

# Questions Pre-School Training

By MARY MOSES

No one ever seems to argue about pre-school training for little children. It is simply assumed that Head Start and other pre-school programs are best for the children.

But some parents secretly wonder, "Why?" If parents are not working, and have time for their little ones, why should they have to go away part of the day when they are still so very young? Especially, why in the smaller towns, where the children all play together anyway?

Perhaps the most important reason is to get ready for school. At home, our children often play many games, but rarely play the games that teach them what they need to know to start school. Their teachers often simply assume they do know these things when they start. It makes school very hard for the children if they do not.

Pre-school programs are designed to help teach the little

ones these basic things. In the cities, they also let them get used to being with others of their own age. They become ready to pay attention to school work, not to learning about being in a group.

Can the children get ready for school without the pre-school? Of course. Many children do a very fine job of being ready without ever seeing a pre-school of any sort.

What things can parents do to help their children get ready? The most important thing is talk to them a lot. Talk about everything, all kinds of things. TV, radio and movies are good things to talk about.

So are daily chores at home, and absolutely anything and everything a child sees or does. The important thing is that the child get used to talking about things. How well he uses words when he enters school may make the difference whether he has an easy or a hard time learning to

read.

Other things a child should learn before school include how to color (and names of colors), how to count simple groups of objects, how to cut things out, and how to listen to a story read or told by an adult.

Parents can help a lot by reading to him, or just looking at picture books with him. And, of course, the mother or father can teach a little child to look forward to the time when he can really go to school!