, be no necessity of drawing mothers of dependent children into industry. The interest and backing of women and women's clubs all over the country would go a long way toward ensuring passage of the bill.

Information concerning the Austin-Wadsworth Bill may be obtained from the Citizens' Committee for National War Service Act, 28 West 44th Street, New York 18, N. Y.

On the other hand, women with the education and experience helpful in the program for (Turn to page 37)