

Neighbors In Child Care

A Newsletter
for Adults Who
Care for Young
Children

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Winter 1992

WCTE
TOLEDO PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

**MISTER
ROGERS®
NEIGHBORHOOD®**



Dear Child Care Providers and Parents

WE'RE PLEASED TO be working with our friends at WGTE Toledo Public Broadcasting, who are publishing this newsletter and distributing it with the support of your area's PBS station. Together, we can help extend our television Neighborhood to day care centers and to child care homes. We're glad to be partners with you, too, in the important care you're giving to children as their important child care providers.

Right from the start, I would like you to know how I feel about my role in the lives of those who use our television programs. I think of myself as another honest adult in the life of a child who is watching. If I am a friend to that child, I am an *adult* friend. I feel responsible to be just that: truthful, trustworthy, predictable, and interested in the outsides and insides of a child's world. You, your children, and the children you care for, can count on me to be such a person.

In the months and years ahead I hope that you who live and work with young children will continue to count on our organization (Family Communications, Inc.) as an honest resource for growing, and will try to understand with us what children are dealing with and how we can be the healthiest possible support to them and to ourselves.

Most Sincerely,

Fred Rogers

Neighbors in Child Care
*A Newsletter for Adults who
Care for Young Children*
Winter 1992

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Neighbors in Child Care is published quarterly by WGTE Public Broadcasting Foundation of Northwest Ohio. This newsletter is part of the research and demonstration project, *Extending "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" to Child Care*, a joint venture of WGTE and Family Communications, Inc., the producers of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD. The project has been funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

For more information about the project, contact your local public television station. Or, call Karen Roadruck, Project Coordinator at WGTE, Toledo (419) 243-3091; or Sam Newbury and Hedda Sharapan, Project Coordinators at Family Communications, Inc. (412) 687-2990.

Who is Fred Rogers?

The man is full of surprises.

"I'M A COMPOSER and piano player," says Rogers thoughtfully, as though not quite sure where to begin, "a writer and television producer...almost by accident a performer...a husband, father and grandfather. And I'm a minister. You know, most of us are many things, and I remember the marvelous feeling I had when I realized that many parts of who I am could be brought together in work for children and their families. That's what I am the most: a man who cares deeply about children."

Known as one of the softest-spoken people on television, Fred Rogers' voice nonetheless resounded over radio and television when he spoke to parents' and children's concerns about the war in the Persian Gulf. His message is one of respect for fellow humans, but caustic comics Johnny Carson, Jay Leno and Joan Rivers have all invited him to appear with them on THE TONIGHT SHOW. And although his personal style is traditional, even conservative, The Village Voice cited him as the only valid father figure on television.

Many of the feelings and interests reflected in MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD began in Fred McFeely Rogers' own childhood. Rogers was born in 1928 in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, a small industrial town about an hour's drive east of Pittsburgh. Some of his sensitivity to children can be traced to his relationship with his adopted sister Elaine, who came along when Fred was 11 years old. His love of music, language and creative expression was encouraged by his parents, grandparents and neighbors.

Rogers received a bachelor's degree in music composition in 1951 from Rollins College in Florida. Television was still in its early days then, and after watching several programs for children, Rogers realized that children's television needed performers and producers who understood their audiences and cared about them.

So instead of entering the seminary as planned, Rogers headed for New York and NBC-TV, where his television apprenticeship included work on such shows as THE VOICE OF FIRESTONE, THE KATE SMITH HOUR and the NBC OPERA THEATER.

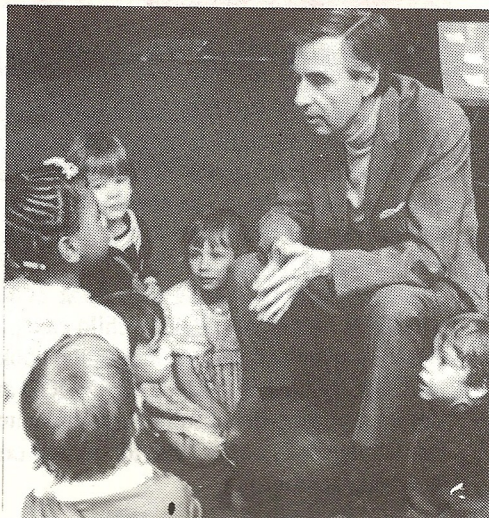
In 1953, Rogers moved back to Pittsburgh at the request of WQED, the nation's first community-supported public TV station. There he produced an hour-long program called CHILDREN'S CORNER. Besides being producer, Rogers also played the background music and worked the hand puppets.

He could not ignore his call to the ministry, however, and during his lunch hours and at night he managed to keep working on his degree at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He also took graduate courses in child development and psychology, and worked closely with children in association with Dr. Margaret McFarland of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Rogers also trained at The Arsenal Family and Children's Center in Pittsburgh, with Doctors Benjamin Spock and Erik Erikson. In 1962, Rogers became a Presbyterian minister and was ordained to work with children and families through the mass media.

Almost 30 years later, this quiet man continues his mission of helping young children nurture self-esteem and discover and accept their own feelings and potential. Although he doesn't feel at home in the spotlight, Rogers is unfailingly friendly when stopped on the street or in airports, or asked for autographs in restaurant or stores.

Even though people may consider him a star, Rogers dislikes the term. A better one, perhaps, is one coined by a poetic admirer, who called him "a bright light in childhood's sky."

And a very bright light in the world of children's television, we may add.



"That's what I am the most: a man who cares deeply about children."

—Fred Rogers

Viewing Mister Rogers With Children

MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD was designed as a "television visit" for a child viewing at home. So when you use it with children in a group setting you may need to find ways to adapt the viewing situation to have it work well for both you and the children in your care. You may want to consider the following:

1. Children often have strong preferences about how they like to watch television — and there may

be good reasons for what feels comfortable for them. Sitting in a chair, for example, may help children define their own boundaries. Some may want to sit or lie down on the floor, while others like to snuggle with a toy or a blanket.

2. Some children may want to sit close beside you. Being able to

physically feel the presence of a caring adult may help them settle in for a comfortable "television visit" with Mister Rogers.

3. It's not unusual for children's attention to wander while watching.

That doesn't necessarily mean they've stopped listening. You may be surprised by how much children have absorbed, even when their attention seems to have wandered.

4. Many people have found that younger children tend to watch when Mister Rogers' face is on the screen and then lose interest

during more complicated scenes. As children get older, they will grow into the rest of the program and realize how a show's parts are related.

5. Have some quiet activities nearby, such as crayons and paper or puzzles, for children who become restless or don't want to watch. Such activities can keep them from distracting the other children, and you may still be able to care for them without moving away from the group.

6. Keep important physical safety factors in mind. Always strap or bolt TV sets securely to their carts, and store them away from the play space and out of sight when not in use. Also, never ask a child to help wheel the cart from one location to another, and keep children away from the cart itself as it is being moved.



Ella Jenkins, children's folk singer, invites children to imagine and pretend in a new week of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD programs, airing February 24-28 on most PBS stations.

“The ability to imagine is one of the most useful tools children need for their learning.”

—Fred Rogers

How to Use the Trolley Schedule

THE TROLLEY SCHEDULE identifies episodes of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD that PBS stations broadcast on specific dates. (Check with your local PBS station to find out if it broadcasts MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD on dates different from those on the Trolley.) The specific episode number corresponds to the program description and activities in the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*. The Trolley also shows days, dates and themes of the week.

Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book is designed for use by parents, caregivers, early childhood educators and other child care providers. In addition to over 350 pages of clearly-written and easy activities, the book also includes words to many of the songs from MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD and a special section with recipes and how-to's. Copies may be ordered from Family Communications, Inc.; call the FCI Marketing Department at 412-687-2990 for current order information. Or, contact your local public television station.

New Week of Programs on Imaginary Friends

Every year, MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD premieres a number of new programs. Related activities for these episodes will eventually be included in supplements to the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*. We are including descriptions for the new week of programs premiering February 24-28, 1992, as a special preview for child care providers; *Plan & Play* activities can be found on pages 7-8.

Monday, February 24 – #1646

The ability to imagine is one of the most useful tools children need for their learning. Mister Rogers uses his imagination as he draws with colored markers to music. Mr. McFeely brings a tape about how people make those markers. In the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, X the Owl gets a tripod for his new “TV” – it’s an “Imaginary Viewer!” Song: “You Are Special.”

Tuesday, February 25 – #1647

Imaginary friends can be a real comfort for those times when children are feeling lonely. Bob Trow comes by with his imaginary dog and tells Mister Rogers about the imaginary friends he made up in his childhood. In the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, Daniel Tiger’s imaginary friend, Malcolm Aprico Dinko, meets Bob Dog’s imaginary pet, Gloria. Songs: “Pretending” and “Please Don’t Think It’s Funny.”

Wednesday, February 26 – #1648

We can imagine what it might be like to do something, but it takes work and time and practice to make things happen. Mister Rogers has an umbrella and a videotape about how people make umbrellas. It’s raining in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, and Chuck Aber tries out Corney’s “Umbrellarockits” — a rocking chair with an umbrella cover — for the rain or sun or for pretending. Later Mister Rogers invites viewers to see a rehearsal of an umbrella dance. Songs: “Look and Listen” and “It’s Raining in the Neighborhood.”

Thursday, February 27 – #1649

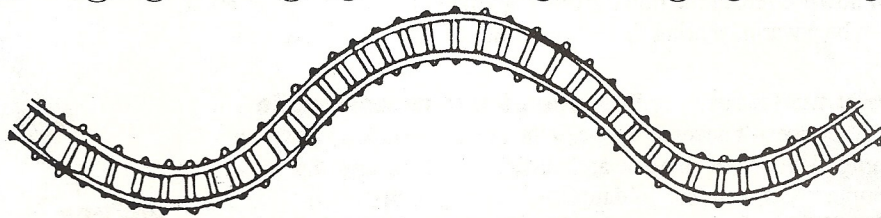
Imagining helps children make something out of whatever they have at the moment. Mister Rogers has a blank book and invites viewers to use their imagination with it and some other toys. In the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, Daniel Tiger’s imaginary friend gets an imaginary delivery. Chef Brockett shows Mister Rogers how to make a simple nutritious snack. Song: “There Are Many Ways.”

Friday, February 28 – #1650

Many important inventions in this world were developed because people imagined them first! Folk singer Ella Jenkins is a surprise guest at Neighbor Maggie Stewart’s “Sing and Sign.” Is there an imaginary friend to blame for the mystery in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe? Why won’t Lady Elaine’s Museum-Go-Round stop twirling? Song: “Everything Grows Together.”

FEBRUARY

This Week: DANCE	3 #1571 It's Raining; Tai-Chi Is Like a Dance	4 #1572 Shamu the Whale; Caring for Fish; Dancing Mobiles	5 #1573 How People Make Shoes; Sam Weber, Tap Dancer	6 #1574 Dance Theater of Harlem; Dancing Is for Everyone	7 #1575 Tamburizan Folk- Dancers; A Weaver at Work
	10 #1576 Feelings When People Laugh at Mistakes	11 #1577 How People Make Books; Mistaken Delivery	12 #1578 Helping Others After Mistakes; Eraser Factory	13 #1579 Pianist André Watts; Practicing & Mistakes	14 #1580 Poetry Day; Even Parents Sometimes Make Mistakes
	17 #1581 Antique Car Show; A Song in Sign Language	18 #1582 Television Programs Around the World; Different Jobs	19 #1583 Differences Between A Real Dog and Pretend "Bob Dog"	20 #1584 Feeling Jealous; Making Strudel; Clowns	21 #1585 Circus Day; Help with Fears of Clown Make-Up
	24 #1646 Imagine with Music; How People Make Colored Markers	25 #1647 Imaginary Friends Can Help Lonely Times	26 #1648 Imagination + Work; Umbrella Factory; Rain	27 #1649 Blank Books for Imagining; Nutritious Snack	28 #1650 Ella Jenkins; Sign Language; Inventions



MARCH

This Week: NIGHTTIME	2 #1586 Nighttime Fears; How People Make Flashlights	3 #1587 Mister Rogers Visits Russian TV Program	4 #1588 Help with Fears of Firefighters' Gear & Bathroom Drains	5 #1589 Russian Visitor Tatiana Vedeneeva- Children's TV Host	6 #1590 People Who Work and Care for Us at Night
	9 #1591 Kind Reaction to McFeely's Mistake; Harmonica Factory	10 #1592 Eric Kloss Blind Saxophonist; Luray Cavern Visit	11 #1593 Kindness to a Lost Kitten; Jump Rope Exercises	12 #1594 How People Make Bicycle Helmets; Bicycle Safety	13 #1595 Broadway Dancer Tommy Tune is a Kind Tutor
	16 #1596 Underground House; Secrets in Nesting Boxes; Bike Ride	17 #1597 Treasure Hunt Game; Love is a Good Secret to Tell	18 #1598 Marble Sculptor at Work; Invisible Ink Pen	19 #1599 When Secrets Are Uncomfortable; Blind Artist	20 #1600 Suitcase Factory; Surprise Birthday Party
	23 #1601 Hats for Fun; Folk Singers; Making New Friends	24 #1602 Choosing Teams & Feeling Left Out; Soccer Game	25 #1603 Special Olympics; Feeling Proud; Baskets	26 #1604 Suzie McConnell of US Olympic Basketball Team	27 #1605 Win or Lose- Having Fun Is Important
This Week: WHEN PARENTS GO TO WORK	30 #1611 Being Upset When Parents Are Busy at Work	31 #1612 Going & Returning; Peek-a-boo; Peanut Snacks			

**MISTER
ROGERS'
NEIGHBORHOOD**



PARENTS' PAGE

Tips for Watching MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD

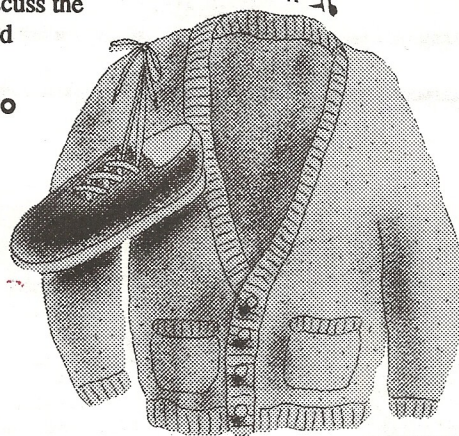
YOUR CHILD'S DAY care provider, along with your local Public Television Station, are happy to offer you these tips, which may make watching MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD and other public TV programs more enjoyable for you and your child.

1. Your child may have strong preferences about how to watch television. You may find that your son or daughter may prefer to sit in a chair sometimes, especially if other siblings are around. If your child prefers to sit or lie down on the floor, or wants to snuggle with a cuddly toy or a blanket, allow him or her to do so - we as adults watch TV in lots of different positions ourselves, depending on how we feel at the time. Allowing your child to share your lap, if so desired, can be a warm, sharing time for the both of you - the chores will always wait!

2. It's not unusual for a child's attention to wander while watching. That doesn't necessarily mean the child has stopped listening. In fact, seeming to "tune out" may be an indication of something that is particularly important to your son or daughter. When you discuss the program afterwards, you may be surprised how much the child has absorbed.

3. You may find your younger child may tend to watch when Mister Rogers' face is on the screen, and then lose interest during more complicated scenes. This may be due in part because a grownup's face is so important to young children. As they get older, they will understand how a show's parts are related. Having some quiet activities nearby, such as books or puzzles, can help your child to satisfy restlessness and yet still enjoy listening to Mister Rogers.

4. Try to watch programs with your child as much as possible. Then discuss what you've seen. Your child will enjoy having the chance to talk about what was important to him about the show. And you may get a different perspective on and enjoy the program more yourself!



MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD is produced by Family Communications, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation that produces audio, video and print materials designed to encourage communication between children and adults. For more information and a catalog, please write or call: Family Communications, Inc., Dept. A, 4802 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213; 412-687-2990.



**Watch MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD
on your local PBS station.**

WILL#12

7:30 am Monday - Friday
11:30 am Monday - Friday
10:00 am Sunday

Plan & Play for "Imaginary Friends"

MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD is producing three brand-new weeks of programs for its 1991-92 broadcast season, including a week about Imaginary Friends airing February 24-28. Because these episodes are too new to be included in the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*, this issue includes program descriptions for each show (page 4), as well as ideas for related Plan & Play activities (see below).

Thoughts for the Week:

MANY CHILDREN HAVE imaginary friends at one time or another. It sometimes makes adults a little uncomfortable when children turn up with an imaginary friend, partly because these imaginary friends can only be controlled by the children themselves, and partly because adults worry about the children's sense of real and pretend. Imaginary friends have a way of seeming all too real from time to time. Yet, imaginary friends can play an important role for children, allowing them to fulfill their wishes through their imaginations.

Sometimes imaginary friends help children to handle loneliness by being the friend or sibling that isn't there. Other times, the imaginary friend becomes the scapegoat who makes messes or gets into trouble when the child doesn't want to face the consequences. Wise adults encourage both the child and the imaginary friend to clean up the mess or set things right again so that children come to take responsibility for the imaginary friend's behavior as well as his or her own behavior. Imaginary friends usually play a brief role in a child's life, but their presence is often very helpful to the child as they provide needed companionship and support during a critical time in the child's life.

— Fred Rogers

Program #1646:

Drawing With Colored Markers

Talk with the children about how people make colored markers. What do they recall from the film? You could discuss the children's favorite colors or the different colors of markers available for them to use. If you have tapes, records or a radio, play some music and let the children "draw a song." Then see if the children want to tell you about their pictures.

Program #1647:

Imaginary Pets

You could begin by discussing with the children any real pets they have at home. Can the children show you how they pet the animal or care for it? You can encourage children to create a pretend pet and tell you a little about it. Some children might want to draw a picture of their imaginary pets; others might want to take their imaginary pets for a walk, or have them become a part of their pretending.



Program #1648: Imaginary Viewers

Children can create their own imaginary viewers with cardboard boxes or tubes. (Children can use tubes as if they were telescopes.) Encourage the children to imagine they can see something when they look into the viewers and let them talk about the imaginary things they can see. You might want to reassure them that no one can see what they are thinking when they imagine...they have to tell you for you to know. The children could use colored markers to decorate their imaginary viewers.

Program #1649: An Imaginary Book

Assemble blank booklets for each child by stapling five or six sheets of paper together and write each child's name on the booklet. Then sit alone with one to two children at a time, and let them tell you their imaginary stories. Encourage them to turn the

pages and "handle" the booklet as if it were a real book with words and pictures on each page. Some children may want to turn the imaginary books into real books by drawing on the pages and having you write down the words they say.

Program #1650: Everything Grows Together

If you and the children know the tune to the Mister Rogers' song, "Everything Grows Together," you might sing it with them and ask them to touch each body part as it is named. Or, you could play the simple game, "Where's Your Nose?" By asking children to point to a particular body part as it is named, you help them to become more aware of their own identity. If you are comfortable allowing children to pass a hand mirror around, you can let them look at their faces as they point to their noses, eyebrows, eyelashes, mouths, ears, hair, cheeks and chins.



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