THE COMMON SENSE BOOK OF BABY AND CHILD CARE

The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care written by Benjamin Spock, is a manual on infant and child care first published in 1946. The book, along with Dr. Spock, attained fame almost instantly, selling 500,000 copies in its first six months. By 1998, over 50 million copies of the book had been sold, making it the best-selling book of the twentieth century in America, aside from the Bible. As of 2011, the book had been translated into 39 languages.

Spock and his manual helped revolutionize child-rearing methods for the post-World War II generation. Mothers heavily relied on Spock's advice and appreciated his friendly, reassuring tone. Spock emphasizes in his book that, above all, parents should have confidence in their abilities and trust their instincts. The famous first line of the book reads, "Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do."

HISTORY

CHILD CARE BEFORE SPOCK

Spock's book helped revolutionize child care in the 1940s and 1950s. Prior to this, rigid schedules permeated pediatric care. Influential authors like behavioral psychiatrist John B. Watson, who wrote Psychological Care of Infant and Child in 1928, and pediatrician Emmett Holt, who wrote The Care and Feeding of Children: A Catechism for the Use of Mothers and Children's Nurses in 1894, told parents to feed babies on strict schedules and start toilet training at an early, specific age.

Further, these experts, whose ideas were embodied in Infant Care pamphlets distributed by the U.S. government, warned against "excessive" affection by parents for their children. To maintain sterility and to prevent children from becoming spoiled or fussy, these experts recommended kissing children only on the forehead and limiting hugs or other displays of affection.

INTENT

As a practicing pediatrician in the 1930s, Spock noticed that prevailing methods in pediatric care seemed cruel and ignored the emotional needs of the child. He wanted to explore the psychological reasons behind common problems seen during practices like

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World Heritage Encyclopedia Edition
The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care

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The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care

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Benjamin Spock

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Although Spock was approached to write a child-care manual in 1938 by Doubleday, he did not yet feel certain enough of his professional abilities to accept the offer. Eventually, though, after several more years of giving advice to parents, Spock felt ready to approach a major publisher in order to give less arbitrary advice to mothers who came to his practice. He thus became trained in psychoanalysis, emerging as the first pediatrician with a psychoanalytic background.Seeking useful ways to implement Freudian philosophy into child-rearing practices, Spock would try out his advice on patients and their mothers, continuously seeking their response.[1] He contradicted contemporary norms in child care by supporting flexibility instead of rigidity and encouraging love for children by their parents.[2] He also masked Freudian explanations of children's behavior in plainspoken language to avoid offending his readers, making his work accessible to mainstream America.

Spock's reputation has changed over time, but Spock continued to be a leading authority on child care until his death. In 1990, Spock's views have brought naturalness, common sense, reassurance, Sigmund Freud and even joy to parents all over the world.
Nuclear family
Orphaned
Shared
Single parent
Blended family
Surrogacy
In loco parentis

Attachment theory
Applied behavior analysis
Behaviorism
Child development
Cognitive development
Developmental psychology
Human development
Love
Maternal bond
Nature versus nurture
Parental investment
Paternal bond
Pediatrics
Social psychology

Attachment parenting
Concerted cultivation
Gatekeeper parent
Helicopter parent
Nurturant parenting
Slow parenting
Soccer mom
Strict father model
Taking Children Seriously
Work at home parent

After-school activity
Allowance
Bedtime
Child care
Co-sleeping
Homeschooling
Latchkey kid
Parent Management Training
Play (date)
Role model
Spoiled child
Television
Toy (educational)

Blanket training
Corporal punishment in the home
Curfew
Grounding
Tactical ignoring
Time-out

Child abandonment
Child abuse
Child labour
Child neglect
Choreville effect
Incest
Narcissistic parent
Parental abuse by children
Parental alienation

Child support
Cost of raising a child
Marriage
Parental responsibility
Deadbeat parent
Paternity
Dissolution
Child care or childcare, child minding, daycare, or preschool is the caring for and supervision of a child or children, usually from age six weeks to age thirteen. Child care is the action or skill of looking after children by a day-care center, babysitter, or other providers. Child care is a broad topic covering a wide spectrum of contexts, activities, social and cultural conventions, and institutions. By Spock's death in 1998, over 50 million copies of the book had been sold, making it the best-selling book of the twentieth century in America, aside from the Bible. As of 2011, the book had been translated into 39 languages. Spock and his manual helped revolutionize child-rearing methods for the post-World War II generation.