How does the fantasy of Christmas affect children?

Is Santa Claus coming to town? Are children waiting for him? How does the fantasy of Christmas with it's story of Snata affect children?

"Probably only positively, unless the ideas are over emphasized or used in a negative way by those working with young children," said Cosby Steel Rogers, assistant professor of family and child development at Virginia Tech.

Whereas many two-year olds are afraid of Santa, young children, from about age three, enjoy the story of Santa Claus. Four-year olds really believe in Santa and are interested in the details. At five children think of him as a real man in a real place and will want to write a letter.

"Soon children wonder about some of the parts of the Santa Claus story such as 'how does he get down the chimney?' When they are just beginning to detect incongruities, they are not ready to give up the idea of Santa as real.

Incongruities may be detected by six or seven year olds. For example, How can he travel over all the world in one night? How colud he have enough toys? How can he be in the parade and the photo both at the same time?

"At about seven or eight years, they usually get the word about Santa Claus from older friends at school."

said Mrs. Rogers.

"Their acceptance of Santa as a myth may be a slow process, "Don't force them to give it up until they're ready," she said.

Once children themselves bring up questions about Santa Claus, it is easy for the parents to talk about Santa by just putting the questions back to the children to examine how much they believe. Ask them what they think then discuss what they say.

"When the child asks how Santa gets down the chimney, just ask 'How do you think he gets down theehimney?'" said Mrs. Rogers, and then let the conversation go from there.

Distinguihsing between reality and fantasy of Santa Claus usually isn't a serious concer, she said. The use of the Santa Claus myth as a heavy-handed threat is more of a concern.

The hectic holiday season, with its many gatherings of people in the household, is already a stressful time for everyone, including young children.

If, on top of that, someone uses Santa Claus as a threat to make children behave, they can become overly fearful. They can feelthat they have no privacy with their every move being watched.

"A better alternative is to focus on the intrinsic acceptance of the children themselves," said Mrs. Rogers who works with Virginia Extension specialists in teh University College of Human Resources.

"Let them know that Santa is bringnig them gifts just because they are themselves. They are important just because they exist, not because of some acts they may or may not do." It is often just a matter of degree, Mrs. Rogers said. It is only when the threatening aspect of Santa Claus is over done that the children could be uncmofortable.

Mostly in society, the mythof Santa Claus is enjoyed by everyone, young and old, as a part of the holiday celebration.

Holidays bring out emotions—happy and sad

WINSTON - SALEM, N.C.—The best of times, the worst of times. Holidays and special occasions often bring out the happiest—and saddest—emotions.

"Holiday seasons often serve as trigger points for feelings and anxieties that already exist within individuals and within families," says Charles A. Shaw, a pastoral counselor for R.J. Reynolds Industries, Inc.

Expectations run especially high, and disappointments reach especially deep during this time of year, Shaw explains.

"For some people, holidays present stressful family situations. Reunions of several generations under one roof can rekindle old conflicts between parents and grown children or siblings," says Shaw.

He works with three other professionals offering personal and family counseling to approximately 15,000 R.J. Reynolds employees. The program is one of the nation's oldest continuing employee industrial pastoral counseling services, dating back to 1949.

Families and individuals undergoing divorce or grieving the death of loved one are especially prone to getting trapped in the contradiction of holiday emotions, the counselor says.

"We've all been taught that we're supposed to be happy at Christmas, New Year's and other holidays. That just isn't realistic at some times in our lives, but the pressure to 'be happy' creates even greater frustrations," Shaw says.

Many holiday pressures are generated by individuals themselves. Quite simply, people try to do too much — too much shopping, too much celebrating, too much entertaining, too much cooking, too much house cleaning. Painful mental and physical tension can result.

Approach the holiday season with a positive attitude tempered with realism. For example, don't expect to resolve long-time differences with a parent of member of the family during a brief holiday visit. But you can initiate considerate actions that may help ease tensions temporarily and form the basis for a more lasting peace later.

Take a "time out" from the holiday hustle and bustle. Read a chapter of a favorite book. Listen to music or watch a television program. Go jogging, take an exercise class or play a game of racquetball. Take a nap, walk the dog, write a letter to an old friend. Attend a worship service of your choice.

Strike a balance in your activities. Don't try to do it all. Pace your shopping over a period of weeks or months before Christmas. If you work all day and are short on time, stop at a bakery and buy holiday cookies and treats instead of baking. Attend parties of your closest friends, but don't feel obligated to accept every invitation you receive.

Admit your feelings and discuss them. If a family is experiencing its first holiday season after the death of a loved one, sadness is a normal feeling.

Instead of masking such feelings, share them with other family members. Dealing honestly and openly with grief or anger can ease tension significantly.

Go with the flow of holiday activities instead of insisting on following rigid plans or schedules. Be receptive to creating new holiday traditions.

Adults often feel "cheated" if the elaborate Christmases of their childhood aren't duplicated when they grow older. Parents can hold similar expectations for visits from children and grandchildren.

"By relaxing and placing fewer demands on ourselves and others we can make the holiday season much more rewarding for everyone," Shaw says.

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Mondawmin is not an ordinary regional shopping mall. It is a community with a rich history. The name Mondawmin came from no less an illustrious figure than Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. It means Indian spirit of the cornfields according to old Indian legends. Longfellow named the land at the request of its owner, Dr. Patrick Macauly, when he was a guest at the estate in 1939. Mondawmin was one of Baltimore's most fashionable residences and a mecca for social gatherings for over a century.

Today, Mondawmin is still a mecca for people shopping, strolling, eating, and enjoying an interesting variety of free cultural and fashion events. This 500,000 square foot beautifully enclosed mall houses over 100 retail shops, numerous state and local agencies in more than 80,000 square feet office space, and 36 warehousing units.

As one of the first enclosed malls in the country, Mondawmin is strategically located only minutes from the heart of Baltimore's revitalized downtown district. Transportation facilities are excellent and getting even better. The Mall's free parking lot can accommodate 4,000 cars. In addition, Mondawmin is serviced by five Baltimore City bus routes, numbers 1, 5, 7, 22, and 28, on a regular basis.

Mondawmin's future has arrived. The Mondawmin Parking lot and station is within easy walking distance of all Mall stores and services.

As we all find ourselves traveling into 1984, all of us at Mondawmin would like to wish you the "Sweetest Christmas Ever" and a prosperous New Year.

MONDAWMIN MALL

Liberty Heights Ave. and Reisterstown Rd.

—The strike is over

Continued from page 1

be back," said John Strauss, local union representative, "but not under these circumstances am I completely satisfied. There were a few gains, but basically we're where we were in the first place."

The Greyhound contract includes a 7.8 percent wage cut, an agreement not to accept any part-time help and to enforce split shifts, and to remove dual job classifications. A cost of living increase will be frozen until May 1986 with a two percent payment reduction in pension benefits.

"I just kind of feel we were forced back," argues Jerry Singletary, ticket agent. "We came back for less money and it took a long time to accomplish really nothing. If we didn't come back when we did, we'd be out until April for sure and that would have allowed Greyhound to turn its trainees into professionals and never need us again."

As returning employees face having no toys to give their children for Christmas or any food to bring home, they recall the suddenness in which things happened.

"We wanted to just simply keep things as they were instead of accepting the original 9.5 percent wage cut Greyhound asked for," said Strauss.

"I don't think any of us expected to be out for seven weeks," said Singletary. We weren't prepared, not financially or mentally."

Many returning employees are dissatisfied with the presence of workers hired by Greyhound during the strike.

Maurice Stokes, a baggage clerk, said it just wasn't fair to those who were laid off before the strike and promised to be rehired as soon as business was up. "I can't say I feel threatened with being replaced for my active involvement during the strike, but there are some (in the station) who feel because they were so active with the strike, they might be replaced."

Greyhound Company Spokeswoman Leslie White said that new hires will continue as employees but will be the first to be furloughed once the busy season ends in January, since strikers retained seniority rights — We also expect our business to increase. We are coming into one of the busiest times of the year and there is plenty of work for everybody," she said.

Meanwhile a 17 percent increase on intrastate fares which went into effect in November have raised doubts in some employees as to the company's claim for a cut so that they can more effectively compete with other transportation.

For example, to go from Baltimore to Frostburg, the fare before November was $20.65 and is now $24.15. The fare to Aberdeen was $5.20 and is now $6.10.

John Glenn, manager of the downtown station, said he was unsure what the company planned to do.

Greyhound said normal fares would be in effect through the holiday season, but it would offer riders a "one third off" coupon good for travel between Jan. 10 and April 1.

Trailways, Greyhound's leading competitor said it would match that discount and any others.

EVEN the inclement weather couldn't take the smile off the face of little Carla Jones, age 2½. She says she is looking forward to the baseball season.

AFRO Photo by P. A. Greene

UNCF raises $180,000

The United Negro College Fund (UNCF) raised over $180,000 during its recent "Lou Rawls Parade of Stars" television special.

Shirley Brown, UNCF executive director, said the results of the star-studded telethon surpassed anything they had dreamed of and would, insure that literally thousands of young men and women would not be denied a college education because of finances.

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Thanks again to everyone who volunteered their time and effort to make the Lustrasilk Curl-A-Thon a success. We only wish that more of you could have been able to get "the real curl" for this real cause.

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