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(54) **Dish, particularly for feeding infants and children**

(57) A dish (10), particularly for feeding infants and children, comprising a main dish body (11) to which at

least one toy (14) is fixed reversibly. The toy (14) is fixed reversibly to the main dish body (11) by means of a quick coupling-release device (15).

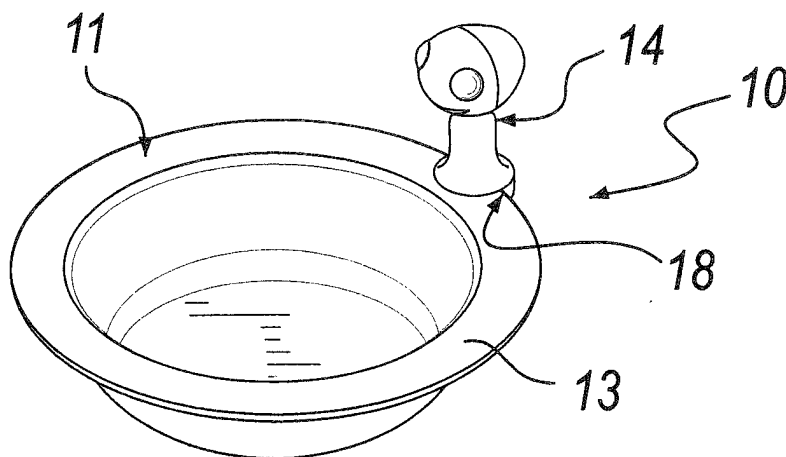


Fig. 1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children.

[0002] It is well-known that as children grow they need to feel fully integrated with the family.

[0003] It is at the dinner table, where one usually gathers to chat, discuss and debate, that infants even only a few months old must learn integration with the family, becoming accustomed to taking part in the conviviality.

[0004] Unfortunately, children are instead often bored at the table and are eager to get up once they have finished their meal.

[0005] Once weaned, it would be wise to accustom children to eat sitting at the table, if possible, making their mealtimes coincide with those of their parents.

[0006] To facilitate a behavior of this type, it is accordingly now customary for parents, when the child is still very young, to place the highchair next to the set table as if it were an extra chair.

[0007] To spare the child from experiencing this moment as a coercion, initially and only when he is still very young, it is customary to place, next to the dish, cup and fork (which are colored and decorated with toy figures specifically intended for children), his favorite toy, which will help him to find his bearings in an environment that he still perceives as alien.

[0008] While the child is being fed, he tries to play with such favorite toy, which is close to the dish and is possibly being held by the same parent who is feeding him.

[0009] As it is known, the child tends to grab and shake anything that is within his reach and to throw it or drop it; this occurs punctually also with the favorite toy, which thus becomes dirty and becomes unusable for the rest of the meal.

[0010] The aim of the present invention is to provide a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, that allows to solve the drawbacks noted at children's mealtimes.

[0011] Within this aim, an object of the present invention is to provide a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, that helps the child be happy to stay at the table where he eats his meals.

[0012] Another object of the present invention is to provide a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, that allows to integrate meals with children's games.

[0013] Another object of the present invention is to provide a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, that can be manufactured with known systems and technologies.

[0014] This aim and these and other objects that will become better apparent hereinafter are achieved by a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, characterized in that it comprises a main dish body to which at least one toy is fixed reversibly.

[0015] Advantageously, said at least one toy is fixed reversibly to said main dish body by way of a quick coupling-release device.

pling-release device.

[0016] Further characteristics and advantages of the present invention will become better apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred but not exclusive embodiment thereof, illustrated by way of non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a dish according to the invention;

Figure 2 is a sectional front view of a dish according to the invention;

Figure 3 is a sectional side view of a dish according to the invention;

Figure 4 is an enlarged-scale view of a portion of Figure 2.

[0017] With reference to the figures, a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, according to the invention, is generally designated by the reference numeral 10.

[0018] The dish 10 comprises a main dish body 11, such as for example a plate in which the peripheral rim 13 is of the type that forms an annular ring that cantilevers outward.

[0019] A toy 14, such as for example a toy figure, is reversibly fixed to the peripheral rim 13.

[0020] The toy 14 is fixed to the rim 13 by way of a quick coupling-release device 15, which is described hereinafter.

[0021] The toy 14 comprises two half-shells, respectively a front half-shell 16 and a rear half-shell 17, which are mutually coupled by way of complementary snap-together elements (not shown in the figures), of the elastically deformable type, which are in any case of a per se known type.

[0022] The two half-shells 16 and 17, when mutually coupled, form, below the toy 14, a slot 18 for coupling to the peripheral edge 13; such slot is delimited by an upper surface 19, which forms the bottom 19a of the front half-shell 16, and by a tab 20, which protrudes from the bottom of the rear half-shell 17 toward the plate 11.

[0023] In practice, the peripheral rim 13 is sandwiched between the bottom 19a of the front half-shell 16 and the tab 20 of the rear half-shell 17.

[0024] The coupling between the slot 18 and the peripheral rim 13 occurs substantially without interference; locking is ensured by the quick coupling-release device 15.

[0025] The quick coupling-release device 15 consists, in this embodiment, of an elastically deformable element 21 that protrudes partially from an opening 22, formed in the bottom 19a, when the toy 14 is not coupled to the plate 11.

[0026] The elastically deformable element 21 is accommodated and locked inside the front half-shell 16.

[0027] In particular, the elastically deformable element 21 is constituted by a U-shaped body 23 provided,

on its bottom side, with an ellipsoidal stud 24 that protrudes toward the slot 18.

[0028] The ellipsoidal stud 24 protrudes partially from the opening 22 when the toy 14 is not coupled to the peripheral rim 13.

[0029] The U-shaped body 23 has, in an upper region, horizontal wings 25 for resting against corresponding locators (not shown in the figures) formed on the front half-shell 16.

[0030] The U-shaped body 23 is locked in an upper region by a locking element 27, which is fixed by snap-together coupling to the front half-shell 16, which rests on the horizontal wings 25.

[0031] When the toy is coupled to the plate 14, the peripheral rim 13 enters the slot 18.

[0032] The elastically deformable element 21, which protrudes with the ellipsoidal stud 24 from the opening 22, thus makes contact with the rim 13 and is consequently pushed into the opening 22.

[0033] The elastic thrust of the elastically deformable element 21 contributes to the stable coupling of the toy 14 and of the plate 11; to the benefit of the reversibility of the coupling, such elastic thrust is such as to still allow easy disengagement of the components.

[0034] In practice it has been found that the invention thus described achieves the intended aim and objects.

[0035] In particular, the present invention provides a dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, that has a three-dimensional toy that is integrated in its structure and therefore allows the child who is using the dish to find his bearings in an environment, i.e., the family table, which he may still perceive as alien in the first months of his life.

[0036] Advantageously, the toy can be uncoupled from the plate and be used as a plaything by the child even outside of the period linked to meals, consequently increasing the familiarity of said toy when it is instead associated with the dish used for meals.

[0037] Conveniently, the fact of having a quick coupling-release device allows safe locking and at the same time simple release, so as to prevent the child from tipping the dish with the food if he grips the toy forcefully.

[0038] Moreover, the fact of having a quick coupling-release device allows to detach the toy easily to place it in a dishwasher together with the dish.

[0039] The invention thus conceived is susceptible of numerous modifications and variations, all of which are within the scope of the appended claims; all the details may further be replaced with other technically equivalent elements.

[0040] In practice, the materials employed, so long as they are compatible with the specific use, as well as the dimensions, may be any according to requirements and to the state of the art.

[0041] The disclosures in Italian Patent Application No. PD2003A000232 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

[0042] Where technical features mentioned in any

claim are followed by reference signs, those reference signs have been included for the sole purpose of increasing the intelligibility of the claims and accordingly such reference signs do not have any limiting effect on the interpretation of each element identified by way of example by such reference signs.

Claims

1. A dish, particularly for feeding infants and children, **characterized in that** it comprises a main dish body (11) to which at least one toy (14) is fixed reversibly.
2. The dish according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said at least one toy (14) is fixed reversibly to said main dish body (11) by way of a quick coupling-release device (15).
3. The dish according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said at least one toy (14) is fixed to a peripheral rim (13) of said main dish body (11).
4. The dish according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said main dish body (11) is constituted by a plate that has a peripheral rim (13) of the type that forms an annular ring that cantilevers outward.
5. The dish according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said toy (14) comprises two half-shells, respectively a front half-shell (16) and a rear half-shell (17), which are mutually coupled and form, below said toy (14), a slot (18) for coupling to said peripheral rim (13), said slot being delimited by an upper surface (19) that forms the bottom (19a) of said front half-shell (16) and by a tab (20) that protrudes from the bottom of said rear half-shell (17) toward said plate main dish body (11), the coupling between said slot (18) and said peripheral rim (13) occurring substantially without interference, the locking between said peripheral edge (13) and said slot (18) being ensured by said quick coupling-release device (15).
6. The dish according to claim 5, **characterized in that** said quick coupling-release device (15) comprises an elastically deformable element (21) that protrudes partially from an opening (22) that is formed in said bottom (19a) when said toy (14) is not coupled to said main dish body (11).
7. The dish according to claim 6, **characterized in that** said elastically deformable element (21) is constituted by a U-shaped body (23), which has, on its bottom side, an ellipsoidal stud (24) that protrudes toward said slot (18) and partially protrudes from

said opening (22) when said toy (14) is not coupled to said peripheral rim (13), said U-shaped body (23) being accommodated and locked on said front half-shell (16).

shell (16), which rests on said horizontal wings (25).

8. The dish according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said U-shaped body (23) has, in an upper region, horizontal wings (25) for resting against corresponding abutments formed on said front half-shell (16), said U-shaped body (23) being locked in an upper region by a locking element (27), which is fixed in an interlocking manner on said front half-shell (16), which rests on said horizontal wings (25).
9. A toy particularly for infants and children, **characterized in that** it comprises a device (15) for quick coupling-release with respect to a peripheral rim (13) of a dish (10).
10. The toy according to claim 9, **characterized in that** it comprises two half-shells, respectively a front half-shell (16) and a rear half-shell (17), which are mutually coupled and form, below said toy (14), a slot (18) for coupling to the peripheral rim (13) of the dish (10), said slot being delimited by an upper surface (19), which forms the bottom (19a) of said front half-shell (16), and by a tab (20) that protrudes from the bottom of said rear half-shell (17) toward said dish (10), the coupling between said slot (18) and said peripheral rim (13) occurring substantially without interference, the locking between said peripheral rim (13) and said slot (18) being ensured by said quick coupling-release device (15).
11. The toy according to claim 10, **characterized in that** said quick coupling-release device (15) comprises an elastically deformable element (21), which protrudes partially from an opening (22) provided on said bottom (19a) when said toy (14) is not coupled to said dish (10).
12. The toy according to claim 11, **characterized in that** said elastically deformable element (21) is constituted by a U-shaped body (23) that has, on the bottom side, an ellipsoidal stud (24), which protrudes toward said slot (18) and partially protrudes from said opening (22) when said toy (14) is not coupled to said peripheral rim (13), said U-shaped body (23) being accommodated and locked on said front half-shell (16).
13. The toy according to claim 12, **characterized in that** said U-shaped body (23) has, in an upper region, horizontal wings (25) for contact against corresponding locators provided on said front half-shell (16), said U-shaped body (23) being locked in an upper region by a locking element (27), which is fixed by snap-together coupling to said front half-

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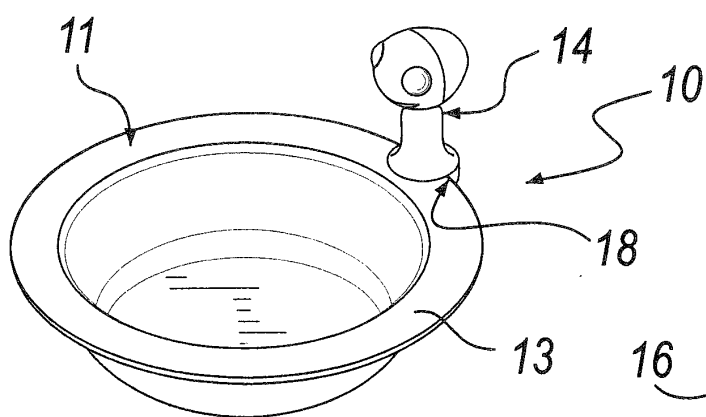


Fig. 1

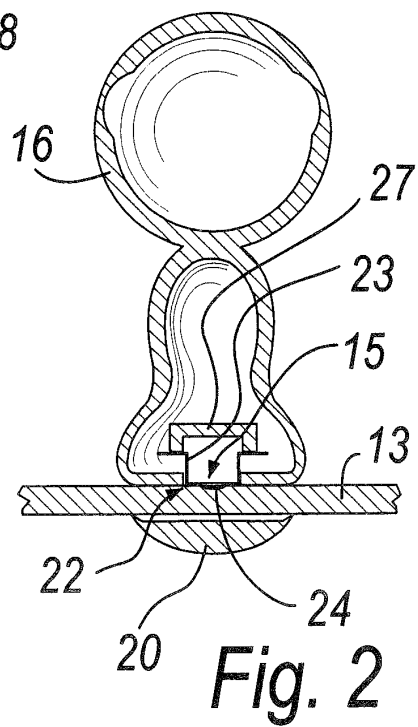


Fig. 2

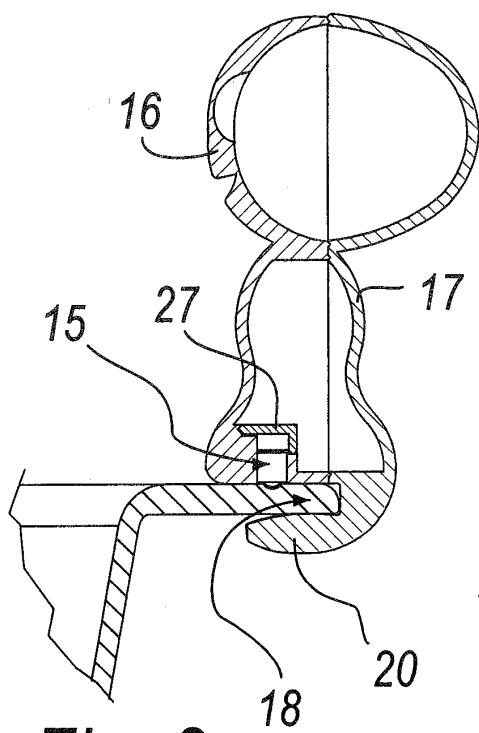


Fig. 3

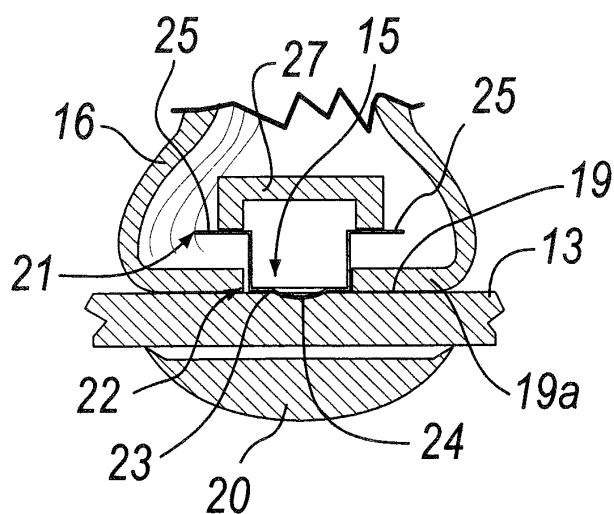


Fig. 4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 04 10 2039

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X	FR 1 601 401 A (AFTALION ET AL) 24 August 1970 (1970-08-24) * page 2, line 21 - page 3, line 30; figure 1 *	1-4,9	A47G19/02 A63H33/00
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague		26 July 2004	Vistisen, L
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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