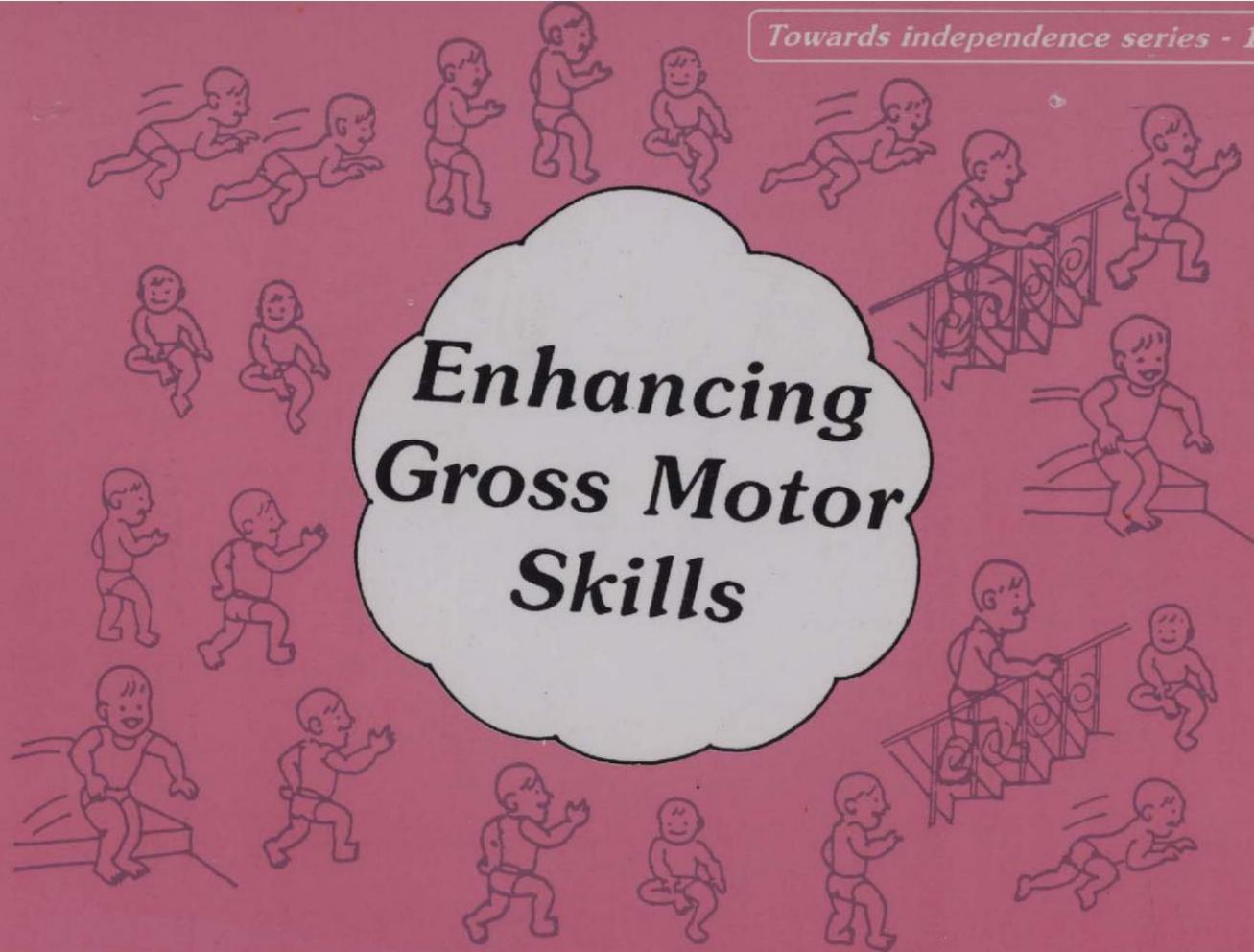


# **Enhancing Gross Motor Skills**



# ***Enhancing Gross Motor Skills....***

**Towards independence series - 1**

**(Funded by UNICEF)**

**National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped**

(Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India)

Manovikas Nagar, Secunderabad 500 009. A.P. India

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**Other titles in the series :**

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Train Your Child to Bathe

We Can Dress Ourselves

Teaching Grooming Skills

Teaching Basic Social Skills

**Artist : K. Nageswar Rao**

**Printed at : Sree Ramana Process, Secunderabad, Hello : 7811750**

**Gross motor skills refer to the activities that require large muscle movements, like crawling, sitting, walking, running, climbing stairs, jumping and so on. Mentally retarded children are often slow to develop gross motor skills due to delayed general development. We need to help them learn these skills, as almost all the activities of everyday life involve gross motor skills.**

**NOTE : Before starting the training, *seek medical help.***

*Developmental sequence Eg. 1*



*Head & eye control*



*Arm & hand control*



*Trunk (body) control*



*Leg control*

**IMPORTANT**

**DEVELOPMENT OF MOTOR SKILLS FOLLOWS A PATTERN.**

Before you start teaching a particular skill, be certain that the child is ready to learn that skill. eg. A child who cannot hold his neck, cannot be expected to learn how to sit. Your priority, then, should be to give the child, activities that enhance neck holding.

*Developmental sequence Eg. 2*



*Sits, when held in a sitting position*



*Sits, balancing with arms*



*Sits unsupported*

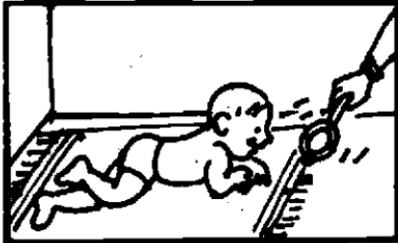


*Pulls to a sitting position*

Ideas to enhance gross motor skills.....

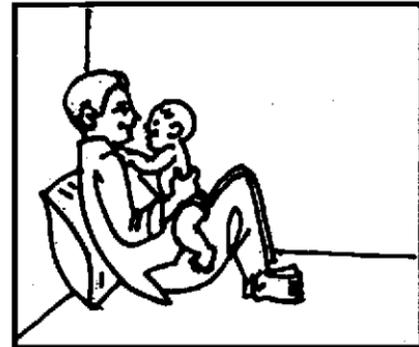
**Major emphasis in this booklet is on skills that are basic for daily living.**

### **HEAD AND NECK CONTROL**

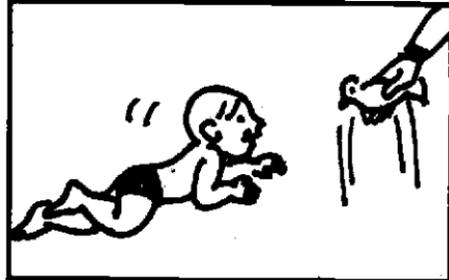


- \* Help the child to lie on his stomach, with his elbow resting on the floor. Facilitate lifting and turning of the head by moving the child's favourite object in front of him.

- \* If the child has trouble lifting his head, when lying face down, lay him against your body, so that he is almost upright. Talk to the child, so that he tries to lift his head, to look at you.

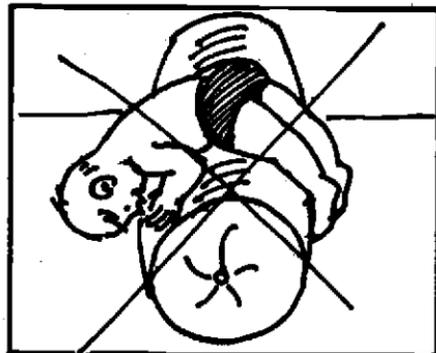


As the child learns to lift his head to watch the objects, move the object slowly up and down in front of him. Once he is able to move his head up and down, move the object from right to left, so that he learns to move his head sideways.



Make the child lie on his stomach on a cylindrical pillow and allow him to watch colourful objects/ mobiles in front of him. By this, the child can hold his neck for a longer time, and watch things in his surroundings. *Avoid this activity immediately after a feed.*

**CAUTION:** Try this activity only when the child is able to lift his head and hold at least for a few seconds. Otherwise the child's neck may bend over the pillow.



## **ROLLING OVER**



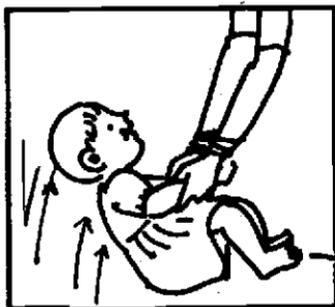
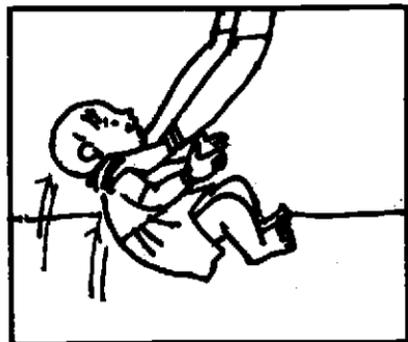
- \* Spread a blanket on the floor and place the child sideways on it. See that the leg touching the ground is straight. Help the child to roll over by holding the other leg, lifting it up and placing it on the ground. Have toys of her choice at the other end of the blanket, so that she tries to roll over to reach the toys. By observing, find out the preferred side for rolling over, and train to roll over by that side.

- \* Continue practising in the above manner until the child can roll on her own.

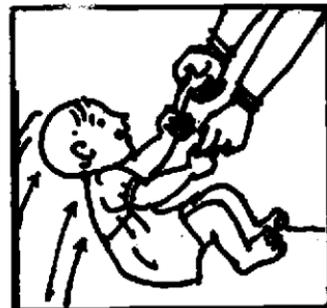
***IMPORTANT : Do not leave the child alone on cot when she has learnt to roll over. Prevent the child from falling down.***

## SITTING

- \* Suppose the child is lying, facing you.....  
Holding her at the shoulders, pull her to a sitting position.

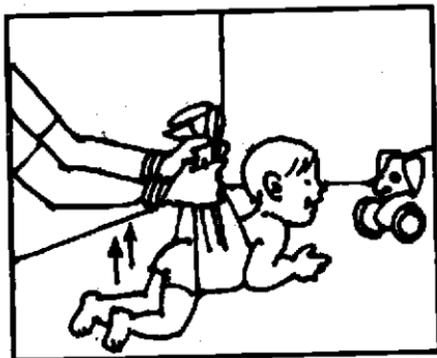


- \* Shift the position of assisting the child, from shoulders to elbows, and from elbows to fingers. Talk pleasantly to the child all the while.



**CAUTION:** Do not leave your child in any one position for a long time. Change her position often.

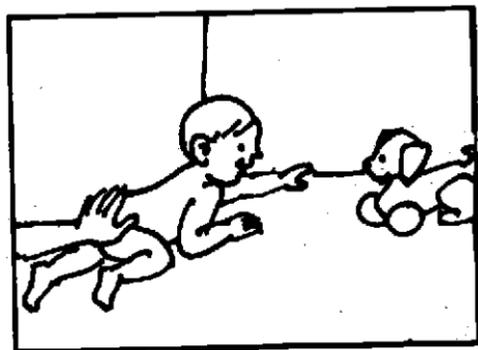
## CRAWLING



- Place the child's favourite toy a little away from him.  
Run a towel under the child's chest and abdomen. Lift the ends of the towel, so that the child's trunk is raised. Make him crawl towards the toy.

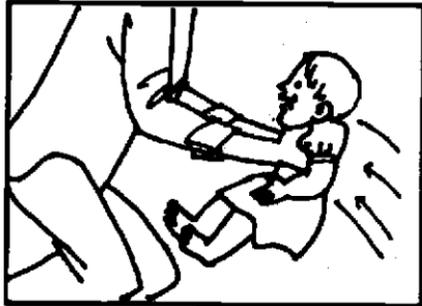
- Drawing his attention towards the toys, encourage him to crawl gradually without the use of the towel.

*Give a slight forward push, so that the child is stimulated to crawl.*



Assist her to remain in the sitting position for few minutes, using the following ways. Practise it several times each day.

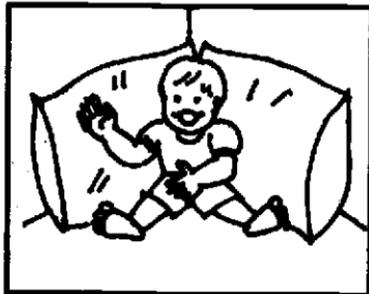
- i) Support her by holding her under the arms.



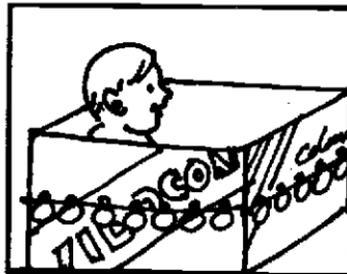
- ii) Hold her in a sitting position on your lap.



- iii) Sit on the floor with the child sitting between your outstretched legs.



- iv) Prop her up using pillows.



- v) Seat her in the corner of a cardboard box, such as a T.V. carton. Tie the box from outside, so that it does not fall apart.



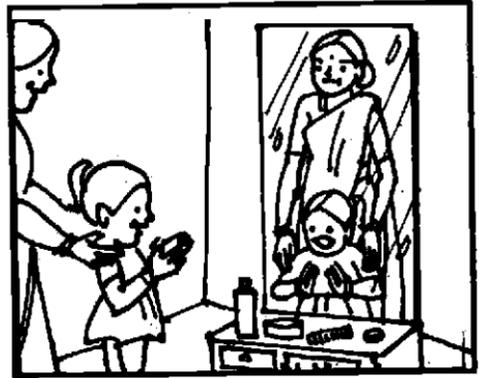
- vi) Encourage her to clap and sing songs, while she is in the sitting position.

# STANDING

Help the child to pull herself to a standing position, by holding her at the shoulders. As in sitting, shift the position of holding the child from shoulders to elbows, and from elbows to fingers.



*Hold her in standing position in front of a mirror. Praise her saying 'Look how you stand.....!' 'You look so big, when you stand.....!' and so on.....*



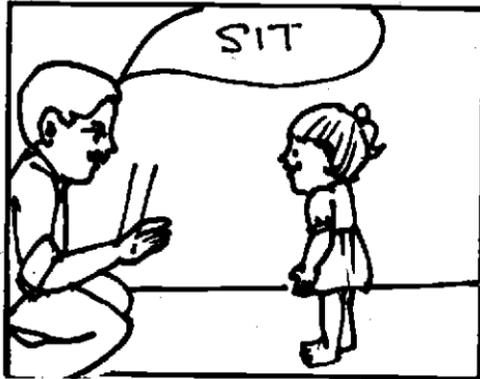
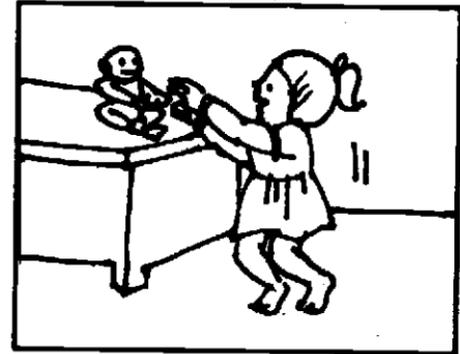


Train her initially to pull up to standing position from a low stool and later, from the floor.

Encourage her to stand against a wall.

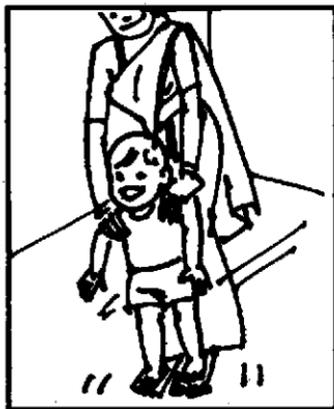
Place her near a table or chair, so that she pulls herself to standing position, with its support.

Keep an object of the child's interest, at a slightly higher level, so that she has to stand to reach it.

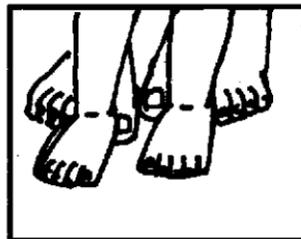


Participate with the child in the play activity "sit", "stand", so that the child learns to lower to sitting position from standing position, and vice versa.

## WALKING



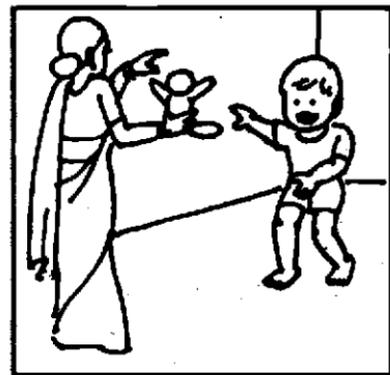
Walk, with the child standing on your feet, so that the child feels the movement.



Place your toes at the heels of the child. Push them alternately, so that he moves forward.

Stand a little away from the child, holding one of his favourite toys. Encourage him to take a few steps towards you.

APPRECIATE HIS ATTEMPTS.



**CAUTION :** *If the child cannot balance when sitting, do not work on walking yet. Help him to develop sitting balance first.*

When he is able to walk independently on plain surface, provide opportunities to walk over various surfaces, like.....



.... sand.....



.... uneven ground.....



.... mattress.....

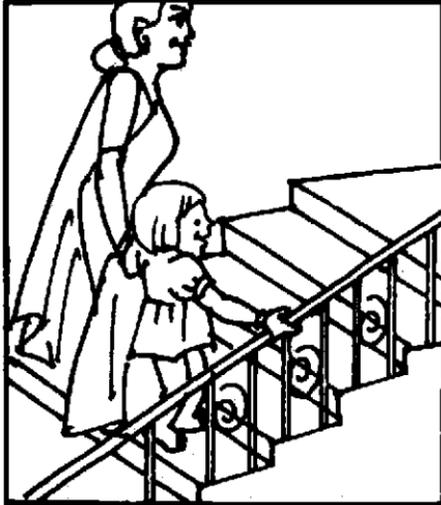


.... lawn.....

and so on .....

## CLIMBING STAIRS

### **Ascending :**



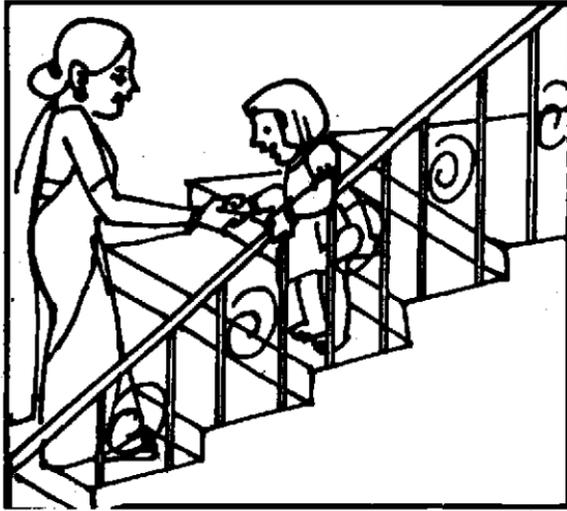
Holding the child's hand, guide her to climb steps, one at a time, placing both feet one after another on each step. Let her hold the rail, with the other hand.

As she gains competence, help her to climb with alternate feet.

*Motivate the child to climb, by keeping her favourite toy on a higher step.*



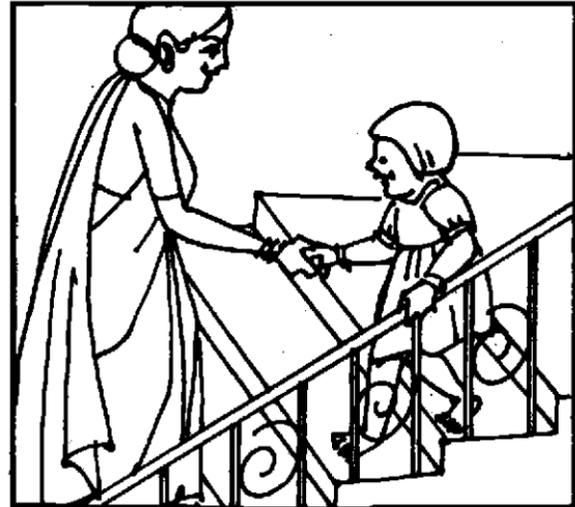
## **Descending :**



Stand one step below the child and call her to you.  
Assist her by holding her arm lightly, if necessary.

As in climbing up, let her climb down with both feet on each step initially. Then, train her with alternate feet.

*Stand next to the child in case she has the fear of falling down.*



***Gradually, provide opportunities for running, jumping, marching, hopping, skipping, and dancing. Encourage the children through organized games, action songs and competitions.***



## **POINTS AT A GLANCE .....**

### ***Make the activities pleasurable !***

*If the child likes doing an activity, he/she will learn it faster.*

### ***Stimulate the child !***

*Give him opportunities to see, reach, and explore things in his surroundings.*

### ***Practice is important !***

*After the child has learnt doing an activity, he/she needs to continue doing it.*

### ***Variety is the spice of life !***

*Activities should not be so repetitive, that they become monotonous.*

### ***Be realistic !***

*Do not expect too much at once.*

### ***Be expressive !***

*Let the child know that you are pleased with his/her effort.*

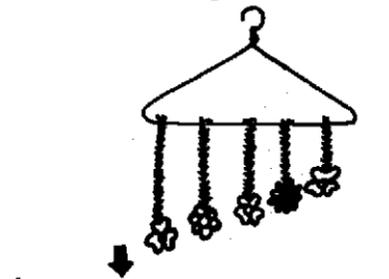
**REMEMBER : It is not how long you train, but HOW WELL you train.**

# "Wealth from waste...."

Mobile made out of cloth dolls

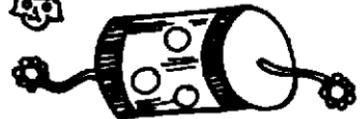


Mobile made out of cloth hanger & "Rakhees"

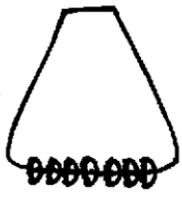


Look at the object  
Hold neck  
Try to reach the object

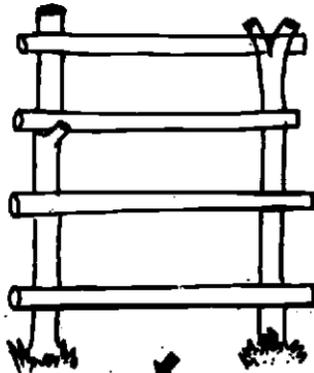
Musical instrument made out of old powder tin



Musical instrument made out of cool drink bottle caps



Climbing frame made out of waste logs of wood and tree trunks



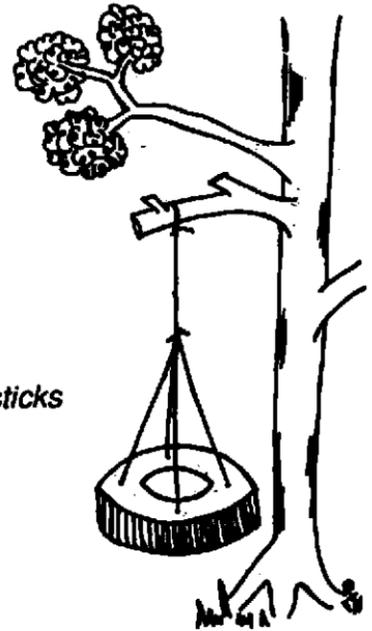
Climb  
Balance

Painted sticks



Dance  
Drill

Old tyre converted into a swing



Sit  
Balance

## **Contributors**

### **Jayanthi Narayan**

M.S. (Sp.Ed) Ph. D., D.S.Ed.

Project Coordinator

### **Jandhyala Shobha**

M.Sc. (Child Devt.)

Research Assistant

## **Project Advisory Committee**

### **Dr. V. Kumariah**

Associate Professor (Cl. Psy.)

NIMHANS, Bangalore

### **Ms. V. Vimala**

Vice Principal

Balavihar Training School, Madras

### **Prof. K.C. Panda**

Principal

Regional College of Education,

Bhubaneswar.

### **Dr. N.K. Jangira**

Professor (Special Education)

NCERT, New Delhi

### **Ms. Girija Devi**

Asst. Communication Devt. Officer

UNICEF, Hyderabad

### **Dr. D.K. Menon**

Director, NIMH

### **Dr. T. Madhavan,**

Asst.Prof. of Psychiatry, NIMH

### **Mr. T. A. Subba Rao**

Lect. in Speech Pathology

& Audiology, NIMH

### **Mrs. Reeta Peshawaria**

Lect. in Cl. Psychology, NIMH