ABSTRACT: A body support for retaining a small child on its back in a reclining position for bathing and for washing its hair comprising a one-piece member adapted to rest on the bottom of the washing tub. A central supporting portion of the member is generally sloped with sidewall portions and oppositely sloped end portions that combine to retain the child in comfort and security. The sloped end portion at the higher end of the central member supports the child's head as its hair is being washed and allows the head to be tilted so that soapy water will not flow into the child's eyes and over his body.
DEVICE FOR HOLDING A CHILD IN A RECLINING POSITION TO FACILITATE HAIR SHAMPOOING

This invention relates to an improved body- and head-supporting device for holding small children to facilitate washing their hair.

When infants are small they are relatively light and easy to manage during the required bathing and hair washing procedures. However, as the baby becomes larger and grows into the "small child" stage it usually becomes more active and perhaps even more fearful of being in water. Hence, at this stage washing or shampooing the child's hair often becomes a more difficult task for the mother.

One object of my invention is to solve the problem of washing a small child's hair by providing a device that will hold the child with complete safety while maintaining its comfort and feeling of confidence and security. A particular feature of the present device is that it holds the child's head in a position that will facilitate hair shampooing while also giving the rest of its body firm and comfortable support, thereby solving the problem of keeping soapy water out of the child's eyes during this usually difficult hair-washing procedure.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an improved device for use in a tub or the like that will support a small child in a reclining position as it is being bathed. More particularly, it is an object to provide such a device that will retain the child in comfort and yet immobilize it to such an extent that the person doing the bathing can be free to leave the child momentarily in complete safety or do other things with his or her hands during the bathing operation.

Yet another object is to provide a device for supporting a small child in a tub for bathing that is easy to clean as well as being easy to handle and store.

Still another object is to provide a device for supporting a child in a tub for bathing that is particularly well adapted for ease and economy of manufacture.

Other objects, advantages and features of my invention will become apparent from the following detailed description of one embodiment thereof presented with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a view in perspective of a device embodying the principles of my invention;
FIG. 2 is a plan view of the device;
FIG. 3 is a view in section taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 2;
FIG. 4 is a view in section taken along line 4—4 of FIG. 3; and
FIG. 5 is a view in section taken along line 5—5 of FIG. 3.

With reference to the drawing, FIG. 1 shows a small child supporting device 10 embodying the principles of my invention as it appears when normally used within a standard bath tub. As shown, the device is preferably made in a one-piece construction with a generally sloping central portion 12 that will support a child on its back in an inclined position. Near its lower end, this central portion, as shown in FIG. 3, slopes upwardly along a surface 14 and then curves around to slope downwardly again along a surface 16. Thus, while the surface 12 supports the back of the child, the oppositely sloping surface 14 supports its buttocks and thighs and thereby prevents it from sliding. Along their opposite sides the surfaces 12 and 14 curve upwardly and then downwardly as shown in FIGS. 4 and 5 to form guide rails or ridges 18 which prevent the child from moving sideways off of the device. The material forming these guide rails continues downwardly to form sidewalks 20 which terminate at a common horizontal plane at their lower edges 22. These sidewalks 20 also slope outwardly toward their lower edges to provide additional stability for the device. Essentially, the surfaces 12 and 14 and the guide rails 18 form a recessed area that holds the child with comfort as well as a feeling of security, while also providing sufficient freedom for the infant to move his or her arms and legs.

At its upper end the central inclined body portion 12 of my device 10 terminates and curves gently around at a high point 24 to form a downwardly extending end surface 26 that also slopes outwardly and joins with the sidewalks 20. This sloping end surface is particularly useful when the child's head and hair are being washed, because water applied to his head will roll off and fall on the sloping surface 26 and thereby be deflected away from the infant's eyes and body. A series of holes 28 are provided in a spaced-apart group on the sloping surface 26 to help dispose of the water used for head washing. A similar group of perforations 30 are provided at the lower ends of the central inclined surface 12 and the surface 14. These latter perforations provide a drain means for any water trapped inside the device and they also prevent the device from floating and being displaced when it is initially placed in a partially filled tub.

As stated previously, my recliner device 10 for small children is preferably made as a one-piece unit from a suitable plastic material that can be poured or laid over a mold form having the proper configuration. Because of the manner in which the sidewalks 20 and the end surfaces 16 and 22 are integrally connected, the device may have a high degree of strength and rigidity even though the thickness of the plastic material, which may be uniform throughout, can be small (e.g. one-fourth inch). Thus, the device is highly adaptable to high volume production at a relatively low unit cost.

To those skilled in the art to which this invention relates, many changes in construction and widely differing embodiments and applications of the invention will suggest themselves without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. The disclosures and the description herein are purely illustrative and are not intended to be in any sense limiting.

I claim:
1. For use in supporting a small child in a reclining position as it is being bathed and its hair is being washed, a rigid device comprising:
   a child-supporting surface; said child-supporting surface including a central inclined back supporting portion connected at its lower end to an upwardly sloped thigh and buttock supporting portion and connected at its upper end to a downwardly sloped head supporting portion;
   said child-supporting surface at its side edges terminating in upwardly directed low rails, the outer edges of said rails being connected to sidewalks which support said surface in an elevated position.
   2. The device as described in claim 1 wherein said child-supporting surface includes a downwardly sloped lower end portion connected to said upwardly sloped portion, and said sidewalks being connected to the end of said downwardly sloped lower end portion and the end of the downwardly sloped portion at the upper end of said central portion.
   3. The device as described in claim 2 wherein all of the elements are integrally part of a one-piece plastic member.
   4. The device as described in claim 2 including a first group of spaced-apart holes in said downwardly sloped portion at the upper end of said central portion and a second group of spaced-apart holes at the lower end of said central portion.