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FOREWORD

The welfare program in Colorado is county-administered, state supervised. Direct services to children are given through county welfare departments. However, because of shortage of child welfare workers, the state child welfare staff assists in direct service in some counties. This is, of course, in addition to services given counties by state child welfare field supervisors and consultants. The state maintains a state-wide register of approved adoptive and foster boarding homes, which the counties use in selecting homes for children in their care.

The State Child Welfare Division has an Advisory Committee composed of twenty lay persons, representative of different parts of the state, who have demonstrated their interest in the well-being of children. This committee gives vital assistance in strengthening, expanding, and interpreting child welfare services throughout the state.

FOUR WORDS



1-9-6-0

The year 1960 began with an intensification of two existing problems: not enough child welfare workers to meet the growing needs of children and our increased responsibilities; not enough foster family or group care homes for children with varying degrees of emotional disturbance, and consequent difficult or dangerous behavior.

The first problem, of course, affects every type of services to children - services in their own homes, which include protective services and homemaker service; placement of children in foster family care, group care, or in adoptive homes, services to the courts in children's cases; interstate placement of children; group work (recreation) services; group care (services to institutions and day care centers on behalf of children placed therein.)

In describing child welfare services, as such, there is no alternative to speaking of children in general terms. However, when you enter a child's life, you lay aside generalities as you recognize the uniqueness that is each individual child. For this reason, we think we can give you a clearer idea of services to children through examples of actual cases, changed only enough to conceal the identity of the children.

The picture will be partial, it is true, so varied are the ills of mankind, and so individual the children concerned. We can only hope we have shown something of the specialized training, skill, understanding, patience, time, and meshing of services (both public and private) that go into safeguarding the child in his dependence upon the adult world.

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But above all, we hope we have shown we are here to meet the needs of troubled children - whether they be children of wealth or children of poverty - they are still children and our responsibility.

Many are the children we have helped, but the many we have not reached are on our minds - that is our problem. Before we go on to the children, we shall describe briefly our

PLAN OF ATTACK

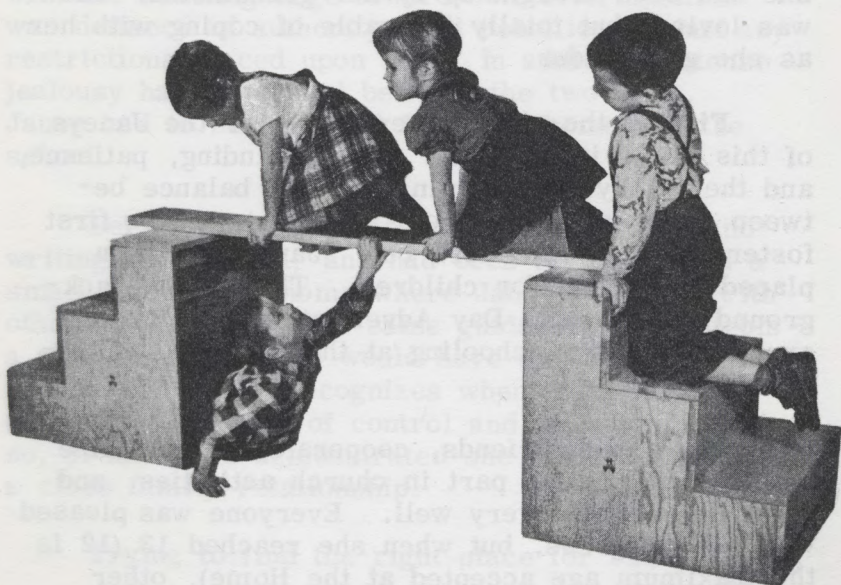
In attacking the problem of shortage of trained child welfare workers (which is nationwide), we have put into operation two plans - one looking toward the future, and the other to meet the present emergency.

The Advisory Committee to the Child Welfare Division helped in working out both of these plans.

Through the instigation of this committee, and the cooperation of the State Employment Department and the Denver Department of Welfare, an aptitude test for social work was developed (something we did not have before). Now, through the state-wide aptitude testing and counselling program of the State Employment Department (beginning with the 9th grade and continuing through the 12th), we will have each year a list of students with an aptitude for social work. With the cooperation of the high schools, we have worked out a recruiting program. The Northern Colorado Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers is also cooperating in this program.

To meet the present emergency, a new classification for child welfare workers has been established. Since child welfare workers with graduate training in social work simply don't exist in sufficient numbers to meet the need, we have set up an intensive in-service training course, which is given to workers having a B.A. degree and other necessary qualifications. This classification carries a salary more nearly commensurate with the greater responsibilities of a specialized caseload; hence, we find more willingness on the part of those qualified to take the training and carry the greater responsibilities.

The two plans mentioned cannot be set forth in detail because of lack of space. However, they are both proving to be effective, and we are encouraged with the progress made.



JANEY HAD OTHER IDEAS

Janey was before the Court on a delinquency charge at the age of 12. She was to be committed to the State Training School for Girls, but at the suggestion of the child welfare worker, the Court referred her to the Children's Diagnostic Center. Commitment was suspended pending diagnosis.

The Center found Janey normal, but somewhat disturbed emotionally, and recommended foster home placement. The court placed her in the care and custody of the county department of public welfare.

Janey's mother had abandoned her at birth. Her father drank heavily and was in and out of jail. In spite of this Janey was loyal to him, and her worst behavior followed his sentences to jail. She had been brought up by her grandmother who was loving, but totally incapable of coping with her as she grew older.

Finding the right foster home for the Janey's of this world is not easy. Understanding, patience, and the ability to maintain the right balance between controls and freedom are musts. The first foster home did not work out. Janey was then placed in a home for children. The child's background was Seventh Day Adventist, so the county arranged for her schooling at the Seventh Day Adventist School.

Janey made friends, cooperated at the home and took an active part in church activities, and generally behaved very well. Everyone was pleased with her progress, but when she reached 13 (12 is the maximum age accepted at the Home), other plans had to be made for her.

What she needed was a small group care home for teenage girls, but such homes are scarce. Either there was no vacancy, or Janey didn't qualify. The only prospective foster boarding family we had for her interpreted her tall tales about the wonders of her home as an intense desire to return there. They decided not to risk failure with her. So, we had to send her back to her grandmother, and the gains she had made at the home promptly melted away.

Later, a family who knew her when she was going to the church school, and who had a daughter Janey's age, offered to take her before she landed back in court.

Janey, now 13, was not exactly the same little girl she was at 12. It wasn't long before the storm signals were flying, both in the foster home and at school. The only way Janey had of coping with the swelling urge toward self-determination was defiance of authority, and rebellion against any restrictions placed upon her. In addition, intense jealousy had developed between the two girls. Janey had to be removed from the home and the school.

Before the showdown, we had seen the handwriting on the wall, and had been trying to find a small group care home where Janey would be with other girls needing the same guidance and controls - a place where she would have the kind of close supervision which recognizes when and how much to loosen the reins of control and when not to. Also, it had been demonstrated she could not tolerate a close family relationship.

Trying to find the right place for Janey was

like batting our heads against a stone wall. When the time came to move her, we still had found no place. Again, she was returned to her grandmother.

The welfare department placed certain restrictions on her behavior, and she was told to report weekly to the department. But Janey had other ideas, and we didn't have the staff to give her the close supervision and support she needed. She ran wild - staying out until all hours, hanging around taverns, skipping school and, for good measure, went back to shoplifting. The court felt it had no alternative to committing her to the State Training School for Girls.

When she was ready for discharge, more than a year later, the Training School asked us to make plans for her away from home. It was evident she couldn't return to her grandmother without reverting to her old pattern of behavior. Fortunately, there was a vacancy in one of the few small group care homes. Here at last was a place for Janey - now 15 years old - with three lost years to make up for.

We have many adolescent boys and girls whose principal need is for guidance and control which will help them to understand and to master their strange, new feelings, and uncertainties, and to make peace with hurts of the past. But such guidance and control must not be exercised with a heavy-handedness that fails to respect a child's right to privacy where his tough and conquering young spirit can seek and find its own inner strength.

The pity is that this help can't always be found in time to prevent severe emotional disturbance. For some, help comes too late, if at all, and children needlessly become mental cases, or

hardened criminals for want of discerning help at the first sign of incipient trouble.

Also, we have requests from both the boys' and the girls' training schools for foster homes for children being paroled who should not be returned to their own homes or communities.

When a child is released from an institution, the job is only partially done. At this stage he needs supportive supervision, and encouragement in developing his own inner strength.

A small group care home is what the teen-ager needs if he cannot (as is usually the case), tolerate the close relationship of substitute parents in a foster boarding home.

We are meeting these and other demands to the best of our ability which is, as we have said, limited by shortage of staff and of group care homes for the teen-ager.

THE CHILDREN COME FIRST

It is the policy of the Child Welfare Division never to take children away from their own homes if there is any other way to work out the problem presented.

Occasionally, as in the following case, we have no choice but to file a petition in dependency in order to safeguard the child in need of protective service.

Complaints that Mrs. Perry was drinking,

entertaining various men (possibly involving her 14 year old daughter), and leaving the girl, an older brother, and two small children alone when she took off for California with a married man, were proved valid upon investigation.

The father of these children was in the penitentiary. Mrs. Perry had not paid her bills, even though money had been given her, in addition to her ADC grant, for payment of specific expenses. When she left for California, she took all but \$28 of the \$204 ADC check. The \$28 was for the four children to live on. She stayed in California a month.

At the first court hearing, temporary custody was given to the county department of public welfare. For the time being, the county left the children with the grandmother who, shortly after the mother took off, discovered the children alone and took them in. This was far from an ideal arrangement as the grandmother was old and ill. However, it allowed time for the child welfare worker to see if Mrs. Perry could be helped to accept and to cope with her responsibilities as a mother.

Mrs. Perry was an attractive woman who evidently made a good impression on strangers, judging by the amount of credit extended to her. She seemed to know the right words, whatever the occasion, but these words turned out to be mere window dressing.

In numerous talks with Mrs. Perry, the worker could detect no spark of concern for the children, and no evidence of any feeling of responsibility. She had admitted to the judge that she would give up her children rather than the man with whom she was currently involved.

The worker doubted if there was any potential there to build on, but referred Mrs. Perry to a psychiatrist for an evaluation. His report confirmed her fears. While Mrs. Perry's I. Q. was normal, her emotional development was that of a two or three year old child. She had no ability to plan ahead, to foresee the consequences of her actions, or to feel any responsibility for them. Immediate gratification of any desire of the moment governed her actions.

Her relationship to her children was that of another child. In the opinion of the psychiatrist she seemed bent on destroying her older children - the daughter by promoting in her the same sort of uncontrolled sexual behavior and early marriage as her own; and the son by returning to him the gun which had gotten him into trouble, and with which he had threatened to shoot her if she kept on acting as she did.

At the final hearing on the case, the Court gave the care, custody, and guardianship with right to consent to adoption, to the county department of public welfare.

(This case is in direct contrast to the protective service case described in last year's report. The mother in that case was capable of loving her children, and did. She wanted to do her best for them. She simply didn't know how, and was submerged in frustration and helplessness, which accounted for her seeming callous and outrageous behavior. With the patient and tireless help of the child welfare worker, she learned, and took pride in the learning.)

As for the children in Mrs. Perry's case, the

oldest boy stayed with his grandmother for a short time before joining the Navy. The fourteen year old girl was cared for by a responsible aunt. The two young children were adopted by a couple who had been successful with three emotionally hurt children previously adopted by them.



SOLID GROUND

The Juvenile Probation officer called Miss Lee, the county child welfare worker, saying he had four children in need of immediate care.

The mother had been found dead under unusual circumstances, and the father was prohibited by court order from seeing the children. (He had served a prison term for taking indecent liberties with two of his own children.) There were no relatives to take over, and it would be cruel to uproot these children at a time when they desperately needed the security of familiar surroundings. Could the county provide homemaker services? It could.

Miss Lee first reviewed the situation. The oldest child was Connie, 16; then Bud, 12, who was

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on probation; and twin girls, Jill and Jennie, age 7 years. Connie was mature for her age, and for the past year had been caring for the younger children as a mother would.

For the homemaker this would be a 24 hour a day job of indefinite duration. She must be a woman who could gently guide and direct these children, but who would stay in the background so that Connie would not feel she was being replaced by an outsider. She must be able to use good judgment in handling Bud. Miss Lee would, of course, keep in close contact with the family, but the homemaker must be a woman of warmth, tact, and understanding.

Mrs. Fairfield, the homemaker chosen for this unusual case, had done excellent work for the department in a similar situation. She was willing to go to this new job on a few hours notice and continue without relief until the situation was stable.

Prior to sending Mrs. Fairfield to the home, Miss Lee visited the family. She found the house reasonably well-kept with adequate sleeping room for the homemaker. She invited Connie for a ride to give her a chance to unburden her feelings.

Connie was afraid they would be separated and the younger children given to their father. Miss Lee assured her the court would not allow the father even to see them. She told her the court and the department wanted to make plans that would be best for her and the younger children, but this would take time and asked if they would like to stay in their own home with a middle-aged woman to stay with them.

As she explained the homemaker service,

Connie's face brightened, but she wanted to know where the money would come from. When Miss Lee said the department would assume this responsibility, Connie doubted her ability to handle money for the whole family. The worker assured her that she and the homemaker would help with budgeting and planning, and Connie could let them know what the family's needs were.

Connie then told Miss Lee about Bud being on probation and that he must be kept out of trouble. Miss Lee said the court had told her about this, and that she, the homemaker, and Connie would work together to help Bud. Before taking Connie home, Miss Lee told her she would talk to the homemaker, Mrs. Fairfield, and then bring her to see them.

Mrs. Fairfield was told only as much of the situation as she needed to know to be of most help; that the father was forbidden to see the children, but not why; about Bud, and Mrs. Fairfield understood how a child could want something so badly he would steal to get it. Miss Lee described Connie, her maturity and dependability, and how helpful she would be, and suggested that she consult Connie about the children's care, etc., and not take away from her any responsibility she wanted to continue to carry. She cautioned her about well-meaning neighbors who might be a bit more curious than they should be and to keep the conversation impersonal. If they wanted information, or had some to give, to refer them to the worker.

The first meeting between Mrs. Fairfield and the family went well. Connie seemed pleased; the little girls wanted to call her "Granny"; Bud seemed to be reserving his judgment, but was not antagonistic.

On a visit a few days later, Miss Lee found

the homemaker baking a chocolate cake as a surprise for the children when they got home from school. She said she had never known a girl as young as Connie take so much responsibility, but she was tactfully relieving her of part of this to give her more time to sleep in the mornings.

Connie had a part-time job at the theatre from 5:30 to 10 p.m. Mrs. Fairfield felt this might interfere with her school work but realized how important this job was to her feeling of individual worth. Out of her salary she gave the younger children an allowance and, unknown to the department, had paid part of the milk bill.

As questions and problems arose, the homemaker and the caseworker worked them out together, bringing Connie in on them when it seemed wise to do so.

One problem concerned a friend of Connie's, Kay, also 16. Kay was staying with the family a great deal of the time. She wasn't going to school, didn't work, and had a car at her disposal. She and Connie double dated occasionally. Mrs. Fairfield did not think this girl was the right kind of friend for Connie and, in addition, feeding an extra person was hard on the food budget. Miss Lee said they should go slow on this, as they did not want Connie to feel they were cutting off her good times or choosing her friends for her.

The next day Miss Lee dropped by the house about the time Connie would get home from school, and took her for a ride. She asked casually about Kay. The girl's parents drank excessively, and she was not happy at home. Miss Lee told Connie how proud they were of the way she shouldered responsibility for her brother and sisters; what a beautiful job she was doing; that they realized it might be hard sometimes to have to come home at a certain

time when some of her friends had no responsibility. Tears came to Connie's eyes. No further mention was made of Kay.

In another visit with Connie, Miss Lee brought up the subject of Kay again in a casual way. Connie, herself, was bothered about Kay being in the home so much but didn't know how to handle the situation without hurting her feelings. The worker offered to take this problem off her shoulders, but Connie said she would rather work it out herself. Later, Miss Lee learned from Mrs. Fairfield that Kay had gone and probably would not be back.

After the homemaker had been with the children several months, Miss Lee talked again with the probation officer. He read her parts of their record on Bud. His grades had improved to a remarkable degree. He was happy, good natured, liked school, and was full of conversation about what he was doing and planned to do. He was like a different boy.

Toward the end of the school year, the homemaker called Miss Lee late one evening, saying Mrs. Maye, an aunt of the children's from California, and her husband had arrived unannounced. They were on a trip, had stopped to see the children, and mentioned taking some of them to California. Miss Lee called the aunt to arrange an appointment with her and her husband for the next day.

Mrs. Maye was obviously in poor health. She had been in the hospital recently and was going again soon. She said they were thinking of taking Connie; that she could get a job in California, and they had room for her. (This couple had shown no spark of interest in these children before.) Miss Lee explained that the children were in court custody, and any change of plans would have to be approved by the court. The Mayes were in a hurry to be on their

way, so there wasn't much time to talk.

The next day Miss Lee talked to Connie, thinking she might be excited about the possibility of going to California, but Connie had kept her feet on the ground. She confided that she was not enthusiastic about going to California after talking with her aunt, and wondered why they wanted her. This same question was in the worker's mind, and she was relieved that Connie had sized up the situation on her own.

Miss Lee told Connie that any plans for her and the children would be made with her help and cooperation; that the court and the department wanted for them only what would bring them the greatest good.

What the permanent plan for these children will be, is still to be worked out; but one thing is certain - the homemaker service prevented the further shattering of their world at a crucial time in their lives, and led the children back to solid ground.



I'M HERE, I'M HERE, I'M HERE!

Who is the small boy with the anxious little face, who keeps running around knocking over the furniture? He, our group care consultant, was told, is seven year old Joey, who has been in the Home for more than five years.

The child was placed in the Denver Orphans' Home by his parents when he was less than two years old. His mother was an unstable woman - at times cruel to the baby, and at best, indifferent. The father was an ineffectual person with no real affection for the boy. After they placed Joey in the Home, the mother never came near him again. The father visited once or twice the first two years.

Our consultant had been asked by the director of the Home to help them in solving some of their problems, and Joey was one of these problems. What was to become of this small bit of humanity? He was becoming an increasingly difficult child to manage. What could the future hold for him?

Joey made a poor showing in the psychological examination, but for a child whose only answer to life has been the silent closing of doors, a poor showing is not conclusive. Nevertheless, the psychologist could give no assurance the child would ever - to use the psychologist's term - function within normal limits.

Joey's parents would, no doubt, be willing to relinquish him, but what then? His prospects for adoption were slim, and the Home hesitated to accept custody on a long term basis, as would be the case if adoption proved impossible.

So, three agencies - the State Children's Home, the Denver Orphans' Home, and the State Child Welfare Division - went into a huddle. The State Children's

Home agreed to take custody after relinquishment, but to leave Joey at the Denver Orphans' Home rather than move him into a strange place. The State Child Welfare Division would go through their approved adoptive home files and watch new applications with Joey in mind.

The right home eventually turned up for Joey. However, there was another hurdle to take. Under the law it is possible for an adoption to be made final within 30 days. If this happened to Joey with his anxieties, fears, and distrust of himself, of life, and of people, the adoption could fail. We must not let this happen to Joey. He and his adoptive parents would need skilled and intensive help for many months.

The parents would be asking themselves - how can we reach Joey to give him reassurance? What is he trying to tell us by his actions? When is silence more golden than words? What fears and doubts are troubling him? How can we handle this? What about our own reactions? (Parents, also, have problems to work out within themselves).

A child who has known love and the security of belonging, can take some impatience, misunderstanding, a few unconsidered whacks, with philosophical calm. (Parents just naturally act like people sometimes, and all children know what they are). But Joey and other harborless children have no such philosophical calm to sustain them - their world still bears the face of night.

In talking the situation over with the adoptive parents, who understood the need for help in the trying times to come, it was decided not to place Joey on an adoptive basis now. Instead, we would ask that their home be licensed as a free foster home, and the State Children's Home would arrange

for a child welfare worker to give intensive casework services to Joey and his prospective parents.

Then began the months of patient and painstaking work of restoring a little boy's trust and confidence in life and in himself. The dog and cats in the foster home did their part, too. Animals Joey could take into his uncertain little heart immediately with people he had to watch and wait. For some reason past explaining, as Joey lavished his love on the animals, his heart expanded to receive the love he had ceased to hope for.

Gradually, Joey's tenseness and anxiety faded. His actions ceased to be erratic. He was acting like a normal, confident little boy.

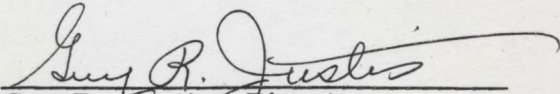
When final adoption procedure was being discussed, the adoptive mother told the child welfare worker about an incident that was puzzling her.

She went out to get Joey and heard him chanting, "I'm here, I'm here, I'm here!" He was oblivious to his surroundings, and the words seemed to have a deep significance for him, so she went quietly back into the house.

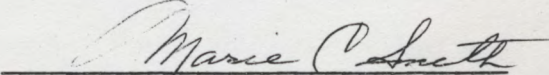
The child welfare worker thought for a minute, then her face lighted up - she remembered when Joey was still at the Home he had asked her, almost in anguish, if there was some place where he belonged. She told him yes, and that some day he would find it. He has.

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