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A study of parental attitudes and behavior toward the placement and adjustment of twenty-one children discharged from foster homes by the Boston Children's Aid Association during the years 1948 and 1949.

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A STUDY OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR TOWARD THE PLACEMENT AND
ADJUSTMENT OF TWENTY ONE CHILDREN DISCHARGED FROM FOSTER
HOMES BY THE BOSTON CHILDREN'S AID ASSOCIATION
DURING THE YEARS 1948 AND 1949

A THESIS

SUBMITTED BY

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(A.B., Colby College, 1949)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Boston Children's Aid Association is an adoption and child placing agency. The purpose of this study is to examine a number of cases taken from this agency which indicate the parent's attitudes and behavior toward the child's adjustment and placement in a foster home. The writer will attempt to discover what effect the attitudes and behavior of the parents had on the child's adjustment and placement in the foster home. What were the parents' attitudes toward the child prior to placement? What effect did the parents' actions have on the foster home situation? What was the case worker's role with the parents and was the case worker able to modify the parental attitudes and behavior?

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study includes twenty one children who were referred previous to 1948, but were discharged in 1948 and 1949. In conference with the senior case work supervisor, it was decided that the age group would include children between the ages, three to ten years when referred. The reasons for limiting the age group were 1. The children under three years were under the nurses' supervision and 2. The writer felt that children over ten were reaching adolescence, and therefore, the problems of the adolescent were different from the problems of the pre-adolescent child. However, when some of these children were dis-
charged from the agency, they were in their adolescent period. There are included cases of children who were placed in Children's Aid Association camps which are considered foster homes in small group placements. Only those cases are included in which there is a clear recognition of the parent's attitudes and behavior towards the child's adjustment in a foster home.

SOURCES OF DATA

For this study, the material includes fifteen families which consists of twenty-one children. The material is obtained from the child's and the parents' records. There is also information concerning the health of the child which describes the developmental history and the role of the parents during this period, referring summaries from cooperating agencies, and psychological summaries. The case material was gathered from closed cases.

METHODS OF PROCEDURE

The cases were given to the writer by the senior case work supervisor who obtained them from the agency files and the index of records. Each case was read and the information gathered was compiled by means of a schedule. Particular attention was paid to the source and the urgency of referral, family background, the parents' attitudes towards the child, the case worker, and the agency, before and after placement, and the results of the foster home placement. These cases were chosen as a basis of study because 1. The children were representative of the age group in the writer's study, and 2. The parents' attitudes influenced the child's adjustment in the foster home. Each
case was summarized, interpreted and then compared and classified in five groupings.

LIMITATIONS

This study was obviously limited in size due to the small number of cases studied. The conclusions drawn at the end of the study were applicable to the fifteen cases studied at the Children's Aid Association during the years 1948 and 1949. In some records, the material may have been incomplete. The writer wished to point out that both the attitudes of the child and the foster parents were important, but this study will only include the attitudes of the parents and their effect on the child in the foster home.
CHAPTER II

THE AGENCY SETTING

The Children's Aid Association in Boston is a child placing and adoption agency. Children have been placed in foster homes since the 1860's by the Boston Children's Aid Society.¹ During the 1860's, family ties were considered, but special emphasis was not placed on the parents until 1922 when Alfred Whitman, executive secretary from 1922 to 1951, laid particular stress on family ties and on strengthening disorganized families.

Since this study is concerned with parental attitudes toward placement, the writer will describe the agency policies from the time of the application interview to the actual placement. This chapter will include the parents' attitude toward these policies.

The application for placement is made by the parents, other agencies, professional people, or friends. The parents are first seen by the intake worker who explains the policies of the agency and emphasizes the right of the parents to determine whether they want placement since it is their attitude which may influence the success or failure of the child's adjustment in a foster home. A conference is held with the intake worker and the case work supervisor to decide whether the case can be accepted for study.

If the case is accepted, it is then assigned to a case worker who establishes a relationship with the child and the parents to de-

¹ Hereafter referred to as CAA.
termine whether placement seems indicated. During this process, the parents are shown an ether permit and a boarding agreement, copies of which can be found at the end of the study, which the parents are required to sign before the children are placed. The ether permit is a paper stating that in case of an emergency, the CAA can assume the responsibility of enabling the doctors at the Boston Dispensary, which is connected with the CAA, to admit the child to the hospital and permitting the use of an anesthetic.

The case worker discusses with the parents on a budgetary basis, the amount of board that they are able to pay for the child. The case worker explains that in signing these papers, it does not mean that the parents are giving up their responsibilities or right to their children. There are some parents who fear that they are giving up their children to the agency. In regard to clothing, parents are encouraged to contribute as much as possible; however, if they are unable to do so, the CAA will pay for all or part of the clothing. The agency believes that the child in care should be dressed like the other children in the neighborhood where they go to live and, therefore, should not be deprived of clothes if the parent is unable to provide for them. Each child is given a weekly allowance which the parent or the agency pays.

When these policies have been explained, the parent makes a decision to continue plans for placement or decides against it.

If it has been decided that the parents are in need of the agency's services, the foster home department endeavors to locate a home which will meet the needs of this child. The foster parents are
prepared for the child and the foster home is described to the parents and to the child. The child and the parents usually visit the foster home with the case worker before actual placement, so that the child will not feel too strange when he does leave his parents. Such a visit also permits the parents to become acquainted with the foster parents. On the day of placement, the child is examined at the Boston Dispensary and then is taken to the foster home by the case worker.

The case worker keeps in constant contact with the child, the parents, and the foster parents while the child is in the foster home. When the worker feels that the parent–child relationship is a wholesome one, it is encouraged throughout placement. If the parental relationship is upsetting to the child, the worker attempts to interpret to the parent its effect on the child and when advisable, suggests limiting the contacts with the child. Parents are requested to visit the child not more than once a week. If it is deemed feasible to have the parents visit more often, it is arranged in individual cases.

CAA demonstrates particular concern for the parent–child relationship stressing that placement is a sharing process. The parents and the agency work together to decide that foster home placement is what the parents want and that the child can benefit from it. During the placement process, the worker is constantly aware that the child still belongs to his parents and endeavors to follow through with this idea.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The parents' attitudes and their behavior toward the child are of the greatest importance in child placing since these attitudes influence the child's adjustment in the foster home. It is accepted that the effects of a child's former experiences and relationships with the parents will operate in the foster home.

The people in our society have a great deal of feeling about applying to an agency for help. This cannot be overemphasized when applied to parents who come to an agency requesting placement for their child. The case worker recognizes these feelings and it becomes the case worker's responsibility to establish a relationship with the parents. Dorothy Hutchinson emphasizes the case worker's role with the parents.

The request for placement is as individual as people are individual. Behind this request lies the life story of men, women and children. To understand the implications of placement, to read its meaning in each case, is the responsibility of the case worker as well as her opportunity for more effective living.2

The case worker must be aware of the agency's role in separating the child from the parents and help them to comprehend the meaning of giving their child to another. It is important to remember that the parents may intellectually accept and understand placement, but there are many parents who are emotionally unable to accept the actual separation. The worker's ability to clarify child placing in concrete terms reduces the parents' anxieties and fears. Norma Philbrick states that

2 Dorothy Hutchinson, *The Request for Placement Has Meaning*, P. 132.
the tangibleness of placement is a highly significant factor.

For parent and worker, early in the contact, consideration of the concrete nature and terms of placement is an important part of this giving and taking process. Its value lies in their very tangibleness. The worker's clarity about them, her comfort with them, amount to "this is—what is a part of placement." The application interview becomes the crux of placement for parent and agency. The agency's responsibilities becomes: First—for meeting the parent with readiness to understand what is involved for him in any giving up of his child to another. Second—for its acceptance of its own role in taking the child from the parent for placement.3

The case worker enters into a meaningful relationship with the parents to enable them to work through their feelings for their child. When this relationship has been established, the case worker determines whether the parents can be involved in helping the child to accept placement. David Hallowitz emphasizes these points in the following statement.

A beginning effort should be made with all parents to determine whether or not they can be involved in helping the child while in placement and in planning for the child's future care,... When the parent enters into a meaningful relationship with the worker and is able to work through some of his antagonistic feelings for the child, then the process of bringing the child and parent together can be undertaken. This consists of helping the parent and child understand each other and of making it possible for them to experience and test out their changing relationship.4

Placement which will result in separation may arouse so much guilt in the parents that it may become too threatening for them to accept. The actual separation is a traumatic experience for the parent and the child and the parents' attitudes at this time can influence the


4 David Hallowitz, The Separation Problem in the Child Care Institutions, p. 39.
child to such a degree that he will not be able to adjust in the foster home. Dorothy Hutchinson believes that the guilty parent is capable of influencing the child’s behavior in the foster home.

The guilty mother is more defeating because her rejection is accompanied by guilt and her bad conscience causes her to disparage the foster mother while she continues to bribe and allure her child with false promises of his return home. The child is neither free to benefit by the foster mother nor to disentangle himself from the sadistic bonds of his own mother.... The child in turn is tied to his mother with anxiety and conflict. Although he has never had her he still believes he will get her if he holds out long enough. Certain children are bound by such strong negative bonds to their parents, are so entrenched in their illusions about them, that they defy any attempt to dispel these illusions on the part of the worker or foster parents.5

Jalowicz emphasizes this when she states that the separation of the child from the parent may increase the child’s feeling for the parent.

Physical separation of the parent and the child does not necessarily interfere with the parent’s influence upon the child. The separation may lead to the child’s idealizing the parent.6

The parents endeavor to conceal their feelings of rejection toward their child, but the child eventually begins to realize this attitude.

An important factor is whether the parents want the child. If they do not, if the coming child is unwelcome, there is greater likelihood of the child’s being rejected, at least partially, and this rejection, whether open or hidden, conscious or unconscious, will eventually communicate itself to the child and create in him a feeling of rejection.7


6 Almeda Jalowicz, Foster Child Needs His Own Parents, pp. 18-19.

7 A.H. Maslow and Hela Mittleman, Principles of Abnormal Psychology, p. 245.
Parents demonstrate their attitudes toward their child in various ways. Such methods as excessive gift giving, poor choice in gifts, frequent or infrequent visiting, bribing and false promises of return to their own home, criticizing the foster home to the child, seductiveness and rejection of the child, were used to indicate the parents' attitudes and influenced the child's adjustment in the foster home. The realization of the importance of the parents' influence on the child in the foster home can be illustrated by the behavior of the child in reaction to the attitudes of the parents. These behavior mechanisms take the form of new symptoms, intensify already existing ones or promote the recurrence of former symptoms. Draza Kline and Helen Overstreet are in accordance with this statement.

All children react with hostility to the rejection inherent in being placed, and this hostility comes out in some kind of symptom formation.... In one case stealing and excessive eating were found to be manifestations of the child's attempt to overcome the deprivations she has suffered.8

Symonds believes that running away is another reaction of the child to the attitudes of his parents. "When a child runs away, he is searching both in fantasy and in reality for the security which his home or his school does not provide."9

Most children react to their parents' attitudes and behavior in some form of a defense mechanism. The case worker may be under the impression that an ideal foster home has been secured for a child, but

8 Draza Kline and Helen Mary Overstreet, Maintaining Foster Homes Through Case Work Skills, pp. 321-327.

this child believes that his own home could be similar to the foster home. Many of the child's statements about his own home exist in his fantasy live.

It is apparent that the physical attributes of this ideal home which he fantasizes, and the personalities with which he would like to surround himself are not unlike those that he thinks could exist in his own home and it is a short step to frank statements that he wishes to be returned there.10

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF CASE MATERIAL

This chapter included the case material of the fifteen cases which consisted of twenty one children who were referred to the CAA for foster home placement. In each of the case studies, the name and other material which would identify the child, the parents or the foster parents have been eliminated.

The writer has arranged the case material into five groups which indicated the different parental attitudes and behavior toward the child's adjustment in the foster home. The groupings were as follows:

1. Three cases in which the grandparents interfered to such an extent that they influenced the parental attitudes towards the child in the foster home.

2. Three cases in which the parents identified the child with themselves or with another relative.

3. Two cases in which the parental attitudes were transferred by the child into the foster home.

4. Three cases in which the step-father influenced the child's adjustment in the foster home.

5. Four cases whose parents refused to assume responsibility for their children.
The first group contained three cases consisting of four children in which the grand parents interfered to such an extent that they influenced the parental attitudes towards the child in the foster home.

The writer will present two cases and summarize one.

Case 1

Lee, five years old, was referred to CAA in 1947 by his mother who requested boarding school placement for Lee. After Lee's parents had been divorced in 1944, he lived with his mother at the maternal grandmother's home in the South for a year. The mother had been dependent on her own family for support, but resented being bossed by them. This situation was not a healthy one for Lee, since the boy had every wish granted and his mother was not able to exercise any control or authority over him. The maternal grandmother interfered so much that Lee was taken by his mother to the New England States where his mother had been working in a factory for the last two years. Lee's mother was not able to share him with the maternal grandmother. Lee, who was an only child, had been living with his mother in a one room apartment and was boarded out during the day.

Since the mother was interested in placement, the case worker saw her during weekly interviews for one month to interpret CAA policies and the meaning of foster home placement. The mother described foster home placement as an answer to her prayers, but at the same time she felt that placement meant that she would have to relinquish her rights to her child. The worker emphasized that the mother would play an important role in the placement of her son. Lee was accepted for placement for six months until mother was able to adjust her own life. The case worker's plans were to alleviate mother's fears regarding placement and to help her with her relationship with her own family.

Lee was placed one month after referral and at the time, the mother sobbed bitterly and Lee responded to this by saying "You are crying because you are not going to see me again, aren't you Mommy?" Lee became frightened when the mother left and he would not permit the case worker to leave him. It was evident that Lee had not been prepared for the foster home or for the separation. Lee remained eleven days in his first placement because the foster mother could not accept his aggressive behavior in attempting to destroy furniture. The case worker explained that this was Lee's reaction to his separation, but the foster mother insisted upon Lee's removal.

Lee was replaced, but his mother immediately took him out of the foster home and returned to the maternal grandmother's for a month. The case worker felt that the mother was compelled to return
to her own mother's home. The mother returned North, as she thought that her mother's home was a bad influence on Lee, since one of the uncles was an alcoholic and Lee was exposed to him on several occasions. Lee was not disciplined in the South as the maternal grandmother did not think that it was necessary. Consequently, Lee began to demand his mother's attention in order to obtain his own way. This began to irritate the mother since she could not accept the permissive attitude of the maternal grandmother toward Lee.

Lee was returned to the second foster home, but he began to react to the difference in attitudes of his mother and the maternal grandmother. He developed a finicky appetite and he instigated trouble among the children in the neighborhood. When his mother visited, Lee would not permit his friends to come near "his Mom". Lee demonstrated to adults the picture of an excessively meek and passive attitude and at the same time provoked aggressive behavior in other children. He suggested to the children that they do things that were contrary to foster mother's wishes which eventually resulted in their punishment while Lee remained aloof and good.

The mother was very generous with clothes, toys and presents for Lee. She visited frequently, but when he became ill, the mother refused to visit him stating that she was afraid that she would infect herself and had no time to visit him. The mother paid board regularly for a few months and then hinted that CAA keep Lee without payment. The mother had several complaints about the foster home stating that there were too many rough influences in the home and that Lee was "too nice and gentle a boy to be subjected to this treatment". The mother said that she would never change him.

The worker attempted to help the mother to see her problem from Lee's point of view, pointing out that frequent visiting would hinder Lee's adjustment in the foster home. The mother failed to cooperate with the case worker and the agency by not keeping appointments, was irregular in regard to board payments, and refusing to limit her visits to Lee. The mother did not recognize that frequent replacements and visits to the maternal grandmother left Lee with a feeling of insecurity.

Seven months after Lee's first placement, the mother again removed Lee from the foster home stating that she was going to her mother's home in the South where she planned to remarry. Her reason for remarriage was to avoid the humiliation and the dependence on her own family. The plan of the mother's fell in logically with CAA plans, since the agency decided that case work would be terminated, since the mother could not accept case work services and the child was unable to adjust in the foster home because of the mother's attitudes toward Lee in the foster home which influenced his adjustment.
Lee's maternal grandmother influenced his mother to such an extent that it hindered Lee's adjustment in the foster home. It was apparent that the mother had not solved her relationship with the maternal grandmother, since the mother was very dependent on her, but at the same time, she wished to be independent. This attitude was evident in the mother's constant return to the maternal grandmother's home. Lee did not have any feeling of security as he was not permitted to remain in any place long enough to form any close relationships or to establish any sense of stability. Lee's mother kept him in a state of indecision and unrest by making plans with him and then failing to keep them.

Since the maternal grandmother had maintained a permissive attitude with Lee and had given him a great deal of attention, he demanded this same amount of attention from his mother and from the foster parents. Lee's mother was unable to do this, as he reacted by destroying furniture, developing a finicky appetite and taking pleasure in other children being punished by his wrong doing.

The mother was not able to accept case work services before or after placement. She could not accept the foster home as she frequently complained about it. These complaints could have increased Lee's behavior in the foster home. The case worker was unable to modify the mother's relationship with the maternal grandmother which influenced Lee's adjustment in the foster home.
Case 2

Billy, nine years old, was referred to CAA in 1944 by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children for placement following repeated delinquent acts and because of the neglect by his parents. CAA accepted the case with the understanding that a study would be made of Billy, who was the second in a family of three boys.

Marital relationships in the family were not harmonious after eleven years of marriage. The mother described the father as a mean contemptible person with a vicious temper and often broke the furniture. Billy's mother also mentioned that his father, in a rage of fury, broke Billy's front tooth. She further said that father drank, gambled, and went out with other women. The father was suspicious of mother--believing that she was interested in her own pleasures. The father withheld money for his own interests and the mother and the maternal grandmother maintained the home. The family was living with the maternal grandmother who was described as a hostile, aggressive, and dominant person. The maternal grandmother placed herself on a pedestal and made a point of informing the worker about her illustrious past. The worker's impression was that the maternal grandmother was endeavoring to engineer a divorce or separation between the mother and father.

The parents were interested in their own pleasures--neglecting the children by leaving them alone on several occasions. The parents recognized that they were unable to discipline the boys, but claimed an interest in them and dressed them very well. They referred to Billy as being very nervous, a trouble maker, and a "wise guy". The case worker felt their attitude towards Billy was rejecting. The parents were visited by the case worker three days after referral and the worker was told that "social workers stuck their noses in their business." The mother wanted two weeks to prepare Billy's clothes and to reconcile herself, but the father insisted on immediate placement. The maternal grandmother thought that placement would be harmful to Billy.

Billy was placed in four different homes within a period of sixteen months. It was the worker's impression that parental disagreements, interference of maternal grandmother, and unwise parental indulgences and questionable handling, affected Billy's progress in the foster home. Billy made grimaces by mouth, twitched and his hands shook, which were of a psychological nature used to disarm adults. These mannerisms increased in the foster home. Whenever the parents visited Billy, there was a marked difference in his behavior; he stole and twitched nervously. Billy made phallic gestures with a stick which he held between his legs. He was rejected by other children because of his sadistic tendencies. He was dismissed from two schools because of his aggressive behavior and the
foster mothers could not accept him. In one foster home, Billy identified one foster mother with his own mother, since they both whined, lacked consistency, and were very dominating. Billy was then placed in Children's Village in New York where he adjusted slowly because of his unaccepting attitude of removal from his own home. The mother and the maternal grandmother fortified this attitude by saying that he was unjustly treated. As strains developed in relationship to his mother he developed insight into the realities of his problems. When Billy did not write to her, the mother said that he would lose his mother.

In foster homes, Billy's mother dwelled on the non-essentials. For example, she insisted that his clothes be mended and that the buttons on his shoes be locked after. They would often visit late at night and "poke into foster home". The maternal grandmother visited once and stayed twelve hours. This ordeal was upsetting to Billy and his twitching increased. The mother demanded that the boy be permitted to come home on weekends so that he could act as nursemaid to the baby while the parents went out for the evening. The mother wished to hold onto Billy, but at the same time wanted to keep him in the foster home. The case worker thought the mother was a mixture of resentment and hostility of her way of life and compensated by buying clothes. The mother also projected blame onto others. The family failed to cooperate with the case worker. As they did not want "charity"; the father paid board regularly. Worker felt that the father was interested in doing the right thing, while the mother was passive and very critical. The maternal grandmother continually interfered with the parents, mentioned all the money she spent on the family, and did not approve of placement for Billy. The mother attempted to disregard domination of the maternal grandmother and at the same time sought her protection and aid. It was also evident that the parents were interested in status more than in Billy's training.

Billy failed to graduate from the Children's Village and was transferred to his own home in 1947, three years after referral. Billy was discharged from CAA in 1948 since it was the case worker's impression that he could not be helped since Billy identified with his parents and was unable to release his aggression and hostility.

Billy's grandmother influenced his mother's attitudes toward placement to such an extent that he was unable to adjust in any foster home. Since the family lived in the same house with the maternal grandmother, they were under her constant domination. Billy's mother was ambivalent in her attitude toward her mother--disregarded her domination
and at the same time, sought her protection. The mother was not mature enough to emancipate herself from the strong relationship with the maternal grandmother. The record did not state what effect the maternal grandmother's efforts to dissolve the marriage of the parents had on Billy, but his nervous twitching might have been a reaction to this. Billy also reacted to the constant quarreling of his parents which was partially initiated by the interference of the maternal grandmother. The mother's feelings that the foster home would harm Billy were influenced by the maternal grandmother. The mother and the maternal grandmother fortified Billy's beliefs that he was unjustly treated in the foster home. Stealing occurred whenever his parents visited in the foster home. His nervous grimaces and twitching which were reactions to his separation, increased when his parents visited the foster home and when he visited his own home. This case illustrated that Billy could not adjust because of the maternal grandmother's interference in his parents' life which affected their attitudes toward his adjustment in the foster home.
Case 3

Doris and Richard, five and three respectively, were referred to the CAA in 1948 by the mother for placement in order to save money to buy a home for her children. Since the mother could not emotionally bring herself to part with her children, although, intellectually, she realized that she must, she was referred to a family agency for guidance with her own problems. The mother was referred back to the CAA four months later as the home conditions became worse and the mother was unable to find a home for herself and the children.

The parents were divorced in 1947 after five years of marriage. The mother did not have the sanction of her family when she married and had considerable guilt feelings for not heeding her parents' advice. The children lived with the mother for a year at the maternal grandmother's home where their mother received Aid to Dependent Children. The relationships in the home were strained as the maternal grandmother interfered with the mother's efforts to reise the children and they began to defy their mother. The mother became jealous when it became apparent that Doris and her maternal grandmother became attached to each other. The maternal grandmother's illness necessitated the children's removal from the home, but she had considerable feeling about them entering a foster home.

It was the case worker's impression that the mother's problems were not in the area of motherhood. The mother was not able to leave the maternal grandmother's home as she was still dependent on her mother. The mother was seen by the case worker in an interval of four months, approximately four times before placement in an attempt to interpret CAA policies to her.

Doris and Richard were placed in a foster home two months after referral. Doris' reaction to being separated from her maternal grandmother was to become increasingly defiant. Richard's nocturnal enuresis which was spasmodic when he was living with his mother, occurred more frequently in the foster home. The mother had several complaints about the foster home which increased the children's reactions in the foster home. The mother had not solved her relationships with her own mother and therefore, was not able to have a satisfactory relationship with her children which influenced their adjustment in the foster home. Since the mother had guilty feelings about leaving her mother when she married, these same guilt feelings could have been transferred to Doris and Richard when they were separated from their mother.

The children were returned to their mother seven months after placement, as the mother had remarried. The mother failed to cooperate with the case worker by not keeping appointments and not paying her board regularly.
The case worker was unable to modify the mother's attitudes regarding placement and her feelings towards her own mother which affected the children's adjustment on the foster home.
The preceding three cases involved four children who were unable to adjust in a foster home because of the interference of the grandparents which influenced the parents' attitudes toward the child in the foster home. The three mothers were dependent on their own mothers, but at the same time, desired their independence. Billy's grandmother was an outstanding example of the effect of the interference of a grandmother and her influence on the child's parents. The maternal grandmother dominated one family in this case and the parents' reactions were transferred onto Billy, who reacted by running away and developing several nervous grimaces. Lee became insecure when his mother had to return to the maternal grandmother's home. Doris and Richard also reacted when the grandmother interfered in the mother's raising of the children.

Edith Baylor believed that the grandparents' interference in the family relationships affected the foster home situation when she stated:

The harmony, the satisfactions, and the expressions fostered by at least a wholesome attitude between parents, grandparents, and siblings were reflected in the children's better adjustment to a new home adjustment.  

GROUP TWO

This group includes three cases in which the parents identified the child either with themselves or with another relative which influenced their attitudes toward the child and affected his adjustment in the foster home. The writer will present two cases and summarize one.

Case 4

Sandra and David, nine and eight years old respectively, were referred to CAA by the mother in 1946 for foster home placement. The children had been in six private foster homes which the mother continually complained of. The mother was working and was unable to give her children proper supervision. The mother had considerable guilt feelings about not being able to maintain a home, failing as a mother and asking for CAA's help with her problems.

The parents were divorced and the mother described their life together "as she being his slave." The mother was physically attracted to her husband and eloped without her parents' consent. Her poor relationships with her husband was the part of her life which caused her to feel that she had failed her children.

The mother came from a family with questionable mental illness. The mother's sister was institutionalized and the maternal grandmother, who was described as neurotic, was never able to accept her daughter's illness. The mother had a poor relationship with the maternal grandmother and was a victim of her father's whims. It was the case worker's impression that the mother was jealous of her father. Sandra and David's mother was rejected by her parents and when she placed her own children, the mother experienced a great amount of guilt. The mother was following the same pattern of rejection with her own children that she had undergone in her own childhood.

In the past the mother rejected agency services, but was now ready for help with placement from CAA. It was the worker's impression that the mother could not accept success in any foster home and would have difficulty in accepting any plan. The worker explained the mechanisms of placement—what placement of the children would mean and that the mother's visiting would be limited to once a week in order to permit the children to form a relationship with the foster parents. The worker also thought that the children would benefit by a child guidance clinic, since the children had been in several foster homes, they might possibly have been confused over the divided loyalty to their mother. The worker planned a case work
relationship focused on the mother and her problems to accept more readily the foster home placement and the foster parents for her children. During the first few interviews, the mother was difficult to reach because of her sense of failure and her need for help as a mother, but later wanted to talk to the case worker.

It was the caseworker's impression that the mother identified herself with her children as she was repeating the same attitudes that she experienced with her parents onto her children. The mother identified with the girl by mentioning that Sandra was just like herself as she never finished anything. In the two foster homes, Sandra was the favorite, which the mother strongly resented, since it reminded the mother of her childhood when the maternal aunt was the favorite. The mother constantly complained that Sandra was not appreciative of what she was trying to do for her. Sandra became disrespectful to her mother, who attributed this behavior to the foster mother who spoiled Sandra.

David reacted to the mother's visiting and her complaints about the foster home by becoming talkative after every visit and developing poor eating habits. His enuretic condition increased in the foster home, but the mother was convinced that it was caused by weak kidneys. David regressed in school and escaped into reality by daydreaming. The mother lavished gifts and clothes on both children which the worker felt was due to her guilt feelings for not setting up a home.

During placement, the mother used the interviews to talk about her children's clothes and resisted the case worker by not keeping her appointments. The mother was helped with her own problems. The case worker prepared the mother for David's referral to a habit clinic, although she thought that all he needed was a good foster home. Due to the mental illness in the mother's family, David's mother indicated that she had feelings about her son seeing a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist felt that the mother should tell David about his future as this state of indecision resulted in his problems.

Sandra and David's mother identified herself with her son, as she felt that Sandra was the favorite in the family and that David was rejected. Since the maternal grandparents favored the maternal aunt, the mother believed that she, too, was rejected. Since the mother became overly attached to David, Sandra sought love and affection from the foster parents. Since Sandra was able to develop relationships easily, everyone became attached to the little girl which the mother resented. It was
not known whether the mother's overprotecting attitude toward David was that of hostility. David reacted to his mother's attitude by becoming increasingly enuretic and escaping into fantasy. The case worker was not able to modify the mother's feelings toward placement or towards a better relationship with her own family.
Case 5

Donald, three years old, was referred to CAA by his mother who requested placement in 1946. After discussing the situation with a case worker, the mother decided that she would place Donald and her one year old illegitimate daughter, Betsey, in private placement. The mother returned two months later, requesting placement again as the private foster home requested that the children be removed. The mother intended to obtain a job and, therefore, would not be able to supervise the children.

The parents had been married for four years and were now separated. While the husband was overseas, the mother became pregnant by another man and the husband was considering a divorce, but would return to his wife, if Betsey was placed for adoption. The mother had a great deal of ambivalence as to whether she would return to her husband or give her daughter up for adoption. The mother had a very poor relationship with her own father and mentioned that she was not his favorite.

The case worker saw the parents in separate interviews before the children were placed. According to the father, the mother neglected Donald while the father was in the service. The father described the "mother as a little girl who had never grown up enough to assume responsibility for her children". The worker explained CAA policies to the father stating that his support was needed as he was responsible for Donald's support. The father requested that CAA assume full responsibility for Donald, as he was convinced that his wife would never care for Donald. The worker attempted to explain policies to the mother, but it was evident that she wanted the case worker to make the decisions regarding the children. The case worker explained that CAA was interested in helping her with her problems as the case worker felt that the mother's difficulties were within herself. The case worker thought that separation was advisable if Betsey was to be adopted, but the mother could not decide this. The mother was also helped to tell Donald about placement as this three year old boy would feel the separation and did have some realization of the emotional entanglements of his parents. It appeared that the mother identified Donald with his father, as she mentioned that Donald "was rough and noisy like his father". The mother said that if she had the choice, she would keep Betsey who was like her and was a girl.

During the next two years, the mother followed the pattern of placing Donald for three months and then having him returned to her, as the parents had reconciled several times, but this did not last long.

The mother frequently visited Donald in his foster home and he reacted by becoming sick and aggressive. The mother took Donald,
against the worker's advice, to visit Betsey, who was ill with a contagious disease. The mother was jealous of the foster mother and resented any relationship the boy had with his foster mother. At one time, the mother considered adoption plans for both Betsey and Donald—"stating that she did not think that it mattered if the children had a mother or not". She was convinced that she could do nothing for her children.

It was the case worker's impression that placement might not necessarily serve the needs of the mother or the children. The worker also felt that once the mother made up her mind, she would consider no other possibility for fear that she would be confused about what she really wanted to do. The maternal grandfather did not approve of placement for Donald and the mother's feelings about placement were related to this. The mother considered the future only when working with the case worker who mixed her all up. At home, "she was numb, but with the case worker she was alive, alive, alive." The mother lived in one room in her father's house "where she felt safe and away from everybody and could live from day to day".

The case worker helped the mother to accept the idea of seeing a psychiatrist who described the mother as being dangerously withdrawn. The mother felt guilty about mother's death. She had an unresolved Oedipus-complex which resulted in her promiscuity. Her masculine identity, as she wished she could have been a man, was with her father and she fled to men to protect herself from her father. Her psychiatrist felt that she was not ready for psychiatric treatment as she used it as a means of running away from her problems around placement.

Two years after placement, the mother took Donald and Betsey out of foster homes and planned to obtain a divorce and remarry.

The mother's unresolved Oedipus complex made it impossible for her to form a satisfying relationship with any male. Therefore, the mother could not accept her son as he reminded her of the maternal grandfather. Donald's mother demonstrated her hostility toward her son by exposing him to his sister's illness. Donald became insecure since the mother repeatedly took David out of placement. As a result of this, Donald became extremely aggressive. The father endeavored to cooperate, but since he was in the service, he was unable to keep regular appoint-
ments. The case worker encouraged the mother to see a psychiatrist, but the worker was unable to help the mother with her feelings for Donald.
Case 6

Patsy and Douglas, six and three, respectively, were referred for placement by their mother in 1948, since their parents were divorced and the mother intended to work. Patsy, according to the mother was "living in the past and was upset because she had been present during her parents' arguments". The mother described Douglas "as not having a care in the world and was healthy and happy".

The worker explained CAA policies to the mother, who resented sharing Patsy with the worker and the foster mother, but wanted CAA to assume the responsibility of Douglas. The father was seen by the worker and resented interference of an agency and "did not want a record kept on him". The father did eventually approve of a foster home when the case worker was able to interpret it to him.

Patsy and Douglas were placed four months after referral. The mother visited regularly, but resented visiting another child whom she also had in placement as she "hated taking this time when she could be visiting Patsy". The mother paid board regularly and brought more gifts to Patsy than to Douglas. The mother also upset Patsy by promising to take her out of placement. It was the case worker's impression that mother identified Patsy with herself--treating Patsy as her mother treated her. It was felt that the mother also identified herself with her father and found it hard to accept boys as they represented her father to her. The mother identified Douglas with her father and her husband and, therefore, was not able to accept him. The foster mother favored Douglas which forced the mother-daughter relationships to be strengthened. Patsy did not adjust in school and mentioned that if her mother did not marry her father again, she would. Patsy day-dreamed and wrote backwards in school. The mother had ambivalent feelings for Patsy by overprotecting her and at the same time, was unable to see the rejection of Patsy by the foster mother. The mother took the children out of the foster home, twenty two months after referral. The mother went out of the state to live with her father and her children.
INTERPRETATIVE SUMMARY OF GROUP TWO

The preceding three cases which involved five children whose parents identified their child with themselves or with another relative, pointed out that these attitudes of the parents interfered with the child's adjustment in the foster home. In the case of Patsey and Betsy, Donald's sister, the mothers identified themselves with their daughters and treated them the way their own mothers had treated them in their childhood. In both cases where there were two children in placement in the same family, the mother favored one child which forced the rejected child into forming a strong attachment with the foster parent. In the three cases, the mothers' feelings toward their sons were the same as their feeling toward their husband and maternal grandfather. These parents also had ambivalent feelings regarding placement as they felt guilty about keeping the children in placement, but were not too anxious to have them returned home. These mothers were not able to accept case work services.
GROUP THREE

This group includes two cases in which the parental attitudes were transferred by the child into the foster home which influenced the child's adjustment. The writer will present both cases.

Case 7

Mickey, nine years old, was referred in 1946 to CAA by a probation officer because of Mickey's behavior problems. Mickey had been observed at a State Hospital where he was described as non psychotic and not commitable. He was a boy of normal intelligence and a psychiatrist recommended that Mickey be removed from his home and neighborhood.

The parents' marriage was a forced one which terminated in divorce eleven years after marriage. The father was a psychopath of the inadequate type and according to his wife, "had the brain of a little kid". The mother was on Aid to Dependent Children and was keeping company with the father of her illegitimate baby. Mickey was the third child in a family of four and the children were confused about the identity of their own father.

There was evidence of strong sibling rivalry between Mickey and his eleven year old brother, who were continually fighting with each other. Mickey was described as a boy who had slender, smooth skin, angelic appearance, and spoke with a girlish inflection.

The mother was not seen until after Mickey was placed. She was described as a crude person who heaped abusive language on the children to make them obey and was quite helpless in controlling them. The worker felt that the mother was attached to the children and was a good housekeeper—giving the children a good home—physically. The mother thought that Mickey inherited his behavior from his father.

Mickey was placed two days after referral and during his stay at a temporary foster home, he began to run away to his own home. This running away began two weeks after placement. Mickey was orally and physically aggressive, becoming sullen when worker attempted to discuss his problem with him. The case worker also felt that Mickey "articulated in a narcissistic manner". Mickey hated the foster home and the case worker felt that placement only aggravated his anxiety in relation to his mother's affection. A month after placement, the worker visited the home with Mickey who lavished affection on his brother, when on previous occasions, he could not tolerate him. The worker noticed that the mother reprimanded the children by saying "Shut up, or I'll murder you". The worker felt that Mickey's
central problem resulted from unsatisfied needs for his mother's affection and the resulting extreme rivalry with his siblings. He could not accept placement, since he left his siblings who were his rivals with his mother. It was then decided to place Mickey in one of the agency's camps where foster parents would not be a threat to him and they would be able to help him reorient his attitudes toward siblings and his parents. Mickey behaved very well at camp, so that he could go home on vacations. On his visits home, he fought with his brother and his mother would ask worker to take Mickey back to camp. When the mother did not write to Mickey, he would write to worker "to see if his mother was all right, as she did not write, call or do anything".

The mother articulated that she wanted to cooperate, but she did not understand the purpose of placement in terms of helping Mickey to build a strong character, as she did not have any insight into the nature of his problem. She thought that all Mickey needed was "stricter discipline", but the worker explained that our foster parents did not administer physical punishment to the children. The worker also explained that Mickey was complaining about foster homes in order to make the mother feel guilty and to get more attention, but the worker felt that "the interpretation fell on deaf ears".

Two years after referral, Mickey returned home as he was bored at camp and his panic for his mother grew stronger than the pleasures and satisfactions in placement. Mickey had been at camp for a year and a half. The mother cooperated as well as she could, but was "found to be of such limited capacity for growth into a mature parental attitude, that the home situation was found to be unmodifiable".

Mickey was not secure enough from maternal love, so that he was not free to develop warm, friendly relationships with other people, which prohibited him from adjusting in any foster home. His behavior was motivated by his desperate attempt to force his mother's attention onto him, so that he could assure himself that she wanted him, while at the same time, he was punishing her for her lack of affection. His pattern of fighting off rivals for his mother's affection was transferred into the foster home. His greatest rival was his brother, with whom he continually fought. There was little evidence concerning the mother's preparation for placement, but it was obvious that mother did not have the in-
sight to understand placement. Mickey's mother was a woman who could give her child some of the material things, but could never really understand his behavior. Mickey could not accept a foster mother as she constantly reminded him of his own mother.
Case 8

Joyce, nine years old, was referred in 1944 for placement by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children because of her mother's desertion which left her father in a state of bewilderment. According to the father, he and his wife were happy together until his wife began associating with women of questionable character, about six months previous to referral. During that time, the father was hospitalized, and the mother began to go out with other men, and finally deserted her husband and Joyce. When the mother left, she took Joyce's teen age sister with her. Joyce remained with her father and her two older brothers were in the service.

In a conference with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, it was decided, with the father's approval, to place Joyce in a SPCC home for a month until CAA was able to locate a home for her. The worker described Joyce as a girl with large sad eyes which would fill with tears. There was a strong father-daughter relationship with a great deal of genuine love and interest on the part of the father. Her mother rejected Joyce by preferring her older daughter and being very mean to her. Joyce feared her mother and continually threatened to run away if her mother came near her. Joyce would be satisfied if she "only saw her mother at a distance". The worker also wondered what effect the presence of service men in the home had on Joyce during her father's hospitalization.

Since the father was not in good health and when he was able to work, Joyce did not have any supervision, he was very willing to consider placement. The worker explained the policies to the father, supervision by visitor, clinics, and board payment which the father agreed to pay half of. The worker carefully explained all details of placement to Joyce who was very anxious to be placed and wanted to begin school.

Joyce was placed one month after referral. Joyce and her father were happy about the foster home for about two weeks and then began to find fault with the foster mother who left Joyce home at night and did not give her proper food. Joyce was given everything that she wanted by her father and he visited her three times a week and took her home on weekends. Joyce reacted to the overvisiting and over-indulgence of her father as she became defiant, told lies, would not comply with discipline, refused to eat, and was mean to her foster brother. The worker explained to the foster mother that Joyce was acting out because of her mother's desertion which had a traumatic effect on Joyce. Joyce was also upset because of separation from her father. The divided control between her father and the foster mother was frustrating to Joyce. The worker explained that Joyce was too old for her nine years and had too much responsibility. She now felt guilty for her mother's desertion of her father and the worker felt that it was hard for Joyce to attach herself to another woman because
the mother was so cruel and rejected her by desertion, consequently, she did not want to be deserted again and could not form a relationship with the foster mother. Since Joyce was unhappy in the foster home and the foster mother could not accept Joyce's behavior, Joyce was replaced fifteen months after first placement.

The worker thought that Joyce's father cooperated with the agency "at times". The worker explained that taking Joyce out of the foster home so frequently was undoing all the foster mother had been trying to do, but the father would not listen to this interpretation. The worker emphasized that the father would have to choose which was most important—his being lonesome on weekends or Joyce improving in behavior. The mother also began to visit Joyce and gave her a great deal to eat which resulted in Joyce becoming ill. Both the foster mother and the worker prohibited the mother from visiting Joyce as it was such a traumatic experience for her.

Joyce improved in the second foster home—as she became less aggressive, made friends with the neighborhood children, began to eat everything and no longer lied. It was decided after two years in the second foster home, that Joyce would remain in the foster home in private placement, since foster mother and Joyce's father were able to come to satisfactory working relationships.

Joyce was unable to form any relationship in the first foster home because she feared that the foster mother would follow the mother's pattern of deserting her. Therefore, Joyce could not adjust in the first foster home because she transferred her feelings towards her parents into the foster home. The father was prepared for placement, but had guilt feelings about the separation. The father complained about the first foster home, but accepted the second foster mother as she gave Joyce the affection and security which she needed. Joyce realized that the second foster mother would not desert her and therefore, was not like her mother. With this realization, Joyce was able to adjust in the second foster home. The father's attitudes were partially modified towards placement.
INTERPRETATIVE STUDY OF GROUP THREE

The preceding two cases included two children who found it difficult to adjust in a foster home because of their parents' attitudes which were transferred by the children into the foster home. Joyce's mother rejected her daughter by desertion, but while Mickey's mother maintained a home for him and gave him material things, she was unable to give him the love and security that he needed. In both cases, we see two children who were unable to make a satisfactory love relationship with their mothers. Although Joyce maintained that she did not want to see her mother, Joyce was so deeply hurt by her mother's desertion, that she could not face her. Joyce felt that her first mother's attitude was so similar to her own mother's that she felt that she would be deserted again. Joyce was eventually able to adjust in the second foster home when she felt assured that she would not be deserted. Mickey was constantly reminded of his own mother when he was in the foster home and therefore was unable to adjust, as he had to remain in his own home in order to be assured of his mother's love. Consequently, Mickey had to run away to his own home where he could be closer to his mother.
GROUP FOUR

This group includes three cases consisting of three children in which the step-father influenced the child's adjustment in the foster home. The writer will present two cases and summarize one.

Case 9

Roy, eight years old, was referred in 1945 to CAA by the police, probation officer, and scout master for a possible placement plan of Roy and his two brothers. Roy, an illegitimate child, was the youngest in a family of three boys. When referred, Roy and his brothers had just returned to their home after running away for a week. The boys had stolen and had been responsible for a fire in one of the stores where they lived.

The mother's first husband was killed in an accident and nine years later she had remarried. The stepfather had a long record on probation and was on parole. The mother was immoral and a prostitute and the stepfather abused her and constantly reminded her of her earlier immorality.

Roy's parents were seen by the case worker who explained the agency policies and foster home placement. The step-father resented supporting Roy and his brothers and encouraged the boys to keep the things which they had stolen. The mother had no control over the children and violently resisted several attempts by the Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children to have them committed as neglected children. The parents were evasive and the worker felt that they did not relate the exact truth. The step father treated the mother like a child, which was her mental capacity, according to the worker.

On the day that Roy was placed, his mother and step-father "had a knock down, drag out fight", as both were drunk. There was no information on Roy's reaction to this scene which he witnessed before he was placed in the foster home. Three weeks after referral, Roy was placed with his brother on a farm. Roy became rough with the other children in the neighborhood. Two months after placement, Roy began to steal and quarrel and was not too popular with the other children. Roy imitated his step-father's behavior by becoming aggressive in the foster home. It was the worker's impression that "nothing disturbed or bothered Roy". Roy had the whole neighborhood in an uproar when he undressed a six year old boy and spanked him and sent him home naked. Roy saw his step-father do this to his mother and, naturally, thought that it was permissible. Roy continued to steal and could not be left alone as he could not be trusted, and after ten months in his first placement, he was replaced. The step-
father continued to encourage Roy to keep the things he stole.

The parents failed to cooperate as they did not send Roy's board to the agency. The worker assured Roy's mother that the agency had no desire to take Roy away from her and if she were a good mother as she professed, she would want her children cared for by relatives or by CAA who could give them a good home until she, herself, could make a good home for them. When the visitor saw the step-father in the home, he was confronted by the statement, "I suppose you've come to see if the house was decent. You are a smooth article--you are". The step-father said that he had no obligation to contribute to the support of the boys. He also thought that "all agencies were in glove together and a bunch of grafters making their living off of poor people".

Two years after placement, Roy was sent home to live with his mother and step-father as there was not any evidence of cooperation between the parents and the agency, and Roy was not in any trouble at that time. The case was closed and Roy was discharged from the agency. It was the case worker's impression that it was only a matter of time before Roy and his brothers would be involved in serious delinquency.

The step-father had little interest in Roy's welfare and would not cooperate with the agency or with the Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children when they were interested in Roy. The agency policies were explained to him before placement, but he completely ignored the worker. Roy stole before he was placed in a foster home, but this stealing increased when he left his home. Instead of condemning the stealing, Roy's step-father encouraged this behavior. He could not cooperate with his neighborhood friends and endeavored to conceal his feelings by not permitting anything to bother him. These attitudes were transferred into the foster home. It was apparent that Roy's behavior was hostility directed toward the step-father and the mother for their rejecting attitude and also for their neglecting manner. Roy could have felt hostile toward the step-father for interfering in his home after
his mother had been alone with the children for so many years. The stepfather was unable to accept the case worker and became very suspicious of him. These feeling developed into a paranoid attitude. The stepfather's failure to cooperate and his interference with the worker and the foster home made it difficult for Roy to adjust in any foster home.
Case 10

Anthony, nine years old, was referred to CAA in 1944 by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and two other agencies because of his step-father’s inability to handle him. Anthony was a leader who absorbed new ideas quickly and put them into practice with a group of young boys. Anthony had engaged in several stealing episodes. He was the second oldest in a family of four.

The mother’s first husband was intelligent, but was a chronic alcoholic with a weak personality. Anthony’s mother was promiscuous during her first husband’s illness. When her husband died, she decided to remarry in spite of the fact that she was tired of her boy friend. The step-father and the mother were quarreling constantly and were at sword’s point. Anthony and his brothers were compatible, but it was the case worker’s impression that the youngest brother was the favorite in the family. Anthony had been tested and found to be dull normal but not defective. He did not have a personality disorder, but was in great need of a better environment and more supervision.

The mother and step-father were seen before placement by the case worker who found that the mother was interested in Anthony, but did not know how to handle him. The mother openly admitted that she did not want Anthony when he was born and had a difficult time during her pregnancy. The mother was superstitious and some of her fears carried over to Anthony as he was fearful of the dark and refused to go to bed unless someone accompanied him. Anthony was also afraid that some man would come in through the window and choke him. The step-father took the initiative throughout the conversation, while his wife remained silent. The step-father was very protective of Anthony’s difficulties, mentioning “that Anthony was weak and easily led on, the neighborhood was a poor influence on him, and he gave everything away which he had stolen. Anthony could not defend himself and would never strike back”. The step-father did not think that he was a problem in the home as he minded and was helpful. The mother mentioned that the step-father had a real interest in the boy, but the case worker knew that the step-father had a quick temper and severely beat his wife and her children. The case worker felt that differences in his own father’s personality and that of his step-father had a traumatic effect on Anthony. Anthony’s father had been a passive person, whereas, the step-father was a dominating figure in the family. The case worker discussed possible placement plans with the parents and the possibility of having Anthony receive psychiatric treatment at the Judge Baker Guidance Center because of his apparent insecurity and his inability to defend himself. The parents were most anxious to have help for the boy and agreed to all the agency’s suggestions.

Two months after referral, Anthony was placed in a temporary
home for the purpose of his being studied at the clinic. At the time of placement, Anthony went into the anxiety state, refusing to sit down or take his coat off. He was then taken to the agency's other foster home where the boys were his own age, but he again repeated the same behavior as in the first foster home. The mother bribed him by offering Anthony three dollars, but this could not persuade Anthony to remain. When the worker decided not to push Anthony into the placement, the boy was allowed to return home with his mother. As the boy, the worker and the mother were leaving, the worker's car became stuck and Anthony became friends with the boys and decided to remain in placement--much to the "surprise of the case worker". Anthony had a difficult time in adjusting as he became involved in several arguments and endeavored to jump out of a window in order to run away, and was unable to take any challenge to his self respect. Anthony remained in the first home four days because of his inability to adjust. About a week later, Anthony was sent to the Lyman School because of a tragic incident which Anthony was involved in. Four months later, he was sent to Children's Village and he again went into a panic, but it lessened when his mother left. Anthony lost tension, his enuresis continued, his nightmares and panic decreased. He maintained a friendly attitude with adults, but was aggressive with children. The worker thought that Anthony's aggression was an attention getting device to show other boys that he was fearless and also wanted to gain their admiration. The worker also felt that Anthony's aggressive hyperactivity was an over-reaction to his former repressed pattern.

The case worker continued to see the parents who considered CAA "a real life saver". It was explained to the parents that Anthony was a disturbed boy whose problems were deep seated and explained the necessity of psychiatric treatment for Anthony. The parents were pleased with Anthony's improvement and that he was no longer difficult. It was the worker's impression that the step-father was tyrannical, but that he was a hard working person with good standards. The parents began to accept Anthony and began to encourage him to work for his graduation and discharge. Anthony's one goal was to go home.

Three years after referral, Anthony was discharged from Children's Village and from CAA, and was then supervised by the probation officer. It was recommended that Anthony have a school where he would enjoy protection from frustration and could have a sense of achievement.

Anthony's behavior when his mother remarried was similar to that of Roy when his mother remarried. They both were unable to share their mother with anyone. The difference in the personalities of Ant-
hony's father and his step-father was a traumatic experience for the boy. Anthony's step-father was unable to handle the boy and tried to control him by being very dominating, but at the same time was protecting of Anthony when confronted by the case worker. The step-father projected the blame for Anthony's behavior onto the neighborhood children. Anthony's aggressiveness was his method of getting attention which he lacked in his own home. The parents were very willing for an agency to assume responsibility for Anthony, when he was a problem but when he improved, they encouraged him to work for his graduation. The mother's attitude was that of rejection, as she admitted that she had not wanted Anthony when he was born and now that he was a problem, she did not know how to cope with him. The agency policies were explained before placement and the parents cooperated with the worker to some extent.
Case 11

Ronald, four years old, was referred in 1940 to CAA by a hospital for placement because of his mother's poor health and because of unsatisfactory conditions in the home. Ronald was the youngest in a family of three boys. The mother had divorced her first husband and had been married to her present husband for over a year. The stepfather had the attitude that the world owed him a living and had lost his equilibrium during the time of his unemployment and continued to be irritable and super-sensitive. The mother had a strong drive for perfection and demanded her own way. It was the worker's impression that the mother had little initiative to start or carry through anything but usual routine. There was reason to believe that the mother's ill health was due to psychological reasons rather than an organic disease. There was also some question of incompatibility between the parents.

Ronald's mother was seen three times before placement and was anxious for immediate placement. The mother was "tied" to her children, but was jealous of the attention that the children paid to the stepfather. Ronald had heard the quarrels between his parents and became upset by them. Ronald developed a stomach-ache if he was not given his own way, hit his mother, had temper tantrums, and had enuresis. Ronald was also very fond of playing with a doll and carriage.

Ronald was placed three weeks after referral and he reacted by crying, his enuresis increased, became constipated, talked about his "mudder", and became hysterical and developed severe stomach pains when his parents visited him in the foster home. Ronald took delight in playing house and demanded that he be called "hubby instead of husband". For the next eight years Ronald was placed at the agency's camp every summer and also was placed during the mother's illnesses. He developed poor eating habits and whenever his step-father visited, Ronald regressed to the infantile stage in his manner of speech and whined. Ronald's main problem continued to be enuresis.

The mother was unable to understand the situation intellectually. The case worker thought that some of the strain in the family was due to the mother's drive for perfection. Through case work services, the mother was able to assert herself in dealing with her second husband. The case worker explained that the step-father's presence in the home was upsetting to Ronald who failed in school and his enuresis grew progressively worse.

In 1948, the family moved to a smaller city and Ronald went to live with his mother. The worker helped Ronald to face the facts of his step-father's neglect and unfaithfulness, since the step-father lacked emotional maturity and stability.
INTERPRETATIVE SUMMARY OF GROUP FOUR

The preceding three cases consisted of three children whose step-fathers influenced their adjustment in the foster home. Although these children seldom talked about their own father, they were visibly influenced by their absence. The difference in the real parent's attitude and that of the step-father resulted in confusion of the children which later developed into some behavior problem or symptom formation which was illustrated in the case of Anthony. When these children's mothers remarried they undoubtedly realized that their feelings of rejection were verified, and when they were placed, their fears were increased. Ronald and Roy had severe cases of enuresis, Roy stole, and Ronald developed poor eating habits. Ronald also regressed which was an attention getting device. Anthony's mother admitted that Anthony was an unwanted child which he undoubtedly realized.
GROUP FIVE

This group includes four cases, seven children, whose parents refused to assume responsibility for their children, and were very willing that an agency assume the responsibility of them in foster homes. This attitude naturally influenced the child's adjustment in the foster home. The writer will present two cases and summarize cases fourteen and fifteen.

Case 12

George, nine years old, the second oldest in a family of five, was referred in 1946 by a probation officer for foster home placement. George was placed by a state agency in two different foster homes which resulted in his running away. George was returned to the court and the state agency requested the commitment of George to the boy's reformatory, but the court felt that George was too young for this commitment and, therefore, requested that CAA take an interest in him.

The case worker learned that George's parents had been to several agencies, twenty nine different times during the past few years. The father had a probation record and was described as a person who was "baffled by life's problems". The mother was a hypochondriac, and a passive and an ineffective person. The mother had spells of a functional illness owing to her inability to cope with life's physical and financial problems. The parents' first child was illegitimate and George was born eleven days before the parents' marriage. This family gave no evidence of stability and lacked any security or feeling of a family. George and his younger sister began to indulge in sex play and were both hyperactive and highstrung.

The mother admitted that she was unable to cope with the boy. It was the case worker's impression that the mother liked her children when they were in the doll stage, but did not assume any responsibility for them when they became older. The mother "bragged about locking George in the closet at the age of three or tied him to a chair when she left the house as he was too active for her". The mother admitted that she rejected George because of the trouble he caused her and was unable to understand why he still loved her. The mother had placed him in a nursery school when he was younger "in order to get rid of him during the day".

The mother was very anxious for placement. The worker was unable to interpret the parents meaning of placement, "as they were hopelessly suggestible and disoriented". They were too willing to let
anyone relieve them of their responsibility.

During the agency's two year contact with George, he was replaced eleven different times, but four of these replacements were for admittance to a hospital when he developed scabies, which he had contracted at his own home. His comment about the hospital was "Woo-Woo, the nurses are pretty here." Evidently, he was attached to his first foster home which was only a temporary home, as he continually ran away to that home. He urinated in the yard in one foster home "so that he would be sent back to the temporary home". George lied and ran away continually, was over-affectionate with adults who were fond of him. It was the case worker's impression that all the boy needed was a foster home in the country with a man who could devote his entire time to George and a woman who could give him demonstrative, motherly affection.

The parents did not cooperate with the agency or the worker who felt that only superficial contacts were made. The parents thought that George had improved and were "delighted". The parents had intentions of contributing to the payment of George's board, but never showed any ability to do so. When the child visited his own home, he became over-stimulated and too excited. Since the boy was attached to his home, the worker urged George to stay at home and he improved to some extent, but his mother refused to keep him there.

George was tested by a psychiatrist and was found to have pre-psychotic trends and was an adolescent psychopath. In 1948, two years after referral, George was committed to the boys's reformatory, at the age of eleven.

George's parents were very agreeable to placement for him but they were unable to comprehend the real meaning of placement and the benefits that George might possibly receive from a foster home. The parents' attitudes toward the foster home were not recorded, but it was evident that the parents showed little interest in the foster home or in George's adjustment. The mother and father were both immature persons who were unable to cope with any problem or assume any responsibility. The mother did suffer from a functional illness and George also had pre-psychotic trends. The mother rejected George at an early age, but George always went back to his mother, hoping that some day, she would give him the love and affection that he had always desired from her. This was a
typical reaction of a rejected child. George's over-affection with adults was his manner of compensating for the lack of affection from his own parents. George was unable to adjust in any foster home because his parents failed to give him the love and affection and security in order to enable him to make relationships with other people.
Case 13

Raymond, Gene, and Lois, nine, eight, and four respectively, were referred to CAA in 1948 by a family agency for placement during their mother's illness and hospitalization. The father's previous wife and the present one, had been afflicted with the same illness. The father was under heavy expenses because of the heavy medical expenses, but insisted on paying full placement expenses for the children before he would consider the possibility of placement. It was felt by the agency that a referral to a public agency would have been difficult for the father to accept.

Raymond was described by the father as a carefree, easy going child, while Gene was serious, conscientious and anxious. Raymond frequently quarreled with his sister and brother. The father brought the three children to see their mother in the hospital every three weeks and they were permitted to stand outside and wave to their mother. It was the worker's impression that the parents were interested in their children and had a great deal of love for them. The parents had a good relationship with each other.

The case worker visited the mother who was eager for placement as she was anxious about her home and family. Placement was carefully explained to the mother and the father and assurance of the agency's interest was given to avoid the anxiety of the father. The father was relieved that the children would be cared for as it was evident that the father felt the responsibility of the children keenly. The worker felt that the mother had little understanding of discipline and care for the children. The parents were quite cooperative before placement and accepted the case worker.

The father carefully explained placement to the children and found them very eager. The children were placed three months after referral, on a farm. During this placement, Raymond contracted and allergy which caused some deafness and Gene began to have fainting spells, while Lois became quite constipated, developed a finicky appetite and sought a great deal of attention. The foster parents were of the opinion that the children were happy, but were difficult to manage. It was also noticeable that the children failed to gain weight in spite of the foster mother's efforts to give them nourishing food. After two months placement, the children spent one day at home with the mother who had returned home. Gene reacted to this by losing weight and appeared lonesome and it was the worker's impression that Gene missed physical affection from the foster parents.

The case worker kept in constant touch with the father and attempted to modify his feelings about the foster home. He complained that his children did not have the proper care, as they were not clean in spite of the fact that the children had daily showers. The father was certain that the milk was not sterile and that Raymond was
overworked on the farm. The father visited the children regularly in the foster home and continued to take them to see their mother. The father paid the children's board regularly and cooperated with the worker. When the time came for the mother to be released from the hospital, it was apparent that she was not anxious to be released, as there was some question as to whether she wanted to assume the responsibility of her children. The mother was described by the doctor in the hospital as a woman who did not assert herself, and took delight in being waited on and disliked having to make decisions. The doctor mentioned that the mother refused to assume any responsibility for herself in the hospital.

The children were returned home fourteen months after placement. The mother had been discharged from the hospital three months previously and had not shown any interest in the return of her children. The father came to the office after the discharge and made several complaints about the foster home. The father said that the children were now gaining weight in their own home and that they were given a poor quality of food in the foster home. He ascertained that Raymond was horsewhipped, and had previously maintained that the children were happy in the foster home, but was now convinced that they were not. The father owed some money for the board of the children, but now refused to pay the agency as the "agency did not keep their part of the bargain." The case worker also mentioned in the record that Raymond, Gene and Lois were intelligent children who could have benefited from a family with higher standards, but the family had requested a farm.

Raymond, Gene and Lois found it difficult to adjust in a foster home because their mother was unwilling to assume responsibility for them. The mother was desirious of placement and was not anxious for the children to be returned to her. The case worker and the doctor described this mother as a woman who did not want to assume any responsibility. The father, on the other hand, took the responsibility of his children keenly. He endeavored to cooperate before placement, but criticized the foster home after placement which was an indication of his guilt for not keeping the children with him. The children reacted to placement and to their mother's attitude by becoming difficult to manage. Lois became constipated, developed a finicky appetite and sought an excessive amount of
attention. Gene's fainting spells were his method of escaping or attracting attention.
Case 14

Dickie, eight years old, the youngest of five children was referred in 1943 by a probation officer, who complained that Dickie had been truanting from school, ran away from home, panhandled money and had undesirable companions. Dickie had been transferred to a disciplinary day school, but because of his youth, the probation officer felt this was undesirable. The mother had been in court because of neglect and failure to send the boy to school and also for adultery. Dickie and his sister were illegitimate. The mother refused to give up work and consider Aid to Dependent Children as she disliked being dependent on an agency. It was the worker's impression that the mother did not want her home supervised as this would prevent Dickie's father from visiting the home. The mother had a superficial interest in the boy and was interested in a foster home for Dickie, but the records did not indicate whether the mother was prepared for the placement.

Dickie was prepared for placement by the case worker who described Dickie as a person who lived in a world of fantasy. Dickie claimed that he had a "powerful brain which made him psychic" and that the alleged father was "on a secret mission and had to travel by dog sled and submarine". Dickie was placed two weeks after referral, and ran away two days afterwards. After his return, he was placed in the country which the mother agreed to as he was miles away from home and would not be able to run away so easily. Dickie again escaped into fantasy by becoming absorbed in funny books. His flight into fantasy was a mechanism of escape which was a reaction against his parents' attitudes. Dickie adjusted in the foster home, took their name as his own, and became very affectionate with all the farm animals.

The alleged father was seen by the case worker, but he was not able to straighten out his marital relationships in order to make a home for Dickie. The father visited Dickie who became alarmed that his father would take him back home. Two months after the father's visit, Dickie ran away. The mother and the alleged father showed little interest in Dickie and were willing that the responsibility of Dickie would be assumed by someone other than themselves.

The case worker continued to take an interest in Dickie until 1949. Dickie had requested that he be returned to his own home, in spite of the fact that "the foster home was much better than his own home". Dickie was certain that "his mother wanted him". In spite of the fact that Dickie's parents failed to assume any responsibility for him, he was impelled to return to his own home.
Case 15

Phyllis and Janice, ages four and three respectively, were referred in 1948 to CAA by another agency for placement, since the parents were separated and the mother did not have any money. The father, an American citizen, had met the mother in another country and brought her to the United States. The mother, who had a deprived childhood as she felt that her brother and sister were favored, married against the wishes of her parents. The father had deserted the mother in America five years after their marriage. The mother asserted that she would not return to her parents as they would resent her. The children's mother was an immature person with few advantages—regarded America as the land of plenty. The worker in the other agency considered the mother's mentality to be similar to that of an eight year old. The worker thought that the mother had "a come hither look".

The two girls had a baby sister whose paternity was questionable. The father was described "as a poor country yokel" and a low grade moron, who was always in difficulties and was not capable of assuming any responsibility for his children.

The agency policies were explained to the mother and the children were accepted for placement for a period of one year and a half. The mother was very upset over placement. The mother had explained placement to the children by telling them that "they were going for a ride in the country". The case worker assured the mother that the girls would be returned to her whenever she requested it and the mother constantly mentioned that "nobody was going to get those kids". Phyllis and Janice were placed in the same home. The mother seldom visited the children in the foster home claiming that she did not like the foster home. It was the case worker's impression that the mother did not take the responsibility of her children too seriously. The mother did not pay the board regularly as it "did not make any difference whether she paid or not". Phyllis was very show in talking which was an indication that she wanted to remain at the infantile level where she hoped to gain some attention and affection. Janice was more relaxed, whereas Phyllis was quite anxious. The girls were examined by a psychiatrist who described both girls as immature and deprived both emotionally and in experience. Janice demanded a great deal of attention, both girls masturbated, were very destructive with their clothes, as they cut them. The girls tried to choke each other as they had seen their father do it to their mother. The children were replaced six months after their first placement as the foster mother could not accept the girl's behavior.

The mother did not keep her appointments with the case worker who endeavored to reassure the mother. The mother brought clothes to the girls which were never the correct size. After being transferred to another worker, the mother stated that she did not "like her second agent as she did not drive her out to see her children as the first worker did". The father did not show any interest in
Phyllis and Janice. The mother did not want to assume the responsibility of the two girls, and the case worker was unable to help the mother in regard to her feelings about her two daughters. Phyllis and Janice's actions appeared to be reactions to their mother's lack of responsibility.

Phyllis and Janice were taken out of placement fourteen months after placement, as the mother had planned to be a practical nurse for an elderly lady and would be able to have her children with her.
The preceding four cases consisted of seven children, whose parents were unwilling to assume the responsibility of them which affected their adjustment in the foster home. George and Dickie continued to run away to their own home, as they anticipated that their parents would want them some day, in spite of the fact that their parents openly admitted that they did not want them. This is in accordance with Percival Symonds who maintained that "The parents who presented the smallest number of affectionate advances to their children received the largest number of affectionate advances from their children". 3

Dickie maintained that his foster home was better than his own home. It was evident that Dickie hoped that his own home might become similar to the foster home.

Phyllis and Janice reacted to their mother's lack of interest in them by cutting their clothes. "The child cuts clothes or destroys things which is hostility resulting from parental neglect which was concentrated in neurotic behavior." 4

In the case of Raymond, Gene, and Lois, the conflicting attitudes of the parents regarding responsibility influenced the children's adjustment in the foster home.

CHAPTER IV
CASE FINDINGS

Several significant factors were evident in the foregoing case material. There were several tangible factors that should be pointed out in order to present a clearer picture of this study. The writer will present tables which will include the source of referral, the reasons for referral, the place of living at the time of referral, the marital relationships, the modification of the parents' attitudes and the evidences of the child's reactions to the parents' attitudes in the foster home.

Table I points out the sources from which the cases were referred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOURCE OF REFERRAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regard to the source of referral, it was significant to note that the public had taken advantage of the agency services which was indicated by the fact that five parents did refer their children to CAA for placement. However, the number of parents was relatively small when compared to the ten referring agencies which indicated that more referrals were made by people professionally interested in helping children.
Table II indicates the apparent reasons for the referral.

TABLE II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent worked</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removed from the foster home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness of mother</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table pointed out that the two most prevalent reasons for placement were: 1. The parent worked which consisted of six cases involving ten children and 2. Behavior problems which consisted of six cases involving six children. These behavior problems in some cases were reactions to the parents' attitudes of rejection and neglect. The fact that the parents were working, also, in some cases, justified their desire for placement. Two cases consisting of four children, requested placement as their mother was ill which left the children without supervision. One child had been in private placement and the mother requested placement in a foster home with the supervision of CAA.

It was not the source of referral that was important, but the parents' feelings toward applying to an agency and their request for placement, that was the meaningful factor. The reason for referral was not always the real reason for coming to the agency. "Some parents seek a child placing agency as a kind of super-conscience which gives them permission to go ahead with a decision they have already made where their
permission is needed as parental sanction.¹

The person with whom the child was living at the time of referral was indicated in Table III.

**TABLE III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACE OF LIVING AT REFERRAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living With</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and stepfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was significant to note that one child out of the twenty one children studied were living with both of their parents. One child lived in a private foster home and his parents requested placement from CAA as there was disharmony between the private foster home and the parents. Nine children lived with their mother and four lived with their father. Three children lived with their mother and step-father. It was pointed out in the study that the parents' separation, divorce and desertion had a traumatic effect on the child.

Marital relationships, as a significant factor in influencing the child's adjustment, was pointed out in Table IV.

¹ Helen Leland Witmer, Parental Behavior as an Index to the Probable Outcome of Treatment in a Child Guidance Clinic, p. 432.
TABLE IV
MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital State</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living together</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation due to illness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarriage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common law marriage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The writer found that there were two cases in which the parents were living together, but it was evident that the relationships were strained. In one case, the separation was due to the mother's illness which necessitated foster home placement for the children. Separation, in the three cases was due to marital disharmony. Five of the cases consisting of eight children came from families of divorced parents and the parents of three children had remarried. There was one case of common law marriage.

Four parents did not have the sanction of their own parents when they married. This was not a large number to be too significant, but these mothers either divorced their husbands or returned with their family to live with their parents. It was evident that the intensity of their guilt increased to such an extent that they felt obligated to return to their parents. These parents were unconsciously punishing themselves by their failures in marriage. When the parents returned to their own homes, the grandparents interfered with the parents' relationship with the child to such an extent that the parents' attitudes toward this interference affected the child when he entered the foster home. It was also
noted that the parent's inability to form a satisfying relationship with their own parents increased the possibility that the parents could not relate to their own children. The parents, in some cases, treated their children in the same manner in which they were treated in their childhood.

The writer had previously mentioned the five groupings in which the parents' attitudes influenced the child's adjustment in the foster home. There were other significant attitudes and behavior of the parents which influenced the child. Nine of the parents visited regularly, three parents overvisited and three parents did not visit the child in the foster home until the case worker advised them to visit for the best interest of the child. Three parents continuously took their children out of placement which gave the children a sense of insecurity. Four parents lavished clothes and presents on their children which were indications of their guilt feelings. It was interesting to note that one parent brought an overabundance of clothes to the child, but the clothes were never the correct size. Several of the parents were unable to keep their appointments with the case worker and were unable to pay the child's board in the foster home. Four parents openly complained of the foster home in the child's presence which hindered the child's acceptance of the foster home. Conscious rejection of the child was demonstrated by the parents who refused to assume their responsibility for their child.

The following table indicated the number of parents whose attitudes were either modified or remained the same through case work services.
TABLE V
MODIFICATION OF THE PARENTS' ATTITUDES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Work Contact</th>
<th>Number of Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both parents' attitudes were modified</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents' attitudes unmodifiable</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the parent's attitudes modified</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent refused to cooperate after Placement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was significant to note that nine cases of parental attitudes were unmodifiable, in spite of the case work services. There were three cases in which the parents were able to accept case work services and their attitudes were modified. There were two cases in which one of the parents could accept the case work services. One parent cooperated and accepted the case worker before and during placement, but reversed his attitude toward the agency and the case worker after placement.

In the following table on evidences of the child's reactions to the parents' attitudes in the foster home, the number of times the evidences were mentioned, exceeded the number of children.
TABLE VI

EVIDENCES OF THE CHILD'S REACTIONS TO THE PARENTS' ATTITUDES IN THE FOSTER HOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidences of the Child’s Reaction</th>
<th>Frequency of Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor appetite</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive demand of adult attention</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex practices</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor school work</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enuresis</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running away</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive behavior</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daydreams</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibling rivalry</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table indicated that aggressive behavior, sex practices, and poor appetites were the most frequent evidences of the child's reaction to their parents' attitudes. The use of the term sex practices, included masturbation, phallic gestures and re-enacting the sexual scene witnessed by the child. There were several indications in individual cases of the child regressing to the infantile level in behavior and in speech. Most prevalent regression was that of enuresis. Anna Freud referred to this when she stated:

When the break in attachment is sudden and complete... even older children may revert to bed wetting and dirtying themselves. The breakdown in habit training is one of the expressions of a breakdown of the mother-child relationship.3

Children will also attempt to gain security with their parents by becoming or remaining helpless. Nocturnal enuresis in children is a potent weapon to be used almost consciously for such a purpose, as it gives a mother much annoyance and labor and yet is something

3 Anna Freud, and Dorothy Burlingham, War and Children, p. 75.
over which the child seems to have no control in as much as it happens during the night."

Since five of the children had never experienced attention in their own homes, they sought attention from any adult. Five children continually ran away, usually to their own homes, as they felt that someday they would be wanted by their parents.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to study the parental attitudes and behavior toward the placement and adjustment of twenty-one children placed in foster homes. The conclusions drawn from this study can only be applied to this group of twenty-one children between the ages of three to ten years. These children were selected from the closed cases and were discharged during the years 1948 and 1949 and had been referred previous to that time.

This study shows that the parents' attitudes and behavior toward their children greatly influenced the children's adjustment in the foster home. The parents' attitudes toward the children before and after placement influenced the children's adjustment in the foster home. The conscious and unconscious attitudes of the parents toward the children were transferred into the foster home. These children reacted to their parents' attitudes by developing various behavior problems in the foster home. Poor eating habits developed in those children who lacked security in their parents' love and were constantly afraid of desertion. Those children who were constantly taken out of their foster home by their parents became insecure and were left in a state of confusion. As a result, these children were unable to form a close relationship with anyone. The parents' rejection attitude and the actual separation resulted in daydreaming which was used as an escape into fantasy. Parental neglect resulted in destructive actions of some of the children, for example, cutting clothes and destroying furniture were evidences of hos-
tility directed toward the parents. The parents demonstrated their guilt toward separation and their lack of responsibility by giving their children an over-abundance of clothes and gifts. The parents' lack of attention caused the child to regress to the infantile level in regard to speech and toilet habits. Aggressiveness was an attention getting device which was demonstrated in the actions of several of the children. The need for parental love which these children failed to receive from their own parents, resulted in a demand for an excessive amount of love from other adults. Those children who ran away continually, usually to their own home, were making a desperate attempt to gain their mother's affection. They were compelled to return to their own home as they thought that eventually their parents would want them.

These conflicting attitudes of the parents and the foster parents upset the children to such an extent that some of them began to steal. Several incidents of stealing occurred when the parents visited and complained of the foster home in the presence of their children. The complaints of the parents hindered their children's acceptance of the foster home.

On the question of whether the parents could accept case work services, this study shows that nine of the parents were unable to do so. The case worker found that these parents' attitudes were unmodifiable. The parents' inability to accept the agency and the foster home affected the children's adjustment and their acceptance of the foster home. In the case where the child made a satisfactory adjustment in the second foster home, the parent had accepted the foster home and the agency.
The attitudes of this parent were amenable to case work services.

Case work services needed were in assisting the parents with their own problems, as in some cases, the problems did not lie with the child but in the parents, themselves. The case worker endeavored to help the parents in relation to their own problems, but was unsuccessful. Some of these problems were related to the parents' relationships with their own parents which were never resolved. The parents projected their feelings for their parents onto the child and identified the child with their parents. These attitudes of the parents affected their acceptance of their child.

There was further need for services in relation to the parent-child relationship during the early years. Another need was the necessity for marital counseling as only two of the fifteen parents were living together. It was difficult for the children to accept and to understand the reasons for the separation or the divorce of their parents, since some of the children exhibited guilt feelings because they felt that they were responsible for this. The attitudes of the children were carried into the foster home.

Approved:

Richard K. Conant
Dean
Appendix I
SCHEDULE

Name
Age at Time of Referral
Position in Family at Time of Referral
Referral
   Date of Referral
   Source of Referral
   Urgency of Referral
   At Time of Referral Living With -
Family Relationships
   Economic-financial
   Family background of parents
   Marital Relationships
   Sibling Relationships
Child-parent relationships before placement
Preparation of parent for placement
   Attitude toward placement
   Agency policy explained
   Can parents accept case work
   Attitude toward case worker and agency
Parental attitude and behavior toward child after placement
   Frequency of visits and trips—results
   Complaints
   Overfeeds the child
   Gifts
Number of letters written
Payment of board
Provides clothes
Case worker's attempts to modify these attitudes

Parental attitudes toward case worker and agency after placement
cooperation
Failure to keep appointments
Indifference
Case worker's attempts to modify these attitudes

Disposition of case
Appendix II

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


Freud, Anna, and Dorothy T. Burlingham, War and Children. Editor, Philip R. Lehram, 1943.


PERIODICALS


CHILDREN'S AID ASSOCIATION, Inc.
41 MT. VERNON STREET
BOSTON

Child's Name _____________________________________________________________

I hereby give permission for my child to be sent to a Hospital in case of developing a condition calling for such treatment and to a special Hospital when develops any contagious disease.

Signed______________________________________________________________

Address____________________________________________________________

I hereby give my consent to the use of such necessary tests and immunizing treatment as in the opinion of the medical adviser of the Association seem advisable.

Signed______________________________________________________________

Address____________________________________________________________

I hereby consent to the administration of an anesthetic and performing of an operation on my child, if in the opinion of the Society's physician this is advisable.

Signed______________________________________________________________

Address____________________________________________________________

Witness_______________________________________________________________

Date_______________________________________________________________
AGREEMENT

To enable the CHILDREN'S AID ASSOCIATION, INC., to make suitable provision for

... born .........................................................,

... born .........................................................,

... born .........................................................,

... born .........................................................,

in a foster family home or elsewhere as may seem best to the Association, I hereby
agree to pay to said Association, so long as said child is in its care,

the sum of .................. dollars per .................., and, in addition to this amount for board,
to pay for clothing, tuition, cash allowances, medical and surgical care and other necessary
incidentals the sum of .................. dollars per ..................

In Witness Whereof, this paper having been first read

have hereunto set hand to

in the State of Massachusetts, this

day of

A.D. 19 .

The Children's Aid Association, Inc., derives its support from various sources, among them reimbursement from parents up to their ability to pay, and the annual allocation from the Red Feather campaign of United Community Services of Metropolitan Boston.