

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR LONE PARENT FAMILIES
IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

by

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this thesis was to investigate the characteristics of lone parent families and the types of educational programs available to them in the City of Vancouver. Based on the investigation, the study outlines factors underlying the ineffectiveness of some of these educational programs and offers recommendations for action.

The initial phases of this study were prompted by a grant from the Continuing Education Division of the British Columbia Ministry of Education to carry out two research projects on the lone parent family in the summer of 1980. The first phase of the study consisted of the analysis of census data on lone parent families in Canada and the second phase consisted of the compilation of an annotated bibliography on the subject of the lone parent family. The results were published jointly by the Vancouver School Board and the Ministry of Education under the respective titles of Lone Parent Families in Canada and British Columbia and Lone Parent Families: A Selected and Annotated Bibliography. In subsequent phases of the study, data on educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver were collected through a series of interviews conducted with educators who were either working with lone parent families in the setting of public education institutions or in conjunction with these institutions in the calendar year of 1981-82. A set of criteria was established to define the group of programs under study and representatives from the following government ministry, public institutions, and social agencies were interviewed for data on

educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver:

1. The Ministry of Human Resources, Victoria
2. The University of British Columbia, Women Student's Office
3. Vancouver Community College, Vancouver
4. Douglas College, New Westminster
5. The City of Vancouver Health Department
6. Community Centres in Vancouver
 - a. False Creek
 - b. Britannia Community Services Centre
 - c. Thunderbird Neighbourhood Centre
7. Family Services of Greater Vancouver
8. Y.W.C.A., Vancouver
9. The People's Law School, Vancouver
10. Single Parent Groups, Greater Vancouver
11. Vancouver School Board, Career and Community Education Services
12. New Westminster School Board, Continuing Education, New Westminster
13. The National Council of Welfare, Ottawa
14. Federated Anti-Poverty Group of B. C., Vancouver

The effort yielded data on a variety of educational programs available to lone parent families, but only those programs which met the established criteria were included in this study.

The analysis of the 1976 Census data yielded the following statistical picture of lone parent families in Canada, British Columbia, Greater Vancouver, and the City of Vancouver:

	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Canada	559,070	100	93,590	16.7	465,480	83.3
British Columbia	60,200	100	10,415	17.3	49,785	82.7
Gt. Vancouver	29,265	100	4,570	15.6	24,695	84.4
Vancouver, City	12,235	100	1,855	15.2	10,385	84.8

Source: Statistics Canada, 1976 Census of Canada

In the five-year intercensal period between 1971 and 1976, the total number of lone parent families in Canada increased by 17.1 per cent compared to an increase of just 13.0 per cent among husband-wife families. As an indication of significance in Canadian society, one in ten families in 1976 was a lone parent family.

The incidence of lone parenthood was found to be highest in urban centres with a population of 100,000 and over. A total of 685,915 children of under 18 years of age were found living in lone parent families throughout Canada in 1976, and of the total number of lone parent families 83.3 per cent were headed by women and only 16.7 per cent by men. The average lone parent family had 1.9 children, and families headed by women appeared to be larger than families headed by men. The largest group of children belonged to the age group of 6 to 14.

When the socio-economic characteristics of lone parent families were analyzed, it was found that 36.1 per cent of the total parents in Canada had less than grade 9 schooling. In view of the general

pervasiveness of undereducation among the group, it was not surprising to find that only 47.5 per cent of the group were employed. Among those who were employed, there was a vast discrepancy between the sexes. Only 46.7 per cent of the female lone parents were employed compared to 73.5 per cent of the male lone parents. The typical lone parent was a woman who had two children and required social assistance due to her unemployed status, her relatively low level of education, and her general susceptibility to poverty. A report released by the National Council of Welfare (1979) showed that 44 per cent of all Canada's female lone parents were poor in 1975.

Educational programs for lone parents and their families were conducted at all levels of public education institutions in the City of Vancouver in the calendar year of 1981-82. Some of these institutions worked in close conjunction with community centres and social agencies in the city. The majority of the programs offered, however, succeeded in reaching only a very small percentage of the total lone parent families in the city. Various attempts by the Ministry of Education to introduce new programs met with only limited success and a number of programs were terminated due to the lack of interest on the part of lone parents and their families. Yet an examination of the needs of lone parent families and the goals of educational programs offered revealed a high degree of congruency between the two.

Alternative explanations for the ineffectiveness of program were sought from theories pertaining to needs and participation patterns in adult education; and it was concluded that the failure of educational

programs for lone parent families lay in a variety of factors including social and psychological barriers which hindered members of the target population from active participation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

As a growing phenomenon in Canadian society, the lone parent family is causing increasing concern for educators who attempt to provide educational programs which will cater to the needs of the group. As a high percentage of the lone parent families are undereducated and require social assistance, educators in existing education institutions face the all-important task of helping the group to acquire skills and training which will provide them with new options and free them from long-term social assistance. An analysis of the 1976 Census data revealed the presence of a significant percentage of lone parent families in all but three of the 14 college regions and 72 or the 75 school districts in British Columbia (Heath, 1980). Investigation of educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver showed that a variety of programs are available in all three levels of public education institutions - university, community college and school - and in various social agencies, but the majority of these programs succeeded in reaching only a very small percentage of the target population. Efforts to introduce new programs in these institutions are often unsuccessful or aborted in their early stages due to the lack of interest and poor subscription rate on the part of lone parent families. This study intends to achieve the following purposes:

1. To identify and review literature on lone parent families in Canada, U.S., and Great Britain.
2. To determine the demographic characteristics of lone parent families in Canada and in British Columbia.

3. To determine the needs of and educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver.
4. To forward a set of recommendations for action.

Sources of Data

Three major sources of data were employed in this study. The first, the identification and review of related literature on the lone parent family, derived data contained in an annotated bibliography compiled earlier (Heath, 1980). Most of the literature included was written or published after 1970 and was obtainable from major libraries in British Columbia. The bulk of research for this part of the study was conducted in the Vancouver Public Library and the Social Work Library and the Main Library of the University of British Columbia. Other sources such as the Ministry of Human Resources, the Ministry of Education, United Way of the Lower Mainland, Y.W.C.A., lone parent groups, the National Council of Welfare, the Federated Anti-Poverty Groups of B. C., agencies and individuals working with lone parent families in the Lower Mainland were contacted for information leading to publications and literature on the subject of the lone parent family. An ERIC search was also conducted to uncover other sources of materials on the subject.

Secondly, data pertaining to the demographic characteristics of the Canadian lone parent family were derived from the 1976 Census with some tabulations conducted by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Human Resources, and the National Council of Welfare.

Thirdly, data on educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver were collected through a series of interviews

conducted with educators, counsellors, social workers, and other professionals working with lone parents and their children. All the educational programs included in the study were conducted either under the auspices of the Ministry of Education or by agencies which work in close cooperation with institutions which come under the administrative umbrella of the Ministry of Education. The main institutions and agencies included in the study were the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Community College, the Vancouver School Board, the City of Vancouver Health Department, Family Services of Greater Vancouver, and the Y.W.C.A.

Definitions

Lone parent family - a family headed by a male or female parent with one or more children.

Lone parent - a parent who is separated, divorced, widowed, single (never married), or has an absentee spouse.

Children - sons and daughters (including adopted and step-children) under 18 years old who have never married and who are living in the same dwelling as their parent.

Educational programs - a series of meetings or learning experiences conducted over a specified period of time with certain pre-determined objectives.

Family composition - the combined classification of families by number of children, of children by age and school attendance, and average number of children per family.

Undereducation - less than grade 9 schooling.

Limitations of the Study

Although this study is primarily exploratory in nature, its main focus is on meeting the needs of lone parent families through educational programs conducted in the City of Vancouver. The programs included in the study are selected according to a set of established criteria and, therefore, share certain common characteristics. This study, however, is limited in scope and does not claim to be an exhaustive study of all educational programs for lone parent families conducted in the City of Vancouver.

Among lone parent families, the characteristics selected for study are those which can be measured objectively and which are readily obtainable from existing census data.

In reporting the number of children in lone parent families, certain problems were encountered since age was not used as a criterion in the definition adopted by Statistics Canada. By including all never-married sons and daughters (including adopted and step children) living in the same family dwelling, regardless of age, as "children" statistics Canada might have incurred certain inaccuracies in its data pertaining to the number of children living in lone parent families since 40.6 per cent of the total number of children reported were over the age of 18, and a large number of these so-called children were possibly independent adults sharing the same household as their parents. For the purpose of this study, children will include only never-married sons and daughters (including adopted and stepchildren) whose ages were eighteen or under at the time of enumeration.

Plan of the Study

The following chapters of this study will focus on the review of literature on lone parent families, the demographic characteristics of the group as revealed by existing census data, the needs of lone parent families and educational programs for the group in the City of Vancouver, and recommendations for action.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

With the lone parent family becoming an increasingly common social phenomenon, a significant volume of literature on the subject has been produced in the three major English-Speaking countries of Canada, U.S., and Great Britain in the last two decades. This review of literature will focus on the following aspects:

1. Definitions
2. Lone parent family as a new family form
3. Pervasiveness of lone parent families
4. Characteristics of lone parent families
5. Poverty among lone parent families headed by women
6. Children of lone parent families
7. Problems and needs of lone parent families
8. Educational programs for lone parent families
9. Needs and participation pattern in adult education

Definitions

Most of the literature on the lone parent family employs the use of the terms "single parent family" and "one-parent family". Schlesinger (1975, 1977, 1978, 1979a, 1979b), the foremost authority on the study of the lone parent family in North America, used the term "one-parent family" in the majority of his work. Two other major studies of the lone parent

family in Canada, one by Guyatt (1971) and the other by the Canadian Council on Social Development (1971), also employed the term "one-parent family". The National Council of Welfare (1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c), on the other hand, used the term "single parent family" in its series of reports.

Among British studies, the term "one-parent family" was used in the Finer Report (1975) while another comprehensive study carried out by Hunt (1970) used the two terms "fatherless family" and "motherless family." Hunt was also the first to employ the term "lone parent family." Other British studies such as the work of Marsden (1969), George and Wilding (1972), and Kriesberg (1970) also tended to employ the two terms "motherless family" and "fatherless family."

In the U.S., lone parent families headed by women seemed to have received the bulk of attention. The two terms "single parent family" and "one parent family" are used in some studies (Education USA, 1980; Eisenberg, 1975; Tucker, 1975) while another group of studies (Brown and Miller, 1976; Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1977; Honig, 1971; Ross & Sawhill, 1975; Women's Bureau, 1977) tended to employ the use of the terms "male-headed family," "female-headed family," and "families headed by women."

The distinction between the two terms "lone parent family" and "single parent family" was first established by Statistics Canada in its 1976 Census publications on the lone parent family (Statistics Canada, 1976a, 1976b). While "single parent family" was used to describe a family headed by a parent who has never married, "lone parent family"

described a family headed by a parent who was either widowed, divorced, separated, single (never married), or had an absentee spouse. A "lone parent family," according to Statistics Canada, consists of a parent, regardless of marital status, with one or more children (including adopted children) living in the same dwelling. Similar criteria were adopted by Schlesinger in defining the term "one parent family". In the British study by Hunt (1970), another criterion was added when he included lone parents and children living as members of a near relative's household without a male head as another category of lone parent families.

This study has opted for the term "lone parent family" for three main reasons. Firstly, it was the term employed by Statistics Canada and, in obtaining data, it was important to have a common frame of reference. Secondly, the term allows the distinction between lone parents who were once married and lone parents who have never married as the latter - single parents - can be subsumed under the general category of lone parents. Thirdly, the status of lone parenthood in Canadian society carries certain social implications such as isolation and loneliness which were aptly conveyed by the term "lone parent family," but are not conveyed by the other terms.

The definition of "children" also varies from study to study. In the census publications by Statistics Canada, children referred to sons and daughters (including adopted and stepchildren) who had never married, regardless of age, and were living in the same dwelling as their parents. Schlesinger did not define the term in any of his studies. As can be seen from the definition adopted by Statistics Canada, no age limit was

set in the process of enumerating, and "children" would include sons and daughters who were still living with their parents but were no longer dependent on their parents for support. In some studies such as the B. C. Public School Statistics (1976) and Cowhig's study (1970) on families headed by women in the U.S., however, the upper age limits for "children" were set at 19 and 18 respectively. The general lack of consensus on the definition has resulted in a certain amount of confusion and inaccuracy in data pertaining to the number of children from lone parent families. As stated in the introduction, "children" in this study will include only sons and daughters under the age of 18.

Lone Parent Family as a New Family Form

Among early literature on lone parenthood, there was a tendency for scholars to treat lone parent families as a deviant group or, as Schlesinger (1975) suggested, the "fifth wheels" of society. It is, therefore, important to stress that many of the problems faced by the average lone parent family are also commonly shared by the average husband-wife family, and society's attitude toward the lone parent family is changing. In a report sponsored by the Anglican Church of Canada, Thompson (1969) noted the general fear of the "broken home" harboured by the general public and recent tentative evidence that unhappy husband-wife families might pose greater risk for the young than more stable lone parent families. Thompson also noted that serious disturbances among the young have many complex causes and cannot be attributed solely to family structure.

In a recent conference report entitled What Holds Tomorrow? (1981), the lone parent family was identified as a future trend in the development of the family as "life in the traditional family is being eroded by changing political, social and cultural conditions..." (p. 4) and other family forms are being born. The report also stressed the need for the future family to be adaptable and for a wide range of support services if modern families are to survive in the face of social change and the lack of a value consensus.

In a discussion paper (June, 1981) published by the Ministry of Education, Thomas also noted technological and social impact on the structure of the family and identified eight kinds of unions resulting in the "blended or reconstituted families" and other familial groupings. The recent increase in the number of younger lone parents, the changing attitude of society, and the problems faced both by working lone parents and by lone parents on welfare were also noted.

Pervasiveness of Lone Parent Families

Significant increases in the number of lone parent families were reported by studies conducted by Canada, the U.S., and Great Britain in the last two decades. Statistics Canada reported that one in ten Canadian families in 1976 was a lone parent family. The changes in statistics of different family types are shown in Table I.

The rate of increase was even greater among lone parent families in British Columbia which, according to Statistics Canada, experienced an increase of 20.6 per cent between 1971 and 1976. All provinces reported

Table 1: Family Types for 1971 and 1976 and Rates of Change Since 1971

Year	Total Families	Husband-Wife Families	Male-Headed Families	Female-Headed Families	Total Lone Parent Families
1971	5,053,170	4,575,640	100,355	377,165	477,525
1976	5,727,895	5,168,560	94,990	464,345	559,330
Change since 1971	13%	13%	-5.4%	23%	17%

Source: Anne-Marie Ambert, Divorce in Canada, Don Mills: Academic Press, 1980, Table 13.

an increase in the total number of lone parent families. The largest groups of lone parent families were found in the two most populous provinces of Quebec and Ontario (see Statistics Canada, 1976a, 1976b).

Data supplied by the National Council of Welfare (December, 1981) showed that lone parent families had the tendency to congregate in the larger urban centres. Of the total number of Canadian lone parent families, 79.0 per cent lived in urban centres with populations of less than 15,000.

On the British scene, the Finer Report (1974) also indicated a significant increase in the number of lone parent families since 1955. According to the report, there were 620,000 lone parent families in Great Britain in 1971. A total of one million children were reported to be living in these families and 720,000 of them lived in female-headed households. Table 2 shows the breakdown of data on lone parent families as presented by the report. As in Canada and the U.S., these data showed that one-tenth of all families with dependent children had only one parent.

The rapid growth of female-headed families in the U.S. was reported by Ross and Sawhill (1975) and Cowhig (Welfare Review, 1970, 8, pp. 16-20). Cowhig reported a total of 5.3 million lone parent families headed by women in 1968. The total number of children living in female-headed families was 6.7 million. As with lone parent families in Canada, the majority of these families, especially those headed by Negro women (62 per cent), tended to congregate in urban centres. Ross and Sawhill

Table 2: Lone Parent Families in Great Britain with Marital Status of Parents and Number of Children in 1971

Parent	Number of Families	%	Number of Children	%
Female				
Single	90,000	14.5	120,000	11.1
Married	190,000	30.6	360,000	33.4
Widowed	120,000	19.4	200,000	18.5
Divorced	120,000	19.4	240,000	22.2
Sub-Total	520,000	83.9	920,000	85.2
Male	100,000	16.1	160,000	14.7
Total	620,000	100.0	1,080,000	100.1

Note: Tables may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

Source: B. Schlesinger, "One-Parent Families in Great Britain", The Family Coordinator, 1977, Vol. 26, pp. 139.

did not concentrate on statistics, but analyzed the increasingly common phenomenon of the female-headed lone parent family in the context of social changes and contended that changing economic and social status of women was the main cause for the increase in female-headed lone parent families.

Demographic Characteristics of Lone Parent Families

The majority of lone parent families in Canada, U.S., and Great Britain were reportedly headed by women. Of the 599,070 Canadian lone parent families reported by Statistics Canada in 1976, a total of 465,480 (83.3 per cent) were headed by women and only 93,599 (16.7 per cent) were headed by men. In British Columbia, the ratio of male- and female-headed families was similar to that for Canada.

The correlation between marital status and age of lone parents was indicated by a number of Canadian studies. Statistics Canada (1976a, 1976b) found that 41.2 per cent of Canada's total lone parents were widows and the majority of them were over the age of 55. On the other hand, the majority of lone parents in the separated and divorced categories were women between the ages of 25 and 44. Lone parents who were single or never-married constituted only a small percentage of the total lone parent population and most of them were under 35.

The typical lone parent, according to a report by the National Council of Welfare (1979), was a 40 to 45 year old woman who was either divorced or separated, with teenage children, and whose main source of income was welfare.

As in Canada, the majority of lone parent families in Great Britain and the U.S. were headed by women. The Finer Report found in 1971 that 83.8 per cent of the 620,000 lone parent families were headed by women and only 16.1 per cent by men. The same report found a total of 1,080,000 children living in lone parent families in 1971 and 95.2 per cent of them lived in families headed by women. The study by Hunt revealed a significant number of female-headed families who shared a common household with a near relative. The same study also showed that over 90 per cent of all female-headed families included children of ages five to 15. The average British lone parent family had 2.0 children.

In the U.S., the study by Cowhig showed that 81 per cent of all lone parent families were headed by women. Of the 6.7 million children (under 18) living in lone parent families, about 38 per cent belonged to Negro families. Compared to female heads of White households, female heads of Negro households appeared to be younger. In fact, the average Negro lone parent was almost 12 years younger than her White counterpart. The largest congregation of female lone parents was found in the two age groups of 35-44 and 45-54. Compared to her Canadian counterpart, the average lone parent in the U.S. appeared to be older.

There also seemed to be some correlation between age and marital status among U.S. lone parents. Widows formed the largest group of lone parents (86.0 per cent in the age group of 65 and over); while separation and divorce were the two main reasons for lone parenthood for approximately 40.0 per cent of female-headed White and Negro families. Among the

middle age groups, about one of every five of the women was divorced, one in ten was never married, and the remaining 46.0 per cent were widowed. Divorce seemed to be much more common than separation for White than for Negro mothers.

Literature on the lone parent family tends to single out the case of the female-headed family since the latter dominates every category of lone parenthood. Male-headed motherless families claimed only slightly over 10.0 per cent of the total population of lone parent families in Great Britain.

The most extensive study on the Canadian male-headed motherless family was carried out by Todres (1975) whose survey of 72 motherless families in the metro-Toronto area identified gaps in community services and the scarcity of child care among the group. Unlike the typical female lone parent, this group of male parents were well-educated and had good average incomes. Todres also noted the more severe and enduring nature of loneliness and depression rendered by widowhood than that rendered by marital dissolution. Dore (1977) employed the "career path" model to analyze the progressive phases of lone parenthood and commented on the importance of the extended family as a source of support for the male lone parent following marital dissolution.

Schlesinger and Dominic (1979a) examined patterns of male parenthood among those fathers who had settled the custody of their children out of wedlock and those who had settled custody in court, and noted the superior quality of fathering provided by the former. The authors also noted the fear of losing their children among the majority of the fathers.

Gatley and Koulack (1979) produced a handbook which offers advice for male lone parents.

Few studies have been conducted up to date on male-headed lone parent families in the U.S. Schlesinger et al. (Children Today, 1970, 7, pp. 12-19) estimated a total of 450,000 male lone parents in the U.S. in 1976. The subsequent interviews conducted with 49 separated or divorced fathers who lived in the Boston area by Keshet and Rosenthal showed that the majority of the fathers were highly educated and belonged to either professional or semi-professional categories. Interviews conducted by Mendes with 32 lone fathers in Southern California and 20 lone fathers in North Carolina revealed similar income status for the fathers, but pointed out the lack of role clarity among the group and the resultant stresses.

In Great Britain, George and Wilding's study (1972) of 588 motherless families found that the loss of the mothers in a family had serious economic, emotional, and social consequences for the family. Unlike their North American counterparts, the British male parent appeared to share many of the socio-economic characteristics of the female lone parent.

An overview of the common themes which had emerged from studies conducted on motherless families included financial problems for some fathers, the lack of child care facilities, difficulty in attaining a balanced home and social life, the lack of experience in parenting and homemaking, personal problems related to the strains and stress of lone parenting, and the lack of community support.

Poverty Among Female-Headed Families

Poverty among female-headed families in Canada was documented by Statistics Canada (1976a, 1976b), the National Council of Welfare (1975, 1976a, 1977, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c), the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970), Schlesinger (1975, 1979), Guyatt (1971), and the National Council of Social Development (1971). One of the reports by the National Council of Welfare (1979) pointed out that poverty among female-headed families had become so pervasive that such families had become the stereotype of the female poor. The same report also pointed out that next to widows and other formerly married women living alone, female lone parents constituted the next poorest group of women in Canada as 44.0 per cent of this group were poor.

There also seemed to be a wide discrepancy in income status between male- and female-headed lone parent families. A report on income distribution carried out by Statistics Canada (1977) showed that among female heads of families not in the labour force, 11.2 per cent had annual incomes of under \$3,000. Among male heads of families not in the labour force, however, only 4.4 per cent had incomes of under \$3,000. Another report released by Statistics Canada in 1978 on Canada's families showed that the most noticeable difference in average income was found between heads of male and female lone parent families. The National Council of Welfare's report on one-parent families (1976) pointed out that the incidence of poverty among lone parent families was four times greater than that for husband-wife families, and the poverty rate of female lone parents was 59.6 per cent compared to only 14.1 per cent for male lone parents.

Citing statistics from the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women released to the public in 1970, Schlesinger (1975) reported that more than one-third of all female heads of lone parent families were poor in 1967 and although female-headed families represented only 7.5 per cent of all Canadian families at the time, 14.8 per cent of the low-income families had female heads. Altogether there was a total of 123,320 poor female-headed families in 1967. The same report also pointed out the correlation between the incidence of poverty and the number of children in a lone parent family among both male-and female-headed lone parent families. The percentages of poverty among male and female heads of lone parent families with four or more children were 23.7 per cent and 66.8 per cent respectively compared to 11.4 per cent and 42.2 per cent of male and female heads with only one child.

The most common causes of poverty among lone parent families were unemployment, lack of training and skills, and inadequate welfare payments. The Canadian Council on Social Development (1976) cited the respective employment rates for male and female lone parents in 1974 as 89.0 per cent and 45.0 per cent. The 1976 Census showed that 73.5 per cent of the male lone parents were in the labour force compared to only 46.7 per cent of the female lone parents. In the report on Canada's families, Statistics Canada (1978) cited family obligations, fewer opportunities for promotion, and a large proportion of widowed lone parents living off acquired assets and small incomes as other causes of poverty. The odds against female lone parents striving for financial independence was stressed by the National Council of Welfare's report

(1976) of lone parent families in Canada. Negative cultural orientation toward the role of bread-winner, and lack of financial incentives and day care facilities were cited as important odds in addition to discrimination against women in the work force. The same report also pointed out that female heads of families were just as well, if not better, educated than their male counterparts, but had a much narrower range of job opportunities due to discrimination women experienced in the job market. Compared to their counterparts in the general population, however, female lone parents seemed to have a lower level of education. This assertion was supported by Schlesinger (1976) who reported that 49.0 per cent of female heads of families in 1967 had only elementary school education or no schooling.

Statistics Canada (1976a) reported a higher proportion of under-educated male lone parents (27.5 per cent) than female lone parents (19.7 per cent). In British Columbia, the percentage of undereducated lone parents appeared to be even higher.

The inadequacy of welfare payments was stressed by the National Council of Welfare (1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c), Guyatt (1971), the Canadian Council on Social Development (1971), Newton (1979), Edmonton Social Services (1979), and Schlesinger (1975). One of the reports by the National Council of Welfare (1979a) stated that 41.5 per cent (almost an equal proportion as those in full-time employment) of the female lone parents in 1974 were dependent on welfare for their major source of income. The report advocated the urgent need for a new program

of guaranteed income which would at least match the existing poverty line. The report summed up the situation as follows:

If a single-parent woman has a full-time paid job, her chances of having at least a minimum adequate income are almost as good as those of a married woman living with her husband. If her only sources of income are a former husband or the government, however, she will almost certainly be destitute. (p. 12)

Similar contentions on the need for reforms in welfare policies were held by Guyatt, the Canadian Council on Social Development, Newton, Edmonton Social Services, and Schlesinger.

Like its Canadian counterpart, the poverty of the average female-headed lone parent family in the U.S. is well documented. Studies conducted by Kriesberg (1970), Congress of the U.S. (1979), Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1977), Brown and Miller (1976), and Eisenberg et al (1975) attempted to show some of the negative effects of poverty and the high percentage of lone parent families, especially those headed by women, who were poor. Female lone parents were among the poorest in the country and the major consumers of welfare. About one-third of all families headed by women were poor with a median income of \$2,926 in 1975 and this rate of poverty was five times that for male-headed lone parent families. Although women made up only 14.0 per cent of all poor, they constituted 48.0 per cent of all poor family heads. This rate of poverty was almost identical to that found among female lone parents in Canada.

Another similarity between lone parent families in the U.S. and lone parent families in Canada emphasized by literature was the great discrepancy between the income status of a male-headed and female-headed family. Cowhig's study revealed that the median income for a female-headed family in 1967 was about \$4,300 compared to a median income of about \$8,400 for a male-headed husband-wife family. The group of lone parents with the lowest income were female parents of under 25. Negro families were found to be more susceptible to poverty than White families. One-third of the families headed by women had incomes of less than \$3,000 in 1967 and half had incomes of \$2,114 or less. Among both White and Negro families, the proportion of families with incomes less than \$3,000 was much greater for female-headed than for male-headed families.

As in the case of the Canadian lone parent family, the poverty status of the female-headed family in the U.S. was directly related to the number of persons in the family. The study by the Women's Bureau of Washington, D.C., for example, showed that larger families suffered a higher incidence of poverty. The same study also attributed the greater prevalence of poverty among female lone parents to other causes such as higher unemployment rate, child care responsibilities, and the greater longevity of women. Cowhig, on the other hand, saw the comparatively low educational attainment of the female lone parents both as the cause and the effect of their poor economic status.

The theory of intergenerational transmission of poverty had been explored by many sociologists and transmission of poverty among female-headed families has been frequently used as an example of this theory at

work. Kriesberg (1970) dismissed this theory in her study of poor female-headed families in the U.S. and concluded that the connection between the poverty of broken families in one generation and the next is non-existent or small. Instead, she pointed out the importance of contemporary situational factors such as a mother's education in affecting the income status of a female-headed family.

The extent of deprivation suffered by fatherless families in Great Britain was described by Marsden's study (1969) of 116 female-headed lone parent families. Marsden noted that financial and emotional deprivation are intermeshed and that "poverty accentuates all the morbid tendencies of grief - the isolation, bitterness, apathy...." (p. 3).

Children of Lone Parent Families

The traumatic effects of marital upsets on children were dealt with by a number of studies though the results were inconclusive. Stuart and Edwin (1972) described children of separation and divorce as "pawns" in the power struggles between parents. Schlesinger (Ed., 1979b) examined the effect of divorce on children in nursery schools and concluded that divorce had a significant impact for the majority of the children in this age group. Ercul, Goldenberg, and Schlesinger (Schlesinger Ed., 1979b) concluded from their study of children from broken homes that most of their subjects had mixed feelings about the absentee parent.

The National Council of Welfare (1975) reported the overwhelming probability of poverty among children living in families headed by mothers in all provinces and all population categories. These children, according

to the Council's report, tended to have a high dropout rate during their school years, low educational aspirations; but strong desire to earn money. The majority of them were also found to be susceptible to ill-health and poor nutrition. Some of these assertions were supported by Statistics Canada's 1976 Census data.

The damaging effects of children growing up in poverty were studied by Forrest (1979a), the Canadian Council on Social Development (1975), and Ferri and Robinson (1976). The conclusions from these studies tended to support the theory that children from lone parent families tend to have a lower level of attainment in school.

A report which appeared in Education USA (Aug. 4, 1980) pointed out the presence of 12 million children from lone parent families in the U.S. and stressed that children from such families were potentially "at risk" since they were more likely to be poor achievers and school dropouts than children from husband-wife families. Another study by Ross and Sawhill (1975) yielded inconclusive evidence on the issue of school performance, but Cowhig's study (1970) showed that school performance by children from lone parent families was more affected by factors such as family income and maternal role, and children from poor female-headed families often performed better than children from poor husband-wife families. Kriesberg (1970) forwarded some alternatives for rearing children from poor families for independence and achievement based on the conclusion that there were no overall differences between children of fatherless families and husband-wife families.

Problem and Needs of Lone Parent Families

The difficulty of determining the "real" needs of clientele has prompted many debates in adult education literature. The nebulous nature of the term and its definitions were discussed by Griffith (School Review, 1978, 3, pp. 384-394). In this study, "needs" will generally refer to either "felt needs" or "expressed needs" (Griffith, p. 384).

Major studies conducted by Schlesinger, Guyatt, the National Council of Welfare, and the National Council for Social Development overwhelmingly stressed poverty as the main underlying cause of most problems faced by lone parent families, especially those families headed by women. Next to poverty, the majority of these families face varying degrees of social isolation in a society which is, to a large extent, still dominated by the values and norms set by the traditional nuclear family.

Issuing from the two problems of poverty and isolation are needs pertaining to income assistance, education and training opportunities, day care, housing, and self-help groups.

The need for day care was examined by Li (1978) who studied the child care arrangements of 87 working lone mothers in Toronto. Poulas (1969), in her study of the needs of lone parent families in the City of Vancouver, ranked the ten most frequent needs of the group as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Day care | 6. Getting along in the community |
| 2. Income management | 7. Employment |
| 3. Personal adjustment | 8. Sex education |
| 4. Living arrangement | 9. Job training |
| 5. Child rearing and care | 10. Family court action |

Another study by Bowers (1979) revealed similar needs expressed by lone parents in the Okanagan College region of British Columbia.

Other literature dealing with the needs of lone parent families revealed a hierarchy of "felt needs" and "expressed needs" which can be summed up by the following extract from a report prepared by the National Council of Welfare (1974):

She (lone mother) may have need of some form of remedial or educational services to help her adjust to her new role and to enable her to help her children adjust to the new situation. And she will have need of situations in which her sense of self ... can be reaffirmed. Once her most immediate need of ensuring that she and her children are not without food and shelter has been met, the opportunity for participation in a peer-group setting in which she can both establish relationships with others in similar situations and engage in activities that interest and challenge her may represent the most important need-meeting vehicle that can be made available to her. (p. 28)

Educational Programs for Lone Parent Families

A number of studies had been carried out on educational programs in British Columbia. Wilmut (1975) reported the large number of lone parents in the Work Incentive Program sponsored by the Ministry of Human Resources. Pearson (1979) studied women returning to the work force and found that almost 70.5 per cent of divorced or separated women aged 35-44

were in the labour force and that the majority had returned out of financial necessity. Widows, on the other hand, seemed to be less prepared for the role of the working mother and tended to possess low and outdated work skills.

Women enrolled in the office career programs in two community colleges in the Lower Mainland were the subjects of Hoek's study (1978) which revealed that participants of such programs were part of a non-traditional group with low income, little education or employment experience, and relatively "non-risking" lifestyles. Their resources, both financially and emotionally, were under strain in meeting the demands of the student role. Hoek's findings also revealed the lack of affinity of these women with the area of their study, and their tendency to have diffused goals.

Bowers (1979) documented the results of the Single Parent Study in Okanagan College and identified programs for fulfilling these needs. Blown (1979) reported the findings and results of another similar study. She pointed out factors such as nominal fees, free child care, convenient schedule and location as important concerns in organizing educational programs for lone parents. The report recommended that educators work with existing groups of lone parents to ensure ongoing group support for the program.

Carlisle (1980) documented another educational project created to serve the needs of lone parents and their families in the school district of New Westminster. She outlined the extreme isolation experienced by some

lone parent families and offered insights into the extent of poverty among the group. She concluded:

It was apparent that programs can only alleviate some of the problems that poor families encounter until the basic economic/political problem of poverty is dealt with on a much broader scale at the government level. (p. 6)

A recent comprehensive report on family learning activities in British Columbia by Thomas (1981) documented a total of 534 family-related courses and a number of special projects offered under the Continuing Education Division of the Ministry of Education in the academic year of 1979-80. The report also offered discussions on family types in Canada and future trends in the development of the family.

Needs and Participation Patterns in Adult Education

Among adult education literature dealing with the needs and participation patterns of adults in educational programs, Maslow's (1970) theory of human motivation offered some insight into the ordering of human needs and helped to predict participation behaviour based on the relative degrees of satisfaction experiences by the individual at different need levels in the so-called hierarchy of human needs. Using the theory, the adult educator can possibly predict the participation pattern of an individual or a group of potential participants with certain known socio-economic characteristics.

Anderson and Niemi (1969) examined the role of education in altering the personal and social characteristics of socially disadvantaged adults

and offered explanations for the failure of programs with middle-class orientations and traditional marketing strategy in reaching disadvantaged adults who are hampered by certain psychological and physical factors.

Lorge's (1963) theory of power and load employed a formula in the form of a ratio to explain the relationship between an individual's total abilities and total tasks at any particular time in the person's life. The ratio would indicate the presence or absence of a comfortable margin which would, in turn, determine the voluntary participation pattern of the individual in less essential tasks such as adult education programs.

Miller's (1967) force field theory analyzed participation patterns of adults in educational and vocational programs. At any moment, Miller asserted, an individual's participation pattern in an educational program is determined by the interaction between the two forces of individual needs and social class orientation. An understanding of the various patterns of interaction between these two factors, therefore, will enable the adult educator to predict the participation pattern of an individual or a group of potential learners in an educational program.

Assuming that Maslow's, Anderson and Niemi's, Lorge's, and Miller's theories are viable, adult educators should be able to predict, explain, and manipulate the participation patterns of such clientele as lone parents in educational programs with a fair degree of accuracy.

Summary

The review of related literature on lone parent families in Canada, the U.S., and Great Britain shows that there is a lack of consensus in the use of terminologies and the tendency for lone parent families to be regarded with prejudice despite their pervasiveness in modern society. The majority of lone parent families are headed by women, and a significant percentage of them are poor. Studies on the children of lone parent families have yielded inconclusive findings, but the traumatic effects of marital upsets on children are generally recognized. Lone parent families face many needs ranging from basic survival to personal fulfillment. Studies on educational programs and participation of adults in education suggest that the latter is likely affected by personal needs and social class orientation.

CHAPTER III

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF LONE PARENT FAMILIES

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Introduction

Despite recent increases in number, and society's greater tolerance, the lone parent family has not yet been fully accepted as a norm in the development of the modern family. As a group, lone parent families are identified by certain characteristics which set them apart from the general population. In the following discussion of the demographic characteristics of lone parent families in Canada and British Columbia based primarily on the 1976 Census data, it is important to point out that not all lone parent families share all these characteristics. Indeed many lone parent families enjoy greater affluence and stability than the average husband-wife family. Male lone parents in Canada and the U.S., for example, are often better educated and of higher socio-economic status than the average population. The majority of Canada's lone parent families, however, are headed by women who tend to share certain common characteristics of the socially disadvantaged.

Distribution

According to Statistics Canada (1976a, 1976b), the number of lone parent families in Canada increased from 477,520 in 1971 to 559,070 in 1976 (Table 3). This figure included lone parents of over 65, a group consisting mainly of widows with unmarried children living in the same

Table 3: Distribution of Lone Parent Families in Canada by Provinces, 1971 & 1976

Province	1971	%	1976	%	Increase/ Decrease
Newfoundland	9,675	2.0	10,800	1.9	11.6
P.E.I.	2,470	0.5	2,875	0.5	16.5
Nova Scotia	19,070	4.0	21,470	3.8	12.6
New Brunswick	13,810	2.9	16,160	2.9	17.0
Quebec	138,370	29.0	158,900	28.4	14.8
Ontario	167,770	35.1	202,450	36.2	20.7
Manitoba	22,620	4.7	24,730	4.4	9.4
Saskatchewan	18,550	3.9	19,100	3.4	3.0
Alberta	34,100	7.1	41,200	7.4	20.8
British Columbia	49,920	10.5	60,200	10.8	20.6
Yukon	395	0.1	500	0.1	26.3
Northwest Territories	780	0.2	950	0.2	22.2
Canada:	477,520	100.0	559,070	99.9	17.1

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

Note: Increase/Decrease in percentage distributions likely represent other phenomena such as changes in mobility and birth rates within provinces.

dwelling. Based on these data, the number of lone parent families appeared to have increased by 17.1 per cent in the five-year intercensal period compared to only 13.0 per cent for husband-wife families in the same period. The greatest increase occurred in the Yukon Territory (26.3 per cent) and the Northwest Territories (22.2 per cent), but these increases were relatively insignificant in view of the small numbers involved. In the two most populous provinces of Quebec and Ontario, the increases were 28.4 per cent and 36.2 per cent respectively. The smallest increases occurred in the prairie provinces of Saskatchewan (3.0 per cent) and Manitoba (9.4 per cent).

In British Columbia, the total number of lone parent families increased from 49,920 in 1971 to 60,200 in 1976. The rate of increase for the province was 20.6 per cent (Table 4).

The majority of lone parent families in British Columbia lived in cities and municipalities with populations of 5,000 and over. In 1976, a total of 49,095 (81.5 per cent) of the total lone parent families were located in cities and municipalities with populations of 5,000 and over, and nearly 25.0 per cent of them were located in the City of Vancouver.

Due to changes in boundary, name, and status, the percentage of population change was not known in some cities and municipalities, but a wide variation was evident from area to area. For example, the City of Langley and the Municipality of Mackenzie, both of which were fast-growing areas, reported increases of over 100 per cent; whereas the City of Chilliwack and the municipality of Oak Bay both showed only slight increases.

Table 4: Lone Parent Families in British Columbia by Cities and by Municipalities of 5,000 Population and Over, 1971 and 1976

Cities and Municipalities	Lone Parent Families		% Increase/Decrease	Average No. of Persons Per Family	
	1971	1976		1971	1976
Total No. of Families	-	49,095	-	-	2.8
Abbotsford, D.M.*	-	265	-	-	2.8
Burnaby, D.M.	3,320	3,700	11.4	2.8	2.7
Campbell River, D.M.	230	325	42.1	3.1	2.8
Castlegar, C*	-	140	-	-	2.8
Central Saanich, D.M.	75	110	46.7	2.9	3.0
Chilliwack, C.	295	260	-9.9	3.0	2.8
Chilliwack, D.M.*	430	590	-	3.2	2.9
Comox, T-V*	35	95	-	3.2	2.9
Coquitlam, C.M.*	-	1,290	-	-	2.8
Courtenay, C.*	150	250	-	3.1	2.8
Cranbrook, C.*	245	380	-	3.1	3.0
Dawson Creek, C.	335	365	10.2	3.5	3.1
Delta, D.M.	595	1,105	86.6	3.2	3.0
Esquimalt, D.M.	340	555	60.5	2.9	2.7
Fort St. John, C.*	170	225	-	3.2	3.1
Kamloops, C.*	615	1,500	-	3.1	2.9
Kelowna, C.*	450	1,230	-	3.0	2.9
Kimberley, C.*	140	155	-	2.9	2.7
Kitimat, D.M.	105	135	31.4	3.0	2.9
Langley, C.	125	295	140.7	3.1	2.8
Langley, D.M.	415	615	48.8	3.0	2.8
MacKenzie, D.M.	20	50	123.8	3.0	2.8
Maple Ridge, D.M.	560	630	12.9	3.1	2.9
Matsqui, D.M.	395	525	31.7	3.1	2.9
Merritt, T-V	110	135	22.3	3.3	3.1
Mission, D.M.	220	345	56.8	3.1	2.9
Nanaimo, C.*	400	1,100	-	3.0	2.8
Nelson, C.*	270	290	-	2.9	2.7
New Westminster, C.	1,460	1,245	15.1	2.8	2.6
North Cowichan, D.M.	210	355	67.5	3.1	2.9
North Vancouver, C.	995	1,080	9.0	2.7	2.6
North Vancouver, D.M.	1,010	1,470	46.4	3.0	2.8
Oak Bay, D.M.	445	420	-6.1	2.8	2.7
Penticton, C.	425	545	27.5	3.0	2.7
Port Alberni, C.	425	445	4.0	3.1	2.9
Port Moody, C.	240	425	78.2	3.2	2.9
Powell River, D. M.	265	315	17.3	3.2	2.8

Table 4, Page 2: Lone Parent Families in British Columbia by Cities and by Municipalities of 5,000 Population and Over, 1971 and 1976

Cities and Municipalities	Lone Parent Families		% Increase/Decrease	Average No. of Persons Per Family	
	1971	1976		1971	1976
Prince George, C.*	745	1,435	-	3.3	3.0
Prince Rupert, C.	380	335	11.8	3.3	2.8
Quesnel, T-V*	140	210	-	3.2	3.1
Richmond, D.M.	1,255	1,865	48.2	3.0	2.8
Saanich, D.M.	1,365	1,820	33.4	3.0	2.8
Salmon Arm, D.M.	165	175	9.2	2.9	2.9
Sidney, T-V	110	140	30.8	2.9	2.7
Squamish, D.M.	95	145	58.2	3.0	2.7
Summerland, D.M.	90	115	30.3	3.0	2.7
Surrey, D.M.	2,105	3,055	45.2	3.2	2.9
Terrace, D.M.	200	235	15.9	3.3	3.1
Trail, C.*	255	215	-	2.9	2.7
Vancouver, C.*	12,565	12,240	-	2.7	2.6
Vernon, C.	325	530	-	3.0	2.8
Victoria, C.	1,905	1,940	1.7	2.8	2.6
West Vancouver, D.M.	740	785	5.7	2.8	2.7
White Rock, C.	260	265	0.4	2.9	2.6
Williams Lake, T-V*	60	125	-	3.0	3.0
British Columbia:	49,920	60,200	20.6	3.0	2.8

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

* Indicate changes to boundary, name or status
 D.M. District Municipality
 C. City
 T-V Town

Family Size

The average Canadian lone parent family had 3.1 persons in 1971, but only 2.9 persons in 1976 (Table 5). The largest families were found in the Northwest Territories with 3.4 persons per family, and the smallest families were found in Ontario and British Columbia with only 2.8 persons per family. While the average family size of a lone parent family decreased in all provinces between 1971 and 1976, there were significant increases in the total number of lone parent families during the period. The province of Saskatchewan, for example, showed a decrease of 3.4 per cent in the total number of persons in lone parent families although the number of lone parent families increased by 3.0 per cent in that province.

The average lone parent family in British Columbia had 2.8 persons in 1976. Compared to the average Canadian lone parent family, British Columbia's lone parent families were smaller. Among cities and municipalities with populations of 5,000 and over, the average size of a lone parent family ranged from 2.6 to 3.1 persons. The City of Vancouver had the largest number of lone parent families but the smallest family size with just 2.6 persons per family. The cities of Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, the towns of Merritt and Quesnel, and the municipality of Terrace all had larger families of 3.1 persons. Except for Central Saanich, the average size of a lone parent family in all municipalities, cities, and towns had decreased since 1971 despite the general increase in the total number of lone parent families in these centres during the

Table 5: Size of Lone Parent Families in Canada by Provinces

Provinces	Total	Total	% Increase/ Decrease	Average No. of Persons Per Family	
	1971	1976		1971	1976
Newfoundland	34,090	35,020	2.7	3.5	3.2
P.E.I.	7,885	8,590	8.9	3.2	3.0
Nova Scotia	59,050	63,250	7.1	3.1	2.9
New Brunswick	44,495	48,920	9.9	3.2	3.0
Quebec	434,470	463,450	6.7	3.1	2.9
Ontario	494,070	570,040	15.4	2.9	2.8
Manitoba	68,740	71,135	3.5	3.0	2.9
Saskatchewan	58,120	56,160	-3.4	3.1	2.9
Alberta	102,290	119,800	12.7	3.1	2.9
British Columbia	148,870	169,110	13.6	3.0	2.8
Yukon	1,315	1,520	15.6	3.3	3.0
Northwest Territories	2,910	3,270	12.4	3.7	3.4
Canada:	1,460,310	1,610,260	10.3	3.1	2.9

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

same period. Average family size for lone parent families in British Columbia are shown in Table 4 together with the distribution of lone parent families in the province.

Family Composition

According to the 1976 Census data, there were 685,915 children of under 18 living in families with only one parent. The average number of children per family was 1.8 for male-headed lone parent families and 1.9 for female-headed lone parent families. Compared to only 1.6 children for the average husband-wife family, lone parent families appeared to be larger (Table 6).

The highest concentration of children (55.7 per cent) was found in the 6 to 14 age group. The large number of lone parents in the three middle age groups of 25 to 34, 35 to 44, and 45 to 54 was probably the cause of this phenomenon. Of the children in the 15 to 17 age group, only 51.5 per cent were attending school full-time compared to 59.4 per cent of the children in similar ages from husband-wife families. The fact that only slightly more than half of the children attended school full-time after the compulsory school age of fifteen suggested that schooling was no longer the primary concern for these children, and a large number of them would drop out of school early to become the future undereducated adults.

There were 78,430 children of under 18 years old living in lone parent families in British Columbia in 1976. The average number of children per family was 1.8 for female-headed families, but only 1.7 for

Table 6: Family Composition of Lone Parent Families in Canada by Sex of Parent and Age of Child, 1976

Total No. of Children	%	Under 6 Years	%	6 - 14 Years	%	15 - 17 Years	%
Total Lone Parent Families:							
685,915	100.0	173,755	20.1	382,130	55.7	166,030	24.2
Male-Headed:							
106,130	100.0	16,565	15.6	57,950	54.6	31,615	29.8
Female-Headed:							
878,275	100.0	121,185	20.9	324,180	55.9	134,415	23.2

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

male-headed families (Table 7). Compared to the number of children for an average lone parent family in Canada, British Columbia's lone parent families had fewer children. Consistent with patterns established at the national level, the largest concentration of children was found in the 6 to 14 age group (56.4 per cent). As with trends set at the national level, the number of children attending school full-time dropped drastically after the age of 14. In the 15 to 17 age group, only 48.0 per cent of the children were attending school full-time. Compared to similar data for Canada, British Columbia's children had an even lower rate of full-time school attendance after the compulsory school age.

Sex and Age of Parent

Of the 559,070 lone parent families reported in 1976 by Statistics Canada, 83.3 per cent were headed by women and 16.7 per cent by men. The high percentage of women among heads of lone parent families could probably be explained by the difference in death rate between men and women (41.2 per cent of the total lone parents were widowed), and the traditional awarding of child custody to the mother in cases of separation and divorce (Table 8).

The majority of lone parents belonged to the three middle age groups of 25 to 34, 35 to 44, and 45 to 54. Together these three age groups accounted for 62.3 per cent of the total lone parents in Canada. Only 6.4 per cent of the total lone parents were found in the youngest age group of 15 to 24. The fact that 15.0 per cent of the total lone parents were over 65 was probably a reflection of the high percentage of widows in this age group (92 per cent) and the lack of age as a criterion in

Table 7: Family Composition of Lone Parent Families in British Columbia
by Sex of Parent and Age of Child, 1976

Total No. of Children	%	Under 6 Years	%	6 - 14 Years	%	15 - 17 Years	%
Total Lone Parent Families:							
78,430	100.0	16,340	20.8	44,250	56.4	17,840	22.7
Male-Headed:							
12,395	100.0	1,960	15.8	6,750	54.5	3,685	29.7
Female-Headed:							
66,035	100.0	14,375	21.8	37,495	56.8	14,155	21.8

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletin Housing and
Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

Table 8: Distribution of Lone Parents in Canada by Sex and Age, 1976

Age of Parent	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
15-24	2,925	0.5	32,810	5.9	35,730	6.4
25-34	12,125	2.2	98,360	17.6	110,485	19.8
35-44	21,335	3.8	101,645	18.1	122,980	21.9
45-54	24,680	4.4	98,990	17.7	123,670	22.1
55-64	15,955	2.8	66,260	11.9	82,215	14.7
65 & Over	16,585	2.9	67,405	12.1	83,990	15.0
Total	93,590	16.7	465,480	83.3	559,070	99.9

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

Statistics Canada's definition of "children". The majority of lone parents in this age group were probably elderly widows with adult offspring living at home at the time of enumeration.

Data pertaining to the sex and age of lone parents in British Columbia were consistent with those for Canada. Of the 60,200 lone parents in British Columbia, 82.7 per cent were women and 17.3 per cent were men (Table 9). Greater Vancouver reported a total of 30,875 lone parents of whom 84.0 per cent were women and 16.0 per cent were men (Table 10). In the City of Vancouver, there was a total of 12,236 lone parents of whom 84.9 per cent were women and 15.1 per cent were men (Table 11).

Like their national counterparts, the majority of the lone parents in British Columbia belonged to the three middle age groups. The combined total of these three groups constituted 70.9 per cent of the total lone parents in the province. Each of the two remaining groups, the youngest and the oldest, constituted less than 10.0 per cent of the total lone parents.

Marital Status of Parent

For lone parents in Canada, widowhood seemed to be the most common predicament. Altogether 41.2 per cent of the lone parents were widowed. Next to widows, separation was claimed to be the marital status of 26.0 per cent of the total lone parents. Divorced lone parents formed 20.5 per cent of the total lone parents and the percentage of single parents and lone parents with absentee spouse were 7.0 per cent and 5.3 per cent respectively. These data shattered the common assumption that increase in

Table 9: Distribution of Lone Parents in British Columbia by Sex and Age, 1976

Age of Parent	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
15-24	340	0.6	3,875	6.4	4,215	7.0
25-34	1,480	2.5	12,705	21.1	14,180	23.6
35-44	2,865	4.7	12,260	20.4	15,125	25.1
45-54	2,890	4.8	10,490	17.4	13,385	22.2
55-64	1,570	2.6	5,730	9.5	7,300	12.1
65 & Over	1,230	2.0	4,750	7.9	5,980	9.9
Total	10,410	17.3	49,785	82.7	60,200	99.9

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

Table 10: Distribution of Lone Parents in Greater Vancouver by Sex and Age, 1976

Age of Parent	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
15-24	140	0.5	1,580	5.1	1,720	5.6
25-34	700	2.3	6,240	20.2	6,940	22.5
35-44	1,320	4.3	6,315	20.4	7,635	24.7
45-54	1,345	4.4	5,720	18.5	7,065	22.9
55-64	775	2.5	3,285	10.6	4,060	13.1
65 & Over	610	2.0	2,845	9.2	3,455	11.2
Total	4,890	16.0	25,990	84.0	30,875	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Families, Characteristics of Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-825

Table 11: Distribution of Lone Parents in Vancouver (City) by Sex and Age, 1976

Age of Parent	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
15-24	70	0.5	560	4.6	630	5.1
25-34	250	2.0	2,235	18.3	2,485	20.3
35-44	430	3.5	2,350	19.2	2,785	22.7
45-54	465	3.8	2,205	18.0	2,675	21.8
55-64	315	2.6	1,470	12.0	1,785	14.6
65 & Over	330	2.7	1,565	12.8	1,895	15.5
Total	1,855	15.1	10,385	84.9	12,236	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, SDF AMB13

lone parenthood is the result of a rising rate of illegitimate births (Table 12).

As with findings in the U.S. and Great Britain (see Chapter II, Review of Literature), there appeared to be some correlation between age and marital status. The majority of widowed lone parents were older, nearly all the single parents were under the age of 35, and most of the separated and divorced lone parents were between the ages of 25 and 44 (Table 13).

By and large, the marital status of lone parents in British Columbia conformed with the national norms with the majority of the parents (88.5 per cent) found in the widowed, separated, and divorced categories. There were, however, differences worth noting between the two groups. Compared to the marital status of lone parents in Canada, British Columbia had a smaller percentage of widowed lone parents, but claimed higher percentages of lone parents in the separated and divorced categories. Tables 14, 15 and 16 illustrated the marital status of lone parents in British Columbia, Greater Vancouver, and the City of Vancouver by sex of parent. As can be seen, the percentages of widowed, divorced, and separated lone parents fluctuate from table to table. Widowhood again claimed the largest groups of lone parents in Greater Vancouver and the City of Vancouver, but in each case the percentage was lower than that for lone parents in Canada.

Table 12: Marital Status of Lone Parents in Canada by Sex
of Parent, 1976

Marital Status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Married Spouse Absent	11,955	2.1	17,775	3.2	29,725	5.3
Separated	23,905	4.3	121,765	21.8	145,670	26.0
Widowed	36,065	6.5	194,115	34.7	230,180	41.2
Single	4,415	0.8	34,595	6.2	39,010	7.0
Divorced	17,250	3.0	97,240	17.4	114,485	20.5
Total:	93,590	16.7	465,480	83.3	559,070	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and
Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

Table 13: Lone Parents in Canada by Age and Marital Status, 1976

Age	Total Lone Parents		Married Spouse Absent		Separated		Widowed		Divorced		Single	
	No.	%		%		%		%		%		%
15-24	35,730	6.4	3,350	0.6	12,970	2.3	915	0.2	3,990	0.7	14,505	2.6
25-34	110,485	19.8	7,265	1.3	45,560	8.1	7,775	1.4	35,275	6.3	14,610	2.6
35-44	122,980	21.9	7,000	1.3	43,640	7.8	23,875	4.3	42,610	7.6	5,860	1.1
45-54	123,670	22.1	6,710	1.2	31,010	5.5	58,130	10.4	25,400	4.6	2,410	0.4
55-64	82,215	14.7	3,505	0.6	9,825	1.8	61,830	11.1	6,115	1.1	950	0.2
65 & Over	83,990	15.0	1,905	0.3	2,665	0.5	77,655	13.8	1,095	0.2	675	0.1
Total:	559,070	99.9	29,725	5.3	145,670	26.0	230,180	41.2	114,485	20.5	39,010	7.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

Table 14: Marital Status of Lone Parents in British Columbia
by Sex of Parent, 1976

Marital Status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Married Spouse Absent	1,185	2.0	1,985	3.3	3,175	5.3
Separated	3,150	5.2	15,045	25.0	18,200	30.2
Widowed	2,830	4.7	15,155	25.2	17,980	29.9
Single	495	0.8	3,270	5.4	3,765	6.2
Divorced	2,755	4.6	14,330	23.8	17,080	28.4
Total:	10,410	17.3	49,785	82.7	60,200	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special Tabulations conducted by
Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

Table 15: Marital Status of Lone Parents in Greater Vancouver by Sex of Parent, 1976

Marital Status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Married Spouse Absent	565	1.8	915	3.0	1,480	4.8
Separated	1,350	4.4	7,455	24.1	8,800	28.5
Widowed	1,380	4.5	8,160	26.4	9,540	30.9
Single	215	0.7	1,555	5.0	1,770	5.7
Divorced	1,385	4.5	7,900	25.6	9,285	30.0
Total:	4,895	15.9	25,985	84.1	30,880	99.9

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special Tabulations conducted by
Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

Table 16: Marital Status of Lone Parents in Vancouver (City) by Sex of Parent, 1976

Marital Status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Married Spouse Absent	260	2.1	440	3.6	700	5.7
Separated	410	3.3	2,440	20.0	2,855	23.3
Widowed	600	4.9	3,860	31.5	4,455	36.4
Divorced	450	3.7	2,870	23.4	3,325	27.2
Single	110	0.9	795	6.5	910	7.4
Total:	1,840	15.0	10,400	85.0	12,240	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, SDF AMA24

Mother Tongue of Parent

Data pertaining to the mother tongue of lone parent families in Canada implied that the lone parent family is a social phenomenon which transcends ethnic differences. Among the total number of lone parents, 60.5 per cent were English-speaking, 27.6 per cent were French-speaking, and the remaining 11.5 per cent belonged to other language groups (Table 17).

In British Columbia, 82.0 per cent of the total lone parents were English-speaking and only 2.0 per cent were French-speaking (Table 18). Data pertaining to the mother tongue of lone parents in Greater Vancouver and the City of Vancouver were consistent with those of the province (Tables 19 and 20).

Labour Force Activity of Parent

The 1976 Census data indicated that 286,430 (51.2 per cent) lone parents were in the labour force and of this number, 47.3 per cent were employed (Table 21). The percentage of lone parents in the labour force was much greater among males (73.5 per cent) than females (46.7 per cent). For lone parents in the labour force, however, male lone parents appeared to have a higher rate of unemployment (4.2 per cent) than their female counterparts (3.7 per cent).

The high percentage of female lone parents outside the labour force (53.3 per cent) suggested that over half of this group had no earned incomes, but were dependent on other sources for support. As pointed out by the National Council of Welfare's report on women and poverty (1979a), the lack of earned income was the prime cause of poverty for female lone

Table 17: Mother Tongue of Lone Parents in Canada by Sex of Parent,
1976

Mother Tongue	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
English	55,115	9.9	283,315	50.7	338,430	60.5
French	25,460	4.6	128,620	23.0	154,080	27.6
German	2,350	0.4	9,785	1.8	12,135	2.1
Italian	1,725	0.3	5,550	1.0	7,275	1.3
Ukranian	1,695	0.3	7,135	1.3	8,830	1.6
Others	1,595	0.3	4,210	0.7	5,805	1.0
Not Stated	7,055	1.3	25,730	4.6	32,785	5.9
Total:	94,990	17.0	464,340	83.0	559,070	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Families, Characteristics of Parents in Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-825

Table 18: Mother Tongue of Lone Parents in British Columbia by Sex of Parent, 1976

Mother Tongue	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
English	8,110	13.5	41,265	68.5	49,375	82.0
French	255	0.4	975	1.6	1,230	2.0
German	450	0.7	1,725	2.9	2,175	3.6
Italian	120	0.2	405	0.7	525	0.9
Ukranian	165	0.3	685	1.1	850	1.4
Others	215	0.4	590	1.0	805	1.4
Not Stated	1,095	1.8	4,135	6.9	5,230	8.7
Total:	10,410	17.3	49,785	82.7	62,200	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Families, Characteristics of Parents in Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-825

Table 19: Mother Tongue of Lone Parents in Greater Vancouver by Sex of Parent, 1976

Mother Tongue	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
English	3,460	11.8	19,880	68.0	23,340	79.8
French	105	0.4	510	1.7	615	2.1
German	205	0.7	820	2.8	1,025	3.5
Italian	70	0.2	250	0.9	320	1.1
Ukranian	80	0.2	345	1.2	425	1.4
Others	110	0.4	340	1.1	450	1.5
Not Stated	545	1.9	2,550	8.7	3,095	10.6
Total:	4,570	15.6	24,695	84.4	29,270	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Families, Characteristics of Parents in Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-825.

Table 20: Mother Tongue of Lone Parents in Vancouver (City) by Sex of Parent, 1976

Mother Tongue	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
English	1,265	10.3	7,700	63.0	8,965	73.3
French	30	0.3	200	1.6	230	1.9
German	85	0.7	380	3.1	465	3.8
Italian	50	0.4	185	1.5	235	1.9
Ukranian	30	0.2	165	1.3	190	1.5
Others	55	0.4	160	1.3	215	1.7
Not Stated	325	2.7	1,615	13.2	1,940	15.9
Total:	1,840	15.0	10,400	85.0	12,240	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, SDF AMA20B

Table 21: Labour Force Activity of Lone Parents in Canada by Sex of Parent, 1976

Labour Force Activity	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Lone Parents in Labour Force	68,775	12.3	217,650	38.9	286,430	51.2
Employed	64,900	11.6	200,365	35.8	265,260	47.3
Unemployed	3,880	0.7	17,285	3.1	21,170	3.8
Lone Parents not in Labour Force	24,815	4.4	247,825	44.3	272,635	48.7
Total:	93,590	16.7	465,480	83.3	559,070	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Supplementary Bulletins, Housing and Families, Lone Parent Families. Catalogue 93-833

parents. The fact that the percentage of lone parents in the labour force decreased with each successively older group also implied possible difficulties encountered by older parents who attempted to enter the work force.

Of the 36,630 (60.9 per cent) lone parents reported to be in the labour force in 1976 in British Columbia, 32,760 (54.5 per cent) were employed. The number of lone parents outside the labour force was 23,555 (39.2 per cent) (Table 22). Among a total of 8,115 (78.2 per cent) male lone parents in the labour force, only 6.4 per cent were unemployed. Only 57.2 per cent of the 28,505 female lone parents were in the labour force, but their rate of unemployment was identical to that for male. Compared to the labour force activity of lone parents in Canada, there seemed to be a higher percentage of lone parents in the labour force in British Columbia accompanied by a higher rate of unemployment. The percentage of female lone parents in the labour force was also higher in British Columbia (57.2 per cent) than in Canada as a whole (46.7 per cent). Data pertaining to the labour force activity of lone parents in Greater Vancouver and the City of Vancouver were consistent with those for the province (Tables 23 and 24).

Income Status of Parent

Statistics Canada's report of income distribution (1977) stated the average and median incomes of an average female-headed family in Canada as \$12,089 and \$9,715 respectively. The average and median incomes for an average male-headed family (including both lone parent and husband-wife families), on the other hand, were \$20,947 and \$19,385 respectively.

Table 22: Labour Force Activity of Lone Parents in British Columbia
by Sex of Parent, 1976

Labour Force Activity	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Lone Parents in Labour Force	8,115	13.5	28,505	47.3	36,630	60.8
Employed	7,455	12.4	25,305	42.0	32,760	54.4
Unemployed	665	1.1	3,209	5.3	3,865	6.4
Lone Parents not in Labour Force	2,260	3.8	21,295	35.4	23,555	39.2
Total:	10,375	17.3	49,800	82.7	60,200	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special tabulations conducted by
Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

Table 23: Labour Force Activity of Lone Parents in Greater Vancouver
by Sex of Parent, 1976

Labour Force Activity	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Lone Parents in Labour Force	3,855	12.5	14,950	48.4	18,805	60.9
Employed	3,540	11.5	13,495	43.7	17,040	55.2
Unemployed	305	1.0	1,460	4.7	1,765	5.7
Lone Parents not in Labour Force	1,040	3.4	11,025	35.7	12,065	39.1
Total:	4,890	15.9	25,975	84.1	30,880	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special tabulations conducted by
Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

Table 24: Labour Force Activity of Lone Parents in Vancouver (City)
by Sex of Parent, 1976

Labour Force Activity	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Lone Parents in Labour Force	1,320	10.8	5,525	45.1	6,840	55.9
Employed	1,200	9.8	4,940	40.4	6,145	50.2
Unemployed	155	0.9	585	4.8	700	5.7
Lone Parents not in Labour Force	535	4.4	4,860	39.7	5,395	44.1
Total:	1,855	15.2	10,385	84.8	12,240	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, SD FAMB31

According to these data, the average and median incomes of a female-headed family were only half those of a male-headed family (Table 25).

In British Columbia, the average and median incomes for a female-headed family were \$11,647 and \$10,906 respectively compared to \$21,880 and \$21,123 for a male-headed family. Altogether, 12.6 per cent of the female-headed families received incomes of under \$3,000 per year and over half (50.4 per cent) received incomes of under \$11,000 (Table 26).

Compared to the income status of female-headed families in Canada, British Columbia seemed to have a higher percentage of female-headed families in the middle income group (\$11,000 to \$19,999). On the other hand, the percentage of female-headed families in the under \$3,000 group was also much higher than that for the whole country. The comparison of income status of male- and female-headed families, including lone parent families, in the different categories also suggested a great disparity between the incomes of the two groups.

Of the 351,000 divorced, separated, or widowed female lone parents surveyed by the National Council of Welfare in one of its recent studies (1979b), 44.2 per cent were poor. The extent of poverty was even more pronounced among single parents as 75.9 per cent of the 29,000 parents surveyed were poor (Table 27).

Level of Schooling of Parent

The 1976 Census data revealed that 202,350 (36.2 per cent) of the lone parents in Canada had less than grade 9 schooling (Table 28). The percentage of female lone parents (35.2 per cent) in this category was,

Table 25: Distribution of Families in Canada by Income Groups and Sex of Head, 1977

Income Group	Male-Headed %	Female-Headed %
Under \$3,000	1.6	8.4
\$3,000 - \$10,999	17.8	47.4
\$11,000 - \$19,999	33.0	28.2
\$20,000 - \$34,999	37.0	13.2
\$35,000 and over	10.6	2.8
Total:	100.0	100.0
Average Income	\$20,947	\$12,089
Median Income	\$19,385	\$ 9,715

Source: Statistics Canada, Income Distributions by Size in Canada, 1977

Table 26: Distribution of Families in British Columbia by
Income Groups and Sex of Head, 1977

Income Group	Male-Headed %	Female-Headed %
Under \$3,000	2.2	12.6
\$3,000-\$10,999	15.9	37.8
\$11,000-\$19,999	27.2	36.4
\$20,000-\$34,999	43.1	10.8
\$35,000 and over	11.5	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0
Average Income	\$21,880	\$11,647
Median Income	\$21,123	\$10,906

Source: Statistics Canada, Income Distributions by Size in
Canada, 1977

Table 27: Distribution of Poor and Non-Poor Female Lone Parents
in Canada by Marital Status, 1975

Marital Status	Poor Parents	%	Non-Poor Parents	%
Single (Unmarried)	22,000	13.1	7,000	3.3
Divorced, Separated, and Widowed	146,000	86.9	205,000	96.7
Total	168,000	100.0	212,000	100.0

Source: National Council of Welfare, Women and Poverty, October, 1979

Table 28: Level of Schooling of Lone Parents in Canada by Sex of Parent, 1976

Level of Schooling	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Less than grade 9	38,650	6.9	163,700	29.3	202,350	36.2
Grade 9-10	16,565	2.9	96,620	17.3	113,185	20.2
Grade 11-13	14,665	2.6	90,705	16.2	105,370	18.8
Post-Secondary Non-University	10,500	1.9	67,915	12.2	78,415	14.1
University	13,200	2.4	46,540	8.3	59,740	10.7
Total	93,580	16.7	465,480	83.3	559,070	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special tabulations conducted by Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

as generally suspected, lower than that for male lone parents (41.2 per cent). These data were inconsistent with those found in studies conducted on male-headed families in Canada since the latter tended to portray male lone parents as a highly educated group (Schlesinger et al., Children Today, 1970, 7, pp. 12-19).

The overall extent of undereducation among lone parents was clearly demonstrated by a comparison of the percentage of undereducated lone parents (36.1 per cent) with that of undereducated male heads of husband-wife families (29.6 per cent). The percentage of lone parents who proceeded to post-secondary non-university and university education were 14.0 per cent and 10.7 per cent respectively.

The extent of undereducation among lone parents in British Columbia was not as great as that found among lone parents in Canada as a whole. Only 21.0 per cent of the total lone parents in British Columbia had less than grade 9 schooling. The percentages of lone parents who proceeded to post-secondary non-university and university education were 18.7 per cent and 15.2 per cent respectively (Table 29).

The extent of undereducation among lone parents in Greater Vancouver (18.7 per cent) was smaller than that found among lone parents in the province as a whole (Table 30). The number of undereducated lone parents in the City of Vancouver, however, was slightly greater than that of Greater Vancouver (Table 31). Table 32 shows the level of schooling of heads of families by family types in Canada.

Table 29: Level of Schooling of Lone Parents in British Columbia by Sex of Parent, 1976

Level of Schooling	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Less than grade 9	2,855	4.7	9,815	16.3	12,670	21.0
Grades 9-10	1,905	3.2	9,430	15.7	11,330	18.9
Grades 11-13	2,080	3.5	13,610	22.6	15,680	26.1
Post-Secondary Non-University	1,615	2.7	9,690	16.1	11,310	18.8
University	1,920	3.2	7,265	12.1	9,185	15.3
Total:	10,375	17.2	49,810	82.8	60,200	100.1

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special tabulations conducted by Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

Table 30: Level of Schooling of Lone Parents in Greater Vancouver by Sex of Parent, 1976

Level of Schooling	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Less than grade 9	1,090	3.5	4,710	15.3	5,800	18.8
Grades 9-10	790	2.6	4,490	14.5	5,285	17.1
Grades 11-13	1,140	3.7	7,390	24.0	8,530	27.7
Post Secondary Non-University	800	2.5	5,140	16.7	5,940	19.2
University	1,085	3.5	4,250	13.8	5,325	17.3
Total	4,890	15.7	25,980	84.3	30,870	100.1

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, Special tabulations conducted by Ministry of Economic Development, Victoria, B. C.

Table 31: Level of Schooling of Lone Parents in Vancouver (City) by Sex of Parent, 1976

Level of Schooling	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Less than grade 9	470	3.8	2,460	20.1	2,930	23.9
Grades 9-10	260	2.1	1,625	13.3	1,890	15.4
Grades 11-13	390	3.2	2,570	21.0	2,960	24.2
Post-Secondary Non-University	265	2.2	1,930	15.8	1,105	18.0
University	460	3.8	1,795	14.7	2,255	18.4
Total	1,850	15.1	10,380	84.9	12,240	100.0

Source: 1976 Census of Canada, SDF AMB13

Table 32: Level of Schooling of Heads of Families by Family Types
in Canada, 1976

Level of Schooling	Husbands in Husband/Wife Families	%	Husbands/Wives in Lone-Parent Families	%
Less than Grade 9	1,533,775	29.8	202,345	36.2
Grades 9 - 10	897,315	17.4	113,185	20.2
Grades 11 - 13	959,495	18.6	105,370	18.8
Post-Secondary Non-University	781,145	15.2	78,420	14.0
University	983,485	19.0	59,740	10.7
Total:	5,155,215	100.0	559,060	99.9

Source: Adapted from Audrey M. Hunt, Family Learning Activities in British Columbia, Discussion Paper 07/81.

CHAPTER IV

NEEDS OF AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

FOR

LONE PARENT FAMILIES IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

CHAPTER IV
NEEDS OF AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
FOR
LONE PARENT FAMILIES IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

Introduction

The lack of consensus among adult educators on the definition of "need" was pointed out by Griffith (1978) in a discussion paper on the concept of need in adult education literature. With reference to the work of other prominent adult educators, he presented the following definitions on the four categories of need:

1. Normative need - the discrepancy between observed (by a professional) level and desired level of capability, or simply, the gap between "what is" and "what ought to be."
2. Felt need - something the intended recipient of a service believes he or she wants.
3. Expressed need - a felt need turned into action.
4. Comparative need - the discrepancy between two services received by two comparative groups (pp. 384-394).

The nebulous nature of the term "need" and the lack of absolute standards from which human needs can be assessed, as Griffith stressed, present endless problems for the educators and professionals working in education institutions and social services. In the absence of absolute standards, educators and professionals tend to resort to establishing a standard in the form of "normative need" (Griffith, 1978, p. 384). Using

"normative need" as the desired standard, the need of a client can be determined by comparing what standard is desirable and what standard actually exists. However, "normative need" does not constitute an absolute standard and it is easily influenced by the value judgement of those who define it in the first place as well as the changing values of society. In conducting an educational program, the lack of an absolute standard mutually acceptable to adult educators and learners means that decisions concerning the educational needs of learners are made in the context of differing perspectives and norms, and conflict becomes an inherent feature of the whole process of need assessment.

Decisions regarding educational needs can also be approached from the learners' point of view.. Needs determined by learners are either "felt needs" or "expressed needs." Ideally, there should be a high degree of consensus between "normative needs" determined by the adult educators and "felt needs" and "expressed needs" determined by the learners. In reality, however, conflict often ensues for the reasons mentioned earlier.

From the interviews conducted with adult educators and lone parents, the lack of consensus with regard to the educational needs of the latter was obvious in some programs which had proved ineffective in reaching their target population. Such programs were often set up independently of the "felt needs" and "expressed needs" of their target population. By and large, the adult educators who were interviewed demonstrated understanding and empathy toward their clients' needs. Some were lone parents themselves and a number acted as advocates for their clients.

In contrast, programs which were effective involved a high degree of consensus between the adult educators and their clients with regard to the needs of the latter. Many of the programs were planned with input of an advisory committee consisting of members from the community and lone parents.

The following examination of educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver will focus on the following aspects:

1. Maslow's hierarchy of human needs.
2. Meeting the needs of lone parent families in the City of Vancouver.
3. Educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs

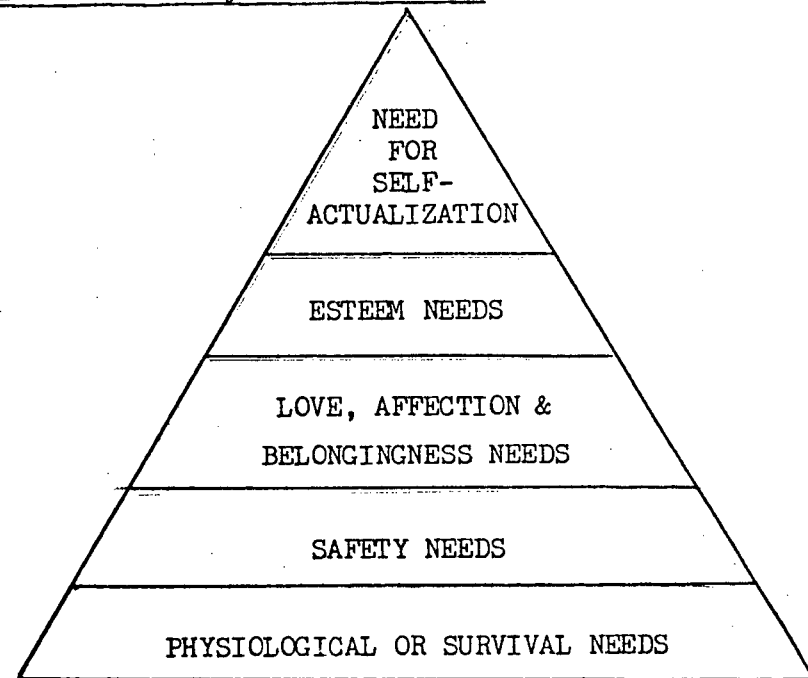


Figure 1: Maslow's hierarchy of human needs adapted from Knowles, 1977, p. 24.

Maslow (1970) contended in his theory of human motivations that human needs are arranged in hierarchical order (see Figure 1), starting from the most fundamental needs for survival to the highest-level need for self-actualization.

The five levels of needs, according to Maslow's scheme, are as follows (see pp. 35-46):

1. Physiological needs - the most prepotent of all needs, these physiological drives include the basic survival needs for food, clothing and shelter.
2. Safety needs - the need for security, stability, order, and freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos; for example, a person's preference for a safe, orderly, predictable, lawful, and organized world.
3. Belongingness and love needs - the need for affectionate relations with people in general; for example, a person's need for a place in his or her group or family.
4. Esteem needs - the need for a stable, firmly based self-image; for example, a person's need for self-esteem and for the esteem of others.
4. Need for self-actualization - the need to realize one's full potential; for example, a person's desire for self-fulfilment.

Higher-level needs emerge as their prepotent lower level needs are satisfied. Consequently, any effort to satisfy human needs must recognize all levels of the pyramid. A need does not have to be totally satisfied in order for the next higher-level need to emerge as Maslow took pains to explain:

In actual fact, most members of our society who are normal are partially satisfied in all their basic needs and partially unsatisfied in all their basic needs at the same time. A more realistic description of the hierarchy would be in terms of decreasing percentages of satisfaction as we go up the hierarchy of prepotency (pp. 53-54).

Meeting the Needs of Lone Parent Families in the City of Vancouver

Judging from demographic characteristics described in Chapter III, the average lone parent family clearly has many "felt needs" and "expressed needs" across all levels of Maslow's hierarchy. Poverty of the average female-headed family, for example, is a well-documented fact.

The average lone parent family in the City of Vancouver possesses many of the general characteristics of its national counterpart. Characteristics such as the low income status of the family, the low level of schooling of the parent, and the high risk of unemployment experienced by the parent place the average lone parent family in the category of the socially disadvantaged.

The most frequently stressed needs of lone parent families in Greater Vancouver are for financial assistance, subsidized housing and greater social acceptance (see Carlisle, 1980; Poulas, 1969). These expressed needs were consistent with those put forward in studies conducted by Guyatt (1971), the National Council of Welfare (1976a), and Schlesinger (1975, 1979), and could be classified as lower-level needs in Maslow's hierarchy as they pertain to the fundamental needs of lone parent families in contrast to higher-level needs such as the need for self-actualization.

Many lone parents tended to view their needs with perspectives which issue from the lower end of the needs hierarchy since their most immediately expressed needs were the so-called fundamental needs described above.

By and large, the educators interviewed were aware of the perspective of their clients and attempted to minimize potential conflict between their own perspectives and those of their clients by defining "normative needs" at the grass roots level. In other words, they tried to reconcile the differences between "normative needs" on the one hand and "felt needs" or "expressed needs" on the other. As a consequence, they reconciled the differences between "normative needs" and "felt needs" or "expressed needs" by adjusting the level of the former to the latter. This did not, however, mean that these educators share their clients' perspectives. In determining their clients' needs, however, these educators were more likely to pose for themselves the questions "What can be achieved in the light of existing standards?" instead of "What ought to be achieved?" In working with a socially disadvantaged group such as lone parent families, in the author's opinion, it was this quality of perceptiveness which distinguished an effective from an ineffective adult educator. Instead of taking steps to reduce the discrepancy between "normative needs" and "felt needs" or "expressed needs", the ineffective educator tended to create discrepancy by setting standards which were too remote and, therefore, often perceived as threatening by their clients. McMahon (1970) pointed out the importance of dealing with clients' "felt needs" and "expressed needs" in the context of the voluntary nature of most participation in adult education programs.

He stated:

... in the last analysis, it is always the client who makes the judgement about his own need and what will satisfy that need.

The voluntary nature of most participation in adult education leaves the ultimate decision with the adult who either enrolls or stays away. (p. 11)

Griffith (1978) further pointed out the importance of the adult educator's role as conciliators. He stated:

The problem arises that while the individual is ordinarily free to abstain from supporting any given offering, he is not usually able to exert a direct influence on the selection of course to be offered.

The adult education program planner is left with the responsibility of bridging the gap between providers and the clients they serve.

(p. 386)

Educational Programs for Meeting the Psycho-Social Needs of Lone Parent Families in the City of Vancouver

A diverse range of educational programs exists in the City of Vancouver, but attempts to study these programs presented two problems:

1. What criteria should be used to select programs to be studied and to impose some form of classification on the programs?
2. How should one locate and identify those programs applicable to lone parent families amidst all the general interest and community education programs offered by institutions, agencies, and community groups?

To solve the first problem, the following set of criteria for program selection were drawn up:

Criteria for Program Selection

1. Goals of program - goals of program must be related to self-maintenance and self-development rather than professional training.
2. Target population - program is designed wholly or partially with the needs of the lone parent family in mind.
3. Institution affiliation - program must come under the auspices of the B.C. Ministry of Education.
4. Program administration - program must be conducted and administered within the City of Vancouver.
5. Accessibility - program must be accessible to the lone parent family in terms of proximity, time, duration and prerequisites.
6. Time commitment - program facilitates part-time rather than full-time attendance.
7. Fee structure - program charges only a nominal fee.

The solution for the second problem proved rather elusive as programs for lone parent families were offered by a multitude of different institutions, agencies, and community groups under a highly complex administrative structure. To avoid labelling their clients, these institutions, agencies, and community groups generally preferred to place educational programs or community education programs with such titles as "Assertiveness Training," "Parenting," and "Confidence Building." Consequently, it was difficult to separate educational programs which had specific relevance

for lone parent families from general interest and community education programs. Most of the programs included in this study were identified with the help of educators and professionals working with the group. Since many of the educational needs of a lone parent family are identical to those of a husband-wife family, some of the programs were designed to cater to the needs of both groups. On the whole, all the programs included in this study were known to be attended primarily by members of lone parent families. Although this is by no means an exhaustive study of all the educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver, it does represent all the major types of educational programs conducted for the group in the city. (Figure 2)

Of the 39 programs included in this study, 25 were either co-sponsored or conducted jointly by two or more institutions, agencies, or community groups. Of the remaining 14 programs, one was conducted by Britannia Community Services Centre, six by Vancouver Community College, and seven by the University of British Columbia. Thus co-operation or co-sponsorship between institutions and agencies was the rule rather than the exception in educational programs conducted for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver.

No effort was made to classify all the programs under a common code or category at the district level. Instead, the classification of programs was left to the individual institutions, agencies, or groups responsible for the programs. As stated earlier, there was a tendency among these institutions, agencies, and community groups to avoid labelling lone parent families as a unique group although they acknowledged the many

unique circumstances related to lone parenthood and this tendency was probably responsible for the lack of a systematic classification of the programs under study.

As stated in the criteria for program selection, the primary goals of all the programs under study were related to the self-maintenance and self-development of the participants rather than professional or job training. Of the 39 programs included in this study, six were for children from lone parent families, three were for both parents and children, and the remaining 30 programs were for parents only.

Most of the programs were informal. Through various forms of group interaction such as workshops, discussions, meetings, counselling sessions, group sharing, family gym, and social gatherings conducted under the trained leadership of an adult or community educator, attempts were made to meet individual and group needs. Fulfilling these needs provides members of lone parent families with sufficient "power" to cope with their daily "load" in life (McClusky, 1963, pp. 15-16).

The programs under study did not offer any direct aid to lone parent families in some of their most critical needs such as the basic survival needs for food, clothing, and housing; and other needs for security and income assistance, as these needs are not amenable to educational means. Figure 3 illustrates two main categories of psycho-social needs identified by educators working with lone parent families. The first category contains certain needs which are non-amenable to educational intervention, while the second category contains needs which are amenable to educational intervention rendered either in an individual or group setting. Since many of the

Figure 2: Educational Programs for Meeting the Psycho-Social Needs of Lone Parent Families in the City of Vancouver.

Institutions	Titles of Programs	Target Population
- Britannia Community Services Centre	1. Drop in Centre for Parents	Parents
- School District No. 39 (Vancouver), Bayview Community School & Family Services of Greater Vancouver	1. Kids from Divided Homes 2. Parenting Alone 3. Effective Parenting	Children Parents Parents
- School District No. 39 (Vancouver), Bayview Community School	1. Bayview Single Parent Group 2. Family Gym	Parents Parents & Children
- School District No. 39 (Vancouver), Sir John Franklin Community School & Family Services of Greater Vancouver	1. Kids from Divided Homes	Children
- School District No. 39 (Vancouver), Sir John Franklin Community School	1. Franklin Recreational Education Experience (F.R.E.E.) 2. After School Day Care	Children Children
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver, School District No. 39 (Vancouver), and Community Groups	1. Kids from Divided Homes 2. Parenting Alone 3. Uncoupling 4. Positive Parenting 5. The Challenge of Being Assertive	Children Parents Parents Parents Parents

Figure 2: (Continued, Page 2)

Institutions	Titles of Programs		Target Population
Family Services & Community Groups (Continued)	6.	Assertiveness for Women Who Have Experienced Violence in Relationship	Parents
	7.	Looking at Options - Chance for Change	Parents
	8.	Self-Help Groups	Parents
- University of British Columbia, Women Students' Office	1.	Assertiveness Groups 1 & 2	Parents
	2.	Career Counselling	Parents
	3.	Time Management	Parents
	4.	Panel Discussions	Parents
	5.	Test Anxiety	Parents
	6.	Brown Bag Lunch	Parents
	7.	Women Coping with Campus	Parents
- Vancouver Community College, Continuing Education, Langara Campus	1.	On Being Single	Parents
	2.	Changing Families	Parents
	3.	Children Get Divorced Too	Parents & Children
	4.	Confidence Building	Parents
- Vancouver Community College, King Edward Campus	1.	Basic Training for Skill Development (B.T.S.D.)	Parents
	2.	Employment Orientation for Women (E.O.W.)	Parents
- Britannia Community Services Centre and Ray Cam Day Care	1.	Ray-Cam Parent Education Program	Parents
- Britannia Community Services Centre and Eastside Family Place	1.	Single Parenting	Parents
	2.	Shared Parenting	Parents
	3.	Setting Up Babysitting Co-op	Parents
	4.	Legal Rights	Parents
	5.	Drop in Centre	Parents & Children

Figure 2: (Continued, Page 3)

Institutions	Titles of Programs		Target Population
- Britannia Community Services Centre and Family Services of Greater Vancouver	1.	Kids from Divided Home	Children
	2.	Looking at Options for Single Mothers on Social Income	Parents
	3.	Assertiveness Training for Battered Women	Parents

Figure 3: Psycho-Social Needs of Lone Parent Families.

Category 1: Needs which are non-amenable to educational intervention	Category 2: Needs which are amenable to educational intervention - individual or group
Physiological needs -	Counselling - group & individual
Food	Counselling - career
Clothing	Counselling - legal
Housing	Parenting skills
Day care	Employment orientation
Transportation	Confidence Building
Security	Social acceptance
Household assistance	Effective communication
Child care assistance	Income management
Income assistance	Coping alone
	Personal adjustment
	Stress management
	Conflict resolution
	Personal grooming
	Health and fitness
	Better nutrition and diet
	Self-help groups
	Day care co-operative
	Peer group membership and support
	Community membership and support
	Information workshops
	Adult basic education
	Neighbourhood ESL classes

needs which are non-amenable to educational intervention are closely related to the basic physiological and psychological well-being of lone parents, the effectiveness of educational programs catering to those needs clearly hinges on the relative degree of satisfaction experienced by lone parents and their families in the first category of needs - the needs which are non-amenable to educational intervention.

Aside from those needs which are non-amenable to educational intervention, the types of educational programs under study seem to be the ideal solutions for the other category of needs expressed by lone parent and their families. The need for more adequate day care facilities, for example, can be met if groups of lone parents can be helped to organize their own babysitting co-op. Education can also help to build greater self-esteem and confidence, another category of needs frequently expressed by lone parents. Thus there seemed to be a genuine need for educational programs dealing with self-maintenance and self-development. Yet all the educators interviewed expressed their common exasperation at not being able to reach more than a small percentage of their target population through such programs. The average program, according to these educators and programmers, manages to reach only 3 to 10 per cent of the lone parents and their families in any city zone and plans for new programs are often cancelled due to the lack of enrolment (see Blown, 1979; Carlisle, 1980). Meanwhile, lone parent groups continue to express the need for more programs amidst the bewilderment and exasperation of educators and programmers. A survey of adult education literature pertaining to participation patterns of disadvantaged adults in adult education programs led the author to arrive at the conclusion

that the cause of ineffective programming for lone parent families can be traced to a combination of the following factors:

1. The motivation to fulfil higher-level needs through educational programs is weak among lone parents and members of their families who experience only a low degree of relative satisfaction in their prepotent needs (see Maslow, 1970, Chapter 4).

According to Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, physiological needs are the most prepotent of all needs and tend to dominate over all other needs. To quote Maslow, "if all the needs are unsatisfied, and the organism is then dominated by the physiological needs, all other needs may become simply nonexistent or be pushed into the background." (p. 37) In the case of lone parent families in need, it is quite likely that the existence of unfulfilled physiological needs will dominate over all other needs, including educational needs, and educational programs, therefore, will have little relevance for such a group until their physiological needs for food, clothing, and shelter are satisfied to some degree.

2. The personal needs of lone parents and their families conflict with social forces resulting in tension within the proposed educational program and subsequently undermining its effectiveness (see Miller, 1967, p. 4).

According to Miller's force-field analysis, the willingness of an adult to participate in voluntary activities such as educational programs demonstrates some personal needs which are shaped, conditioned, and channelled by the social structures and forces of the particular society to which the person belongs. Thus participation patterns in voluntary activities such as educational programs are determined by the interaction between personal needs and social forces. In a case where there is conflict

between personal needs and social forces, tension will result. Lone parent families are constantly under pressure from society to reduce their dependency on social assistance by achieving self-sufficiency through educational programs regardless of the relevance of these programs. From the point of view of lone parents, however, educational programs have little relevance until their physiological needs are fulfilled. This polarity of ideas inevitably creates tension between lone parent families and educators who represent the values of society at large. The effectiveness of the program is, in turn, diminished.

3. A large number of lone parents and their families are socially disadvantaged and are, therefore, unable to take advantage of educational programs such as those described in this study (see Anderson & Niemi, 1964, Abstract).

Findings from Anderson and Niemi's study on the disadvantaged adult showed that the disadvantaged are hampered by both physiological and psychological barriers with regard to participation in education. Largely because of discrimination, the poverty subculture is compelled to evolve its own way of life, and any program of change will be doomed to fail if it adheres to traditional patterns of establishing contact with its clients. According to data pertaining to the demographic characteristics of lone parent families, many members of the group fit the above descriptions. Educators and programmers, on the other hand, may have the tendency to identify with middle-class values and to adhere to traditional methods of establishing contact with clients. Consequently, the standards and expectations established by these educators and programmers may be unrealistic and do not relate to the existing ability nor to the "expressed

needs" of their clients. The ineffectiveness of programs conducted under these circumstances is, therefore, to be expected.

4. As a socially disadvantaged group, lone parents and their families have little "margin" left for participating in voluntary educational activities after coping with the complexities of lone parenthood (see McClusky, Howard W. Course of the Adult Life Span. In Wilbur C. Hellenbeck, Ed., Psychology of Adults, 1963, p. 17).

McClusky's concept of power and load maintained that "the key factors of adult life are the load the individual must carry in living" and "the power which is available to him to carry the loads" (p. 15). Based on this concept, he forwarded a formula to express the ratio between the individual's load and the power available to him. The ratio, in turn, determines the margin available to the individual. Lone parents generally assume a heavy "load" with little "power" available to them due to their disadvantaged status. Their resultant lifestyle is a highly stressful one with little or no "margin." As McClusky also pointed out, the differences in "margin" influence a person's ability to perform, and lone parents who have little or no "margin" will most likely lack the energy or "power" to perform well in any educational activity.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Summary

The significant increase in the number of lone parent families in recent years indicates that this new form of family is becoming firmly entrenched in Canadian society. Social policies, on the other hand, have not kept pace with changes in society, but continue to treat the traditional nuclear family as the norm. Many politicians, educators, and professionals uphold the view that lone parents who stay home to care for their children and receive social assistance are non-productive citizens and constitute prolonged and unnecessary dependency on welfare.

In the social service sector, however, anticipated changes in societal and family structures prompted a recent conference on future planning for human care needs, including the needs of the future family. The report of the conference stated the issue as follows:

- Life in the nuclear family is being eroded by changing political, social, and cultural conditions such as: inflation and the growing scarcity of resources; the growth of population outward from the city; and the replacement of the nuclear family by different family forms, e.g. dual-career families, single parent families, multi-family households, etc.
- In the face of social change comes a lack of value consensus.
- Resources families will need to survive the next two decades include a sense of their own adaptability, an increasing range of support services and decentralized services, combined with community support network. (What Holds Tomorrow? 1980, p. 4)

Educational programs alone will have limited impact on the problems faced by lone parent families unless the programs are accompanied by necessary changes in existing social policies. The starting point for change must issue from the acceptance of the lone parent family as a legitimate new family form and the recognition of the role of full-time parenting in all forms of family as a productive and important occupation.

As far as educational programs are concerned, their effectiveness can be enhanced by closer co-operation between government ministries such as the Ministry of Human Resources and the Ministry of Education. A closer liaison between the various ministries concerned will not only foster a better understanding of the needs of lone parent families and the types of educational programs necessary to meet such needs, but will also improve the quality and effectiveness of current and future educational programs.

Apart from government ministries, a number of social agencies such as Family Services of Greater Vancouver, Y.W.C.A., and local community centres also provide invaluable services and programs for lone parent families. Nearly all these agencies are funded from voluntary contributions. Should additional funding be made available to these agencies, it is conceivable that the effectiveness of these services and programs will be greatly improved.

The polarity in perspectives between some educators and lone parent families is another issue which must be resolved if existing educational programs are to be more effective in reaching their target population. To achieve this, educators should understand that lone parent families constitute a socially disadvantaged group and possess many characteristics of a poverty sub-culture. Any educational program catering to the group must,

therefore, attempt first to remove the numerous institutional, financial, and psychological barriers which tend to hamper the group from participating.

The effectiveness of educational programs can also be improved if educators use lone parent groups and organizations as points of contact with their clients. Many lone parents, except for the extremely isolated, belong to at least one of many lone parent groups and organizations in the Lower Mainland (see Beaven, 1981). With clearly defined leadership and goals, such groups function as self-help organizations among lone parents. An additional function of providing educational programs could be undertaken by these organizations and groups if arrangements can be made to employ their leaders to work in close co-operation with educators in designing and conducting educational programs for group members.

Thus educational programs for lone parent families can be much more effective if certain changes are made in social policies to meet some of the needs which are often non-amenable to educational programs. Based on the above perceptions of the necessity for change, the following recommendations are directed at the following government ministries:

1. The Ministry of Human Resources.
2. The Ministry of Education.
3. The Ministry of Health.
4. The Ministry of Labour.

Although the main focus of this thesis is on educational programs aimed at self-maintenance and self-development, the recommendations take into consideration the wide range of educational and training programs available to lone parent families.

Recommendations:

- (a) That steps be taken to raise income assistance to lone parent families to the level of the current poverty line as defined by Statistics Canada

Educational programs have little direct relevance for lone parent families whose basic survival needs such as food, clothing, and housing are not being met satisfactorily. The anguish suffered by lone parents on welfare is well-documented. Annual welfare payments are assessed by the National Council of Welfare to be as much as \$2,000 to \$3,000 below the poverty line and the recent restrictions on welfare eligibility will make it even harder for the average lone parent family to maintain a decent standard of living; for full-time parents, regardless of the family forms to which they belong, are the victims of society's double standard which praises the contributions of full-time parenting on one hand, but deprives full-time parents of basic financial support on the other. The raising of income assistance to all lone parents with children of under 15 years old will not only give legitimacy and recognition to full-time parenting, but free lone parents from their daily struggle for increased participation in educational programs aimed at their self-maintenance and self-development.

- (b) That the amount of earned income a welfare parent is permitted to keep be raised over and above his or her welfare payments to such a level that, upon combining the two sources of income, the monthly income of the individual parent equals the current poverty line defined by Statistics Canada.

Under Section 6 (16) of the Guaranteed Available Income for Need Act

(GAIN), a family of two or more in British Columbia can only retain income

or gifts equivalent to the value of up to \$100 per month in order for the family to retain its eligibility for full income assistance. Such a regulation not only discourages welfare recipients such as lone parents from obtaining part-time employment, but forces many working lone parents in low-paying jobs to reconsider the two options of working or remaining at home to care for their children since their monthly earned incomes hardly exceed existing welfare payments. By adopting the above formula, welfare recipients such as lone parents will be free to choose to contribute toward the improvement of their income status to an acceptable level without any fear of penalty. As lone parents seek to meet their need for additional income, another barrier to participation in educational programs is being removed.

- (c) That the period of income assistance to lone parents undertaking educational programs or vocational training under Section 10 (5) of the GAIN Act be extended to accommodate individual need.

The purpose of the educational provision is to aid individuals toward self-sufficiency. In limiting the period of training to two years, the policy is limiting the range of vocational training an individual can undertake and discriminating against those who wish to embark on more serious career training which may require longer periods of time. The removal of this restriction will give lone parents and other participants in educational programs more flexibility in the choice of program and added incentive to participate in programs leading to higher academic or professional development.

- (d) That more quality day care facilities flexible enough to meet the whole range of day care needs expressed by lone parent families be created.

There is still a great shortage of day care facilities in the Lower Mainland. Lone parents cannot begin to consider entering the work force or participate in full-time educational and training programs until they are assured that their children are well cared for, and thus any suggestion of employment, training, or participation in educational programs is rendered meaningless unless a wide range of day care facilities are made available to lone parent families. At the same time, compensations should be initiated for both part-time and full-time working parents in low-paying jobs to meet expenses incurred by child care.

- (e) That help and support continue to be provided for lone parent families through the Homemaker Programs or other emergency provisions.

The fear of being unable to cope alone in times of sickness and other emergencies is frequently expressed by lone parents participating in educational programs for, unlike a husband-wife family, a lone parent family does not have a second adult to assume family responsibilities in times of emergency. Lone parents frequently have to drop out of educational programs due to sickness or other emergencies in the family. Good rapport established with a homemaker who knows the family will greatly relieve lone parents from such fear and ensure that lone parents participating in educational programs are able to continue despite sickness and other emergencies in the family.

- (f) That an emergency fund which is accessible to lone parent families experiencing sudden financial crises be created to meet the emergency financial needs of lone parent families.

The majority of lone parent families live from hand to mouth and become destitute in times of financial crises. The creation of such a fund accompanied by guidelines and screening of applicants will remove some of the panic and constant sense of insecurity experienced by the majority of lone parents who lack economic security and free them for learning.

- (g) That the provision of educational programs for lone parents be continued under the Individual Opportunity Plan.

The Individual Opportunity Plan is one viable scheme for providing educational upgrading and vocational training for welfare recipients such as lone parents who wish to become economically self-sufficient. Applicants to the plan, however, often complain of the limited number of places in certain training programs and the inconvenience posed by some "out of town" program locations. Some applicants complain of having to wait for a long period of time before being accepted for a specific program they have requested. In cases where programs are being held "out of town", the problem of travel proves to be an insurmountable obstacle for lone parents who lack transportation and who have to juggle constantly with housework, child care, and other everyday demands posed by lone parenthood. Ministries concerned should cater to the educational and training needs of lone parents who have applied to enroll in the Individual Opportunity Plan. Closer co-operation between ministries will not only boost the Individual Opportunity Plan, but will also take the uncertainties out of programming

for lone parent families and make certain educational programs more accessible to members of the group.

- (h) That the community services model such as that used by Britannia Community Services Centre and the Community Schools be adopted in the planning and delivering of those educational programs aimed specifically at the self-maintenance and self-development of lone parent families.

In general, educational programs based on the community services model have proved to be more successful in reaching their target population than programs based on more traditional and formal methods. From the interviews conducted with educators and programmers involved in the two types of programs, the author has reached the conclusion that the greater effectiveness of those programs based on the community services model can be attributed to the following components of the programs:

1. The presence of an existing clientele and peer group support as a significant number of lone parent families are active members of local community centres.
2. The input into program planning stages from an advisory committee consisting of representatives from the community to which the target population belong.
3. The decision to employ the strategy of contacting clients through local community groups.
4. The informal and accepting atmosphere established by educators and community leaders responsible for the implementation of the programs.
5. The location of programs within the community to which the target population belong.

6. The provision of free child care for participants of programs.
7. The charging of only a nominal fee.

In contrast to programs based on the community services model, programs based on more traditional methods may be perceived as threatening by some lone parents and members of their families. This is especially true for those who are under-educated and who may be lacking in self-confidence and motivation. The fact that programs are often conducted in public institutions may act as a further deterrent since many lone parents are members of the poverty subculture, and tend to harbour distrust and fear of public educational institutions due to previous negative experience with such institutions. The adoption of the community services model can remove this element of threat. It would help to bridge the existing gap between public education institutions and lone parent families from diverse cultural settings, and further increase the accessibility of educational programs for lone parent families.

- (i) That an education fund be established so that lone parent groups, community groups, and social agencies can apply for funding of educational programs, approved by an education committee, consisting of representatives from lone parent groups, educators from the Ministry of Education and the organization or group applying for funding.

A large number of lone parent groups, community centres, and social agencies already offer a variety of highly successful educational programs for lone parent families in the City of Vancouver. With additional sources of funding made available, these groups and agencies will be able to further expand their role of programming for lone parent families and, in the process, be granted recognition, autonomy, and legitimacy in their efforts.

APPENDIX

LIST OF EDUCATORS AND INSTITUTIONS INTERVIEWED

<u>Educator</u>	<u>Institution</u>
N. Horsman	Women Students' Office, University of British Columbia
M. Cairns	Women's Centre, Simon Fraser University
L. Fast	Langara Campus, Vancouver Community College
B. Anderson	Continuing Education, Langara Campus, Vancouver Community College
R. F. Cunningham	King Edward Campus, Vancouver Community College
P. Littleboy	King Edward Campus, Vancouver Community College
M. Hoek	New Westminster Campus, Douglas College
R. Yee	Bayview Community School, School District No. 39 (Vancouver)
E. MacAuly	Sir John Franklin Community School, School District No. 39 (Vancouver)
E. Zack	Career & Community Education Services, Vancouver School Board
E. Gurriero	Britannia Community Services Centre, Vancouver
L. Manuel	False Creek Community Centre, Vancouver
J. MacGregor	Thunderbird Neighbourhood Centre, Vancouver
G. Long	Federated Anti-Poverty Groups of B.C., Vancouver
L. B. Dulude	National Council of Welfare, Ottawa
M. Carlisle	Continuing Education, New Westminster School Board
A. Taylor	City of Vancouver Health Department
M. Jack	East Vancouver Health Unit, Vancouver
J. Rogers	Y.W.C.A., Vancouver
L. Alden	Family Services of Greater Vancouver, Vancouver
Spokesperson	People's Law School, Vancouver

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