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ANNUAL REPORT

1957

CHILD WELFARE DIVISION

WHEN YOU ENTER
A CHILD'S WORLD

When you enter a child's world
Let it be with humility.
So new are they to this Earth,
They have no measurements for life -
Only a child's unclouded vision of
A world that reaches to the Sky.

Let no heedless, thoughtless
Act of yours dim
Their shining Gift of Life
And so, by that much, take away from
A world in need the potent magic
Of a child's clear sight.

----Dorothy Ratcliffe

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WHAT DO WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT?

The year 1957 is over and done with. What do we have to show for our year's work? What services did we offer the children of Colorado? Did we approach the individual child's problem with understanding and sensitivity? What part did communities play in making these services possible and effective?

These are the questions we shall try to answer briefly in the following annual report. But first, we want to explain in general terms what we mean by basic services.

Each child is born into this world with his own special gift and unique personality (or possibly he brings with him only his need). If he is mishandled, neglected, abused, or rejected, his growth and development can be stunted or perverted, because he has no firm foundation under his feet - his trust in life and his belief in his own worth are damaged.

Basic services are those services which rebuild, restore or preserve a child's faith in the goodness of life and in himself.

During 1957 6,412 child welfare cases were known to the county departments of public welfare.

BASIC SERVICES

I. Services to children in their own homes are divided into three classifications:

1. Services requested by parents

Any parent who is concerned about an unhappy, disturbed or unmanageable child - and who does not understand the cause or know the cure - can ask help from his county department of public welfare. The child welfare worker has made understanding the child's problems his life work.

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With the cooperation of the family, and use of community resources, the worker is able to render invaluable service.

During 1957 a monthly average of 1,241 children were given service in their own homes, and 237 in the homes of relatives.

2. Protective Services

These services are given at the request of someone other than the parents, or as a result of a complaint that the child is being neglected or abused.

If the parents want to be good parents (and most parents do), they are helped to understand wherein they have failed and how to become better parents. In such cases the child either remains in his own home or is returned to it later when conditions have improved sufficiently.

During December, 1957 - 1,362 children were given protective service.

3. Homemaker Service

To take a child out of his own home when he has lost his mother, or she is incapacitated in some way, is to rock his world. He can only feel safe and comforted in familiar surroundings with the remaining members of the family group.

In December of 1957 fifty-three children in twelve families were receiving homemaker service.

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II. Child Welfare Services in the Placement of Children

There are many reasons why a child cannot remain in his own home, and there are some children who do not have a home.

If the child is an infant, or one who needs and can accept family life, or one who needs special attention, then a family foster home is the best answer.

If the child cannot accept the close relationship of a foster home because of family ties or distrust of adults, placement in a group care agency (suitable to his needs) is the best answer. A child who is seriously emotionally disturbed must be placed in a residential treatment center, if possible (we are getting an increasing number of such children.)

If the child is legally, medically and emotionally ready for adoption, then of course an adoptive home is the answer.

Placements - 1957

Monthly average of 686 children in foster homes.

Nine children in residential treatment centers, with waiting list of others needing to be placed in a treatment center.

Monthly average of 135 children in group care agencies.

During the year, 267 children placed for adoption.

In order to make the foregoing services possible and effective, the following programs interweave and support these basic services, and are themselves a part of these services.

Family Foster Home Program

Careful study is made of the family life and home of the foster parents before licensing is recommended to the State Board of Standards of Child Care.

The child is placed in a foster home selected for his particular needs. The child welfare worker supervises this placement through extending professional help to child, foster parents and natural parents, if any.

Adoption Program

First, we must have approved adoptive homes. Applicants for adoption are very carefully screened to be sure that a child placed with them will have the best possible chance to develop normally in a home where there is love, understanding and an acceptance of both his potentials and his limitations.

From a state-wide register of approved adoptive homes, the best home for a particular child is selected.

There are many problems in the adoption field, as in other fields. One is the finding of homes for the so-called hard-to-place child - the handicapped, those of the minority group, mixed racial background, the older child.

We believe there is a home for these children.

It is a question of finding them. 1957 saw the start of an intensive campaign to find these homes. We are attacking the problem from many angles - radio, newspaper, personal contacts, talks, distribution of pamphlets, etc. Results of this campaign should show in 1958.

Services to the Unmarried Mother

The unmarried mother has a big problem - her own and the baby's future. She is under too much of an emotional strain to make objective plans for her own or the child's future. She needs professional counseling to make her way through the maze of legal, emotional, and economic entanglements.

This help the unmarried mother can get through her county department of public welfare. It goes without saying that her confidence will not be violated.

Cooperation with the University of Colorado Medical Center

In selected counties psychiatric consultation is offered as part of the child welfare program.

Services to the Court and Cooperation with Children's Diagnostic Center

County welfare workers prepare social information on children before the Court, and if requested by the judge, act as probation officer. Also workers make known to the court what county child welfare services are available to the child in his court.

For each child referred by the judge to the Diagnostic Center, the county welfare department prepares a social study which goes to the Center prior to the child's arrival there.

After a child has been studied at the Diagnostic Center and recommendations made, state and county child welfare divisions cooperate to the fullest extent possible in carrying out these recommendations if such recommendations are accepted by the court.

During 1957 - 148 social studies were prepared by county departments of public welfare for use of the Diagnostic Center.

Interstate Placement of Children

County child welfare workers offer a reciprocal case work service to other states in investigating resources for the child in this state, and in supervising that child in the placement, if made.

In 1957 - 28 such placements were made.

Group Work Services

Requests for help in organizing Teen Centers for high school age youth are referred to the Group Work Consultant through directors of county departments of public welfare and child welfare field supervisors.

The first step in consideration of such a project is whether the youth in the community desire such a Center. If so, an adult sponsoring committee is organized and a governing body of representatives of

youth groups who will participate.

Approximately 150 children known to county welfare departments attended camps during the summer of 1957, either on a free basis or drastically reduced rates.

The benefits of a camping experience are many. Some of the most valuable are improvement in health, learning how to get along with children of his own age and with adults, self-reliance and good citizenship. Camp referrals are an important part of the services of the group work consultant.

Group Care Services

Children placed in group care agencies are not put there and forgotten. Our group care consultant watches their progress and adjustment. Then, too, institutions having a child in residence who is not getting along well in the group, may ask for help in making other plans for the child, such as foster home, residential treatment center, adoption, etc.

She also consults with staffs and boards of directors of institutions in planning program changes that will bring their children closer to the joys and fulfillments of a normal family life.

During 1957 our group care consultant gave consultation and service to twenty institutions, which involve the lives of hundreds of Colorado's children.

Community Organization Services

The most effective place to study and solve community problems is in the community itself. This can be done most thoroughly by the citizens of the community themselves.

But, unless a community can get experienced professional help, it is difficult to get organized for action.

Our consultant on community organization is glad to help any community requesting her services in the task of effective organization.

She also works with our Advisory Committee in their child welfare community projects and workshops sponsored by the Committee.

During 1957, our consultant on community organization worked with four counties in organizing for community action, with others in arranging workshops; assisted the Advisory Committee with projects, such as Career Day programs for recruiting much needed social workers; cooperated with U. of Colorado in a training institute held in Fort Morgan for police officers in the area to help them with their juvenile problems, etc.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1957

Mrs. David Griffith, Chairman, Denver
Mrs. Alva B. Adams, Jr., Pueblo
Mrs. R. J. Arnold, Denver
Mrs. Joe Autry, La Junta
Mrs. J. G. Brown, Montrose
Mrs. Ruth B. Clark, Fort Collins
Mr. Charles R. Conklin, Delta
Mrs. Lon T. Fidler, Denver
Mrs. Lester Garner, Sterling
Mrs. Edmond F. Noel, Denver
Reverend Stephen J. McShane, Denver
Mr. L. M. Lopez, Denver
Mrs. Henry Luby, Denver
Mrs. Philip B. Short, Denver
Miss Marie C. Smith, Denver
Mrs. Ben Stapleton, Jr., Denver
Mrs. E. L. Survant, Trinchera
Mrs. Eugene Wiege, Greeley
Mrs. Robert H. Showalter, Alamosa

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE CHILD WELFARE DIVISION

The Advisory Committee is a very important part of the child welfare program in Colorado.

This committee is composed of twenty men and women representing different sections of the state, and are appointed by the State Board of Public Welfare. They are chosen for their deep interest in the welfare of children, and for their civic activities in behalf of children, either directly or indirectly.

This committee brings to the Division both the local and the layman's point of view. Members act as interpreters in their own communities.

The committee keeps informed on both state and federal legislation concerning children. Through its subcommittees, it assists in recruitment and retention of urgently needed staff, and gives leadership in child welfare projects in various communities.

Last year the committee co-sponsored a workshop in Pueblo on Juvenile Delinquency Prevention; one in Colorado Springs on Services to the Mentally Retarded Child. It also co-sponsored a workshop with the Colorado Conference of Social Welfare on Group Living in Children's Institutions. Outstanding leaders in these three different fields were brought to Colorado.

The committee also sponsored a workshop in Durango and one in Sterling on the Normal Development of Children.

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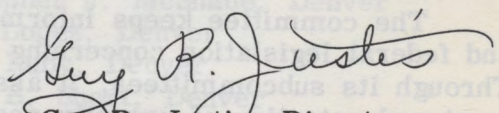
It is our firm belief that prompt basic serv-
ices to all children needing them will sign the
death warrant of juvenile delinquency, and put an
end to so much waste of human potentials.

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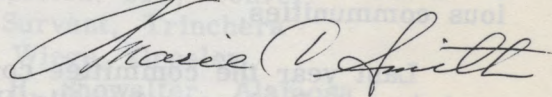
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Citizen. We welcome your questions, sugges-
tions, and criticisms. Most of all we welcome
your interest in the program, and we need your
cooperation.



Guy R. Justis, Director
State Dept. of Public Welfare



Marie C. Smith, Director
Child Welfare Division

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