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.

Furthermore, 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...
REVISED EDITIONS
During Spock's lifetime, seven editions of his book were published. Several co-authors have helped revise the book since the fifth edition. Since Spock's death in 1998, two more editions have been published.

Spock, Benjamin; Rotherenberg, Michael B. (1985). Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care for the Nineties (9th ed.). New York City: E.P. Dutton.
Spock, Benjamin; Rotherenberg, Michael B. (1992). Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care (10th ed.). New York City: Dutton.
Spock, Benjamin; Parker, Steven (1996). Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care (11th ed.). New York City: Pocket Books.

Each subsequent edition of the book brings medical information up-to-date. Other revisions have emerged to deal with contemporary social issues, such as daycare and gay parenting. [29]

In the second edition, Spock emphasizes in several new chapters the importance of “firm but gentle” control of children. [30] He warns against self-demand feeding, a type of feeding that had become popular in the 1940s. Because parents were letting their he or she should be fed, some parents began indulging all of their child’s desires, resulting in unregulated sleep schedules and a loss of control for the parents. Spock clarifies in his manual that white parents should respect their children, they also must act as return. [31]

By the fourth edition, Spock adapts to society’s shifting ideas of gender equality, especially after the rise of [32] He warns against praising girls only on their appearance and notes the sexism present in a household where girls learn to do housework while boys do not. Spock also continues to expand on the role of fathers and acknowledges that parents should have an equal share in child-rearing responsibilities, while also both having the right to work. [33]

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SYNOPSIS
The Common-Sense Book of Baby and Child Care is arranged by topics corresponding to the child's age, ranging from infancy to teen years. Drawn from his career as a pediatrician, Spock's advice is comprehensive, dealing with topics such as preparing for the baby, toilet training, school, illness, and "special problems" like "separated parents" and "the fatherless child." [36]

Unlike leading child care experts prior to the 1940s, Spock supports flexibility in child-rearing, advising parents to treat each child as an individual. Drawing on his psychoanalytic training, he explains the behavior and motivations of children at each stage or parents to make their own decisions about how to raise their children. For example, Spock has an entire chapter devoted to "The One-Year-Old," in which he explains that babies at this age like to explore the world around them. He then suggests ways to: and prevent accidents with a "wandering baby." [37]

Spock emphasizes that ultimately, the parents' "natural loving care" for their child is most important. [38] He reminds parents to have confidence in their abilities and to trust their common sense; his practice as a pediatrician had proven to him that parents usually best know how to raise their [39]

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Theories - Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuclear family</th>
<th>Orphaned</th>
<th>Shared</th>
<th>Single parent</th>
<th>Blended family</th>
<th>Surrogacy</th>
<th>In loco parentis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attachment theory</td>
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<td>Behaviorism</td>
<td>Child development</td>
<td>Cognitive development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Maternal bond</td>
<td>Nature versus nurture</td>
<td>Parental investment</td>
<td>Paternal bond</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>Social psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Styles

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

Techniques

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<tr>
<th>After-school activity</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Bedtime</th>
<th>Child care</th>
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<th>Homeschooling</th>
<th>Latchkey kid</th>
<th>Parent Management Training</th>
<th>Play date</th>
<th>Role model</th>
<th>Spoiled child</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Toy (educational)</th>
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Discipline

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<tr>
<th>Blanket training</th>
<th>Corporal punishment in the home</th>
<th>Curfews</th>
<th>Grounding</th>
<th>Tactical ignoring</th>
<th>Time-out</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child abandonment</td>
<td>Child abuse</td>
<td>Child labour</td>
<td>Child neglect</td>
<td>Child abuse by children</td>
<td>Child alienation</td>
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Abuse

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<tr>
<th>Cost of raising a child</th>
<th>Divorce</th>
<th>Parental responsibility</th>
<th>Deadbeat parent</th>
<th>Parental alienation</th>
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Legal and social aspects

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Child support</th>
<th>Deadbeat parent</th>
<th>Disownment</th>
<th>Paternity</th>
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Benjamin Spock's Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care is one of the best-selling books of all time, with overall sales of some 50 million. Sixty-five years since its first publication, what is Dr Spock's contribution to child-rearing today? Image caption Dr Spock rejected the idea that too much affection made children weak. The book's title wasn't the most exciting. But in the austere post-war years, its message was revolutionary: "As soon as it hit the market, it was acclaimed," says Professor Lynn Bloom, Dr Benjamin Spock's biographer and friend. The book was at times controversial; Spock was accused of advocating permissiveness. Others criticized the book's status as a bible for parents, bemoaning its influence on generations of children. On the other hand, many parents believe that the book increased their confidence, especially for women, Spock's assertion that it was acceptable to be irritated or impatient on occasion debunked myths about the "perfect parent." He also urged parents to be active in politics and their communities, to make their children's world better. No book published after 1957 has been a true reprint of the original book. Starting with Baby and Child Care (1957), books have been coming out claiming to be new editions of the original book, but in reality they are different books, not the same book. Poor Dr. Spock has had to cater to the demands of various pressure groups who demanded revisions of his work. ...more. Get A Copy.

Benjamin McLane Spock was an American pediatrician whose book Baby and Child Care, published in 1946, is one of the biggest best-sellers of all time. Its revolutionary message to mothers was that "you know more than you think you do." Spock was the first pediatrician to study psychoanalysis to try to understand children's needs and family dynamics.