

# 'Program' your kids properly



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**T**HE NURSES IN THE Maternity ward knew each time I was up to see my little Elizabeth. In 1969 when she was born, I stood in front of the glass partition separating us and I squeezed rubber ducks, played music boxes pre-recorded with happy birthday and the Farmer in the Dell, and literally jumped up and down. I really had a selfish attitude. This was my baby and I was going to bring her up my way. Of course, little Elizabeth did not know too much about me at the time of her birth but I'm sure she was able to get some physiological vibrations from me as I held her and began telling stories about Little Red Riding Hood and the like.

What is interesting to note is that a baby is born like a new computer. The machine is delivered, capable of performing all sorts of exotic language and thinking skills, however, only capable of doing them not able to do them. The child, like the computer, must be programmed to perform. One example of this is at the age of six to eight weeks old: During the babbling stage of a child's speech development, every sound of every language that has ever been created can conceivably be said. The reason for this is very simple. The unique kind of specialization that the muscles will eventually learn in speaking the language of the family and community has not been developed. The brain sends

down general signals to the mouth muscles to simply move and have fun-enjoy the feeling. As the child matures and his computer like brain gets supplied with bits and bits of language cues, it will begin to remove its random patterns of making sounds and concentrate on only those sounds that are reinforced by those that speak to him every day.

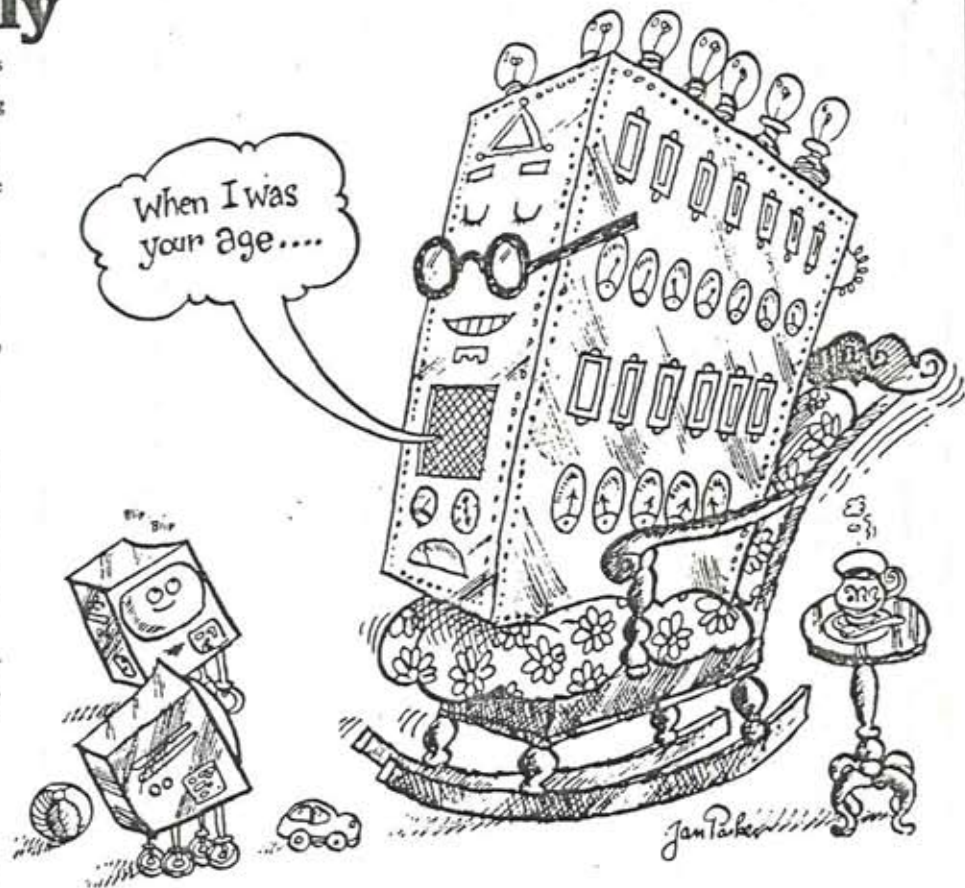
Thus, our little children are vulnerable. They are at the mercy of the parent to feed their little computer brains with information that will make them grow healthy and be successful in life. As parents we must be very careful as to how we feed information to our children. Each piece of information that they are exposed to is not soon forgotten, rather, it is coupled with other pieces of information in the hopes that the children can begin to see a pattern of behaviour unfolding before them and develop a personal philosophy of life. An empty mind, in a very short period of time can become filled to the brim with useful information.

## The Freedom Front

As our children grow older and reach eighteen, nineteen and twenty plus, their computer brains are jam packed with life experiences and time has come to consider marriage and parenting. Of course, you can hear them already saying, "I'm going to do it my way." After all, we had a chance to do it our way and it

was a real struggle: being a parent is no easy matter. All the freedom our children would like to have in giving their children the very best is not always available. For example, they may wish a certain doctor or hospital to care for their children, but due to a lack of appropriate financial resources, they must settle for an alternative medical service. On top of that, they may have a parent (could that be you or I?) that is constantly interfering in the affairs of their household and not giving them an opportunity to learn how to be a parent all by themselves.

And with all the problems of freely trying to raise children in a couple of decades, parents grow old. All of a sudden they find their needs changing. Possibly they may be no longer wanted or needed by their children. These grandparents can hear conversations of 30 years ago played back in their memories about how they conducted themselves and how annoying their parents were. Now it seems their children are reacting in the same way. It is no wonder these grandparents are saying to themselves, "which nursing home will I go to?" The brighter side of things, however, finds other grandparents being accepted and wanted in the house because they are recognized as productive human beings that still serve a usefulness and are a responsible branch of the family structure. It is important for us to ask ourselves now, where we would like to be when we are old and gray. Of course, sometimes we cannot always plan for our destiny but we conduct ourselves as parents in such a way that will give our children and their children a feeling of love toward us and make every effort to assist us in being a contributing force of the family.



The point to be made in dividing life into three stages is that each stage of life has attached to it different needs that must be addressed by families and communities. If a child cannot receive good information about life and a parent

cannot have the chance to make the decisions about raising his kids and if the grandparent cannot feel useful and able to contribute to the needs of the family, then the divisions between young and old will grow larger and larger. Generation gaps

will become massive holes and the continuity of life will be in jeopardy.

Jan Parker Productions