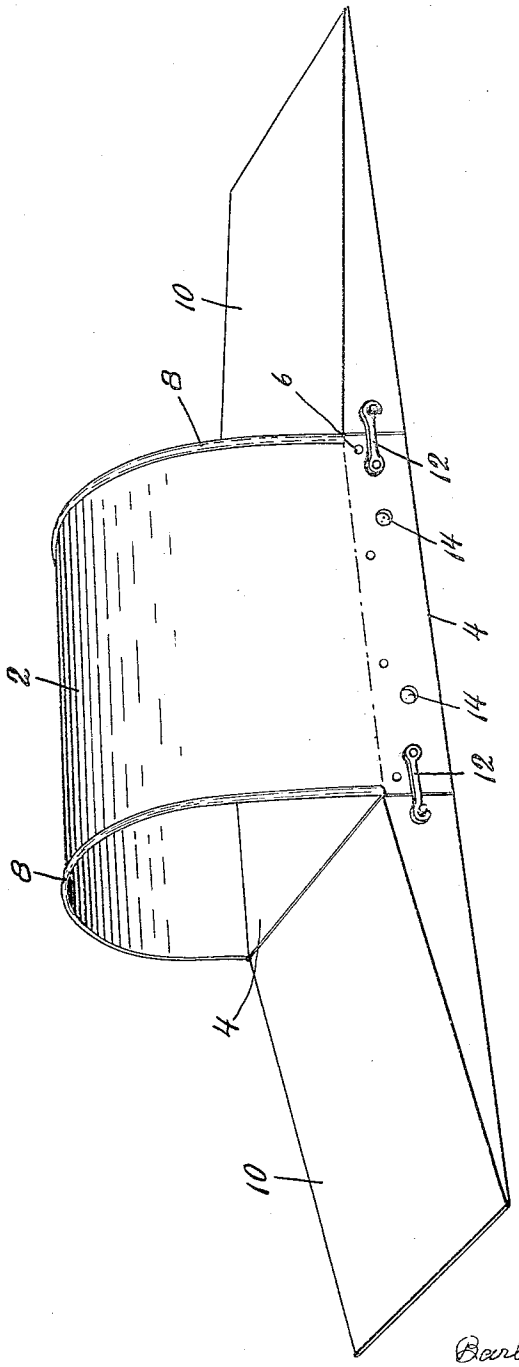
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TUNNEL TOY

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TUNNEL TOY

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This invention relates to a tunnel toy. This toy, when constructed and used in accordance with the principles and directions hereinafter set forth, has great utility and value in the promotion of the proper development of children.

Modern research points to the fact that the exercise of crawling has great value in the development of children. Those children who have been most proficient in this exercise appear to be stronger and better developed. The pelvic muscles, especially, are better developed by the use of four supports as in crawling, than by the use of two as in walking.

It is an object of my invention to provide a toy which will be attractive to children so that they will use it extensively, and the use of which in an instinctive and natural manner will be of great benefit in the proper development of the child. My invention is capable of modification such that its use will be of value in the correction of certain deformities of the spine.

The accompanying drawing is a perspective view of one form of my invention.

In its simplest form, my toy comprises a tunnel formed by a bent surface 2 which may be of sheet metal or other suitable material. This bent surface, which forms the curved sides and roof of the tunnel, may be secured to a base or floor 4 in any suitable manner as indicated at 6. When the surface 2 is formed from sheet metal, the edges 8 which form the ends of the tunnel are bent around curved wires for greater safety in the avoidance of sharp edges which might otherwise be a source of injury. Or the tunnel may be constructed, for example, of wood and hard rubber.

The exact dimensions of the tunnel will vary somewhat depending upon the age and size of the children for whose use it is primarily intended. A convenient size is twenty inches in length, twelve inches in height at the center of the opening measured from top of base, and twelve inches in width. These dimensions are, however, given only in an illustrative and not in a limiting sense, as they may be increased or diminished to adapt the tunnel toy to the most convenient and suitable use by an average child of predetermined age.

It is desirable to provide the tunnel with inclined approaches 10. Crawling up and down inclined surfaces, and changing from one level to another, is beneficial to a child's development. In this case, therefore, the base of the tunnel is elevated four to six inches, for example. The inclined approaches are advantageously made separately from the tunnel part of the toy, and provided with means for readily attaching and detaching the same, such as the hooks 12.

The construction of my tunnel toy is susceptible of various modifications.

Perforations 14 may be provided in the sides of the base 4 through which axles may be carried, and the tunnel may thus be made convertible into a cart.

Actual use of my tunnel toy has demonstrated that it has a great appeal to children, who use it in a wide variety of ways for which its structure peculiarly adapts it. Crawling into a hole is an instinctive behaviorism in which a child will indulge, and one which should be encouraged by the provision of attractive facilities because of its value. The rounded top of my tunnel is much more suitable and desirable for children to climb and sit upon than, for example, the sharp surface of a horizontal bar. Children will set astride upon the tunnel, walk the length thereof, climb on and jump off—all of which exercises are beneficial to the child's development.

In the appended claims the phrase "conveniently to accommodate" is to be understood as referring to the accommodation of a child in a crawling position.

I claim:—

1. A toy to stimulate crawling comprising an open tunnel member of a size conveniently to accommodate a small child, engaging along two edges thereof a base member presenting a flat floor, and inclined approaches leading to the floor of the tunnel.

2. A toy comprising an arched tunnel portion of a size conveniently to accommodate an average child of predetermined age, an elevated floor, inclined approaches leading to either end of the said floor and terminating substantially in the plane thereof, and means for detachably securing the approaches to the floor portion of the tunnel.

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