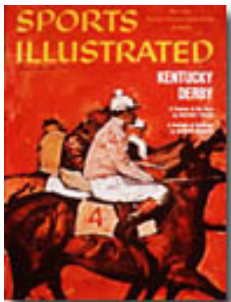
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May 02, 1960

Fitness From The Cradle

The week of May 1 to 7 has been designated by President Eisenhower as National Youth Fitness Week, and the happy family shown at right is making its own special and significant contribution to it. They have been chosen by Sports Illustrated and Bonnie Prudden to introduce a new program that will help American parents to build a fit generation of children right in their own home—from babyhood on

A fact of fitness that hitherto has gone virtually unnoticed is that a sound program can be started right from infancy. Most children, in the first formative years before the walls of the schoolroom begin to circumscribe their lives, have little or no guidance on the development of physical health. Yet these are the very years when a sound program can lay the foundations for fitness that will last a lifetime and build habits that will never be forgotten. With this in mind, **Bonnie Prudden**, director of **New York's** Institute for Physical Fitness, has devised a program of exercises specifically for infants. As her models, she chose Ren• and Julia Pouteau and their two-month-old son Ren•.

The importance of Bonnie's new program is that it puts the responsibility—and the opportunity—for improving children's fitness where it belongs: on the parents. Whether you live in the wide open spaces or in crowded city quarters, you can follow Bonnie's exercises now in your own home and, what is even more important, your child can continue to follow them as he grows older. The Pouteaus, who live in a garden-apartment development, are making the most of their opportunities to give their son Ren• John a good start in life. Both have their own favorite sports. Julia, 28, loves swimming and the modern dance. Father Rene, 30, a native Frenchman who came to the **U.S.** in 1952 on a Fulbright scholarship and is now acquiring citizenship while working as a travel agent, plays soccer.

The first exercises follow the baby's natural motions. No equipment is needed, just a warm, draft-free room, a good-sized, washable blanket on a carpeted floor and a small diaper on the baby. Patience and gentleness will do the rest and make it an enjoyable time for mother and baby. Music adds to the baby's sense of rhythm, and Bonnie's new record, *Keep Fit...Be Happy* (**Warner Brothers**), has a special section designed for the purpose. Before you start the program, be sure to check with your pediatrician to make sure your baby is healthy. At the first sign of illness, stop the exercises until all is well again. Now, to see how you and your baby can join Bonnie and the Pouteaus, turn to the next page.

DIAPER GYMNASTICS AT TWO MONTHS

1

The grip helps baby regain an instinct lost soon after birth. Close that tiny fist over your forefinger and gently stretch baby's arm to full

length. Baby's natural resistance to stretch will help build up his strength. Do five each side.

2

Chest stretch, for arm and chest muscles, lets lungs expand, helps to prevent round shoulders. Cross the baby's arms, then slowly extend them outward against baby's instinctive resistance. Do this five times, repeat again later.

3

Double-leg stretch is important aid for sturdy, straight legs. Grasp legs firmly, bend knees and push against tummy, then straighten and stretch. Baby will resist at first, but this strengthens leg muscles. Start with 10.

4

Hamstring stretch for back-of-leg muscles and hips increases flexibility of limbs. With your thumbs behind baby's calves and fingers over knees, carefully straighten baby's legs and lift his seat off floor. Do six at intervals.

5

Bottoms-up exercise strengthens back, stretches abdominal muscles. Slip hands under thighs, lift gently and hold a few seconds. After a few weeks, remove one supporting hand so baby holds free leg himself. Five times.


6

Tummy crawl is exciting adventure for baby. Tuck baby's knees up under, brace your thumbs against soles of his feet. Even at one month many babies will shove themselves forward as they straighten legs. Repeat five times.

Mother's turn comes at end of session. The Abdominal Set is one exercise she should do eight or 10 times a day to help her figure return quickly to its young lines. While baby enjoys your company, get down on all fours with head hanging. Relax. Then, without moving any other part of the body, pull in abdominal muscles. Hold this position for a slow count of five, then relax for three counts and repeat five times. Julia Pouteau (below) lost one inch around the waist in one month.

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