A study of twelve children accepted for placement by the Worcester Children's Friend Society from September 30, 1944 - October 1, 1949 because of behaviour problems

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A STUDY OF TWELVE CHILDREN ACCEPTED FOR PLACEMENT BY THE WORCESTER CHILDREN'S FRIEND SOCIETY FROM SEPTEMBER 30, 1944 - OCTOBER 1, 1949 BECAUSE OF BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS.

A Thesis

Submitted by
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(A.B., Clark College, 1948)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this study is to study the adjustment in foster homes of children accepted by the Worcester Children's Friend Society because of behavior problems. From this study the writer hopes to evaluate what factors may have influenced the success or failure of such placements. These factors include: age of the child, seriousness of the behavior problem, attachment to own family, role of the placing agency, and the role of the foster parents.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study includes all cases accepted by the Worcester Children's Friend Society between October 1, 1944 and September 30, 1949 in which the primary reason for requesting placement was the behavior problem of the child. There were twelve such cases. Only those cases were included in which there was a clear recognition on the part of the agency and the referral source that the child's behavior was the primary reason for the request for placement.

SOURCES OF DATA

The twelve cases under study were obtained from both the closed and active cases on file at the Worcester Children's Friend Society. The writer also had access to read those cases included in the study that were handled cooperatively by the Youth Guidance Center of Worcester.
LIMITATIONS

The writer is limited by the small number of cases under study and also by the brief stay of some of the children in foster homes. In some of the cases still active with the agency the records were not complete which served as another limiting factor.

METHODS OF PROCEDURE

The literature in this field has been reviewed for an understanding of current thinking and practices in the use of placement for children with behavior problems. The most outstanding scientific investigation is that of William Healy and his associates in which 501 cases were studied at the Judge Baker Clinic in 1938. Another elaborate study by Mrs. Edith Miriam Hedges Baylor at the Children's Aid Association in Boston was done in 1939. The following statement by Carl. R. Rogers seems to sum up this thinking and serves as an orientation to this study:

The foster home offers the child a chance to make a normal adjustment to normal community life. The child is also provided an opportunity for security and anchorage necessary for the development of personality. The potentialities of environmental change are great. Such a child is lifted bodily from emotional tensions in the home which may be at the root of his unsatisfactory behavior, and provides a complete alteration of the social milieu. In addition the child's insight is likely to be changed since removal from any situation brings with it a greater chance for objectivity.

Chapter II will explain the function and history of the Worcester Children's Friend Society and the function of the Youth Guidance

1 William Healy, et al, Reconstructing Behavior in Youth
2 Mrs. Edith Miriam Hedges Baylor, The Rehabilitation of Children; The Theory and Practice of Child Placement.
3 Carl R. Rogers, The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child.
Center. Chapters III and IV include the case presentations; Chapter V is devoted to summary and conclusions. Material from the case records was extracted by the use of a schedule a copy of which may be seen in the Appendix.
CHAPTER II

AGENCY HISTORY AND FUNCTION

History and Philosophy of the Worcester Children's Friend Society

The Worcester Children's Friend Society was organized on January 29, 1849 by a group of citizens who felt that the city missionaries, almshouses and reform schools were not doing enough - their help being intermittent and late. It is interesting to note that the first function of Worcester Children's Friend Society was to provide a mother's love in the orphanage established as a result of these efforts. In 1903 it was voted that "boarding of children be a permanent thing" indicative of the change from orphanage to foster home care.

When the number of children under care increased to over 150, the need for a small home where a child could be taken in an emergency became apparent; a study of problem children demanded that some of them be given special care in a controlled environment. The Society opened in 1926, therefore, its first "Study Home".

Worcester Children's Friend Society is the only private childplacing and adoption agency serving the children of Worcester and Southern Worcester County, irrespective of age, race, or religion. The agency accepts for placement children whose parents are able to pay part or full expenses for the child's board, clothing and medical expenses. Parents who are unable to contribute towards the support of their children are referred to the Division of Child Guardianship. Children are referred to the Worcester Children's Friend Society mostly by their own parents.
Other agencies such as Family Service Organization, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Youth Guidance Center, and the Juvenile Probation Officer also refer children for placement.

The amount of financial reimbursement required for the children is determined by a budget worked out with each parent or guardian prior to placement. The parent is expected to assume at least partial financial support for his children.

Some of the most frequent causes for applications and referrals to the Worcester Children’s Friend Society are:

1. Children presenting behavior and personality problems for whom a change of environment is needed as part of the social treatment.

2. Convalescent children in need of special care for a limited period on the recommendation of doctors or a health agency.

3. Children deprived of parental care through death, illness, or permanent separation of parents.

4. Children for whom an unmarried mother needs a home.

5. Children detained for a short period at the request of the Juvenile Court.

Merrifield, a special foster home, is part of the child-placing program of the Children’s Friend Society. It can accommodate ten to twelve children, but because of the type of child for which it is used, it is seldom suitable to have more than eight children there at one time. Boys and girls of all ages, from infants to eighteen years, make up the family. The staff consists of two house mothers (with their husbands who also are employed elsewhere). Merrifield is used for four different purposes:

1. Children in need of observation prior to placement in regular
foster homes. The Children's Friend Society cooperates with the community in accepting for study and placement children who have shown inability to adopt their own or other normal homes and for whom, because of their behavior, no immediate placement is possible.

2. **Temporary care.** Merrifield is a place for children to stay while the Society is trying to find the right foster home for them. Each child understands that his stay at Merrifield is for a temporary period only, but while he is there he becomes accustomed to separation from his family and usually enjoys the informal, warm relationships of the home. Merrifield helps to lessen the uncertainty which surrounds the loss of a child's own home while the observations of the house parents are valuable to the worker who must choose a foster home. Sometimes an emergency arises in a foster home which makes it necessary to move a child at short notice. Merrifield is sometimes called upon to give this type of temporary care to children who are already under the care of the Society because there is a crisis in the foster family.

3. **Convalescent children.** The third use of Merrifield is for convalescent children who need special care for a short period. Only extraordinary cases of this type are sent to Merrifield as the Society can usually find foster homes to give this type of service.

4. **Summer vacation for handicapped children.** During the summer months, Merrifield offers a "change" to crippled and handicapped children who are referred by the health services of the city. Volunteers help give these children craft activity, take them swimming, etc.

The staff of the Children's Friend Society consists of the General Secretary, Case Supervisor, and five case workers, one of whom devotes her full time to homefinding. The case worker supervising the child visits him regularly in the foster home, arranges for clothing and medical needs, and at the same time keeps in frequent touch with the child's parents with the eventual hope of re-establishing the child with his own family.

The parents are encouraged and helped to plan for their children. Children are accepted for boarding care only when the social study indicates their best interests will be served by a carefully chosen foster
home.

The services of the Worcester Children's Friend Society are available to children of Worcester and Southern Worcester County, irrespective of age, race, or religion. Individual consideration is given to each child and his problem.

Function of the Youth Guidance Center

Martha J. Fritsch in her pamphlet said: "Services of a Child Guidance Clinic should be used wherever possible in cases of behavior problem children in foster homes". Many cases have been referred to the Youth Guidance Center for diagnosis, testing, and treatment by W.C.F.S. and there has developed a close cooperation between the two agencies.

Of the twelve cases presented in this study eight were under treatment at the Center during placement. The other four had psychiatric help of some kind; one girl was under treatment with a psychiatrist in private practice; the other three had had some previous contact with Youth Guidance Center prior to placement.

The Youth Guidance Center is set up to serve children and adolescent youngsters of Worcester County who are showing behavior and personality difficulties of emotional origin. In general the age range is from three to eighteen years. Cases are referred for treatment at the Center by professional people; such as, a physician, clergyman, or teacher; by a social agency; by a parent or parent-substitute; or by the

patient himself.

The patient's problems are approached from two directions, indirectly through the parent or parent-substitute, and directly through the patient himself. The Center in addition to therapy offers a diagnostic service consisting of a relatively brief contact with the patient for the purpose of describing and interpreting his condition. Such a study might consist of a brief psychiatric and/or psychological study augmented by various psychological and physical examinations. Finally the Center offers consultation service given by a member of the Clinic Staff in regard to a child for whom neither treatment nor examination at the Clinic is contemplated. Treatment requested by parents or parent-substitutes is generally given on a fee basis. The Center has instituted a sliding scale of fees so that the family or individual may pay according to income and financial obligations.
SIX CASES OF CHILDREN WHOSE PLACEMENTS WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL

The following six cases did not adjust successfully to placement. An unsuccessful adjustment includes those children who were removed from placement either by the agency or the children's parents before time enough had lapsed to allow their behavior to subside. The first two cases illustrate an unsuccessful adjustment in these terms. "Unsuccessful" would also include those children whose behavior symptoms remained or increased after a longer period of placement. The last four cases are of this sort in which the shortest placement term of the four was four months.

The ages of these six children range from the youngest of ten years to the oldest of fourteen years. Two were girls; four were boys. Stealing and lying were the chief problems in four of the following cases; enuresis and sexual delinquency as the chief problems in the other two cases.

All were placed in foster boarding homes. Five children were replaced while under W. C. F. S. care, the largest number of replacements being two.
ONE CASE OF SHORT TERM PLACEMENT TERMINATED BECAUSE OF FACTORS WITHIN THE AGENCY

Case No. 1 - Andy

Andy's father requested that the W. C. F.S. place Andy, age twelve, as he was the source of much discord in the home. He claimed that Andy lied, stole money, and more particularly was disobedient and plagued his stepmother and stepsisters. The father was interested in placing Andy in a school or having him committed to Lyman School for Boys as a "stubborn" child. Since that was not the type of placement the W.C.F.S. offered, and since the father would consider no other, the application was withdrawn. Through the efforts of the Youth Guidance Center, however, the father again applied for placement a few months later. This was prompted by an incident in the home which provoked Andy's father into pressing for Andy's immediate removal. Andy had overheard his father and stepmother discussing a serious operation which was necessary to prolong the life of Andy's older stepsister. Andy told his stepsister about the conversation, thereby upsetting his stepmother very much.

Andy was under treatment at the Youth Guidance Clinic prior to placement. His I.Q. was above normal but the therapist felt strongly that he had morbid tendencies and psychopathic traits and that his father and stepmother were definitely rejecting the boy. Treatment was unsuccessful with Andy in his own home because the father resisted treatment on the grounds that commitment to Lyman School was the only solution. The Clinic felt, however, that Andy's prognosis for improvement was good in a foster home because of his high intellectual rating. Interviews with the boy at the clinic brought out his fear of rejection, a need for affection, fear of his own aggression and the resulting punishment. He formed a strong positive relationship with the Clinic therapist, felt extremely jealous of the therapist's attention to others in the Clinic, and would hang around the Clinic for hours before and after his appointment.

Andy's parents were divorced when he was six years old. Prior to the divorce his mother deserted his father taking Andy and three other children with her. During the separation she was reported to have had homosexual relations. When the divorce became final, Andy lived for a year with his grandmother until his father remarried and Andy came to live with them.

Andy was placed in a foster home in which there was an older foster brother, a foster brother his own age, and a baby placed by
W.C.F.S. Andy's initial adjustment was good. He enjoyed helping his foster mother cook and do household tasks. After a week in this home, however, the foster mother requested Andy's removal. She said Andy was untidy, had poor personal habits, he lied, stole food and abused the baby.

His visitor from the agency noted that Andy's first foster mother was prone to discuss Andy's behavior difficulties with her friends and neighbors, usually in Andy's presence.

Andy was replaced, therefore, in a second foster home. He stayed in this home for a month during which time the foster parents felt that he improved somewhat and that all he needed was understanding and firm discipline. It was still necessary for the foster mother constantly to repeat directions to Andy and to prevent him from abusing his foster sister. Andy made friends with the neighborhood boys and boasted to his playmates about how rich and secure his family background was. After one month Andy was discharged to the Court as the agency felt the lack of a male worker prevented effective case work with him and that the limited agency budget made it necessary for it to discontinue paying for Andy's board as his father refused to make payments.

**DISCUSSION**

Here we have the case of a twelve year old rejected boy whose father and stepmother had little insight for an understanding relationship with him. The father was not thoroughly in accord with foster home placement and assented to the plan rather reluctantly. Andy obviously needed a foster home that would provide the security and affection which he lacked in his own home. He needed accepting and permissive foster parents. This is the chief stumbling block in foster home placement of children with behavior problems - finding foster parents with the necessary patience and acceptance to see the child through his difficult behavior. Andy's first foster mother requested his removal after one week. In addition to Andy's objectionable personal habits there is another complaint by this foster mother - his abuse of the baby. In this
situation the agency had the rights of another child to consider. One might speculate whether Andy would have received more security and affection in a foster home in which he was the only child.

Andy's second placement brought out slight improvement in his behavior. The foster parents were understanding people with patience enough to help Andy control his aggressive anti-social behavior. However, Andy's progress was halted by factors within the agency that resulted in his discharge to the Court.

Certain limitations in the agency budget made it necessary for W.C.F.S. to discontinue service to children whose parents were unable to pay for their expenses.
ONE CASE IN WHICH THE PLACEMENT PERIOD WAS TOO SHORT TO ALLOW FOR EVIDENCE OF BEHAVIOR SYMPTOMS

Case No. 2 - Cecile

A child welfare agency outside of Worcester referred Cecile to W.C.F.S. for placement during the mother's expected confinement. Cecile was eleven years old and her mother had considered her a problem since birth. As an infant she started masturbatory activities. Mother and father had considerable marital conflict and were separated previously. During mother's pregnancy with Cecile she was unhappy in her relations with the father. Cecile was a small baby at birth and a feeding problem. Cecile when very young initiated sex play with other children and had sexual relations with older boys. She had periods of two or three weeks of good behavior during which she was gentle, helpful, and in good humour and then would lapse into periods of poor behavior and sexual activities. Her school adjustment was poor. History showed Cecile was the father's favorite and impossible to discipline while father was in the home. She was defiant and stubborn, and lied excessively in a protective fashion. Mother felt Cecile was "marked" to masturbate as this was a practice of the father and witnessed by the children.

Mother claimed father was a sex pervert and made excessive demands on her. He worked irregularly and gave mother infrequent support. There was some question as to the paternity of Cecile and it was felt that Cecile's father was another man with whom the mother lived when separated from father. Mother reported when the father was in the home he instructed the children to defy mother's most simple commands and laughed when they followed his orders.

W.C.F.S. felt that Cecile should be placed in a foster home for the purpose of treatment for a longer period of time than during mother's confinement. However, the referring agency believed that such placement would be ineffective since reports from a State school for mentally retarded children indicated that Cecile's I.Q. was 69; that her mental age was eight years and two months; that her I.Q. would probably drop as she got older and would qualify her as a moron. Nevertheless, they did feel that she was trainable and would benefit by a period of training and supervision.

Cecile was placed in a foster home in a rural section of Worcester County. There were no other children in the home so that she might not initiate sex play with children. She was returned to her own home after two weeks in this foster home. During her stay there she adjusted well, seemed happy and took great delight in
helping foster mother with household tasks. No evidence of her sex habits was displayed during her placement.

DISCUSSION

It is generally true that children with severe behavior difficulties do not exhibit their symptoms during the first few weeks of placement. Cecile being placed only two weeks was not in a foster home long enough for her to feel completely relaxed and free. Then, too, in this history Cecile's mother reported that Cecile had periods of two or three weeks of good behavior during which time she was "gentle, helpful and in good humour". The two weeks of placement for Cecile might very well have been an example of one of her "good" periods.

W.C.F.S. recommended a longer period of placement for treatment purposes, believing that Cecile's behavior symptoms stemmed very directly from an abnormal home environment which included an emotionally disturbed and sexually maladjusted father. The referring agency believed, however, that if Cecile's mental ability was about that of a moron, foster home placement would accomplish little, even though there was some indication in the report sent to W.C.F.S. by the State school that Cecile was trainable under a period of supervision. Most studies seem to indicate that placement is not successful with children of below average intelligence. Rogers in The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child states:

In the cases of more confirmed and excessive patterns of misbehavior there is less likelihood of success in foster home placement. Children who exhibit personality instabilities and conduct disorders which are in part due to hereditary or constitutional defects such as abnormal mentality are not hopeful subjects for foster home treatment.¹

¹ Rogers, op. cit. pp 79-87
FOUR CASES OF CHILDREN TOO SERIOUSLY DISTURBED TO BENEFIT FROM PLACEMENT

Case No. 3 - Tom

Tom was a seriously disturbed eleven year old boy referred by the Juvenile Probation Officer for placement. Tom came to the attention of the Court when his mother declared him to be a stubborn child. This occurred when she found Tom stealing money from friends visiting in the home. For some time, however, she had been concerned about Tom's truancy, stealing, lying and other anti-social behavior.

Tom's father died when Tom was two years old. His mother remarried and apparently this second marriage was a most unhappy one and she was now divorcing her second husband. There appeared to be considerable rejection of Tom by his mother. She complained that her efforts to train Tom had been unsuccessful from the beginning. She attributed some of her difficulty to the fact that the stepfather was abusive to Tom, deprived him of an opportunity to play and have the companionship of other children. He dominated the household but did not support it and, consequently, the mother was forced to obtain employment and leave Tom entirely at the mercy of the stepfather. Tom had one sister five years older than himself.

Tom was placed in a rural home with foster brothers near his own age. This home was selected because of the foster parent's apparent ability to work with boys.

Immediately after placement Tom seemed to be making a satisfactory adjustment to the foster home. He was cooperative and conforming, and seemed to enjoy the great amount of attention given him by the foster parents. He gave every evidence of responding to organized, healthful family living which he had not had previous to that time. His behavior problems began to express themselves only after Tom seemed to relax and become a part of the home.

He engaged in hiding food in various places throughout the house. In an effort to combat this the foster parents emphasized Tom's right to eat as often and as much as he chose. As a result Tom seemed to develop an abnormally large appetite eating as many as three meals after the evening meal was finished. In spite of this he secreted various kinds of food, perishable and non-perishable about the house and yard. He never ate the food he stole.

In addition Tom prowled the house at night rummaging through drawers, closets, and any other available places not visited by him.
in the day time. A few items were taken of no value to Tom or anyone else. Foster parents were particularly alarmed about Tom's night prowling as he set fires around the house and always seemed to have matches with him.

He developed poor toilet habits. His bowel movements were frequent and large. He defecated on the front porch or some place in the house or yard rather than use toilet facilities. During his prowling escapades at night, he also urinated out of the windows.

Foster parents found Tom to be sly, deceitful, unresponsive to their attempts to develop a close relationship with him, and inclined toward bullying small children. His abuse of the children was so great he was ostracized by the entire community. Efforts to talk with Tom seemed unproductive. He responded little, but when he did he would speak in a very low voice. Tom's removal was requested by foster parents as they felt he was a threat to the physical and emotional wellbeing of their own children.

Tom was admitted to the New England Home for Little Wanderers for study. The psychiatrist there recognized Tom's initial favorable rapport with adults as a defense against the bitter hostility he felt against the world. His peculiar compulsive behavior was motivated unconsciously. He maintained indifference to where he was and to his rejection by his mother, but it was felt he longed for a fantasy mother and the home life he missed. He seemed to have a severe obsessional neurosis.

The result of the study was recommendation that he be placed in a group placement where therapy could be found for him.

Tom's case was presented to the Boys' Committee and it was recommended that he be sent to Children's Village at Dobbs Ferry, New York. He stayed there for two years and made an excellent adjustment. His behavior symptoms disappeared and he adjusted well to school. His mother kept close contact with him and arranged to have him with her during vacations. At the end of these two years the school felt he had adjusted sufficiently to be returned to his mother who, in the meantime, had moved to the West Coast and married again. Plans were made for Tom to join his family to which he seemed to look forward greatly.

**DISCUSSION**

Tom was obviously a very disturbed boy whose extreme behavior symptoms reflected his neurotic maladjustment. It certainly is doubtful whether a child exhibiting such extreme forms of behavior can success-
fully be placed in a foster home and be completely accepted by the foster parents.

For children as seriously disturbed as this youngster, W.C.F.S. utilizes their study home, Merrifield. In this case, however, the recommendation of psychiatrists pointed to a group placement as being the most suitable for Tom - one in which he would also have an opportunity to receive intensive psychotherapy. With many very seriously disturbed children the opportunity for forming close family bonds often proves too much for them to accept, and they benefit most from the neutral atmosphere of a school or institution. Tom clearly did benefit from his two year experience in a group placement probably because this atmosphere is not so loaded with emotional pressures.

1 Edith L. Lauer, The Role of Substitute Parents in the Life of the Emotionally Deprived Child. p.7
Case No. 4 - Ned

The Court asked W.C.F.S. to place Ned who was on suspended sentence from Lyman School because of truancy. It was felt that his own home contributed to his unstable, impulsive personality and he should be removed from that influence. Ned was twelve years old, the third oldest in a family of seven children. His mother drank frequently and would desert the family periodically, leaving the children alone or in the care of the father. His father, a physically deformed man, was often cruel and abusive to the children. Ned's older sister was at one time in the House of the Good Shepherd. She was now married and had a child, but was separated from her husband and lived with the mother.

Ned himself requested foster home placement as he felt his home life was not suitable and he was, therefore, placed at Merrifield, W.C.F.S. study home. His adjustment from the beginning was poor. It was hard for him to adjust to the routine and discipline. Although his I.Q. was higher than average, his adjustment at school was poor as he could not apply himself to his homework. He was troubled about his younger twin brothers to whom he was greatly attached and would run away from Merrifield to go home to see them. His mother also frequently telephoned Ned asking him to come home for a while and care for the children. These telephone calls upset Ned greatly and the worker tried to prevent them by cautioning the mother. On one occasion Ned asked to go home for the weekend and worker drove him there. His mother was sitting at the table drinking and the baby was running naked around the house. Ned was delighted to see his mother, climbed into her lap and hugged her. It was obvious that Ned had seen his mother in this condition before and was accustomed to the situation.

Ned stayed at Merrifield for almost two years. He started treatment at the Youth Guidance Center. In an early conference held with the Clinic it was found that Ned strongly felt his rejection by his mother and sought the love which she should have given him. He suffered from the physical abuse by the father but at the same time longed for his affection. He feared being hurt. He had no creative outlet for his emotions and actually had not control over his behavior. He could easily become schizophrenic. The Clinic recommended that Ned should be disciplined in a way flexible enough so that he could be accepted after his misbehavior. He had been raised in a home in which he felt no security, received no affection, and found no leadership in either parent. He felt completely lost and his concern over the younger twin bothers was an attempt to give them what he had missed. It was felt that Ned should be in a school where he would receive intensive psychiatric treatment.
Ned expressed to the foster mother at Merrifield that he ran away and went home because he felt the other children at Merrifield thought he was crazy, while at home with blood relatives he knew what they thought of him. He said at home he didn't have to worry about his brothers as he did when he was away from them. He seemed to have some insight into his behavior and he said to the worker that he realized that he loses his head first and is sorry later. He said he wanted to be on a farm most of all. Two weekend visits were arranged for him on a farm, therefore, to see if placement there would be beneficial. This was unsuccessful as the foster parents reported that he was restless, inattentive, defied orders, and upset the entire family. He showed a fascination for knives and commented to the foster mother that he could kill the family's baby very easily with a knife.

He continued at Merrifield and transferred to vocational school. His school marks came up slightly and he seemed to make a better adjustment there. Two sex incidents were reported by the foster parents at Merrifield. On one occasion he was seen handling a little girl and, on another, he tried to break into a girl's bedroom.

He became interested in Scout activities and did well with this group, showing a great deal of cooperation and real concern about the group. He went to Scout camp for three weeks during the summer and did well. In September he asked to return to the grammar school, which he originally attended when placed, to continue along college preparatory lines. He graduated in June and made plans to enter high school. He still continued to see his family, although less frequently. Again Ned requested a farm placement and he was replaced. In five days he ran away from the farm and went to his own home saying the work on the farm was too hard. His father rose up in defense of Ned, although his story was not true, and Ned spent the summer with his father. He obtained a part-time job during the summer and in September entered high school.

In October the Court again asked W.C.F.S. for placement as Ned was truanting again. He had also stolen a musical instrument from the school and damaged a part of it. Ned was again placed at Merrifield and his case was discussed with the Youth Guidance Center and the Boys' Committee of W.C.F.S. to decide the best plan for Ned. He could be committed to Oakdale Training School or to Lyman School by the Court; he could be placed in a foster home; or he could be sent to a school. Ned himself was confused and did not know what he wanted. He told worker he did not guarantee that he would stay in a foster home.

It was finally decided to send Ned to a school for unadjusted boys many miles away from his disturbing home life. Final recommendations by the Youth Guidance Center were to place Ned in a foster
home with unusually capable foster parents who would not make too great demands on Ned, and who could tolerate considerable acting out without resorting to punitive measures, but it was felt that such a foster home would be unavailable and the impersonal environment of the school would be more suitable for Ned.

W.C.F.S. arranged for Ned to attend this school. In a few weeks, however, he ran away from the school, hitchhiked home with no explanation for his impulsive behavior. He was returned to the school and again ran away for the second time. After this second episode he was committed to the Youth Service Board with a probable pending sentence to Lyman School.

**DISCUSSION**

Ned failed to adjust to placement for three main reasons. His impulsive, erratic behavior made him unacceptable to foster parents; the emotional ties he had to his own home and the real demands made upon him by his mother continually attracted him and disturbed him; the type of foster home recommended for Ned was virtually impossible to find.

Some improvement was observed in his behavior. He was placed at Merrifield for over two years as the agency felt that a foster home would be difficult to find for him and he could best profit by being in a more neutral environment. In the two years he was placed at Merrifield he showed less tendency to resist helping with household tasks and conforming to discipline. His school adjustment picked up slightly. Noticeable, however, was the good adjustment he made to a Boy Scout group. He showed real interest in their activities and took great pride in being a Scout. Visits with the Scoutmaster revealed that he was not a problem in the group but had leadership potentialities.

His emotional ties with his family still were strong, however, and he continued to run away and return home for weekends. Even at school away from the proximity of his home, he impulsively ran away to return
home.

It seemed to the agency that Ned was too severely damaged and disturbed to benefit from foster home placement. It is doubtful that a placement away from home where Ned would not have been exposed to the demands of a neurotic mother would have been helpful as Ned’s own neurotic ties were too strong to allow physical separation to destroy them sufficiently for Ned to turn his energies in healthier directions. This was clearly borne out when he was sent to Children's Village many miles away from his home and yet he made two attempts to return home.
Case No. 5 - Peggy

Another agency requested placement for Peggy, a fourteen year old girl, whose mother died when she was nine, and whose father had a long history of alcoholism and prison sentences. Peggy had three older siblings and two younger siblings. After the mother’s death a housekeeper lived in the home. During this time a neglect charge was filed against the father and a suspicion of immoral relations between the housekeeper and the father was confirmed. The two youngest children were given over to the care of the Division of Child Guardianship and Peggy lived with the maternal grandmother. After the father’s second marriage (to his former housekeeper) Peggy returned to the home, until a quarrel between Peggy and the stepmother resulted in the latter deserting and Peggy going to an uncle’s home. There were no behavior problems exhibited until recently when Peggy began to truant from school, run away from the uncle’s home, and her enuresis increased.

Peggy was placed in a foster home after a period of considerable study. Her enuresis was less frequent the first two weeks of placement but after a month it increased. Restriction of liquids and discipline was tried in the foster home to help Peggy overcome this. Examination by the agency doctor revealed Peggy’s hymen to be ruptured and the vagina widely stretched. Peggy then revealed the following incident: in the uncle’s home she was attacked by a middle aged man living in the house and raped twice. After Peggy related this incident the worker assured her that the matter would be kept confidential.

Peggy’s adjustment in the foster home continued to be poor. Her father did not write to her and Peggy spent much time watching the mailbox. The enuresis increased. In subsequent interviews with the worker regarding the enuresis, the investigator quotes the following from the case record: "visitor told Peggy she must be very careful that she does not answer back and whenever foster mother tries to correct her she must accept it and learn ... Peggy said she wished she could stop her enuresis and that every night when she goes to bed she tries but then she falls asleep and dreams and when she wakes up the bed is wet ... visitor spoke sternly to her, not only about the care of her clothes and neatness and order of her room, but said it would do little good to have foster parents give up all their time to caring for her if Peggy did not cooperate ... visitor explained to her that there was no physical reason for having it and that it was a habit she could change if she really wanted to".

The foster mother related Peggy’s continued rudeness and stubbornness in the home and told of two incidents in which Peggy
acted very strangely. Peggy took a statue of a saint to bed with her, although the foster mother had refused permission for this. In the morning the statue was found broken. Another time Peggy forgot her prayer beads in church and substituted pictures of her family to which she prayed.

After four months in this foster home the foster mother requested Peggy's removal. Peggy told the worker that the foster mother had told her she had not wanted her anyway when she found that Peggy was enuretic. Worker told Peggy that it would be very difficult to place her in a home if that condition kept up since no foster mother would be willing to cope with that situation. Worker said that Peggy had shown she could stop it at intervals but must prove that she can stop it completely if she is to go to a new foster home, or she would be unwelcome there too.

Peggy was then replaced at the W.C.F.S. study home and began having psychiatric treatment with a private psychiatrist. During this time Peggy's father was again committed to prison for non-support. Report from the psychiatrist stated that Peggy had some neurotic traits and had strong family feeling. Peggy related a suicide attempt she had witnessed by her father who was intoxicated at the time. Much of Peggy's talk revealed a deep seated anxiety: "Many times I feel afraid and don't know what I'm afraid of or what to do with my hands and feet. Then I bite my nails". The psychiatrist recommended a prolonged and satisfying experience in a foster home that could accept her impulsive behavior.

She was at the study home for almost seven months. Her behavior symptoms still continued. Stealing episodes were reported. She ran away from the study home one night and related meeting a young man in a movie who spent the night with her. This episode was verified by getting in touch with the young man. Sexual relations were denied by both.

Twice Peggy was taken to the hospital for a tonsillectomy and prepared for the operation, but at the scheduled time the hospital rejected her for physical reasons. The second time this happened Peggy's anxiety was acute as she said she told all her friends she was going to the hospital and asked them to visit her, only to be disappointed.

After an acute hysterical temper tantrum over a petty argument with another girl her own age in the study home, requiring the presence of the worker and psychiatrist, Peggy was sent to a Catholic correctional school to which her older sister had gone and taken vows to become a nun. It was felt that this should be done as the agency did not have a foster home permissive and accepting enough of Peggy's behavior. Follow up visits with Peggy revealed her to be happy and well adjusted there.
DISCUSSION

Here again the agency faces the chief stumbling block in placement of children with severe behavior problems - finding foster homes that can accept these children and permit expression of symptoms without punishment, but with sympathy and understanding. Peggy needed such a home but was unable to be placed successfully because of her acute symptoms. Peggy was punished, disciplined and restricted, with little sympathetic understanding for her emotional anxiety.

Peggy's worker identified almost completely with the foster parents and thus minimized her chance to help Peggy with her problems. This worker's relationship with Peggy seemed condemning and punitive. She showed little acceptance of Peggy's enuresis and from the quotations taken from the record her lack of understanding in this area is evident.

Again it is noticed that in spite of Peggy's lack of adjustment in a foster home she did very well in an institutional setting. One may conjecture that because of Peggy's strong "family feeling", recognized by the psychiatrist, she was unable to become involved emotionally in any way with a new family setting. Here again the neutral, less deeply involved setting of the institution offered the emotional balance so badly needed by this girl.
Case No. 6 - Jimmy

The court requested placement by W.C.F.S. for ten year old Jimmy for a temporary period prior to agency's decision relative to acceptance or rejection of the boy for more permanent placement. Jimmy had been arrested with two other boys in the act of vandalism in some summer cottages. Jimmy told of breaking every piece of glass in these cottages, of overturning and breaking furniture, and destroying many other articles of value. He did not seem to have any deep sense of guilt for the damage done. After this temporary period, if W.C.F.S. did not accept him for more permanent care, he would be committed to Lyman School.

Jimmy had a history of delinquent behavior traits from the age of seven when he began truanting from school and running away from home. Five months prior to the request by the court, W.C.F.S. placed Jimmy for two weeks during his mother's confinement. While in this foster home he ran away and was found with neighbors of his own family. This foster mother described Jimmy as a "clever" youngster always in some kind of mischief. He was involved in fist fights frequently and had been seen throwing stones at trolley cars.

Previous family history disclosed that Jimmy was an illegitimate child. His mother left home at the age of eighteen and had relations with a married man, Jimmy's alleged father. She lived with this man for two years after Jimmy's birth and then Jimmy was placed in an orphanage for three years until her marriage to her present husband, by whom she had two other children. Mother claimed that Jimmy had no knowledge of his illegitimacy nor any memory of the first five years of his life. Friends, neighbors, and relatives, looked upon Jimmy's stepfather as his own father. The stepfather appeared very much interested in Jimmy and was willing to assume financial responsibility for long term placement of Jimmy, although he questioned the value of placement since Jimmy had not improved in his own home. As far as known, the father showed no favoritism among the three children.

The family did not follow through any suggestions made by the school or W.C.F.S. when Jimmy was first placed. Jimmy seemed to receive very little care, guidance or supervision at home. One of the school principals described Jimmy as having been used as a "plaything" by his family and that he was the source of entertainment at all family gatherings. This could probably be so for Jimmy was a likeable boy who related well to adults.

As the Court requested, Jimmy was placed in a foster home. His first week was uneventful. In the next two weeks, however, he began to show his usual behavior traits. The foster mother reported
that he was sneaky, sly, and untruthful. He was untidy in his personal habits, and foster mother remarked that he soiled his underclothes and then attempted to hide them in the rear of closets. He accepted correction and supervision in a very resentful manner and was apt to be rude to the person trying to correct him. He seemed to be fond of animals but actually was seen to be cruel to them. On one occasion he grabbed the puppy by the ears and started to swing it around in a circle and finally threw him on a pile of brush. When the foster mother came to the dog's rescue he denied his act claiming he did not know what happened and then went over to the dog to pet him.

Foster mother also said Jimmy did not answer when spoken to or when called. He would hide about the house and very suddenly turn up in a spot the foster mother had just left and state he had been there all along. Several times he hid behind doors or chairs listening to the conversation of adults in an adjoining room. He never finished a job completely but would lose interest after a short time.

After a month in this foster home the foster parents requested his removal. He was returned to his own home pending arrangements to admit him at Longview Farm at the New England Home for Little Wanderers. He was refused placement there because of overcrowded conditions, and, also, because the director felt Jimmy needed long term psychotherapy which they could not supply.

He was seen twice at the Youth Guidance Center and they gave the following report: He had an I.Q. of 117, or superior average intelligence. According to his present mental age his grade placement in school was about two years below his developed capacity. Psychologically one point stood out clearly. Jimmy was preoccupied with food, particularly with candy. This led to some interesting conjectures in terms of his needing warmth and affection from other persons. The Clinic also saw a tendency for him to escape into books and fantasies. He selected books with heroes older than himself, heroes who had a great deal of adventure.

In cooperation with the Court, Youth Guidance Center, and the school attendance office, a tentative plan was suggested to supervise Jimmy intensively in his own home. His mother and stepfather, however, felt unable to cope with him. They felt they must consider their other son who was now beginning to imitate Jimmy's destructive behavior. Jimmy, therefore, was sentenced to Lyman School for a period of eight months. He did not display any feeling about this nor did he seem at all disturbed at having to go to a "reform" school.
DISCUSSION

Jimmy's strong anti-social behavior made it difficult to place him successfully in a foster home. After one month of being exposed to his aggressive and destructive behavior, the foster parents requested his removal. It seemed doubtful to the agency that he could be successfully placed in a second foster home for, after another period in which he would revert to this behavior, the foster parents would again request his removal. With such a boy, obviously rejected by this mother, further rejection at the hands of foster parents could result in considerable more damage to him. It was, therefore, suggested that intensive supervision in his own home by a psychiatric agency such as Youth Guidance Center, would have been a better solution since his parents would have been more accepting of this behavior. The parents, however, were unwilling to accept Jimmy under these circumstances and, therefore, commitment to a reform school was inevitable.

As in the two previous cases we see a boy emotionally involved in family ties that prevented him from relating to a new adult group. It would seem from his behavior, particularly that of hiding behind doors and chairs and listening to adult conversations, that Jimmy was concerned about the question of his paternity and the development of behavior symptoms was his way of acting out his disturbance. Until this question was cleared to his satisfaction it is doubtful that he could be helped by placement in a foster home.
SUMMARY OF CHAPTER III

The preceding four cases involve children who exhibited severe behavior problems which made placement exceedingly difficult and ultimately ended in the request for their removal by the foster parents.

In the case of Tom, such behavior as food hiding, night prowling, fire setting, physical abuse of other children, and extreme toilet habits were certainly behavior problems sufficiently difficult to try the patience and understanding of foster parents.

In the case of Ned, his lack of conformance to simple discipline and routine, his runaway episodes, two reported sex incidents, physical abuse of one foster family's child, and other compulsive acts contributed to the difficulty of placing him in a regular foster home.

Peggy's enuresis was the chief behavior symptom that destroyed the ability of most foster parents to accept her. In addition her rudeness and stubbornness, her strange behavior, and the runaway episodes contributed to a foster family's rejection of her.

In the fourth case, Jimmy's abusive treatment of animals, his untruthfulness, poor personal habits, and attempts to outwit the foster parents resulted in his being removed from the home.

In addition to these severe symptoms, we have four children with neurotic ties to their family which prevented them from making a successful adjustment to placement. It seems questionable, therefore, that placement is valid for such seriously damaged children. Other investigators have corroborated this belief. Rogers reports as a result of his study that treatment in a foster home is less successful as the child's
behavior becomes increasingly more anti-social. He also observed that children who present only personality or habit problems make a better adjustment than children who are apprehended in a first delinquency, or whose delinquent behavior has not yet taken them to Court. He also indicates that where a child is free to form new parental attachments, the likelihood of foster home adjustment is greatly increased, but where there exists a strong emotional tie to parents willing to keep the child there is a strong barrier to successful placement. The child's attachment to his parents is not influenced to any appreciable degree by common norms of behavior offered by a foster family. Gula also concluded that children whose symptom patterns need professional observation and treatment, or who cannot relate to a foster family, community, school, or neighborhood, or those children too disturbed to be accessible to case work treatment cannot be treated in a foster home.

2 Rogers, op. cit., p. 81
3 Ibid. pp. 79-97
### TABLE I
AGE OF CHILD AT PLACEMENT

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<td>Lying, stealing</td>
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<td>Enuresis, disobedient</td>
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<td>Lying, destructiveness</td>
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### TABLE III
LENGTH OF PLACEMENT

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### TABLE IV
NUMBER OF REPLACEMENTS

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CHAPTER IV

SIX CASES OF CHILDREN WHOSE ADJUSTMENT TO PLACEMENT WAS SUCCESSFUL

The following six cases are those which the writer believes adjusted successfully to placement. By "successful" the writer includes those children whose behavior symptoms were alleviated or whose symptoms disappeared completely.

The first three of these cases show a definite alleviation of behavior symptoms during placement but whose adjustment does not show maximum degree of normal living. Further work on these three children was terminated by the parents. The final three cases are those in which the child's behavior symptoms almost completely disappeared and the goal of the agency to help the child to a more normal adjustment was ultimately reached.

The ages of these six children range from the youngest of two years to the oldest of fifteen years. Five were boys; one was a girl. All were placed in foster boarding homes with the shortest placement being two months; the longest over twelve months. Two children were replaced. The chief behavior problem of two of the children was runaway behavior. One child was a retarded enuretic boy; one was a tense, fearful child; one was accused of stealing and rape; and one was described as "defiant".
Case No. 7 - Bobby

Mother was referred to W.C.F.S. for placement of twelve year old Bobby by the Juvenile Probation Officer. She was interested in having Bobby "put away". She stated that Bobby was a most difficult boy. He was defiant, independent, and given to roaming about at will not returning home until very late at night. He also stole money from neighbors and from a small store in the neighborhood. Mother and Bobby were living with the maternal grandparents while mother was employed. The maternal grandparents were chronically ill and unable to cope with Bobby's behavior.

Bobby's own father died when he was two years old. Mother remarried three years later. Bobby suffered considerable abuse at the hands of his stepfather and it was evident that although the mother disliked this treatment of Bobby she did nothing to stop it. The stepfather died the year before mother made application to this agency for placement.

While living with his mother and stepfather in another state Bobby was committed by the Court to an institution for delinquent boys. He remained there for over a year and made a fair adjustment. Although he ran away repeatedly from this institution, his adjustment in other areas and in school work seemed to improve slightly. Testing revealed that Bobby had an I.Q. below normal but it was felt that this was due to his emotional disturbance. At age twelve he was only in the fourth grade in school.

Interviews with the maternal grandmother indicated that his mother strongly rejected him. The mother was extremely bitter toward Bobby's father when she learned of Bobby's conception during a visit from the father from a tuberculosis sanitarium. Mother left Bobby alone for long periods of time and seemed to be unconcerned about his care. She disciplined Bobby's behavior by resorting to severe beatings.

Bobby was seen several times before placement. He seemed to be a very tense nervous boy who constantly stammered and blinked his eyes. He regarded placement as a punishment referring to the fact he would be "put away" because he was "bad" although he really did not want to be bad. Whenever worker tried to discuss Bobby's feelings toward his mother he changed the subject and obviously tightened up. He indicated a strong desire to be placed on a farm.

Bobby was seen by a psychiatrist at the Youth Guidance Center. He felt that Bobby was not the victim of a severe neurosis but that
his problems were essentially a reaction to a situation that would be equally intolerable for any other average child. Treatment at the Youth Guidance Center was not recommended as essential as the mother, it was felt, would not cooperate and Bobby seemed to have the capability of working through his problems with the help of someone who would be definitely interested in him.

Bobby was placed in a foster home which was a farm that Bobby so desired. On the trip to the home with visitor he showed an abnormal interest in cemeteries along the way remarking about his father's and stepfather's death and asking many questions about death.

Bobby was in this foster home for almost eight months and at first was a very disturbing boy to the foster family and the school he attended. Foster parents had given him a calf to take care of but he quickly lost interest in that unless he was showing off before strangers or visitor when she came to see him. He was unable to complete any chores assigned to him and seemed to spend his entire time and energy in attempting to outwit the foster parents. In school he failed every subject except drawing and music. He was especially poor in reading. His conduct was very unsatisfactory in the schoolroom as he delighted in creating a disturbance and showing off. Foster mother spent a great deal of time with Bobby in helping him with his reading difficulties.

Bobby ran away twice from the foster home, and once was found at his mother's house. During his placement his mother had very little contact with Bobby except under pressure from visitor and actually seemed greatly relieved that she no longer had the responsibility of caring for him.

After the second runaway episode foster father resorted to slapping Bobby when Bobby defiantly said he could do whatever he wished because foster parents could not punish him. Visitor interpreted to foster parents the questionable value of this type of punishment since the boy had been severely punished most of his life and many of his problems arose because of this treatment.

Beginning the fifth month of placement Bobby seemed to improve somewhat. His eyes were examined and glasses prescribed. His school adjustment improved greatly after this and his grades went up. He seemed less tense, stammered less and put on weight. However, he still devoted much time to ways of outwitting the foster parents and trying to get out of doing the tasks assigned to him.

After Bobby had been in the foster home eight months, his mother rented a small apartment and took Bobby home to live with her. Visitor made several visits to Bobby under this arrangement and
found him to be relatively happy although his personality seemed basically unchanged. He seemed more independent and his appearance was that of an older boy. He seemed relieved by not having the supervision of the maternal grandparents as he had previously. His mother still was employed and for part of the day he was unsupervised. No further evidence of his delinquent behavior was appearing.

DISCUSSION

Bobby was held pretty rigidly to a work program in the foster home. He never had been actually accustomed to a home life in which people make every moment count and in which they are thrifty of their time and money. It was hard for Bobby to take the organization in this home. It was equally difficult for the foster parents to understand problems such as Bobby's.

He was removed from close association with other boys since the home was located in a sparsely settled area. He lived in an atmosphere in which the amount of work accomplished each day was far more important than other aspects of living. His school work improved considerably, allowing him to be promoted to the next grade, probably because of his relationship with the foster mother who spent much of her time helping and encouraging Bobby with his work, and because of correction of his eye defects. His pattern of behavior to run away constantly before placement was considerably less. While this was not an ideal home Bobby did make progress.

His progress was interrupted, however, by his mother's sudden decision to have Bobby live with her again. The worker made several efforts to convince the mother that a longer period of placement was necessary since it was believed he was not completely ready to return to
his own home. Mother was not convinced. Bobby's new home life was similar to that which he had experienced prior to placement and he was again exposed to long periods of unsupervised activity while his mother was employed.
Case No. 3 - Jackie

The S.P.C.C. referred seven year old Jackie to W.C.F.S. for placement as a run away, pre-delinquent boy. The S.P.C.C. was called into the case following an episode in which the police were called in by neighbors who reported that Jackie was tied naked to his bed with a chain. Much newspaper publicity followed this episode.

An interview with the mother revealed her viewpoint of this incident. Jackie's delinquent behavior began about a month before when he began truanting from school and running away from home to attend movies. He would go late in the afternoon and not return until early in the morning. His parents had tried punishing him by whippings, hiding his clothes, and denying him privileges. Preceding the above incident Jackie had been missing for several hours. Mother said she and his father went to a movie to relax leaving a young paternal uncle in charge of the three younger children. While they were in the theatre the father was summoned to the telephone and told that Jackie was located. Leaving the mother in the movie, he went home, tied Jackie to the bed and then returned to the mother. When they returned home the police had been called and the father was arrested on an assault and battery charge.

Jackie's parents owned a small store and both mother and father worked there leaving the children in the care of a high school girl during part of the day. S.P.C.C. reported lack of proper food and supervision. Jackie was frequently left in charge of his younger brothers and sister and forced to prepare their meals.

Jackie was placed immediately in a foster home. On the way to the foster home Jackie commented to the worker that he didn't think he'd know his way home from the foster home. Worker asked Jackie not to run away but to try his new life for ten days and then talk over how he liked the home. His adjustment during his placement of two months was good. He ran away once for a period of two hours only a short distance away from the foster home. Foster mother said Jackie was a pathetic little boy who responded well to praise and affection and cried when criticized. He adopted "Mummy" in referring to the foster mother and had a strong attachment to the foster father. He did get into some childish mischief and fights with neighborhood boys.

During placement the case against Jackie's parents was brought to Court. Through a misunderstanding between W.C.F.S. and S.P.C.C. the former agency was not notified of the court hearing and the case was dismissed. W.C.F.S. strongly felt that the boy should be committed to the agency's care on a neglect charge so the agency would
have full control of the boy.

Unexpectedly Jackie's foster parents made plans to leave the city and of necessity requested Jackie's removal. The parents refused to place Jackie elsewhere and requested his return. In the meantime, the W.C.F.S. had several interviews with the parents of Jackie trying to help them realize how they were neglecting their children. Although the mother's insight into her behavior was very limited, she reluctantly accepted the suggestion that leaving children unsupervised was neglect, and did rearrange her working hours at the store so that either she or the father could be at home with the children. Once a week both parents worked the same hours and the children were then brought to the store and allowed to play in a small adjacent room. The mother reported two months after Jackie's return that he was obedient and anxious to please now and no incidents of running away had occurred.

**DISCUSSION**

In this case placement could have been the ideal solution to helping the boy relate successfully to adults who could provide him with affection and security so lacking in his own home. His foster home provided these qualities and Jackie responded positively to the praise and affection. However, the placement was interrupted by his parents' refusal to have Jackie replaced and their demands for his return. Without control through court action or assumption of guardianship the agency's hands were tied and the rights of his parents had to be recognized and complied with. The agency recognized the pitfalls of accepting such a child without control over demands from his parents and asked to be represented at the court hearing hoping to gain the necessary control through a court order committing Jackie to the care of the agency on a neglect charge. This was not done, however, and, therefore, Jackie's needs were not sufficiently protected.

Casework with Jackie's parents was only partially successful.
They were people with limited insight who failed to understand the damage they were doing to their children by their neglect to provide a home with supervision and security. The lack of these factors could be seen in Jackie's frequent run away episodes.

It is quite often necessary for children who are neglected or seriously damaged that a private agency such as W.C.F.S. be given some control over the situation to prevent further damage to the child. Without this the agency must often yield to the whims and desires of the child's rightful guardians.
Case No. 9 - Betty

Betty, age fifteen, was referred to this agency for placement by the S.P.C.C. Her mother had been unable to cope with her behavior and had made a stubborn child complaint against her. The Court felt that placement away from home was a better solution than commitment to the Lancaster Training School.

Betty's behavior according to her mother consisted of her keeping late hours at night, being arrogant and defiant to the mother, and immorality. Betty's father and mother were divorced and there was a history of sexual relations between the father and maternal grandmother, and of alcoholism. There were six other children in the family all of whom were being cared for out of the home with the exception of two younger brothers who were with the mother. Betty was the second oldest child in the family.

It was interpreted to Betty's mother that the agency would consider placement only if Betty's feelings were indicative of her willingness to cooperate with this plan. The mother was extremely hostile to this suggestion as she demanded placement immediately without consideration of Betty's feelings. In spite of mother's extreme hostility, Betty was supervised for a period of two months to enable worker to interpret placement to Betty and draw out her feelings about it.

In the worker's initial interview with Betty, she seemed utterly amazed that her feelings were to be considered in the matter. It was clear that placement to Betty was a punishment as the mother many times had threatened her with having to "put her away" and compared placement to a reform school. In spite of Betty's inability to get along with her mother it was evident that she had a great deal of affection for her and was resistant to placement for that reason as well. Betty did not relate easily to worker at first as she seemed clearly suspicious and on the defensive in regard to worker. Betty's physical appearance was poor; she wore thick make-up, and dirty, poorly kept clothing.

Betty's mother was very difficult to work with during this period. She vacillated between becoming hostile and angry with worker as she continued to see Betty, and threatening to commit Betty to reform school unless W.C.F.S. placed her immediately. The mother was a person of very limited intelligence and insight. She was a coarse, vulgar woman who yelled at Betty at the top of her voice to discipline her.

Although Betty related well to worker and seemed much more secure in her presence, she was extremely ambivalent toward accept-
ing placement. The worker made arrangements for her to visit Merri- 
field, W.C.F.S. study home, to see what it was like, and Betty indi-
cated how much she liked it but at the same time indicated that she 
did not want to leave her mother.

In school Betty made a fair adjustment. She was capable of 
average work but her marks were below her ability. She was not an 
outstanding problem in school although she was somewhat saucy and 
defiant. She had few friends and her teachers remarked about her 
poor personal appearance but felt that these things were a result of 
her environment and lack of support from the mother. Twice Betty's 
mother sent her to a doctor for a vaginal examination having accused 
Betty of being a "bad girl".

During the two month period of supervision, relations between 
Betty and her mother grew no better. The mother constantly threat-
ened Betty with placement and told Betty she wanted her out of the 
house. It was felt nothing could be accomplished in attempting to 
work with Betty while she was in the home and arrangements were 
made to place Betty at Merrifield. Betty resisted strongly going 
with worker and ran away to maternal aunt's home. The maternal aunt 
and uncle took a great deal of interest in Betty and offered to 
have Betty stay with them. After careful study, a plan was worker 
out in which Betty would be placed with maternal aunt and uncle, as 
if this were a regular W.C.F.S. foster home, and she would be under 
the supervision of a worker from the agency. The maternal aunt and 
uncle agreed to this, as did Betty and her mother. She was placed 
there and supervised for a period of eight months. The meaning of 
placement and supervision by W.C.F.S. was carefully interpreted to 
Betty and she seemed to accept this.

Her placement with these relatives proved beneficial to Betty. 
She accepted the supervision of the worker and the restrictions and 
discipline of her aunt and uncle. Many times she remarked that she 
did not mind having her aunt and uncle discipline her as she felt 
they were just and fair. Her general appearance improved consider-
ably with the help of the worker's guidance in selection of clothing 
and her aunt's guidance on the care of it and her body. Her adjust-
ment to vocational school improved also. Her grades were a great 
deal better and her teachers remarked on her improved appearance and 
work.

After eight months, however, Betty took her belongings and 
said she wanted to live with her mother. The mother had indicated 
previously that she wished Betty at home and would give her "one 
more chance". Although worker felt the relationship between Betty 
and her mother had not changed much, Betty refused to return to the 
aunt's home on the basis that she was too restricted there and she 
felt she and her mother could get along.
The case was closed as the family would be supervised by the mother's A.D.C. worker.

**DISCUSSION**

As in the cases of Bobby and Jackie, Betty also benefited from her placement experience. Here we have the unusual circumstance of placing a child in the home of relatives - using this home as a regular foster home. The writer believes that Betty would not have accepted any other type of placement since it would have been too threatening to her. In spite of worker's attempts to interpret placement as a non-punishing procedure this effort was more than overcome by Betty's mother constantly threatening Betty with placement. It may be that the mother referred to placement in this manner because she felt guilty about her lack of control over Betty. In line with this hypothesis the mother's insistence that Betty return after a placement of eight months may have again been the result of guilt for she may not have been able to accept her relatives' ability to supervise and help Betty. Betty's progress was definite in the areas of her improved personal appearance, her adjustment to the school, her more regular hours, and lack of her former frequent evenings spent away from home.

In this situation again the parent utilized the emotional tie between the child and herself to obtain the child's willingness to return home. She played upon this child's emotional tie by offering Betty "one more chance" which Betty leapt to accept and she returned home. Actually it would seem logical to speculate that with the mother's limited insight
the two would soon become involved in the situation observed prior to placement and application would again be made for placement, or a complaint against Betty as a stubborn child would result in a sentence to Lancaster Training School. In considering what steps should be taken in the future should such an application be made for placement a second time, the agency strongly feels that guardianship should be exercised by W.C.F.S. on the child.

**SUMMARY**

It would seem to the writer from the three cases presented that lack of legal control by W.C.F.S. for the protection of the child resulted in interruption of placement which began, prior to that interruption, to show improvement in the child in terms of his adjustment to the foster home, the school, and in the decrease in behavior symptoms. In these cases the agency had to yield to parents' requests although it was felt that such a move was damaging to the child.

The control of guardianship gives the agency the right to limit, according to their judgment, parent's visits to the child, or, more particularly, the right to prevent an unwise return of the child to his own home before either parents or child are emotionally ready for this step.
THREE CASES IN WHICH PLACEMENT WAS SUCCESSFUL IN ALLEVIATING THE
CHILD'S SYMPTOMS

Case No. 10 - Michael

An out of town agency asked W.C.F.S. to place two year old Michael. He was a rejected child who was an unstable, fearful, trembling tense boy, and who cried almost constantly. He was born one month prematurely. His parents had considerable marital difficulty and at the time of referral the father was separated from his mother who was living with the maternal grandmother. Michael's father was a World War II veteran subject to occasional violent emotional spells. His work record was poor, he was lax and unstable and had recently, for no apparent reason, changed from a secure, well paid job to one with less security and less pay. Michael's mother was a woman of low mentality unable to cope with Michael's symptoms. She, herself, was rejected by her family because of Michael as the maternal relatives threatened to evict her and Michael because of his constant crying. The family were evicted several times from their previous apartments for this same reason. The report from the referring agency stated that they felt the parents basically loved Michael and recognized their need for long term case work. It was agreed that W.C.F.S. would place Michael while the referring agency would offer case work service to the family to help them accept Michael in their normal family life.

The worker from W.C.F.S. interviewed both parents and Michael at the office prior to placement. Mother said she had to pick Michael up constantly to prevent him from crying, and had to carry him around with her while she worked. He was destructive in his play, especially upon waking in the morning when he tore the curtains, etc. In the office Michael broke the toys the worker gave him and tried to put his fist through the window pane. Mother said she tried giving the boy sleeping pills but was not successful. He was not toilet trained as he screamed when attempts were made to put him on his pot.

A conference was held with Youth Guidance Center and it was felt that Michael was too severely damaged and too young for effective therapy. The Clinic recommended placement until Michael was older and more stable.

Michael was placed in a boarding home in which there was another boy his own age. Although his playing continued to be destructive and selfish he gradually lost his fear and tension over new people and situations. He slept less fitfully and gave up his tense sleeping position. He adjusted well to a temporary replacement
while his first foster parents were on their vacation. The foster parents noted that Michael had a fear of women in housecoats and, on one occasion, he screamed when the foster mother came into his room wearing one. He seemed to be more attached to men than to women and related easily to them. He continued to eat hurriedly as if he were afraid of not having enough to eat.

After a month in his first foster home Michael had to be replaced because of the lack of water due to the dry season. He responded immediately to his new foster father. After a month in this foster home it was discovered Michael was frequently constipated and examination revealed he had a rectal prolapse.

During Michael's placement work by the agency who originally referred the case to W.C.F.S. was continuing with the parents. Reports from the case worker indicated that the parents were acquiring more insight into their relationship to Michael and their own marital conflicts. They were now living together and had taken steps toward securing more adequate housing arrangements. The father had one more emotional outburst unaccompanied by the violence he had previously exhibited. They visited Michael regularly at first in the foster home and lavished gifts on him which seemed to be their method of assuring themselves they still had possession of him. Their visiting at present is less frequent, but nonetheless seems regular and of genuine interest. At the present time, since the case is still active with the agency, the most recent report from the worker seeing Michael's parents indicates a great deal of success in re-establishing a home for him with accepting and understanding parents. It is hoped that final arrangements will be completed to return Michael within a few weeks.

In her visits to the foster mother, Michael's mother is beginning to show sincere interest in the foster mother's methods of handling Michael and is asking many questions relative to his care in preparation for the day when she will again take up her role as a mother to this boy.

**DISCUSSION**

Michael was a two year old rejected boy whose symptoms were an evidence of treatment by frightening, tense adults in his environment. His symptoms were interpreted to his foster parents who tried to treat him calmly and consistently. They were careful not to make any threatening quick moves toward the boy; they fed him regularly and gave him
much affection.

Being so young he responded quickly to a change in environment. It was not difficult to place Michael as his symptoms were not sufficiently disturbing to other people to have him rejected by prospective foster parents.

Placement also seemed beneficial since it provided the parents with an opportunity to seek help from a casework agency. Having been relieved of the tension of their son temporarily, they could redirect their energies toward more positive goals. For Michael's sake placement was necessary to remove him from a tense, disturbing environment to a consistent, affectionate, and accepting one. Because of Michael's age he was amendable to treatment and with such cases often one may observe very remarkable improvement in a short time.
Case No. 11 - Charlie

Charlie's mother applied for placement of Charlie, age twelve, by letter. She wrote: "He is very restless at home and I thought you could find a place for him on a farm where he would be interested and have different associations. His mental attitude of us here is very disturbing. He thinks we are all against him and do not love him or want him here. He will be thirteen soon and is in the fifth grade in school but is quite slow in school. But he is very quick motioned and can do many physical chores if he feels inclined to do it".

From the Youth Guidance Center we learned Charlie was brought to them at age six, for testing as a possible retarded child. He also gave indications of being enuretic and a thumb-sucker. Their testing disclosed Charlie as a child who was below average intellectually but the results were not considered valid as Charlie was too upset and restless at the testing. They also learned of the maternal grandmother's preference for Charlie's older sister who was bright. The Clinic felt that the mother seemed to be an intelligent woman who intellectually accepted Charlie's retardation but emotionally projected onto the teacher and her method of handling him. She identified him with the father but could not verbalize her feelings about him. During the Clinic's contact with the family it was felt that Charlie became more independent and that the mother was helped to give him more freedom in making him less dependent upon her.

During the worker's interview with the mother it was felt that she saw Charlie as an overactive boy, not as a problem, but that she could not find channels into which she could direct this excess energy. Charlie often wandered about without his mother's knowing where he was. He preferred playing alone rather than in groups. The mother saw placement as a way for Charlie to get rid of his excess energy. She identified him with the father in temper and manners. The mother disclosed that as a baby he gained only seven ounces in four months and could not hold his head up until he was seven months old. She felt that Charlie was two years behind normal development and his progress was in proportion to that.

An interview with Charlie disclosed him to be indeed a hyperactive boy. He walked around the office tapping the wall, opening doors, etc. In talking about placement Charlie seemed to have his heart set on a farm placement for the summer.

Charlie was placed on a farm for two months. The foster mother saw Charlie as a child who had received no training at home. While he was there she taught him to tell time and improved his table manners. He ate with a spoon and cut his meat with a fork. He at a
great deal of food yet seemed to gain no weight. His enuresis improved by the foster mother’s cutting out liquid and food after five o’clock in the afternoon, and getting him up at night. He was caught lying and shirking small tasks although he boasted of his ability to do a man’s work. After this period the foster mother felt she had done all she could for the boy and suggested that he return home. The mother was willing to accept him back and the agency agreed to supervise him in his own home, helping the mother to realize the boy’s limitations.

After his return home Charlie’s mother reported some improvement in his behavior. The worker helped her to complete vocational guidance tests which showed that his manual ability rated above average. He could imitate rapidly and copy quickly. However, he had a lack of space perception and visual conception that would hinder his doing creative or untried work. It was felt on the basis of the tests that Charlie would do well in machine work, woodworking and the like as long as they did not require new or creative approaches. Charlie showed an anxious interest in the tests and a probable realization of his own ability.

Three years later when Charlie was fifteen his mother came to the W.C.F.S. office to tell of his present adjustment. He was now at vocation school and doing very well. He had a part-time job after school. Mother related many minor disciplinary problems she had with Charlie, but on the whole his adjustment in the home was good, particularly since his older sister had left to take a job elsewhere.

**DISCUSSION**

Charlie was a boy who exhibited behavior problems which arose partly from his intellectual retardation and from the family’s lack of acceptance of this limitation. Foster home placement in this case was beneficial for two reasons. First of all it gave the mother an opportunity to understand and accept Charlie’s limitations by realizing the foster parents had to cope with the same difficulties as Charlie exhibited in his own home. Secondly, through the foster parents’ patience in teaching Charlie and giving him security and affection, he was able to become more independent and his symptoms disappeared to some extent —
his enuresis stopped and he was less hyperactive.

Through her acceptance of the boy's limitations Charlie's mother was then able to complete arrangements for the psychological tests necessary to guide him into the best vocational fields. The results from these tests evidently were helpful to her in guiding Charlie, as witnessed by his subsequent entrance into vocational school. He made a successful adjustment there.

Although Charlie was not in a foster home long enough for any conclusive statements to be made, it does seem that this short placement did accomplish some purpose. A longer period of time would not have been much more beneficial to him as both the agency and foster parents felt they had done all they could for the boy.
Case No. 12 - Sidney

The S.P.C.C. referred nine year old Sidney to W.C.F.S. for placement. He was presenting serious behavior problems such as attempted rape of his three year old stepsister, boring holes in the walls, destroying his clothing, stealing and lying. He had recently been discharged from the Metropolitan State Hospital. S.P.C.C. felt that the boy's behavior was the result of his rejection by his mother and stepfather.

Sidney was an illegitimate boy born soon after his mother's divorce from her first husband. His father was a married man whom his mother knew only briefly. After her remarriage to Sidney's present stepfather the mother gave birth to two daughters and a son. Sidney was boarded privately before he came to live with his stepfather and mother. He was committed to the Metropolitan Hospital after being examined at Wrentham State School as he was believed to be a psychotic child. He had an I.Q. of 97, and he admitted he attempted to rape both stepsisters. After a period of observation at the Metropolitan State Hospital he was discharged as non-psychotic with the recommendation that he be placed in a foster home.

In discussion of Sidney's problems with his mother she confirmed his destructive behavior in the home, adding that he spit in the sugar bowl at meal times, abused his stepbrother, and was generally destructive of the furniture. Sidney did not know of his illegitimacy. When he was boarded privately, however, he became confused when called by a different surname than that of his stepfather whom neighbors believed to be his real father. Mother felt that she accepted Sidney and tried to favor him over his stepsisters, but that his behavior was due to his extreme jealousy of his stepsisters.

Sidney was placed at Merrifield where he stayed for one year. During the trip out to the Study Home he described to worker a story of a "bad boy" who lived in the neighborhood attributing exactly his own behavior to this boy. When asked why this boy did all these things, his reply was "so his mother will like him".

He adjusted immediately to Merrifield and not once did the behavior observed by his parents appear. He had a speech defect which in addition to his former behavior suggested treatment at the Youth Guidance Center. He continued weekly contacts there for over a year. Their testing revealed a high average intelligence but showed emotional blocking which interfered with the full utilization of his ability. The Youth Guidance Center felt that the disappearance of his habit and conduct disorders was due to the removal from
the rejecting atmosphere of his own home to the accepting atmosphere of Merrifield.

Sidney was very dependent at first while at Merrifield, fearing to go out alone or to make his weekly trips to Youth Guidance Center alone. After about two months, however, he became more independent and less fearful. His parents visited him infrequently and they were not encouraged to have frequent visits with him. Adoption was discussed with the parents who agreed readily to release Sidney for adoption if a home could be found for him. The parents continued to be amazed at the miraculous disappearance of Sidney's behavior symptoms. They took him home over Christmas holidays which proved to be a very upsetting experience. All of Sidney's old behavior returned to an even greater degree. The Youth Guidance Center recommended long term placement of Sidney away from his family.

A foster home was found for him. The foster father was a young man of Scandinavian origin, not yet a citizen of the United States. The couple could have no children of their own. Three or four weekend visits were arranged for Sidney in this home and during the summer he spent a month's vacation with them. He responded immediately to the foster parents, calling them "aunt" and "uncle" and was quite excited over the prospects of living with the family.

Sidney has been in this foster home for the past nine months. After four months he asked the foster parents if he could be their "little boy" and adopt their last name. Sidney's mother and stepfather had no contact with him at all during his placement with this family, nor did they know specifically where he was located. The worker purposely did not see the parents hoping that the foster parents would eventually plan to adopt Sidney.

Worker constantly interpreted to the foster parents Sidney's problems and the general behavior one might expect of a nine year old boy. At first the foster parents needed a great deal of help in accepting Sidney, as their conception of a nine year old boy's behavior was quite different from what they saw in Sidney. A great deal of interpretation, too, was needed for the foster father whose "Old World" background endowed him with different disciplinary ideas than those of our standards. Gradually the foster family grew to accept Sidney's behavior as normal and they were ready to accept him on an adoption basis. Sidney was told of their plans to which he responded with unbounded delight. His serious behavior has entirely disappeared and he appears to be a happy, well adjusted boy in every way. He has done well in school ever since his placement with this foster family. In two more months his adoption basis will start and he will be in a "free home" for a period of six months until the final adoption papers will be signed.
DISCUSSION

In Sidney's case we see an almost remarkable change in behavior witnessed immediately upon removal from the home where he felt he did not "belong". His destructive behavior changed almost overnight and at no time did his foster parents report the type of behavior witnessed by his parents. It seems that Sidney expressed in his behavior hostility against a world that did not accept him, yet at the same time his behavior was an attempt to gain his mother's attention which he strongly felt was given largely to his stepsisters. His comment to worker in answer to her question as to why the "bad boy" he described so like himself did the things Sidney attributed to him clearly brought out some of Sidney's feelings - "so his mother will like him". From the beginning Sidney was accepted and loved by the foster parents as a child who needed a home, and thus feeling secure in a foster home he did not need to regress to infantile means of gaining affection.

Two things were outstanding in making Sidney's final adjustment such a success. The first was the interest in, and acceptance of Sidney by the foster parents, who now are planning to adopt him. With placement in this foster home, Sidney seemed suddenly to have found his place in a real home and with the security of knowing that these parents wanted him, Sidney asked to become their little boy. A major issue was now settled for him - he now had a surname he knew was his.

The second factor which made this happy solution possible was the patient and effective casework in interpreting to these foster
parents the problems of a nine year old boy. The worker felt all along that this was the right family for Sidney and that the potentialities were there for their development of understanding of a boy. Without her support the foster parents might have given up the task of accepting Sidney. It was not easy to place a nine year old boy, such as Sidney, in a home for adoption with persons who have little understanding of what a nine year old boy was like. The worker also had the job of reaching a happy medium between the foster father's culture and our own. In spite of these shortcomings, which might make another worker hesitate to place Sidney there, the warmth, patience, and intelligence were there to be fully developed by the worker.

At the first the foster parents needed a great deal of support, particularly when Sidney felt more and more secure and began to reach out into the community activities. The foster parents at first had difficulty in understanding that such independence was normal and healthy for Sidney as they felt that Sidney should be at home with them as often as he could. Gradually, however, these people realized Sidney's development was normal as they compared his behavior to that of other boys, and as they gained continual praise and support for their work from the worker. With the growth of insight, came an increase in love for Sidney and acceptance of him.

Of equal importance in the casework process seen here is the caseworker's purposeful lack of contact with the parents. Frequent contact with Sidney's mother would have accentuated her guilt feelings over Sidney's progress. Encouragement of visiting between Sidney and his
mother would have prevented him from fully enjoying the opportunities offered in the foster home. It also provided the opportunity for the foster parents to accept Sidney and ask to adopt him without Sidney's parents knowing specifically where he was located. Thus through alert casework, and an exceptional foster home, a little boy reaped the full benefits of foster home placement.
SUMMARY OF CHAPTER IV

From the study of twelve cases, the writer believes that the last three cases presented in this Chapter showed full use of the potentialities of foster home placement. The writer would like to repeat Carl Rogers’ statement of what these potentialities are:

Foster home placement lifts the child bodily from any emotional tensions at the root of his unsatisfactory behavior; it provides for a complete alteration of the social milieu; and increases the likelihood of the child’s insight being changed since removal from a situation brings with it a greater chance of objectivity.¹

These three cases illustrate three main factors in placement of problem children that loom in the successful result of their adjustment. The three factors are summarized by Carl R. Rogers as part of the factors important in determining the outcome of placement. They are the age of the child, stability of the child, and the skill of the social agency.

The earlier a child is placed the more hopeful is the outcome as it is easier for a younger child to take over the foster parents as his own; whereas, the older child is not free to regard these people as his parents since the foster home changes his social environment, not his family environment.²

With reference to the age of the child, Michael’s case seemed to be successful mainly because of his age and his ability to respond readily to a change of environment.

The second factor is brought out by Rogers’ study—he felt that a moderate degree of emotional instability or neurotic tendencies

¹ Rogers, op cit. pp 64-65
² Ibid, p. 79
and hyperactivity were amenable to placement in a foster home. Thus in
the case of Charlie we see such a boy who was helped by placement to
develop his potentialities as well as by helping his mother accept and
recognize his limitations.

The third factor that Rogers mentions as important in deter-
mining the success of placement is that of the skill of the agency. He
states the following:

Success depends to a large extent on the skill and ability
of the caseworker; what resources are utilized; the selection of
a foster home, the interpretation of placement to the child,
parents, and foster parents; and the guidance in the continuing
adjustment.4

The case of Sidney illustrates this third point. Although to
a large extent his adjustment was brought about by removal from a tense
home environment, an important contributing factor was the casework
interpretation to the foster parents about Sidney’s behavior and develop-
ment. Skill in selecting a foster home and the necessary “guidance in
the continuing adjustment” were all carefully planned and worked through
to the finish.

From the study of these three cases it would seem that there
are sufficient significant changes in the behavior of problem children
toward developing along normal lines to warrant continuing placement of
them. Through careful study, well-planned casework, understanding foster
parents and a child whose behavior was merely symptomatic of an unhappy
home may be helped to a more normal adjustment.

3 Rogers, op. cit. p. 98
4 Ibid, p. 99
**TABLE V**

**AGE OF CHILD AT PLACEMENT**

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**TABLE VI**

**TYPE OF BEHAVIOR PROBLEM**

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<td>Retarded enuretic</td>
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**TABLE VII**

**LENGTH OF PLACEMENT**

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**TABLE VIII**

**NUMBER OF REPLACEMENTS**

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The writer studied twelve cases accepted for placement by the Worcester Children's Friend Society between September 30, 1944 and October 1, 1949 in which the reason given for requesting placement was the behavior problem of the child. The primary purpose of the study was to study the adjustment in foster homes of children accepted for placement because of behavior problems, and to determine what factors influenced the child's adjustment or lack of adjustment in the foster home. These factors included the age of child, seriousness of behavior problem, attachment to own family, role of placing agency, and the role of the foster parents.

The cases were classified in this manner: six cases of children who did not adjust successfully to placement, including one case of short term placement terminated because of factors within the agency, one case in which placement was too short to allow for evidence of behavior symptoms, four cases of children too seriously disturbed to benefit from placement or to place successfully; and six cases of children who did adjust to placement, including three cases in which successful adjustment occurred but was terminated by the parents, and three cases in which placement was successful in alleviating behavior symptoms.

The children ranged in age from two years to fifteen years. Of the twelve children, nine were boys and three were girls. Length of placement varied, the shortest being two weeks and the longest over two years. All were placed in foster boarding homes; four were placed for
a period at Merrifield, Worcester Children's Friend Society study home; six were replaced, one child being replaced three times. All but four children had some psychiatric contact.

From the tables at the end of Chapter III and Chapter IV it may be seen that the age of the children who did not adjust successfully were slightly older than the ages of those who did adjust successfully. The type of behavior symptoms did not differ markedly between the two groups; however, there was slightly more anti-social behavior in the first group. This type of behavior included impulsive behavior, destructiveness, stealing and lying. The children who did not adjust successfully were placed for a slightly longer period of time than those who did adjust successfully. There were fewer replacements in the latter group than in the former.

From these findings it seems that the younger child with less anti-social behavior has a better prognosis to benefit from placement than the older child with more confirmed anti-social behavior.

Of the twelve cases, two are still active with the agency; four were committed to correctional schools, and six were returned to their parents. The behavior problems exhibited by the children included such symptoms as lying, stealing, enuresis, hyperactivity, running away, truancy, sexual delinquency, rape, and fearful tense child. Five children were described as having lying or stealing tendencies at referral. Three children were described as runaways, and three children were enuretic.

Rogers in his study draws several conclusions summarized as follows:
1. Seriousness of child's behavior problem as related to success. Rogers concluded that treatment in a foster home was less successful as the child's behavior became more confirmed toward antisocial acts. The child who presented only personality or habit problems made a better adjustment than children apprehended in a first delinquency or whose delinquency had not yet taken them to court.1

2. Abnormal mentality and personality. The more confirmed or excessive the patterns of misbehavior, the less likely would success be. Children who exhibit personality instabilities and conduct disorders which are in part due to hereditary or constitutional defects are not hopeful subjects for foster home placement.

3. Age. The earlier a child is placed the more hopeful the outcome is as it is easier for the younger child to take over foster parents as his own. The older child is not free to regard these people as his own parents as the foster home changes his social environment, not his family environment.

4. Hereditary defects. There is less chance of successful adjustment in the case of children from poor hereditary stock, although Rogers found the difference in results between these children and children from good hereditary stock not to be especially striking.

5. Child's attachment to his own family. Where a child is free to form new parental attachments, the likelihood of foster home adjustment is greatly increased. Where there exists a strong emotional tie to parents willing to keep the child there is a barrier against successful placement. The child's attachment to his parents is not influenced appreciably by community norms of behavior.

6. Social agency skill as a factor in foster home success. Success depends on the skill and ability of the case worker in her use of resources, selection of the foster home, interpretation of placement to the child, parents and foster parents, and her guidance in the continuing adjustment.2

The most favorable prognosis for placement of behavior problem children according to Rogers' study was that of children exhibiting personality or habit problems only; who were under nine years of age;

1 Rogers, op. cit., p. 81
2 Ibid., pp. 79-97
whose ancestry was relatively free from defects; who had a relatively stable disposition, i.e., had the ability to maintain a given course of action; who lacked emotional security with their own parents and were rejected or unhappy with their own family; whose intelligence was rated as average, dull normal, or superior; and children who were placed by an agency with good standards. In describing this last statement he pointed out that good standards included trained workers on the staff, some with psychiatric social work training, whose case loads were under sixty; an agency that did selective homefinding and placing; had an adequate board rate for foster parents; did intensive supervision of the foster home; and had available psychiatric service for the diagnosis and treatment of such children.

Mary B. Houwers in her study of "Factors Involved in Planning for Placement of Problem Children" drew similar conclusions. She felt that the sex, age, color, nationality, religion, physical condition, and intelligence of the child did not vary enough to be considered as important factors in placing children with behavior problems. She concluded as follows:

The important factors upon which placement recommendations seemed to be based were broken homes, lack of family strength indicated by high frequency of social agency registration, aggressive and anti-social nature of the child's problem, extremely poor intra-family relationships, and the parents' desire for the placement of the child.3

Jones' study also corroborated the two previously cited.4


The results of Healy's study brought out two outstanding facts. With good standards of casework a high degree of success in placement of behavior problem children is possible and success is dependent upon introduction of scientific methods of discrimination.\(^5\)

This study seems to agree with the results of those studies previously mentioned. Foster home placement does seem to be successful enough with some children to validate future work in this area. From study of one case it would seem that children with behavior problems can be placed for a short period of time. One factor stands out in this study: the chief stumbling block in placement of children exhibiting certain types of behavior difficulties is that of finding foster parents willing to accept these children and see them through their difficult behavior. A convenient arrangement by a placing agency is the maintenance of a study home especially equipped to accept and help such children.

Another conclusion to be drawn from this study is that of the advisability of assuming guardianship of these children by the agency. More careful consideration at intake should be given to this matter which ultimately involves the best interests of the child. The writer also found that some children were too seriously disturbed to benefit from placement and needed to be institutionalized.

The suitability of foster home care for problem children depends largely on certain types of attitudes. The first step in considering placement for these children is identical with the first step involved in any placement, i.e. the question of whether it is wise to remove the

\(^5\) Healy, op. cit., p. 214
child from his own home in the first place.

In the foster home there must be a consistency of viewpoint and discipline. This element of stability in management gives the child the comforting feeling of knowing where he stands with reference to some standard. The consistency of viewpoint seems more important than the actual type of discipline itself, since every clinic or child placing agency can point to successful homes with very diverse views on discipline.

Finally, one needs an attitude of interested affection and satisfaction in the child's developing abilities. In agencies staffed with competent workers under good supervision placement of behavior problem children can prove fruitful and satisfying. As in all fields of social work we may summon all our skills and resources in the task of helping people help themselves and gain reward out of watching them grasp the help and apply it to the making of happier and fuller lives.

6 Rogers, op cit., p. 74

Approved,

Richard K. Conant
Dean
### Appendix I

**SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age at Time of Referral</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Family Situation</th>
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<td>Social and economic status</td>
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<td>Marital status</td>
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<td>Number of siblings</td>
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<th>School Adjustment</th>
<th>Source of Referral</th>
<th>Reason for Referral</th>
<th>Time Symptoms Existed Before Referral</th>
<th>Placement</th>
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<td>Kind of placement</td>
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<td>Replacements - how many and why</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To whom</td>
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<th>Contact after Discharge</th>
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Appendix II

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Periodicals


Hopkins, Cornelia D., and Alice R. Haines, "A Study of One Hundred Problem Children for Whom Foster Care was Advised", American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1: 107-128, January, 1931.


