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CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
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CHILDREN'S YEAR

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APRIL AND MAY  
WEIGHING AND MEASURING TEST

PART 2  
SUGGESTIONS TO EXAMINERS

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WEIGHING AND MEASURING TEST

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SUGGESTIONS TO EXAMINERS<sup>1</sup>

*Examiners should wash their hands before examining each child*

**Weighing.**

Children under 5 years should be undressed and weighed without clothing or wrapped in a thin sheet or towel, the weight of which is deducted. Children over 5 years should be weighed in their ordinary indoor clothing. Young babies, unable to stand, should be weighed if possible on scales equipped with a scale pan. A fresh paper towel should be laid in the pan and changed after each child is weighed. Where only large platform scales are available, a baby old enough to sit or stand may be set on the platform of the scale, on which is spread a fresh paper towel. If the baby is not old enough to sit alone, an adult holding the baby may be weighed and the weight of the adult deducted.

**Measuring.**

All children should be measured without shoes.

To measure children able to stand. If the scales used are equipped with a measuring apparatus it should be used. Where this is not available, the child should be asked to stand against the wall with the heels and the back of the head touching the wall. His height is obtained by holding a book or small box horizontally on top of his head against the wall and measuring the space between the bottom of the book or the box and the floor. A convenient method is to tack a tape measure perpendicularly on the wall, beginning at the floor, and to measure by this.

To measure babies unable to stand. An apparatus for measuring babies and young children may be made by nailing a headboard firmly across one end of the examination table. To this board attach one end of a linen tape measure and secure the other end firmly across the sheet which covers the table. Provide also a book end—one of the cheap, enameled kind sold for office use. The length of the baby may be quickly and accurately found by laying him upon the examination

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<sup>1</sup> If the test is given in connection with a children's health conference, examiners should read also "How to Conduct a Children's Health Conference," Children's Bureau Publication No. 23

table, directly over the tape measure, with his head resting firmly against the headboard. Be sure that the baby is lying flat on the table, completely relaxed. The legs must not be bent at the hips or knees. Press the enameled book end squarely against the feet and read his length as indicated upon the tape measure. More elaborate types of apparatus on the same principle have been devised and are used in the same way. A baby may also be measured by laying him on a table and measuring between two books held one at the head and the other at the feet.

### Filling out Record Card.

*Part I To be retained by the parents.*—Care should be taken to fill out every space on this card which requires an answer. In stating whether the child is above or below the average height and weight for his age, "Height: Average, above, below. Weight: Average, above, below," the examiner should compare the height and weight recorded for the child with those given in the table on the back of the card for a child of the same age. This table represents the average height and weight of a large number of normal children. If the child's height is greater than that given for a child of the same age in the table the examiner should check the word "above", if it is less, he should check the word "below." In the same way, the weight of the child is compared with the weight given for a child of the same age in the table, and the word "above" or "below" checked according to that which applies.

In the table, heights and weights are not given for every month of the child's age over 48 months; for instance, the heights for 6 years and 7 years are given, but not the height for 6 years 7 months. For a child over 4 years of age, use the age at his last birthday.

In answer to the question, "Is the child's weight above, below, or equal to the average weight for his height?" the examiner should check "average," "above," or "below," as the case may be. To determine which is the case the examiner should compare the weight of the child examined with the weight which corresponds in the table to the height of the child. For example, a boy may be examined whose height is  $31\frac{1}{2}$  inches and whose weight is 22 pounds; on the table of heights and weights of boys, the weight which corresponds to the height of  $31\frac{1}{2}$  inches is  $24\frac{1}{2}$  pounds. Hence, the weight of the child is below the average for his height. Trifling variations from the average of height and weight are not important. Should there be any great divergence from these standards it is a warning that the child's health should be given medical consideration or should be carefully looked after. If such deviation is found, examiners should advise that the child be taken to the family physician for a thorough examination.

After "Remarks" the examiner, if a physician, should state any recommendations which he wishes to make to the parents if any abnormality is noticed in the child. He should not, however, give medical advice nor prescribe treatment; but if the need of treatment is indicated, he should recommend that the child be taken to the family physician or to a specialist for examination.

"Signature". Here the examiner should sign his or her name. If a physician, "M. D." should be written after the name.

Space is left on the card for the record of subsequent examinations. It is suggested that parents continue the record every six months or every year until the child is grown. Such a record will be of the greatest value to parents as showing how the child is growing and developing; and examiners should emphasize this fact when returning the card to the parents.

*Part II. To be returned to the Children's Bureau*—The directions for filling out given on the card make further suggestions unnecessary for the most part.

The question, "Is the child apparently healthy and free from serious defect?" is to be answered only if the examiner is a physician. If the answer to this question is "No," the physician should write in the space after "Remarks" the name of the disease or defect suspected.

"Signature". Again the examiner should sign his or her name. If a physician, "M. D." should be written after the name.

