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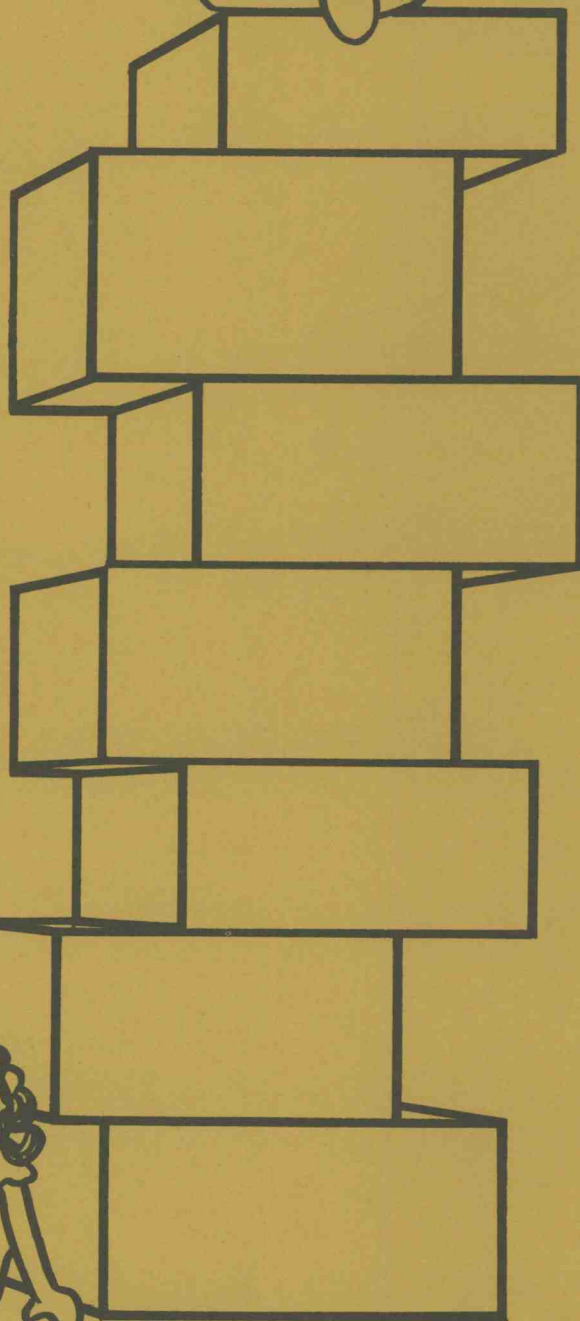
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storage for kids stuff



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CONTENTS

Stages of children's growth and storage needs	3
Infancy 0-1 years	3
Toddler 1-2½ years	4
Early School 6-12 years	4
Teenager 13-19 years	4
Plan Ahead for Storage	5
Clothes Closets	5
Drawers	5
Bedroom Accessories	6
Toy Storage	7
Study Areas	8

storage for KID'S stuff

by Judy Burrridge, Extension Home Economist

Children need work space and storage for clothes, toys, recreational equipment and study supplies. Providing these spaces encourages development of self-help techniques, neatness and, as the child grows older, good study habits. Children's storage should be flexible enough to grow with them. This bulletin is intended to be a guide for planning children's storage.

Stages of children's growth and storage needs

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Stage and Age:

STORAGE NEEDS

Infancy 0-1 years

Basically oriented for mother's convenience. Routines relate to baby's activities—sleeping, bathing, diapering and feeding. Because of safety factors, temporary storage of soiled clothes and diapers should be provided near the changing table.

Changing table or chest of drawers (holds notions, lotions, clothing and diapers).

Wet diaper receptacle.

Diaper pail.

Cupboard space for feeding equipment.

Area to store equipment such as:

- • bathtub
- stroller or buggy
- walker
- playpen
- • car bed
- • infant seat
- high chair
- • jump seat

* Indicates equipment that will not be needed in following developmental stages.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

STORAGE NEEDS

Toddler 1-2½ years

Transitory from mother-oriented to self-help. Child *may* begin to dress himself—needs storage for toys, some books, art materials and games, as well as clothes.

- Closet or clothes rod
- Drawer space
- Low, open shelving for toy storage

Preschool 2½-5 years

Storage should be designed for developmental self-help stage of the child. Toys are designed for small muscle development, dramatic play and some large muscle development. Child begins art work, "writing." Likes to be read to—wants books.

- Clothes closet with low rod.
- Shelves for pull toys, dolls, books, etc.
- Drawers or trays for small toys such as puzzles and some games.
- Large drawers or bins for blocks.
- Storage area for wheel toys such as tri-cycles, wagons, etc.
- Desk for art and "writing" supplies.

Early School 6-12 years

Activities are oriented around school and play. The young child is an avid collector of things which require storage. The older child has storage needs for recreation, hobby or sports equipment and needs space for study. Adjustments in clothing storage may be necessary as the child grows older. As children begin to have needs for privacy and ownership at this age, provision for a place for their own things is desirable.

- Low rod for hanging clothes.
- Drawers for folded clothing.
- Shelves for collections.
- Bulletin board for "works of art."
- Storage cupboards for art supplies.
- Shelves for books.
- Shelves for toys, games.
- Desk and study supplies.
- Storage area for wheel toys.
- Large storage area for hobby, sporting equipment.
- An area for each child's own possessions.

Teenager 13-19 years

Space requirements are greatest at this stage. Storage needs are for self-learning equipment, recreation, sporting, hobby equipment, clothing and grooming aids. As individuality, sex differences and privacy are important at this age, individual storage is desirable.

- Closet space.
- Drawers for folded clothes.
- Area for desk and desk supplies.
- Shelves for books.
- Area for hobbies, collections.
- Storage for records, tapes.
- Storage for educational media, projectors, tapes, films. (Self-learning media.)
- Storage area for grooming aids.

PLAN AHEAD for storage

Since most families do not have the resources to completely refurbish each time a child enters a new stage, planning flexible storage for children is helpful. If you are planning a home in which you will be living several years, built-in storage may be ideal. For those who anticipate moving, portable units may be more practical than built-in storage.

Clothes Closets

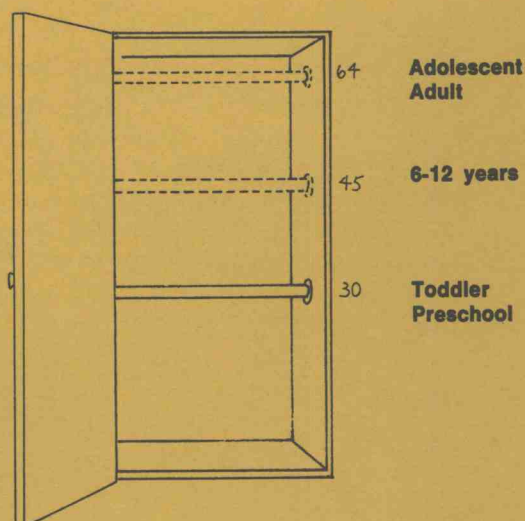
Children should be able to reach clothing rods. Suggested height from the floor for clothes rods are 30" for toddlers, 45" for early school years and 64" for teenagers. Several alternatives can be used to make closets grow with the child. Hardware for clothing rods may be purchased inexpensively and added to the closet to make rod height adjustable. Portable rods that are held in place by suction cups or screws may be put in closets at height needed.

When the toddler is using the lower rod, out-of-season clothing may be hung above on the adult rod. If more shelving is needed in the room, brackets or guides could be attached to the side walls of the closet enabling the use of flexible shelves until the adult rod is needed.

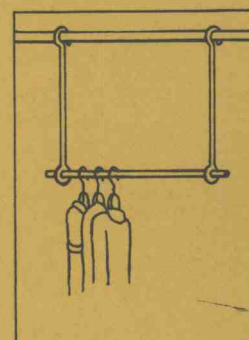
Drawers should be at a height that the child can reach. Many shallow drawers enable children to find socks, underwear and shirts that are stored there. Drawers which are too deep and become cluttered can be better utilized by adding sliding trays to the top half.



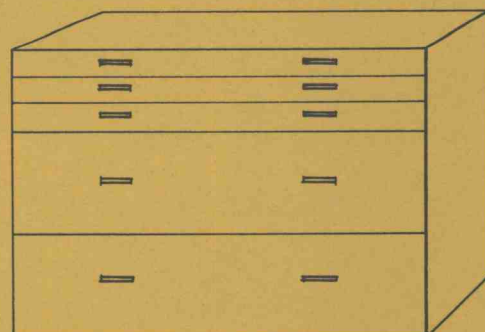
Sliding tray in a deep drawer.



Children's closets should grow with the child. Allow 48" of rod space for each family member.



Additional rods can be suspended from existing rods to make clothes easier to reach.

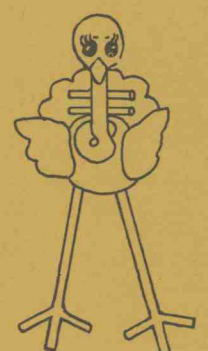
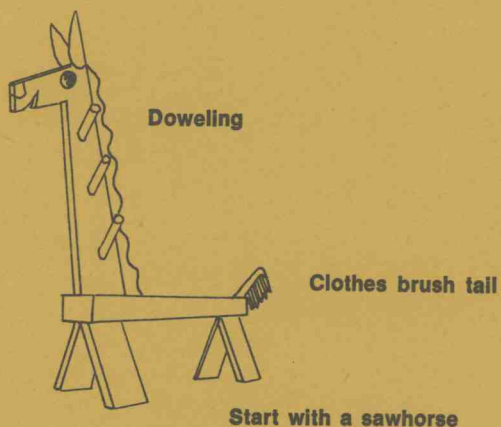


If deep drawers are used, they should be low to enable small children to see into them.

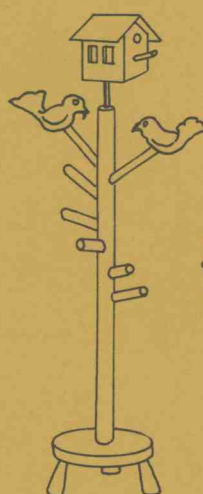
Bedroom Accessories

Bedroom accessories help younger children to be neat, to help themselves, and to stimulate their imagination. They can be used in the decorating scheme of the room. These accessories can be made inexpensively at home or purchased. Some ideas are:

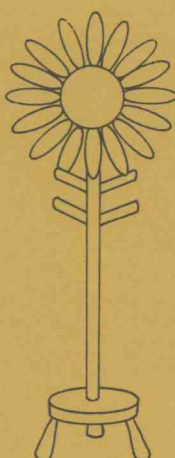
**Clothes tree:
animal or
vegetable**



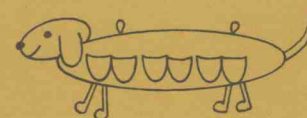
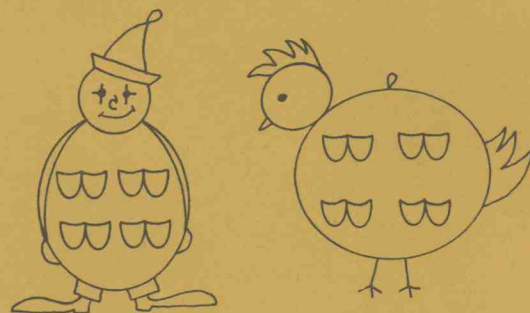
Paper mache birds



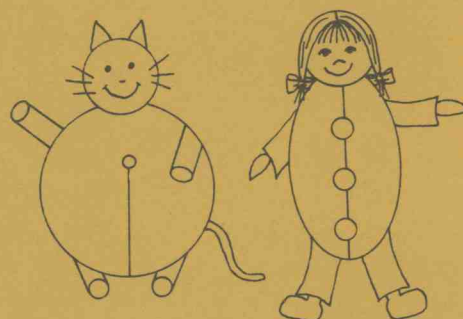
**Doweling
Small dowels**



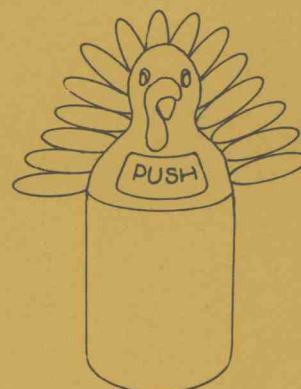
Plywood or paper mache



**Decorative Animal or
Clown shoe bags to hang on wall**



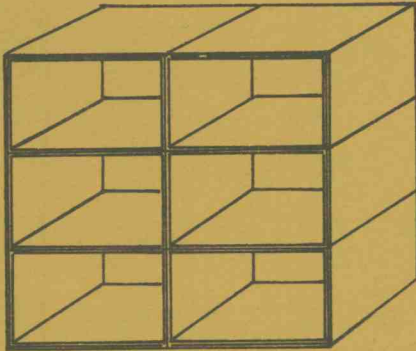
**Animal or doll
Pajama bags for the bed**



Laundry gobbler
(Ventilated base with turkey head
which can be made from paper mache)

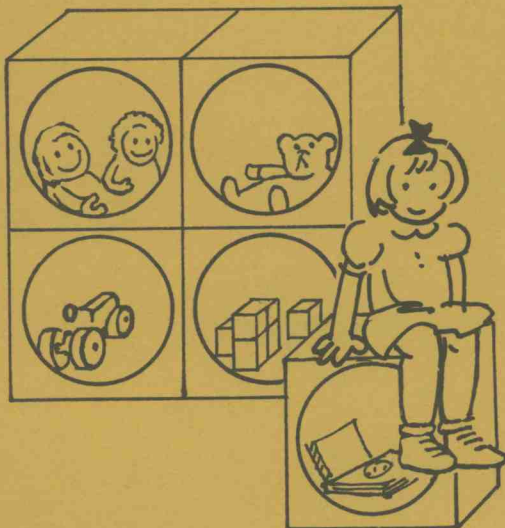
Toy Storage

Children need easy access to playthings. When planning storage for toys, shelving enables the child to locate the toy he wants without rummaging through a toy box.



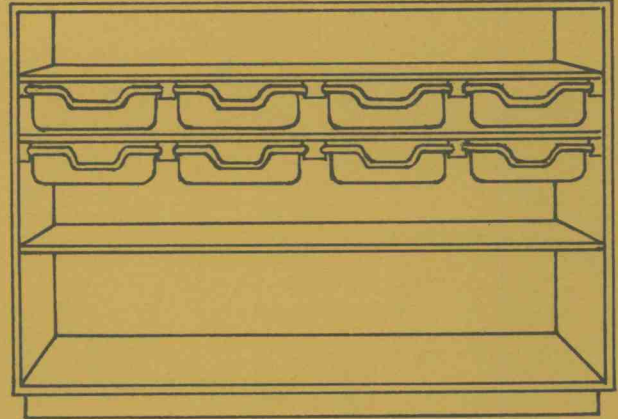
Covered Boxes.

An inexpensive approach to shelving is to cover boxes with adhesive paper or vinyl and stack them.



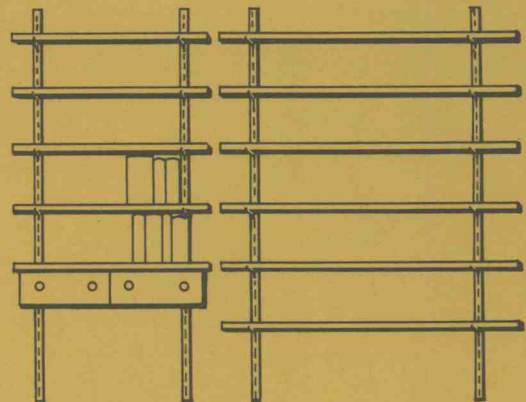
Storage Modules.

Storage modules can be made from plywood. They do double duty work as shelving or toys.



Storage Bins.

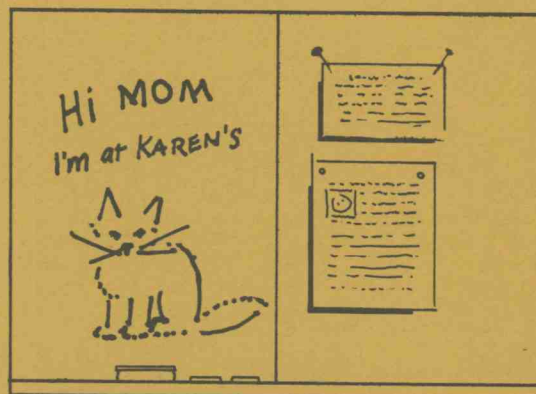
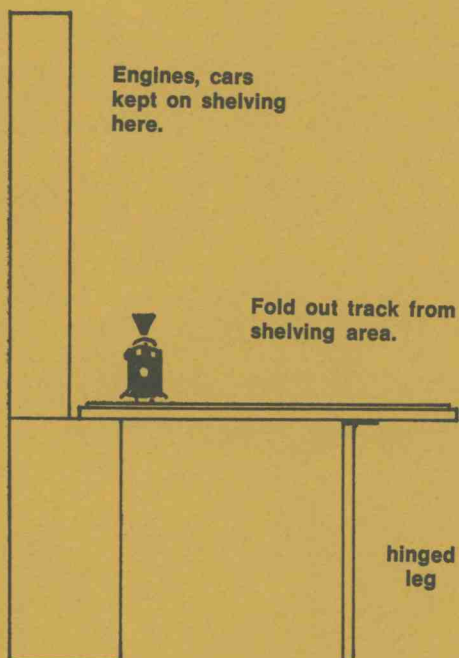
A cabinet with shelves for storing toys enables children to learn to be neat. Plastic vegetable bins are handy for storing small items. Open shelving that is adjustable is flexible and will "grow" with the child.



Storage Walls.

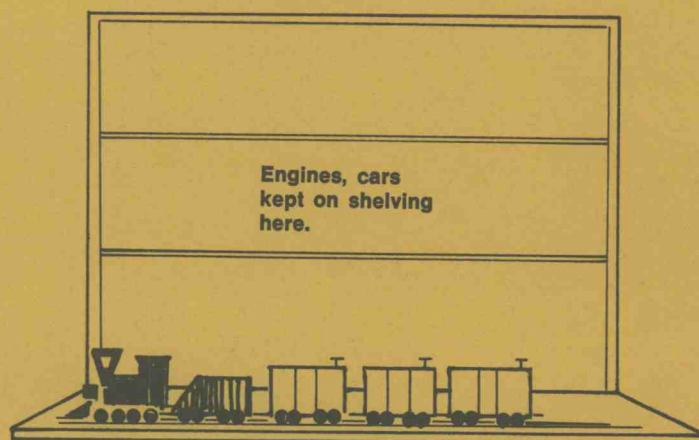
More expensive but more durable than boxes are storage walls. These should have adjustable shelving for flexible use.

Tracked toys such as model trains and car-racing outfits are best utilized if they are mounted on a large sheet of plywood with some provisions of storing out of sight when not in use.



Folded Up

It's a blackboard-bulletin board.



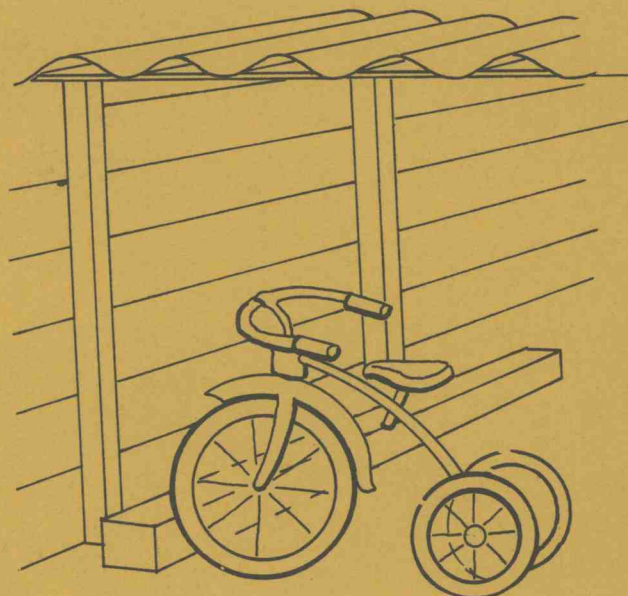
Dropped down

It's Junior's train track board.

Large wheel toys present special problems. In rainy climate provision for storage requires cover. Storage area can be in garage or basement with easy access to outdoors. An outdoor "parking area" or "trike-port" encourages the junior set to park off the sidewalks or driveway where deserted tricycles and wheel toys can be hazardous. Bicycle racks keep bicycles from being parked in the middle of the sidewalk.

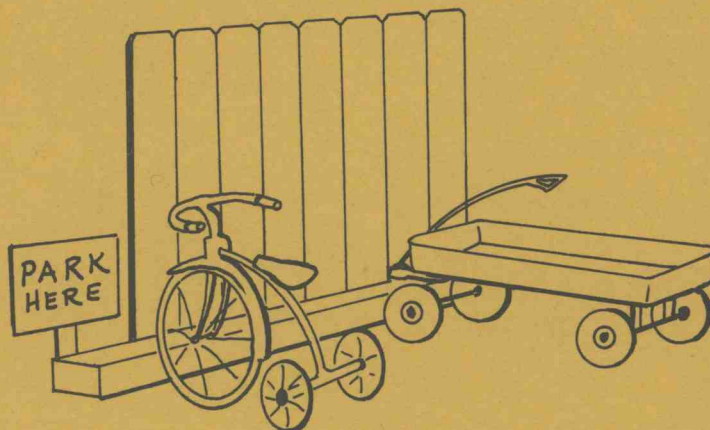
Fiberglass Roofing

Trike Port



Located on back of garage or house. Provision for locking is desirable.

Provisions in yard area should be made for temporary storage for wheel toys to keep them off sidewalks or driveways where they are hazardous.



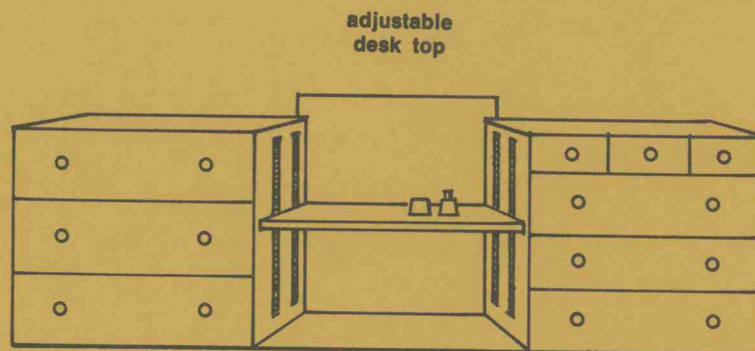
Study Areas

School age children need a study area in which they can store books, paper, art and writing materials and study. Adequate lighting and writing space is needed.

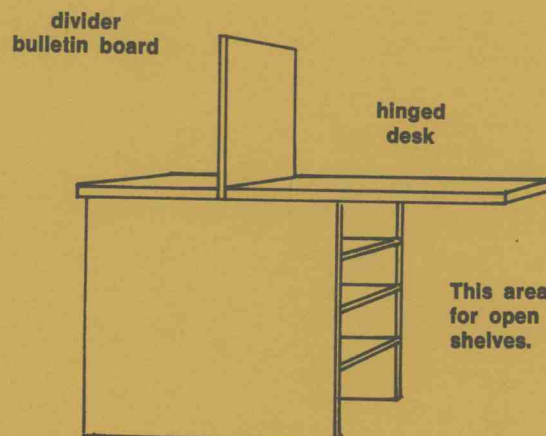
Supplies for study area storage may be:

pencils	paper	dictionary
pens	paper weight	thesaurus
scotch tape	glue or rubber cement	encyclopedias
scissors	stapler	books
rulers	art materials	file materials
erasers	and supplies	
pencil sharpener	typewriter	

Suggestions for study areas include:

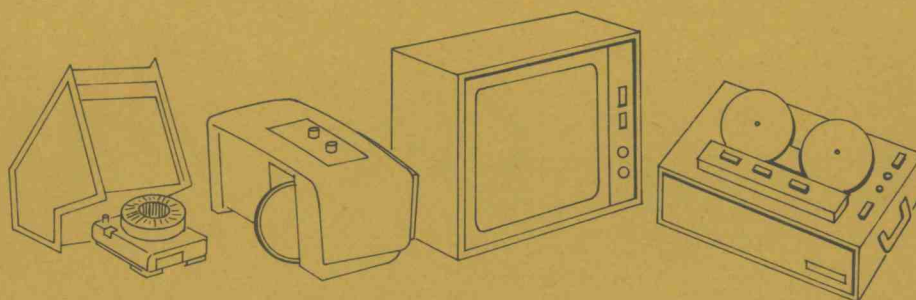


Plastic-laminated desk tops can be a part of built-in storage. Adjustable tracking enables the desk to grow with the child.



Portable desk units can be made for children sharing a room.

Learning aids require areas for use; storage space for supplies.



**carousel
back screen**

film loop projector

TV

tape recorder

A new concept for study areas is that of a self-learning center. This means space is needed for equipment such as television, tape recorders, slide and film projectors. If the family is photography and music-orientated, the learning center can serve as a multi-purpose area.

Storage needs for a learning center are for the following equipment:

projectors
films, slides

tape recorder
recording tape

electrical cords
screens, back-
screens
electronic syn-
chronizer

maps, charts
posters, illustrations

Storage for children should be planned to fit their clothing, grooming, recreation, hobby and study needs. These needs change as children grow, necessitating planning for flexibility of storage units. For further information about storage contact your county Extension home economist.

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