April 30, 1963 M. T. McCOOK 3,087,277

TETHER FOR BABIES' TOYS

Filed May 25, 1959 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

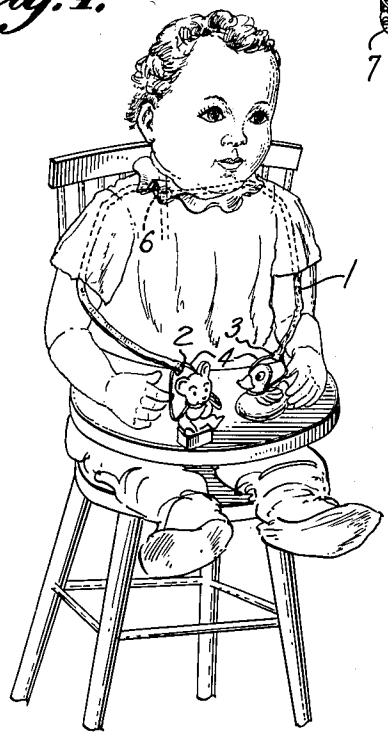


Fig. 2.

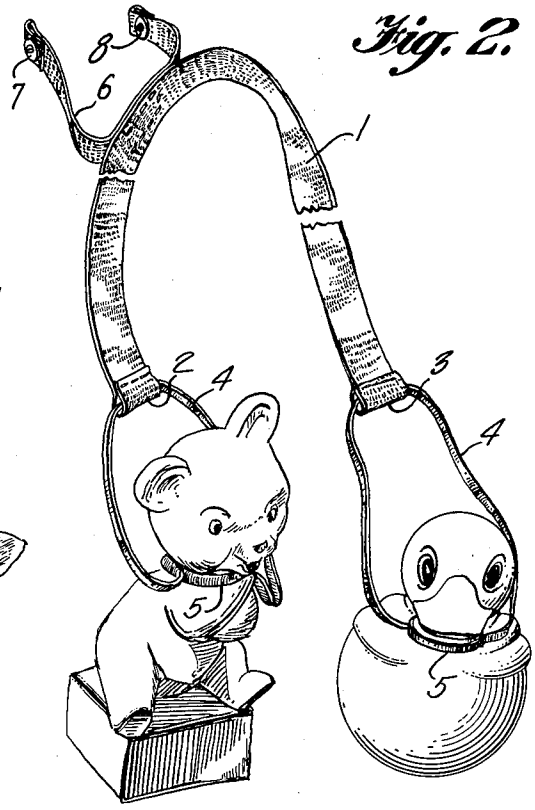


Fig. 3.

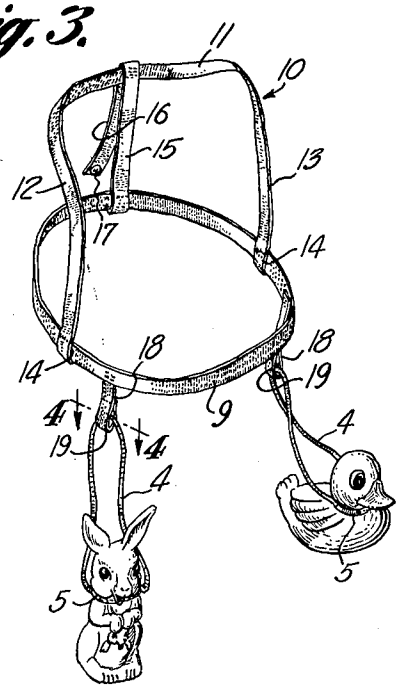
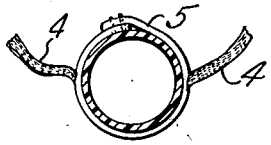


Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



INVENTOR

Mildred T. McCook

BY *Mason, Fenwick & Lawrence*

ATTORNEYS

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Filed May 25, 1959 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 6.

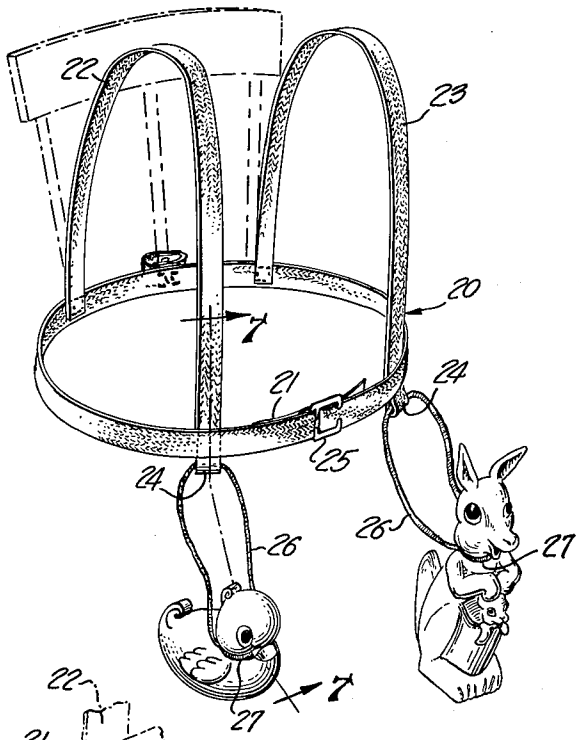


Fig. 7.

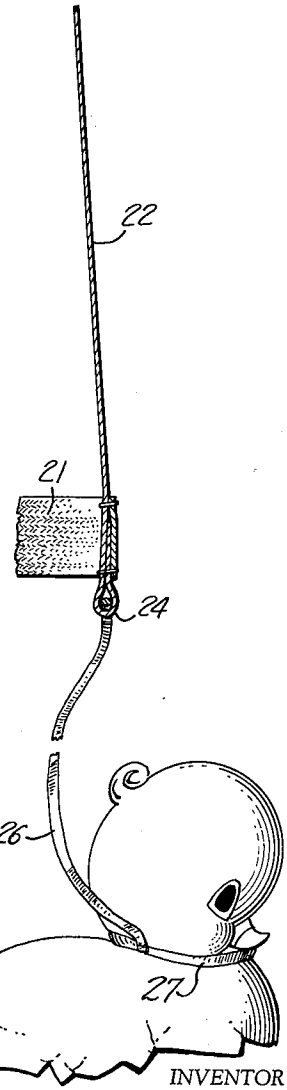
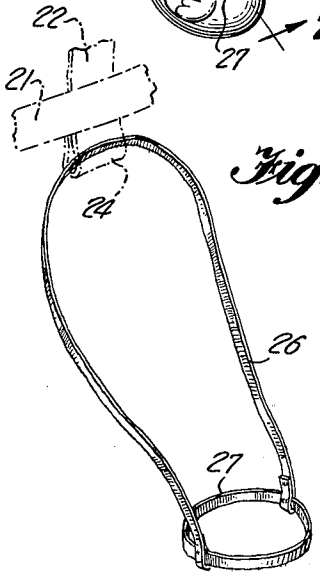


Fig. 8.



INVENTOR

Mildred T. McCook

BY *Mason, Fenwick & Lawrence*

ATTORNEYS

United States Patent Office 3,087,277 Patented Apr. 30, 1963

3,087,277

TETHER FOR BABIES' TOYS

Mildred T. McCook, P.O. Box 324, Chester, Va.

Filed May 25, 1959, Ser. No. 815,617
3 Claims. (Cl. 46—1)

This invention relates to a tether for babies' toys, designed to couple the toy to the baby in such manner that the toy is flexibly held with sufficient range of universal movement to enable the baby freely to handle the toy within the limits of said range, but to prevent the toy's being wilfully or inadvertently thrown out of his reach by the baby, thus avoiding frustration on the part of the baby in not being able to retrieve his toy, and the onerous necessity on the part of the parent, of repeatedly picking up the toy.

One of the objects of the invention is to provide a flexible tether constructed to be body-borne by the baby, having snap-on means by which a toy or toys may be quickly attached or detached, by others than the baby, so that the toys may be removed for cleaning, replacement by other toys, etc.

Another object of the invention is the provision of a tether as described adapted to be retained with reference to the baby, and also provided with means by which it may be fastened to the spindles of the high chair or play pen, for example, whereby the baby may be tethered to the associated furniture to prevent him from falling.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a tether for toys comprising body harness for the baby having one or more streamers extending therefrom, terminating in elastic closed loops adapted to be expanded for receiving the toy and to react constrictively against the toy for removably retaining it.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a tether for the baby as well as for toys, as described, comprising body harness with a snap-on strap for securing the baby to a chair or the like, and having streamers each terminating in an eye-defining fold through which passes the bight of a free-running loop, the latter being provided at a point opposite said bight with an elastic loop adapted to constrictively embrace, and removably hold, a toy.

Other objects of the invention will appear as the following description of practical embodiments of the invention proceeds.

In the accompanying drawings which form a part of the specification and in which the same reference characters have been employed throughout the figures to designate identical parts, three modifications of embodiment of the inventive concept are shown, by way of example.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one modified form of toy tether illustrating its operative relationship to the baby, the toys, and a high chair.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the toy tether in disengaged relation to the baby.

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of another modification.

FIG. 4 is a horizontal sectional view through the eye-defining fold taken along the line 4—4 of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a horizontal sectional view through the constrictive toy-embracing loop.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of still another modification of the invention.

FIG. 7 is a sectional view taken along the line 7—7 of FIG. 6.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a portion of the toy tether shown in FIG. 6, detailing the eye-defining fold of the body harness, the free-running elastic loop that passes through the eye, and the constrictive toy-retaining loop carried by the free-running loop.

Referring now in detail to the drawings and first adverting to that form of the invention shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 the tether comprises an elongated band 1 of flexible

material and preferably elastic having its ends upfolded and secured, defining the eyes 2 and 3. A running loop 4 of elastic material passes through each of the eyes 2 and 3, being preferably of narrow dimension so as to run freely through the eyes when not under tension. At the end of each of the free-running loops 4 opposite the eyes in the normal position of the running loops are the closed elastic loops 5 which are stretchable to receive a toy and to react restrictively against the toy to retain its removability. At the middle of the band 1 a securing strip 6 is suitably secured having complementary fastening elements 7 and 8 at its ends so that it may be closed about a suitable support such as the spindle of a high chair as shown in FIG. 1.

The middle portion of the tether is designed to be placed at the back of the neck of the baby, the lateral portions being brought across his shoulders to the front. Preferably the tether is retained by an outer garment such as the short-sleeved jacket shown in FIG. 1, the end portions of the tether extending below the short sleeves of the jacket as shown. The strap 6 extends through the placket at the neck of the jacket so it is accessible for securing it to the chair. The length of the tether provides a free range of movement within which range the child may play with the toys as though they were altogether unrestrained. If he purposely attempts to throwh the toy to the floor or inadvertently drops it, it is of course retained by the tether so that the child himself may recover it and the parents are saved the onerous chore of repeatedly picking it up and returning it to the baby. The tether obviously serves the double purpose of retaining the baby in the chair or the play pen, as the case may be, and of keeping the toy or toys within playing range of the baby.

The running loops 4 are elastic, that is to say, stretchable, in all of the illustrative forms shown. If the baby is relatively young so that his reach is short the toys may be manipulated without any restriction due to the elasticity of the material. If the child is a little older so that his reach is relatively long he may get the pleasure of resistance to his efforts by manipulating either toy so as to stretch corresponding elastic running loop 4, pushing the toys away from him against the concerted resistance of both sides of the running loop. Alternatively, with the toy in dangling position, he may separately grasp the sides of the running loop and by rapidly moving his hand back and forth in a lateral direction cause the toy to jump up and down. Or, he can grasp only one side strand of the running loop and by reciprocating his hand vertically, cause the loop to run through the eye, lifting and lowering the toy. If he exerts tension upon the side of the running loop while making these movements there is a braking effect engendered between the running loop and eye, which varies the resistance to the child's efforts. Many other variations in the manipulation of the toy, made possible by the elastic running loop will spontaneously occur to the child in the course of play, creating a sustained interest that is not probable in other toy tethering devices.

It is to be noted that the ends of the free-running loops 4 are secured to the constrictive loops 5 preferably at diametrically opposite points as shown in FIG. 5, each forming a bail. This balances the toy between the sides of the running loop so that it may maintain its normal position when suspended or when raised beyond the table of the high chair or any other support. Particularly in the case of animal toy, the loops 4 are in effect reins, reaching to opposite sides of the toy so as to keep a definite aspect of the toy directed toward the child, but the child or its elder can readily turn the toy around in the constricting loop 27, to present a different aspect. For instance, in FIGURE 1, the bear has its rear toward the child, but can be readily rotated within the loop 5, so as to be looking at the child.

Referring now to FIG. 3, this discloses a form of the invention which involves the provision of body harness for the baby. Said harness comprises the belt strap **9** and shoulder strap **10**. The latter has a portion **11** designed to pass back of the neck of the child and the lateral portions **12** and **13** which extend from the portion **11** over the shoulders to the front, then to the belt strap being secured toward the front at lateral points **14**. The shoulder strap and belt strap are connected by the vertical back strap **15**. This cooperates with a keeper strap **16** which lies congruently over the back strap **15** being secured at its upper end to the shoulder strap and at its lower end having a fasening element **17** cooperating with a complementary element not shown to form a closed loop to anchor the body harness to the spindle of the chair, play pen, etc.

A pair of tabs **18** depends from the forward part of the belt strap **9**, having the lower end portions over folded and secured as by stitching, defining eyes **19** at the lower ends of said tabs. Elastic loops **4** similar to those already described pass freely through the eyes **19**. Constrictive loops **5** such as those described in connection with FIG. 2 are carried by the running loops **4** being preferably secured to said running loops at diametrically opposite points on the constrictive loops. In the use of this form of the invention it is not essential to call into requisition any outer garment as a means for holding the tether in position. The tabs **18** are also flexible and may be of any suitable length to provide the necessary playing range of the toys.

In FIG. 6 a form of tether is shown which also includes body harness. In this instance the harness **20** comprises a belt strap **21** and a pair of shoulder straps **22** and **23** which extend from back to front over the shoulders of the baby, being secured at corresponding points to the belt strap **21** at front and rear. As shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 the shoulder straps extend below the belt strap at the front and have their free ends up folded and secured to form the eyes **24**, best shown in FIGS. 7 and 8. The body harness employed in this form of the invention is preferably non-elastic and adjustment for size is made by means of the buckle **25** shown in FIG. 6. Free-running elastic loops **26** extend through the eyes **24**, the free ends of these are secured to the constrictive loops **27** in such manner that the loops **27** are perpendicular to the normal repose plane of the running loops **26**. This mode of attachment is a slight deviation from that shown in FIG. 3 since in the latter case the ends of the running loops are secured tangentially to the constrictive loops.

While I have above described three practical embodiments of the inventive concept it will be understood by those skilled in the art that changes may be made in the structure and arrangement of parts such as will improve the device as well as make it more amenable to manufacture in production quantities, and still be within the scope of protection of the invention.

What I claim is:

1. Tether for babies' toys comprising strap means adapted to be body borne and provided with an eye, a flexible elastic loop interengaged with said eye in free running relation thereto, having opposite limb portions, and a closed flexible elastic loop for constrictively and removably encircling a toy, the limbs of said first mentioned loop being attached to said closed loop at substantially opposite points and perpendicular thereto forming a bail, balancing the toy between the limbs of said first mentioned loop.

2. Tether for babies' toys comprising strap means to be body borne and including an eye, a flexible elastic loop interengaged with said eye in free running relation thereto, and a closed flexible elastic loop of smaller size than said first mentioned loop, attached to the latter, for constrictively and removably encircling a toy, said first mentioned loop being normally elongated when weighted by the toy, with the sides of said first mentioned loop substantially parallel and said closed loop being remote from the eye, whereby the child may selectively grasp both sides of the elongated loop together, or a single side, in manipulating the toy.

3. Tether for babies' toys comprising a body harness including a lower circumferential body embracing strap, a folded elastic tab forming an eye, supported by said body embracing strap, and elastic means forming a free running loop carried by said tab having its end portion remote from said tab constructed so as to constrictively embrace a toy.

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