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PAINTS, PIGMENTS, AND DYES 1/

Some paints, when swallowed, are poisonous and since children are apt to put paint-smeared fingers in their mouths or to chew painted objects, thought should be given to providing paints that are harmless.

Commercial Paints.

Water-color paints.—Water-color paints—powdered, liquid, or cake—that are prepared especially for children's use can be relied on as safe. Some artists' paints, however, contain lead and must not be given to children to play with.

Oil paints.—Oil paint produces a better effect upon wood than does water-color paint. Oil paint is much more difficult to get off hands, clothing, and floor than water-color paint, but more serious than the cleaning-up problem is that of eliminating the danger of poisoning to the child who gets some paint into his mouth from fingers or tools, or even from under the finger nails of "cleaned" hands. There are many safe oil paints and parents should learn the names of these paints and buy them by name.

Oil paint consists of a pigment—the coloring—and a liquid in which the pigment is dissolved or suspended. When oil paint is drying sometimes vapors are given off which are irritating to sensitive people. For this reason it is better for children not to remain in unventilated rooms in which there are freshly painted walls, furnishings, or other objects. Since some paint thinners may be poisonous, close application to work should be avoided. However, a child will not be likely to continue painting for a long enough time to be harmed.

Some pigments used in paint are poisonous when swallowed. They are harmful, whether sucked off damp fingers or from painted toys or furnishings.

Many paint manufacturers print the formula on each can of paint; a number of States require such a statement by law. Therefore, the label will usually furnish the information from which the poisonous paints can be distinguished from the harmless ones. Unfortunately, however, the terms used by the paint trade are not always readily understood by the public. Paint that contains any lead is poisonous and should be avoided. Some pigments in which the word "lead" does not appear are also poisonous.

The following lists contain the names of the most commonly used pigments. With this list as a guide a harmless paint can be selected in most paint stores. If a paint offered to you in a store is not in this list, it is not safe to take the word of the salesman as to whether it is harmless or not because he may not know.

1/ This information has been checked and approved by the National Bureau of Standards and the National Institute of Health.

Paints usually considered harmless

White paint

Aluminum and potassium silicate
or mica
Aluminum silicate or china clay
Barium sulphate or baryte
Calcium carbonates or ground
limestone
Calcium sulphate or gypsum
Lithopone
Magnesium silicates or talc
Silic
Titanium barium
Titanium calcium
Titanium dioxide
Titanium magnesium
Titanated lithopone
Zinc-sulphide barium
Zinc-sulphide calcium
Zinc-sulphide magnesium
Zinc oxide
Zinc sulphide

Red paint

Chlorinated para
Iron oxide, red
Madder lake
Para red
Toluidine red

(Lithol red except
Barium lithol
toner)

Yellow paint

Hansa yellow
Iron-oxide yellow

Green paint

Tungstated organic green
Phospho-tungstic green

Blue paint

Tungstated organic blue
Russian blue
Ultramarine blue

Paints that are poisonous

White paint

Basic lead carbonate
Basic lead sulphate
Lead titanate
Antimony oxide

Red paint

Cadmium red
Litharge or red lead
Lithol red (all lithol reds
including medium lithol
toner)
Para red

Yellow paint

Chrome yellow
Cadmium yellow
Zinc yellow

Green paint

Chrome green
Lead-chromate
yellow and iron blue

Blue paint

Copper
phthalocyanine
blue

Orange paint

Chrome orange
Molybdate orange
Orange mineral
lead oxide