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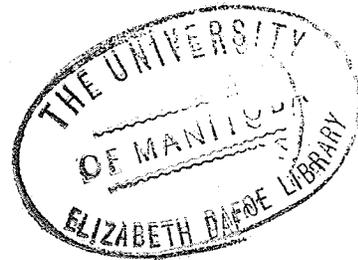
IMPLICATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE CARE

A study of social functioning of children who
have experienced institutional and foster home care

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ABSTRACT

IMPLICATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE CARE

This study took place in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and was focused on the later functioning of children who have experienced substitute care. The population for the study was one hundred permanent wards of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg whose guardianship was discharged between January 1, 1955 and December 31, 1959.

The objective of the study was to examine certain areas of social functioning to determine whether or not there was malfunctioning in any area, and if so, to what degree. The problems studied were those pertaining to the broad areas of education, employment, mental health, parenthood, conformity with the law, and frequency of placements.

The conclusions reached in the final chapter indicated that there was malfunctioning in all chosen areas, and that there was a definite correlation between degree of malfunctioning and the number of placements experienced. The more placements experienced the higher was the degree of malfunctioning.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the major concerns in the social welfare field is the care of children who, by neglect, desertion or other circumstances, are deprived of their own parents. A great deal of effort and time is spent by those active in child welfare in attempting to provide such children with care conducive to their general well-being and development. For many children, substitute care is provided in foster homes or institutions. In offering substitute care child welfare aims at supplying those things that are essential for meeting the individual child's emotional and material needs.

It is assumed that society in general is interested in the effectiveness of services and methods of substitute care. In particular, workers, both administrators and practitioners, who are directly responsible for determining the quality and quantity of child welfare services, are concerned about the results of these methods. As professionals who rely on the adequacy of their theory about people and situations they need to test the applicability and efficiency of their concepts, methods and practices. Such testing can be valid only if it is conducted by means of scientific research and evaluation.

In Canada various governmental and private agencies are vested legally with the authority and responsibility for providing child welfare services. In the metropolitan area of Winnipeg the responsibility and authority for those services are vested in the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg and the Children's Aid Society of Eastern Manitoba which serves the area of St. Boniface. This study is focused on the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

It is natural that this agency, interested in measuring the effects of its work with children, has suggested study of certain aspects of child welfare as a research project for students of the School of Social Work, University of Manitoba. The following study concerning the functioning of children who have experienced substitute care is part of the larger study of child care suggested by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

It has been implied previously that child welfare agencies attempt to provide the type of care that will be most conducive to the successful development and adjustment of children for whom they are responsible. However, child care workers frequently question the success of their methods as they observe repeated situations in which wards of agencies are unable to function adequately in society. These individuals seem to lack security, stability and ambition. They appear unprepared to assume the responsibilities of an independent life and carry their childhood problems into adolescence and adulthood. Frequently, they have difficulty in forming new and meaningful relationships and incline to disregard accepted standards of behavior. They rarely seem to demonstrate the incentive for higher learning or vocations.

The foregoing statements, based on the impressions of practicing social workers are very broad and subjective. In order to support valid conclusions concerning the social functioning of children who have experienced substitute care, it is necessary to select a sample group of such children and examine their performance in particular areas of behavior. This study is focused on some aspects of behavior which are indicative of the degree of success in social functioning and which are measurable. Unfortunately, it is not possible within the scope of this study to consider all the important factors of an emotional or psychological nature in respect to social adjustment.

The aspects selected for study are mental health, education, employment, conformity with the law, and frequency of placement.

It has been mentioned that the subject of this study was suggested by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg and therefore the group selected consists of permanent wards of this Society who have experienced substitute care. The group is comprised of children discharged from the guardianship of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg between January 1, 1955 and December 31, 1959. This includes only those children for whom guardianship was terminated because they had reached the age of twenty-one years, or because of special legal action, exclusive of adoption.

It would be most satisfactory to examine the social functioning of a group of children several years after the termination of the Society's guardianship. However, because of the difficulties that are involved in locating members of such a group, and because of the time limits set for completion of this study, personal interviewing of former wards is excluded. Through necessity, the sources of information are confined to those records of the Society pertaining to the individual members of the group selected for study. Generally, little information is entered on these records after the children are discharged from guardianship. Consequently, consideration is focussed on the effects of substitute care centered mainly on social functioning in that period of the individual ward's life from the time of the first substitute placement until the discharge of guardianship.

It should be noted that originally the scope of the study was limited to the effects of foster home care only. However, during the period of time that the children selected for study were in substitute care, institutions of various types played a significant part in child care programs. As it is

impossible to determine the separate effects of institutional and foster home care, the two types of care are not differentiated in the study but are considered as parts of the total substitute care program. Similarly, it is recognized that the children's experiences before becoming wards of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg have had effects which cannot be assessed in this study. Also, accuracy of the study is influenced by the consistency with which information is recorded in the Society's files.

Despite the fact that the topic is an interesting and vital one, there is little literature available on the results of long term substitute care methods. Some attempts have been made at evaluating methods of child care and their significance in relation to a particular period of a child's development, as well as to behavior characteristics. For instance, Bowlby¹ has studied and reported on the effects of child care methods in relation to early stages of personality development. Available literature on the effects of foster home and institutional care has only indirect relationship to this study. Literature relative to the topic is discussed more fully in Chapter II.

Reference has been made to the aims of child welfare programs in promoting healthy social development of children. Contrary to these aims, the effects of substitute care seem undesirable and disappointing. The study is based then, on the assumption formulated in the following hypothesis: "Children who have experienced substitute care present characteristics of social malfunctioning."

It is a broadly accepted concept that a child's early life experience and environment are instrumental in shaping his personality and behavior. It is reasonable to assume then, that substitute care is a powerful factor in determining a child's personality and behavior, and that its effectiveness

¹ John Bowlby, Maternal Care and Mental Health, Geneva, World Health Organization, 1951.

is reflected in the child's later adjustment to the requirements of life and society.

The thinking behind the hypothesis is that although substitute care may provide adequately for physical and material needs, it rarely satisfies emotional needs for love, understanding and consistent guidance. Further, it rarely offers the intellectually stimulating atmosphere that is necessary for fostering educational and occupational ambitions.

The impression is that most children who have experienced substitute care achieve low academic standing. Frequently, they encounter several changes in school setting and have to cope with the social and academic adjustments involved in such changes. Usually, there is a corresponding change of home environment which affects ability to function in other areas. When the frequent changes in environment and in parental and other influential figures are considered, it is not surprising that so many children have learning difficulties. A great deal of psychic energy must be expended in struggling with the complexity of feeling that comes with change and the necessity of meeting strange life situations.

It is reasonable to expect that the individual's occupational endeavours will be influenced by the nature and extent of his educational experience. Practicing social workers are conscious of the large numbers of children having experienced substitute care, who appear ill-equipped to seek and hold jobs. Not only are they handicapped by limited academic standing or insufficient training, but they are unable to accept the discipline and responsibility normally involved in any occupational pursuit. Job situations available to them often are unsatisfying and unremunerative.

Many of these children have lacked affection, attention and constant guidance and harbor a considerable amount of hostility which they project on

society. They act out their hostility in an offensive way that brings them into conflict with the laws of society. It is suspected that a significant number of these children have court records.

It is lamentable that children experience frequent changes in substitute care. Many times child care agencies have limited foster home resources from which to select homes that will meet the individual needs of each child. Consequently, when the foster parents are not well-suited to understand and cope with the ward's particular problems, the home situation breaks down. The resulting frustration and tensions culminate in a move to another, often equally inadequate situation. Every move involves the trauma of separation for a child and represents rejection. It means that he feels unwanted in the foster home or institution. Thus, as one rejection adds to another, this deeply affects the child's self-esteem. Appropriately or not, the child blames himself for being unlovable and unwanted. An attempt will be made in this study to illustrate the relationship between frequent moves in a child's early life and later forms of social malfunctioning.

It has been inferred that the children who have experienced substitute care have later difficulty in attaining independence. Being unable to sustain employment, they often require financial assistance from social welfare agencies. Frequently, they also need psychiatric treatment or help in solving personality problems. From this study it may become evident that dependency on outside help is one of the elements of social malfunctioning exhibited by children who have experienced substitute care.

"It is in and through family that the main components of a child's personality develops"¹ and it is in the family sphere that the foundation is laid for a child's psycho-sexual development and later attitudes toward marriage and own children.

¹
Helen Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky, Personality in the Making. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952, p. 174.

In many cases wards have witnessed disharmony between their natural parents, which may interfere with their formation of ideas about the kind of adults they want to be. By experiencing substitute care in several foster homes and institutions, wards may become confused in their identification with adult figures and in the incorporation of desirable standards. It is a contention that unmarried parenthood is common among individuals who have had substitute care, and that many when married, become parents who are neglectful of their children. The postulations with regard to some effects of substitute care have been discussed and from these are formulated the ten sub-hypotheses to be tested or answered in this study. They are:

1. A majority of children who have experienced substitute care do not achieve a maximum level of education beyond Grade VIII.
2. A majority of children who have experienced substitute care have not achieved the normal age-grade level at the time of termination of school.
3. A majority of children who have experienced substitute care do not pursue occupational or professional training.
4. A majority of children who have experienced substitute care present a pattern of short term employment.
5. A majority of children who have experienced substitute care have court records.
6. A majority of children who have had substitute care receive further financial assistance after once being self-supporting.
7. A majority of children who have had substitute care receive psychiatric services.
8. A minority of children who have experienced substitute care receive unmarried parent services from the Children's Aid Society.

9. A minority of children who have experienced substitute care later receive protection services from the Children's Aid Society because they have become neglectful parents.

10. There is a relationship between social malfunctioning and the number of placements experienced by children who have had substitute care.

As mentioned previously, information for this study has been gathered from those records of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg which relate to that group of wards discharged from the Society's guardianship between January 1, 1955 and December 31, 1959. The study involves the total of one hundred wards discharged in that period. The data needed were extracted from agency records by means of a schedule that was completed for each of the wards included in the study group. A copy of this schedule may be found at the back of the study report.

A more elaborate outline of the methods used in this study is given in Chapter III.

The analysis of data is presented in tables to illustrate the findings. The tables are of simple statistical character as most of the sub-hypotheses have been formed on majority or minority principles. Each table represents the statistical material necessary for proving or disproving the sub-hypotheses. Chapter IV presents the more detailed description of our analysis.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

A survey of the literature in the field of child care reveals that there has been very little research done on how children who have experienced substitute care adjust in adulthood. E. Weinstein in "The Self Image of the Foster Child" found that "the state of research knowledge in the field has progressed very little, however, since Sophie Theis' monumental follow-up study over thirty-five years ago."¹ J. Bowlby felt that research in this area was difficult enough, but added to this was the resistance, both active and passive, to be encountered from trustees and officials in child caring agencies. "Their defensive arguments, the weakness of which has been shown, are the result of fear, a fear which springs from the expectation that the research worker will be no more than a hostile critic."²

Most literature in child welfare has been concerned with the traumatic experiences of separation, the difficulties experienced by the child in substitute care, and the effects of early maternal deprivation. Although the surveyed literature, other than the study done by Sophie Theis, does not pertain directly to the focus of this study, the relationship between early maternal deprivation and later social maladjustment appeared to be of great interest and therefore was reviewed.

¹Eugene A. Weinstein, The Self-Image of the Foster Child, Philadelphia: Wm. F. Fell Co. Printers, 1960, p. 16.

²John Bowlby, Child Care and the Growth of Love, London: Whitefriars Press Ltd., 1953, p. 180.

A study entitled "How Foster Children Turn Out" was done by Sophie Theis¹, and was printed in 1924. It was a study and critical analysis of nine hundred and ten children who were placed in foster homes and were eighteen years of age or more at the time of the study. The placing agency felt that it had been placing children for twenty-five years and it was time to examine what happened to them. In this study, it was found that the age of the child at the time of placement was a very significant factor. It was clear that children placed when less than five years of age showed a marked superiority in development over the group older at placement; and a large proportion of the younger group proved to be competent, well-adapted, happy individuals, more law abiding and steady; and also received a better education.

Bowlby, Goldfarb and more recently Earle and Earle as well as many others studied the effects of early maternal deprivation and the later functioning of these individuals.

Bowlby concluded that deprivation in early childhood had grave and far-reaching effects in adulthood. "There is a very strong case indeed for believing that prolonged separation of a child from his mother (or mother substitute) during the first five years of life stands foremost among the causes of delinquent character development."¹

Goldfarb, in "The Effects of Early Institutional Care on Adolescent Personality" indicated that those children who have been emotionally and intellectually deprived because of the absence of adults in their early life "remain less well adjusted to the demands of the community group, more

¹ Sophie Theis, How Foster Children Turn Out. New York: State Charities Aid Association, 1924, pp. 113-118.

² John Bowlby, Child Care and Mental Health. Geneva, World Health Organization, 1951, p. 38.

simple in their mental organization, less capable of making reflective or complex practical adjustment as in school, and most important, less capable of normal human relationships."¹

Earle and Earle investigated "the relationship between early maternal deprivation and the later development of personality disorders and patterns of psychiatric illness."² They also found that, "failure in adjustment to society in the spheres of marriage, work and relationship to law and order" was also significantly associated with early maternal deprivation. In their research project, it was found that a majority of the cases studied had a history of substitute care.

M. Dickins observed that, "a deprived child like all others, grows up with the unconscious need to reproduce herself, the need to do to her children what has been done to her."³ She felt that Children's Aid Societies have learned this from their experience in child placement and these Societies were now serving children of former wards.

Bowlby also stated that, "the difficulty for deprived children to become successful parents is perhaps the most damaging of all the effects of deprivation."⁴

¹ Wm. Goldfarb, "The Effects of Early Institutional Care on Adolescent Personality", Journal of Experimental Education, Volume XII, December 1943, p. 129.

² A. M. Earle and B. V. Earle, "Early Maternal Deprivation and Later Psychiatric Illness", American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Volume XXXI, No. 1, January 1961, p. 181.

³ M. Dickins, "Permanent Wardship: For Better or Worse." Canadian Welfare, Volume 35, No. 1, January 15, 1959, p. 25.

⁴ John Bowlby, Child Care and Mental Health. Geneva: World Health Organization, 1951, p. 30.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

As stated in Chapter I, this study was an attempt to determine the nature of the later functioning of children who have experienced institutional and/or foster home care. The principal questions to be tested or answered, and about which certain assumptions were formulated and phrased in the sub-hypotheses, were: Educational level, occupational or professional training acquired, employment stability, court experience, financial dependency, emotional problems requiring psychiatric treatment, unmarried parenthood, neglectful parents, and relationship between number of placements and social malfunctioning.

The material required to answer these questions was obtained from individual case records, kept by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, of foster children whose guardianships were discharged between January 1st, 1955 and December 31st, 1959. The complete recording for each child was perused.

An inquiry into the Children's Aid Society's ward records disclosed a total of one hundred wards whose permanent guardianships had been discharged in the above mentioned period of five years. This group seemed to provide sufficient homogeneous material for examination and as all cases were included in the study no sampling was necessary. A schedule was prepared for the purpose of recording the required information for each case.

Approximately fifteen cases chosen at random were used for an initial test of the schedule. The information obtained was tabulated and evaluated and it was found that a revision of the schedule was necessary. A copy of the revised schedule is shown in the Appendix. Originally the study was focused on the results of foster home placements only. However, as it was found that nearly all foster children in this group had also experienced institutional care, an influential factor in personality development, the schedule was rearranged to include both types of care.

Due to lack of recorded information in certain areas of behavior, the schedule could not be completed in its initial form. For example, it had been hoped that it would have been possible to throw light on the reasons for foster children leaving school and employment, which are aspects of significance in regard to determining level of functioning in these two areas. However, the case records did not yield this information and the inquiry had to be limited to maximum level of education achieved at school leaving, age-grade level, and number of job-placements.

Also in other areas it was necessary to limit the study because of lack of information available in the case records. For instance, an attempt was made to record the ability and need of foster children to form and maintain relationships. However, material relating to contacts with foster parents or own relatives, and to duration of stay in each residence after becoming self-supporting, was insufficient and inconsistent and the inquiry was, therefore, discontinued.

A simplification of the schedule was made in respect to the question of the number of placements experienced by each foster child in each individual foster home and/or institution. It was believed that the length of time spent in each placement would be significant. Therefore, detailed information

was recorded on the schedule giving the exact period of stay in each placement. After this material had been tabulated and examined it was found to be unwieldy and to have little bearing on the study. Consequently, the inquiry was limited to the question about number of placements in foster home and/or institution from date of first placement until date of discharge of guardianship.

The question of number of job placements held within the first two years after being self-supporting revealed that a considerable number of children had either been unemployed for certain lengths of time or had pursued further training after having held a job or two. By summing up the number of jobs held in a period of two years without considering periods of unemployment or instances where individuals never held a job, the employment picture was not accurate. Therefore, it was decided to make a note in each case where the child had experienced a long period of unemployment or had never held a job.

The group examined in this study comprised forty-four females and fifty-six males, giving a total population of one hundred children. The reading of their files revealed that the completeness of recording varied from file to file. For example, it was found that recording became sparse after the child became self-supporting and, therefore, answers to the question about number of job placements and pursuit of further training were difficult to locate. However, a careful examination of the files yielded the information required to answer the questions of the revised schedule.

As already mentioned in Chapter I, the method of personal interviewing was ruled out because of difficulties in locating group members, and because of the time limits. The study, therefore, was confined to an examination of the wards; records at the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

These basic requirements together with the limitations discussed in this chapter determined the scope of the study. The specific areas of the study were phrased and defined as clearly as possible to facilitate a constructive gathering of information in a schedule for later analysis. Following are the definitions of terms as used in this study and units of classification for the purpose of analysis of the collected material from the case records.

Definitions

All definitions in this study will apply to all permanent wards of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg whose guardianships were discharged between January 1st, 1955 and December 31st, 1959.

Children: - in this study refers to permanent wards, which means that they are under twenty-one years of age, and have been committed legally to the permanent care and custody of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

Foster home: - means a home in which a child is placed by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, and is not an institution as prescribed by the Manitoba Child Welfare Act of 1954.¹

Institution: - means a building or a part of a building, other than the private dwelling of a family, other than an industrial home as prescribed by the Manitoba Child Welfare Act of 1954.²

Education: - is formal schooling according to the standards of the Provincial Department of Education of Manitoba.

Normal age-grade level: - one grade per year starting at the age of six is considered to be normal progress but one grade above or below this will be included as normal achievement.³

¹ Manitoba: Child Welfare Act, 1954, CAP 35, Section 2 (d).

² Ibid., CAP 35, Section 2 (f).

³ L. Emery, L. H. Forest, R. L. Hyhka, M. Mohr, L. Swan, A Study of Juveniles in Greater Winnipeg Who Committed Car Theft During the Year 1958. Manitoba: University of Manitoba, 1960, p. 19, (Unpublished).

Occupational and professional training: - is any form of specialized vocational education.

Short term employment: - is considered to be six or more different job placements over a period of two years as delineated by the National Employment Services' Special Placement Division in Winnipeg.

Court record: - is any court action and/or conviction occurring in the period from date of first placement until date of discharge of guardianship and recorded by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

Further financial assistance: - is monetary support granted by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg or other welfare agencies, to wards because of these individuals' inability to provide for themselves after once being self-supporting.

Self-supporting: - means financial independence and ability to manage without monetary support from the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg or from any other welfare agency.

Psychiatric services: - will include any form of psychiatric treatment given in the period from date of first placement until date of discharge of guardianship and recorded by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

Unmarried parent services: - is counselling and planning services offered to unmarried parents by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

Neglectful parents: - are those who deprive their children of the care necessary for their well-being as delineated by the Manitoba Child Welfare Act of 1954.¹

Protection services: - is assistance given to neglectful parents for protection of their children.

¹Manitoba, Child Welfare Act, 1954, CAP 35, Part IV, Section 19.

Social malfunctioning: - means difficulties in performance as indicated in the areas dealt with in the sub-hypotheses of this study.

Placement: - is an arrangement for substitute care in a foster home or institution.

Units of Classification

Placements experienced: -

- one to three placements.
- four to six placements.
- seven to nine placements.
- ten or more placements.

Grade of education completed: -

- grade IX or more.
- grade VIII or less.
- no education.

Educational level: -

- above normal grade for age.
- normal grade for age.
- below normal grade for age.

Occupational or professional training: -

- pursued training.
- did not pursue training.

Employment: -

- long term employment.
- short term employment.
- no employment.
- frequent unemployment.

Court record:-

- court record.
- no court record.

Financial assistance: -

- received financial assistance.
- did not receive financial assistance.

Psychiatric services: -

- received psychiatric services.
- did not receive psychiatric services.

Unmarried parent services:-

- received unmarried parent services.
- did not receive unmarried parent services.

Protection services:-

- received protection services.
- did not receive protection services.

Following is the method of analysis used in this study. The total population was arranged in groups according to number of placements experienced and sex. A table was then prepared to show the number of children according to sex in each placement category.

To illustrate first placement, a graph was drawn showing the actual age at time of first placement within each group.

A table was used to show the maximum grade of education completed. Similarly a table was shown to present age-grade level. Tables were compiled to show occupational or professional training, employment, financial assistance, receipt of psychiatric services, unmarried parent services, and protection services.

Finally a graph illustrated relationship between social malfunctioning and number of placements experienced.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This chapter is devoted to the presentation of evaluated data. Raw material collected from the schedules has been examined, and the findings enumerated to show their relationship to the hypothesis and the sub-hypotheses of the study. It should be noted that wherever findings refer to the entire population of one hundred they may be interpreted on a number or percentage basis.

The purpose of this study has been the examination of certain areas of functioning, in order to determine whether or not children who have experienced substitute care malfunction in any of the areas, and if so to what degree. There has been no attempt to re-enforce findings in each area with supporting etiological evidence. However, it was assumed that the children studied had suffered the repeated trauma of separation. Therefore, this broad etiological factor has been considered and will be illustrated in this chapter in the following ways: (1) The number of placements experienced by each child, and age at time of first placement will be shown in introductory tables which will form a background for the analysis of areas of functioning, and (2) after the specific areas of functioning have been examined individually, they will be related in a concluding table to the number of placements experienced.

The following table illustrates the number of children who experienced one to three placements, four to six placements, seven to nine placements, and ten or more placements.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF WARDS BY NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS EXPERIENCED

Number of Placements	1-3	4-6	7-9	10+	Total
Number of Female	8	7	14	15	44
Number of Male	4	25	16	11	56
Total	12	32	30	26	100

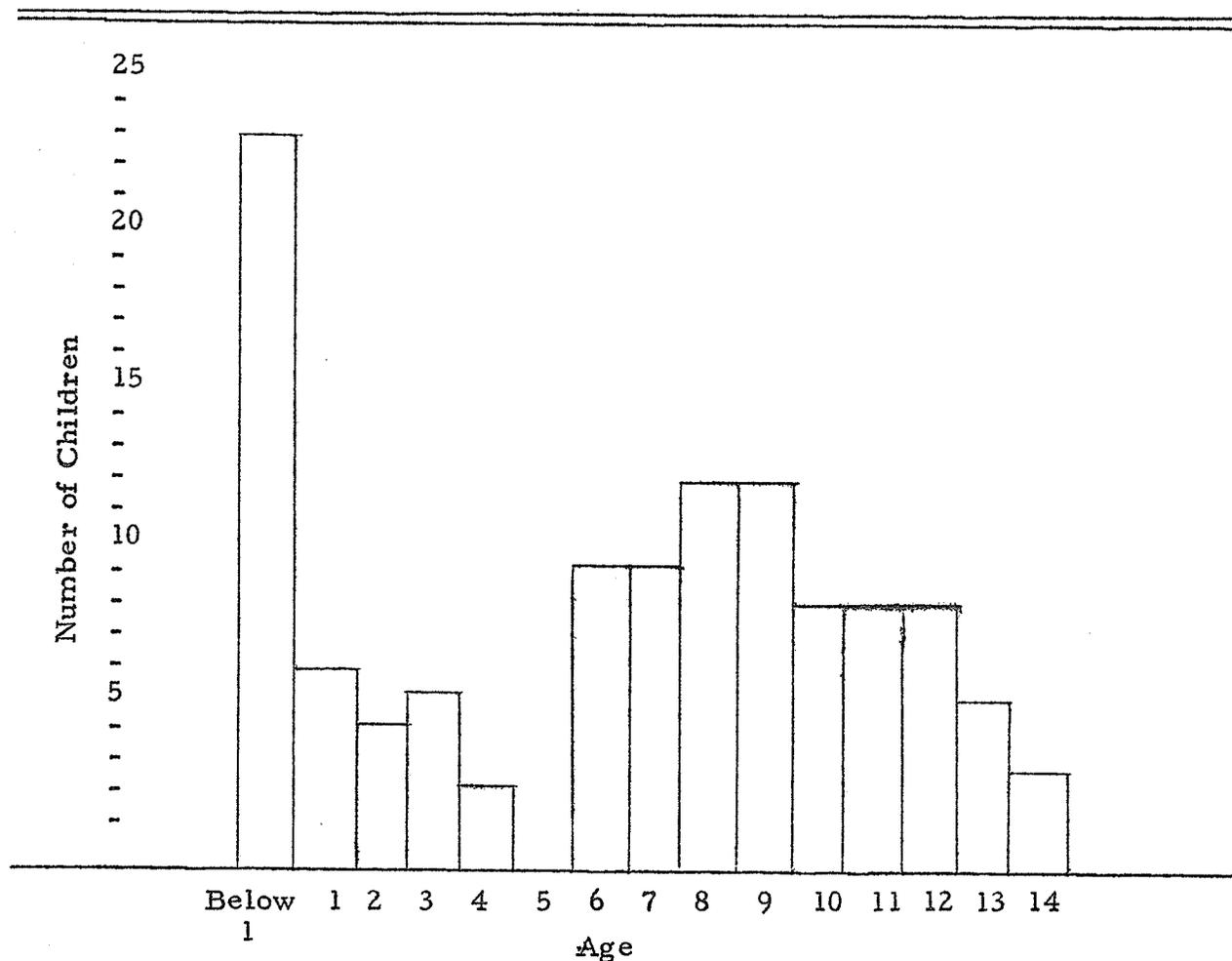
The above findings substantiate the assumption made in Chapter I, that children who experienced substitute care, also experienced frequent changes of environment. Only twelve of the children studied had fewer than four changes of environment, and information recorded on the schedule, but not tabulated above, reveals that no child experienced the stability of one placement only. Equally distressing is the large group of children, twenty-six, who experienced ten or more placements.

If one looks at the group of children who experienced four placements or more, it will be observed that eighty-eight fall into this category, and therefore a large majority of the children were subjected to four or more parent figures, four or more different types of parental standards, controls, and attitudes.

There seems to be little significance in the different placement experiences of female and male children. The male population clusters in the four to six placement group, but no evidence can be found to say why this was so, or why so few male children remain in the lower one to three placement group.

It is felt that the age at time of first placement may have some bearing on the number of subsequent placements, and therefore this area is also examined. The following graph illustrates the findings.

GRAPH I
DISTRIBUTION OF WARDS BY AGE AT TIME OF FIRST PLACEMENT



These findings indicate that the highest number of children, twenty-two, experienced their first placement before the age of one year, probably due to the fact that many of the children taken into care, are the offspring of unmarried mothers, who relinquish guardianship shortly after birth, and placement follows within a few months.

It also can be observed that twelve children experienced their first placement at the age of eight or nine years. This could be misleading because some of these children may have been receiving institutional care at the time the Children's Aid Society took guardianship, and first placement as recorded above is first Children's Aid Society placement. Wherever it was known that a child had received institutional care, prior to first Children's Aid Society placement, this was considered first placement for the purpose of this study. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that according to Graph I, fifty-seven children experienced their first placement after the age of seven years.

After considering some aspects of placements which might influence later functioning, the specific areas of functioning were examined. Educational level at time of school termination was the first area to be considered, because it was thought that academic experience would influence some of the other areas such as, further training and employment stability.

Table 2 illustrates educational level at school leaving.

TABLE 2
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF WARDS AT TIME OF SCHOOL LEAVING

Educational Level	Female	Male	Total
Grade IX or More	25	19	44
Grade VIII or Less	15	36	51
No Education	4	1	5
Total	44	56	100

As can be observed by the preceding table, fifty-one children achieved grade VIII or less, substantiating the sub-hypothesis which stated that a majority of the children who experienced substitute care do not achieve a maximum level of education beyond grade VIII. Five children received no education due to mental deficiency which prevented any formal education.

Of the fifty-one children who achieved grade VIII or less, thirty-six were boys and fifteen were girls, which seems to indicate a higher level of functioning in the female group in this aspect of educational achievement.

The next table illustrates the age and grade achieved at time of school leaving.

TABLE 3
MAXIMUM EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF WARDS BY AGE

Age	Grade Level												Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	
20												2	2
19												1	1
18									1	2	4		7
17							5	4	8	4	4	1	26
16				1	1	1	5	12	10	1	2		33
15				1		3	10	4	2	2			22
14			1			2		1					4
Total			1	2	1	6	20	21	21	9	10	4	95

13

- indicates those children who achieved normal age-grade level.

82

- indicates those children who were below normal age-grade level.

Five children did not receive formal education due to mental deficiency.

This table shows that eighty-two children did not achieve a normal age-grade level at time of school leaving thereby substantiating the sub-hypothesis.

Of the forty-four children who achieved above grade IX, only twelve were at the normal age-grade level; of the four children who completed grade XII only one child was in the normal age-grade level. Most children left school at the age of sixteen years in either grade VIII or grade IX.

These findings indicate that although eighty children remained in school after the age of sixteen, and forty-four achieved grade VIII or more, the actual level of academic functioning was impaired and that the normal age-grade level was achieved by very few children. No child was above normal age-grade level at time of school leaving.

Another area of functioning which was felt to be of importance was that of employment, the impression being that children who have experienced substitute care do not pursue further training after leaving school, and also show an unstable employment pattern. The answers to these two questions are shown in the tables below.

TABLE 4
OCCUPATIONAL OR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Occupational or Professional Training	Female	Male	Total
Training Pursued	22	17	39
Training not Pursued	22	39	61
Total	44	56	100

This table verifies the assumption that the majority of children do not pursue further training after leaving school, and therefore one would expect them to be somewhat hampered in a society which demands skilled labour.

Of the thirty-nine children who did pursue further training, seventeen were males and twenty-two were females. It is difficult to assess whether females have higher motivation in this area, or whether there are more training fields open to females.

TABLE 5
EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS OF WARDS

Employment Patterns	Number of Children
Long Term	62
Short Term	13
No Employment	13
Frequent Unemployment	12
Total	100

As can be observed by the above table a majority of the children studied, presented a picture of long term employment, which is contrary to the assumption that these children were unable to keep jobs. It also suggests that in this area, although the contributing influences, education and further training are weak, the children show relatively stable functioning.

It was assumed when examining certain areas of functioning, that children who had inadequate family experiences had a need to act out their hostility toward society. An examination of children who had court records,

was the method of determining the need for anti-social behavior. The records of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg indicate that thirty-three of the children in the study had court records. Therefore, the assumption that a majority of the children malfunction in this area is not verified.

Other areas which were examined to indicate levels of social functioning were the extent to which children who had experienced substitute care are dependent on financial assistance after once being self-supporting, and the extent to which they require psychiatric services.

Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the number of children who received financial assistance and psychiatric services respectively.

TABLE 6
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED BY WARDS

Financial Assistance	Number of Children
Received	42
Not Received	58
Total	100

It can be seen from the above findings that forty-two children received financial assistance. Although this is a high number it does not substantiate the assumption that a majority of children received financial aid.

TABLE 7
PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES RECEIVED BY WARDS

Psychiatric Services	Number of Children
Received	44
Not Received	56
Total	100

Although the above findings do not verify the assumption that a majority of the children required psychiatric services, forty-four is a substantial number of the population and indicates that many of the children suffered from emotional or mental disturbances.

It was assumed that children who had experienced substitute care showed a tendency to have children out of wedlock or to become neglectful parents. The next two tables illustrate the findings in these areas.

TABLE 8

UNMARRIED PARENT SERVICES RECEIVED BY WARDS

Unmarried Parent Services	Female	Male	Total
Received	14	2	16
Not Received	30	54	84
Total	44	56	100

Very few wards received unmarried parent services. This probably was due to the facts that there were more boys than girls in the sample and that the putative fathers rarely come to the attention of the Society.

TABLE 9

PROTECTION SERVICES RECEIVED BY WARDS

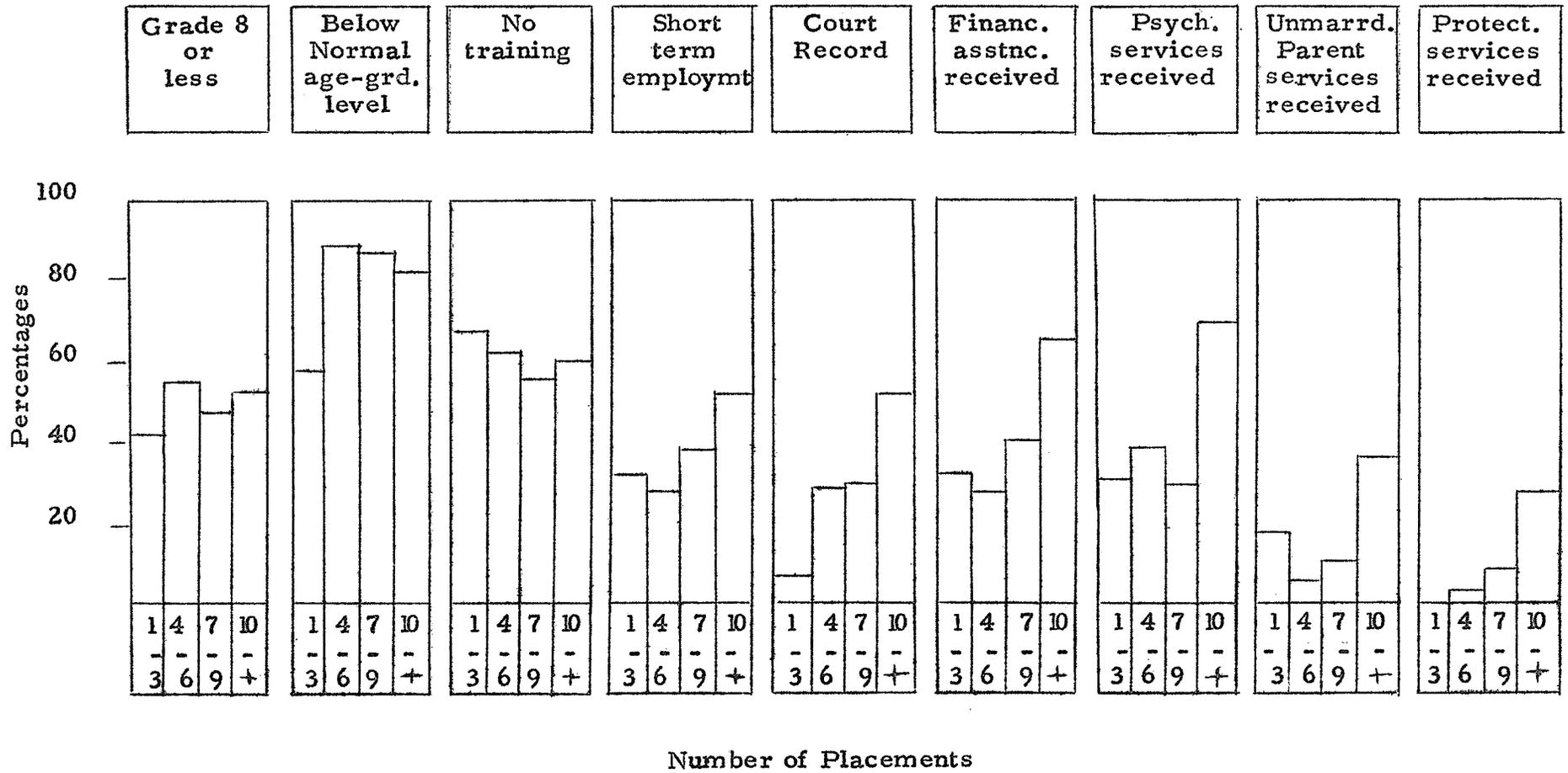
Protection Services	Number of Children
Received	10
Not Received	90
Total	100

It should be remembered that only a small portion of the population was married at the time of the study and therefore the above findings relate only to those who were married and had children.

To conclude the study, a comparison was made between levels of malfunctioning according to number of placements experienced. Graph II outlines the findings in this area.

GRAPH II

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MALFUNCTIONING AND NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS EXPERIENCED



The two areas in which the relationship between social malfunctioning and number of placements is illustrated most clearly are those defined as "court record" and "protection services received".

In the area of "court record" there is a steady incline in malfunctioning from eight per cent in the one-to-three placement group, to twenty-eight per cent in the four-to-six placement group, to thirty per cent in the seven-to-nine placement group, to fifty-four per cent in the ten or more placement group. Therefore, although the assumption that a majority of children have court records cannot be substantiated in the entire population, a majority of children who had ten or more placements had court records.

In the educational area, number of placements experienced appears to have no great effect on whether a child achieves grade VIII or less at the time of school leaving. However, as was explained earlier, the age-grade level seems to be the most important factor in academic functioning, and in this area the effect of number of placements can be seen. In the one-to-three placement group fifty-eight per cent were below normal age-grade level, in the four-to-six group eighty-eight per cent were below normal age-grade level, eighty-seven per cent in the seven-to-nine group, and eighty-one per cent in the ten or more group.

It is interesting to note the rapid rise in malfunctioning after four placements, and to note that this remains on an almost constant level through the higher placement groups. This seems to suggest that if academic achievement is associated with parental stability, impairment occurs after four placements.

The picture of malfunctioning according to number of placements experienced in the area of "occupational or professional training" shows

very little difference within the placement groups. In the one-to-three placement group sixty-seven per cent did not pursue further training, in the four-to-six placement group sixty-three per cent, in the seven-to-nine group fifty-seven per cent, and in the ten or more placement group a slight increase to sixty-one per cent.

In the areas of "short term employment" and "financial assistance received" similar patterns can be observed. The four-to-six placement group showing the highest degree of functioning, the one-to-three group the next, with a rapid increase in malfunctioning in the seven-to-nine and ten or more placement groups.

In the area of "psychiatric services received" there is a rapid increase in malfunctioning in the ten or more placement group.

The ten or more placement group showed a comparatively high percentage (thirty-five per cent) of social malfunctioning in the area of "unmarried parent services received". In the one-to-three placement group seventeen per cent received unmarried parent services, while the seven-to-nine group declined to ten per cent, and the four-to-six group to six per cent.

Although there are variations within each area of malfunctioning, six of the nine areas examined showed that the highest degree of malfunctioning occurred in those children who had experienced ten or more placements.

The areas where this picture was not presented were:

(1) "Below normal age-grade level", where the highest degree of malfunctioning was shown in the four-to-six placement group and remained fairly constant in the rest of the groups.

(2) "No occupational or professional training", where the highest degree of malfunctioning was in the one-to-three placement group, with a decline in the four-to-six and seven-to-nine groups, and showing a rise in the ten or more placement group.

(3) "Grade VIII or less". Here the highest degree of malfunctioning was in the four-to-six placement group, with a decline in the seven-to-nine group, and a rise in the ten or more placement group.

This chapter has outlined the findings of the study, and given some interpretation of the data. The following chapter will view these findings on a broader basis and by relating them to the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses, draw from them some conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The initial purpose of this research project was to study a number of wards of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg in respect to the functioning of children in substitute care and its carry-over into adulthood, specifically in areas where malfunctioning has been observed by social workers in child care - education achievement, employment patterns, conformity with the law, emotional and/or mental stability and their ability to become adequate parents. A detailed analysis of the findings of this study has been set down in the preceding chapter. This concluding chapter will attempt to draw together these findings into an integrated picture of the characteristics of social malfunctioning of children who experienced substitute care; to see it in relation to past and present policies in the placement of wards, and where feasible, to suggest further study in related aspects of the problem which will be valuable in obtaining a more complete analysis of the whole problem of child placement.

The high rate of replacement which is an inevitable concomitant of substitute care has long been a matter of concern for all social workers in the field of child care. Table I graphically illustrates the temporary nature of placements, and the number of times within the brief span of a few years that the child must adapt to a totally new family situation. For example, if the thirty-two children who experienced four to six moves were in care for the maximum possible time of twenty-one years they would have moved approximately every three and a half to five years. This is an outside estimate, as they may not have been in care from birth to age of twenty-one.

Those who had seven-to-nine placements moved approximately every two and a half to three years; and those experiencing ten or more placements moved at least every two years. This is an optimistic picture, since realistically speaking it is well-known that some children move every few months.

The age of the child at the time of first placement could be a basic criterion for the success or failure of the child's future adjustment. At the time most children in this study came into care (mid-1930's) the highest percentage of them experienced their first substitute care before the age of one year. Today the picture for infants probably would not indicate this noticeably higher percentage, because of the increase in numbers of children being adopted in early infancy. It also is true that in cases of family neglect, where consideration is given to apprehending some or all of the children, the tendency is to leave the older children in the home, unless they are being seriously damaged, in the belief that they can withstand the family problems more ably than the younger children.

Speculations can be made regarding the sudden drop in the numbers of children coming into care between the ages of one and four, with none coming in at five, but none are based on proven facts. One is that this is the most difficult age group to place because foster parents find toddlers and pre-schoolers exhausting and difficult to manage. The greater number of requests are for infants and school-age children. It also is a probability that after a year or so in care many of these children were returned to own parents, who were able to cope until the more difficult years around eight or nine, when they were returned to the agency. Today all ages would show an increase in admissions, because of movement away from private placement both of children of unmarried mothers and of older children placed by their own parents.

No attempt has been made in this study to distinguish between foster home and institutional placement, but it is noteworthy that the record showed that almost every child had spent a period of his or her life in an institution, particularly those coming in as infants. This made for easier placement because the institutions were large and could accommodate many children. This may be a further reason for the higher number of infants coming into care. It also coincides with the trend in child care at the time, which was mass institutional care, with a beginning change in trend toward foster home care. It also must be remembered that these children came into care during the depression, pre-war and early war years. All these factors contribute to increased family breakdown in terms of financial and emotional stress, and disruption of the family through the absence of the father. The higher number of children coming into care at ages eight and nine might be attributed to these factors.

As a result of careful study of the relationship between the child's age and deprivation, Dr. John Bowlby concludes that most harm is done when deprivations occur within the first three years of life which is the most critical period when personality development depends on a "continuous relationship with a nurturant figure during the critical period of ego and superego development."¹ The whole question of relationship between age of placement and future adjustment could well be the subject of a further research project.

The most glaring ramification (probably because it is the most carefully recorded) of the substitute care experience, as shown in tables 2 and 3, is the level of educational achievement. Maintaining the normal level of

¹ John Bowlby, Maternal Care and Mental Health. Geneva: World Health Organization, 1951, p. 52.

educational development obviously poses a serious problem for the majority of these children. Although little attention was paid in the years of this study to assessing intelligence quotients of children in care it is probably safe to say that the majority of them possess at least average intellectual ability. The notable finding of this aspect of the research was not that most of these children did not obtain levels of education comparable with other children, but that they obtained them at a much later age. Since every child suffers some degree of setback with a move to another school, it is not difficult to deduce the greater degree of setback for these children with the number of different school systems they encounter, and with no stability of family support to help them over each difficult adjustment period. Aside from this there undoubtedly is the realistic fact that some of these children are kept in school longer than they ordinarily would be because the agency is at a loss to know what to do with them until they are mature enough for full time employment. Stimulation for greater educational achievement is lacking for most of these children because of limitation of caseworker time and frequently by an inability of foster parents to understand their special learning difficulties.

As indicated, the study ascertained that the girls tend to obtain a higher degree of education than the boys. There are many factors contributing to this, one being that during school age years of these particular children it was the policy of the agency to encourage boys to begin earning money as early as possible, if they were not achieving in school. It is possible that there was a higher failure rate among boys in elementary schools because of the emphasis placed on subjects such as English, Spelling, Reading which held less interest for boys causing them to become bored before they reached the higher levels. It also is recognized that our culture tends to be more

protective of girls and more approving of independence in boys. However, the most pertinent finding in respect to children experiencing substitute care is that there is direct correlation between intellectual growth and difficulties encountered in growing up in a series of substitute homes.

As verified in table 4 the low level of academic achievement of children experiencing substitute care is carried over into later pursuits of occupational or professional training. It naturally follows that with inadequate education at the lower levels, the majority of these wards would not be fitted for further training. Financial reasons also play an important part here, most of the children probably being anxious to become self-supporting as quickly as possible. It is not surprising that of those who did take further training, girls were in the majority since they had the advantage of higher educational level.

Proceeding to the consideration of the patterns of employment of children having experienced substitute care, it was anticipated that there would be a picture of short term employments and frequent job changes. Table 5 indicates the converse to be true, which seems incongruous with those patterns of education and training which are ordinarily preludes to patterns of employment. The validity of these findings is questioned because of lacks in the records of employment and also because of infrequency of agency contact with the older children in care. In cases where it appears that a child held only one job over a period of two years, this may be true, but it also may be true that he was unemployed for part of this time. Although it is known that many of these children show stability for the first time after they become employed, it also is possible that some of them prove to be poor employment risks because of instability, poor work habits, frequent absences, and an instability to keep up with

average production requirements. However, this tendency toward instability in employment seems to be true of many young persons entering the labour field for the first time. Many of those included as having no employment either were too retarded for gainful employment, or were in some form of correctional institution.

Table 6 disproves the assumption that the majority of children experiencing substitute care, at some time or other have come into conflict with the law. Here again the validity of these findings is questioned because of discrepancies in the records. It is possible that foster parents, in an effort to protect the foster child and themselves do not report court or police contacts to the social worker. Some children commit minor offences and are caught by the police and brought to court for a warning, thus appearing on court records. Others commit more serious offences but have the good fortune not to be caught. Juvenile court judges vary in their consideration of youthful offenders, some recording all offenders, others choosing to omit from official records the names of the very young, the first offenders, and the minor offenders. Some children have had contact with the police for petty offences, but are not brought before a judge. All these variations contribute to inconsistency in the Children's Aid Society records regarding court records. In the findings as they exist in Table 6 thirty-three per cent, or one third of the total population showed a proclivity to some degree of delinquency, which is a high proportion considering all these children are under twenty-one years of age. This is about five times as high as the delinquency rate in the general population, which is five to six out of every hundred for children up to eighteen years of age.¹

¹A. Kitchen, Director of Corrections and Inspector of Gaols, Province of Manitoba.

Some of these children were in correctional institutions or jails before having reached discharge age. A valuable piece of research would be a study to determine how many of the thirty-three offenders, and of the sixty-seven non-offenders became adult criminals.

Due to irregular employment habits, some wards who have begun to work before the age of twenty-one, either need financial assistance because of low wages, or may return to full financial dependency because of unemployment. Occasionally an individual ward will decide to pursue further training after having worked for a brief period, and the agency will subsidize the course and living expenses while it is in progress. This is true particularly with girls who may for instance, decide on a nursing course which requires three years of training, during which time the girl is almost all or totally dependent on financial support from the agency. It is suspected that the findings in this area of financial help are not substantially different from those of children from own homes, in fact it probably is true that Children's Aid Society wards are totally independent sooner than children who have own families to whom they can revert if they require financial help for matters such as education, travel or marriage.

A study of the physical health of these children could not be completed because of lack of recording of illnesses. Tendency to infection, frequency of minor illnesses, respiratory weakness, accident proneness and many other physical defects were overlooked either because the foster mothers did not report them or the worker considered them insignificant. However, more detailed record was kept of the need for psychiatric services, including assessment as well as treatment but not psychological testing.

It no doubt is true that many who needed these services did not receive them. Nevertheless, forty-four per cent were recorded as having used the services of a psychiatrist, which is a very high percentage. Although there are no statistics to qualify the statement, it is doubtful that the percentage would be so high for a similar group of children with stabler home backgrounds.

Table 9 indicates that sixteen per cent of the children studied became unmarried parents. It was anticipated that this would be higher. Many of the children in the care of Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg are the product of extra-marital relationships and it is a well-established fact that such children tend to reproduce themselves.¹ It is possible that the figures in this study would be higher if it had considered the children beyond the age of twenty-one. Here also is the possibility that some would become unmarried parents without returning to the Society for services around placement of their child.

The low percentage of these children who developed into neglectful parents requiring Children's Aid Society protection services is encouraging until it is realized that very few of these children had been married by the time they were discharged from the Society's care. A study done five or ten years later might show a more unfavorable picture. Here again it is well known that neglected children tend to become neglectful parents. In the words of Dr. Bowlby, "The impairment of the capacity for successful parenthood is perhaps the most damaging of all the effects of deprivations"², and he speaks of the social process "whereby one generation of deprived children provides the parents of the next generation of deprived children."³

¹ John Bowlby, Maternal Care and Mental Health, Geneva: World Health Organization, 1951, p. 27.

² Ibid., page 27.

³ Ibid., page. 29.

In all the assumptions about functioning in adulthood, employment, tendency to become unmarried parents, and tendency to become neglectful parents, more significant statistics would be obtained by extending the period of study five to ten years past the time of discharge from Children's Aid Society care.

The final assumption of this study which states that there is a relationship between social malfunctioning and number of placements experienced, is presented summarily in graph II. In all areas of malfunctioning, the one pertaining to school functioning shows the highest percentages of children, whereas the lowest percentages are in the two areas related to the ability of these children to function as adequate parents. Again it is important to stress the differences in availability of recorded evidence, most being known of schooling and least being known of those aspects of the child's life such as parenthood which accrue to his having attained his majority.

In all areas of functioning considered, except the one concerning pursuit of further training, graph II gives clear evidence that those with fewer placements have the lowest degree of malfunctioning, and conversely that those with the higher number of placements demonstrate the greatest degree of malfunctioning.

From findings drawn from all the sub-hypotheses, it is concluded that the hypothesis of this study has been established.

This research study has served to make a beginning in studying the effects of substitute care on the adult functioning of those children who, for reasons beyond their own control have become wards of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg and have experienced a series of foster and/or institutional placements. It indicates a correlation between malfunctioning

in those areas of behavior considered in this study, and the factor of repeated placements with all its ramifications such as deprivation, separation, rejection, and insecurity.

Within the limits of this particular research project it is possible only to conjecture regarding functioning after the age of twenty-one. However, it may serve as a springboard for further more intensive studies, by personal interview, of these children when they will have had more experience with adulthood.

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APPENDIX

PERMANENT WARDS OF THE C. A. S. OF WINNIPEG WHOSE DISCHARGE
FROM THE SOCIETY OCCURRED BETWEEN JANUARY 1st, 1955
AND DEC. 31st, 1959.

FILE NO.:

1. NAME.....
Surname Given Name(s)
2. DATE OF BIRTH:.....
3. SEX: Male..... Female.....
4. DATE OF FIRST PLACEMENT:.....
5. DATE OF PERMANENT GUARDIANSHIP:.....
6. NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS EXPERIENCED:.....
 - (a) In Foster Home.....
 - (b) In Institution.....
7. MAXIMUM GRADE OF EDUCATION COMPLETED:.....
8. DATE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TERMINATED:.....
9. OCCUPATIONAL OR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: Yes..... No.....
10. NUMBER OF JOB PLACEMENTS HELD WITHIN THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF SELF-SUPPORT:.....
11. HAS THE CHILD ANY COURT RECORD: Yes..... No.....
12. DID THE CHILD RECEIVE PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT SERVICES:
Yes..... No.....
13. DID THE CHILD RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AFTER ONCE BEING SELF-SUPPORTING: Yes..... No.....
14. DID THE CHILD RECEIVE UNMARRIED PARENT SERVICES:
Yes..... No.....
15. DID THE CHILD RECEIVE PROTECTION SERVICES FROM C. A. S. OF WINNIPEG: Yes..... No.....

Recorder's Initials.....