

Pediatric Pointers

by Dr. Joey Bell, Pembroke Pediatrics

Very often I see children brought to the clinic by parents concerned about the shape of the child's legs. The two most common conditions are bowlegs (genu varus) and knock-knees (genu valgum). What I try to remind parents in the clinic is that either condition can be normal for that particular child. Remember that infants generally have bowing of the legs during the first year of life. By about 12 to 18 months the legs begin to straighten out and may even progress to mild knock-knees. Usually by 6 or 7 years of age the alignment of the legs are set for good.

To determine how bowed or knocked the knees might be, I have the child perfectly straight with their ankles touching. If there is a gap between the knees, then they are bowlegged; if the knees overlap, they are knock-kneed. I also try to remember to tell parents that some of the fastest runners are slightly knock-kneed. (Dads really

love to hear that about their children!) Only if these conditions are severe or occur only on one side does a doctor need to be consulted.

Let me briefly mention one other orthopedic condition seen in kids - flatfeet (pes planus). Flatfeet are normal in infants and young children. The arch will develop whether the child goes barefoot or wears shoes. One out of every 7 children will never develop an arch and this is usually because the foot is loose-jointed. The arch flattens when they are standing. Buying special shoes or using arch supports for these kids is usually bothersome to their feet and a waste of the parents money. It is when the flatfoot is stiff, painful or very severe that it needs medical attention or special shoe supports.

Remember that the good Lord made us in all different shapes and sizes and if measured, no one would have perfectly straight legs. Thanks for tuning in, and we'll talk again next week!

The mail box was invented in 1810 by Thomas Brown. He later became Governor of Florida in 1849.

FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Dr. Barry Harding
Public Schools
of Robeson County



For over a thousand students in Robeson County, this past Friday was a Red Letter Day in their lives marking, as it did, the completion of their public school education. While Graduation Day means that "public school education" is over, it doesn't mean that education in general, comes to an end. Virtually every year about seventy percent of our graduates opt to continue their education at either a two or four year institution. Even among the remaining thirty percent who feel they don't want to enroll in college immediately, there are other roads they can follow to attain the goals of getting more education.

More than a quarter of our graduates either go into the work force or the military following graduation. In both cases, formal learning can continue. The military offers courses to that end and institutions like Robeson Community College offer a wide range of courses to working students in day or evening classes. Additionally, some employers offer their em-

ployees further training which also adds to their educational background.

Some years ago, a study indicated the need for fundamental changes in the nation's educational system. It pointed out that a special effort had to be made to educate all students rather than just college-bound ones because of a projection suggesting that 15% of jobs in this country would soon be unskilled. Since it's obvious how technology has already been affecting our work force, we have been trying to prepare our graduates to join it as productive members. While we realize that there is a great deal in the way of training that we can't realistically provide them with, we can prepare them to the best of our ability to take the next step in their education.

For those who choose not to continue any formal education, we try to sufficiently ground them in certain basics which can make them easily trainable by industries providing such training. Courses like advanced math and science and Principles of Technology as well as

involvement in our Tech Prep Program help to prepare graduates to make the choice of further education or immediate entry into the work force.

We've also attempted, through various courses and programs, to instill in students attributes sought out by institutes of higher learning as well as prospective employers. Attributes like good communications skills, the ability to think creatively, solve problems and teamwork have been addressed by our Stepping Stones to Success and communications skills programs among others. These are things that can help out students regardless of where the road of life takes them.

As we send these young people out into the world, our hopes and prayers go with them. While that world is radically different from the one which their parents entered, we know that we have done our level best to see to it that their education progressed at the same pace set by the changing world they are entering. We look forward to hearing and seeing great things from them for as they go so goes Robeson County.



In addition to his legendary violins, Antonio Stradivari also produced cellos, violas, lutes, guitars, and mandolins.



Adding phosphorus to the soil in a garden promotes good root growth, and helps make plants more resistant to disease.

Though I am not naturally honest, I am so sometimes by chance.
—William Shakespeare,
The Winter's Tale

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