

The report discusses the reasons for pregnancy in schoolgirls and makes suggestions on prevention aimed particularly at health education programmes in schools. The importance of adequate health care during pregnancy is stressed and mention is made of the primary care team. Social and educational aspects of pregnancy in schoolgirls are dealt with in depth and suggestions are made to improve their situation. The welfare of the child and father are considered and there is a complex legal argument to define the rights of mother, child and father.

It appears that evidence was not submitted to the Working Party by the Royal College of General Practitioners, although both the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Royal College of Psychiatrists did so. This may explain the small role afforded the family doctor in this report despite obvious involvement in the care of the pregnant schoolgirl, her infant and family and in the provision of contraception. Failure to consider the general practitioner's contribution unbalances an otherwise useful document in which all the available evidence on schoolgirl pregnancy is drawn together. Researchers and general practitioners

with a special interest will find this report a valuable source although its complexity and length will limit its more general appeal.

A. HUTCHINSON

YOUR CHILD'S TEETH. A PARENT'S GUIDE TO MAKING AND KEEPING THEM PERFECT

Stephen J. Moss

Penguin Books
Harmondsworth (1980)
156 pages. Price £1.25

Dentistry is not a subject that most general practitioners know much about. Nevertheless, the long waiting lists for dental treatment in many parts of the country often mean that patients seek advice from their family doctor in the meantime. The appallingly ill-funded, and therefore seldom offered, state of NHS preventive dentistry in the UK should perhaps make members of the primary health care team more conscious of the advice and help they can offer patients.

To this end, this is a magnificent

book that could be recommended to any parent. Its title is self-explanatory, and its author, who is Professor and Chairman of Dentistry for Children at New York University, writes entertainingly, clearly, and enthusiastically. The book is easy to read and full of clear, practical and sensible advice. I am not in a position to debate the finer points of any scientific theories that he quotes but, in general, common sense advice is the order of the day.

Although the author is American, he does discuss fully the provision of NHS services, though I doubt whether he is aware how difficult it is for the average patient to find a kind, gentle, NHS dentist who practises prevention, is good with children, and does not have a massive waiting list. His advice to find such a dentist is of course quite right, but barely practicable.

My only other doubt is common to all books on health. Will the people who need them be the people who buy them?

I am delighted to have read this book. I only hope that in 50 years' time my children will flash a smile of unblemished teeth and be glad I read it too.

DAVID HASLAM

REPORT

The General Practitioner and Social Worker Workshop, Manchester, 28-30 March 1979

THE theme of the conference was dependence on alcohol and prescribed drugs. The first speaker was Dr Alex Theodossiadis, consultant psychiatrist, Manchester, who opened the conference with a general discussion of biological and psychological dependency.

Alcoholism

Mr Stan Shaw, Co-Director of the Detoxification Evaluation Project at the Institute of Psychiatry, spoke on early identification of alcohol problems. He explained that it is particularly difficult to identify alcoholism because its symptoms, almost without excep-

tion, can have other organic causes. However, he outlined a range of illnesses and social difficulties which are associated with alcoholism and which, if present, can lead to a diagnosis.

Mrs Elizabeth Broderick, Director of the Greater Manchester Council on Alcoholism, described the work of her organization. She stressed the importance of offering an appointment to clients on the same or the following day after they approach or are referred to the Council. If this is not done the client may lose the motivation for treatment. She discussed the reasons leading to referral and the help which can be offered to the families of alcoholics even when the patient has refused treatment for him or herself.

Brian Hore, consultant psychiatrist and Director of the Alcoholic Unit at the Withington Hospital, Man-

© *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 1981, 31, 61-62.