

. . . MORE THAN "JUST" WITNESSES.
DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING
A CHILDREN'S PROGRAM IN A
SECOND-STAGE HOUSING PROJECT.

BY

CHRISTINE MARY BALICKI

A practicum presented to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree

Master of Social Work
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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"All the boys got mad, and the girls got sad."

"Eric" (age 7)

PREFACE

As part of my practicum commitment, I co-facilitated a group for latency-aged children who had been witness to their mothers being battered. While reading and discussing a story about family violence in a group session Eric remarked with bemusement that boys in the group felt mad, and the girls felt sad.

At the time I remember thinking that Eric had succinctly and eloquently described what still, in spite of recent societal changes is one of the main differences between men and women today. Generally men "externalize" feelings, tending to push their anger and aggression out in order to rid themselves of it. Women tend to "internalize", to hide their anger inside. They feel their anger might hurt or damage others if they try to let go of it.

It was not long after this group session that "Theresa", Eric's mother was found dead. Her death brought out a whole range of feelings that the women and children with whom I was working had kept inside. Her death had a tremendous impact on this author, and the women, children and staff at W.I.S.H. (the agency where this practicum was completed). Theresa and her children remain in the minds and hearts of all of us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many individuals I would like to acknowledge for their valuable contribution toward making this practicum a reality:

The women and children of W.I.S.H. courageously shared their experiences with me. I have learned much from them. I am especially grateful for their permission to share their stories and the children's drawings in this practicum report.

Dr. Kathryn McCannell was a constant source of fresh insight, valuable knowledge and energy. As my advisor her role was an active one and included co-facilitating a children's group, co-writing the 'Parent's Handbook,' and developing the Belief Inventory evaluation measure. Kathryn's support and encouragement were much appreciated and her sense of humour at times was very much needed.

Prof. Shirley Grosser and Ms. Dale MacKenzie kindly agreed to also be members of my practicum committee. Their thoughts and ideas and their review of this practicum report were most helpful.

Ms. Linda Hayes and Ms. Mary Sweeney, the staff persons at W.I.S.H., provided a warm acceptant atmosphere in which this practicum was completed. Special thanks are extended to Linda for co-facilitating a children's group and the Board of W.I.S.H. for providing me with the opportunity and the setting for the development and implementation of this practicum.

I would also like to thank Ms. Penny Weide for turning this practicum report into living black and white, and for doing an excellent typing job in far from excellent conditions.

Pursuing graduate studies was an exciting challenging experience. The journey however has not been without its 'peaks and valleys.' I am most grateful for the support, concern and patience of my family and close friends, especially during times when this graduate student was perhaps somewhat single-minded and singularly focused.

To all of you again . . . much thanks.

Chris Balicki

May, 1987

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Incidence of Neglect, and Emotional, Physical and Sexual Abuse of Children Staying at W.I.N. House (Edmonton, 1985)	41
Table 2	Summary of W.I.S.H. Families	73
Table 3	Summary of Intake Assessments	79-81
Table 4	Questionnaire on Divorce	106

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface		ii
Acknowledgements		iii
List of Tables		v
<u>Table of Contents</u>		1
Part I	Introduction and Purpose	3
	Introduction	4
	Purpose	5
Part II	Literature Review	8
Chapter One	<u>An Historical Overview</u>	9
	An Historical Overview of Violence in the Family	9
	Women in the Socio-historical Context	9
	Children in the Socio-historical Context	12
	Prevalence of Wife Abuse	14
	The Relationship Between Wife Abuse and Child Abuse	17
Chapter Two	<u>Toward an Analysis of Violence in the Family - Some Theoretical Considerations</u>	20
	Psychopathology or Personality Theory	20
	Family Systems or Interactional Theory	23
	Social Structural Theory	26
	Learning Theory	29
	Feminist Theory	33
Chapter Three	<u>Children from Violent Homes</u>	37
	Children from Violent Homes - An Overview	37
	The Effects of Violence on Children: A Developmental Perspective	40
	When A Battered Woman Leaves - Special Issues Encountered by Children	49
	Implications for Practice	53
Chapter Four	<u>A Feminist/Ecological Perspective</u>	56
	Introduction	56
	The Microsystem	57
	The Mesosystem	59
	The Exosystem	61
	The Macrosystem	62

Chapter Five	<u>Groups as Treatment Modalities for Children</u>	65
	Rationale for Group Intervention	65
	Discussion of Group Typologies - Establishing the Purpose	68
PART III	The Practicum	71
Chapter Six	<u>Development and Implementation of Children's Programs in a Second-Stage Housing Project</u>	72
	Introduction - The Setting	72
	The Interviewing Process	74
	Mothers' Interviews	74
	Children's Interviews	76
Chapter Seven	<u>Group Intervention</u>	82
	Group Membership	82
	Group Process	
	The W.I.S.H. Latency-Aged Group	89
	The W.I.S.H. Pre-School Group	111
	Summary of the Group Process	119
Chapter Eight	<u>Evaluation</u>	122
	The Self-Appraisal Inventory	122
	The What I Think and Feel Questionnaire	124
	Belief Inventory	125
	Supplementary Evaluation Methods	126
	Summary of Evaluation and Data-Gathering Techniques	127
	Individual Evaluations	130
PART IV	Discussion	144
	Conclusions	145
	Recommendations for Social Work Practice	152
APPENDICES	A - Bibliography	161
	B - Bibliography - Literature Used in Children's Programming	169
	C - Mother's Interview Form	171
	D - Young Child's Intake Form (4-7 Year Olds)	178
	E - Child's Intake Form (8-12 Year Olds)	182
	F - Adolescent Intake Form (13-18 Year Olds)	188
	G - Self-Appraisal Inventory (Grades K-3)	193
	H - Self-Appraisal Inventory (Grades 4-6)	196
	I - Self-Appraisal Inventory (Grades 7-12)	201
	J - What I Think and Feel Questionnaire	205
	K - Belief Inventory	208
	L - Group Feedback Form	210
	M - Pre-Test/Post-Test Children's Program Evaluation Form	212
	N - Helping a Child to Cope with Battering - A Parents' Handbook	216

PART I Introduction and Purpose

Introduction

Wife abuse refers to violent acts by an assailant against his wife or partner. These assaults may involve emotional, physical or sexual abuse. Assault is inflicted upon a victim for the purpose of controlling behaviour and inducing fear and intimidation. Physical assault may include shoving, slapping, being burnt or thrown across a room. Sexual assault ranges from lewd comments or accusations to forced intercourse. Often women submit to a partner's sexual demands because they really believe they have no choice. They may believe their own feelings are not important, or irrelevant. Women may submit because the sexual assaults are accompanied by threats of violence, or actual violent acts. Psychological attacks can take the form of threats against the woman, her property, her pets or her children. The assailant may threaten to take his own life if his wife does not submit to his demands. The assailant may want to prove that he is not making "idle" threats, so he may have weapons such as a gun or a knife in his possession to demonstrate his point.

Wife abuse can end in murder.

In our Canadian society, there is a growing recognition that wife abuse is a very serious problem. It has been consistently reported that one in ten Canadian women will be physically abused by her spouse or live-in lover at some point in her life (MacLeod, 1980). If we include other types of assault the numbers are much higher. When these battering relationships involve children, they too are frequently the victims of physical,

emotional or sexual abuse. Elbow (1982) suggests that children are the "forgotten victims" of family violence. Unless they are aggressive enough at home or at school to warrant special attention, the needs of these children are frequently overlooked by helping professionals. Walker (1984) suggests that when a mother and her children are being battered, it is often the mother who is the focus of casework intervention, for it is she who is expected to take care of her children and keep them from harm. Although in the last decade there has been considerable concern expressed regarding abuse, Kinard (1980) suggests that in regard to physical abuse, the primary target of intervention continues to be the abusing parents.

Clearly more adequate programs are needed for battered women, battering men, and the children of violent marriages. This practicum looks specifically at children who have been exposed to violence within families. As is discussed many of these children have been victims of abuse themselves. However recent studies suggest that whether children are witnesses to abuse, or victims or inflicted abuse, violent events within their family have profound effects upon their development. These children are hurting and need help.

Purpose

The purpose of this practicum was to develop and implement programs for children who had been witness to repeated violence in their family, and to evaluate the applicability and effectiveness of the intervention. The major part of my practicum commitment involved the development, implementation and evaluation of two group models, designed for pre-school

and latency-aged children.

The specific educational objectives I hoped to accomplish through this practicum were:

- 1) to enhance my skills in program development, specifically children's programming;
- 2) to enhance my group work intervention skills with children;
- 3) to increase my theoretical and practical knowledge of children in general, and children in battering relationships in particular;
- 4) to gain a fuller understanding of how battering impacts on the child and significant others in his or her world.

The orientation in this practicum can be termed a "feminist/ecological perspective". The feminist perspective simply echoes what researchers, and people in general already know: In the family home and in the community, children and women are at significantly greater risk of abuse than men. This is not a coincidence. Rather it is related to gender, status and age/power differentials that are characteristic of the family and social structure. The feminist/ecological perspective acknowledges that the abuse experience has an impact on the child and his or her family, and other systems with which they are involved. In turn the attitudes that the family, friends, school and other systems have toward the child and the abuse experience can further affect the child positively or detrimentally.

It is important to look at the child in relationship to all these systems if we are to truly understand the child and to intervene in his or her best interests.

This practicum is divided into three major parts. In the first part, the literature on wife abuse and the impact of such abuse on children is reviewed. As this practicum involved the development of group programs for children whose mothers had left battering relationships, the literature on the impact of parental separation on children and group intervention is also discussed. The second part of this report focuses on the practicum experience and the evaluation of the children's programs that were developed and implemented. This report closes with a summary of my involvement. Recommendations for further intervention are discussed.

PART II Literature Review

CHAPTER ONE

A SOCIO-HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY

Wife abuse is not a recent phenomenon. In order to understand wife abuse or family violence of any type we need to understand the origins of values and attitudes that perpetuate abuse of women and children in our contemporary society. This chapter presents a brief socio-historical overview of the 'place' of women and children in history, followed by a statistical look at wife abuse in the context of present day society. A theme that is interwoven throughout this practicum report is the relationship between wife abuse and child abuse and neglect. This theme is discussed in the last part of this chapter.

Women in the Socio-historical Context

In tracing the history of wife abuse MacLeod (1980) states that the first law related to wife abuse was enacted around 2500 B.C.: A man who had been verbally abused by his wife could write her name on a brick and use this brick to knock out her teeth. . . Whether it was the Roman ages, Medieval times or the Victorian period, husbands were expected to physically control and punish their wives. The incorporation of wife abuse into religious doctrine and legislation has ensured that this practice would survive for thousands of years. Wife abuse has survived while nations and whole civilizations have not.

Wife abuse has survived, because until recently women had no rights:

While men had the right to vote, to own property, to divorce, and to inherit the wealth of others these rights were denied women, or women were forced to relinquish them when they married. MacLeod (1980) does note that for brief times in history, such as just prior to the French Revolution, women did enjoy freedoms and other property rights. It was during such times that wife abuse diminished as a practice. In discussing women in the historical context Langley and Levy (1977) state:

"the combined forces of God, society and the law were a formidable enemy (for women) to resist. Most women acquiesced and came to think of themselves at worst as mere property, or at best, as pets that needed to be disciplined and trained." (p.36)

When changes in laws regarding wife abuse began to appear, these changes did not declare wife abuse illegal. Rather laws focused on regulating beatings (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). For instance the well-known British "Rule of Thumb" of the 1700's gave a husband the right to chastise his wife, children and apprentices by physical means providing he used a stick or whip no wider than his thumb. When someone else assaulted his wife he could sue for damages much as he would if his prized cow or horse or some other property had been damaged (Langley and Levy, 1977).

Much of Canadian law is derived from British common law, and until recently we had our own "Rule of Thumb" laws which implicitly condoned wife abuse: For example, until 1965, beating one's wife resulted in a jail sentence of two years only if there was proof of "actual bodily harm". And until 1968, in order to collect alimony, a woman required proof that the physical and/or mental abuse being inflicted on her by her husband was endangering her life (Dranoff, 1977).

MacLeod (1980) states four themes are evident when reviewing women's positions in the historical context: (1) women were the property of men; (2) wives were expected to obey husbands and to 'conform' to the idea of self-denial; (3) men had complete authority at home; (4) a woman's place was in the home. Dobash and Dobash (1979) expand on this last theme when they suggest that the 'home' is seen as the wife's responsibility. If, for instance, a marriage is failing, or if a woman is abused, it is because she has done something wrong or she has not fulfilled her responsibilities.

These themes to varying degrees are still found in present day society. However there have been many positive changes made in the area of domestic violence: In the Province of Manitoba, the Attorney-General's directive of 1983, police must now report all cases of wife assault, thus treating these cases like any other assault. Police also now lay the assault charges, thus relieving abused women of that heavy responsibility. Also as of January, 1983, federal government legislation makes it possible for a husband to be charged with sexually assaulting his wife. Legally, wife assault within the home is no longer a private affair. Rather it is a public crime and against the law.

Similarly professional communities such as social work are recognizing that wife abuse is a major social problem and are taking active roles in working towards solutions. (See for example, the Policy Statement on Social Work Practice with Assaulted Women and their Families, Canadian Association of Social Workers, 1982).

However, practices and attitudes have remained even after laws which

gave men control over wives have been abolished. We as professionals still directly or indirectly support violence against women through such myths as "women stay because they enjoy it", or "wife abuse is a family problem". Professional values have their roots in societal beliefs and practices. Practices such as 'sex-appropriate behaviour' have been demonstrated to be linked to wife assault. Such practices are proving much more difficult to erase than legislation. However our changing laws and policies do reflect a changing perception of women, and of relationships between men and women. Such changes are encouraging.

Children in the Socio-historical Context

In 'looking back', we can see many parallels between society's attitudes toward children and women. Such attitudes make both groups vulnerable to control through repeated abuse.

Historically, children too were considered to be the property of men. A review of the literature reveals that there were continuous societal shifts with both women and children, in some eras, being perceived as innocent or good, and in other eras, being perceived as wicked. (See, for example, Rush, 1980). Children and women, so it went, had to be protected either from society, or from themselves.

Garbarino (1982) states that since the time of Aristotle there has been considerable debate about where a child 'fit' in relation to family and society. He suggests an attempt was made to resolve this issue in the Middle Ages when childhood began to be downplayed as a separate life

stage; partly due to a short life span childhood was not seen as really existing. Children were treated as 'little adults'. There were many negative implications to this status, and not too many rights.

Perhaps this perception of children as "little adults" was the basis of their large scale exploitation during the Industrial Revolution. Ironically the value of children increased as they became a cheap source of labour. Although Bybee (1979) states that there were always advocates for children, Garbarino (1982) states concern for children increased during this time when the standard of living and life expectancy both rose. Child labour laws were passed to protect children. Doctors and other professionals began to specialize in child development and childhood diseases. In 1871, Mary Ellen, a young girl in New York, was removed from her home because of neglect and abuse. At that time there were no existing agencies whose purpose was to protect children, so her cause was taken up by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. As a result of this case, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the forerunner of today's child welfare system, was founded in New York (Bybee, 1979).

The case of Mary Ellen is just one symbol of a debate that has spanned the ages: state intervention vs. the "sanctity" of the family home. All provincial child welfare legislation now deals with the issue of child physical and sexual abuse and neglect. The Child Welfare Acts of Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island state that children who witness abuse in their family are in need of protection (C.A.S.W., 1982). The Alberta Child Welfare Act recognizes that a child can be emotionally abused through exposure to domestic violence (cited in Scanlon, 1985). In spite

of such legislation, society and helping professionals are still in a quandry regarding when to intervene, and whether in fact they have the right to intervene:

"Children remain the property of others ... even when we may be outraged at the verbal or physical abuse of a person by his or her guardians, we are as inhibited from intervening as we would be from walking across their back gardens or entering uninvited into their classrooms or homes ... judging from the stricter taboo against interfering with what people do or do not do with their children (you may) it seems more easily tell a person to look after (a) house than you can tell him (or her) not to assault his (or her) young."
(McMurtry, 1979, p.4)

In discussing child battery Cole (1985) suggests that living in a society that (1) values the sanctity of the home, (2) approves of violence and authoritarianism as ways of settling differences (3) and underestimates the connections between "soft-core" abuse (verbal outbursts and shouting) and "hard-core" abuse, makes children very vulnerable, in spite of changes in contemporary societal attitudes toward children. These same factors make women vulnerable as well. As will be discussed in this practicum report, when a woman is being battered at home, in all likelihood her child is as well.

Prevalence of Wife Abuse

Although there has been increased publicity about wife abuse, and the public and professional community have become much more informed, the vast majority of assaults repeatedly occur in the 'sanctity of the home'. Many assault situations go on for years and years. Because all of Canada's data on wife abuse is gathered from police or court reports, and shelter

facilities, we are only aware of the abuse cases that have become 'public knowledge'. There have been no surveys conducted in Canada to determine the extent of wife abuse within the general population.

Several such surveys have been conducted in the United States: For example, Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz conducted a study involving a random sample of 2143 American couples of whom 1146 had one or more children aged 3 to 17, living at home at the time (Gelles & Straus, 1979). Violence was defined as "an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of physically hurting another person." (Gelles and Straus, 1979). Interviews covered a wide range of violent acts from "normal violence" (an example given by researchers is spanking) to extreme forms of violence such as beating and threatening with a knife or gun.

In this study, the researchers found that 58% of the respondents had used some form of violence toward at least one child during the year, and 71% had done so at at least one point in the child's life, but not necessarily in the past year. (Researchers randomly chose one child about which they asked parents questions.) Rates of children being hit drop progressively with age: In the age groups of 3 and 4, and 5 to 9, 82% had been hit during the year. Of the 10 to 14 year olds, 66% had been hit during the year, and 34% of 15 to 17 year olds had been hit during the year.

Regarding spousal abuse, the researchers found that 16% of the 2143 couples reported having engaged in a violent act in the last year. Findings show that husbands and wives had similar rates of violence. However the researchers do caution against misinterpreting their data: They state

their survey measured violence and not outcomes, and that this survey consequently did not indicate whether physical injury resulted from the violent act. As well, they acknowledge that husbands are typically stronger than their wives, and therefore can be much more harmful and dangerous. Gelles and Straus (1979) state that they did not measure the violence in the context in which it occurred; they recognize that when wives were being violent they were much more likely to be acting in self-defense. As well Gelles and Straus (1979) recognize that economic, social and legal constraints that "bind" a woman to a violent marriage are greater than those that bind a husband.

The researchers of this study suggest that the violence may have been underreported. As couples were reporting their own actual behaviour, they might have downplayed or "minimized" the violence they inflicted on family members. Violence, they conclude is very much a way of life in the family. Women and children in particular are likely targets.

There has been no such research undertaken in Canada. However Canadian data that is available does emphasize the prevalence of the problem.

For example, of all the Family Court cases in Toronto in 1979, 54% dealt with spousal abuse and of these 85% were wife abuse. When assaults on a husband occurred they were less severe but dealt with more harshly by the courts (Kincaid, 1982). In Manitoba domestic assault charges are consistently rising: In 1983, there were 1136 charges laid in the province (629 in Winnipeg), in 1984 there were 1339 charges laid (640 in Winnipeg) and in 1985 there were 1713 charges laid of which 923 in Winnipeg. (Manitoba

Community Services, 1986). From 1983 to 1985 almost 6300 women and children sought refuge in Manitoba's safe homes and shelters (Manitoba Community Services, 1986). A nine month study conducted at W.I.N. House, a women's shelter in Edmonton involving 320 women and their children showed that 87% of the children (201 in total) between the ages of three and eighteen were severely neglected or abused (Scanlon, 1985). And of Winnipeggers surveyed in 1984, 46% stated they personally knew someone who was being abused (Manitoba Community Services).

As it suggested by these statistics, wife abuse is a major social problem that affects a tremendous number of families. In a family where the wife is being battered it is quite likely that the children are also being abused or neglected. The prevalence of wife and child abuse within many of the same families suggests that these issues are connected, if not part of the same problem.

The Relationship Between Wife Abuse and Child Abuse

In a general discussion of all types of family violence Finkelhor (1983) refers to the violence experience as being a "brainwashing" process. In comparing wife abuse and child physical and sexual abuse he states:

"The brainwashing that accompanies family abuse is potent because families are the primary group in which most individuals construct reality. Family members often do not have enough contact with other people who can give them countervailing perceptions about themselves. The distortion of reality and self-image is generally one of the most devastating effects of family abuse."

(Finkelhor, 1983, p.20)

The abused wife and/or child may begin to believe that they deserve the

abuse. As well they may begin to believe that violence is a norm, not only in the primary world of their family but that it is a normal action and reaction in the outside world. While believing that the type of abuse they are experiencing is normal, abuse victims still feel stigmatized, shameful and isolated.

In discussing his survey of 2143 American families (as detailed in the previous section) Straus (1983) states that fathers who "frequently" abused their wives had "elevated" risks of frequently abusing their children, and mothers who were beaten by their husbands were at least twice as likely to abuse their children. He concludes that the more parents themselves are physically punished the greater the likelihood they will abuse their own children. Straus (1983) states that acceptance of the use of physical punishment is one of the factors accounting for high rates of wife and child abuse. Finkelhor (1983) suggests that "ambiguity of normative boundaries" (p.23) is a problem that is characteristic of all types of family abuse. Especially in the case of wife abuse and child physical abuse there is considerable disagreement regarding what actually constitutes abuse.

Finkelhor (1983) states that existing power differentials make women and children more vulnerable to abuse, and that female child sexual abuse within the family is an example of the most powerful abusing the least powerful. The adult male has greater power based on age, status and gender differences. He acknowledges that violent persons sometimes abuse others to compensate for their perceived lack or loss of power.

Cole (1985) also states that abuse can be a response to perceived

powerlessness. She suggests that men, socialized to wield power, are permitted to exert this power in their families by battering their wives and their children. Women, on the other hand, abuse out of a sense of powerlessness. Brought up to believe that marriage and motherhood will satisfy and empower them, and perhaps incorporating society's unrealistic romantic expectations of marriage, mothers may become frustrated and alienated, and either abuse or neglect their children. "Children will become scapegoats, the only ones with less power than the angry women who are supposed to care for them," (Cole, 1985, p.30). Cole acknowledges that whether children are abused by fathers or mothers, the impact can be equally devastating.

Finkelhor (1983) suggests that an unequal balance of power, lack of social supports and the "potent ideology of family dependency which makes it difficult for victims to contemplate surviving outside the family," (p.21) causes an "entrapment process" to occur. The abuse occurs repeatedly over long extended periods of time with the victims experiencing long-term effects which may include depression, suicidal ideation and an inability to trust or form intimate relationships (Finkelhor, 1983).

Clearly there is a relationship between wife abuse and child abuse and/or neglect. However the issue is not a simple one that can be explained by one variable. The following chapter will look at some of the popular theories that attempt to explain the etiology of violence in the family.

CHAPTER TWO

TOWARD AN ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY - SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter discusses several major theories that attempt to explain the causes of violence in the family. The reader will probably note some overlap between many theories. In reviewing the current literature, it became apparent that theories regarding wife abuse are becoming more complex. In attempts to explain the issue of wife abuse researchers seem to be realizing the importance of integrating other theories with their own. These 'new' complex theories are really a reflection of the complexity of the issue itself.

Psychopathology or Individual Personality Theory

In discussing all types of family abuse, Finkelhor (1981) states that initially:

"All cases were analyzed as extremely pathological behaviors. Incest offenders were seen as backwood degenerates and feeble-minded freaks. Child beaters were seen as depraved. Wife beaters were seen as alcoholic rogues and psychopaths . . . from only extremely lower class and disorganized families."

(Finkelhor, 1983, p.22)

A reliance on individual case studies as a method of data collecting, combined with society's unwillingness to accept that family violence was a widespread problem, contributed to the belief that such violence seldom occurred. Fear of the consequences of reporting also resulted in women

and children not reporting their victimization. Consequently the first theories to emerge in studies on family violence focused on the purported psychopathology of the abuser, or the victim, or the psychopathological relationship of the abuser and the victim.

Proponents of these theories might refer to the abuser as "passive-aggressive", "obsessive-compulsive", "sadistic" or lacking in impulse control. (Shainess, 1977, p. 114). Shainess (1977) states that "partners are psychologically and emotionally on the same level. People pick mates responsive to their own (unrecognized) neurotic needs" (1977, p. 115). Faulk (1977) suggests that the beating is not the main issue, rather the "ambivalence and pathologies of both partners" are of primary concern. (p.129). To suggest that all batterers are suffering from some sort of mental aberration, or that the batterer and the abused wife may be suffering from, or re-inforcing each other's mental aberrations is to vindicate the abuser while subtly blaming the victim for her victimization.

In tracing the evolutionary process of personality theory clear parallels can be drawn between the study of child abuse and wife abuse: early researchers examined child abuse victims to determine whether they possessed traits which made them vulnerable to abuse. (See for example Friedrich and Boreskin, 1976; Martin, 1976). More recently researchers have acknowledged the role played by social, cultural and economic factors in precipitating child abuse.

Similarly, some personality theorists now state that an individual with poor impulse control or low stress tolerance, when confronted with

environmental pressures is more likely to become violent. Such theories are a step forward from the original, oversimplified explanations. By integrating environmental stress factors into their theories, personality theorists are acknowledging the multi-faceted nature of the problem. In some respects, however, personality theories which address environmental stress are as limited as their predecessors. Personality theories do not always recognize the impact that pressure may have on the batterer and the victim. For example, to the question, "Why does she stay?" some theorists state "a woman permits her husband to beat her . . . and remains in the same situation so that she may be beaten again" (Kleckner, 1978, p.54). The battered woman is sometimes seen as a masochist with nobody to blame for the abuse but herself. While environmental factors are seen as partially (if not totally) responsible for a man's battering, factors such as societal attitudes and lack of resources are not always seen as contributing to a woman's being forced to stay in a battering relationship. According to personality theory, a woman's psychological make-up may be a predisposing factor in her own abuse. In actuality, it is the psychological experience of being abused that demeans a woman's sense of self-worth and contributes to her further victimization.

Personality theories do not address why it is men react to pressure by battering. If battering is related to the lack of impulse control why can certain men 'control' themselves in other situations but not at home? Why can some batterers wait until the children are asleep before they batter? Why can these batterers "confine" their beatings to their wives, while others batter children too?

These are questions that personality theory alone cannot address. Consequently such theories continue to be limited in scope and application, as well as possessing some inherent biases.

Family Systems or Interactional Theory

Family systems theory has emerged as a popular framework for analysis of violence in the family. By focusing on family interrelationships, focus is shifted away from individual personalities, and no one family member is seen as responsible or to blame for the abuse.

According to family systems theory, family members work to form an interacting unit, which is always attempting to maintain equilibrium. As the family experiences threats to equilibrium, coping mechanisms are developed and implemented to relieve the tension. Threats can come from internal forces (such as a family death) or external forces (such as a high unemployment rate). Such threats become family problems when the family as a unit cannot cope. Each family member is affected by threats to equilibrium and each family member must mobilize mechanisms to guard against intrusions. Each member is seen as sharing equal responsibility for problems that exist within the family (Elbow, 1977).

In regard to all types of family violence, Flanzer (1982) states (1) all members are affected by the violence (2) violence is allowed to exist with each member having a relationship to it (3) when one member changes his or her "role" in the violence, others will adjust roles accordingly. One member can "change the climate that permits violence in the family" (p.8).

Family systems theory assumes that violence functions to maintain the family as a unit (Flanzer, 1982; Frantz and Frantz-Cook, 1984).

Clearly family disagreements can be stressful for all family members. However this does not mean that all family members are responsible for the violence. A description of the tension-building process preceding a violent physical outburst is not and should not be considered analogous to an assessment of what caused the violence. To suggest that all family members have an equal opportunity to change the conditions that create violence is to ignore the gender/power/status differentials existing in the family. To explain violence in the family as a deviancy that is internally produced and maintained is to ignore the social, political and economic forces that play a part in creating and supporting the 'dysfunction'. James and McIntyre (1983) suggest that by not acknowledging that "family problems" have their origins in the social structure, family systems practitioners "may unwittingly reinforce the dysfunctional structure they seek to eliminate" (p.127).

Dobash and Dobash (1983) suggest there is little, if any difference in seeking explanations of family violence in deviant personalities and deviant family systems. For example, Hoffman (1981) suggests wife abuse is characterized by an 'overadequate' wife and an 'underadequate' husband. This author states that a husband beats up his wife to enhance his self-esteem resulting in a return to a homeostatic balance (homeostatis presumably meaning an imbalance of power in favour of the husband). Hornung, McCullough and Sugimoto (1981) suggest status incompatibility, specifically a wife having a higher status than a husband, leads to severe tension in

a relationship. The woman in such a situation is at great risk of being abused by her husband, according to these authors.

In discussing a 'deviant' family some authors may really be discussing a wife's 'deviant' non-traditional behaviour. Such theorists may imply that such dysfunctional systems would not exist if women had lesser status than men; if women were content with lesser status they would not be beaten.

Family systems theory can be a good tool when attempting to describe a specific pattern of family interaction. It can help to explain why a particular husband hits his wife. However systems theory still does contain some gender-based biases and limitations. Nor does this theory address itself completely to the larger questions of why so many women and children are abused (inside and outside the family), and what traditions and institutions perpetuate such abuse.

Family systems theory purports to look at the whole family. A review of the literature suggests this is not always so. Children are mentioned, infrequently at best in articles discussing the systems approach to violence in the family (exceptions to this being when the child is sexually abused). A family systems approach to wife abuse focuses primarily on the husband/wife dyad. Articles on the effects of marital violence on children are usually written when the wife has left the abusive relationship. Clearly the goal in wife abuse cases should be to stop the abuse. However the violent relationship of the husband and wife frequently overshadows the needs of the children. To ignore the needs of children in the marriage is to not fully recognize them as important members of the 'family system'.

Social Structural Theory

This theory suggests that in order to understand violence in the family, it is necessary to understand the unique way society organizes the interaction of family members. Unlike family systems theory which focuses on inter-relationships in the family, this model emphasizes how the actual structure of the family unit makes its members more vulnerable to conflict.

Hotaling and Straus (1980) list eleven features of the family which make this unit prone to high rates of conflict:

- (1) Time at Risk: A lot of hours are spent interacting with family members. This increases the likelihood of conflict occurring when other factors are at play.
- (2) Range of Activities: Families are involved in a wide range of activities together, resulting in more opportunity for disagreement to occur, over more issues.
- (3) Intensity of Involvement: Family members are usually more emotionally involved with each other than with persons outside the family. When disputes occur in the family, the degree of injury or hostility may also be more intense.
- (4) Infringing Activities: Family members are constantly involved in their own personal pursuits while at home. These activities may 'infringe' on those of others. Some of these activities might not occur or might be considered 'trivial' in other social groups, but could cause serious conflict at home. (For example, playing the stereo too loud, leaving things around.)
- (5) Right to Influence: Family membership carries with it a concern for

other members and an implicit right to influence others' behaviour, when deemed necessary, thus increasing the likelihood that conflict could arise.

(6) Age and Sex Differences: Generational and gender differences create "differences of opinion" in the family. With other factors, this can make the family an "arena of culture conflict" (p.16).

(7) Ascribed Roles: Family statuses and roles are assigned on the basis of biology, not on the basis of interest and ability. This alone can create numerous areas for conflict.

(8) Family Privacy: When violence in the family does occur the rules of society which define family activities as a "private affair" result in the family being isolated from both social controls and outside assistance. This makes further violence more likely.

(9) Involuntary Membership: Despite changes in such areas as divorce and child welfare laws, factors such as age, economic and legal constraints, and emotional and social pressures, make it difficult to terminate family relationships when repeated violence occurs.

(10) High Level of Stress: The family is continuously experiencing major structural change as it passes through the family life cycle. This, coupled with the major emotional investments individuals make in families, contributes to more stress and conflict.

(11) Extensive Knowledge of Family Biographies: Family members are privy to all sorts of information about each other. This information can be used to support and encourage the other, or it can be used to make the other more dependent or more vulnerable.

Ironically, the very factors that precipitate intimacy and caring between family members also seem to prompt violence in the family (Hotaling and Straus, 1980).

Gelles and Straus (1979) state that there are other social groups that have a high level of conflict, but that two factors combined with a high level of conflict, create a high level of violence in the family: first, the family serves as a 'training ground' providing members with learning contexts in which violent acts are committed; and second, only the family is given the implicit cultural right to hit if someone is "doing wrong" or "won't listen to reason" (p.36).

The implication in this model is that all family members are equally prone to violence, and that only family members have the implicit social permission to perpetrate violence on each other. As stated previously, women and children, both in the social and familial context are more vulnerable and powerless than men, and consequently are more likely to be repeated victims in both spheres. Although proponents of this theory imply a recognition of power differentials in the family, their primary interest seems to be the 'structure' as a whole. Violence in the family, not violence against women and children in the family is seen as the real issue.

Proponents of this model recognize that factors in social organization are not the only causes of violence. Their model places the family in the wider social context and examines the impact of society on the family unit. This model then complements, to some extent, the personality and systems theories which explain violence by focusing on individuals with specific backgrounds and personalities interacting in the family.

This model does raise many interesting points regarding how societal influences create both an atmosphere for potential intimacy and violence

in the family. From the social work perspective, this model could be of some help as an analytical and intervention tool. For example, encouraging women to maintain connections outside the family may make it easier for them not to keep family affairs private. Such contacts may also loosen some of the emotional constraints that make leaving a violent relationship so difficult.

Learning Theory

This theory, also known as the cycle of violence theory, is perhaps the best known theory pertaining to violence in the family. This model suggests that children who witnessed or directly experienced abuse in their family of origin will likely repeat this pattern in their family of procreation either as victims or perpetrators of abuse. This theory first became popular over twenty years ago when early pioneers in child abuse reported that many child-abusing parents were themselves abused as children. More recently this theory has been utilized to explain wife abuse.

A review of the literature suggests it is not possible to predict that a violent upbringing is a definite predictor of husband-wife violence. However many studies do consistently suggest a stronger link between boys who experience violence in their family of origin and occurrence of violent behaviours in adulthood, than is the case with girls. For example, in a survey involving 150 American women seeking crisis services for battered wives, 81% of the wives reported that their husbands were beaten as children or witnessed their fathers beating their mothers. Only 33% of the women surveyed reported they were beaten as children or witnessed their fathers beating their mothers (Roy, 1977).

Walker (1984) conducted a survey involving 400 self-identified battered women. About one-half of the sample reported on both battering and non-battering relationships. Findings showed that 67% of the women, 81% of the batterers and 24% of the non-batterers were abused as children. Wife abuse was reported in the families of origin of 63% of the batterers, 44% of the battered women and 27% of the non-batterers. Women reported being equally battered by both parents while men were one-third more likely to be abused by their fathers. Walker suggests that fathers may be perpetuating abuse through their sons, and that this may be an area for further study.

Hofeller (1982) conducted a control group study involving 50 battered women matched on educational level with 50 women who were in non-violent marriages. The women in the experimental group reported 50% of their husbands experienced no violence in their families of origin, 28% witnessed wife abuse, 4% were abused, and 12% were both abused and witnessed abuse. Sixty-seven percent of the women in this group reported no abuse in their own families of origin, 10% reported wife abuse, 14% reported being abused, and 10% reported both. In the control group, no abuse was reported in the families of origin of 96% of the women and 94% of the men.

Stacey and Shupe (1983) in a study involving 542 battered women in a shelter found that only 34% witnessed their mothers being battered, while 57% of the same women reported that their husbands had witnessed abuse between parents. According to the women, 38% of the husbands were abused as children, and 31% had siblings who were abused.

Most studies focusing on family-learned behaviour rely on data obtained from women, usually in shelters who report on both their childhood history and that of their husbands. Kincaid (1982) suggests that this may result in some distortions and/or misinterpretation of data collected. She suggests that women in shelters may feel guilty about leaving their husbands, or they may still feel to blame for the violence. Placing blame on the husband's family of origin is one way that women can shift blame away from herself and her husband. Many people today are familiar with the cycle of violence theory and it is possible that the reports do overestimate the number of husbands who experienced violence in their families of origin. Kincaid (1982) also suggests that violence in a woman's family of origin does not automatically help create an environment where violence can be repeated in her adult life. Women in shelters may have been strongly motivated to leave battering relationships as such experiences might have brought up unhappy memories of a violent childhood. Kincaid cautions against generalizing about the incidence of violence in the families of origin, based only on reports of women in shelters. She does however note the high degree of consistency regarding incidence between various studies in the field.

In spite of possible inaccuracies studies do indicate substantiated support for the 'cycle of violence' theory to be more applicable to men, than women. Pagelow (1984) criticizes learning theorists for generalizing findings and suggesting that the theory applies to men and women. She suggests this theory should be further refined to focus specifically on the father/son cycle of violence, as preliminary research suggests boys from violent homes are more likely to become violent with their spouses

and children. Exposure to violence in childhood is not as strong an indicator of a woman's further victimization in her adult life.

Boys from violent homes do at an early age begin to show more overt behaviour problems than girls exposed to violence at home, and more problems than boys from non-violent homes. Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson and Zak (1984) in a multiple regression analysis matched 50 mothers and children in a shelter with 50 mother-child pairs from the community. Their study showed children's behaviour was strongly related to maternal adjustment and the amount of violence in the home. Boys from violent homes reported significantly more behaviour problems than girls. Boys in the abuse group differed from the non-violent sample of boys. These findings are consistent with studies conducted by Hughes and Barad (1983) and Porter and O'Leary (1980) who found that 'overt marital hostility' (p.287) correlated significantly with many behaviour problems of boys but not of girls.

The studies cited above suggest that perhaps boys from violent homes become aggressive and externalize behaviour, whereas girls have a tendency to internalize problems. Kincaid (1982) in her discussion of learning theory suggests a "different lesson" is learned by boys and girls: whereas both boys and girls may have witnessed violence or have been abused as children, boys it seems are much more likely to learn the role of batterer regardless of their previous victim status.

Pagelow (1984) suggests that the learned behaviour theory may be helpful in trying to understand husband-wife violence but it is important to recognize that the family does not operate in isolation. Values and beliefs trans-

mitted by the family are created and reinforced by the social structure. Pagelow suggests that to be truly useful learned behaviour theory should incorporate learning of and adherence to traditional dichotomized patterns of behaviour. She states that strict adherence to such roles seems to provide the most potential for abuse in intimate relationships.

Feminist Theory

The feminist perspective views violence against women and children as the historical expression of male control both within and outside the family (Schechter, 1982). This unegalitarian control structure exists because it has been reinforced through the social, political and economic institutions in society. Men have control, and consequently they have greater access to opportunities, resources -- and power. Violent acts such as rape and wife abuse are the ultimate ways of demonstrating, and ensuring the perpetuation of that unequal distribution of power.

Although feminists are concerned with the personal growth and empowerment of individuals, they believe such development within the person cannot occur without an awareness of the role that socio-cultural factors play in impeding this process. The feminist approach does not concentrate specifically on the problems or personalities of a family in which abuse occurs. In this regard wife abuse is not seen as a 'personal' problem. Rather it is seen as a socially created and reinforced means of control. The feminist approach is very much concerned about the 'global' context in which battering occurs, for to extinguish battering completely change must occur in the social and cultural institutions that reinforce it.

While some feminist theorists have chosen to focus on why abuse is directed at women (and children) by men, (see for instance, Schechter, 1982) others have expanded their analysis to include questions such as why certain men abuse and others do not. For instance, Pagelow (1977) proposes a relationship between traditional ideology, the battering experience and wife assault. Her analysis considers three factors:

(1) Development: The traditional dichotomized ideology that still permeates our culture continues to reinforce the subordinate status of women and children. This creates a situation in which women and children are vulnerable to abuse, and men, primarily become batterers.

(2) Primary Battering: Some men assault their partners while others do not. A strong dichotomized ideology, combined with factors such as reinforcement of violence as a way of dealing with feelings of anger, stress or frustration, and previous exposure to violence, increase the likelihood that an assault may occur. The integration of these factors and others, with a traditional ideology may distinguish the batterer from the non-batterer.

(3) Secondary Battering: In many cases, a woman is not beaten only once. Pagelow (1981) suggests that the fewer the resources available to a woman, the more negative the response from family, friends and the community, and the stronger the woman's own traditional ideology, the greater is the likelihood that violence will recur.

Kincaid (1982) is also interested in what turns a predisposition to violence into battering. Borrowing from Pagelow's model, she suggests that wife battering occurs when there is an interplay between a cycle of violence and a cycle of sexism (intergenerational transmission of rigid

traditional roles, beliefs and values). Kincaid states the degree to which individuals "buy into" the cycle of sexism may be the determining variable in the etiology of husband-wife violence.

The feminist perspective posited by Pagelow and Kincaid is particularly interesting. The essence of their theories is what is at the root of all feminist theories regarding violence in the family: a traditional patriarchal ideology that is reflected in society and the family creates an imbalance of power, which in turn creates potential abuse. However both Pagelow and Kincaid suggest that wife abuse is related to the interplay of other variables (such as individual personality, intergenerational transmission of violent family patterns). As well they state that 'degree' (for example, stronger vs. weaker ideology, fewer vs. more resources available to the woman) is a crucial factor in predicting wife abuse.

Pagelow and Kincaid have integrated other theories into their model and have begun to develop a more complex feminist framework for analyzing the complicated problem of wife abuse. Such complex explanations are required for despite the power differentials existing between men and women and children, some men batter while others do not. Many batterers also abuse their children while others do not. Many battered women in turn abuse their children while others do not.

In order to understand violence in the family, one must also understand factors related to the victim, the batterer, other family members and the social context in which the battery occurs. In discussing child sexual abuse, Finkelhor (1984) states that "factors at a number of levels, regarding

a number of individuals come into play in determining its occurrence" (p.68). This statement is equally applicable to wife abuse, which in turn is related to child abuse and neglect.

The multi-factored approach discussed above is essentially the feminist/ecological perspective which was adopted by this writer as an assessment and intervention tool in this practicum. McCannell (1986) has used the feminist/ecological perspective in her analysis of 'family politics, family policy and family practice'. The use of this perspective when working specifically with children from violent homes will be discussed in Chapter Four. Chapter Three is a discussion of special problems and issues facing a child whose mother is being battered.

CHAPTER THREE

CHILDREN FROM VIOLENT HOMESChildren from Violent Homes - An Overview

When a woman who is in a battering relationship is also a mother, her children are constant witnesses to violence that occurs within the family. Lenore Walker (1984) notes that 87% of 400 battered women interviewed, stated that their children were aware of the violence within their family home. In a study conducted in London, Ontario, women stated they were beaten an average of 35 times before they made their first call to the police (Boswell, 1983). Although such episodes may go unreported for a long time outside the home, they cannot go undetected inside the home.

Elbow (1982) states that whether a child's mother is being abused, or whether it is the child who is the victim of abuse, the violent confrontation that occurs reinforces the message that violence is the primary means of conflict resolution. Children experience anxiety and fear about self-control issues while witnessing their parents' helplessness in the face of their own (the parents') uncontrolled impulses (Elbow, 1982). Researchers Jaffe, Wolfe, Wilson and Zak (1986) suggest that children who have been exposed to family violence may experience adjustment problems similar to those of children who have been victims of direct abuse. The above researchers conducted a study involving three comparison sample groups. A sample of 32 male children, between the ages of four and sixteen years, who were exposed to family violence in the past year, was obtained from several shelters for battered women. The second sample consisted of eighteen

male children between the ages of six and sixteen years, who were in the care of a provincial child welfare agency, as a result of being physically abused by their parents. The third sample, a community comparison sample group consisted of fifteen male children between the ages of six and sixteen whose parents had responded to an ad in the newspaper which requested participants for a study on family relations. Criteria for inclusion in this sample included no evidence of psychiatric disturbance within the family, as well as no evidence of physical violence within the family.

Using the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist as the major assessment instrument, the researchers found that boys who were exposed to family violence had social and behavioural difficulties which resembled problems shown by children who had been abused. Both groups differed significantly from children in nonviolent families. The researchers in this study recognize that the problems exhibited by boys exposed to family violence may be related to variables such as family stress and disrupted school, home and social supports. As well, these researchers acknowledge that there may have been considerable overlap between the "abuse" sample and the "exposed" sample. Boys who had been abused may have been witness to violence, and some of the boys who were in the "exposed" sample may have been abused themselves. However this study does suggest that exposure to family violence can be an important factor in children's adjustment problems. As previously discussed in the section of this practicum report dealing with social learning theory, this same group of researchers suggest that gender may be a factor in children's adjustment with boys from violent homes exhibiting more overt behaviour problems than girls.

Children are never only witnesses to abuse. Stacey and Shupe (1983) state that children from violent homes are more likely to suffer severe emotional neglect from both parents. The abusing fathers are frequently so caught up in their own issues that they do not have the time or ability to concentrate on their children's needs. Many battered women are forced into neglecting their children by men who demand all their attention. Sometimes these women are so severely beaten that all their energy is consumed in healing and protecting themselves. There is little left for their children. Woods (1981) states that women who are being abused do not have the strength or stability to provide their children with consistent nurturing. In many cases, the woman's self-esteem is so low that she does not feel confident in her own abilities as a mother.

Many children whose mothers are in battering relationships are not only exposed to serious forms of emotional abuse and neglect. In her study involving 400 battered American women, Walker (1984) reported that 53% of the men who abused their partners also abused their children, and 28% of the mothers who were being battered abused their children. As well several women in this study, without being asked direct questions regarding sexual abuse, volunteered that their battering husbands also sexually abused their children. Walker (1984) concludes that children are at greater risk of being physically hurt by their battering fathers, but when angry at their husbands, women will also abuse their children: "Anger begets more anger. Violence begets more violence" (p.60).

Scanlon (1985) conducted a nine month study involving 320 women and their children at W.I.N. House, a women's shelter in Edmonton. The findings

of this study that concentrate on incidence of emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect can be found in Table 1. Most abuse to the children was identified through combining results of interviews with mothers and interviews and play sessions with children. Most neglect was identified through compiling results of mother's interviews and mother-child observations. Scanlon (1985) states that although the mothers in the shelter were in crisis, this probably did not result in overreporting but underreporting; the combination of having extra support and care at the shelter, and the mothers' being on their best 'behaviour' for the interviews may have resulted in some underreporting.

Insert Table 1 about here.

There is a general consensus among researchers that if there is violence between parents, it is very likely that there is violence being directed toward children. If these children are not being directly abused physically or sexually they are certainly most vulnerable to emotional abuse and neglect. Scanlon's study at W.I.N. House definitely supports this premise.

The Effects of Violence on Children: A Developmental Perspective

Carlson (1984) suggests that a parallel can be drawn between the age and developmental differences that affect children's reactions to violence and the developmental differences that affect children's reactions to parental separation or divorce. Children who are living with their mothers who have left battering relationships are attempting to adjust to their parents' separation, as well as coping with the experience of witnessing

TABLE 1

Incidence of Neglect and Emotional, Physical and Sexual Abuse of Children Staying at WIN House (Edmonton, 1985)*

Number of Children	Age of Children				Total	Additional Comments
	0-36 mos.	3-6 yrs.	7-10 yrs.	11-18 yrs.		
	98	125	66	47	336	
"Neglect Only" *	22% (22)	9% (3)	4% (3)	--	11% (37)	Neglect seen as a 'mother' issue as child care still primarily her responsibility. Neglect was seen as difficult to assess in children over 10.
"Emotional Abuse Only" *	5% (5)	14% (18)	8% (7)	11% (5)	10% (35)	Mothers were assessed as being responsible for the emotional abuse of 60% of children under 3.
"Emotionally and Physically Abused" *	33% (33)	64% (70)	72% (48)	90% (92)	53% (193)	Father responsible for 78% of all abuse and 87% of abuse to the 11-18 yr. olds. Mother were abusive in 36% of all cases; in the 11-18 year age range mothers were abusive in 13% of all cases.
"Sexually Abused"	2% (2)	12% (15)	11% (7)	30% (14)	11% (38)	Fathers were perpetrators in 72% (or 27) of the cases. Other perpetrators were male significant others (4) and strangers (5).
Not Abused (Emotionally, Physically or Sexually)	67% (66)	36% (45)	28% (19)	10% (5)	40% (135)	If neglected children are included the statistic increases by approximately 20%.

* as compiled from information reported in Children's Domestic Violence Demonstration Project (Scanlon, 1985)

* as Scanlon (1985) did not always include the actual numbers of cases of abuse and neglect, some numbers were calculated based on percentages given.

or being the victims of repeated abuse within their family. Such is the situation of children in safe shelters.

Infancy - In regard to infants, Woods (1981) reports that the healthy infant should be responsive to adults, especially familiar adults, such as parents. As well, infants should be active in the exploration of their environment. Infants who are non-responsive and have a low activity level may be experiencing some difficulty in their home environment. Thus, the infant who has been in a violent environment may display signs of insecure attachment, distrust and irritability.

Pre-School - Hilberman and Munson (1978) found that toddlers and pre-schoolers experienced a high degree of somatic complaints and tended to regress to earlier stages of development and functioning. These behaviours are similar to those reported in children of the same age who were experiencing separation or divorce between their parents (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). With toddlers and pre-schoolers, cognitive and verbal skills are limited. Similarly, children of this age are unable to turn to friends or other resources for support. Straus (1980) states that there is a general tendency for pre-schoolers and school-aged children to feel responsible for the violence that occurs within their family. Children in these age groups whose parents are separating, also, are most likely to feel guilt and self-blame (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). In their study of the psychological functioning of 65 child residents of a battered women's shelter, Hughes and Barad (1983) found that pre-schoolers scored well below average on administered self-esteem measures. These authors concluded that their findings were congruent with those of Wallerstein and Kelly (1975) who

reported that pre-schoolers experienced the most difficulty in adjusting to family disruption.

During pre-school years, children should be showing signs of emotionally moving outside their immediate family. They should be forming friendships with other children their age. Children from violent marriages continue to be extremely dependent on their parents. Kempe and Kempe (1978) state this dependency is so great that the child will collaborate with the abusing parent against all outside agencies who may be investigating the family situation. Woods (1983) states that children from violent homes are fearful and vulnerable, though they present a tough facade. Walker (1984) states that if these strong dependency needs are not resolved, they may be carried over into the child's marriage. In a study that she conducted Walker (1984) found that over one half of the violent men questioned reported "unresolved dependency needs" that were perpetuated in their dependency on their wives and children.

Children from abusive homes are extremely dependent on their parents. However, these same children, at a very early age, become so alert to cues in their environment and so sensitive to the needs of their parents, that they "cease behaving like children" (Walker, 1984). Paradoxically, while presenting as independent, these children are emotionally starved. The intense emotional and physical needs of these children, for the most part, go unfulfilled. Consequently children in abusive situations may develop a tendency to distrust adults.

Latency-Aged - In regard to latency-aged children, Alessi and Hearn (1984)

state that these children vacillate between wanting to please adults, and being eager to make friends and being angry and aggressive. Hilberman and Munson(1978) found latency-aged boys to be more aggressive than female children of the same age. Boys became disruptive, fighting with sibling and friends; girls tended to become passive, withdrawn, clingy and anxious. Other authors (Davidson, 1978; Pizzey, 1977; Stacey and Shupe, 1983; Walker, 1984) have also suggested that there may be a relationship between gender, children from violent homes, and aggression. Hughes and Barad (1983) found sex differences in problem behaviour with school-age children. These authors state that these gender differences found in children from violent homes are consistent with social sex role stereotypes. Hilberman and Munson (1978) state that as children grow older they may become less sympathetic, and, sometimes hostile or outwardly aggressive toward their mothers. Walker (1984) suggests children model and identify with powerful adults so that they can feel powerful and safe, resulting in their co-participating in their father's abuse of their mother. Elbow (1982) suggests that a dichotomy of good and evil, male and female can occur, and that this can create further barriers to positive gender identification for children. She states children do not want to identify with the violence of the abuser or the helplessness of the victim. However they sometimes do begin to equate maleness with hurting people, femaleness with being passive, and with being hurt. These theories are consistent with those of Pagelow (1984) and Kincaid (1982) which were discussed in the section on learning theory. Rosenbaum and O'Leary (1981) report a "strong" and "significant" tendency for husbands who had witnessed parental abuse (in their families of origin) to report the abusive dynamic in their own relationship. This study's findings are consistent with those previously cited (Hughes and Barad, 1983; Porter

O'Leary, 1980; Wolfe et al, 1984) which suggest that boys react to violence at home by externalizing while girls' reactions are considerably less overt. In the absence of appropriate intervention boys who have been witnesses to wife abuse, may be at greater risk of growing up to be batterers.

In regard to children who are experiencing their parents' separation, Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) report that children in their early latency years develop increased anger towards the custodial parent, usually the mother. They also display a "pervasive sadness" and a feeling of being abandoned. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) state parental separation is difficult for children of this age as they are unable to use denial as a coping mechanism, as is the case with younger children. Nor are they able to mobilize into supportive peer groups, like older children.

Because children from this age group who come from abusive backgrounds may be angry and distrusting, they may experience problems in their attempts to develop and maintain friendships (Woods, 1981). Their strong dependency on their parents, their inability to identify and express feelings, and their anger, can cause them considerable difficulty in interpersonal relationships. Sometimes these children devote so much time and energy into surviving physically and emotionally in their own environment that there is not much energy remaining for the development of friendships.

Children from violent homes may experience difficulty in academic pursuits. They simply may not have the energy to maintain the necessary pace at school. All their concentration may be focused on the difficulties at home, or they may be too tired to concentrate, having been unable to

fall asleep due to violent disruptions at home. In the absence of strong, caring, responsible parents, many children must assume more than their share of child care and household responsibilities. This can result in these children being too tired to concentrate on academics or missing a significant amount of school days. Older girls in particular may assume extra responsibility around the house (Pizzey, 1974; N.S.P.C.C. School of Social Work, 1981).

Woods (1981) states that as children grow older they should be developing more tolerance for frustration. If children are constantly overwhelmed by their mistakes, they do not develop the necessary tolerance for satisfactory social adjustment (Woods, 1981). In regard to school performance, Woods (1981) states that ideally children should do well, relative to their intellectual capabilities and motivation. Generally, healthy children should not be experiencing constant failure and frustration in various academic attempts. Children from violent home situations become quite adept at surviving in their traumatic home environment. However, they often have little tolerance for frustration and very poor problem solving skills. In discussing child residents in shelters for battered women, Alessi and Hearn (1984) state that these children may initially attempt to solve problems by hitting. They are not aware of any other alternatives. These children tend to project blame and mistakes onto other people or objects. These are the coping skills that have been their means of survival in their home environment.

Although such children might "act-out" or "hit" in their attempts to solve problems, they might also be passive, shy and uncommunicative

(Hughes, 1981; Varma, 1981). Verbal expressions of feelings and needs are often resisted in families where there is violence; having such feelings may be equated with inadequacy and weakness (Elbow, 1982). Children may withdraw as a way of coping; they may "tune out" with a television or stereo. As these children grow older, they are more able to physically remove themselves from home by becoming involved in constructive or destructive activities (Walker, 1984).

Wallerstein and Kelly suggest that children in later latency are intensely angry when their parents separate. Along with this anger lies an inner fear of being abandoned or forgotten by both parents. While "putting up a good front", they may have underlying feelings of rejection.

Halperin (1981) suggests latency-aged children from violent homes may have negative and/or ambivalent feelings toward other family members: Halperin's study matched twenty abused black children and one of their non-abused siblings with twenty non-abused children and their siblings. (This sample was entirely black as the school in which the study took place was more than 80% black). Findings showed that both abused and non-abused children from violent homes had more negative and fewer positive feelings and perceptions toward their parents and siblings, than children from non-abusive families. As well children from abusive families had more feelings of ambivalence toward their parents when compared to the control group.

Children from violent homes are particularly needy and dependent on their parents. However many of their needs go unfulfilled. It follows easily that these children would have ambivalent and negative feelings

toward their family.

Wife assault is not an isolated event. It frequently occurs in a repeated cycle consisting of what Walker (1984) has identified as three phases: (1) The Tension Building Phase; (2) The Acute Battering Incident and (3) The Honeymoon Phase, where following the release of tension through battering, the batterer may become charming and loving. The batterer in the final stage may beg forgiveness for his actions. This phase is characterized by "unusual calm" in the family (Walker, 1979). Given that there can be long periods of time when the family experiences a non-abusive father, and an absence of tension and violence in the home, children may very well be confused and ambivalent toward their father or mother whom they may perceive as being equally responsible for the abuse.

Adolescence - Adolescence is a time in which the peer group gains in importance as a source of support. Peer groups provide an opportunity for adolescents to emotionally distance themselves from their family. Many become involved in positive activities outside the home. Walker (1984) suggests there is a strong correlation between teenagers' destructive activities outside the home, and violence in those teenagers' families. Walker also suggests that fathers are more likely to abuse their adolescent children, than are mothers. As discussed previously, batterers may have "strong unresolved dependency needs". The batterer needs his children to fill those needs. As his children show signs of becoming increasingly independent, the batterer may react by attempting to control through violence.

While adolescents may choose to seek support outside the family, they may also be further drawn into the family system. Parents may require

the adolescent to be available to meet their emotional needs, as well as to take on responsibilities for household management. As teens become "drawn into the battle", they may frequently take sides (Carlson, 1984). Walker (1979) suggests daughters may be angry with their mothers, because of a perceived powerlessness. Adolescent girls may develop a distrust of men, or they may begin to associate violence with love (Carlson, 1984). Adolescent boys may intervene on behalf of their mother, (perhaps further incurring their father's wrath), or they may begin directing their anger towards their mothers, sisters or girlfriends.

When A Battered Woman Leaves - Special Issues Encountered by Children

All children from violent homes have been described as having a sense of "restlessness" and "rootlessness" (N.S.P.C.C. School of Social Work, 1981). Mothers often leave their battering husbands several times before finally separating permanently. As well as being emotionally torn between two parents, children in abusive situations are frequently uprooted, as their parents separate and reconcile. When battered women leave their husbands, they may take the children with them. If they are lacking in financial, legal and emotional supports, they may be forced to leave their children behind. A lack of resources, coupled with a poor sense of self-esteem may cause a woman to believe she cannot survive without the "support" of her husband. This may be a factor in a decision to reconcile. Elbow (1982) suggests many fathers use their children as ransom to force their wives into reconciliation. A batterer may remove his children for days or weeks, as a threat to his wife, if he senses she may be planning on separating from him (Elbow, 1982). When the situation at home is particularly tense, children may be sent to stay with extended family while

tension lessens.

Mothers in abusive situations give considerable thought to what is best for their children. The belief that their children need an "intact family" may keep mothers in violent spousal relationships. Frequently it is when mothers acknowledge that their children are also victims of abuse, that they will choose to leave their battering husbands (Walker, 1984; Elbow, 1982). Nonetheless, the chaotic shifts that occur within such families can further detrimentally affect the child's emotional development.

When battering women do decide to separate from their husbands, this decision is made after considerable deliberation. The family home may have been a very chaotic, frightening one. Nonetheless separation is a very traumatic event for the children involved.

Although children at different ages have different abilities in regard to understanding what divorce means, Hodges (1986) states that "it's a fairly mature child that really understands that the household may be happier and that lifestyle is going to be more comfortable as a function of the divorce" (p.5). Underlying the various verbal and non-verbal behaviours exhibited by children whose parents are separating, there may also be feelings of pain, anger, self-blame and insecurity (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). Hodges (1986) suggests that due to their limited cognitive ability, children have some common misperceptions about life. These ideas may make the divorce experience particularly difficult for children. Children are egocentric and tend to focus in on themselves. When they interpret a message (correctly or incorrectly) to mean that they are not being loved, they

may conclude that they are not lovable. Similarly their egocentricity may make it difficult for the child to perceive his or her parents as having the problems. The child perceives any difficulties as originating within him or herself. As well, children assume that parents' love for each other is "wired in" (Hodges, 1986). When they discover that this is not the case, they may become distressed or frightened. "If Mommy can divorce Daddy when she's mad at him, can she divorce me if she's mad at me?" (Hodges, 1986). When parental separation or divorce occurs at times during which the child is trying to separate, he or she may experience even more difficulties. Young infants who have not been given a secure environment, may become clinging, dependent and anxious. If separation occurs in the very early stages of development, children may have difficulty establishing attachments. In regard to adolescence, a time during which teenagers are attempting to establish their own individual identity, parental separation may make it difficult for the teenager to start the developmental task of separating from his or her parents (Hodges, 1986).

The parents' responsibility to their children when they are separating, is similar to the assistance they should be able to offer their children during any traumatic experience, whether that experience is one of separation, hospitalization or geographic relocation. Ideally, the traumatic event should be discussed with the child prior to its actual occurrence. Intervention with the child should involve helping the child understand what will be, or is, happening. The parents, or other adults involved must be alert to the child's verbal or non-verbal reactions. They should be able to help the child express his or her feelings verbally, or through play or other symbolic communication (Lieberman, 1979).

In regard to the trauma of separation or divorce, Poirier and Turgeon (1982) state that:

"It is an adult problem that exists for adult reasons and it is therefore adults who must assume the responsibility of dealing with it. Children must know this, and it is their parents who can express this to them." (pp.193-94).

However providing their children with a sense of understanding in regard to the separation, and allowing their children the opportunity to express their feelings about the trauma are not easy tasks for parents. Even when children have been raised in a stable, healthy environment parents may be emotionally unavailable or unable to give their children all the support they need to accept and adapt to their changing circumstances (Bonkowski, Bequette and Boomhower, 1984).

In discussing the problems encountered by children living in "safe shelters", Alessi and Hearn (1984) state that they are very much in a crisis state. Their whole world has been disrupted. Previous coping mechanisms (hitting, aggression) no longer "work" for them. These children are experiencing multiple losses: loss of major support systems (school, friends, neighbourhood), as well as the loss of the significant male adult in their lives. There is usually considerable change in the family's financial status. Their ability to get any additional support from their mothers may be considerably curtailed, as much of their mothers' energies are being focused on getting their own life situations back on track. Rather than getting support when they need it most for themselves, children are frequently required to be more supportive and to take on additional responsibilities within their family.

Implications for Practice

When working with children whose mothers have left battering relationships there are certain issues that must be addressed:

- (1) Children must learn that violence is unacceptable behaviour. They should be provided with factual information about violence against mothers and children in order for them to unlearn destructive myths (Sinclair, 1985).
- (2) Apter (1982) states that by involving children in positive experiences they can develop confidence and self-respect, which in turn brings increased acceptance by others. A pressing issue in working with children from violent homes is the building of a sense of self-esteem. Children need to know that their needs and feelings are important.
- (3) Children must learn to identify and express feelings in a positive constructive way. Sinclair (1985) states special emphasis should be placed on teaching children that it is alright to be angry, but that anger can be expressed in non-violent, non-aggressive ways. Apter (1982), in discussing "troubled children" states all "feelings should be nurtured. Children should have the opportunity to know all of themselves - anger, fear, resentment, joy" (p.135).
- (4) Although violence is unacceptable, children must be provided with the opportunity to express their feelings about the violence in their homes, and how it affected them (Alessi and Hearn, 1983).
- (5) Identifying and expressing feelings also means allowing the child to mourn the losses resulting from his or her parents' separation - loss of friends, neighbourhood, home and significant male figure. Similarly children should be helped to recognize their ambivalent feelings towards

their parents. "They may love their dad but hate his violence. They may love their mom but hate her for putting up with the violence, or for leaving" (Sinclair, 1985).

(6) Children from violent homes may have learned that men are aggressive and dominate women and that women are passive and are meant to be abused. Both these role models are ineffective, stifling and dangerous. Alternative role models must be made available, so that children can grow and develop and have a positive sense of what they are all about. Children must learn that roles are not rigid but flexible and that there is no specific way for men only and women only to act.

(7) As noted previously, children often perceive that they are responsible for family problems. Because they believe they are the cause of their fathers' violence, they believe they can stop the violence by being a better child. Children must learn that family problems and violence inflicted on mothers, and often on them, are not their responsibility. If parents separate the child needs to know that this is the parents' responsibility.

(8) Children must know that they do have certain rights and responsibilities (Sinclair, 1985). These include the right to be nurtured, the right to control over their bodies, and the right to a safe environment. Children should know how to protect their rights (calling a neighbour, police) if their rights are being violated.

(9) Many children were raised in an atmosphere where violence was the primary means of conflict resolution. Given this, they must learn that there are healthy and unhealthy ways of solving problems (Alessi and Hearn, 1983). Children can learn to control their behaviour and to think through problems. They can also learn to discuss issues, as a way of giving more

control over life events (Apter, 1982).

(10) Many children from violent homes, in the absence of nurturing caregivers have assumed the responsibility of caring for themselves and for other siblings. Their own dependency needs may have gone unmet. Children should be allowed the right to be just that - children.

(11) None of these issues can begin to be addressed if a relationship based on trust has not developed between the child, and the person working with him or her. Many children are unable to trust, and consequently to learn from others because of past bad experiences (Apter, 1982). The beginning of a development of a sense of safety and a sense of trust would be the essential first step in any intervention process.

CHAPTER FOUR

A FEMINIST ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

A concern for the "person in the environment" essentially forms the foundation of social work practice. When working within an ecological framework the social worker is concerned with the complex environmental network that includes the individual, the family, the environment and the interrelationships of all these systems. This perspective views individuals and their environment as "mutually shaping systems, each changing over time, each adapting in response to change in the other" (Garbarino, 1982, p.16). The feminist perspective recognizes this interrelationship but states that male/female relationships are still based on unequal distribution of power. Conflicts within the individual, or between the individual and family and/or environment can result from gender role requirements and expectations of the larger society and from changing ideas about gender-related behaviour.

This framework is valuable both as a tool for assessment and intervention. Because this approach emphasizes the inter-connectedness of different systems, this framework can be effectively utilized with a variety of theoretical models (Auerswald, 1968), including crisis theory, family systems theory or the developmental model of the life cycle. Use of this approach coupled with other theories allows for the development of new ideas regarding intervention. Auerswald (1968) states that by "expanding the horizons" in this way the:

"targets of the therapeutic activity are much clearer and the therapeutic work is more clearly focused on forces and situations that are truly etiological in a given problem situation. Techniques of producing therapeutic change can be brought to arenas much larger than the therapy room or even the home." (p.206).

By understanding the specific elements that comprise the ecological framework we can gain a true and clear appreciation of the value of this framework as a tool in the analysis and treatment of complex social problems such as violence in the family. Bronfenbrenner (1979) has developed a human ecosystem model that enables us to study how the immediate family, the home environment, the community and the larger social and cultural world affects the child and his or her family. This model will now be discussed in detail.

The Microsystem

If we look at the individual's environment as a series of levels or layers, the microsystem is considered to be the layer most immediate to the person. It is composed of actual settings in which the individual experiences and creates day to day, face to face reality. Examples of a child's microsystem would include family members (or the family as a whole), school, peer groups and clubs. Of all these systems, Garbarino (1982) states that the family is "the basic unit of human experience embedded within a series of environmental contexts" (p.20). The family precedes the child; the child's parents underwent a whole complex process of social-

ization prior to becoming parents. Their "history" affects them in their role as parents. As noted earlier, a history of violence in their family of origin may affect how conflict is handled in their family of procreation, which in turn of course, affects the child. As well previously discussed factors such as a family's adherence to, and intergenerational transmission of a rigid, traditional ideology may also be related to how power is distributed in the family, which in turn is related to the abuse of women and children.

Garbarino (1982) outlines three dimensions of microsystems that influence a child's development, positively or negatively:

- (1) Small vs. Large: Children need consistency and stability, but at the same time, they will develop more fully if they experience a variety of roles, relationships and activities, including contact with people of different ages and backgrounds. As noted earlier, children from violent homes may have restricted social contact outside their family. Part of a social worker's involvement might be to more fully develop a child's microsystem.
- (2) Balanced vs. Unbalanced: Children need reciprocal relationships -- what Garbarino (1982) refers to as the "give and take interaction that both respects and challenges the child, that stimulates and responds appropriately" (pp. 36-37). The balance of power between parent and child should reflect the child's developmental age and capabilities. In violent homes, the child is sometimes dominated by the parent(s). In this way parents may place overly high expectations on their child, or not allow their child to make any decisions, feeling he or she is incapable of doing so. A social worker needs to assess whether the role a child is given

in family decision-making and problem-solving is age appropriate and developmentally enhancing. If the balance of power is too uneven this may not only affect the child's development in the home, but affect his or her ability to negotiate and problem-solve with other systems. Similarly children need to see a balance of power in third party dyads, such as the mother/father and parent/grandparent relationships. By experiencing such relationships, the child will learn to respect and regard persons of different gender, age and cultural background equally.

(3) Negative vs. Positive: If a child's first experiences in his or her microsystem have been positive ones, relaying the message that he or she is worthy and capable, that child will experience the world and him or herself in a positive way. This child develops a positive sense of self-worth and self-identity, and can more easily accept challenges in the larger social context. Children from abusive (and non-abusive homes) sometimes receive negative and deprecating messages about themselves. They may not receive positive reinforcement for their behaviour. If they are isolated from other social contacts, this may limit their opportunities to experience esteem-building activities. The responsibility of a social worker in this case would be to help create opportunities for the child that would help create a positive self-identity.

The Mesosystem

The mesosystem refers to the relationship or connections between the child's microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For example, if a child's parents are separated, part of his or her mesosystem is the relationship between the two parents. A child's mesosystem might become a risk to develop-

ment (1) there is an absence of connections, or the connections are weak or (2) there is a conflict of values between microsystems (Garbarino, 1982).

Sometimes parents from violent homes are dependent on their children to the point of being threatened if their child establishes an identity outside the family. Part of the social worker's function then would be to help the parents realize that their children's efforts are part of normal development and do not signify a rejection of home and family. If the parent is supportive of their child's efforts this creates a positive connection between child and family and the "outside world", that is the child has a strong mesosystem. In the case of children's programs at shelters or second stage housing projects, it would be important to 'engage' the mothers, and in this way obtain their support so that they in turn would encourage their children's participation. Although having a rich and varied microsystem is important, it is developmentally enhancing for the child if there are positive connections between the various components of the microsystem.

In the case of divorcing parents, it is not always possible to have 'positive connections'. Sometimes such relationships are very hostile. However a child's adjustment to the separation is very much affected by the parents' adjustment and their relationship after the separation (Hodges, 1986). If the parents are antagonistic toward each other or the child's connections with the non-custodial parent are severed or weakened (through inconsistent visits, for example) this will affect the child. In turn he or she might experience difficulty in other components of the microsystem such as school, and peer relations. The social worker then should be aware

of how a divorce is impacting on a child.

It is important for divorced parents to separate their own feelings from those of their children. Some conflict of values may occur. Through working directly with the child or through the parent the social worker can help the child adjust to such value conflict. In the case of the ex-husband with a battering history, it would be imperative for the social worker to assess whether upholding of certain values, such as resolving problems through violence is placing the child at risk of abuse.

The Exosystem

The exosystem refers to settings in which the child does not participate, but in which decisions are made that are important and relevant to the child, or adults who interact directly with the child (Garbarino, 1982). Examples of a child's exosystem would include a parent's place of employment, parents' peer groups, school boards and local governments. Essentially exosystems enhance a child's development when they work in the child or parents' best interests; when a parent is receiving the necessary support, this in turn, makes it easier for him or her to provide and care for the children involved. For example, a non-supportive peer group (perhaps one who believes in keeping the family together "at all costs" or that the man is "the boss"), inability on the part of a mother to obtain adequate employment or subsidized day care are conditions that may contribute to her feeling she has no recourse but to accept her own abuse. Although her children have no direct interaction with the exosystem they are affected by the abuse that results. As well they are receiving distorted messages about

the role of violence as a way of coping, and, about male/female relationships in the family and society as a whole.

Decisions made in the exosystem can work to the benefit of the child. For example, recent changes in the Manitoba government legislation requiring police officers to lay charges in domestic abuse situations have helped make the public aware that wife abuse is serious and a crime. This in turn has reduced public tolerance of this crime. Such changes, it is hoped make the home a safer place for both women and children.

The Macrosystem

Decisions made in the microsystem and the exosystem are not made in isolation. Rather they reflect basic societal attitudes and ways of thinking. Social ideology and norms essentially comprise the macrosystem of society.

Violence, in general, and, violence in the family, in particular is a norm that is deeply embedded in our society.

'Violence in the family' has been accepted as an integral part of our society, because as a norm it is compatible with other prevalent social beliefs: One of our society's primary beliefs is in the sanctity of the home. The situation must be quite critical for this norm to be violated, and in such cases, those 'breaking the norm', (police, social workers) still do so with considerable trepidation. The belief that family issues are a private matter is consistent with the widely accepted notion that child care is a family (specifically a mother's) responsibility. While

women have entered the 'public sphere' of work, women still do assume the primary nurturing role in the family. Garbarino (1982) suggests males who are interested in assuming the main nurturing role in the family, that is caring for the children full time, do so at the risk of experiencing a decreased sense of self-esteem and sense of failure. Men's responsibility is still primarily in the public sphere, where much of the power lies.

As well, Garbarino (1982) suggests that our society still cherishes the belief that hard work results in success. If a man "fails" in the public sphere, he is seen as not being able to provide for his family, financially or materially. He is perceived as weak and incapable. This causes considerable stress for him. In the absence of appropriate coping skills and supports and in the presence of a socially reinforced belief in violence as a way of solving problems, a man is likely to abuse his wife or children as a way of relieving stress. Given that a woman is seen as primarily responsible for insuring there is harmony in her family and home, she is quite likely to believe she is responsible for the abuse. Children who are still seen as objects to be acted upon, and who are socially powerless, are quite likely to be abused by either parent.

In order to reduce risk at the most immediate level (the microsystem), Garbarino (1982) states we must consider "changing things in the big picture (p.45). However to change the beliefs and ideology that comprise the macro-system may seem like an insurmountable task. However the feminist ecological perspective describes and explains the effects of the ecosystem on the child, the family, and various levels of society. This framework provides us with the opportunity to enact change at various levels, for as is clear

from this analysis, systems at each level impact on the child's development, and in turn children's development can have an impact on the future development of our society. Garbarino (1982) believes that practitioners and policy-makers alike should have the best interests of children in mind, for the investment of time and interest in children, according to Garbarino, is a "precondition for an ecologically sound and sustainable future society" (p.251).

One of the advantages of adopting an ecological framework is that this perspective can be integrated into all types of practice situations including individual, family and group work as well as community development. In my practicum, this perspective was employed when working with individuals, families and groups. As the major part of my practicum commitment was group work, the next chapter will discuss this particular type of social work intervention.

CHAPTER FIVE

GROUPS AS TREATMENT MODALITIES FOR CHILDRENRationale for Group Work Intervention

Group work with children from violent homes can be an effective and important form of social work intervention. This type of intervention may have some very real advantages over the individual counselling process.

A treatment group is generally more attractive to children than interactions between a single child and an adult worker (Rose, 1985). Although children from violent home situations generally may be more isolated than other children, they already have been involved in some groups such as a school class, school teams, and their family. In this way the group may be a less threatening method of intervention than one-to-one treatment where the child is the sole focus of attention and intervention.

Quite often children from violent homes feel a real sense of being "different" or "alone". They may not be able to tell anyone outside the family about the violence because they have been ordered to secrecy. Quite often, even within the family, everyone knows about the violence, but no one talks about it. Children may fear that if they tell a friend or a neighbour about the violence that person will not understand how they feel. They may be concerned that they will be ostracized because of what goes on in their families.

For children from abusive relationships the group can be real proof that they are not alone with their problems. Their feelings of fear, anger, sadness and shame are shared. Sinclair (1985) states a group lessens the isolation these children feel. In a group children are given the opportunity to interact with children in similar situations. Sinclair (1985) states that "it is much easier to believe it's not your fault if you have other 'normal children' (in your group) who are not to blame either" (p.144).

Groups are settings in which children can "simulate responses and reactions to the real world," (Rose, 1985, p.18). Activities and behaviours can be rehearsed in a safe protected environment, and then transferred to the social world outside the group context. Each group member then has ongoing opportunity to problem-solve with other group members, and then practice playing out possible solutions. For children from violent homes the group experience can be particularly meaningful and relevant. Children can learn that problem-solving can occur without violence. They can also learn that there is not necessarily just one solution to a problem. Everyone has valuable ideas worth sharing. As well they can provide constructive feedback and encouragement to others. Davies (1975) suggests that by receiving feedback and interacting with other group members, group members can change their perceptions of themselves, as well as their behaviours. Sinclair (1985) suggests that when children are helping others in the group, and acting in the capacity of "experts", this helps increase their sense of confidence, as well as encouraging group cohesion and cooperative problem-solving.

Groups then can change the group member's perception of self or others.

As well the group can change members' perceptions of their social world. For example "by creating a safe place for children to talk about their experiences, a leader models an alternative to the secrecy surrounding the children's home lives" (Sinclair, 1985, p.44). By presenting alternative types of behaviour and role models, the group leaders can help the children realize that hitting is not the norm. In this natural learning setting the group leader has the opportunity to provide the group with new information and to correct myths and misunderstandings about violence, male/female relationships and sexual stereotypes. As Apter (1982) states the group is especially important to the child, for it can be "a source of motivation, instruction and control" and "a forum for constructive discussion of conflict and friction," (p.135).

The lives of children from violent homes are frequently characterized by chaos and confusion. Apter (1982) suggests providing children who have lived in chaotic systems with some regular routines may help reduce interpersonal disorder. A group where children meet weekly at the same time and place, and where the children are believed and listened to, can give its members some needed consistency, order and stability.

In discussing group work intervention, Feldman and Wodarski (1975) state that:

"any treatment group ... present(s) a broad variety of social stimuli, behavioral patterns and reinforcement mechanisms. To the extent that these represent the real world or more specifically the client's typical social environment ... each client is likely to be confronted with a wide array of social problems, peer relationships, and task responsibilities" (while participating in the group).
(p.7).

Group intervention with children then looks at the child not in isolation, but in the context of his or her environment, which includes friends, family, school and societal attitudes. In a group for children from abusive homes, children can begin to understand what has been happening to them and their families. The group can provide the child with experiences that instill the message that he or she is being listened to, and understood. The child gains the knowledge that she or he is deserving of respect and of having his or her feelings respected.

While focusing on the 'child in the environment', the group process encourages the development of each individual child's self-esteem, self worth and value as a unique person. This makes group work particularly advantageous in intervention with children from violent homes.

Discussion of Group Typologies - Establishing the Purpose

Toseland and Rivas (1984) suggest that treatment groups may be established for four primary purposes:

- (1) Education - helping members to learn about themselves and society, and providing them with the information and skills which will assist them in coping in their social world.
- (2) Growth - providing members with the opportunity to develop their capabilities to the fullest extent possible; such groups promote socio-emotional health rather than emphasizing rehabilitation of emotional or mental difficulties.
- (3) Remediation - correcting or changing behaviours, emotional problems or attitudinal or value orientations that impede social functioning.

(4) Socialization - helping members to learn appropriate communication and social skills which will enable them to develop interpersonal relationships and function as effective members of society. Such groups emphasize a 'learning through doing' approach which involves members improving their skills through actively participating in program activities whereas education groups usually focus on a more didactic approach. (Toseland and Rivas, 1984, pp.19-26).

The above authors state that these group purposes are not separate and distinct and that some groups can combine all four purposes in their approach.

Such is the case, I believe, when establishing the purpose of groups for children from violent homes. After summarizing the issues facing these children, one is left with four primary reasons for conducting group work intervention with them: (1) Education about abuse (Alessi and Hearn, 1984), (2) enhancing of self-esteem, (3) teaching them to identify and express feelings, (4) clarifying and challenging the values, beliefs and stereotypes that they have incorporated (Sinclair, 1985). In the case of children whose mothers have left battering relationships, an additional reason for conducting the group would be (5) to provide the children with a safe and secure place where they could understand and talk about the multiple losses they are experiencing in their lives.

Such a group model then would contain all four components, although the primary purpose would be educational. Group members are presented with new information on how to cope with their feelings and problems in

healthy ways. Members learn about violence and why it happens. Although there is some didactic presentation, learning is also an interpersonal social experience in which group members respond and react to other members, as well as initiating ideas themselves. Structured group activities are used as a primary method of imparting information. Although group leaders are "teachers" and are available to correct misinformation and distortions, group members also "learn through doing".

Klein (1972) suggests that in order for a group to be remedial (or as he refers to it - rehabilitative) group members must at one point in their lives have had the social skills or attitudes. Remediation, according to Klein, suggests that the member has regressed and needs to be taught again. The term 'remedial' in its strictest sense may not apply to some children from violent homes as they may have been raised in an atmosphere that condones violence. To them violence may have always been a fact of life. In this sense the group purpose may not be remedial. However if 'remedial' means to correct distortions or values that differ from those in the 'normal' population, the purpose of groups with children from violent homes can be defined as remedial as well.

All of these purposes were incorporated into the group model which was developed in this practicum. The actual nature of the practicum, activity and description of the sessions, and evaluation will be presented in the next part of this practicum.

PART III The Practicum

CHAPTER SIX

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS IN A SECOND-STAGE HOUSING PROJECTIntroduction

This practicum involved the development and implementation of children's programming at W.I.S.H. Inc. (Women in Second Stage Housing). The primary goal of W.I.S.H. is to provide treatment programs and housing accomodation to women and children who have left battering relationships. W.I.S.H. is meant to be 'second-stage' housing, where women and their children can stay after the initial crisis of leaving an abusive husband. Families can stay in the W.I.S.H. program for up to one year. W.I.S.H. is a pilot project that is being funded by the provincial government with additional funding being provided by private service clubs. Presently W.I.S.H. employs two staff persons who are responsible for providing counselling to women and children in the program. Staff are accountable to the Board of Directors composed of members from the community.

The offices of W.I.S.H. are located in an apartment complex. Eight apartment units in the complex were designated as housing for families who were selected for participation in the W.I.S.H. program. The following table provides a brief outline of the eight families that were chosen for the program. To protect the identity of the families, all names have been changed. In some cases demographic data that is not directly relevant to this practicum has been altered as well.

Insert Table 2 about here.

Table 2SUMMARY OF W.I.S.H. FAMILIES

	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1.	Betty	Pam (F) Crystal (F)	10 2	Grade 5
2.	Shirley	Sara (F) Robbie (M) Richard (M)	5 3 2	Kindergarten
3.	Patty	Carolyn (F) Ken (M) Jeremy (M) Tracey (F)	14 10 4 3	Grade 8 Grade 7
4.	Ellen	Glenn (M) Suzanne (F)	5 2	Kindergarten
5.	Donna	Jamie (M) Sylvia (F)	5 3	Kindergarten
6.	Debbie	Michael (M) Stephen (M) Paul (M) Dale (M)	8 7 6 4	Grade 3 Grade 2 Special Class
7.	Theresa	Rita (F) Jane (F) Eric (M)	12 11 7	Grade 6 Grade 6 Grade 2
8.	Joan	Peter (M) Kim (F) Beth (F)	13 3 2	Grade 7

Children 4 and under - 10
 5 - 6 years - 4
 6 - 7 years - 3
 8 -12 years - 4
 13 + - 2

It should be noted that the criteria for selection into the program related only to the potential and the needs of the adult women themselves. Issues related to children were not a factor in determining a woman's suitability for the program. There were however a certain number of apartment units with one, two and three bedrooms. The number of individuals in a family was at times a factor in selection.

As part of the Intake Selection Process, each woman participated in an interview focusing on herself, her family background, her battering relationship and the effects that the abuse had on the woman and her family. Although these interviews did include a discussion of the children, it was determined that this information would be supplemented by data obtained through interviews that focused specifically on the children. These interviews involved meetings between the author, and the mothers and their children, as well as interviews with the children by themselves. The interviews were semi-structured. Intake interview forms were used by this writer. (See Appendix C for the Mother's Interview Form and Appendices D, E, F for Children's Interview Forms). These forms were modified versions of the forms developed by the Domestic Abuse Project (D.A.P.) in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Interviewing Process

Mothers' Interviews

It should be noted that I had met four of the women previously as I had participated in their initial Intake Selection Interviews. I had not yet established a link with the other four families. The purpose

of the Mothers' Interviews was essentially:

- (1) To obtain further socio-historical data about the family, specifically each individual child in the family;
- (2) To begin to establish a relationship with family members;
- (3) To further explain the children's program that would be offered at W.I.S.H..

When interviewing parent(s) about their child, the Domestic Abuse Project advocates that the intake interview be conducted in the presence of the child. Brink and Gruszinski (1987) state that this practice conveys the strong message that children are active aware participants in the family, and that they have the right to information about what is happening and what is being said about them. When the child is present she or he knows from the start that violence has occurred in the family home and that this issue will be discussed openly and honestly; although discussing the violence may be an uncomfortable process, it is a process that the family must go through.

When interviewing the mothers in this practicum, their children were not present in approximately half the cases. In retrospect it would have been very beneficial to have the children present during the interviews for the reasons cited by Brink and Gruszinski (1987).

Whether or not the children were present during the Mothers Interviews, there were some general patterns that did emerge: These patterns, I believe are worth noting:

- (1) It was generally more difficult for the women to talk about the impact

of the abuse on their children, than on themselves.

(2) When discussing the violence, some mothers would switch from talking about their children to talking about themselves. This was interpreted by this writer as perhaps reflecting the mother's difficulty in acknowledging the effects of the abuse on her child(ren). Also many women needed to talk about their own battery, as the wounds were far from healed.

(3) Most of the women reported that their children were aware of the violence that went on in their homes.

(4) All of the women reported that at least one of their children was physically abused. Two women reported that at least one of their children had been sexually abused.

(5) Most mothers did not talk with their children about the abuse.

(6) Mothers reported that their children all had their own unique ways of coping with the battering at home. To a certain extent coping mechanisms were developmentally related. However even when age differentials between children in the same family were not large, coping patterns were quite diverse.

These interviews required that the women at W.I.S.H. focus on the impact of the abuse on their children. Although a difficult task for some, it was a valuable exercise in that it reconfirmed that their decision to leave their abusive husbands was the right decision for them.

Children's Interviews

The purpose of conducting initial intake interviews with the children at W.I.S.H. was:

- (1) To familiarize children with W.I.S.H. and its staff;
- (2) To begin developing a relationship with the children;

- (3) To convey to the children that their thoughts and feelings were important;
- (4) To give children the opportunity to begin "sharing their story" and to supplement the information provided by the children's mothers;
- (5) To determine children's "suitability" for participation in group programs;
- (6) To help prepare children for using the group as a place of their own where they could share their feelings, thoughts and ideas with other children.

All children from the age of five onwards were "interviewed". Verbal questions were sometimes supplemented or replaced by other types of 'information - gathering techniques' which included use of drawings, short stories, puppets and toys. Initially some children were reticent and non-trusting of others. This was understood and they were not pushed to reveal information they did not want to share. Other children were quite verbal. For some children I believe this was the first time they had permission to talk about the abuse.

There were some common patterns that were detected in the Children's Intake Process:

- (1) Many children were unaware of what was happening to them. There was a pervasive feeling of uncertainty about what would happen next.
- (2) The children confirmed what their mothers had stated: there were so many different ways of coping with the violence.
- (3) Initially there was general reluctance or inability to talk about the fathers involved.
- (4) Many children spoke positively about school experiences. According

to self-reports and reports from mothers, many of the children were above average students.

SUMMARY OF INTAKE ASSESSMENTS

NAME	FAMILY BACKGROUND	ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	PEER RELATIONSHIPS	HISTORY OF ABUSE	RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER
Peter (age 13)	Mother relies heavily on Peter to help with other chn. and household tasks. Positive relationship with maternal grandfather who is very ill.	Poor student, 2 grades behind.	Younger boys. Somewhat of a "loner". Avoids school and contacts with classmates.	Victim or severe physical and emotional abuse by stepfather. Witness to mother's abuse. Very protective of mother. "Mother's confidante".	Never knew birth father who died before he was born. Very angry and threatening of stepfather. No contact wanted.
Carolyn (age 14)	Mother divorced father when Carolyn was quite young. Mother lived with abusive c/l for a number of years. Overall positive relationship with mother and family. Some "parent-teen" problems. Oldest of four children.	Good student in age appropriate grade.	Feels sad & lonely at prospect of changing schools, losing friends. Involved in church and social activities.	Sexually abused by birth father. Stepfather (c/l) would never assault mother when Carolyn was there.	Very seldom sees birth father. Did not get along with stepfather but since separation he has been seeing her to get information about mother
Ken (age 10)	Carolyn's brother. Generally positive relationship with family.	One year behind, above average student	Reports being "picked on" last term. Some positive peer relationships. Ken is overweight & sensitive about comments made by peers.	Frequent witness to mother's abuse by c/l. C/L would taunt and tease Ken if he cried when mom was hit.	Same birth father as Carolyn. Sees birth father regularly. Wants nothing to do with stepfather.
Rita (age 12)	Native heritage. Oldest of 3 chn. Has lived on reserve and in city & speaks positively of both. Positive relationship with family and other relatives. Rita's and her siblings birth mother left the family approx. 6 years ago. Birth mother has no contact with chn. Rita and siblings perceive Theresa (who has been part of the family for five years) to be their 'real' mother. History of alcohol abuse by father and Theresa.	Good student in age appropriate grade.	Good relationship with friends and cousins. Involved in social and recreational activities.	Physically & emotionally abused by father. Witness to mother's physical & emotional abuse. Mother uses Rita as her 'confidante' -discussed with her all the details of her alleged rape by Rita's father.	Reports good relationship with father. Unsure what will happen now (restraint order in effect). Feeling "caught between" both parents.
Jane (age 11)	Rita's sister. Positive relationship with immediate and extended family. Alcohol abuse in family.	Good student in age appropriate grade.	Good relationship with friends and cousins. Involved in social and recreational activities.	Witness to father's emotional and physical abuse of mother. Emotionally abused by mom and dad. Physically abused by dad.	Positive relationship with father. Restraint order presently in effect.

NAME	FAMILY BACKGROUND	ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	PEER RELATIONSHIPS	HISTORY OF ABUSE	RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER
Eric (age 7½)	Brother to Rita and Jane. Close relationship with family.	Good student in age appropriate grade	Positive relationship with peers & cousins. Plays hockey & other sports.	Emotionally & physically abused by father. Witness to mother's emotional & physical abuse.	Mother reports a good relationship with father. Eric identifies with him. Uncertainty re. future visits.
Pam (age 10)	Native heritage. Mother & Father separated when Pam was approx. 6. Pam lived with father for last 3 yrs. Pam returned to live with her mom and c/l about 5 months ago. Pam wants to return to father. Ambivalent non-communicative relationship with mother.	Good student in age appropriate grade.	Had many friends when lived with father, sees cousins in Wpg. but somewhat of a "loner".	Mother abused by father, but Pam says she never saw this. Witness to mother's abuse by c/l. Would attempt to intervene.	Good relationship with father. Has no real feelings (positive or negative) for mother's ex common law.
Michael (age 8)	Mother & father separated for a year. Positive relationship with mother but poor communication patterns. Of the 4 chn., Michael is seen as the child with the most potential by mother. Mom overwhelmed with responsibilities of 4 children.	Good student in age appropriate grade.	New to Wpg. so has to develop new peer group. Was able to develop good relationships "back home". Involved in sport activities.	Physically & emotionally abused by mom & dad. Would hide in his room when mom was being hit. Dad would 'expose himself' in front of Michael.	Had positive relationship with father but since separation, dad rarely visits. Mom reports Michael "never talks about him". Michael has a positive relationship with mom's boyfriend.
Paul (age 6)	Michael's sibling. Has been 'in and out' of foster care due to medical and emotional problems. Mother has difficulties providing consistent care.	In "Special Ed." class.	No real friendships outside the family. Indiscriminately affectionate.	Witness to physical abuse of mother. Physically and emotionally abused by father and mother.	No real relationship with birth father. Relates positively to mom and siblings.
Stephen (age 7)	Michael and Paul's brother. Mother overwhelmed and considers Stephen to be a "real problem". Mom states Stephen and Michael are always "at each other's throats".	Good student but causes disturbances in school.	Mother states he "gets along better with girls than boys".	Physically abused by mother and father. Father would "expose himself" in front of Stephen. When dad hit mom, Stephen would "stand and watch".	Ambivalent relationship with dad. Very rarely sees dad since separation. Never talks about his dad. Refers to his mom's boyfriend as his "new dad".

NAME	FAMILY BACKGROUND	ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	PEER RELATIONSHIPS	HISTORY OF ABUSE	RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER
Sara (age 5)	Black heritage. Dad was 'never around' as he worked out of town and there were many split-ups.	Very shy. This is causing some difficulties in school.	Limited contact with chn. outside her family.	Witness to mom's physical abuse which caused frequent split-ups and moves.	Father distant emotionally and irresponsible. Very infrequent contact.
Jamie (age 5)	Metis heritage. Positive relationship with family and some members of extended family.	Good potential academically.	Some positive relationships.	Witness to mom's physical abuse. Dad would frequently 'use' Jamie (eg.) he would encourage Jamie not to listen to mom, and to call her names and to hit her.	Mother reports a positive relationship between Jamie and father. Dad lives out of town but will probably visit when he can.
Glenn (age 5)	Native heritage. Mom separated from Glenn's father and lived common-law for a number of years. History of alcohol abuse by mother. Positive relationship with mom.	School reports Glenn doing well and a "real leader".	Good relationships with peers, although quite aggressive.	Witness to mom's physical abuse. Physically abused by father, stepfather and mother.	Irregular visits with dad.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GROUP INTERVENTION

As residents of W.I.S.H. all children were ensured of participation in the limited children's programming which existed. However this did not mean they would necessarily be part of a "group". Many factors including age, gender and developmental differences, the nature of sibling relationships and behavioural, emotional and medical concerns were taken into consideration when planning the children's groups.

Group Membership

In total, there were 13 children between the ages of 5 and 15 in the W.I.S.H. program. It was determined that W.I.S.H. would offer two children's groups, a pre-school, younger children's group and a group for latency-aged children. The plan in the initial stages was that children in the age range of 5 to 15 who did not fit the criteria for participation in the group would be seen by this writer for counselling on an individual basis. Children in the group in need of individual counselling could be seen on an ad hoc basis by Linda Hayes, a staff person at W.I.S.H.. The pre-school group was facilitated by this writer and Linda Hayes. Dr. Kathryn McCannell and this writer co-facilitated the latency-aged group. Please refer to Table 3 for profiles of all the children with whom this writer was involved. Following is a brief description of the process involved in choosing group membership.

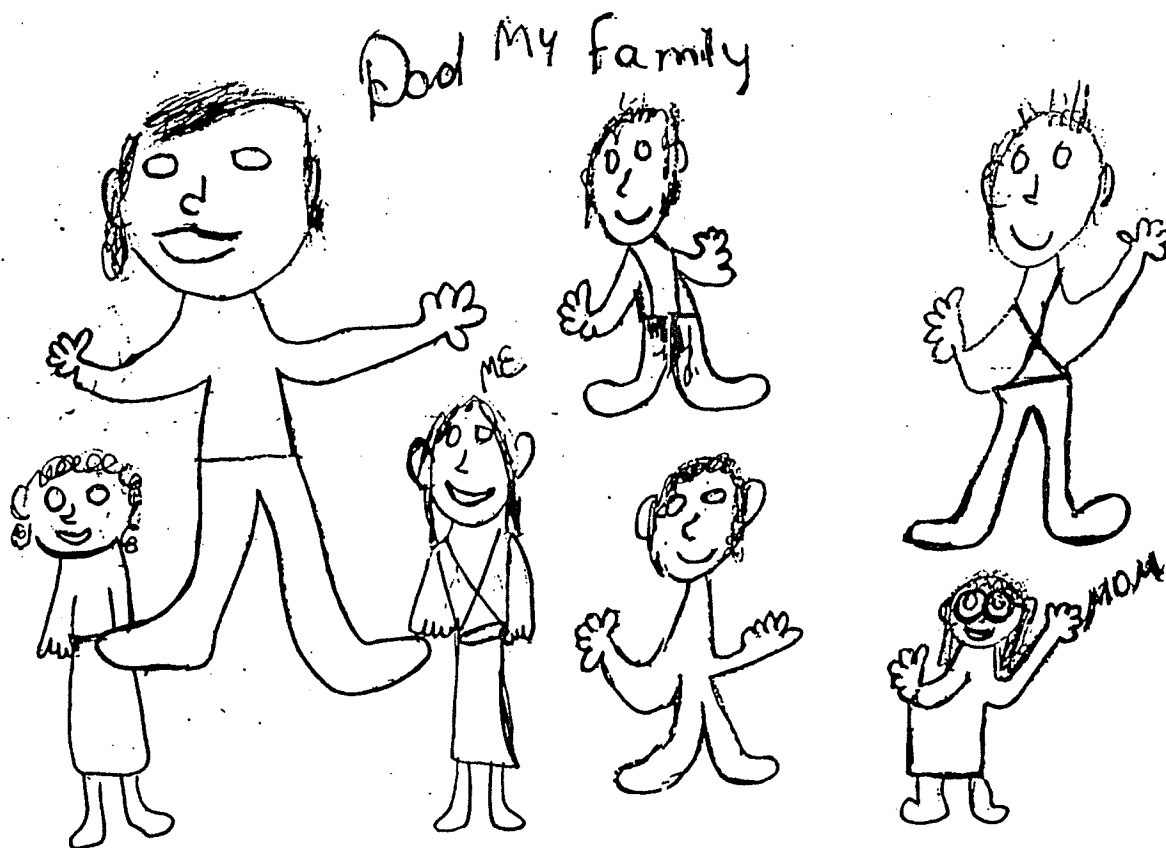
The latency-aged children's group (Group A) was composed of six children, three boys and three girls, ranging in age from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 years. Three group members, Rita, Jane and Eric, were siblings. After interviewing the three children and their mother, it was determined that the relationship that the three children had with each other would not be detrimental to the group and its objectives. Klein (1972) suggests that group composition should reflect a "heterogeneity of coping patterns" and should include a stimulus for interaction "and a movement toward change"; that is groups should include both passive and active members (pp.60-61). In this regard, some individual personality differences of the children (for example, Rita was quite verbal, while Eric was quiet), might complement the group process.

Although Eric was only five months older than Stephen, Eric, age seven, was a member of the latency-aged group while Stephen, also seven, was a participant in the younger group. There were several reasons for this decision. It was evident from the assessment that there was a strong rivalry between Stephen and his brother Michael (age eight). Doreen, their mother, had expressed concern about the two boys constantly being "at each other". Academically Stephen was reported doing very well in school, but experiencing problems in relationships with fellow students. He was considered "emotionally immature" in some respects. Based on this information, it was decided that Michael would participate in the latency-aged group while Stephen would be more suited to participating in the younger group. Stephen was about two years older than the other participants in his group, but he seemed quite positive about being a "junior leader" and helping with exercises such as story-telling.

Two other children were a concern - Pam who was 10, and Sara who was 5. Pam had been living with her father for a number of years and had returned to her mother in Winnipeg about six months ago. The move was not explained to her and she was not happy about it: The family picture she drew during her intake interview (Figure 1) features all the members of her two families. Her father who she drew first seems to dominate the picture. Her mother (who is wearing glasses) who she drew next is quite small in comparison. Pam was not wanting to be in Winnipeg, and did not present as being very motivated to interact with the children at W.I.S.H.. Pam however stated she wanted to be part of the group. It was felt that perhaps the group would help to break the isolation she was feeling. Five year old Sara was very quiet and shy. The other pre-school group candidates were active boys. Although there was concern about Sara being intimidated in the group, Sara's mother felt that Sara became more verbal when comfortable. It was decided to include Sara as part of the younger group.

Initially it was determined that three other children, who would not be members of groups would be seen by this writer on an individual basis: Paul who was 6, had experienced medical problems, which had resulted in his being socially and emotionally delayed. Recently Paul's physician had adjusted his medications and Paul was not yet stabilized on his new medication regime. Paul was seen weekly in sessions that incorporated many of the group themes in play activities. Carolyn who was 14, was experiencing a sense of anger and loss about her new life situation. She was functioning at an age appropriate level and would not have benefitted from a group experience where group members were developmentally and chronologically much younger than she was.

Figure 1
Pam, age 10



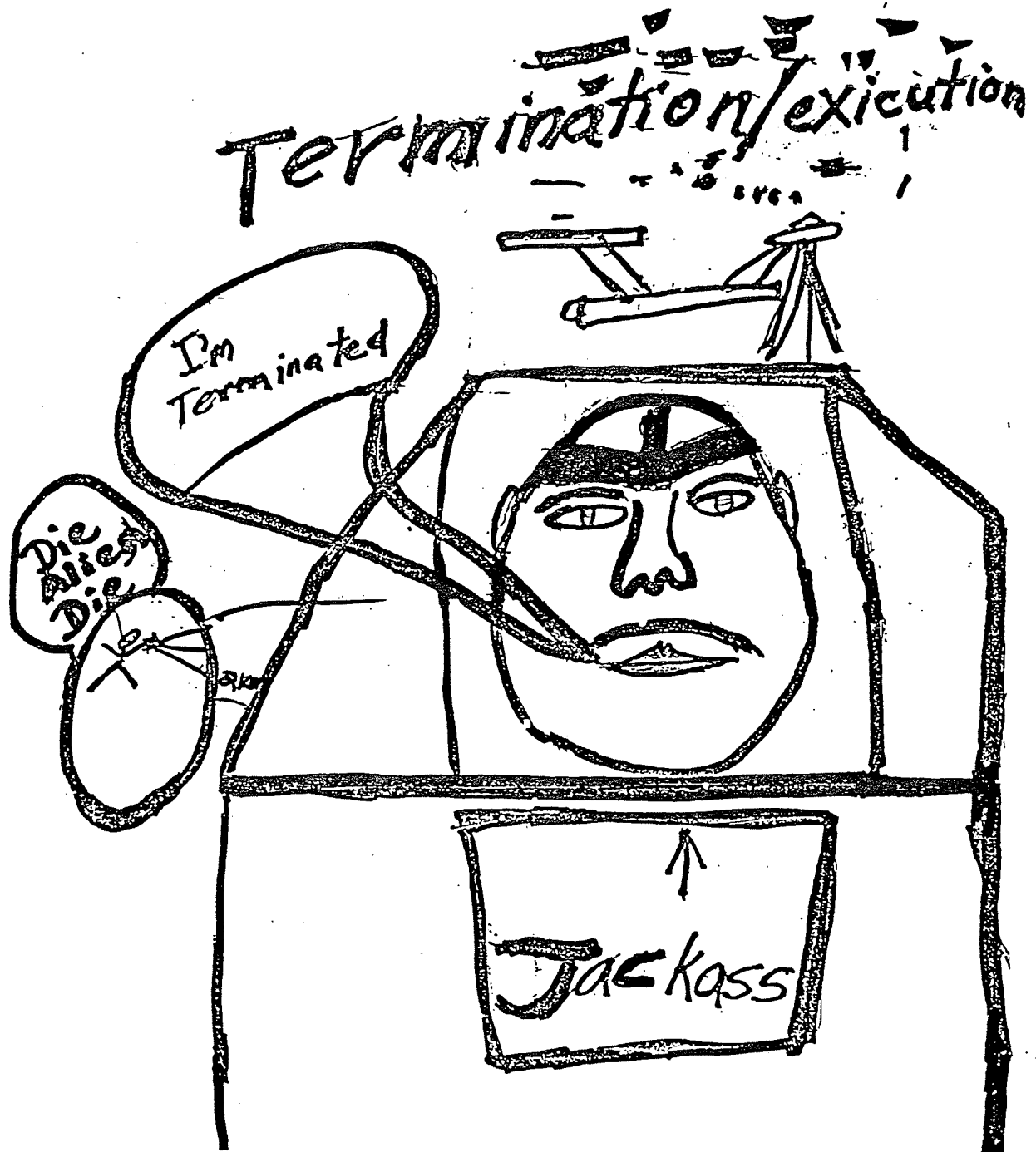
Peter who was 13, was functioning emotionally, socially and academically below his age level. He felt alienated from his peer group and tended to associate with boys younger than himself. However Peter was assessed as not being suitable for the latency-aged group. Peter had been severely abused, emotionally and physically, by his stepfather. Being now physically distanced from this man, Peter felt comfortable venting his rage at him: Figure 2 is a picture Peter drew of "George" in a coffin-type capsule, in which his oxygen supply has been exhausted. The picture depicts a tiny Peter (2 km. from George) blasting George with a radar gun. George is also "getting it" from a space ship ("star ship U.S.S. Enterprise") that is travelling in the area.

It was felt that Peter's anger might dominate the mood in group. As well Peter tended to seek out younger children and act as an authority over them. Given these factors, Peter was assessed as a good candidate for intensive individual counselling. Following an intensive intake process, Peter was referred by this author to a male counsellor at the Psychological Service Centre, who was supervised by Dr. Kathryn McCannell. (This same male student social worker later became co-facilitator of the Parenting Group at W.I.S.H.). Peter had no positive male role models in his life, and it was felt that he desperately needed one. This author acted as a liaison between Peter's counsellor and W.I.S.H..

Group Process

In planning two separate children's programs, several sources were used as

Figure 2
Peter, age 13



references; "Development of a Model of Group Intervention for Abused Adolescents", a practicum report by Cornelia Wicki (1984) was particularly helpful. Sinclair (1985) and Alessi and Haern (1984) have developed programs for children in shelters. Their ideas were incorporated in both groups. Many books for children were used in both sessions. A list of these books can be found in Appendix A. "Activities ... More than Keeping Them Busy", (Gundy, 1984), an activities handbook for children in shelters was a valuable sourcebook for the pre-school group.

Both the latency-aged group and the pre-school group met for ten sessions. Following is an account of the group process in both groups. The chapter ends with a brief summary of the groups.

It is important to note that the group process refers to both the "here and now" occurrences in the group sessions and the interactional and communication patterns among group members and leaders (Balgopal and Vassil, 1983). Using an ecological framework of analysis the group leader is always aware that there is a direct relationship between what is occurring in the group and the members' natural environment. In both groups, the members' connections with their outside world were always evident. When members had a happy experience (such as being elected to the student council) this event was shared with the group. Losses and unhappy events (such as when a father did not follow through with a visit) also impacted on the groups ... the ultimate loss that both groups shared was the tragic death of Rita's, Jane's and Eric's mother.

W.I.S.H. Latency-Aged Group

Session One - A week before the first session the group members had completed the What I Think and Feel Questionnaire (Reynolds and Richmond, 1978) and the Self-Appraisal Inventory (Frith and Narakawa, 1972). It was during this time that all the members (except for Pam) met Dr. Kathryn McCannell who was co-facilitating this group with this writer. Everyone, except for Pam, had met prior to the first session. Pam also missed the first session. She had an argument with her mother and had not returned directly home after school.

The purpose of this introductory session was to outline the reasons for the group and to establish some group expectations and rules. This was also the time to begin establishing a common bond between members. All the group members were feeling anxious about living at W.I.S.H. and participating in the group. Another task of the group leaders then was to help make the group a comfortable and safe place for its members.

The session began with a brief discussion of why everyone was living at W.I.S.H.. The group leaders openly acknowledged the violence in the families and some of the feelings that members might be feeling. The group was presented as a special place where members could talk about their feelings and problems, and have fun too! Group members were given scrapbooks. The scrapbooks were used for special homework assignments and whenever group members wanted to write down or draw their thoughts or ideas. Group members were also introduced to the video equipment.

Following an 'ice-breaker' exercise, the group leaders presented the members with some group rules. Group members refined and added new rules to the list. The list of rules established was:

- (1) Everyone would try to come to each session and to be on time. If a member was going to be late, or could not attend a session, he or she should let the group leaders know.
- (2) Hitting was not permitted, nor was hurting someone by calling him or her names permitted.
- (3) If a group member was upset but did not want to talk about what was bothering him or her, the member could take a "time-out" (leave the room and come back when ready). If a group member was being disruptive, group leaders could request that he or she take a "time-out".
It was hoped that the latter two rules would establish a sense of the group being a safe place for its members.
- (4) It was expected that everyone would try to participate. However if a member did not feel like talking he or she could just say "I pass".
Participating in sessions also meant trying to listen when another member was speaking. Michael suggested that if a member wanted to say something he or she should put up a hand, to ensure that someone else was not being interrupted. This idea was quickly adopted by other members, and practised throughout the sessions.
- (5) Group leaders explained the concept of confidentiality and exceptions to this rule. (Information discussed within the group would have to be shared with parents or other adults if safety was an issue).
- (6) The group decided that each week a different member would assist the leaders with "snack time". The group members would themselves keep track of whose turn it was each week.

Following this, the group played "T.V. Reporter", an icebreaker game, which essentially involves members pairing up with and interviewing each other. The group leaders suggested some questions that members could ask each other. These included "What do you like about W.I.S.H.?" and "What don't you like about W.I.S.H.?" Group members did not have to answer any questions that they did not feel like answering. After the interviews members rejoined the group and introduced their partner to the group. After introductions, other members could also ask questions.

Several children said they liked W.I.S.H. because there was no hitting. Ken said there was no "yelling, screaming or hitting". Eric said he liked W.I.S.H. because he "didn't get hit by dad". Rita challenged Eric's statement saying "Dad never hit you, he just sent you to your room".

Following a break, the group members watched the "T.V. Reporter" segment on videotape, and then completed the Belief Inventory (see Appendix K). The session ended with the members sharing one thing they learned in the session. The homework assignment was to make a unique front page for their scrapbook.

Session Two - Pam missed this session. She was visiting her father who lived out of town. Ken and Rita were quite interested to hear she was visiting her father.

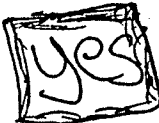
The session began with a "check-in" and group members sharing the pictures they drew in their scrapbook.

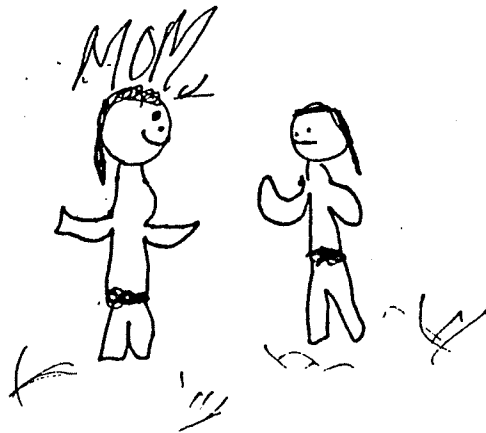
Group leaders then introduced the concept of 'goals' and members wrote down individual goals they hoped to accomplish in the group. Jane drew a picture of herself and her mother (Figure 3). Above the picture she wrote "I made my mom not to drink and I solved it and she said yes, and that is a goal". This precipitated a discussion of adult drinking. All group members had some experience with a caregiver being drunk. Ken thought that "drinking was an adult problem, not a kids' problem", and that children could not stop their parents from drinking. The group concluded that it is up to the grown-up to work on his or her drinking problem. The group members then made a list of their own individual goals. These included (1) learning about feelings; (2) learning about drinking; (3) learning about friends; (4) learning 'to be good'.

The group leaders then introduced the topic of feelings. The group 'brainstormed' and came up with a list of over 25 feelings. After the break the group leaders asked the question "do boys and girls have different feelings?". Michael and Ken stated that they had been teased by their fathers if they cried. They thought everyone should be able to cry. Rita and Jane thought that girls should be able to get mad too. The group then discussed non-verbal cues that indicate how someone might be feeling. The group then divided into two teams and played "Feelings Charades". Members guessed the feelings being acted out incredibly quickly. All were very perceptive at "picking up" on non-verbal cues. Following charades group leaders stressed the importance of expressing feelings clearly.

For homework group members were to watch "The Bill Cosby Show" and "Be a Detective". They were to watch "Rudy" on the show and determine



I made my mom not to drink and I solved it
and she said  and that is a goal
A.A meeting



how she was feeling. Members were also given out a handout of incomplete sentences on feelings which they were to complete. The session ended with a 'group-go-round' with everyone saying how they were feeling.

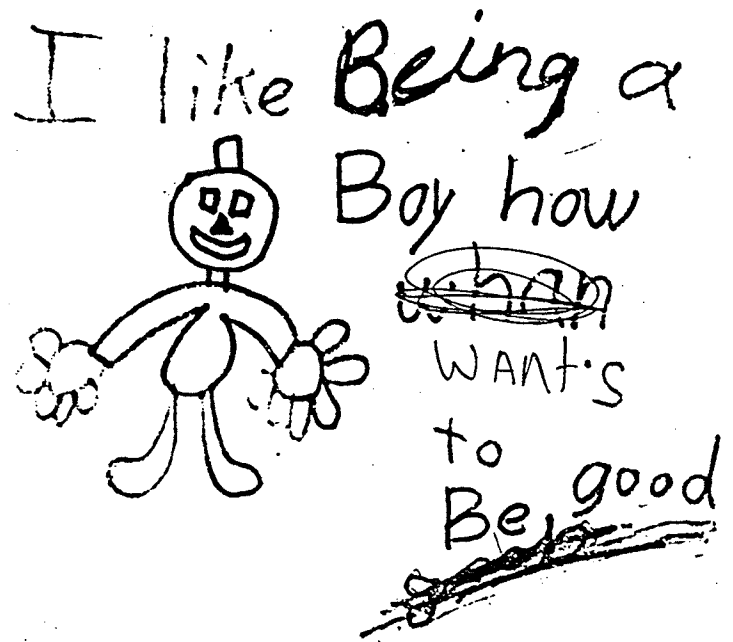
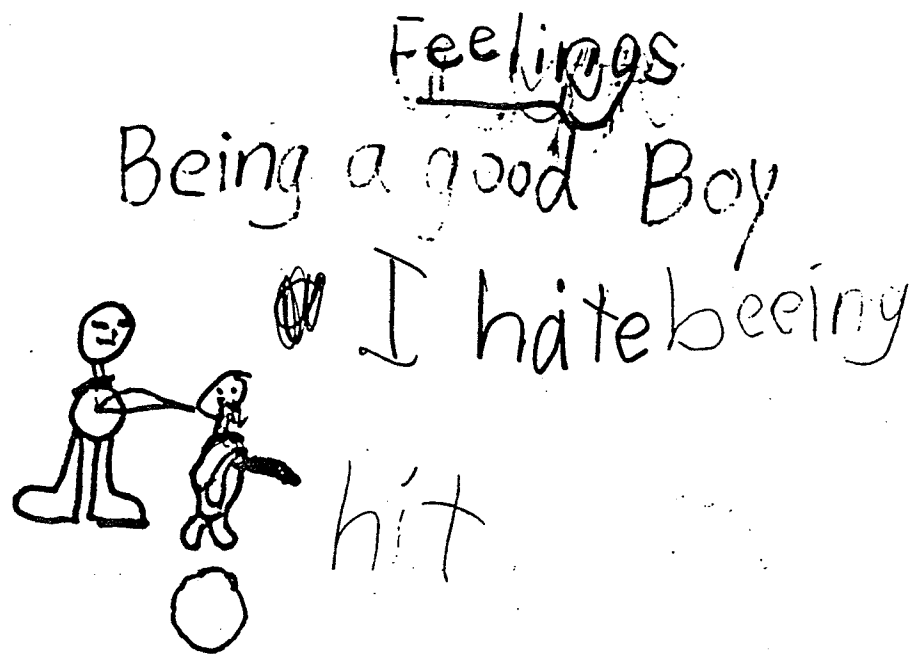
Session Three - Everyone was present at this session. The meeting began by introducing Pam to the group. Group members explained to Pam what the purpose of the group was and what had been happening in the group.

Following a "check-in" the group discussed the homework assignments. Ken shared his completed "feelings handout" with the group. Ken had recently visited his father and this was clearly reflected in his responses which included I am happy "when I can go visit my dad," I am mad "when my mom says I can't visit my dad," and I am scared "when my mom gets hit." Eric talked about being hit on the playground and feeling sad (Figure 4). Group members were concerned for Eric. They shared how they would feel if they were hit, what they "as kids" could do if someone hits them and other ways of handling your feelings besides hitting.

Following the break, the group leaders introduced the topic of 'anger'. The group members discussed different things that make them angry. Eric commented that "girls don't get mad at Ken because they like him." This provided the opportunity for the group leaders to stress the points that (1) you can like someone but still be angry at him or her and (2) it is OK to be angry at someone but it is not OK to hit him or her. Members were given copies of the poem, "It's Alright to Cry", (Hall, 1974) which makes the point that people of all ages, colours, shapes and sizes have tears. This session consisted primarily of discussion. Although the dis-

Figure 4

Eric, age 7



cussion was very beneficial, some of the members were experiencing difficulty in being attentive toward the end of the session. It was evident that the group was much more responsive when structured activities were used as a means of learning.

Session Four - Everyone was present. This session began with everyone "taking their temperature." Ken stated he was not feeling very good because he had a fight at home and then had a fight at school. This led to further discussion about anger and fighting.

Using pictures from magazines, group members then wrote brief stories about how they thought the person in the picture was feeling, what was happening in the picture and what would happen next. The group members' stories were very much metaphors for what was happening in their own lives. There were several stories with a positive tone to them. Many of the stories reflected a sense of loss and instability. For example, in one picture Eric saw a "lonesome girl" who "doesn't have no house", while in another picture he saw a girl "whose mom and dad went away". When this picture was shared with the rest of the group, Ken saw a girl who was sad "because her mother just gave her a licking." In another picture Michael saw a coach who was mad that he lost "so he quit the team." Rita saw a person who will try harder next season. The group leaders summarized the exercise by stressing that it is important to use words to say how you feel, as other people do not always know how you feel by looking at your expression.

Following this, the group divided into pairs and took Polaroid pictures of each other expressing a feeling. Most chose to express how they were feeling at the time.

At the end of the session Ken hit Michael, after Michael had made "a face" at him. Ken said he was "mad" and apologized. Other group members became concerned. Jane asked "are you guys still friends?" and suggested that the two boys talk to each other more after the group.

The group closed with a homework assignment. Members were to be a detective and to report back on what a family member does when he or she is angry.

Ken had been having a difficult time at home and at school. He had talked about being hit by his mother in two sessions, and also saw other children being hit in pictures. It was determined that his concerns about being hit needed to be pursued outside the group.

Session Five - Ken was not at today's session. He was visiting his father who lived out of town. Kathryn McCannell also could not attend due to other commitments.

During "check-in", Michael stated that he and Ken had talked further about the fight they had. He said both felt "happier" about having talked about it.

In discussing their homework assignment ("Be a Detective"),

Eric talked about Jane being mad at him and hitting him (see Figure 5). All group members including Jane agreed hitting was not right. The group brainstormed alternatives to hitting ("she could go to her room") and what someone could do if he or she is hit ("she could tell her mom"). Pam said she could tell that her mother was mad "by the way she looked." Michael stated his mother dropped a pot on her foot and yelled at him! The group agreed that sometimes when we are angry we "take it out on other people" and that this could make these people feel sad.

The main topic today was wife assault. The group leader read the story "Something is Wrong at My House" (Davis, 1984). Members were sometimes restless and coloured in their scrapbooks, but generally they were very interested in the story. Rita thought that the mother in the story looked "terrified." The group leader led a discussion of the feelings members felt for the family in the story.

After a break, the group members were asked to draw pictures of what they felt like when their parents fought. Eric drew a picture of how he and his mother felt (Figure 6) whereas Jane and Rita (Figures 7,8) focused primarily on how their mother felt. Michael drew a picture which showed him hiding in his room (Figure 9). Pam chose not to draw a picture, although she was witness to her mother being hit by her ex-common-law husband. The group leader confirmed all the different feelings that could be experienced when adults fight -- and that nobody deserves to be hit.

The group closed with a homework assignment. The boys as one group and the girls as another group were to get together during the week and

Figure 5

Eric, age 7

BE A DETECTIVE. WATCH
 SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY WHO
 IS ANGRY. WHAT DO THEY DO
 WHEN THEY ARE ANGRY?

— ~~was~~ **was mad**
 — was hitting
 me and I did
 not like that and I
~~cried~~ cried.
 and



Figure 6

Eric, age 7

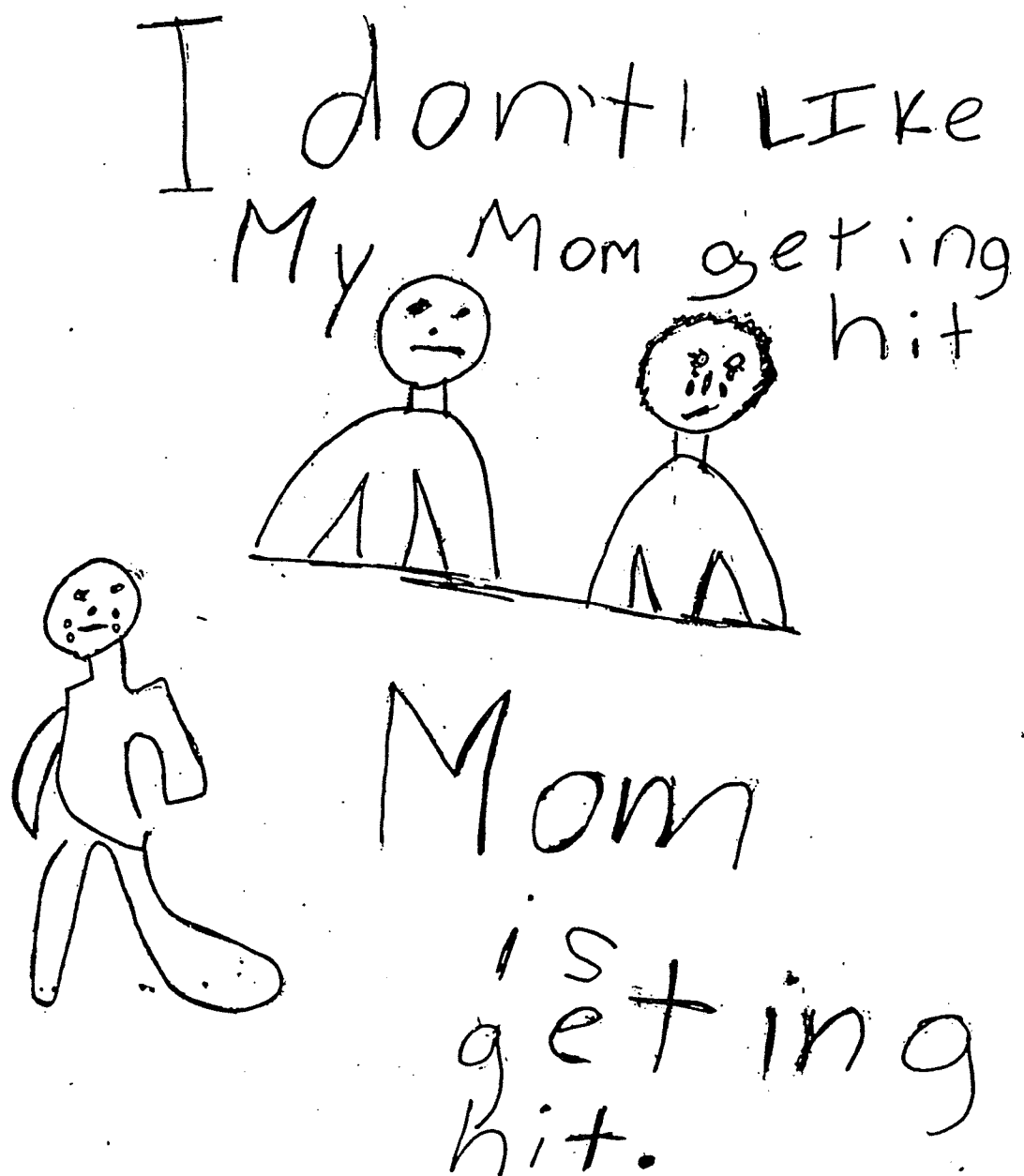


Figure 7

Jane, age 11



my mom feels sad and hurt
because my dad is fighting my
mom. I ~~Am~~ feeling SAD Because my
Dad is fighting my mom. and i dont like it

Figure 8

Rita, age 12

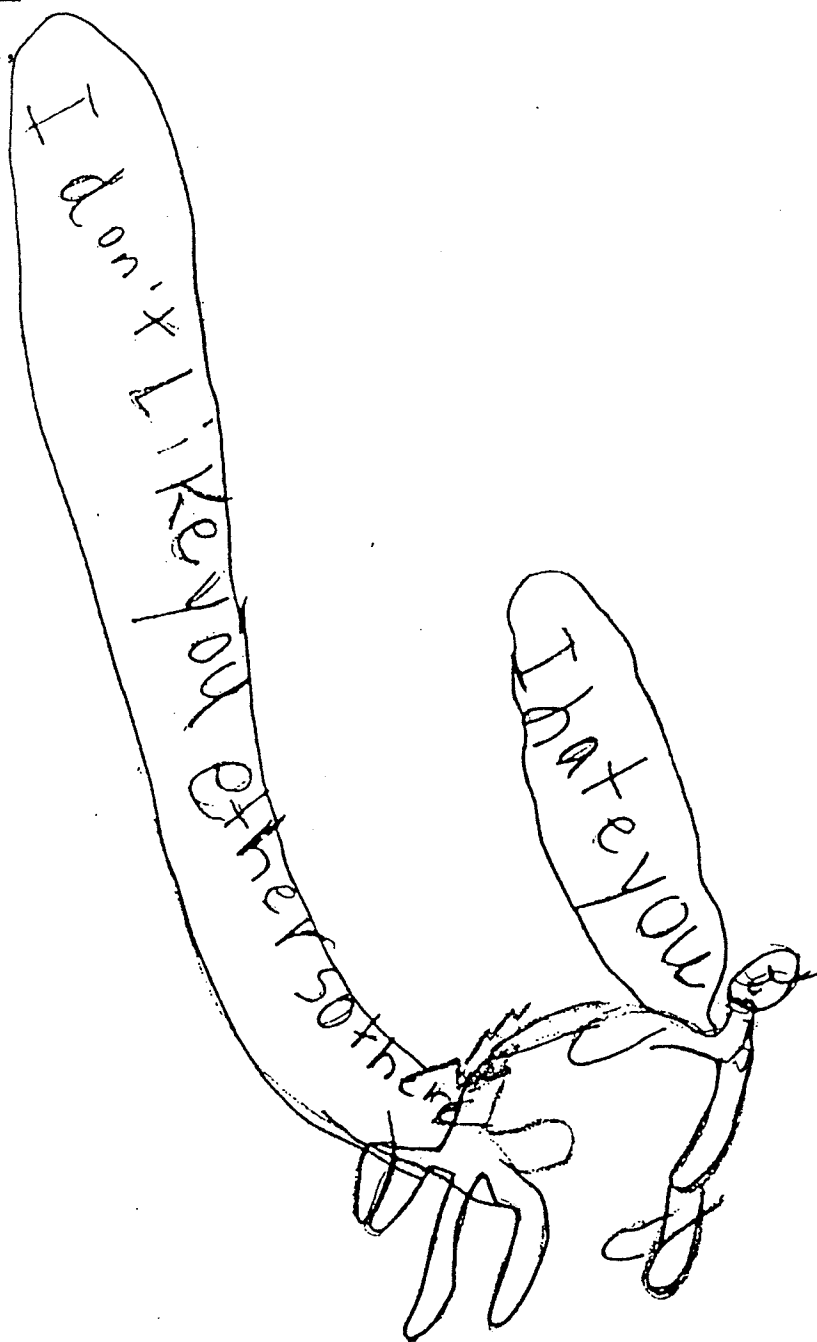
Sad mom

dada and Mom

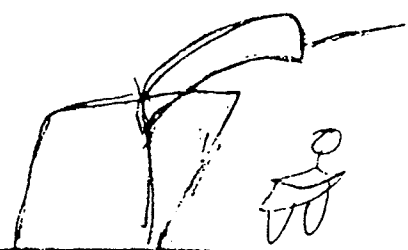
103

Figure 9

Michael,
age 8



The End



write new ending to the story, "Something's Wrong at My House".

Session Six - Everyone was present. The session began with a check-in and a review of the homework assignment. Rita, Jane and Pam had not gotten together to create a new ending to the story that had been read last session. The group discussed why this had not happened.

The group then played the "Definitions Game". Beforehand group leaders had written words (such as assault, divorce, custody) on pieces of paper. Each group member drew a word out of a box and tried to explain what it meant to the rest of the group. Group members helped each other by clarifying erroneous information. Ken was quite helpful in offering the group different reasons why people get divorced. He was quite intrigued by the concept of joint custody. When defining "restraint order" several group members spoke about when their dads had broken their restraint order.

Following this the group reviewed part of the Belief Inventory (See Appendix K). Several statements stimulated good discussions. For example when Rita answered "True" to the statement "Anyone who knows what happened in my family will not want anything to do with me." several members challenged her. Ken stated "people will try to help you" and Michael added "it's not the kids' fault." It seemed that Rita was testing the group when she stated "People might think kids are bad like their father". The group leaders confirmed that when dads hit, they are not bad people; it is the behaviour that is bad.

Today's session demonstrated the group working together as a cohesive

unit. This session also demonstrated that the group members had incorporated many myths about violence.

Session Seven - Everyone was present, but Pam was late. Michael asked why she was late. This generated a good discussion and a request from the group that Pam try not to be late. Michael's concern about Pam's being late demonstrated a concern for Pam, and for the group.

Following "check-in", the group discussed the second part of the Belief Inventory. The statement "All dads hit ~~their~~ moms, it is just part of life" generated a good discussion of what it will be like when the group members have their own children. The statement "I am a bad child" prompted a discussion of whether someone is "bad" or whether his or her behaviour is "bad". The concept of being a bad person as opposed to behaving badly was a difficult one for some group members to comprehend.

The group leaders then introduced the topic of "divorce" and read the story "Zachary's Divorce" (Sitea, 1974). The group members then completed a questionnaire (Table 4) which focused on the members' perceptions of the circumstances surrounding divorce, and the feelings involved. Everyone listened intently to the story and enjoyed completing the questionnaire. Members were interested in how others answered the same questions. Members were acceptant when other members' answers were different than their own, but they were interested in knowing why members answered the way they did. Members' responses were very much a reflection of individual situations. Following is a summary of how members thought Zachary (the child in the story), his mother, and father were feeling about the divorce. It should

Table 4

Please circle your answer.

1. If Zachary showed more good behaviour his parents probably would have stayed together. TRUE FALSE
2. Zachary's parents still love him even if they are no longer living together. TRUE FALSE
3. It is a good idea for Zachary to keep his feelings about his parents' divorce to himself. TRUE FALSE

Below is a list of feelings:

Happy	Hurt	Confused	Disappointed
Mad	Scared	Sad	Lonesome
Helpless	Mean	Ashamed	Nervous
Foolish	Excited	Worried	Quiet
Shy	Loved	Friendly	Unloved

4. List all the feelings that Zachary felt. _____

5. List all the feelings that Zachary's mother felt. _____

6. List all the feelings that Zachary's father felt. _____

7. Do you think Zachary's mom really knew how Zachary was feeling?
 Yes _____ No _____

be noted that the story was vague in that it did not include the reason for, or circumstances of the divorce. This made it particularly appropriate for stimulating projections.

Zachary: sad, mad, disappointed, "unloved for a while", "loved but sometimes unloved"

Mother: jealous because "dad is getting all the money", "happy and excited about starting a new life", "worried about her house", "ashamed because her son didn't want his father to go", sorry "that it didn't work", "foolish because she didn't have anyone to look after her", "helpless because she didn't know how to do things alone".

Father: "mean, mad and scared that he might hit mom again", "mad at himself and jealous that he spent all his money trying to get custody and didn't get custody", "shy, because of what he did.", "mad, sad, lonesome, helpless and mean", "confused because he doesn't know how to clean and the house is a mess now", "foolish because he shouldn't have done what he did".

This session too demonstrated all the members working together. As had been evident in all the sessions, the group members were very adept at perceiving how others feel.

This session ended with members concluding that divorce can generate a wide variety of feelings in different people.

Session Eight - Everyone was present today. Group members were reminded of how many sessions there were left. Although the original plan was that

the final session would be on December 23rd, several members indicated that they might be 'out of town' that week. Group members were to confirm for next week whether they would be in town on December 23.

After 'check-in', the rest of the group session was spent establishing 'family connections'. Group members were requested to list two things that they liked and disliked about their moms and dads. Following is a list compiled by the group:

"Things I Like About Mom" - "getting money from her", "going places with her", "going shopping with her", "when she makes a special dinner for me", "when she goes for a walk with me", "when she rents movies for the VCR"

"Things I Don't Like About Mom" - "having to do chores", "going to bed early", "fighting", "spanking", "yelling", "getting heck"

"Things I Like About Dad" - "going to movies with him", "going on boat rides", "building campfires", "everything"

"Things I Don't Like About Dad" - "fighting", "drinking", "staying out all night", "nothing"

Group members also listed ways they thought they were like their moms and dads.

Pam and Michael stated that they would be visiting their fathers during the week. The other members were happy for them and wished that they could

be visiting their fathers too! This exercise was meaningful and fun for the group. Rita and Jane previously would not get angry at their mother. In this session they seemed to make the connection that you can like or love a person, but still get angry at him or her, or not like everything that he or she does. It was evident that the group members enjoyed making connections with their fathers who were not directly involved in their everyday lives now.

Session Nine - Everyone was present, except for Pam. During the week, she had moved back to live with her father. Although this writer had the opportunity to say good-bye to her, the group as a whole did not. The group members presented as being concerned and interested in Pam. They asked a number of questions regarding the circumstances of her move. Ken commented that Pam was "lucky". The group discussed how they could say good-bye to Pam.

As most other members would not be home on December 23rd, the final group session of the year was planned for the next week. The group members discussed what they would like to see happen at this session. They decided that they would like to make a pizza, and talk.

The group leaders then introduced the topic of problem-solving. The steps involved in problem-solving were outlined by the group leaders. The group leaders identified some problem situations (for example, a young boy having to deal with his father cancelling a visit). The group then was divided into two teams, with each team being given a number of problem situations. Team members were to brainstorm and to come up with solutions

to the problems. Group members were to roleplay the problem situations. This exercise was very much affected by the mood of the group. Some group members were very rowdy during this session. Both Michael and Ken required a "time-out." Michael's father had cancelled a visit to see Michael and it was evident that this was affecting his behaviour in the group. (For example, when Michael roleplayed a father who was cancelling a visit, he played the father as drunk and at a rowdy party). As well the group members were cognizant that the group was coming to an end, and the behaviour of some members perhaps reflected this fact.

Session Ten - Before the last session, Eric, Rita and Jane suffered the loss of their mother. Theresa died suddenly and tragically. The circumstances surrounding her death were confusing and disturbing. Shortly after the children had been told of their mother's death, they left the W.I.S.H. program to live with relatives. Theresa's death had an impact on all the women, children and staff at W.I.S.H.. In this session, Michael and Ken had many concerns related to their co-members' sudden departure, Theresa's death, and the impact that both these events would have on their group.

The group members began the session by talking about Theresa's death and how Rita, Jane and Eric must be feeling. Ken expressed his concern about what would happen if his mother died suddenly. Both Michael and Ken were wondering whether their group would meet now that they were the only two members remaining in the group. (The group had previously decided to continue after the New Year). The group leaders felt a decision on that could not be made right now, but that perhaps a group reunion could be planned in a few months of the group. Everyone expressed their sadness for

for Rita, Jane and Eric and made cards for them. Group photographs were taken. These cards and a group photograph were to be given to the children by this writer who would be attending the funeral.

Michael and Ken then briefly discussed what they liked and did not like about the group. Michael began to 'act out' at the prospect of the group ending. Plans for the future were discussed over pizza. The group leaders read the poem "No One Else" (Laron, 1974) which emphasizes the special and unique qualities we each possess. Group members were given copies of the poem and the leaders had written down special things about them on their copies. The session ended with big hugs.

W.I.S.H. Pre-School Group

Session One - The session began with the group leaders explaining why all the children were a part of W.I.S.H.. The purpose of the group and the rules of the group were explained. The rules of the group were similar to those of the latency-aged group. Stephen was introduced as "junior leader". Group members were encouraged to think of other rules and they did so enthusiastically ("Don't wreck the T.V.", "Don't play with the remote control"). The group leaders then introduced the "Body Drawing" exercise: Each group member lay down on a large body-size piece of paper. The group leaders then traced the body of each member. With the help of a mirror and coloured markers, each member coloured in his or her eyes, hair and clothing (Gundy, 1984). All four group members enjoyed this self-image

exercise.

Session Two - This session began with a brief "check-in" and a review of the last session. The children's body drawings were taped to the wall, and this helped facilitate a lively discussion on how each member was the same and different. The group members shared a Polaroid camera and took pictures of each other standing next to their body drawings. The members enjoyed having their pictures taken, taking pictures and watching the Polaroid shots develop. The members pasted the photos in their scrapbooks. Under the photos, the group leaders wrote three positive statements about each child. These statements were read out loud. Members wanted to add to these statements ("I can sing some Indian songs", "I can help at home"). The session ended with the group having a snack and leaders reading a short story "Big or Little?" (Stinson, 1985), which is about Matthew, a growing boy who sometimes feels "little" and sometimes feels "big".

Session Three - Sara and Glenn were both absent today as they were sick. Although originally the group leaders had intended to introduce the topic of 'feelings', we felt it was important that all members be present for that session. Therefore the group leaders and group members, Jamie and Stephen played "Family Tree" (Three Families Enterprises Ltd., 1986) a game which involves participants answering questions and sharing stories and information about their family. Jamie quite enjoyed this game and shared several stories about "fun times" with his father. Stephen was reluctant to talk about his family.

Session Four - This session began with a brief "check-in". The group leaders

"welcomed back" Sara and Glenn. The topic of 'feelings' was then introduced. The group leaders prepared a brief story about what feelings are and why they are important. The story "Big or Little?" was used as a reference by group leaders and group members were able to identify when "Matthew" feels big (for example, "When he helps take care of his little sister") and little ("When his mom or dad yell at him"). The topic of feelings was expanded to include 'paper pie plate faces'. Prior to this session group leaders had drawn various feelings on the plates. The group members took turns identifying and acting out the feelings on the plates. Stephen had been a 'reluctant participant' up to this point, but he and all the others members enjoyed this exercise. They all wanted to touch and hold the plates. Jamie and Glenn wanted to keep the 'happy face' for themselves. Following a snack, the group played "Feelings Charades" in teams. Group members and leaders had to act out the charades, "Mad", "Sad", "Happy", "Scared", "Love" and "Shy". Sara, who was the quiet member of the group enjoyed acting out "happy", while Stephen, at first refused to act out the feeling "love". After considerable support and encouragement from the group, he acted out the charade by hugging a fellow group member. The session ended by reviewing the "feelings." Group members were given "Feeling Faces" for their scrapbooks.

Session Five - After a "check-in", the group leaders read the story, Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day (Viorst, 1972) and introduced the idea that everyone has bad days. Members related to several incidents in the story. During snack time, the group played "Doughnut Dare" a Theraplay activity (Jernberg, 1983). In this activity the group was divided into pairs. Each member of the pair took alternate turns taking

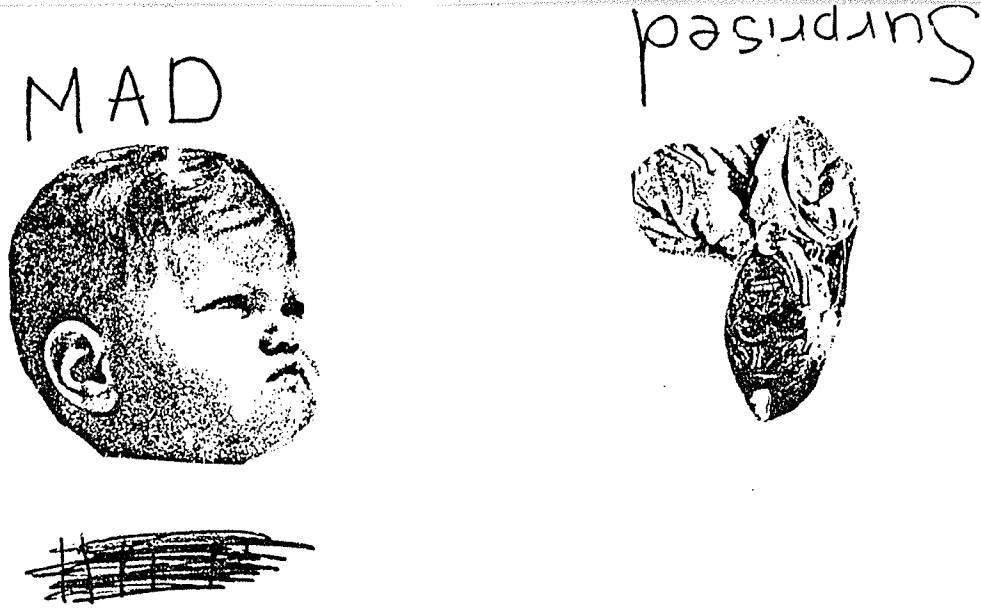
a bite of the doughnut, trying to ensure that the doughnut did not drop off the finger. This activity is seen as both nurturing and challenging. During this session, Stephen was not wanting to listen to the story. Rather, he wanted to play with video equipment and wrestle and fight with the other male group members. Stephen's behaviour was disruptive to the group process and he required a 'time-out' today.

Session Six - After a brief 'check-in', the group leaders continued on the topic of feelings and shared pictures of people from magazines with the group. Group members were encouraged to suggest how the people in the pictures were feeling. Each group member then made his or her own "feelings collage" from the pictures in the magazines. Group members shared magazine pictures, paste and markers. After completing their collages, all the group members shared their collages and the stories about the people in the collages with the group. A predominant theme in Jamie's collage was happy times that a family shared together. Stephen completed his collage well ahead of everyone else. Initially he had only one image in his collage; that of a baby. He labelled the picture "mad". (Figure 10). After about 15 minutes, as an afterthought, Stephen pasted another image into his collage, a girl who was "surprised." Stephen's collage was, it seems a reflection of how he himself was feeling. Stephen's predominant feeling most often was anger. He would frequently storm into a session and only "join in" with the group after 10 or 15 minutes.

The 'feelings collage' exercise was enjoyed by all members. For the most part Stephen preferred to work on his own whereas Jamie, Glenn and Sara shared materials and were interested in each others' projects.

Figure 10

Stephen, age 7



Session Seven - As the group was quite restless, the session began with playing "Moving Charades". This gave the group members the opportunity to move around as they acted out charades such as car, bicycle and vacuum cleaner. Following this the group leaders introduced the topic of "anger", and discussed why anger is important and what anger can tell us about ourselves. The group leaders then read the story "I Was So Mad" (Mercer, 1983). At one point, Glenn got angry and hit the book. Sara reminded him about the rule of not hitting. The story stimulated discussion with group members sharing stories about what made them "mad." Group members were asked to draw a picture of something that made them mad. Stephen drew a picture of himself crying (Figure 11). He had gotten into a fight at school and was hit by a student. In the picture he is stating, "I am going to catch you". Stephen shared his picture with the group. The group leaders talked about how hitting can make you feel sad and mad, and discussed some things that children could do instead of hitting and what to do if they are they are hit. Group members were given a picture of a 'volcano scene' to colour as a reminder that anger that is saved and saved can explode like a volcano.

Today was the first time Stephen acknowledged that he could feel sad. The picture he drew was the stimulus he needed to begin talking about the "sad feeling".

Session Eight - After a check-in, group leaders reviewed the topic of anger, and what different people do when they are angry. The message group leaders conveyed was that "It is OK to be mad, but it's not OK to hit someone". The group leaders then read the story "Something's Wrong at My House" (Davis,

Figure 11

Stephen, age 7



1984). The group discussed how the children in the story were feeling. Jamie and Stephen both began acting out. Stephen at times would become quite anxious when family issues were discussed. In the sessions it became quite evident that he experienced considerable difficulty with family-related topics. Jamie had recently visited his father. Although this was a 'good' visit, Jamie was also upset about saying good-bye. Perhaps this was reflected in his behaviour in today's session.

Session Nine - This session began with a "check-in". Group leaders then introduced the "How Would You Feel . . . Game", (Crary, 1984). Group leaders told a short story and members were to guess how the person in the story felt. Following this, each member told a story as well. ("You want to watch cartoons on Saturday and your mom tells you to go to your room ... How would you feel?"). All the group members enjoyed this activity. They enjoyed telling "their" stories and listening to the other members tell theirs as well.

Following this exercise, the group leaders introduced the topic of separation and divorce, and read the story, "Daddy Doesn't Live Here Anymore" (Boegehold, 1985), which is about a young girl whose parents are getting divorced. Stephen helped to read the story. Jamie talked about how sad the little girl (Casey) must feel. All members were very interested in the story. The group leaders emphasized that divorce is a grown-up problem and that "it's never ever the kid's fault". The session concluded with a "Car Wash" (Canfield and Wells, 1971). Group leaders and members formed two lines with space between for a person to go through. As the person goes through the 'Car Wash', the others pat him or her on the head and

back and say something positive about them.

Session Ten - Glenn missed this session as he was ill. This, the final session, began with a brief discussion of Theresa's death. The members felt sad that Rita, Eric and Jane would no longer be living at W.I.S.H.. The group members made cards for Glenn, who was sick and could not attend this 'final session', and for Rita, Eric and Jane. Although the group would continue in the New Year, this writer would not be a co-leader. This writer talked about how much she would miss the group and each member. The group leaders then presented the members with a copy of the poem, "No One Else" (Laron, 1974). The poem and some characteristics of each individual member were read out loud. The group then had a party with juice and home-made pizza which all the members had helped to make. This final session ended with Sara (who had been the quietest member of the group) leading everyone in the singing of Christmas songs. Group photographs were taken.

Summary of the Group Process

In reviewing the group process it was evident that several common characteristics or patterns emerged in both groups:

- (1) Members in both groups were eager to share their feelings and ideas. Although in the intake interviews, some were initially reticent, this changed as members became more comfortable and trusting of the other group members and the group leaders.
- (2) Although members were eager to communicate, it was clear that members

worked and learned more effectively when they were participating in structured group activities that involved visual stimulation, story-telling or motor movement rather than just discussion. Members were interested in learning new things and participating in the group process.

(3) Once given the permission to talk about their fathers many members did so. Members' stories about their fathers at times indicated both a sense of pride and pain. The confusion that many members felt about their fathers was perhaps best reflected in the comment that Rita made when she stated in one breath, "My father broke the restraint order, I really miss him." Whether or not the children had been abused by their fathers, whether or not the children visited with their fathers regularly, fathers were still very much in the minds and hearts of these children.

(4) Participants in both groups frequently talked about being hit by parents, by siblings and by students at school. While many of the group members would hit others, they were pained physically and emotionally when hit themselves. Participants knew that in the groups they could talk about violence. However this writer believes that members focused on violence not only because they were allowed to do so. Violence had been, and to a certain extent still was, part of their lives. Violence was a real issue for most of the children.

(5) As noted earlier, the groups were very much a microcosm of the members' lives. What members saw in characters in stories, or pictures or what they chose to act out in problem-solving situations were in actuality metaphors for their own lives. Members shared happy and unhappy events with the group. The fact that they were able to share so much with the group made the group process a particularly meaningful one for the children. At the same time it was evident that there were so many difficult issues

with which these children were constantly struggling. These concerns often could not be handled singularly within the short term group.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EVALUATION

Formal evaluation measures were administered on a pre-group, midpoint and post-group basis. Rita, Jane, Eric and Pam did not complete the post group treatment forms. However they did complete the pre-group and midpoint forms. As well their personal evaluative comments and those of their mothers were noted throughout the course of the sessions.

All four members in the W.I.S.H. pre-school group completed the group program. However, Sara, who was exceptionally shy, could not complete the pre-group form and consequently did not complete the midpoint and post-treatment forms. The personal comments of these children, their mothers and staff were also noted.

Pre-treatment and post-treatment forms were completed by Carolyn who was seen for individual sessions. Paul, who was experiencing developmental and medical difficulties, could not complete any evaluation measures.

The measures chosen for evaluative purposes, and their strengths and weaknesses will now be discussed.

The Self-Appraisal Inventory (SAI)

This inventory (Appendix G,H,I) is a self-report measure designed

to evaluate programs aimed at enhancing participants' self-esteem. (Frith and Narakawa, 1972). In this case, changes in levels of self-esteem were measured by comparing results of measures administered to participants prior to, during and approximately six weeks after treatment. (Exceptions to this were noted previously). The SAI has four subscales which measure a child's subjective feelings about peers, family, school and his or her general self-concept. As children from violent homes may be experiencing problems in these areas, the SAI was considered a good measure to use and assess change in the self-esteem of children participating in this practicum.

The SAI is divided into three levels: The primary level is used with children at the K to Grade 3 level and has 36 items. The Intermediate Level (Grade 4 to 6) has 77 items and the Secondary Level (Grade 7 to 12) has 62 items. In the first two levels questions are answered in a "yes" or "no" format. The secondary level responses measure varying degrees of agreement or disagreement. A high score at all levels indicates a high degree of affective adjustment.

Overall test, re-test reliability has been estimated at .73 for the primary level, .88 for the intermediate level and .82 for the secondary level (Frith and Narakawa, 1972). As the SAI deals with subjective feelings it has a face validity, but it does not control for social desirability. However in this practicum the SAI was administered to school-age children in conjunction with the What I Think and Feel Questionnaire. This measure does control for social desirability.

The What I Think and Feel Questionnaire (WITF)

This scale was used to measure the anxiety level of participants before, at the midpoint and after treatment (Reynolds and Richmond, 1978). The WITF Questionnaire (Appendix J) has 37 items which are responded to with "yes" or "no". There are 28 items which measure anxiety and nine items which deal with a child's tendency to deny common faults. This scale is not considered to be a reliable measure for children 6 or under. Consequently, Stephen was the only child in the pre-school group to complete this scale.

Three independent measures of anxiety have been identified in this scale. They are (1) Physiological Indications, (2) Worry and Oversensitivity and (3) Fear and Concentration (Reynolds and Richmond, 1979). This scale has been shown to have content validity (Reynolds and Richmond, 1978). As anxiety is seen as multi-dimensional Reynolds and Richmond (1978) suggest examining the subscales to uncover differential treatment effects on specific dimensions of anxiety. However caution should be used in interpreting subscales due to low reliabilities obtained by having small numbers of items in the subscales. Females tend to score significantly higher than males on this scale, and younger children score higher on the lie items. A high lie score may indicate social desirability. A high lie score (six or higher) may indicate acquiescence. In such cases the scores would be considered invalid but the data could provide important information about the children being tested. In a sample of 167 children from grades 2, 5, 9, 10 and 11, this scale was shown to be a reliable measure of anxiety. Children from abusive homes may be anxious, aggressive or easily frustrated. They may also be distrustful and/or fearful of rejection or disapproval.

Given this, it was determined that this scale with its built-in control for social desirability could be helpful in evaluating changes in anxiety levels of the children at W.I.S.H..

Belief Inventory

This inventory (Appendix K), recently developed by Dr. Kathryn McCannell was used to help determine the impact that a violent home might have on the belief systems of the children at W.I.S.H.. This inventory reflects the idea that children from violent homes may perceive the world differently than children from non-abusive backgrounds. It assesses the extent to which they have incorporated myths about battering. This scale was administered as a pre-test/post-test measure to all school-age children who completed treatment. In the latency-age group this scale was also used as a stimulus for discussion around the midpoint of the group. It was our hope that the treatment process would cause positive changes in the values and beliefs of participants.

This measure has 12 items and four subscales: (1) Violence - has four items, (2) Trust - has three items, (3) Self-esteem - has four items and (4) Guilt - one item. The children at W.I.S.H. were the first group to be tested using this scale. (Staff in another shelter are now using this scale as well). At this point, the small number of items do not make this scale a reliable one. However this inventory is most useful for exploratory purposes and for providing valuable information on individual children. This inventory has not yet been administered to children from non-abusive backgrounds. Comparisons with this population group would be interesting.

Supplementary Evaluation Methods

In addition to the above measures, participants provided "feedback" throughout the sessions. Many completed or were helped to complete a group feedback form. Informal feedback from staff and parents was also obtained on an ongoing basis. Initially the plan was also to obtain written feedback from the children's mothers at the end of the session. However, it was felt that the women would not necessarily say what they thought but what they thought I wanted to hear. Consequently feedback from the women was obtained indirectly from W.I.S.H. staff members, both of whom were co-facilitators in the women's support group.

In addition, a revised form of the Domestic Abuse Project (D.A.P.) Children's Program Evaluation (Appendix M) was used as a subjective measures to help determine children's change in (1) level of awareness of violence in their family, (2) level of understanding regarding who is responsible for the violence, (3) level of self-esteem and (4) awareness and understanding of non-violent problem-solving methods.

The Domestic Abuse Project also evaluates children on whether they have developed a protection plan in the event that their mothers are being battered. In the W.I.S.H. groups the issues of what could be done if someone was being hit was introduced and discussed. As the families were in 'safe' housing and safety alarms were installed in each suite, specific individual protection plans were not developed. However given that threats were made to a few women perhaps such plans should be introduced in future programs.

Summary of Evaluation and Data-Gathering Techniques

By using a variety of evaluation and data gathering techniques this writer was able to complete a thorough preliminary assessment prior to intervention. Because of the various methods of gathering information, data at times were contradictory. Knowing this in itself was useful. Such contradictions alerted the writer to the fact that a situation might need to be explored further. Using different types of measures helps to determine whether information being obtained is accurate. One measure can "pick up on" what another has missed. Information from various sources also provides a more "global" picture of the situation. Essentially the time required for administering, scoring and interpreting the selected measures was relatively brief. As all the measures were 'age-appropriate' they were relatively easy for the children to complete. In fact most children enjoyed completing the questionnaires, and they felt important being asked for information.

The results of each individual's scores will be discussed in the section titled "Individual Evaluations." However it is important to mention some general patterns that emerged:

On the pre-test, of the eight persons that completed the What I Think and Feel Questionnaire, six participants scored 5 or higher on the Lie Scale. These scores can be considered as a measure of social desirability. These high lie scales indicated that these children might be wanting approval and perhaps were concerned that if they presented themselves as they really were, they might be rejected. The high level of social

desirability reconfirmed that a goal of treatment was to enhance the children's sense of self-esteem and trust. The children needed to be reassured that they did not always have to have good manners, and they did not have to like everyone they knew; they did not have to be 'perfect' in order to be liked and loveable.

The completion of the Belief Inventory by the same eight individuals showed a consistent pattern of response to three out of the five violence related statements. Specifically, in response to the statements, "Most children live in families where the man hits the woman", "It is OK to hit someone if you are really angry" and "All dads hit moms, it is just part of life", six out of eight participants answered "True". This pattern suggests these children believed violence was a 'normal' part of life and that anger was synonymous with violence. When this inventory was re-introduced for discussion at the midpoint of the latency-aged group, responses were still varied, suggesting perhaps just how ingrained values and beliefs are.

In the latency-aged group, members generally responded positively to the group experience. All members at some time had told this writer that they enjoyed learning about feelings. For Michael and Ken "feelings" were their favorite part of the group. Pam, the quietest member, said it was interesting to hear how other kids felt even though it was hard for her to talk herself. Outside the group, Rita had once wished that her parents could learn to say how they felt, instead of arguing.

There were no general negative comments. Specific individual comments

will be discussed in the "Individual Evaluations" section.

For a treatment to be "successful," clients should be using the new skills acquired outside treatment sessions. This, I believe was happening in both groups: For example, during a 'problem-solving' session, the latency-aged group had roleplayed a situation in which a girl was being bothered by her younger sister. The group decided one solution to the problem might be to have the older sister make a "Do Not Disturb" sign and put it on the door of her room. Rita actually did do this at home, adding that the sign was "only for when I want to be alone." In the latency-aged group, there had been several discussions on how to handle anger. When Ken hit Michael in the group, the group responded with concern and suggestions on how the problem should be handled. As well the two boys were able to "talk it out" outside the group, and share their feelings voluntarily with the group at the next session.

The pre-school group enjoyed their 'special time' as well. Members reported that they especially enjoyed the "games" and "stories". This group also responded well to "feelings exercises." There was also evidence that these group members were integrating what they learned. For example, when his father asked him about his group, Jamie told him he was learning about feelings, such as feeling mad. His father told him he should not be learning about fighting. Five year old Jamie retorted that he was not learning about fighting, but about "feeling mad". As well some of the mothers of children in this group commented that their children had tried to reinforce the "no fighting" rule on their younger siblings!

Overall, all the mothers felt counselling for their children was valuable. Comments tended to be generalized: "It gives the kids a chance to talk"; "It gives them a chance to talk to other kids about what went on at home" and "it gives me a bit of a break too!". On occasion when the children were experiencing "new" problems, mothers attributed the difficulty to the children's programs. One mother saw her child's focusing on personal feelings as being non-supportive (of the mother).

The children's difficulties, or course, were not "new". However the emergence of problems that perhaps had been "stored up" for a number of years did emphasize the need to have clear ongoing communication with the mothers about their children. This is imperative if a program is to be successful. This issue will be further addressed in the "Summary" section of this practicum.

Individual Evaluations

Prior to discussing the individual evaluations of the children with whom I worked an overall summary of the evaluation results is warranted: Generally speaking, participants experienced a slight increase in self-esteem, a slight decrease in anxiety, and a moderate decrease in level of defensiveness. This worker was particularly interested if any change in the participant's perception of self in the family context would be recorded. A review of the data suggests that there was a slight improvement in participants' perception of self in the family. As will be discussed later, this finding suggests that more family work with most of the families would be beneficial. It would seem that most participants developed a

clearer recognition that the responsibility for the battering that occurred in their homes rested with the batterer, not with themselves, or their mothers. Many children including those in the younger group recognized that violence is not an appropriate conflict resolution tool, and many were able to demonstrate alternative methods of problem-solving. Brief summaries of the individual evaluations of the twelve children with whom I worked will now be presented.

Carolyn, who was seen on an individual basis presents as having an overall more positive sense of self-esteem. She indicates that she has a more favourable perception of self in regard to her school participation, in relations with her peers, and in the context of her family. As well she has a more favourable general perception of self. Carolyn also presents as being considerably less anxious and less defensive. Whereas initially Carolyn perceived her mother as being indirectly responsible for her own abuse (Carolyn's mother had left the abusive situation before but returned and was abused again), Carolyn now recognized that the responsibility for the abuse lay with "Jim", her stepfather. She also recognized that her birth father was responsible for her sexual abuse.

Carolyn, age 14.

	Self-Esteem				Anxiety				Belief Inventory		
	Before	After			Before	After			Before	After	
P	52	60	(+8)	WOS	7	4	(-3)	V	4	4	(0)
F	34	39	(+5)	PHYS	2	2	(0)	T	3	3	(0)
S	47	51	(+4)	FC	3	0	(-3)	SE	3	4	(+1)
G	46	49	(+3)	Total	12	6	(-6)	G	1	1	(0)
GL	61	66	(+5)	Lie Sc.	4	1	(-3)	Total	10	12	(+2)

P - Peer
F - Family
S - School
G - General
GL- Global

WOS - Worry/Oversensitivity
PHYS- Physiological
FC - Fear/Concentration

V - Violence
T - Trust
SE - Self Esteem
G - Guilt

Focus of Carolyn's sessions was her sexual abuse as a child, the losses she was experiencing (friends, school, neighbourhood) as a result of the move to W.I.S.H., and the difficulties she was experiencing being an adolescent and the oldest child in her family. Carolyn's mother was keenly aware of Carolyn's extra responsibilities around the home. She admitted to being worried about Carolyn given that she herself had a difficult adolescence. Generally Carolyn's mother was supportive of her, and was making attempts to give all her children individual attention. The supportive home atmosphere was an important factor in Carolyn's adjusting to her new environment.

Ken shows an improvement in his level of self-esteem, and indicates that he is feeling less anxious (especially in the area of somatic manifestations). He also presents as being less worried and "less oversensitive." Ken consistently scored "0" on the WITF Lie Subscale. This suggests a lack of defensiveness and a certain sense of comfort with self. As well on the pre-test, post-test Belief Inventory Ken scored "full marks" of 12. Ken was constant witness to the violence that occurred at home. However he was aware that this was not normal.

Ken, age 10

Self-Esteem					Anxiety				Belief Inventory				
	Before	MP	After		Before	MP	After		Before	After			
P	18	17	17	(-1)	WOS	7	4	4	(-3)	V	4	4	(0)
F	15	15	17	(+2)	PHYS	5	6	3	(-2)	T	3	3	(0)
S	17	17	19	(+2)	FC	2	1	1	(-1)	SE	4	4	(0)
G	17	18	19	(+2)	Total	14	11	9	(-5)	G	1	1	(0)
GL	15	17	20	(+5)	Lie.Sc.	0	0	0	(0)	Total	12	12	(0)

Ken's improvement in self-esteem is consistent with his verbalized feelings about self, school and family. He was performing well academically

and was spending more "quality time" with his mother, and was visiting his birth father on a regular basis. His mother discussed problems with W.I.S.H. staff when they occurred. Ken's self-esteem scores, to some extent reflected these changes in his life.

In the initial intake interview Ken reported that he recognized that his stepfather was responsible for his mother's abuse, and that his and Carolyn's birth father was responsible for Carolyn's abuse. In the group, Ken referred to being hit by family members and peers at school. On a few occasions, he had 'hit out' at others. Ken knew that this was wrong, and used the group to sort out his feelings and develop more appropriate problem solving methods.

It is interesting that in spite of Ken's high level of self-esteem, he reports that what he learned in the group is "other people like me."

Rita did not complete the post-test measures. The death of her mother resulted in her and her siblings returning to live with relatives out of town. Completion of post-test measures understandably was not a priority, and they would not accurately reflect the impact that the children's group program had on her level of anxiety and self-esteem. However, Rita's pre-test and midpoint test scores will be discussed.

At approximately the midpoint of the group sessions, Rita presented as having an increased sense of self-esteem. She showed an improvement in all areas, except for a one-point drop in the Peers Subscale. Rita presented as even less anxious (scoring 0 on the anxiety scale), and con-

siderably less defensive; she no longer believed she had to be perfect to be liked.

Rita, age 12

Self-Esteem					Anxiety					Belief Inventory			
	Before	MP	After			Before	MP	After			Before	After	
P	17	16	-	(-1)	WOS	1	0	-	(-1)	V	2	-	
F	15	19	-	(+4)	PHYS	0	0	-	(0)	T	3	-	
S	19	19	-	(0)	FC	1	0	-	(-1)	SE	4	-	
G	15	18	-	(+3)	Total	2	0	-	(-2)	G	1	-	
GL	16	19	-	(+3)	Lie.Sc.	6	2	-	(-4)	Total	9	-	

At the midpoint of the group sessions Rita was still believing that violence was 'part of life'. Although Rita believed hitting was wrong, and saw her father as being responsible for the abuse, she also felt that people would judge her for her father's actions. ("Anyone who knows what happened in my family will not want anything to do with me").

Jane at the midpoint of the group sessions indicated that she was feeling less acceptant of herself (in all spheres), considerably more anxious and worried, and less defensive.

Jane, age 11

Self-Esteem					Anxiety					Belief Inventory			
	Before	MP	After			Before	MP	After			Before	After	
P	11	9	-	(-2)	WOS	3	7	-	(+4)	V	1	-	
F	12	10	-	(-2)	PHYS	3	2	-	(-1)	T	2	-	
S	17	11	-	(-6)	FC	1	3	-	(+2)	SE	2	-	
G	11	7	-	(-4)	Total	7	12	-	(+5)	G	1	-	
GL	15	12	-	(-3)	Lie.Sc.	7	5	-	(-2)	Total	5	-	

Although Jane was reported doing well in school her assessment of her-

self, in relation to school, at the midpoint of the group, shows a significant decrease. As well her general perception of self shows a moderate decrease and there are slight decreases in perception of self in relation to peers and family. Jane and her siblings were experiencing some major family difficulties at this point (mother was experiencing alcohol problems, there was a "new man" in their mother's life, and the children were very aware of an upcoming court case involving their father's assault of their mother). Although they received sibling counselling on an "as need basis" this family unit would have definitely benefitted from some family work as well. Jane recognized that her father was responsible for the abuse at home. She had hit her younger brother on occasion, but recognized and demonstrated that violence is not an appropriate way of coping and problem-solving.

Eric at the midpoint, presented as having experienced no significant change in self-esteem, and as being less anxious and less defensive. Although Eric did not complete a post-group Belief Inventory, his discussions in the group indicated an awareness that his father was responsible for the abuse that was inflicted on his mother, himself and his siblings. Eric would often bring up examples of being hit (by his sister or peers at school). Hitting bothered him and he knew it was wrong. He was aware of alternative problem-solving methods such as discussing your feelings with an adult.

Eric, age 7

Self-Esteem					Anxiety				Belief Inventory			
	Before	MP	After			Before	MP	After			Before	After
P	3	3	-	(0)	WOS	6	5	-	(-1)	V	2	-
F	6	6	-	(0)	FC	6	4	-	(-2)	T	2	-
S	6	5	-	(-1)	PHYS	9	7	-	(-2)	SE	4	-
G	4	5	-	(+1)	Total	21	16	-	(-5)	G	1	-
GL	10	11	-	(+1)	L.Sc.	6	3	-	(-3)	Total	7	-

Eric too would have benefitted from more family counselling. Eric is an energetic, athletically adept young boy. The idea of Eric participating in community activities (specifically hockey) had been explored and Eric had joined a hockey team in the area.

Pam left the group program prior to the end, so she did not complete the post-group treatment measures. At the midpoint Pam presented as being considerably less anxious, and slightly more defensive. She indicated that she also had an increased sense of positive self-esteem. Her pre-test scores on the Belief Inventory suggest that Pam saw violence as being part of life, yet she stated that there was no violence in her father's home where she had lived for approximately three years prior to returning to live with her mother. It would be difficult to determine whether there had been any change in Pam's beliefs and values regarding violence. Pam did not see the issue of "hitting" as being relevant to her life situation. (Her father had hit her mother but she stated she did not remember this; although she had intervened in fights between her mother and her common-law husband, Pam did not want to discuss those incidents).

Pam, age 10

Self-Esteem					Anxiety				Belief Inventory			
	Before	MP	After			Before	MP	After			Before	After
P	9	14	-	(+5)	WOS	10	3	-	(-7)	V	2	-
F	11	14	-	(+3)	FC	7	3	-	(-4)	T	3	-
S	9	11	-	(+2)	PHYS	5	3	-	(-2)	SE	2	-
G	11	15	-	(+4)	Total	22	9	-	(-13)	G	1	-
GL	12	18	-	(+6)	L.S.	5	6	-	(+1)	Total	8	-

Pam had two negative comments about the group: that the group seemed

to focus on "hitting", and that the group members talked about negative aspects of their fathers. Pam perceived her father as being "perfect."

Prior to group participation, Pam presented as very anxious, and very worried. Her self-esteem was low. Pam was very much a "lost soul." She was not very happy about living in Winnipeg with her mother, and this was clearly reflected in her pre-test measures. Although Pam was performing well in school, academically, she did not perceive herself in this light. At the beginning Pam did not feel like she belonged in the W.I.S.H. group. Her shy, quiet nature made it even more difficult to participate. Toward the end, however, Pam did begin to participate more fully but not to the same extent as other group members.

The family subscale of the SAI was difficult for Pam to complete. She perceived herself as presently living with one family (her mother and brother) but being a part of another (her father and his family). This was very confusing for her. Pam could have definitely benefitted from more family work to help her sort out these connections. Betty, Pam's mother had considerable insight into Pam's situation but could not discuss her feelings and ideas openly with her daughter.

Michael reports a moderate decrease in self-esteem. On the WITF Scale, Michael consistently reported a high score on both the anxiety and lie subscales. As noted earlier, this combination may be an indication of acquiescence. An "acquiescent nature" is also suggested in some of Michael's responses in the Belief Inventory: For example to the statement, "It doesn't matter what happens to me in my life," Michael consistently responded "True".

Michael, age 8

Self-Esteem					Anxiety					Belief Inventory		
	Before	MP	After			Before	MP	After			Before	After
P	6	4	3	(-3)	WOS	9	9	9	(0)	V	2	4
F	4	4	4	(0)	FC	9	7	9	(0)	T	2	3
S	7	3	4	(-3)	PHYS	5	10	10	(+5)	SE	3	3
G	6	2	7	(+1)	Total	23	25	28	(+5)	G	0	0
GL	15	7	12	(-3)	L.S.	8	7	7	(-1)	Total	6	9

Michael indicated a growing awareness that violence was an issue in his family. He recognized and frequently presented the group with alternative ways of handling conflict. He was able to demonstrate changes in his value system and beliefs. As well these changes are reflected in his post-test Belief Inventory. However Michael's self-esteem continues to be low. Although Michael was reported doing well in school both academically, and in his relationships with peers, his perception of himself is that he is not doing well in these areas. There was no change at all in his perception of self in relation to family. In reality, Michael perceived himself as a 'lot of trouble' at home. His mother was overwhelmed with the responsibilities of being a parent to four children. During the course of the group, Michael had been repeatedly disappointed when his father would make arrangements to visit him and then cancel.

Michael's one negative comment about the group was that he did not enjoy 'playing the games', that is participating in structured group activities. Michael much preferred the opportunity to share stories and "talk about feelings." Michael enjoyed the individual attention. It made him feel good about himself.

It is this writer's assessment that Michael did benefit from the group as it was a place where he could talk about how he felt, and where he could have someone listen to him and validate his feelings and ideas. It is also evident that Michael required further self-esteem building. As well issues within his family suggest that the family as a unit should be receiving regular counselling.

Jamie showed a significant increase in his acceptance of self in relation to his peers, family and school. He also presents as having a more favourable general impression of self.

Jamie, age 5

	Self-Esteem			
	Before	MP	After	
P	4	5	6	(+2)
F	5	6	7	(+2)
S	6	5	9	(+3)
G	5	5	6	(+1)
GL	12	10	15	(+5)

Jamie appeared to be adjusting reasonably well to his new living situation. He did not see his father often (his father lived a fair distance out of town). However these visits were consistent. Similarly, Donna, Jamie's mother was adjusting to the separation well. Although her relationship with Jamie's father was strained, she tried not to allow her feelings to affect Jamie. Jamie used the group as an opportunity to talk about missing his father and how that made him feel. Jamie also brought up incidents of his father hitting his mother and how that made him feel.

Glenn reports a slight increase in his level of self-acceptance:

Glenn, age 5

	Self-Esteem			
	Before	MP	After	
P	6	6	6	(0)
F	5	4	6	(+1)
S	5	5	6	(+1)
G	6	6	7	(+1)
GL	12	12	13	(+1)

While in this group Glenn had been experiencing some changes in his family, including excessive drinking on his mother's part. Glenn's mother was also expecting her third child. These events did have an impact on Glenn. In regard to violence Glenn recognized that violence was an issue in his family. He had talked about being hit by his father and had mentioned that "my mother is trying not to hit me." He would often act out violent scenes with puppets and would react by hitting a book or object when a story about violence or anger was read. Although Glenn recognized that hitting was wrong he would frequently lash out when playing. Glenn indicated that at this point he saw little difference between the person hitting and the person being hit in regard to level of responsibility. He indicated that persons including his mother perhaps deserved to be hit. This as well as his aggressive behaviour was concerning. Glenn could benefit further from one-to-one treatment as well as special individual contact from a parenting figure.

Stephen, because of his age was the only member of the younger group to complete the anxiety scale, and the Belief Inventory as well as the self-

esteem scale.

Stephen's responses indicated that he is slightly less anxious, less defensive and less accepting of himself in relation to his world.

Stephen, age 7

Self-Esteem					Anxiety					Belief Inventory			
	Before	MP	After			Before	MP	After			Before	After	
P	7	7	6	(-1)	WOS	6	6	5	(-1)	V	0	0	(0)
F	7	4	4	(-3)	FC	5	5	3	(-2)	T	1	2	(+1)
S	7	8	8	(+1)	Ohys	5	4	6	(+1)	SE	0	1	(+1)
G	8	7	5	(-3)	Total	16	15	14	(-2)	G	1	1	(0)
GL	17	14	15	(-2)	Lie Sc.	6	6	4	(-2)	Total	2	4	(+2)

In regard to the Belief Inventory Stephen indicates that he still believes that hitting is a normal part of life, and that it is alright to hit someone if "you are really angry" or if "you love that person." On his post-test Stephen answered "False" to the statement that "people will hurt you if you tell them how you feel," suggesting that perhaps a certain level of trust developed as a result of the group process.

Stephen's scores on the family subscale of the Self-Appraisal Inventory are consistent with what was going on for him at home. He was the "scape-goat" and was perceived as a real "troublemaker." He often became engaged in physical fights with his brothers at home, and his peers at school. His father had made promises to visit Stephen and his siblings, but these promises never materialized during his first five months at W.I.S.H.. Stephen would very seldom express any feelings about his father or mother except for anger. Stephen perceives himself as doing well in school.

This is consistent with his actual academic performance; whereas Stephen was experiencing difficulties in his peer relationships at school, academically he was one of the highest ranking members in his class.

In the group there were times when Stephen was extremely helpful, by assisting at snack time or helping to read a story. There were other occasions when he would be very disruptive, and would attempt to get the other children wound up too. Other times he would refuse to participate. Stephen can be a very concerned and affectionate young boy. However, it is not very often that he allows anyone to see that side of him.

Stephen requires intensive individual counselling in order that he begin sorting out some of his feelings. As well Stephen and his family could benefit from counselling as a family unit.

Sara was very shy and non-verbal. She experienced considerable difficulty understanding the Self-Appraisal Inventory. Consequently no formal measures were used to evaluate her progress within the group. In the group Sara was generally attentive, but quiet. At times it was apparent that she was overwhelmed by the three active young boys in the group. Toward the end of the group sessions, Sara began to participate more. She was quite interested in some of the stories presented to the group, particularly those that were read that dealt with violence and divorce.

Sara had experienced her parents breaking up and reuniting many times in her life. This no doubt was very confusing for her. It is quite probable that her withdrawn behaviour is related to the constant upheaval in her

life. More than anything Sara now needs a consistent, stable, nurturing environment.

Paul - As noted earlier, Paul's medical difficulties and developmental delays made it unfeasible for him to participate in the group program. His individual sessions with this writer followed the format of the pre-school activities. Paul enjoyed the activities, and the one-to-one attention.

Paul has spent a significant portion of his life in hospitals or foster care. These constant shifts have affected his relationship with family members and his status within the family unit. Like Sara, Paul too needs a stable, nurturing environment.

PART IV Discussion

This chapter begins with a discussion of the conclusions I have reached based on my review of the literature and my experience in developing and implementing a children's program at W.I.S.H.. The conclusions are discussed in a general format and, I believe have the implications for other programs related to wife abuse and other types of familial abuse. The second part of this chapter looks specifically at recommendations for social work intervention in the area of abuse.

Conclusions

Families in which wife abuse or any type of abuse occurs are usually bound by a "code of silence." Nobody is to tell anyone outside the family about the abuse. Quite often members in the family do not talk about the abuse even among themselves, even though the violence is implicitly and explicitly clear to everyone.

Children especially are the silent victims of family violence. In the case of wife abuse in particular, parents and helping professionals alike may believe it unnecessary to include children in any discussions on treatment as the case is one of wife abuse. They may conclude that since the child is not talking about the abuse, he or she may not have been affected by the family violence; children's verbal silence is often misinterpreted as disinterest or "not wanting to talk about it." What the children at W.I.S.H. clearly demonstrated is that they were never only witnesses to the violence. Whether they were directly abused or not, they were very much affected. All children want and need to understand what

is happening to them, and they need to have the opportunity to express how they feel about it. They may not be adept at communicating verbally. It is then up to the parent or other helping professional to choose from the many tools available that help facilitate communication.

The children at W.I.S.H. communicated their distress and pain in many ways. For some, there was deterioration in their behaviour when they became part of the W.I.S.H. program. Such behaviour changes were consistent with literature findings which suggest children may act out or regress when they are experiencing major life changes. As well many children at W.I.S.H. had fathers who were quite authoritarian. For these children there "acting-out" may have been a reflection of what appeared to be a new-found freedom to be themselves. Some of the 'typical' behaviours that their children might exhibit had been discussed with the women, but the 'new' verbal and non-verbal reactions of their children still surprised some women. Some women suggested their children were not being grateful for their new life situation, while others questioned the "new skills" their children were being taught.

The decision to terminate a battering relationship was a difficult decision for all the women to make but they did resolve that that had to be done if they and their children were to lead a non-violent 'normal' life. The women were excited at the prospect of starting a new life. Although this decision was made with the children's best interests in mind, this decision was not always understood by the children. Both parents and helping professionals must differentiate between their feelings and a child's feelings. We cannot assume a child is interpreting the situation

the same way. We cannot even understand that a child understands what is happening, even after many explanations. What may appear to us to be new and exciting may be quite frightening and confusing to a child.

This author believes that the children at W.I.S.H. benefitted and learned from the group and individual programs offered them. However it is also my belief that in order for a client to integrate what he or she has learned in the counselling process, the client needs to get reinforcement to practice the new behaviour outside the counselling setting. Counselling is not an end product, rather it is a facilitative mechanism which aids clients in gaining the insight and skills necessary to cope with their social world. Children especially need to have their new skills reinforced by their families. A family is the basic, most important unit in a child's existence. The support and encouragement of family is vital to the child's development. If a child's family does not accept or is threatened by the child's new behaviour, the child may choose not to use his or her new skills, and return to previous methods of coping and problem-solving, or the child may learn to believe he or she is not capable of completing tasks. It is thus most important to 'engage' the family.

The Parent's Handbook (Appendix N) was developed to help mothers understand the new skills being taught their children and to seek their assistance in encouraging their children to practice their new skills. The intent was also to provide the women with information about the crises that their children were going through, and to give them ideas which would help their children cope. This information was supplemented by formal and informal meetings with the mothers and their children. These meetings were arranged

on an 'as need basis.'

However, many of the families at W.I.S.H. could have benefitted from regularly scheduled family sessions. For although the women were able to talk about their abuse in their individual or group sessions, and the children were able to discuss the abuse in their sessions, it was evident that parents and children needed help in 'breaking the code of silence' with each other. The women also needed help in talking with their children about separation and divorce. The women agreed and understood that they 'should' talk with their children about these issues, but to actually discuss these issues is a difficult task for any parent. Sessions with a family worker would facilitate such discussion. Such sessions would also allow children to 'practise' what they have learned in the children's program, and ensure that mothers were aware of new developments in their children's program. This could help eliminate any threats the women might feel as parents, as well as ensuring that the mothers are actively participating in their children's skill development.

Some children would have also been helped further by individual counselling. Sometimes group members introduced critical issues that could not always be handled in the group. These included some fathers repeatedly reneging on promises to visit, parent's excessive drinking and fights at school. Although group members received individual counselling on an ad hoc basis, the nature of some of the problems and their impact on the children suggested that regular or ongoing counselling was warranted in some cases.

As noted previously Peter required individual counselling prior to

any group involvement. Carolyn was emotionally and developmentally at a different level than the other children at W.I.S.H.. Carolyn and Peter (at a later date) could have benefitted from the supportive and learning atmosphere of a group. No other programs for teen witnesses to family violence were operating in Winnipeg. Perhaps in the future inter-agency sharing of resources and clients could be considered so that individuals such as Carolyn and Peter can also benefit from group programs if needed.

Apter (1982) states that children need to know joy. Children should "feel joy each day and look forward to joy-giving events in the future," (p.13). They need to have fun. Although group counselling activities can be fun, children from violent homes also need to participate in social and recreational activities outside their homes. Through such activities children are provided with constructive outlets for their energy and frustration, as well as being provided with the opportunity to develop their abilities and skills.

Second-stage housing projects then should provide children with long-term structured group activities. Such group activities should incorporate the themes discussed previously in this practicum report (education about abuse, enhancing self-esteem, identification and expression of feelings, clarifying and challenging of beliefs, values and stereotypes, and helping children to deal with the multiple losses they are experiencing in their lives). As well such structured activities should include the opportunity for children to participate in social and recreational activities as a group, and as individuals with their own unique talents. By participating in activities in the larger community, children from second-stage housing

projects such as W.I.S.H. can be exposed to children from non-violent homes, and they can learn that violence is not "just part of life." As well, as they become more competent in their social and recreational pursuits, they can further develop a sense of self-confidence and an increased sense of self-esteem.

Because of the specific circumstances, not all children in the W.I.S.H. completed the group programs and the final evaluation. Nonetheless the evaluation process was valuable, interesting and enjoyable. The pre-test and midpoint measures confirmed our "professional hunches", while at the same time alerting us to concerns about some children that otherwise might have gone undetected. The evaluation process should be an integral part of any program. Evaluation measures enable us to determine how we can improve client services or, confirm that the services being provided are of benefit to the client.

Working in the area of abuse and violence is emotionally draining. In regard to group intervention, it is important to have two co-therapists. Children from violent homes can be very needy and many of the issues introduced in the group may be very emotionally charged. Having two therapists enables them to share the responsibility of dealing with the issues that emerge in the group. As well, co-therapists can be a source of practical help and emotional support to each other.

The presence of co-therapists however does not negate the need for ongoing consultation and supervision with other therapists in the agency, and in outside agencies as well. Well co-ordinated inter-agency sharing of resources, information and services is not only beneficial to our client's

development, but to our professional development as well.

In regard to wife abuse programs, lack of funds frequently results in children's programs being limited or non-existent. In such situations the hope is that if the abused wife leaves the battering relationship and/or becomes involved in counselling programs aimed at improving her psychological well-being, she, in turn will be more able to meet the needs of her children and to deal with their problems. In the absence of funding and resources, a mother is given personal responsibility for dealing with the effects of the abuse on her children. If we really believe that wife abuse is a societal problem, we must also assume responsibility for helping children to cope with abuse. As was demonstrated in this practicum, the special needs of these children make it imperative that they be involved in counselling as well. Children's programs should be an integral part of wife abuse programs and funds and resources must be made available for the implementation and development of such programs.

Even with the growing recognition that wife abuse is a societal problem, and the consequent increase in funding being provided to wife abuse programs, such programs still perennially experience the problem of having a shortage of resources. Using well-trained volunteers and/or supervised students can help augment service delivery. There are a number of areas where the services of volunteers and students can be used. These include one-to-one child contact, parenting programs and recreational programs. As wife abuse is clearly a community problem, the functions of professionals involved in the area must include developing a community consciousness and getting the community involved in the amelioration of the problem. Use of students

and volunteers is one way of involving the community. Having the extra resources allows staff to become more involved in activities such as public education. Public education is often considered an activity that staff become involved in only "if time permits." This should not be so. Clearly to stop the cycle of violence, making the public aware of the problem, and what social factors perpetuate the problem, must be an integral part of abuse programs.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice

(1) Recommendation: That abuse-related questions be a regular part of any social work assessment or intake interview.

Social workers encounter abused women and children in a wide variety of settings and situations. Abuse is not very often the "presenting problem." Social workers may have a "hunch" that a woman is being beaten, or that a child is being abused, physically or sexually, but often they do not ask about the abuse. Often social workers conclude that there is no abuse in a family even though they have not asked their clients about the possibility. By not asking about abuse we social workers may be perpetuating the 'code of silence' which operates in so many abusive families. An assessment or intake is not complete unless the possibility of abuse has been explored. A women and/or child may deny being abused when first asked. This may be the only way available to them by which they can express control. They may not be ready to disclose. They may be apprehensive (understandably) about what will happen once they disclose. If a client admits to there being abuse we must listen to him or her to determine what he or she expects

from us. We must be aware of all the other resources that are available to help. By initiating questions about abuse we have "opened the door" and given our client permission to discuss the violence. This is an important first step.

As social workers we must become more involved in talking with women about abuse. We must also take the time to talk with children about abuse. Otherwise we can only speculate about the numbers of children presently in mental health settings who are in fact suffering in some way from violence in the home.

(2) Recommendation: That social work practice include more extensive involvement with children in general and abused children in particular.

Although social workers work extensively on behalf of children, generally we do not work with children, the exception to this rule perhaps being the sexually abused child. Brink and Gruszinski (1987) suggest reasons for why professionals do not work with children: Often children are seen as being resilient and capable of "bouncing back." At the same time we think of children as being vulnerable and innocent, and needing to be protected from the cruel reality. As well Brink and Gruszinski suggest that we may be afraid of children; children are bluntly honest and uninhibited, and, they expect us to be the same.

Children may be strong and resilient. But if children's strength enabled them to survive their abuse or the abuse of their mother, they can also survive the memory of the abuse if it is re-introduced through

treatment. Oaklander (1978) states that children need "allies", but that to work with children we need to be aware of many issues, including child development, the child's family and environmental influences and the uniqueness of each individual child. In order for a child to open up he or she must feel safe; we must approach the child with a nonjudgmental attitude, respect and regard. We must also have a sense of humour ... "to allow the playful expressive child which rests in all of us to come through," (Oaklander, 1978, p.62).

Social workers working in child-related areas then must not only feel comfortable interacting with children, they must also have a sound theoretical knowledge of issues relating to children. Learning about children and the impact of abuse, sexual stereotyping, and separation and divorce on children are issues that should be an integral part of training curriculums for all mental health professionals; working with children should be seen as an important aspect of social work practice. When working with children we must be able to take their perspective. And we must acknowledge that they have their own unique perceptions, ideas and interests that may be very different from our own or those of their parents.

Oaklander (1978) suggests that by not having children as real clients, by not talking with, and listening to children we are perpetuating a separatism that furthers the oppression of these young persons. If we want to stop the intergenerational transmission of violence we must intervene with as well as for children.

(3) Recommendation: That social work practice become more fully committed

to the development and implementation of programs for battering and abusive men.

Services to men who are involved in abusive behaviour must be an integral part of strategies aimed at preventing further physical and sexual abuse of women and/or children. Development of group resources in particular has proven to be an effective vehicle through which men can gain insight, assume responsibility for their behaviour, and lose their sense of isolation. Men's programs however should not be developed at the expense of programs for abused victims.

Historically women have always been "better" clients. Women have been socialized to be dependent, to be good listeners and to be more open in discussing their emotions, limitations and problems. Men, on the other hand are taught to be independent and to be in control of the situation, and of all their emotions except perhaps for anger. It is no surprise that the vast majority of social work clients are women. Especially in the area of abuse, it is much easier to provide empathy and support to an abused woman or child than it is to provide counselling to the offender. Granted, to work with abusers one must also recognize that men in many cases have been victims, and that they have also been conditioned at various levels, to preserve the power imbalance between men and women. However in counselling offenders one cannot always be empathetic and understanding; in discussing the juvenile male sex offender (many of whom were victims of abuse themselves), Klein (1986) states:

"the professional must be prepared to not be a friend, to create anxiety, develop an approach to take the offender off guard, to confront, to assume the offender is lying,

and not to be afraid when gathering information." (pp.103-104). Such "tactics" go against the traditional grain of social work and this perhaps makes it difficult for social workers to commit themselves to working with offenders. However it is important that more men's programs are developed. By focusing service strictly on the women and children being abused we are implying that if they change, or they leave the situation the abuse will stop. This is clearly not the case. In order for men to stop the abuse, they must give up some control. Many women and children want to remain in their family homes and keep their marriages "intact." Even when women and children leave the abusive situation, it is quite possible that the ex-husband may return to batter his ex-wife, or he may begin battering a new partner. As the literature and this practicum suggest, children may want to keep in contact with a non-custodial father after a separation or divorce. By visiting their father, they may be placed 'at risk' if he has not received treatment. All these possible situations clearly suggest that further programs for batterers are warranted.

(4) Recommendation: That social work family practice recognize that "family violence" occurs in the context of a social power structure that influences and empowers men, women and children in the family differentially.

It is often unrealistic to encourage a woman to leave her relationship with her battering husband. As well, it is unrealistic to imagine that a family's parent-child difficulties will be solved if the abuser leaves the family home. (As shown in this practicum, some children might in fact deteriorate behaviourally under such circumstances). In both such situations family counselling may be beneficial to the family. Although 'family

problems', just like environmental stress or learned patterns of behaviour alone do not cause a woman or child to be abused, helping a family to develop healthy patterns of interaction provides a family with non-violent methods of problem-solving and decision-making, and in turn helps to "break the cycle of violence."

For a family that remains together after the occurrence of violence, family counselling will be effective only if the abuser acknowledges responsibility for inflicting the abuse. As well the violence must have stopped. There is a growing consensus among helping professionals that in order for the violence to stop, and for the abuser to relinquish some of his power, he must undergo treatment (such as group counselling) prior to family intervention. Similarly group or individual programs can be a learning and empowering process for women and children. It has been suggested that the abuser can be more successfully 'engaged' if external circumstances have been modified or threatened. For example the abuser has been threatened with imprisonment, or he has been given an ultimatum regarding the end of the relationship, or he has been required to leave the home temporarily.

However even when the violence has stopped social workers must acknowledge that helping a family or specifically a husband to control his violence, while leaving the basic power structure of the family unchallenged makes it likely that the control and coercion will continue, if not in the form of overt violence, then in some more subtle form, such as psychological abuse. To stop abuse in families then, social work must recognize that violence of all types does occur in families and that "families (can) incorporate the most brutal and exploitative relationships as well as the

most loving and caring ones" (Eichler, 1983, p.61). After acknowledging that abuse does occur in families we must work toward changing the socially reinforced traditional gender and status roles in families that perpetuate violence.

Social work also needs to recognize the variety of family forms which exist, as well as providing counselling appropriate to those varying structures. We must recognize that the 'breadwinner' family (the traditional nuclear family in which the husband is the sole wage-earner) constitutes a minority of contemporary families. For example, in Canada between 1979 and 1970, a total of 576,559 dependent children were involved in divorce (Eichler, 1983). The majority of Canadian wives of child-bearing age are in the labour force (Eichler, 1983) and in 1980, 12.5% of live births in Canada were to single women.

The statistics cited above reflect major changes in family structures in contemporary society. These changes in turn have tremendous impact on family interactions. As social workers, we must recognize, acknowledge and accept the various types of family forms. If we do not do this, we may be unfairly imposing outdated values and norms on families, and either directly or indirectly suggesting to families that the family unit should remain intact at all cost, even if this means abuse of one member by another.

(5) Recommendation: That social work practice become more fully involved in interdisciplinary and inter-agency programs aimed at coordinating, detecting, treating and preventing wife abuse.

As noted earlier, coordination and sharing of resources can result in clients receiving much needed programs, which may not be available through the efforts of only one agency. Such coordinated efforts can also enhance the awareness, understanding, and capabilities of social workers and other helping professionals including lawyers, doctors, police and probation workers. Abuse against women and children is a multi-layered complex social problem. A well coordinated effort by all involved is imperative if we are to effectively meet the needs of the women, men and children that are involved.

(6) Recommendation: That social work practice become an instrument of social change and work towards improving and changing the social conditions that make women and children vulnerable to abuse.

Changing social conditions, that is changing the attitudes, values and belief systems of society essentially means changing the macrosystem. Such long-term changes are the most difficult to achieve and maintain. Changes in the macrosystem receive far less support. For in order for such change to occur the basic patterns of male/female relationships must change. Such changes are scary and confusing for men and women alike.

Yet changes at all levels are necessary if abuse against women and children is to end. Changes in the macrosystem can be acquired through education and developing an awareness at the lower levels. There is a definite role for social work to play in this process. Through our access to the general public, including schools, social service agencies, government systems and the media, we can encourage the support of inner

values such as cooperation and consideration rather than outer values such as physical beauty and aggression. We can encourage women to see marriage and childbearing as potential choices rather than the reason for their existence. However it is not just an issue of women assuming roles traditionally held by men. Men must also be allowed to assume the roles traditionally held by women. Men should be encouraged to be gentle, warm and nurturing and to take equal responsibility for child care and household responsibilities. In this way both family life and the social fabric are strengthened.

Although programs for women, men, children and families are vital, clearly changes at all levels must take place if we are to eliminate violence against women and children. To eliminate such abuse it is critical that both men and women share in the commitment to work for equal relationships between the sexes in the family and in society as a whole.

APPENDIX A: Bibliography

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APPENDIX B: Bibliography
- Literature Used in Children's Programs

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APPENDIX C: Mother's Interview Form

Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Project
(D.A.P.), Minneapolis, Minnesota

MOTHERS' INTERVIEW FORM

DATE: _____

CHILD'S NAME: _____

MOTHER'S NAME: _____

DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

1. How was your pregnancy with this child (was it a normal pregnancy, were there complications, was the pregnancy planned)?

2. Was the father supportive during the pregnancy?
Did you have any other persons who were supportive?

3. Was there any physical abuse during the pregnancy?

4. How was the delivery? Was the father there?

5. At what age did you child?:

Sit alone _____

Crawl _____

Walk alone _____

First words _____

Toilet trained _____

6. Has your child been experiencing any health problems? What kind of health problems? When did the problem(s) begin?

7. Have you noticed any of the following behaviour changes recently? (or when under stress)

Withdrawal _____	Concentration _____
Eating Habits _____	Missing school _____
Crying/whining _____	Preference for playing alone _____
Yelling _____	Temper outbursts _____
Fears _____	Destructiveness _____
Bed-wetting _____	Sleeping pattern changes _____

Do you want to elaborate on any of the above?

8. Has your child ever been developmentally tested? If so, what were the results?

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

9. How would you describe your child's relationship with friends?

10. Does your child play with older children? _____

Younger children? _____ Children the same age? _____

11. Can your child play alone? _____

What kinds of things does (s)he like to do alone?

12. How does your child resolve conflicts with friends?

13. How does your child handle changes such as moves?

14. Does your child make friends easily?

FAMILY

15. Who is your child closest to in your family?

16. Who is your child most distant with in your family?

17. What role do you think your child has in your family (eg. problem solver, pleaser)? Has this changed since your separation from dad?

18. How does your child resolve conflicts in the family?

19. How is your child adjusting to your separation from dad?

20. Have you noticed any changes in his/her behaviour since the separation?

21. Were you able to discuss the separation with him/her?

What does your child see as the reasons for your separation?

22. Have you been able to discuss your move with your child? What are his/her feelings about it?

23. How does your child show these emotions?

Fear _____

Hurt _____

Joy _____

Sadness _____

Anger _____

Happiness _____

24. How is affection shown in your family?

25. Does any affection seem inappropriate or sexual?

26. Do you have any uneasy feelings about how the father, siblings, babysitter or anyone touches?

27. Do you have any suspicions or concerns that your child may have been sexually touched or abused?

PARENTING - DISCIPLINE

28. When do you have problems setting limits?

Discipline methods used by Mother: _____

Discipline methods used by Father: _____

29. What kind of feedback do you get from people outside your family about your child (compliments, praise, concerns, etc.)

30. Has violence ever occurred as a result of differences of opinions in discipline approaches?
- _____

ADULT VIOLENCE

31. What incidents of the violence between you and your partner has your child witnessed or heard?

Verbal: _____

Physical: _____

32. What was your child's response?
- _____

33. How do (did) you think your child was affected by the violence in your family?

Emotionally: _____

Behaviourally: _____

34. Has violence been directed toward your child (affection withdrawn, yelled at, called names, sworn at, threatened, grabbed, pushed, hair pulled, spanked, slapped, kicked, hit with objects)?
- _____

SUMMARY

35. What are the things your child does best? _____
- _____

What are the strengths you see? _____

36. What are your main concerns about your parenting? _____
- _____

37. What do you want to change about the way you parent? _____
- _____

38. What are the main concerns you have at this time for your child? List time of onset of behavior or concern.

	<u>Concern</u>	<u>Length of Concern</u>
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____

39. Is there anything you would like to ask?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

**APPENDIX D: Young Child's Intake Form
(4 - 7 years old)**

Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Project
(D.A.P.), Minneapolis, Minnesota

YOUNG CHILD'S INTAKE FORM4 - 7 YEARS OLD

How do you like being your age? _____

If you could be any other age, what would it be? _____ Why? _____

SCHOOL

1. Do you go to school/day care? _____

2. What do you like about it? _____

3. What don't you like? _____

4. Do you have friends at school? _____ Who? _____

5. Will you be going to a different school this year? _____

6. What do you think that will be like? _____

FRIENDS

7. Do you have some really good friends? _____

8. What do you like to do with them? _____

9. What happens when you don't get along? _____

10. Will you see your friends when you move? _____

FAMILY

11. Who is in your family? _____

12. Who lives in your home? _____

13. Do you have any pets? _____ Have you ever had pets? _____

What happened to them? _____

14. Who do you like being with the most? _____

Least? _____

15. Is there anyone in the family you have trouble getting along with? _____

16. What is it like now that dad and mom are separated? _____

17. Why do you think mom and dad separated? _____
(Check out issues of responsibility) _____

18. Is there anything you would like to change in your family? If so, what?

19. Do you ever wrestle or tickle with other people in your family? _____

20. If so, where do you get tickled? Do you like it? _____

21. Have you ever felt you couldn't get away, when playing with an adult?

22. Have you ever been touched in a way you didn't like? _____

23. Where? (Use diagram enclosed) _____
24. Do you ever get hurt by anyone in the family? _____ How often does this
happen? _____
When was the last time? _____
25. Tell me about when others in your family get hurt? _____

26. What do you do when mum and dad fight? _____
How do you feel? _____

27. What makes them fight? (Check out issues of responsibility.) _____

28. Do you ever fight with anyone? _____

Who? _____

29. If you had three wishes what would they be?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

30. Is there anything else you would like to say? _____

31. Is there anything you would like to ask me? _____

**APPENDIX E: Child's Intake Form
(8 - 12 years old)**

Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Project
(D.A.P.), Minneapolis, Minnesota

CHILD'S INTAKE FORM8 - 12 YEARS OLD

How do you like being your age? _____

If you could be any age, what would it be? _____

Why? _____

SCHOOL

1. Where do you go to school? _____

2. What do you like about it? _____

3. What don't you like? _____

4. Do you have friends at school? _____

Who? _____

5. Will you be changing schools this year? _____

How do you feel about changing? _____

6. What do you usually do after school? _____

FRIENDS AND SELF

7. Do you have friends you like to play with? _____

Who? _____

8. What do you do for fun with your friends? _____

9. What happens when you don't get along? _____

10. Do you think you will see your friends from your old school or neighbourhood when you move?

11. Do you belong to any clubs or teams? _____ If so, which ones? _____

12. What is it like making new friends? _____ Hard/Easy? _____

13. Everyone has some fears or worries or things that make them nervous. What kind of things are you worried or afraid of?

14. Who do you talk to about these worries or fears? _____

15. If you had three wishes, what would they be? _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

16. Are you a happy or sad person? _____

17. What things make you?

a) Happy? _____

b) Sad? _____

c) Angry? _____

d) Scared? _____

18. What three things do you like about yourself?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

FAMILY

19. Who is in your family? (Include pets) _____

20. Who lives in your home? _____

21. Who do you like to be with most? _____

Least? _____

22. Is there anyone you have trouble getting along with in your family?

23. What is it like with mom and dad separated? _____

What is the same? _____

What is different? _____

24. Did your mom and dad talk to you about their separation? What is your understanding of why they separated?

25. Is there anything you would like changed in your family?

26. What do you do for fun in your family? _____

27. Do you ever wrestle or tickle with other people in your family? _____

Where do you get tickled? _____

Do you like it? _____

28. Have you ever felt you couldn't get away from an adult when playing with them? _____

29. See BODY DIAGRAM

30. Have you ever been touched in ways you didn't like? _____

31. Do (did) you ever get hurt by anyone in your family? _____

By whom? _____ How often did (does) this happen? _____

_____ When was the last time? _____

32. Tell me about when others get hit in your family. _____

VIOLENCE

33. What do you do when mom and dad fight? _____

How do you feel? _____

34. Whose fault do you think it is when they fight? _____

How do you feel about your dad hitting your mom? _____

35. How have other people reacted to the fighting in your family? (Neighbours, other relatives, friends)?

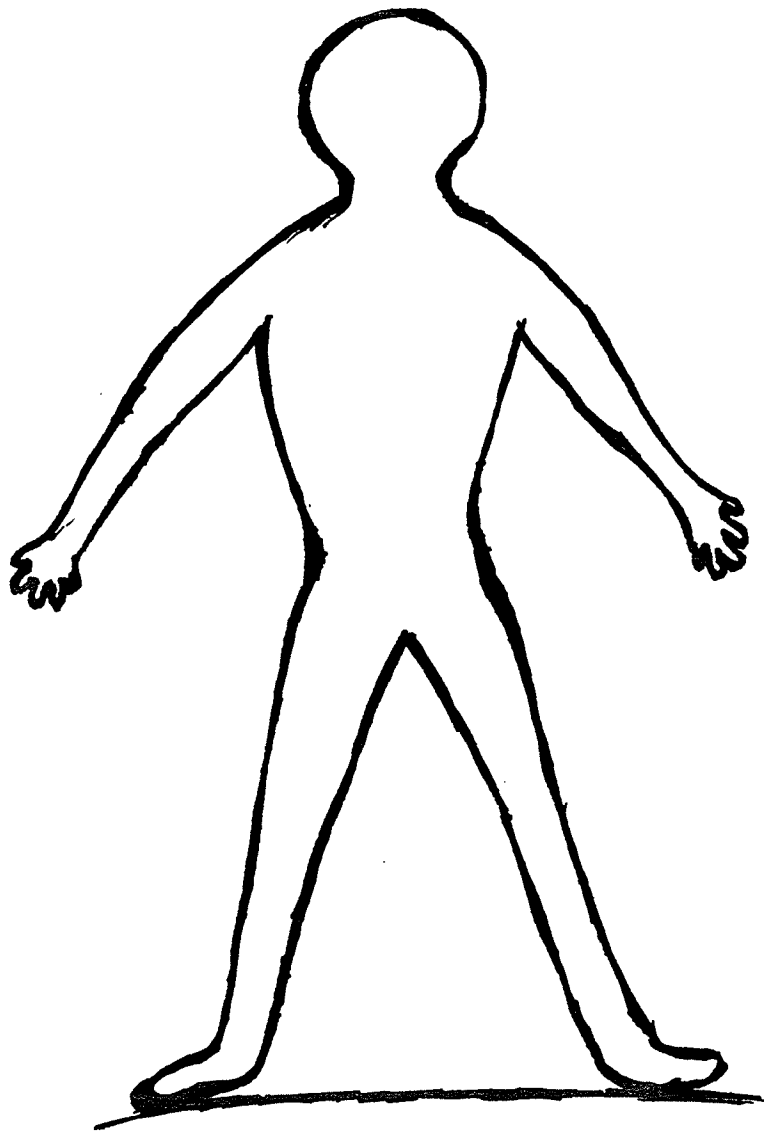
36. How do you feel about moving to W.I.S.H.? _____

37. What do you think would make it easier for you and your family? _____

38. Do you have anything you would like to say or ask? _____

39. Additional comments. . . _____

BODY DIAGRAM



**APPENDIX F: Adolescent Intake Form
(13 - 18 years old)**

Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Project
(D.A.P.), Minneapolis, Minnesota

ADOLESCENT INTAKE FORM13 - 18 YEARS OLDSCHOOL

1. How are you doing in school? (Explore grades, interests, attendance.)

2. How do you get along with your teachers? _____

3. How do you get along with your fellow students? (Explore sex-related, age-related differences, how (s)he sees him or herself in relation to others.)

4. Do you belong to any clubs or organizations at school: _____

5. What do you do after school? _____
On weekends? _____
6. Are you going to be changing schools this year? _____
What is that going to be like for you? _____

SOCIAL

7. Do you have any close friends or buddies? _____
8. If so, what makes these friendship(s) close or special? _____

9. Are you able to talk to your friends about the violence at home: _____

10. Do your friends ever come to your place? _____
If not, why? _____

11. Do you ever go over to your friends' homes? _____

12. Do you belong to any clubs or teams outside of school? _____

13. Is it hard/easy for you to make friends? _____

If it is hard, why do you think this is so? _____

14. What is it going to be like for you moving into a new neighbourhood?

CHEMICAL USE

15. Have you experimented with alcohol or drugs? ____ (If so, explore what, how much, how often and whether drug/alcohol is currently being used.)

16. Was (is) there drug/alcohol abuse in your family? _____

If so, is this affecting you in any way? _____

FAMILY

17. Who is in your family? _____

18. How is it for you living with your family _____

19. What is it like with your mom and dad separated? _____

What is the same? _____

What is different? _____

20. Did your mom and/or dad talk to you about their separating? _____

How was it explained to you? _____

21. Why do you think your parents separated? _____

22. What is your relationship like with your brother(s)? sister(s)?
(Explore closeness, conflict, resolution and feelings.)

23. What is your relationship like with your mother? (Explore closeness, discipline, conflict, resolution, sharing of feelings, changes since separation.)

24. What is your relationship like with your dad? (Explore closeness, discipline, conflict, resolution, sharing of thoughts, feelings.)

How often do you see your dad? _____ How does that make you feel?

VIOLENCE (may have to define it)

25. What kind of violence do you see go on in your family (who, frequency, severity)?

26. Would you tell me about the worst incident? _____

27. What happens to you when this occurs? (Explore feelings, responsibility, behaviour.)

28. Has anyone ever touched you in ways that were sexual or felt uncomfortable? (If so, check who, how, frequency, duration, if anyone was told and the outcome of the disclosure. Also, it is important to explore possibility of other siblings being sexually abused.)

29. How do you think the violence in your family has affected you?

30. What would you like to see done to help you and your family? _____

31. How has it felt to share all of this with me? _____

32. Is there anything you would like to ask me? _____

33. Additional comments:

**APPENDIX G: Self - Appraisal Inventory
(Grades K - 3)**

Source: Frith, S., and Narakawa, D. (1972)
Measures of Self-Concept (K-12) (Kirsten
Edition). Los Angeles: Instructional
Objectives.

SELF-APPRAISAL INVENTORYGrades K - 3

NAME: _____

SEX: _____

GRADE: _____

YESNO

1. Are you easy to like?
2. Do you often get in trouble at home?
3. Can you give a good talk in front of your class?
4. Do you wish you were younger?
5. Are you an important person in your family?
6. Do you often feel that you are doing badly in school?
7. Do you like being just what you are?
8. Do you have enough friends?
9. Does your family want too much of you?
10. Do you wish you were someone else?
11. Can you wait your turn easily?
12. Do your friends usually do what you say?
13. Is it easy for you to do good in school?
14. Do you often break your promises?
15. Do most children have fewer friends than you?
16. Are you smart?
17. Are most children better liked than you?
18. Are you one of the last to be chosen for games?
19. Are the things you do at school easy for you?
20. Do you know a lot?

YESNO

21. Can you get good grades if you want to?
22. Do you forget most of what you learn?
23. Do you feel lonely very often?
24. If you have something to say do you usually say it?
25. Do you get upset easily at home?
26. Do you often feel ashamed of yourself?
27. Do you like the teacher to ask you questions in front of the other children?
28. Do the other children in class think you are a good worker?
29. Are you hard to be friends with?
30. Do you find it hard to talk in your class?
31. Are most children able to finish their school work more quickly than you?
32. Do members of your family pick on you?
33. Are you any trouble to your family?
34. Is your family proud of you?
35. Can you talk to your family when you have a problem?
36. Do your parents like you even if you've done something bad?

**APPENDIX H: Self - Appraisal Inventory
(Grades 4 - 6)**

Source: Frith, S. and Narakawa, D. (1972).
Measures of Self-Concept (K-12) (Kirsten
Edition). Los Angeles: Instructional
Objectives.

SELF - APPRAISAL INVENTORYGrades 4 - 6

NAME: _____

SEX: _____

GRADE: _____

YESNO

1. Other children are interested in me.
2. School work is fairly easy for me.
3. I am satisfied to be just what I am.
4. I should get along better with other children than I do.
5. I often get into trouble at home.
6. My teachers usually like me.
7. I am a cheerful person.
8. Other children are often mean to me.
9. I do my share of work at home.
10. I often feel upset in school.
11. I'm not very smart.
12. No one pays much attention to me at home.
13. I can get good grades if I want to.
14. I can be trusted.
15. I am popular with kids my own age.
16. My family isn't very proud of me.
17. I forget most of what I learn.
18. I am easy to like.
19. Girls seem to like me.
20. My family is glad when I do things with them.

YESNO

21. I often volunteer to do things in class.
22. I'm not a very happy person.
23. I am lonely very often.
24. The members of my family don't usually like my ideas.
25. I am a good student.
26. I can't seem to do things right.
27. Older kids like me.
28. I behave badly at home.
29. I often get discouraged in school.
30. I wish I were younger.
31. I am friendly toward other people.
32. I usually get along with my family as well as I should.
33. My teacher makes me feel I'm not good enough.
34. I like being the way I am.
35. Most people are much better liked than I am.
36. I cause trouble to my family.
37. I am slow finishing my school work.
38. I am often unhappy.
39. Boys seem to like me.
40. I live up to what is expected of me.
41. I can give a good report in front of the class.
42. I am not as nice looking as most people.
43. I have many friends.
44. My parents don't seem interested in the things I do.
45. I am proud of my school work.
46. If I have something to say, I usually say it.
47. I am among the last to be chosen for teams.

YESNO

48. I feel that my family usually doesn't trust me.
49. I am a good reader.
50. I can usually figure out difficult things.
51. It is hard for me to make friends.
52. My family would help me in any kind of trouble.
53. I am not doing as well in school as I would like.
54. I have a lot of self-control.
55. Friends usually follow my ideas.
56. My family understands me.
57. I find it hard to talk in front of the class.
58. I often feel ashamed of myself.
59. I wish I had more close friends.
60. My family often expects too much of me.
61. I am good in my school work.
62. I am a good person.
63. Others find me hard to be friendly with.
64. I get upset easily at home.
65. I don't like to be called on in class.
66. I wish I were someone else.
67. Other children think I'm fun to be with.
68. I am an important person in my family.
69. My classmates think I'm a poor student.
70. I often feel uneasy.
71. Other children often don't like to be with me.
72. My family and I have a lot of fun together.
73. I would like to drop out of school.

YESNO

- 74. Not too many people really trust me.
- 75. My family usually considers my feelings.
- 76. I can do hard homework assignments.
- 77. I can't be depended upon.

**APPENDIX I: Self - Appraisal Inventory
(Grades 7 - 12)**

Source: Frith, S., and Narakawa, D. (1972)
Measures of Self-Concept (K-12) (Kirsten
Edition). Los Angeles: Instructional
Objectives.

SELF - APPRAISAL INVENTORYGrades 7 - 12

NAME: _____

GRADE: _____

SEX: _____

Strongly Agree (SA)
Agree (A)
Disagree (DA)
Strongly Disagree (SDA)

1. School work is fairly easy for me.
2. I am satisfied to be just what I am.
3. I ought to get along better with other people.
4. My family thinks I don't act as I should.
5. People often pick on me.
6. I don't usually do my share of work at home.
7. I sometimes feel upset while I'm at school.
8. I often let other people have their way.
9. I have as many friends as most people.
10. Usually no one pays much attention to me at home.
11. Getting good grades is pretty important to me.
12. I can be trusted as much as anyone.
13. I am well liked by kids my own age.
14. There are times when I would like to leave home.
15. I forget most of what I learn.
16. My family is surprised if I do things with them.
17. I am often not a happy person.
18. I am not lonely very often.
19. My family respects my ideas.
20. I am not a very good student.

21. I often do things that I'm sorry for later.
22. Older kids seem to like me.
23. I sometimes behave badly at home.
24. I often get discouraged in school.
25. I often wish I were younger.
26. I am usually friendly toward other people.
27. I don't usually treat my family as well as I should.
28. My teacher makes me feel I'm not good enough.
29. I always like being the way I am.
30. I am just as well liked as most people.
31. I cause trouble to my family.
32. I am slow in finishing my school work.
33. I often am not as happy as I would like to be.
34. I am not as nice looking as most people.
35. I don't have many friends.
36. I feel free to argue with my family.
37. Even if I have something to say, I often don't say it.
38. Sometimes I am among the last to be chosen for teams.
39. I feel that my family always trusts me.
40. I am a good reader.
41. It is hard for me to make friends.
42. My family would help me in any kind of trouble.
43. I am not doing as well in school as I would like.
44. I find it hard to talk in front of the class.
45. I sometimes feel ashamed of myself.
46. I wish I had more close friends.
47. My family often expects too much of me.

48. I'm not very good in my school work.
49. I'm not as good a person as I would like to be.
50. Sometimes I am hard to make friends with.
51. I wish I were a different person.
52. People don't usually have much fun when they are with me.
53. I am an important person to my family.
54. People think I am a good student.
55. I am not very sure of myself.
56. Often I don't like to be with other kids.
57. My family and I have lots of fun together.
58. There are times when I feel like dropping out of school.
59. I can always take care of myself.
60. Many times I would like to be with kids younger than me.
61. My family doesn't usually consider my feelings.
62. I can't be depended on.

APPENDIX J: What I Think and Feel Questionnaire

Source: Reynolds, C.R., and Richmond, B.D.
(1978). What I Think and Feel: A Revised
Measure of Children's Manifest Anxiety.
Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology 6,(2)
287-295.

WHAT I THINK AND FEEL QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: _____ AGE: _____ SEX: _____

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. I have trouble making up my mind. | Y | N |
| 2. I get nervous when things do not go the right way for me. | Y | N |
| 3. Others seem to do things easier than I can. | Y | N |
| 4. I like everyone I know. | Y | N |
| 5. Often I have trouble getting my breath. | Y | N |
| 6. I worry a lot of the time. | Y | N |
| 7. I am afraid of a lot of things. | Y | N |
| 8. I am always kind. | Y | N |
| 9. I get mad easily. | Y | N |
| 10. I worry about what my parents will say to me. | Y | N |
| 11. I feel that others do not like the way I do things. | Y | N |
| 12. I always have good manners. | Y | N |
| 13. It is hard for me to get to sleep at night. | Y | N |
| 14. I worry about what other people think of me. | Y | N |
| 15. I feel alone even when there are people with me. | Y | N |
| 16. I am always good. | Y | N |
| 17. Often I feel sick to my stomach. | Y | N |
| 18. My feelings get hurt easily. | Y | N |
| 19. My hands feel sweaty. | Y | N |
| 20. I am always nice to everyone. | Y | N |
| 21. I am tired a lot. | Y | N |
| 22. I worry about what is going to happen. | Y | N |
| 23. Other children are happier than I. | Y | N |

24. I tell the truth every single time.	Y	N
25. I have had dreams.	Y	N
26. My feelings get hurt easily when I am fussed at.	Y	N
27. I feel someone will tell me to do things the wrong way.	Y	N
28. I never get angry.	Y	N
29. I wake up scared some of the time.	Y	N
30. I worry when I go to bed at night.	Y	N
31. It is hard for me to keep my mind on my school work.	Y	N
32. I never say things I shouldn't.	Y	N
33. I wiggle in my seat a lot.	Y	N
34. I am nervous.	Y	N
35. A lot of people are against me.	Y	N
36. I never lie.	Y	N
37. I often worry about something bad happening to me.	Y	N

APPENDIX K: Belief Inventory

Source: McCannell, K. (1986)
University of Manitoba: Winnipeg

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ GRADE: _____

DATE: _____

BELIEF INVENTORYRead to the Child

- | | | | | |
|------|-----|---|------|-------|
| (V) | 1. | Most children live in families where the man hits the woman. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (T) | 2. | You can't depend on parents. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (V) | 3. | It is OK to hit someone if you are really angry. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (G) | 4. | I probably caused my dad to hit my mom. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (SE) | 5. | Anyone who knows what happened in my family will not want anything to do with me. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (T) | 6. | People will hurt you if you tell them how you feel. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (SE) | 7. | It doesn't matter what happens to me in my life. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (SE) | 8. | I will never lead a normal life. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (V) | 9. | All dads hit moms, it is just part of life. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (SE) | 10. | I am a bad child. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (T) | 11. | If someone in your family is hitting and hurting someone else, it is a good idea to tell a grownup you trust. | TRUE | FALSE |
| (V) | 12. | It is OK to hit someone if you love that person. | TRUE | FALSE |

Note: This inventory has been revised.

APPENDIX L: Group Feedback Form

Group Feedback Form

1. What I liked about this group was
2. What I didn't like about the group was
3. What I learned in this group was
4. What I will remember most about the group is

**APPENDIX M: Pre-test, Post-test
Children's Program Evaluation**

Adapted from the Domestic Abuse Project
(D.A.P.), Minneapolis, Minnesota

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Pre-Test Evaluation
Children's Program

1. Child's acknowledgement that violence is an issue in their family.
 - a. Measure: Clinician estimate of degree of awareness of violence in child's family.
 - b. Tool: $\frac{1}{1} \quad \frac{1}{2} \quad \frac{1}{3}$
 - c. Criteria:
 1. Doesn't acknowledge violence as an issue.
 2. Acknowledges violence as an issue but minimizes its effects.
 3. Acknowledges violence and its effects.

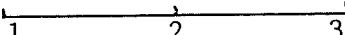
2. Child's perception of who is responsible for violence.
 - a. Measure: Clinician estimate of child's understanding of responsibility for violence.
 - b. Tool: checklist
 - c. Criteria:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Child sees self as responsible.	—	—
2. Child sees Mom as responsible.	—	—
3. Child sees Dad as responsible.	—	—

3. Child's level of self-esteem as demonstrated by age appropriate behaviour: eye contact; conflict resolution; relationship formation; expression of thoughts, feelings, needs.
 - a. Measure: Clinician estimate of child's level of self-esteem initial assessment.
 - b. Tool: $\frac{1}{1} \quad \frac{1}{2} \quad \frac{1}{3} \quad \frac{1}{4} \quad \frac{1}{5}$
 - c. Criteria:
 1. Very low self-esteem. (No assertive characteristics.)
 2. Low self-esteem. (One assertive characteristic.)
 3. Moderate self-esteem. (Two to three assertive characteristics.)
 4. High self-esteem. (Four assertive characteristics.)
 5. Very high self-esteem. (Five or more assertive characteristics.)

End of Contact
(If necessary)
Date _____

1. To help children acknowledge that violence is an issue in their family.

- a. Measure: Clinician estimate of degree of awareness of violence in child's family.
- b. Tool: 
- c. Criteria:
1. Doesn't acknowledge violence as an issue
 2. Acknowledges violence as an issue but minimizes its effects
 3. Acknowledges violence and its effects.

1. _____

2. To help children learn who is responsible for violence. 2.

- a. Measure: Clinician estimate of child's understanding of responsibility for violence.


	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____

- b. Tool: Checklist

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| c. Criteria: | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
| 1. Child sees self as responsible | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Child sees Mom as responsible | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Child sees Dad as responsible | _____ | _____ |


3. To help children build self-esteem by demonstrating assertive behaviour.

3.



A horizontal number line with tick marks at 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

- a. Measure: Clinician estimate of progress at closing

- b. Tools: 

- c. Criteria:
1. Decrease in self-esteem
 2. No change in self-esteem
 3. Minimal change in-self esteem
 4. Noticeable change in-self esteem
 5. Marked or significant change in self-esteem

4. To help children learn non-violent ways of problem-solving.

a. Measure: Clinician rating

b. Tool: Questions

c. Criteria: Answers to questions

1. Yes ☐ No ☐ Did child learn and understand alternatives to violence in problem-solving?
2. Yes ☐ No ☐ Did child accept that violence is not a good or useful problem-solving tool?
3. Yes ☐ No ☐ Has child demonstrated use of alternate methods?

- 4.
1. Yes ☐ No ☐
 2. Yes ☐ No ☐
 3. Yes ☐ No ☐

APPENDIX N Parent's Handbook

HELPING A CHILD TO COPE WITH BATTERING

A PARENT'S HANDBOOK

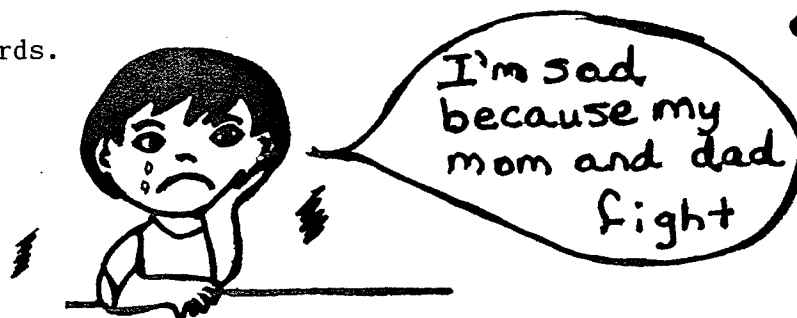
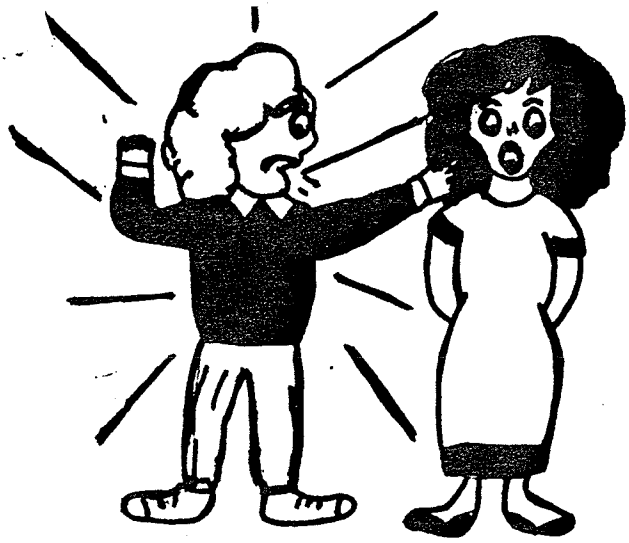
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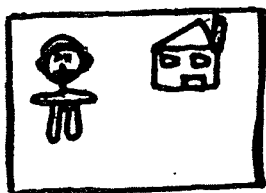
Violence in the family can be very painful for children, whether they are witnesses to violence, or actual victims of abuse. Often children do not understand what has been happening in their home. Not understanding or misunderstanding can make the abuse even more scary for a child. To help children from violent homes the parent or other adults must help them understand what has happened. As well, children must have the opportunity to say how they felt about what went on at home. Sometimes they express how they feel in words.



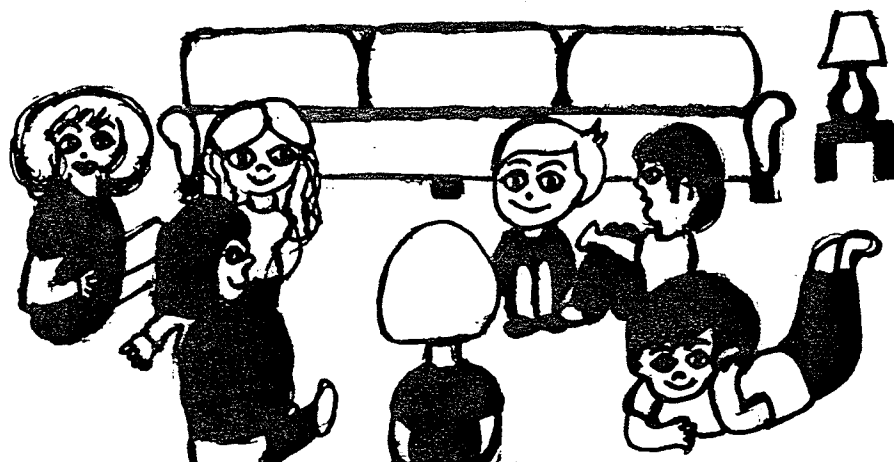
Sometimes these feelings are expressed through other means, such as grumpy behaviour.



Sometimes children express themselves through drawings or through play.



Through the Children's Groups at W.I.S.H., we would like to provide the children with a safe place where they can talk about what went on at home. Many children who come from violent homes feel "different." They might feel that they are the only ones who have daddies who hit their mommies, or they might feel that they are to blame for the abuse. In a group with others children can share their ideas and feelings. In a group it is easier for children to see that they are not "different." In a group children can more easily accept that, just like their moms, they are not responsible for the abuse.



We have summarized for you some of the issues that we are discussing in the Children's Groups. In order for the group to be helpful for your children, we need your help. Following are also some ideas on how you can help us help your children.

SELF-ESTEEM

Children from violent homes may not feel very good about themselves; they may have poor self-esteem. There are many reasons why children may have poor self-esteem. The child may feel that he or she is "bad," feeling to blame for mom being hit, or for his or her parents separating. Sometimes moms have been forced to devote most of their time to their husbands; the husbands may have become angry if their wives spent time with their children. In homes where there has been violence, all family members have unmet emotional needs. Many of the activities in the Children's Groups will focus on helping children feel good about themselves.



HOW YOU CAN HELP: When children feel neglected, they may go to extremes to get attention. Try to pay more attention at times when your child is showing good behaviour or does something well. Don't be afraid to give your child specific praise when he or she does something well. Paying attention when your child is good will make him or her feel better and more capable, and it may result in your child not misbehaving just to get your attention.

To get started, you could try saying 3 positive things each day to your child. (For example, "I like the way you got dressed for school this morning" or "Thank-you for putting your cereal bowl in the sink" or "I like your shiny black hair"). Try keeping track of the positive comments for one week. Do you notice any changes?

Also, don't be afraid to join in and play with your child. A simple game of cards or a "walk and talk" tells your child that you are interested. Such activities can also be fun for both of you.





FEELINGS

Children from violent homes may be experiencing a wide variety of feelings. For example, they may be afraid that their fathers might return and mom will be hit again, even though they have been assured that this will not happen. They may be angry at dad for hitting mom, or them. They may be angry at mom for staying with dad for so long. Most of all, children may be feeling confused because they love both mom and dad. They may feel confused that they love dad even though he was mean and hit mom and/or them. Although the children at W.I.S.H. are in a safe place, they might still feel sad and lonely because they might be missing dad or friends from the old neighbourhood. Although some children might be "feeling all these feelings," they might not be able to express all these emotions. Perhaps in their violent homes they were told that feelings sad or scared was a sign of weakness, so they pretend not to have feelings. It is important for all humans, children as well as adults, to identify their feelings and to express how they are feeling. Also, it is important for children to know their feelings are accepted.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Help your children express themselves by encouraging them to talk with you. If your child does not want to talk maybe he or

she might want to draw you a picture or play a game with you. Perhaps you can help your child by modelling your own feelings. ("I feel sad or lonely when I miss my friends. Maybe you feel that way sometimes "). Reassure your child that all children have feelings at certain times. ("Most kids feel scared when their moms and dads fight"). Feelings "underlie" behaviour. You might try saying "sometimes when you fight with your brother, I wonder if you've had a hard day at school" or "sometimes when you slam the door, I wonder if you're feeling angry." Remember! You have made good things happen in your family by coming to W.I.S.H., but all of these changes may also feel confusing too!

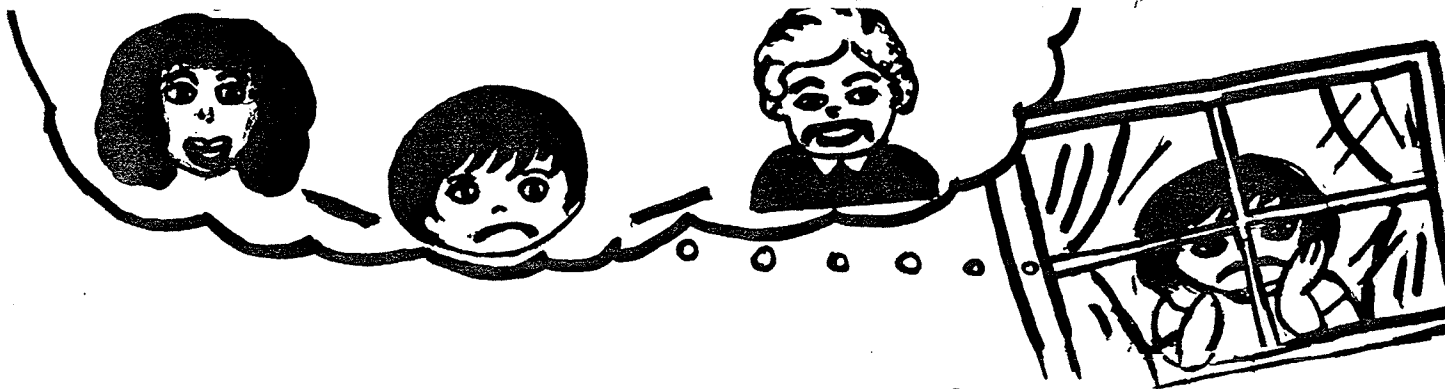


ANGER

Anger is an important feeling. Through our anger we realize how we want to be treated and what we think is fair. However children from violent homes may learn to think of violence and anger as being the same thing. This is not so. People can get angry without being violent. If we don't deal with our angry feelings, anger builds up inside of us. It is OK to be angry, but to be angry at someone does not mean that we hit that person.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Raising children can be very stressful and frustrating, especially when they are young and dependent on you. All parents feel angry at times. One of the best things you can do for your family is to figure out a way to handle your anger. Remember that as a parent you are a very important role model for your children. By not using physical punishment you are reducing the likelihood that your child will strike others. When your child is hitting or acting aggressively it is important that you say that you disapprove. Otherwise your child may think that you approve of his or her aggressive behaviour. Reward or praise your child for not fighting. In the parent group at W.I.S.H. you can share your ways of disciplining that work for you.

The W.I.S.H. Library has several books that deal with anger. Books such as I Was So Mad! by Mercer Mayer are educational, as well as fun to read!



SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

Even if dads were violent children will probably still miss them.

A separation or divorce is painful for parents, and for children. Sometimes a child's behaviour may change for the worse after his or her parents' separation. This is one way that children may be saying that they are in pain. A child may not understand the separation and what it means. Children may feel they are the cause of the separation. Children often think that if parents stopped loving each other, maybe they can stop loving kids too. Children need reassurance that this is not going to happen. It is important that your child understands that he or she is not to blame for the divorce, and that you and dad still love him or her.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Reassure your children that they are not to blame for your leaving dad. "Divorce is a grown-up problem - it's never ever the kids' fault." Let your children know you still love them very much. Encourage your child to talk about how he or she feels about dad and the separation. If your child feels angry that does not mean that he or she does not love you anymore. Many parents find it hard to talk to their children about divorce. In the parent group you will be able to share with each other ways of talking to children about divorce.

Sometimes reading a story is a way to open the subject. You might want to borrow Daddy Doesn't Live Here Anymore by Betty Boegehold from

the W.I.S.H. Library. If your child can read, The Boys and Girls Book
About Divorce by Richard Gardner could be quite helpful to him or her.

ALCOHOL

Sometimes people, both adults and children believe that alcohol causes dads to hit their wives or children. This is not true. Alcohol can dull the senses. Abusers sometimes try to use their drinking as an excuse for hitting someone. ("I didn't know what I was doing. I was drunk.") However the bottom line is that alcohol is not to blame for a man hitting his wife or children. The abuser is responsible for his own actions. When people who have a tendency to be violent drink heavily, they increase the likelihood that they will hit someone. It is their responsibility then, to control themselves - and their drinking.

Just like children sometimes feel they are responsible for their parents separating, children sometimes think they cause their parents to drink. If children think they cause their parents to drink, they may also think they can stop their drinking. If a parent drinks in excess, it is their own fault. Also, children cannot stop their parents from drinking. Parents have to stop themselves.

Sometimes when people can't cope with their problems they drink. Drinking is not a way to solve problems. It is important that children know this. Children have to learn ways of coping and problem-solving.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: If you or someone else in your family has an alcohol problem, reassure your child that he or she is not to blame for the drinking. It is important that you tell your child that nobody can stop someone else from drinking. Only the person who abuses alcohol can stop him or herself from drinking. For example, "Dad has a drinking problem. It is not your fault. He goes to meetings to learn ways to stop drinking."

Parents who drink heavily are taking a big risk. By drinking excessively they may hurt themselves. As well they may hurt or neglect their children. If you have a drinking problem you owe it to yourself and your children to seek help.

It is important that you teach and show your children ways of coping and solving problems that do not involve alcohol. ("I drank because I couldn't handle my problems. I tried to forget by drinking but that didn't work. Now I go to A.A. meetings where I work on my problems by talking to other grown-ups"). In the parent group you will be discussing different ways of helping your children solve problems. In the meantime, the following is a brief summary on problem-solving.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Sometimes children from violent homes have learned that the only ways to solve problems are to yell, scream or hit. Maybe they have not had the chance to learn to make decisions or choices, because dad's opinion was most important. Children need to share their ideas and feelings with others. Children need to know that their ideas and feelings may be different from those of others, but that their ideas are still important. Children need to know that they can make mistakes and still be loved and accepted. They need to be taught how to talk about problems and figure out different ways of solving them. If children can learn these things, they are learning to solve problems in a non-violent way.

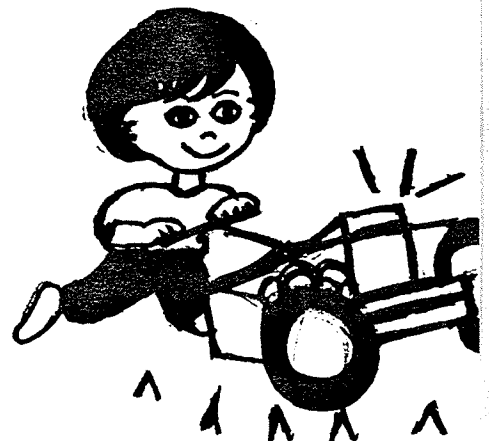


HOW YOU CAN HELP: Let your child make some decisions in his or her life, even if they are small ones. "Do you want an apple or an orange for snack?" Children want to make decisions and feel powerful. When children are fighting with each other help them come up with ideas to solve problems. For example, "You are both wanting to play with that toy right now. I want you to think of a game in which you both get to play with the toy."

STEREOTYPES

Some people believe that women are beaten by men because women are taught to act one way and men another way. Boys and men are not allowed to express their true feelings. Sometimes boys are taught that it's not OK to cry or to feel afraid. Sometimes toughness and anger are the only feelings boys feel comfortable showing. Girls may be taught that other people's feelings are more important than their own. They may worry that if they express anger others will not like them. Sometimes girls are excluded from activities just because they're girls, and likewise for boys. When a boy is raised one way and a girl another way, it is quite possible that neither child will realize his or her real and true potential.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Make sure that both your sons and daughters feel accepted and valued as persons. Let them know that boys and girls can do many of the same things equally well. Don't divide household chores by sex. Support your daughter's athletic abilities as well as your son's. Encourage your child in his or her interests. Your children need to know that you believe in them equally. The W.I.S.H. Library has several books that deal with boys and girls being who they really want to be. Try reading The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch or Free To Be . . . You and Me which is edited by Francine Klagsbrun to your children.

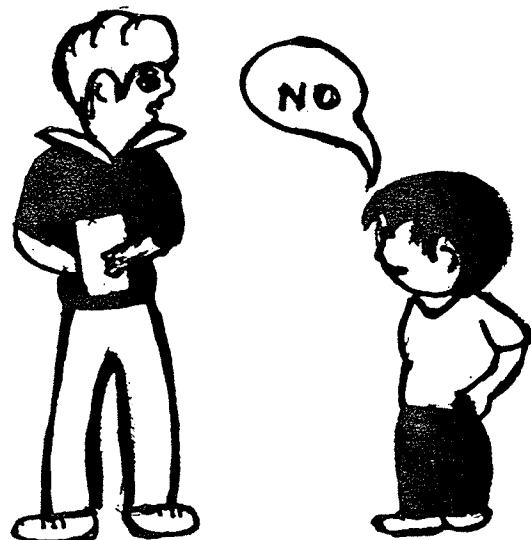


PROTECTION PLANNING

A lot of children have been raised to always be polite to adults, especially relatives or "friends of the family." Children are sometimes encouraged to hug or kiss adults even though they feel uncomfortable and don't want to "share their bodies." It is important to know that children know the difference between good and bad touches. Children can recognize when they feel strange or uncomfortable. It is also important to know that most physical and sexual child abuse situations happen right in the home. Abusers are not strangers, but relatives and friends. In the Children's Groups we will be discussing abuse and different ways children can protect themselves. But it is important for children to know that it is not their responsibility to protect themselves. It is the responsibility of parents to protect their children and keep them safe.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Perhaps your child has already been abused in his or her home. If this happened it must have been very painful for both you and your child. One of the biggest tasks now facing you as a parent is to ensure that from this day forward you will try to protect your child from further physical and sexual abuse.

As we suggested in the section on anger, one of the best ways to protect your child from physical abuse is to figure out ways for you to express your own anger, rather than have your anger build up inside of you. Reassure your child that it is your job to protect him or her. Encourage your children to talk to you about things that are



bothering them. Tell your children that they have the right to say "No" to other children or grown-ups. ("If someone wants to touch or kiss you and you don't want to be touched or kissed, it's OK to say NO. You can say NO to him or her, and then please tell me right away.")

Discussing sexual issues can be difficult, but learning about our bodies helps us grow up feeling comfortable with them, and leads to healthy sexuality. Children who know about their bodies and feel comfortable with them have healthy sexuality as adults. The W.I.S.H. Library has several books that can help you teach your children about their bodies. Try reading The Bare Naked Book by Kathy Stinson with your child. The book It's My Body by Lory Freeman is designed to help parents discuss uncomfortable touch with pre-schoolers and young children.



LAST BUT NOT LEAST !!! Take care of yourself. In order to take care of your children you need to take some time for yourself too. Pamper yourself - do things that make you feel good. Soak in a nice hot bath. Put on your favourite record. Invite a friend over for coffee and a chat. You are a special person. Take the time to treat yourself like the special person that you are!

REMEMBER !!! You have already taken some big steps in changing your family's life. Congratulations !!!

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