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"Foster home placement" a study of the services rendered by the children's division, Fulton County department of public welfare

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"FOSTER HOME PLACEMENT"

A STUDY OF THE SERVICES RENDERED BY THE
CHILDREN'S DIVISION, FULTON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY
GLADIOUS MARIE SLAUGHTER

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
AUGUST 1954

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Study

In recent years there has been an increased interest and concern about childhood development. This interest led to the establishment of services which would help the growth of the child. There is no disagreement among students of child development that of all the agencies of society, the home plays the most important role in the development of the child as a whole. From the family unit the child receives those aspects which are to affect the formation of his character, personality and behavior. Because of this influence, the importance of adequate family life during formative years has been greatly stressed by persons in the field of child welfare. Unfortunately the ideal home situation is not always possible within this society. Broken homes are quite prevalent and many children are left without the influence of one or both parents as a result of divorce, separation or death. Still other children may be without homes because of the continued incapacitation of both parents, due to illness or mental disability or to the inability of a surviving parent to carry the burden alone.¹

When factors necessitate the removal of a child from the home, he is sometimes placed in foster homes or institutions. Foster home placement is concerned with the care of those children in which the home situation is found to be inadequate for one reason or another. Information about the child, his physical condition, emotional nature, background, previous experience in family, relation to parents and siblings, atti-

tudes, habits and behavior is necessary to render adequate service. It is these factors which the writer is largely concerned with. First in terms of the causes necessitating foster home placement; second in terms of rendering service to the children as determined by the Children's Division of the Fulton County Department of Public Welfare.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe the foster home placement of children by the Children's Division of the Department of Public Welfare.

Method of Procedure

The chief method of procedure used was the case study method. Schedules were used to organize information obtained from several sources. This material included information regarding the family constellation, economic and marital status of parents and the development and adjustment of the child.

Pertinent data were extracted from the case records of the children studied. This information was supplemented by interviews with caseworkers who had worked with these families, in an effort to gain a more complete picture of the total situation. Publications were consulted to provide a theoretical basis for the concepts employed.

Scope and Limitation

This study included all cases of Negro children known to the Children's Division of the Fulton County Department of Public Welfare, who were placed in foster homes, from January 1, 1953 through December 31, 1953. The number of cases was seventeen. Eighteen children, two of whom were twins, were studied; of these twelve were boys and six girls. In
cases in which there was only one child, this child was selected; when 
there were two or more children in the family, the oldest child was 
selected, because the writer felt that the older child's needs are more 
variable than the younger ones and would give a better understanding of 
the variety of the service rendered.
CHAPTER II

THE CHILDREN'S DIVISION

History and Development

The Welfare Board of Atlanta, Georgia secured without cost a survey of child welfare services in Atlanta and Fulton County by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor. As a result of this study, the Children's Division of the Department of Public Welfare was established during the latter part of 1935. By the early part of 1936, the Welfare Department had assumed almost complete responsibility for the care, placement, and supervision of four hundred wards of the Juvenile Court, previously cared for by nine private agencies.

At the beginning, a coordinated welfare program was administered by the nine-man Fulton County Board of Public Welfare, which, overburdened with responsibility and without sufficient finances, continued to direct activities until March 27, 1937. At this time, the State of Georgia adopted legislation providing revolutionary changes in the State and County Public Welfare Organizations and their operations. ¹

The Children's Division is responsible for the initial acceptance of all children committed to it by the Juvenile Court of Fulton County for care and supervision; the placement of such children in previously examined and qualified foster homes or institutions; and the continuous supervision of such children and the foster homes; the investigation and reporting of the Fulton Superior Courts on all petitions for adoption filed in such courts and referred to it by the State Department of Public Welfare; and Certification of children eligible for Crippled Children Service Program. ²

² Ibid., p. 13.
During 1952, the Children's Division was given a new functional duty of accepting from the Public Assistance Division workers referrals of Aid to Dependent Children cases in which suitability of the home was questioned, in accordance with the revised Aid to Dependent Children regulations. This made it necessary for the Children's Division worker or supervisor to inquire into the various factors indicating unsuitability of the home of the recipient, and either to make or to request Public Assistance Division workers to make subsequent investigations in order to secure necessary additional information on which to base his recommendation as to whether the case should be placed. In order properly to carry out this additional responsibility, a Senior Child Welfare Worker was employed during the latter part of 1952, her employment being on a half-time basis.1

Foster Home Policies

In spite of continuing efforts to strengthen and improve services to children in their own homes, some children must be cared for away from their own families because of conditions in the family or in the community, or because of the child's special needs. When children cannot be cared for by close relatives, foster care must be provided.

Care covers the physical and emotional needs and the training of a child. A foster home is a family which cares for children who are not related to the family.2

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The children who are referred to the Department for foster care are those whose parents are unable to care for them because of death, separation, physical or emotional reasons or mental incapacity; children with health problems for whom the family is unable to provide adequate care; children with behavior problems; children who have been removed from their own homes because of neglect or other destructive factors in the home.¹

The type of foster care which is selected for a child is determined by the needs of the child, the wishes of the parents, and the resources available. There are no absolute rules to determine which type of care is most suitable for the particular child. Generally it is accepted that babies and children of pre-school age need and benefit from care of a foster family, as it provides the individualized care and attention which is essential to normal personality development. This care is recommended for older children whose family relationships are such that they and the parents can accept a parent substitute; children who need long-time care and whose social adjustment and capacity to relate is such that they can accept foster care.

Children at D.P.W. require study in their own homes before the need for placement can be established. In making this study, information is obtained through a series of interviews with members of the family, the child, relatives, teachers, physicians, and interested individuals. This information is for the purpose of understanding factors in the situation and planning wisely for the child.²

¹ Ibid.
² Ibid., p. 3.
A child should be placed in a home of the same religious faith and racial background as that of the natural parents. If several children in one family can be placed, a home should be found where the children can be together unless there are reasons why they should be separated. The health needs of the child should be considered; if a child has to be brought to a doctor frequently, he should be located where this can be done with little effort. The educational opportunities available to a child in a particular home should be known.

The living standard of the foster home should not be too high nor too low for the child who is placed there. It is difficult for a child to try to live up to standards of foster parents who do not take into consideration the past experiences, training and limitations of the child.

Another important factor in foster home selection is consideration of the personalities of the individuals involved and the relationship within the foster home. In order to know these things, it is necessary to be well-acquainted with the foster family through a study and to understand just as thoroughly the child and his family.\(^1\)

Foster families at D.P.W. should be given an opportunity to discuss the reason why placement is necessary, the characteristics of the child, and to plan for visit with parents, to help them decide whether they can accept a particular child.

The rate of board and the way clothing, medical and dental needs, school supplies, spending money and incidental expenses are furnished should be discussed with the foster parents. The actual placement

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 13.
should be arranged in a way that will make it easiest for the child because it is a painful experience regardless of the way in which it is planned. The foster mother shall not be employed outside of the home, and shall not be over sixty years of age or under twenty-five when the child is placed in the home. Both foster parents shall be in the home, each with an active interest in the child. There should be a harmonious relationship between them and there should be a family relationship which is healthy and satisfying.¹

The general physical and mental health of the foster family should be good. A written statement regarding the foster family's general health and freedom from infectious and contagious diseases shall be obtained from the family or examining physician. No foster home should be used in which a member of the foster family has active tuberculosis or venereal disease. It is not always possible to have a separate bed or bedroom. However, all babies under two years of age are required to sleep in cribs or baby beds; no more than three should sleep in one room, and no children should sleep with adults.²

When the study of a home has been completed, a brief evaluative summary is written which includes the statement of the conclusion and recommendation. The recommendation is based on the analysis of the information obtained in the course of the study and is related to the needs of the foster program. If the home is approved, the age, sex and type of child for whom the home seems best suited should be stated.³

¹ Ibid., p. 14.
² Ibid., p. 15.
³ Ibid., p. 16.
CHAPTER III

CHARACTERISTICS OF EIGHTEEN CHILDREN
PLACED IN FOSTER HOMES

Marriage Status of Parents

Of the parents in the seventeen families studied, two were married, three separated, four common law marriages, one deceased and seven unmarried.

There were two more common law marriages than legal marriages. In considering the type of neighborhood in which the families resided, this was not unusual. It seems that these parents considered common law marriages just as sacred, happy and wholesome as legal marriage. There were few separations.

The broken home backgrounds of most of the children in this study suggest deprivation of emotional strength and sustenance which is required for the development of wholesome individuals.

James H. S. Bossard has said that the father brings a male, the mother a female culture and each parent is a complement to the other in the child-rearing process. Children of the unmarried mothers, the one whose mother was deceased and those separated are without either the male or female culture of their natural parents.

Absence of One or Both Parents

In the cases studied, one or both parents were missing from the family. Since the family is where the child receives his orientation in the social world, the presence of both parents plays an important part in his life.

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Of these seventeen cases, six mothers were incarcerated in jail for various reasons such as drinking, disorderly conduct, larceny, attempt of murder, manslaughter, abandonment, neglect, having left the child alone for a number of days in succession, and awaiting confinement in the Mental State Hospital. The whereabouts of three mothers was unknown, one mother was living with friends, one mother was in the Mental State Hospital, one in Battey Hospital, and one deceased; only four mothers were in the home.

Five fathers were incarcerated in jail for such reasons as non-support, drinking, disorderly conduct, stolen goods and misdemeanors, one living in the home, the whereabouts of two were unknown, one was confined in the Mental State Hospital and one was residing in the same apartment building as the mother but in a different apartment. Ten of the fathers were accounted for, the remaining seven were the fathers of the children whose mothers were not married and could not be accounted for.

In the majority of the cases studied, one or both parents presented antisocial behavior, such as imprisonment with extensive records. Those parents who were medically diagnosed as being ill and placed in hospitals were unable to give the children care, assistance and supervision. The other parents did not provide adequate financial assistance nor love, understanding, protection and guidance which would enable the children to grow up into wholesome individuals.

Provisions should be made for a foster family home for those children who cannot receive in their natural home the love, understanding, guidance and protection so essential to developing within the child his own potentialities for useful living.
Economic and Occupational Status

One of the basic factors in providing the child with a feeling of security is adequate provision in his home of the material necessities of life. This means an income sufficient to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter.

The occupations of the fathers whose employment was listed in the records consisted of manual work such as odd jobs, construction, and work at the freight company; one was receiving U. S. railroad retirement funds. The mothers whose employment was listed were doing domestic work. This included three mothers. One was a waitress, another a housewife, one receiving an Aid to Dependent Children Grant and one was a nurse maid for the two children in the family.

Most of these parents were irregular workers and did not keep the same job for a period of over a year.

The writer was interested in the contributions of these parents to the children's financial welfare. From the above information, there was little contribution and, in many instances, no assistance at all.

Age and Sex Distribution of Children

Studies have revealed that children of all ages are deprived of parental care. Of the eighteen children of this study, the age and sex grouping is indicated in the following table.
Table 1

AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Grouping</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Less than -1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Whereabouts of Children

Before the placement of the eighteen children studied, two were living with a parent; three were living with relatives; nine children were residing with friends; one child who was born in prison was temporarily placed in the hospital; one was temporarily placed by Child Service Association because the mother was medically diagnosed as being mentally unstable and could not care for the child properly; one child was left alone in the home and one child was living with both parents.

The fourteen children who were living with friends, relatives and those who were placed temporarily, had the presence of both a male and a female. All others were placed where there was an absence of either a male or a female.

Family Adjustment

The families of the seventeen cases seemed to provide for their children backgrounds similar to those of their own. These parents had experi-
enced childhood deprivation similar to those to which they exposed their children, thus providing what we might call inherited environment. The majority of these parents were reared by friends and relatives and had been neglected in somewhat the same manner in which they neglected their children.

Miss P. was given away in infancy. She stated that she did not have a family life of her own in which affection and understanding was shown. She further stated that the family she lived with was mean to her and the neighborhood in which she lived was the type in which most anything could be found, such as drinking, and cursing. Miss P. continued to say that she often had to play in the streets because there were no other recreational facilities.

Seven of the parents experienced some variety of the above life. This pattern seemed to be accepted by them as the way in which children should be reared. Many of the children were left with relatives or friends in the same type of neighborhood as were their parents.

Most of these parents' behavior indicated that they were unaware of their responsibility to their children.

Mr. and Mrs. Y. were excessive drinkers, used profane language, worked irregularly and did not spend money on their child. The child was left alone for two and three days to care for himself. The mother stated that she wanted the child but she cannot find anyone to keep him. Both parents had extensive police records, because of fighting, cursing, also disorderly conduct.

The parents demonstrated this type of behavior.

The family is the best place to learn to love, to be loved, to accept oneself and others, and to work out problems of aggression, rivalry, dependency and submission. Children cannot find these factors in families in which they are neglected.

The mother's influence on a child originates before the child is born. Depending upon whether the mother wants or does not want the coming child,
she will mold her own behavior in clever ways directed toward giving or withholding care and protection through her own control of rest, exercise and cleanliness and through the preparation for birth itself. In the infant, feeding experiences are those which give him security or insecurity. Cuddling and caressing is one of the most important factors in the infant life. As the child grows older, he does more things for himself. The child is, however, quite dependent and requires much care, assistance, and supervision from both parents. People and objects do not satisfy every need of the child as the mother, so the process is accompanied by disappointment, anger or fear according to increasingly differentiated reactions toward the failures and thwarting that accompany the process. As these differentiations proceed, his emotional security depends on having a mother and father to whom he can turn in case of need, one who is steady, reliable and unfailing.¹

Obviously all the children of this study were deprived of such security because of the absence of one or both parents.

When the child grows older the parents are interested in his plans, ambitions, accomplishment in school, special interests and hobbies and encouragement is often given in keeping with this. The parent shows evidence of acceptance of what the child is and does. The child who has parents who accept him for what he is and not for what he can do, and a home where he belongs by right and not because he meets certain qualifications, has the best chance of developing into a normal, effective, independent and happy person.

The eighteen children studied did not have this type of relationship with their parents or with the relatives and friends with whom they resided. Therefore they had to be placed in foster homes to secure this relationship.

Parents set the example for their children by their own reactions and behavior, therefore the child learns the expected ways of doing things from the family group. This was shown with the child who wanted to play "getting drunk" as she had seen her mother do. Regardless of whether the parent's behavior is acceptable or not, the child tends to adopt the family pattern.

Of the seventeen cases studied, the majority of the parents neglected their children by failing to provide an adequate financial family life. These parents did not provide food, shelter nor clothing for the children. One parent stated that he had moved from the friends who were keeping his child because he felt that they would take care of him since he did not have a job. Inadequate employment seemed to be the reason why the majority of the parents did not support their children.
CHAPTER IV

SERVICES RENDERED

Source of Referral

Of the seventeen cases referred to the Children's Division, sixteen were court referrals and one was a self-referral. In the court referrals, the parents were proved to be depriving the child of parental care, assistance and supervision and to be guilty of abandonment, such as leaving the child for days in succession with friends and relatives.

Four of the children were called to the attention of the court by neighbors who noticed that they were deprived of care, assistance and supervision. Three were referred by relatives who were no longer able to provide an adequate home for them. One child was brought to the attention of the court by a policeman because he was found to be idling, loitering, and taking toys from a store without permission. Nine children were referred by friends who were unable to provide financially for the children, and one was referred by the mother because of her imprisonment with no relatives willing and able to care for him.

When family conditions are noticed by neighbors, friends and relatives who bring it to the attention of the court, the parents are given a period of time to adjust themselves and provide an environment conducive to the child's welfare. If such behavior is not corrected, the children are then referred by the court to the Children's Division for such care, assistance and supervision as the Department finds needful.

After the child has been committed to the Children's Division, it is the worker's responsibility to continue the process that began at the
time of the court's action, helping the parents to understand and do something about the causes for commitment. It has been found that many parents cannot use casework help. As caseworkers recognize and call upon their strengths, many who cannot still play a limited but an important part in the lives of their children. Marie H. O'Connell has stated we all know what it can and does mean to the child to realize that he can count on visits with and from his parents, and what it means to know that his parents are carrying a share of the financial responsibility for his care.¹

Analysis of Cases

The object of casework services to parents is to help them, both directly and through the use of other community resources, to gain a better understanding of their child, to have more insight about their feeling for their child and what he wants for himself.

Contact with Parents and Guardians:—Prior to placement of these children, the worker talked with the parents or guardian in an attempt to gain more information regarding the reasons for placement, the type of child to be placed in regard to his behavior and habits, their problems around placement, their attitudes and the responsibilities of the foster parents to the children. The worker explained the importance of the placement since the parents could not now care for the child adequately, and the possibility of the return of the children when plans could be made for such.

Worker visited Miss D. She stated that she has been in jail on several occasions. She admitted drinking and neglecting her child. She stated further that she is not a fit mother and that she has no money to support the child. Worker observed that E. is short, of medium brown complexion, fairly attractive and very polite. Miss D. stated that he is easy to control and obeys well as a whole. He attends C. elementary school and is in the fourth grade with a "B" average.

Worker visited Mr. and Mrs. G. who were friends caring for P. Worker observed P. who seemed to have a condition similar to that of a spastic. He limped and leaned to the right when he walked and has a crippled hand. Mrs. G. explained that she had taken him to the hospital for medical attention, but the child did not seem to get any better. She further stated that she had made plans to have him enter the speech clinic at Spelman College. Worker thought that that was a good idea and felt that the child might learn to talk better should he attend. Worker observed that P. was a large child for three years of age. He did not seem to look mentally retarded but his physical condition might be a possible handicap to him in talking. Mrs. G. said that he was more infantile than the average three year old child and was quite dependent on her and Mr. G. for routine things like dressing and feeding.

Three natural parents and twelve guardians were contacted in an attempt to gain additional information which would facilitate the selection of a foster home. A hospital and Child Service Association each furnished information on one child, and an interested neighbor gave as much information as possible on one child. There were fourteen cases in which the natural parents were not contacted due to their confinement in prison, hospital and the whereabouts being unknown thus necessitating these contacts with other sources.

Services to Foster Homes:--Foster homes are selected from the files at Children's Division. However, prior to placement the foster family is acquainted with the child by the worker and may accept or reject him.
In all seventeen cases studied, the foster families were given some information prior to placement. The following case exemplifies the kind of knowledge available.

The B. family lived in an undesirable neighborhood which was not conducive to the child's welfare. There was a great deal of selling of illegal whiskey, drinking and cursing in the street. The only recreation for the child was to play in the street, because of a lack of toys. The child obtained his play toys by taking them without the consent of the rightful owner. Mrs. B. talked with the child regarding their financial hardships since the father was unable to provide for them adequately. He also drank heavily, which was upsetting to the child and his mother, and he worked irregularly.

Before the above child was placed, the worker discussed the child's behavior with the foster family to prepare but not prejudice them; to help them to gain insight into the situation and the child's behavior. Clarification was given as to the needs of the child, such as adequate play toys and space.

Later foster home parents are helped to give up the child who is leaving. They are given recognition of what they have to offer and encouragement when success is achieved.

Services to Children:—The function of the caseworker differs in age groups and from child to child. For the infant, the worker's primary focus is assistance to the foster family in giving physical and affectional attention as well as moderated stimulation to learning. The child, from birth to three years of age, is considered an infant. There were six children in this category. The following case indicated this:

Worker visited a Child Service foster home to talk with foster mother about the removal and replacement plans of M.
and to observe the child in order that she might tell the foster mother something about her, if she agreed to accept her in her home. Arriving at the foster home, worker found M. in bed with a bottle. Mrs. F. explained that the child ate most foods as any other adult would eat; however, she had not been weaned from the bottle and did not walk. Mrs. F. felt that with some prompting she could learn to stand. She felt that M. was afraid to try to stand. Several times Mrs. F. had placed toys in a chair and had stood M. at the chair. The child had stood by the chair with her toys for as long as half an hour. After discovering that she was standing, she would cry as if she had been hurt. M. crawls quite well Mrs. F. explained. She plays alone, sleeps and eats well. M. is rather attractive, however, her crossed-eyed condition detracts from her appearance. She is a lovely brown complexion with very black hair. She is average size for a small nine-month old child. Her limbs are rather slender and small. She did not seem to give much recognition when worker talked to her, but stared at her with a rather blank expression for about five minutes and returned to her toys. Mrs. F. told worker she seldom smiles.

Young babies require direct observation, knowledge of what the child is doing and modification of the living experience. The above child was too young for verbal explanation to be meaningful, but old enough to be aware of changes.

The child from three years of age upward is considered the older child whose needs are more variable. Where there has been a great deal of hurt in some instances, the worker is the only person to whom the child can relate. The worker can gain his confidence and help him to reveal his feelings toward placement. There were twelve older children requiring this functioning by the worker. An example of the older child is shown in the following cases:

Worker visited J., age nine, to take her to her new home at Carrie Steel Pitts. Worker stated that all arrangements had been made and felt that she would be happy to know it was located near the school she would attend. Worker continued to say it was different from
an ordinary home in that there was such a large number of people living there. Both sexes, ranging from very young to teen-agers lived there. J. stated that she had a fourteen year old brother, but did not know where he was living at present. Worker stated that she would be living in the section of the building with all girls.

The worker prepared the child for placement by explaining the type of home in which she would be placed, giving her an understanding and a description of it, and an opportunity to discuss her feelings about it.

There was only one case, that of a nine year old, in which the child needed considerable help from the worker to make the adjustment.

Worker received a telephone call stating that G. was in the detention home again. Her mother had brought her in. She had spent the night with her grandmother and she had no room for her at home.

Worker visited G. at the detention home. G. stated that her father forced her to run away. She further stated that she was playing on the playground at the home when one of the children told her that her father was at the fence and wanted to talk to her. She said that in talking with him he told her that she did not have any business there and for her to go back and live with her grandmother. It frightened her because he said that he was going to return the following day and if she was found there he was going to whip her. Continuing, she stated that her father gave her directions to her grandmother's home. At this point G. began to cry and said that she did not want to go back to the home, that she was afraid her father would whip her as he had promised. She stated that she was afraid of him as he was mean to her, and she remembered that he had stabbed her mother not too long before and she was afraid that if she did not obey he would whip her.

Worker wondered if she had told anyone on the staff of her encounter with her father, and she admitted that she had not, and wanted to know if she would be returned to the home. She began crying and stated that she did not want to go.
At first she refused to say anything, but would only shake her head and say, "I'm not going back". Worker wondered why she objected to going back. Finally she admitted that she liked the home, but was fearful of punishment and that the other children would laugh at her for running away. Worker stated that that was not true and there was no reason to fear punishment and that the staff was very concerned about her absence and worried a great deal over her safety.

Worker further stated that she had explained to the staff that she did not run away because she wanted to but was afraid of her father's threats, and as for the other children just to tell them she had gone to visit her grandmother. She seemed somewhat relieved and stated that she was ready to return to the home.

Arriving at the home, she was greeted warmly by the staff who hugged her affectionately telling her how worried they were about her and happy to have her back, also that it was not her fault. She had no reason to fear her father and should he ever try to talk to her again on the playground to come in and immediately let some of them know his presence.

The worker gained the above child's confidence, gave psychological support, and provided environmental modification to effect a better opportunity for adjustment.

Five of the parents were quite concerned over their children's placement, and returned to see them after they were placed. The remaining twelve could never be contacted after placement. The worker sustained contacts with these parents to make known the importance of their visits to the child, to inform the parents of the child's adjustment, and to assist in planning for a return home.

Mrs. A. in office. She stated that she was interested in her child but could not take care of him. She further commented that she could not find anyone to care for him and neither could she find employment. Worker referred her to Georgia State Employment Office and was told that she would go within the next few days. Worker stated that if she could make a plan for the child, he would be returned to her.
Miss M. in office. She stated that she is interested in her baby and wanted to care for him. Miss M. brought clothing, fruit juice and milk for the baby. Worker informed Miss M. that the baby was doing nicely, but Miss M. stated that she wanted to do something for him. Miss M. gave worker a crib blanket, one pair of diaper covers, sweater suit and two pairs of rompers. Miss M. asked for an appointment to see the baby.

Every child cannot return home, but by working with parents, the caseworker can learn what is ahead for the child's return home, long-time placement or adoption, and help the child and parents accordingly. There were twelve cases in which long-term placement plans were made because the children could not return home. In four of these, the casework plan was for adoption due to the fact that the parents could not be contacted and there were no suitable relatives willing and able to care for them.

In eight of the thirteen cases, the plan was to return the children to relatives of the family, because the worker felt that the homes could not be re-established for their return.

In one case the child was medically diagnosed as having limited mental ability in which extensive care would be required as he grew older. Since this was true, the plan for him was to be committed to the Mental State Hospital. Limited information was found in the record regarding this child.

The casework plan for five of the children was to return home after the re-establishment of the home.

Casework services in foster home placement include contacts with parents and guardians in order to obtain information regarding the reasons for placement, the type of child to be placed with regard to
his behavior and habits, their problems around placement, their attitudes and the responsibilities of the foster parents to the children.

In all records except two, such contacts were held with emphasis on interpreting services of foster homes, encouraging the family in accepting the plans and obtaining information necessary for adequate services of the child.

The records also revealed that information was, in turn, shared with all foster home parents to enable them in assisting the child in his adjustment.

Although the children range from five days to sixteen years of age, the major responsibility of the workers was preparing the children for foster home placement and remaining the sustaining contact between the family during placement.

In these cases, all the children made a satisfactory adjustment with the exception of one who was forced to run away from the home because of the father's threats.
Foster home placement at the Department of Public Welfare is concerned with those children in which the home situation is found to be inadequate for one reason or another. The Children's Division was established during the latter part of 1935. During the early part of 1936, the Department had assumed almost complete responsibility for the care, placement, and supervision of four hundred wards of the Juvenile Court, previously cared for by nine private agencies.

In 1952, the new function given Children's Division was to accept referrals for Aid to Dependent Children from the Public Assistance Division in which the suitability of the home was questioned.

The children referred to the Department for foster home placement were those whose parents were unable to care for them because of death, separation, physical or emotional reasons or mental incapacity; children with health problems for whom the family was unable to provide and children who have been removed from their own homes because of neglect or other destructive factors in the home.

Most of the children placed came from families in which one or both parents were missing because of confinement in prison, hospitalization, and whereabouts being unknown. The few living in the home were deprived because of insufficient family funds. These parents were irregular workers who did not keep the same job for over a year.

The children ranged in age from five days to sixteen years; of which twelve were male and six were female.

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The majority of the parents had been reared by relatives and friends and had themselves been neglected.

The process of Children's Division includes how the children were referred to the agency. Sixteen of the cases were referred by Juvenile Court and one was a self-referral. These children were called to the attention of the court by neighbors, relatives, a policeman and friends who were unable to care for them financially.

Before the children were placed, all children, three natural parents who were contacted, and foster families were prepared for the placement. The child was prepared for a new family and giving up his own family. The natural parents were helped to accept placement of the child and to adjust to the situation. They were also prepared for the return of the child to the home or giving the child up completely. All foster parents were helped to accept the children and their behavior and to give the type of family life which would help them to develop into wholesome individuals.

The caseworker rendered the above services to the children, natural parents and foster families.

The writer felt that the services rendered these individuals were effective in the following areas:

1. Offering psychological support to the natural parents in placing children in foster homes and toward having the child return home.

2. Clarification as to the importance of visiting the children.

3. Offering information as to the child to be placed.

4. Helping the foster family to understand the children's physical condition.
5. Helping the foster family to give physical and affectional attention.


Perhaps due to time, recording, limitations of the Department or other possible circumstances, the writer felt that the following were areas in which the worker's activity in the placement of these children was not clear:

1. Quantity and quality of contacts with individual in reference to parent's reason for placement.

2. Re-establishment of the home for the return of the children.

3. Use of community resources.

4. Variations in relationships and focus with the children, as determined by age and needs.
APPENDIXES
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Number of Siblings in family placed ____________________________

Date of application __________________ Date placed ________________________

Living accommodation in home prior to placement ____________________________

Reasons for referral ____________________________

Delinquency of child, if any ____________________________

Other Pertinent Information ____________________________
Interview Schedule

Explanation:

Due to the fact that limited information regarding worker's role is in the case record, the following questions were developed to give the writer further information in this respect. The workers who worked with the seventeen cases under study were interviewed directly.

Questions

1. What type of casework planning was done with the child during placement (needs of the child)

2. Has there been casework treatment with (natural parents) if so what plan?

3. Worker's impression of child's suitability for a certain foster home.

4. Foster home suitability for certain child.

5. Worker's impression of foster home placement (before and after) physical set-up.

6. Attitude of child toward placement.

7. Attitude of parents toward placement.

8. Social status of parents

9. Casework plan

9. Other pertinent information
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