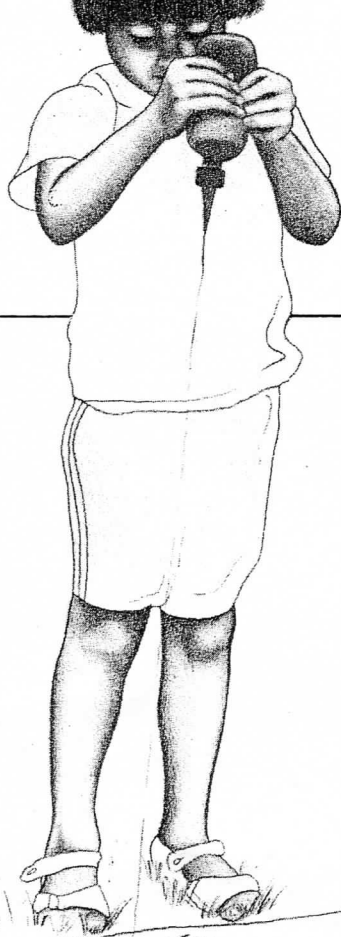


YOUNG



some boats for sailing, cars for washing, dolls for bathing, or some soap for bubbles. A drop of food coloring and empty plastic medicine containers can provide an early science lesson on color mixing. A toddler who decides to make painted footprints on a long sheet of paper will find foot washing greatly facilitated if greeted at the end of the walk by the sight of an infant bath full of soapy water. If you are brave enough to try a messy art project at a birthday party, set the full infant bath out for a community hand-washing experience that will probably be the hit of the party!

A weighted baby dish becomes a perfect no-spill container for tempera paint. Consider using it also as

the water container to accompany watercolor paints. When your toddler graduates to color mixing, it can become a palette.

When your baby switches from bottle to cup, enlarge the holes in rubber nipples, screw them back on a plastic baby bottle and fill it with diluted tempera paint. If you are outdoors, in the basement or other mess-proof area, both you and your child can do an abstract expressionist painting that would be the envy of Jackson Pollack. Squeeze the bottle, splash and throw paint to your heart's content. You will find that your child's other work will actually become neater if he has enough opportunities to participate in an uninhibited painting frenzy occasionally.

The necessary accessories used during babyhood can be quite expensive, and are quickly outgrown. It seems as if you have just chosen a crib when suddenly baby needs a bed! And you will probably be worried about toilet training before you have paid the final installment on your changing table! Before you throw anything away or pass it along to pregnant relatives, consider recycling. The special problems of encouraging creativity are often met by the clever re-use of baby's things after their original use has been outgrown.

Long after your child has joined the family at mealtime, a high chair remains the ideal place to contain him at work with potentially messy art materials. He can even paint directly on the tray. Simply put newspaper on the floor and let your child express himself! The high chair may need a hosing down, but your home will still be pristine.

An infant's bathtub is great for toddler water play. Fill 'er up, add



AT ART[®]

BY SUSAN STRIKER

A changing table can easily be converted to an art center. Keep the items you prefer to have out of reach on the top shelf. Put crayons and paste on a rubber tool caddy, and keep it and paper within easy reach. Old shoeboxes can hold sorted art materials such as collage papers, pipe cleaners and stickers.

An infant's mobile can be remade by a growing child. Remove the figures that came on it but leave the mechanism and the music box intact. Your child can collect or make things to hang on it that more adequately expresses his changing interests. Or, recycle still other baby accessories by making a "growing up mobile." Hang the pacifier, night light, or security blanket on the mobile, as your child abandons them. First shoes, the first lost tooth, and other remembrances of babyhood can also be added. Each new symbol of maturity can slowly be added on the mobile to make it an ever changing growing piece of art—just like your baby!

Of course, your baby is not the only one in the family who outgrows things, although it seems that way! Keep in mind that *your* outgrown items can also be recycled to add to baby's blossoming creativity. If you get a new camera, give the old one to your toddler. With or without film it will provide hours of imaginative play and a new way of looking at the world.

Old books and magazines can provide hours of paper fun and genuinely important opportunities for exploring paper. This issue of PARENTGUIDE can, after being read by you, provide opportunities for exploring, crumbling, folding and tearing for your toddler. It can provide material for collage and an opportunity for you and your baby to write a



whole new book together. You can choose an issue of interest or concern to your child, and sit together looking for pictures on that subject. This is also an ideal way to explore many art concepts. "Let's find all of the pictures of red (or blue, yellow, round, bumpy) things and paste them in a notebook." If your toddler seems to be having a sad day, why not have him look for pictures of other unhappy children. This will give you an opportunity to talk and, perhaps find out what is bothering him.

Your old clothes provide hours of

fantasy play and your old tools of trade do as well. Remember that "toys" are a relatively new concept, and that the real world provides the most compelling and inspiring play your child can engage in.

Susan Striker is the author of the best-selling series, The Anti-Coloring Books and the founder of Young At Art Studio in New York. Her latest book, Young At Art, The First Anti-Coloring Book For Preschoolers, was published in March, and her next book, Please Touch will be out in the Fall.