

Hear the Children

by Linda Tate, *Chronicle-Herald* staff writer, Augusta, GA, Sunday April 20, 1975

Many activities are planned surrounding the Week of The Young Child

The Week of The Young Child, to be celebrated in Augusta this week, is a time for drawing the community's attention to the needs and problems of young children, explained Dr. Peter Haiman, professor of early childhood education at the University of South Carolina-Aiken and a member of the Committee for the Week of the Young Child.

"Hear the Children," the theme for the week, underlines the importance of listening, caring and helping young children since the future of our nation rests in the hands of our children, he said.

"The needs of a child include living and playing in places which are safe, healthy and nurturing, acquiring knowledge and skills in order to become a competent person and developing positive attitudes about himself and others," said Dr. Haiman.

"There is growing evidence that the way adults treat children is the cause of many problems when they reach adulthood," he continued. "Proper child care has been neglected, and child abuse is on the increase in all class levels. Because of these factors, President Richard M. Nixon signed a proclamation for the Week of the Young Child in 1972, making it a national event, at the urging of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)."

Dr. Haiman points to the institutionalization of child care and children's overexposure to television as two prime factors relation to child and, later, adult problems. In child care centers, adults are taken out of the lives of children since it is impossible for a teacher to give the close attention and care a child requires, he said. This situation leads to a child being reared by his peers, which has proved to be unsatisfactory and harmful.

Without strong adult influence, a child does not learn how to make meaningful attachments, to love, to cooperate or to give mutual respect. The lack of these characteristics is related to the high divorce rates seen among young couples today, believes Haiman.

One of the goals of The Week of the Young Child Committee is to reestablish the value of "parenting," a role which has not been given importance in our society, according to Dr. Haiman.

"This attitude is creating a national disaster, which is exemplified by the increased violent acts committed by young people," he said. "These violent acts can be directly related to television violence.

"Adults cause children's problems," he added, "but it is hard for adults to change patterns which they have developed over the years. We hope that through this week's activities, parents will get a glimpse of what they can do to improve the lives of their children."

The week was officially proclaimed by Mayor Lewis A. Newman April 18. At this time, an award was presented to Judge John F. Hardin, municipal court judge in the juvenile court division, for his work with young children in the community.

Activities for the week will include a series of special story hours and films at all branches of the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library. Times and places are as follow: Tuesday, 10:30 a.m., special picture book program at Jeff Maxwell Branch; Wednesday, 3 p.m., guest story and film hour at the main branch auditorium, and Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. and 11 a.m., story

hour at Wallace Branch.

Children's art work will be displayed throughout the libraries, at Ft. Gordon and various shopping centers during the week.