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Characteristics of clients referred to a protective agency

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLIENTS
REFERRED TO A
PROTECTIVE AGENCY

A thesis

Submitted by

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PREFACE

Acknowledgement is hereby made for the most useful suggestions, and the encouragement to continue with the study, to Miss Adelaide T. Hood, District Executive, Franklin District, and to Miss Florence Fitzherbert, Western Area Supervisor, both of the Massachusetts Society for The Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Without their aid and assistance, the project would have been far more difficult, and far less rewarding in terms of accomplishment.

This study material was taken from case records in the Greenfield, Massachusetts office of the Society with the permission of Miss Hood.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Parents the world over normally provide care for their children unless conditions prevent the conforming of these parents to the accepted standards of the community. In those parents who do not provide adequate care for their children, there is a common characteristic:

. . . . a breakdown of parental responsibility with tensions and pressures on family life which result in dangers for children.¹

Developing child protective practices, in the field of social work, in the legislatures, and in the minds of the leaders in the communities has been the role of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. In its beginning the Society acted as an adjunct to the law enforcement agencies within the Commonwealth, but with experience and practice, the focus of the program of the Society became more on prevention of this needless abuse and neglect in its various forms.

Child protection attacks the problem of child neglect and abuse from the viewpoint of parental and community responsibility for care and protection. Concern about this problem prompted this writer to further investigate the characteristics of a group of those parents referred as clients to the Franklin District Office of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the physical environment in which this group live, and the presenting problem.

¹ Esther Lazarus, "The Positive Approach to Protective Service", Child Welfare, vol. 28 (November 1949), p. 9.

Purpose

Much of the staff time of the Franklin District agency is spent on casework with the parents of neglected children, or those in danger of being neglected. It is hoped that this study will identify the characteristics of those parents who are referred to the protective service of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, in the Franklin District Office. No description of the client of the protective agency in a rural area is currently available in the literature in the field of Social Work. The writer feels that such a study of the characteristics of the parents, their environment, and the problems involved will assist in the evaluation of the Society's services in terms of the persons served. The ability to describe the persons served by the Society may be of use at meetings of the Council of Social Agencies, before the Board of Directors, the United fund, and to the community within Franklin County. The more that is known of the client group with which the Society, and other agencies in the community work, the more the possibility of effective effort is increased.

The questions under investigation are as follows:

1. What are the social, economic, and personal characteristics of the parents referred as clients to the Protective Agency, and by whom are these parents referred? Identification of the parent group as to age, marital status, occupation, education, income, religious and ethnic affiliation, appears important to answer this question.

2. What are the housing conditions under which these parents live, and do these conditions contribute to the referral as clients of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?

Determination of the areas within Franklin County, Massachusetts, where the client group resides, and the cost and size of the housing occupied by these families, is one goal of this investigation.

3. What are the health problems of the parents and children included in this study? Members of the client group in this study may have physical health problems in common with, or peculiar to the client group of the Franklin District office of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

4. What forms of psycho-social pathology are present in the client group? No documentation of the prevalence of mental illness, limited mental capacity, or feeble minded clients, among the client group of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, is available in existing material.

Scope of the Study

This study involves forty three cases which were referred, from various sources in Franklin County, for protective service to the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children during the months of October, November, and December 1961. Total intake in the protective service of the Franklin District office for 1961 was 171 cases. It is assumed that the clients referred during this three month period are typical of the 1961 intake. The choice of the three month period is purely arbitrary. In viewing the intake figures for previous years, it was found that the intake per quarter was similar each year, as it is in 1961 also.

Method and Source of Data

The referrals for protective service were all available in the

Franklin District Office of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Greenfield, Massachusetts, in case record form. The schedule (see Appendix A, page 54) used in this study was prepared to record the case record material in a uniform manner, and data was collected to answer the questions as outlined in the preceding paragraphs. Tables were compiled from the data gathered on the schedule used, and discussion written to emphasize the points made.

Initially there were forty-nine cases in this study, but six cases were classified as "service-in-intake", and did not contain sufficient information to be included in this study. It is believed that the omission of these six cases will not have an appreciable effect on the study as they were similar to the cases studied.

This investigation was prompted by a lack of descriptive material in the literature concerning the clients of a protective agency operating in a rural area outside a large metropolitan population concentration.

In the remainder of this study the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children will be referred to as the Society or the Agency.

Limitations and Value of Study

It is not intended that this study answer all the questions current in the child welfare and protective fields, but rather that the study stimulate interest in delving into the problems of the client group, the needs of this group within the community, and the community's readiness to follow through in these areas.

This is a descriptive study limited to an investigation of the questions as described in prior pages, and conclusions drawn from this study may be peculiar to the Franklin County area, and not identical to results which might be obtained from a similar study done in a larger urban area.

CHAPTER II

THE PROTECTIVE AGENCY

Historical Background

The concept of protective services for children to prevent gross physical neglect and abuse is not unique to our present day culture. Primitive tribes in the South Pacific evolved customs and modes designed to protect the young from harm and exploitation. The tribal leaders were responsible for enforcing the wishes of the people in this regard, and meting out justice for any infringements of the code.¹

In other areas of the world, however, aggressive actions directed toward children would have merited not more than passing attention from other members of society.² In ancient Athens Socrates spoke of that era's lack of concern for children:

If I could go to the highest place in Athens, I would lift up my voice and say, "What mean ye, fellow citizens, that ye turn every stone to scrape wealth together, and take so little care of your children, to whom ye must one day relinquish all?"

It may be said that disregard for the children, and pursuit of wealth was a major factor in the downfall of Rome.⁴ The two warrior nations of Athens and Rome were dependent on the children of the nation to fill

¹ Margaret Mead, Childhood in Contemporary Cultures, Pp. 157-158.

² I. Finchbeck, "State and the Child in Sixteenth Century England", British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 7 (December 1956), p. 277.

³ Benjamin Jowett, The Republic of Plato, p. 617

⁴ Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, pp. 473-474.

the future military manpower needs.

Approximately a hundred and fifty years ago the stirrings of public conscience in regard to children began to be expressed by a few enlightened persons.⁵ In ancient Rome the father had absolute power over his children. Even in adulthood, when the children were in the father's house, they could be killed, sold into bondage, or tortured.⁶ In our own country the early colonists regarded incorrigibility as just cause for invoking the death penalty for children over sixteen.⁷ The more barbaric side is emphasized here to point up the change in thinking about children which has occurred in the past hundred and fifty years.

Child labor was a general practice in the late nineteenth century and employers and parents alike all too frequently abused or exploited their young wage earners.⁸ Concerned citizens within the communities appalled at these inhumanities of adults to the youth of the community, evolved and were finally able to persuade their legislative bodies to enact laws governing the use of children in industry.⁹ At this same period, community leaders grouped together to form regulative bodies or agencies to prevent further abuse and cruelties to children.¹⁰

⁵ James S. H. Bossard, The Sociology of Child Development, p. 596

⁶ Edward Gibbon, op. cit., p. 473

⁷ Alice Morse Earl, Child Life in Colonial Days, p. 7

⁸ James S. H. Bossard, op. cit., p. 590

⁹ Ibid., p. 587

¹⁰ Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Standard Practice Instructions, 1954, p. i

Protective Services

When parents cannot or will not ask for help and when, as a result, the children suffer neglect or abuse, someone other than those responsible for their care has to bring the problem to the attention of the agency. So it is that service made available because of community's concern to protect children from such neglect or abuse is called protective service.¹¹

Protective services as provided by the Society began when the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was incorporated in April 1878, as the second oldest Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in the United States, the oldest being established in New York four years earlier. Quoting from the introduction of the Manual of Standard Practice Instructions of the Society its charter states the Society was established

. . . for the purpose of awakening interest in the abuses to which children are exposed by the intemperance, cruelty or cupidity of parents and guardians, and to help the enforcement of existing laws on the subject, procure needed legislation, and for kindred work . . .

In its early days the Society's efforts were primarily concerned with rescue of children from unhealthy or unfavorable conditions, and its efforts were also directed toward sponsoring legislation which would provide adequate safeguards for children.

In 1908 the first district office was established in New Bedford . . . Rapidly other district offices were established . . . At the present time the Society's districts and branches cover the entire state and no area is without some service¹² . . .

At the present time over one hundred persons are employed by the Society throughout the Commonwealth. Community leaders serve on the District

¹¹ Henrietta L. Gordon, Casework Services for Children, p. 371.

¹² Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, op. cit., p. 2.

Offices' Boards of Directors. These local leaders have recognized the need for the Society's services, and are willing to contribute time, energy, and money to further the Society's aims.

The function of the Society has always been to protect children from the various forms of neglect or abuse. The law enforcement agencies do not have the personnel or the time to do casework, and thus the

. . . . Society's major function has come to be that of giving casework service to families where parents are unwilling or unable to ask for help from other agencies and where parents have children under sixteen years of age suffering from substandard care.¹³

The Society's efforts are focused on parents who are unable or unwilling to seek needed agency services for the children involved. The very name of the Society indicates its function and the major focus of its attention and work. When other agencies in the community do not provide child placement, adoption, and family counseling, the Society provides these services.

The Society is also instrumental in the proposal of legislation needed in behalf of children. The various bills pending before the legislature are carefully studied by the Society, and the appropriate action taken by the Society upon the advice of its Legislative Committee.

The Society also endeavors to create conditions in the Commonwealth which will develop strong family groups, and promote a more happy, healthy family. The Boards of Directors of the local Districts are able to influence the local conditions and the local leaders of the

¹³ Ibid., p. 4

communities to improve the conditions under which children grow and mature. The Society has, in the Franklin District Office, assisted in the establishment of a Mental Health Clinic.

The Philosophy of the Society

When the Society began its work in 1878, casework was not known as such. Casework techniques and methods used in other fields of social work were later seen to be little different than those in use in the protective service agencies. New methods and knowledge used for the benefit of the child continues to be the focus of the Society.

. . . the MSPCC was the first organization of its kind to state publicly that the function of child protection organizations was not to break up homes, but to carry out preventive work with parents so that children could remain in their homes. It was the first Society to indicate openly that it was not 'an arm of the Law' and it never had police powers.¹⁴

The Society has always believed that children should remain in their own homes, providing that this was not endangering the health, welfare, or morals of the child. Parents who do neglect their children are not approached in a punitive manner, but rather in a helping way, that these parents may learn that the problems exist, and what may be done to improve the situation.

. . . the goal is not to gain evidence against the parents but rather to gain understanding of them and then to help them move toward a solution of their problems.¹⁵

The task of the caseworker in the protective agency is initially more difficult than that of the caseworker in the family agency, as the

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 4

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 4

parent is seldom aware that a problem exists, and may not become aware of the problem until there has been a long period of casework with the parent. Casework has been defined as the "process of helping people to help themselves".¹⁶

The present philosophy of the Society is:

. . . that although parents neglect their children in most instances this is not willful neglect but rather a result of the parents' own instability, unhappiness, or incapacity.¹⁷

Agency Setting

The Franklin District Office of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is located in Greenfield, Massachusetts, the county seat, and Franklin County's largest town with a population of 17,493. The total population of Franklin County is 54,864 persons, in an area of 729.60 square miles. Of the twenty-six towns in Franklin County, only four have a population in excess of 2,500 persons. Franklin County is considered to be predominately rural in nature according to the definition of the U. S. Census Bureau.

In the Franklin District Office are three staff members supervised by the District Executive, who also carries a case load. Services offered are protective, adoption, and family counselling.

The local Mental Health Clinic is the only other private casework agency operating in the Franklin County area. Public Agencies such as Division of Child Guardianship, Youth Service Board, and Rehabilitation

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

Services do not have local offices.

Summary

From the time of early recorded history some persons have been concerned with the welfare of the youth of the community. In the past one hundred fifty years many persons have become greatly concerned about the neglect and abuse of children, and agencies have been formed to prevent such child neglect and abuse.

The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, formed in 1878, has worked for the improvement of care which children receive by promoting legislation on child care, improving protective services, and using casework methods to help parents recognize and resolve problems which adversely affect parental function.

CHAPTER III

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARENTS

Introduction

The focus of the work of the Society is on the improvement of the parental care which all children receive within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, although a majority of the casework time of the Society's professional staff is given to work with those parents who constitute the client group of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. This study was undertaken to describe the social and economic characteristics of these parents, their physical environment, and those problems which relate to the physical and emotional health of this group of parents and their children.

The client of the Society in urban areas may face different problems in relation to rearing children than does the client in the rural area, such as Franklin County. The image of the client group as perceived by the Society is not at present based on a research study or project, only on the expressed ideas of staff members of the Society taken from previous experience with the client group. A description based on a methodical study of the client group would appear to either substantiate the present image of the client group, or change this image. Different staff members have differing ideas as to the Agency client group. To this end, data was gathered from the case records of the Society's Franklin District Office in Greenfield, Massachusetts and systematically organized utilizing a schedule designed to enumerate the characteristics and problems of those parents and children included in the sample group.

Source and Nature of Complaints

This section of this investigation is to show the source of complaints concerning parental care of children in rural and urban Franklin County, and how these complaints are classified. Information was obtained from the face sheet included in each case record of the Society.

In Table 1 below "Relatives" includes grandparents, aunts and uncles, and parents of the children in the sample group under investigation. "Police" includes Town Police Department personnel, as well as State Police officers, both of which are sources of referral. "School Personnel" refers to teachers, principals, guidance personnel, and school adjustment counsellors. "Neighbors" are classed as non-relatives residing in the community. "Other Agency" includes the Bureau of Public Welfare, Division of Child Guardianship, Mental Hygiene Clinic, and other social agencies. "Clergy" is self-explanatory. The classification of "Other" as listed in the Table includes doctors, lawyers, and those persons not included in the other sources.

Under the heading "Type of Complaint" the category "Supervision" includes those parents of the study group who leave their children alone for hours at a time. "Abuse" denotes physical injury, and ill-treatment. The Society receives complaints in regards to the questionable sexual activity of the parent group, and these are included under "Morals" in Table 1. "School Problem" denotes referrals from the school personnel concerning tardiness noted more than three times in a semester, and absences without cause acceptable under School Department regulations for illness, and medical or dental appointments. "Drinking"

as used in Table 1 refers to drinking to excess. "Physical Neglect" includes neglect of the health of the child, dirty clothing worn by the child, unsanitary condition of the home, and lack of heat, lights, and food.

Table 1 was designed to show these factors in relation to one another.

It should be noted that relatives are the largest source of referrals or complaints, fourteen in number, and that eight of these referrals are for physical neglect of the child or children involved. The relatives direct access to the parental home, and their observations in the home enable the relatives who are complainants to give reliable information, the Society has found by previous experience. The variety of the complaints referred to the Society by the relatives is greater than that of any other source.

The fact that police are the second largest source of referral, is an indication of the good working relationship of the Society with the police departments in Franklin County and the confidence these departments have in the Society's ability to assist with parental problems involving children.

The neighbors of the client group of the Society are also in an advantageous position to observe the children particularly as to supervision when the children are left alone or the neighbor is requested by the parent to care for the child. This is shown in Table 1.

Referrals from the schools of Franklin County reflect the concern of educators for the children in the classroom and under their care.

TABLE 1
SOURCE AND TYPE OF COMPLAINTS

Source	Type of Complaint						Total
	Supervision	Abuse	Morals	School Problem	Drinking	Neglect	
Police	4	0	0	0	1	3	8
School	4	0	0	2	0	0	6
Neighbor	6	0	1	0	0	0	7
Relative	1	1	2	0	2	8	14
Clergy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Agency	0	0	4	0	0	1	5
Other	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	16	1	7	3	3	13	43

Teachers observe the results of the parents lack of supervision in getting the child ready for school as to dress, meals, personal cleanliness, etc.

The Society's relationship with other professional people in the social work field is indicated by referrals from other agencies. Aid to Dependent Children cases are known to both the Society and to the Bureau of Public Welfare, for example.

Residence

Franklin County, the area covered by the Franklin District Office of the Society, is the area of residence of the sample group in this study. The land area encompasses 729.60 square miles, with a total population of 54,864 persons. There are twenty-six towns and no cities in Franklin County.¹

A definition of the terms used here follows: Towns classified as rural are those with a population of less than 2,500, of which there are twenty-two in Franklin County. Urban indicates the other four towns, those listed in Table 2, namely Greenfield, with a population of 17,493, Orange, 6, 154, Montague, 7, 863, and Deerfield, 3,338.²

The four urban towns have a combined total population of 35,218 in an area of 127.02 square miles, for an average population density of 277.2 persons per square mile.

The twenty-two rural towns occupy an area of 602.58 square miles

¹ The Franklin County Commissioners, Report of Franklin County Commissioners, p.31.

² This and the following information is taken from: U. S. Bureau of the Census, U.S.Census of Population: 1960, vol. 1, p. 248.

with a population of 19,648 persons. The population density is 32.64 persons per square mile.

In contrast to the heavily populated areas of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts adjoining Boston and Springfield, the Franklin County area is sparsely populated.

Table 2 below indicates the incidence of complaints designated as to place of residence of the family, and the source of the complaint. The Society staff have for some time thought there may be a relationship between the area of residence and the source of the complaint; i.e., some persons or agencies in specific towns may refer complaints more frequently than similar agencies of other towns.

The definitions of terms used in the headings in Table 2 are identical to those used in Table 1.

TABLE 2
SOURCE OF COMPLAINTS AND RESIDENCE OF FAMILIES

Residence	Source							Total
	Police	School	Neigh- bor	Rela- tive	Clergy	Other Agency	Other	
Urban								
Deerfield	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Greenfield	4	3	3	10	0	1	2	23
Montague	2	0	1	1	0	3	0	7
Orange	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rural	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>112</u>
Totals	8	6	7	14	0	5	3	43

From Table 2 above it will be noted that eleven families, or 25.5

per cent of the study group, reside in rural areas. This is somewhat less than the 35.2 per cent of the total population of Franklin County living in rural areas. The thirty-two families residing in urban towns account for 74.5 per cent of the families in the study group. The census of 1960 of Franklin County lists 64.8 per cent of the total population residing in urban towns.

It will be noted from Table 2 that the largest number of families in this study reside in Greenfield, which is also the largest town in Franklin County, the location of the Franklin District office of the Society, and the daily newspaper headquarters. These three facts plus the ease with which the telephone is used in lieu of a letter of complaint or referral to the Society, account for the larger number of families included in the study from Greenfield.

The source of almost one third of the complaints included in this study are relatives of the families. These relatives do have access to the homes of the parents of the study group, and complaints referred by relatives should be treated as valid complaints until proved otherwise.

The Police Departments in the Franklin County area do refer almost twenty per cent of the complaints to the Society according to the figures included in this study. The concern for children reflected in these complaints indicates the confidence of these Police Departments in the Society's ability to alleviate or change the conditions under which these children live.

There is not a marked difference in the proportion of Agency clients

living in rural or urban areas, as compared to the total population of Franklin County living in similar areas. This could indicate that the Society does serve a representative group when the group is classified as to area of residence.

Parental Characteristics

In order to further describe the parent group with which the Society works, it would appear necessary to examine the ages of the parents concerned in this investigation, as well as to obtain more information on their marital status and educational and occupational level. The ethnic affiliation and religious preference of the parents in this study would add to the value of the investigation. Society staff have talked of the characteristics of the client group in general terms, and feel that the client group in the protective service designation, possibly marry early, are frequently divorced, and work at the less well paid jobs. There has been no previous study of the client group done in the Franklin District, and this study may serve to expand the knowledge of the client group of the Society, thus enabling the staff of the Society to better know the group served, their needs, and capacities for change.

Age

Table 3 indicates the ages of the parents in the study group. The conception that younger parents are more frequently involved in the referrals to the Society is not borne out by Table 3. In only eight per cent of the cases in this study were the parents below twenty-five years of age.

TABLE 3
AGES OF PARENTS

Age	Father	Mother	Total
20 - 24	1	6	7
25 - 29	6	8	14
30 - 34	8	11	19
35 - 39	7	4	11
40 - 44	4	7	11
45 - 49	5	2	7
50 - 54	6	3	9
55 and over	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
	38 ^a	41 ^b	79

^a Four fathers deceased

^b Two mothers deceased

There are 1127 married women less than twenty-four years of age in Franklin County, according to the 1960 census. This is 3.9 per cent of the female population of 28,330. In this study there are six women age twenty-four or less, or 14.6 per cent of the women in the study group. Women under twenty-five are over-represented in the study group. In Franklin County 10.1 per cent of the married women are between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four. The study group includes nineteen women of comparable ages, or 45.2 per cent. This age group is very much over represented in the study group when compared to the total population of Franklin County. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that after age thirty-four the vast majority of parents have older children about whom complaints are not made.

The 1960 Census figures available to this writer did not include simi-

lar statistics for the male population.

Marital Status

The marital status of the parents involved in this study is shown in Table 4 below. For purposes of this study, the parent having physical custody of the child or children was listed in Table 4, and no duplication was involved.

TABLE 4
MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS

Marital Status	No. of Cases
Unwed Mother	1
Divorced	
Mother	9
Father	0
Separated	
Mother	10
Father	0
Living Together	20
Widowed	2
Widower	<u>1</u>
Total	43

Nearly half of the parents in this study group have terminated their marriage by either separation or divorce. The Divorce rate in Franklin County in 1959 was at the rate of thirty divorces for each one thousand marriages, as compared to the U. S. average of forty-three divorces for every one thousand marriages.³ In this study group nine couples were divorced. If this ratio is true of the entire caseload

³ Ibid., p. 155.

of the Society, the rate of divorce per thousand marriages would be a startling two hundred and nine. This certainly indicates the special vulnerability of the divorced parent included in the referrals to the Society.

Table 5 below is included to find out if parents in this study group marry earlier than parents in the population of Franklin County, and are thus different from the general population of the County.

TABLE 5
AGE MARRIED

Age Married	Father	Mother	Total
Under 15	0	1	1
15-19	1	15	16
20-24	18	19	37
25-29	10	3	13
30-34	6	3	9
35-39	2	0	2
40 and over	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
Total	42	43	85

In Franklin County there are 1814 females between the ages of fifteen and nineteen. This represents 8.8 per cent of the total female population of Franklin County. In this fifteen to nineteen age group only 12.3 per cent are married.⁴ Over one-third of the women in the study group married between the ages of fifteen to nineteen. Thus the women in this age grouping do marry earlier than women in the general

⁴ Ibid. p. 107

population of Franklin County. Men married later than women in this study.

Face sheet information from the case records was used to provide data for Table 6 below, concerning the age of the parents at the time of divorce or separation.

TABLE 6
AGE DIVORCED OR SEPARATED

Age	Divorced		Separated	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
20 - 24	1	2	1	1
25 - 29	2	5	2	3
30 - 34	3	1	2	3
35 - 39	1	0	0	0
40 - 44	0	0	2	3
45 - 49	1	1	2	0
50 and over	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals	9	9	10	10

At the time of divorce, ten parents were less than thirty years of age. It is not shown here, but two of the mothers listed in Table 6 were twenty-one and twenty-two years of age. Table 6 shows that the mothers are younger at the time of divorce than the fathers in this study group. Separation of the parents in the study group occurs at a later age than does divorce.

Education and Occupation

The parents in this study group demonstrate that the lack of education relegates many persons to the less skilled, less desirable, less well paid positions in our economy today. The education achieved, and

the occupational level attained, have in the experience of the Society in the Franklin District, significantly effected the child care methods utilized by the parent group.

Table 7 is designed to show the last grade of school completed by the parent group.

TABLE 7
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS

Last Year Completed	Father	Mother	Total
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	1	0	1
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	1	5	6
7	4	4	8
8	5	9	14
9	6	2	8
10	7	8	15
11	7	6	13
12	10	7	17
13 and over	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	42	43	85

Fourteen parents received only an eighth grade education and only twenty parents or 23.5 percent of the study group, completed high school. Twenty-nine, or approximately one-third of the study group had an eighth grade education or less. Sixty-five parents, or 76.4 per cent of the study group, did not complete high school. Two mothers completed nurses training after high school.

Table 8 is included to show the occupational level of the parents

in this study group. In the professional group are included the two mothers mentioned above. The skilled occupations include the carpenters, masons, mechanics, and the licensed practical nurses. The clerical designation included office and store employees. The semi-skilled classification encompasses the assembly-line worker, machine operators, and post office employees. The unskilled jobs include laborers, truck drivers, some construction jobs, street and water department employees, and farm workers. Information was not available for the seven parents listed in Table 8 under the 'unknown' category. Unemployed as used here includes both the unemployed parent at home by choice, and those parents unemployed due to lack of work.

TABLE 8
OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS

Type of Work	Father	Mother	Total
Professional	0	2	2
Skilled	9	1	10
Clerical	2	1	3
Semi-Skilled	11	4	15
Unskilled	16	13	29
Unemployed	0	20	20
Unknown	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	42	43	85

In the above table, ten parents of the study group are listed as skilled workers, representing 10.6 per cent of the total study group. The semi-skilled group of parents, fifteen in number, represent 17.6 per cent of the entire study group. The unskilled group account for

the largest group of parents here, 34.1 per cent of the eighty-five parents. At the time of this study, none of the fathers were unemployed, although several were on short-time work weeks. Twenty mothers were not employed outside the home. The remaining twenty-three mothers were either employed to provide supplemental income, if not separated from their spouse, or were the principal support of the family group, if separated.

Ethnic and Religious Affiliation

In order to give the reader a more complete picture of the parents in this study group, the addition of the country of origin and the religious preference of the parents of the group is included here.

The material for Table 9 was taken from the face sheet of the case record as it was obtained by the caseworker to whom it was assigned at intake. Table 10 presents the ethnic affiliation of the parents included in this study.

TABLE 9

ETHNIC AFFILIATION

Origin	Father	Mother	Total
Yankee-Am.	22	13	35
Polish	5	14	19
French	3	7	10
Italian	4	1	5
Irish	2	6	8
Finn	1	1	2
Negro	1	1	2
Unknown	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	43	43	86

All of the parents included in this study were born in the United States, according to the case records. As the case records were assembled by different caseworkers, allowance should be made for differences of interpretation by the caseworker as to the ethnic affiliation of the parents.

The religious affiliation of the parents differentiates the parents included in this study according to their preference as Catholic or Protestant. Information was obtained from the face sheet of the case record and recorded on the study schedule. Previous thinking by the Society staff had been that the Franklin County area was about evenly divided between Catholic and Protestant, with some very few other religions possibly present.

TABLE 10
RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

Church	No. of Families
Roman Catholic	19
Protestant	17
Hebrew	0
Mixed	<u>7</u>
Total	43

There are approximately five hundred Jewish families in Franklin County. In the past experience of the Society, there have been only two Jewish families referred to the protective service of the Society. It is not surprising that no Jewish families are included in the study group.

Reverend Ralph Rood, of Greenfield, stated to this writer that the population of Greenfield was approximately evenly distributed between Protestant and Catholic. This is also true of the clients as shown in Table 10.

Summary

In summary, the characteristics of the parents included in this study, and as presented in Tables 1 through 10, may be described as follows: The client group of the Society is referred more frequently from the urban areas of the Franklin District, due partially to the concentration of population in these areas. Parents are referred to the Society for lack of supervision of their children in 37.2 per cent of the complaints, and for neglect in 30.2 per cent of the complaints. Relatives of the parents initiate the referral to the Society in 32.5 per cent of the complaints received by the Society.

From this study it became known that the percentages of Society clients in this study living in rural and urban areas closely approximates the census figures of the total population of Franklin County.

In this study just over fifty per cent of the parents are between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-nine at the time of referral of the complaint. The younger parents are not in the majority as previously thought by the Society staff.

It should be noted that in this study women over the age of twenty-five are over represented when compared to the female population of Franklin County.

More than one-half of the women included in this study are maintain-

ing a home without the presence of a husband, and father of the children, in contrast to the general population in Franklin County in which less than one quarter of all marriages terminate in separation or divorce. This group appears to be especially vulnerable to child neglect or abuse.

One-third of the mothers included in this study group marry before age twenty in contrast to the general population of Franklin County in which less than one quarter marry before age twenty.

Educationally speaking, the parents included in the study group, have not achieved outstanding success. Approximately twenty-three per cent completed high school as compared to 28.8 per cent of the total population of the County.

Although more than one-third of the parents were classified in the semi-skilled, skilled, clerical, and professional occupations, 34 per cent of the parent group in this study were listed as unskilled.

As expected, the study group were almost evenly divided between Catholic and Protestant in regards to religious preference. This agrees with the general population of the County as well.

Financial Characteristics of Referred Families

Included in this section of the study are Tables and discussion pertaining to the amount and source of income available to the families. The data was gathered from the case records and recorded on the schedule (see Appendix A, page 54). The average yearly income per family in Franklin County is \$5455.00.⁵ The assumption of the Society staff has

⁵ Ibid., p. 123.

been that the referred client group come from the lower than average income group. In order to further investigate this assumption, the following was undertaken.

Table 11 shows the sources of income available to the families in this study. The total number of families is not given as it would be without meaning in relation to the entire group. In this study families may have several sources of income. For example, Aid to Dependent Children may be received by a parent for children by a previous marriage, even though the present spouse has an income from wages or other source. If the children's father is not supporting, the step-father is not expected to assume the financial support of the children in Massachusetts, and ADC may be granted. The following case excerpt illustrates this point.

. . . Mr. K. is employed at GTD Corporation at \$82.17 net per week. Mrs. K. receives Aid to Dependent Children for four children of a previous marriage, plus Veterans Administrations benefits for a service connected injury while a WAC in World War II. . .

Federal Old Age and Survivors Insurance benefits may also be paid to the children of a deceased wage earner, and to the surviving spouse if not remarried. These benefits continue to be paid in behalf of the children, if the surviving parent should remarry.

Seasonal income from employment in jobs covered by Unemployment Insurance, is a source of off-season Unemployment Compensation during the remainder of the year.

VA benefits may be received by veterans for various reasons to compensate for injuries or illness of a service connected nature. Mental

illness occurs in the study's parent group, and those who are veterans receive a VA benefit for this.

It should be noted that five families were living in duplex or multi-unit homes which they either owned or were purchasing, and the source of income is designated in Table 11.

TABLE 11
SOURCE OF INCOME OF FAMILIES

Source	No. of Families
Wages	31
ADC	9
Child support	5
VA benefits	5
Federal old age & survivors insurance	5
Rentals	5
Unemployment	4
Other	2

The large number of families receiving Aid to Dependent Children, child support and unemployment moneys should be noted here. As expected, wages are the largest single source of income, but the significance of the other sources should not be eclipsed by the wages.

It should be noted here that five families have income from Federal Old Age and Survivors Insurance, although only three families are listed in Table 4, "Marital Status of Parents", as being without one parent or the other due to death of the absent parent. This discrepancy occurs as present marital status of parents was used in collecting data, and no provision was made for noting previous marriages of parents.

Table 13 below presents the monthly income of the families in this study.

TABLE 12
MONTHLY INCOME OF FAMILIES

Monthly Income (In Dollars)	No. of Families
Under 100	0
101 - 150	3
151 - 200	4
201 - 250	7
251 - 300	7
301 - 350	8
351 - 400	1
401 - 450	4
451 - 500	3
501 and over	<u>6</u>
Total	43

In over one-half, twenty-two of the cases included in this study, the income is within the range of \$201.00 to \$350.00 per month, although the average for the general population of Franklin County is \$454.58 per month.⁶ Thus the income of the Society's client group appears to be below the County average, and may thus have a definite relationship to referrals to the Society. The occupational levels attained by the client group in this study may preclude a higher monthly income.

Size and Composition of Household

In homes in which no parent was present, a parent substitute, an

⁶ Ibid., p. 123.

aunt or uncle, was the head of the house in which the children in this study group resided. Table 13 presents the size and composition of the families included in this study.

TABLE 13
COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF FAMILIES

Parents in Household	No. of Children in the Family						No. of Families
	1	2	3	4	5	6 or more	
Both	0	3	5	3	2	3	16
Mother only	3	7	5	4	1	2	22
Father only	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
None	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	6	11	11	7	3	5	43

One-third of the families included in this study are relatively large as they have four or more children. In Franklin County there are 3.18 persons per household in the general population.⁷ Twenty-two of the cases in this study have only the mother of the children living in the home. This is a majority of the cases in the study. The significance of this to the Society is in the prevalence of this in the sample group, as contrasted to the total population of Franklin County in which sixty per cent of the families with children under age eighteen, have two parents at home.

Housing

A description of the housing occupied by the parents and their

⁷ Ibid., p. 107.

families in this study group may add more information and aid in the description of the client group. Included in this section are Tables and discussion on size and cost of housing, and the location of the housing.

Rental units are generally available only in the older parts of the urban areas, and in larger houses converted to smaller apartments. Few new apartment houses have been constructed in Franklin County in the past ten years, although the population has increased slightly, by 4,503 persons, in the past ten years.⁸

Table 14 is included to indicate the size of the housing occupied by the study group families and the cost of this housing. The feeling among casework staff has existed for years that a majority of the clients of protective agencies, in fact of social agencies in general, come from low rent, crowded housing. Possibly this Table will change this concept. Figures given represent numbers of families.

Almost half of the families do live in four rooms plus bath living units for which the cost is less than \$70.00 per month. This is crowded living for the larger families. Over half of the families included in this study group pay less than \$50.00 per month for housing. Apparently the client group of the Society does come from the lower rent, smaller housing units in a majority of the cases included here.

8

Ibid., p. 157.

TABLE 14
HOUSING COSTS AND SIZE

Monthly Cost (In Dollars)	No. of Rooms									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Under 20	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
20 - 29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30 - 39	0	0	0	4	3	2	0	0	1	10
40 - 49	0	0	1	5	4	0	2	0	0	12
50 - 59	0	0	0	8	1	1	1	2	0	13
60 - 69	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
70 - 79	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
80 - 89	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
90 - 99	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
100 and over	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	1	20	10	4	5	2	1	43

Summary

The social characteristics of the parent group included in this study group are summarized on pages 32 and 33. The following is a summary of the financial characteristics of those parents in the study. Over half of the families included in this investigation had income from sources other than wages. Aid to Dependent Children and child support payments were received by over one-third of the families. It thus appears that broken homes are more prevalent in the sample group than in the general population of Franklin County. Income per family is below the average for Franklin County also. Over one-third of the study group have large families of four or more children. Low income and large families appear to be more predominant in the study group than in the general population of Franklin County where there are an average of

3.18 persons per household.

In the majority of cases in this study, the client group do live in the low cost, smaller housing units.

CHAPTER IV

INDICATIONS OF PARENTAL PATHOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter contains data and discussion on social, mental and physical health problems of the parents and children included in this study, as presented in the case records and shown on the study schedule (see Appendix A, Page 54). Tables have been used to present the data, with discussion following.

Housekeeping Standards

In Table 15 is presented data concerning the housekeeping standards of the parents in this study. A classification of the terms used follows. The difference between the home which has been cleaned and articles picked up today, and the home in which the dusting, cleaning and returning of belongings to their proper place has not been attempted for several days is apparent to the caseworker assigned to the case and reporting in the case record. The layers of dust on the tables, dust rolls at the edges of the floors, and scattered toys and other clutter about the house separate the "Dusty and Disordered" home from the "Clean and Orderly" home.

The "Filthy" house, on the other hand, is usually easy to detect, both visually and by smell. Floors, walls and paint are dirty with accumulations of spilled food, and filth from foot traffic.

Parental function may be disturbed in one or more areas of child rearing, but not necessarily in the areas of housekeeping or cleanliness. Compulsive cleanliness may be as damaging to the child as filth and

squalor, if other compensating factors are present in the later home.

TABLE 15
HOUSEKEEPING STANDARDS

Classification of Standards	No. of Families
Clean and Orderly	16
Dusty and Disordered	15
Filthy	5
Unknown	<u>7</u>
Total	43

Twenty of the thirty-six homes on which information was available concerning housekeeping standards ranged from dusty and disordered to filthy indicating a possible lack of motivation to keep a clean and orderly home.

Emotional Problems of Parents

The two most prominent symptoms of parental deterioration or disturbance of normal function as parents were those classified under "Mental Abnormalities of Parents", and those associated with "Alcoholism". These were separated and described by the caseworker doing the original case recording.

Table 16 below presents the types of mental abnormality found in the case records of the sample group. A classification was taken from the records only when it could be established as fact from a hospital report, psychiatric or psychological evaluation included in the case record of the parent. It is assumed that the parents listed under "Infor-

mation not available" were within normal limits as no contradictory information was available in the case records.

TABLE 16
MENTAL ABNORMALITIES OF PARENTS

Classification	Father	Mother	Total
Diagnosed schizophrenic	7	2	9
Diagnosed character disorder	4	1	5
Mentally limited	2	4	6
Diagnosed feeble-minded	0	2	2
Information not available	<u>29</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>63</u>
Total	42	43	85

The classification Diagnosed Schizophrenic includes seven fathers and two mothers for a total of nine persons. In this study, or 10.6 per cent of the parents. The additional classifications of feeble-minded, character disorder, and mentally limited are thirteen in number or 15.2 per cent of the sample group. A quarter of the sample group have mental limitations according to this data, and the implications for the Society in terms of casework emphasis, casework time, and preference for treatment are indicated.

Diagnosed character disorders are only five in number, but the number in this classification might be increased markedly if the parents were to be evaluated by a psychiatrist, and if the overt actions of the parental group are examined.

If credence may be given to the past experiences of the Society, alcoholism is considered to be a problem to both the drinking parent, and to the Society in attempting to work with those parents who are problem drinkers. Table 17 below gives the breakdown of the information available on these parents in the records of the Society.

Drinking was considered a problem if it interfered with parental function as wage earner, or in the parental role as disciplinarian, and male identification figure. Social drinking was not included as a problem, but is included under 'Not a problem' in the Table.

TABLE 17

ALCOHOLISM

Drinking	Father	Mother	Total
Problem	18	11	29
Not a problem	5	7	12
No information	<u>19</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>44</u>
Total	42	43	85

In eighteen instances the father's drinking was considered a problem. This represents 42.9 per cent of the fathers in the study group. Eleven of the mothers are listed as problem drinkers, or 25.6 per cent of the mothers in this study group.

Seminars on the subject of alcoholism, plus reference material available to the staff of the Society, in order that more specifically treatment-oriented work may be done with this group or parents of the study appear in order.

Summary

Mental illness or malfunction in some form effected the function of over one-quarter of the parents included in the study group. It is possible that if more of the parents were studied further, more parents would be classed as mentally abnormal.

Alcohol was a problem in almost one-half of the families included in the study group.

CHAPTER V

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN

The Society emphasizes standards of child care acceptable to the community when working with the parents about whom complaints have been received. The Society does not work directly with the child unless there are no other resources available in the community, and the District Office has a counseling service.

Those characteristics most frequently recorded in the case material and identifiable according to the schedule (see Appendix A, page 54), are given in this section.

Age

The ages of all the children in this sample group are given in Table 18. It is possible that some children over age seventeen may not be included, as these children of the parents in the study group may have been omitted from the face sheet of the case record. Birthdates of the children are given on a face sheet in each record, but these are not necessarily verified at the Town Clerk's Office unless some question is raised as to a conflict in the year of birth, as may occur at school, for example. The parents are used as the primary source of information for these dates.

Seventy-five per cent of the children in this study group have not reached their fourteenth birthday, the age at which most would be expected to be in high school, if they had started school at age six, and advanced one grade each year, to the ninth grade or freshman year of high school.

Pre-school children account for 25.7 per cent of the children in this study group. School age children are in the majority in this study.

TABLE 18
AGES OF CHILDREN

Years	Boys	Girls	Total
Less than 1 year	2	1	3
1 to 2 years	4	4	8
2 to 3 years	4	2	6
3 to 4 years	4	3	7
4 to 5 years	8	5	13
5 to 6 years	1	7	8
6 to 7 years	5	5	10
7 to 8 years	6	6	12
8 to 9 years	6	2	8
9 to 10 years	5	4	9
10 to 11 years	5	5	10
11 to 12 years	5	1	6
12 to 13 years	4	5	9
13 to 14 years	3	5	8
14 to 15 years	5	6	11
15 to 16 years	2	2	4
16 to 17 years	3	1	4
17 and over	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	78	66	144

School Problems

The overt behavior of the children included in this study is the most apparent indication of emotional insecurity. In Table 19 are listed the problems relating to school age children included in this study. These categories appeared frequently enough in the case records to be included in the schedule used to gather data for this study.

Definitions of the terms used in Table 19 follow. "Tardy" as used

here denotes lateness to school in excess of three times per semester. "Excessive Absence" denotes unexcused absences in excess of those allowed by regulations of the School Boards. Citizenship denotes the qualities of behavior relating to consideration of the other persons at school, and the rights of those other persons at school.

TABLE 19
SCHOOL PROBLEMS

Type of Problem	No. Families
Tardy	17
Excessive Absence	5
Citizenship	11
Information not available	<u>10</u>
Total	43

In seventeen families the children were tardy at school, a problem which occurs frequently in Agency cases outside the sample group. The causes of referral from the School frequently involved tardiness of a child. In 76.7 per cent of the families involved in this study, the children were known to the school specifically for infraction of school rules.

Health

Table 20 enumerates the health problems of the children in the study group. Continuing dental, medical, and nutritional problems in the cases under study here, as well as in the overall case load of the Society in an indication of the neglect of the parents, and may provide

a guide to focus intensive work on these cases.

TABLE 20
CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROBLEMS

Type of Problem	No. of Families
Dental	8
Medical	
Eyes	7
Lice	3
Scabies	1
Tonsils & adnoids	5
Orthopèdic	3
Hernia	2
Other	1
Malnutrition	11
Not mentioned	<u>2</u>
Total	43

Malnutrition, in the opinion of the medical doctors who diagnosed the eleven cases above, is a serious problem attributable to neglect by the parent group. Enumeration of the other health problems was given to enlarge the readers thinking on the health problems encountered with the children in this sample group.

Health problems do occur frequently in this study group, and plans to refer the children for regular physical examinations by a medical doctor might be seriously considered by the Society.

Clothing

Table 21 below presents data concerning the clothing problem of the children included in this study. The lack of clothing appropriate to the weather, and to the child is noted in the case records of the

sample group in this study.

For the purposes of this study "Appropriate" denotes clean, possibly mended clothing worn by the child in keeping with the demands of the weather, and appropriate to the age of the wearer. "Inappropriate" is defined as clothing which may be too large or small, dirty, or not warm enough to provide protection from the cold. Protective footwear is also included in these categories.

Teachers and school personnel frequently telephone that Jane comes to school without sufficient clothing for the cold or wet day, and inquire from the Society as to the adequacy of the parents to provide these items.

TABLE 21

CLOTHING

Dress	No. of Cases
Appropriate	23
Inappropriate	12
No information	<u>8</u>
Total	43

In twelve cases, which represent 27.9 per cent of the cases in this study group, it was emphasized that inappropriate clothing was a problem to a child in a family included in the study. Emphasis by the Society on improving this above condition may be indicated.

Summary

Specific problems for the children in this study group include

those in relation to school, health, and clothing. Significant findings indicate that 76.7 per cent of the families of the study group have a school problem with their children. Children of all but two families of the study group had health problems. Over a quarter of the cases listed lack of appropriate clothing as a problem to the families in this study.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study was undertaken in order to describe some of the characteristics of the parents referred to the Society for possible prevention of neglect and abuse of the children involved in the complaint.

The questions under investigation were:

1. What are the social, economic, and personal characteristics of the parents referred as clients to the Protective Agency, and by whom are they referred?

2. What are the housing conditions under which these parents live, and do these conditions contribute to the referral as clients of the Society?

3. What are the health problems of the parents and children included in this study?

4. What forms of psycho-social pathology are present in the client group of the Society?

The use of a systematic approach in suing the material included in the case records was indicated. A schedule was evolved to collect the data to be used in this study.

From the section of this study titled 'Source and Nature of Complaint' may be seen who refers the client to the Society, for what cause, and from what area of Franklin County.

A description of the clients referred to the protective service of the Society would, from the material included in the study, read as fol-

lows: Two-thirds of the referrals are from urban areas of the Franklin District of the Society; the parents range in age from age twenty to fifty-four, except for one father of seventy-eight; the chances are almost even that the parents will be separated from one cause or another such as divorce, death, or separation; those parents now divorced took this step prior to their thirty-fifth birthday. The women included in this study were married younger than those in the general population of Franklin County in the age range of fifteen to nineteen.

Slightly less than a quarter of the parents in the study group have completed high school.

Although thirty-one families had income from wages, this was supplemented by money from sources such as child support from a divorced or separated spouse, Aid to Dependent Children, Veterans Benefits, etc. Significantly, over half of the families had income from a source other than wages.

A disproportionate number of the parents worked in jobs classed as unskilled, when this study group of parents are compared to the general population of Franklin County. Thirty-four per cent were thus limited in earning power, by having few skills to offer an employer in such work as laborers, truck drivers, farm workers, and some construction workers.

Not more than nine families of the forty-three included in this study group, had incomes comparable to the average in Franklin County. Although 60 per cent of all the families in Franklin County have incomes less than \$6,000.00 per year, eighty-six per cent of the study

group's families received less than \$6,000.00 per year.

As might be expected in New England, the predominant ethnic group were of the native-born, so called 'Yankee' group, with many Polish, some Finish, and some French families.

The religious preference is in the majority of the cases Roman Catholic, although Protestants are a close second. This is much like the composition of the entire Franklin District, where families from European Countries, with Roman Catholic populations, settled two or more generations ago.

One-quarter of the parents are known to have mental limitations or disabilities which seriously effect their parental function and perhaps the function of their children. Others in the parent group of this study may also be limited as complete information was not available on all of the parent group. Mental illness is not communicable in the manner that chicken pox or mumps are, but the identification of the child with the parent is not of the best when the parent is mentally ill. The parent with low mental capacity is not usually capable of giving emotional security, and instilling qualities of good citizenship in the children in the family group.

Drinking to excess is known to be a problem to almost one-half of the families studied here, and may seriously effect the children's emotional security in that drinking is given by the spouse as a major cause for conflict and disagreement in the home. Money spent on liquor is not available for food and other necessities for the family. Speculation as to the speech actions, and absences of the drinking parent

would not be without foundation here, particularly in the effect upon the children.

In all but two of the families the parents appear to neglect the physical items of dental care, eye examinations, surgical care, and remedial operations, plus cutting the food expenditures and thus effecting the nutritional level of their children. Neglect of this type is difficult to treat, and most difficult to prove in court in an action to force parental compliance with socially acceptable standards of child care. Children should have a good start in life - proper maintenance while maturing in body and mind - that they may become useful citizens of tomorrow.

Almost one-half of the homes of the parents included in this study were not kept in good order or were filthy. This is probably not so in the general population of Franklin County.

Over half of the families in this study are classed as large families and do live in the lower cost, smaller living units.

Conclusions

The implications for the Society are threefold, and may be given as prevention, treatment, and publicity. First, prevention of deterioration of parental attitudes appears in order. The Society does support existing agencies and programs focused on prevention of family breakdown, and was instrumental in the establishment of a Mental Health Clinic. The facilities of the existing agencies are presently over-taxed, and new agencies and programs should be established to prevent a further increase in the incidence of family deterioration. Or the existing a-

agencies may be able to expand their programs to follow through on this prevention. More staff, more money, and more facilities are needed.

Treatment focused on the total needs of the client group appears indicated. Seminars, college classes, and conferences available to the community's agencies and staff, and possibly paid for by the agencies might assist in training existing and future staff in methods and thinking focused on a treatment oriented program which would produce the best possible results in the shortest possible time. More staff members now may increase the present cost of service, but would decrease the future cost as more persons were able to function within normal limits. Education and rehabilitation of the unskilled parent group to motivate them to learn more job skills might decrease the dependence of the parent group upon the various forms of public aid. A program focused on widening the creative skills, social contacts, and activities of the parent group would ultimately benefit the children of this group.

A well developed and strongly implemented publicity program emphasizing the services available to the public in the Franklin County area would promote support of agency programs and initiate additional referrals. There may be hidden assets and sources of support within the area which would be offered if the needs were more frequently emphasized in the news media.

The challenge to the community is to decrease the effect of mental and physical poverty upon the children.

*Approved
Jan 14 1963
B. Ayres*

APPENDIX A

Case Name:	Flag Code #	Area: Rural	Status: New		
		Urban	Reopen		
		Village	Dup. "		
Age	Age	Age	Racial	Years	
Now	Married	Divorced	Relig.	Background	Educ. Occupation

Parents:

Father:

Mother:

Children: Age Sex

Complaint:

Source:

Police
 School
 Neighbor
 Relative
 Clergyman
 Other Agency
 Other

Presenting Problem:

Home Conditions:

Physical environment: (describe)

Housekeeping:

Rent: (amount)

Child:
School:

Health:

Clothing:

Abuse: Physical Emotional

Neglect: Physical Emotional

Health Problems:

Family Finance:

Source:

Amount:

Employment record: (pattern)

Parental Health: (Note patterns, comments, diagnosed feeble-minded, etc.)

Other Family Pathology:

Comments and Notes:

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