CHILDREN IN COMMERCIAL BOARDING HOMES

A Survey of Wards of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver living in these units in October 1954.

by

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This study is part of a survey of the wards of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C. who were not in foster homes on October 31, 1954. Fourteen wards, ranging in age from fourteen to nineteen years, were resident in commercial boarding homes. Agency policy recommends the limiting of the use of commercial boarding homes to the occasional placement of a boy or girl over the age of eighteen years who is self-supporting and sufficiently mature to meet the responsibilities of such a setting. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to determine why the commercial boarding homes were being used for these particular wards and to what extent the needs of these wards were being met.

Information gathered from the records of the children and their parents was summarized and tabulated for the purpose of study and description. This material was examined to determine whether there was any correlation between the children's pre-admission care and their subsequent adjustment in foster and group homes and their later placement in commercial boarding homes.

Case illustrations of three of the wards were used in order to elaborate on their developmental experiences and adjustment in various settings. These cases were typical in illustrating the unsettled early lives experienced by most of this group and the effect of these experiences in preventing them from adjusting to the demands of a foster home and, in some cases, of group homes. Further emphasis was given to the harmful effect of continued foster home replacement.

In summary, the study of this group of wards pointed out the great need for a receiving home for all children on admission to care for the purposes of familiarization, diagnosis and planning. In order to avoid the use of commercial boarding homes and to meet the needs of those children who are unable to adjust in foster homes, a variety of group-living residences should be developed. A treatment home is an urgent necessity to assist disturbed children while they are still young enough to be helped. In general, greater resources are required for preventive work with children while still in their own homes as well as for the improvement of the services to the children after their admission into care.
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I wish to express my gratitude to Miss Dorothy L. Coombe, Executive Director of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver for making available the case material for this study.

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A Survey of Wards of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver living in these units in October 1954.
CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

Modern concern for the welfare of our children reflects our recognition of the preventive aspect of good child-care services. We recognize that the future health of our society is being partially determined by the welfare of our children of today. We are particularly concerned with the child's formative years as a member of the family unit. The enlightened community makes provisions to strengthen and support the family unit against the hazards of ill health, unemployment and various natural disasters. As the community progresses economically we should expect a similar improvement in social standards generally. However, there is not always a corresponding development of the sense of social responsibility, so that a gap exists between what is known professionally about the needs of children on the one hand, and the community's resources and the quality of service given on the other. The gap is regrettable for society has no greater resource
than its children.

**Early Developments in Child Care Services**

The child welfare movement in British Columbia has developed along the lines of the earlier movements for child care in Great Britain, the United States and the older province of Ontario. Following the confiscation of church property in England during the reign of Henry VIII in the 16th Century the Church was no longer able to provide for the needs of the poor and their children. The first Poor Law made no special provisions for the care of children. However, the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 outlined provisions for indenture practice of apprenticing children to a craftsman and for the care of destitute children in almshouses.

In contrast to this development of institutional care for dependent children the American trend was towards the use of indenture in the private transfer of guardianship to another person who assumed responsibility for the child's care in return for the child's services. The most significant new development was the establishment of the New York Children's Aid Society by Mr. Charles Loring Brace in 1853. The practice of foster home placement of children was begun at this time and eventually became the main method

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of care for dependent children.

**Legislation for Child Protection**

In Great Britain and the United States during the 19th Century, legislation was enacted to protect the physically abused and young child from sentence under adult criminal law. These Industrial Schools or Reformatory Acts were a step towards legislation for the special needs of children. The "Act to Render Reformatory and Industrial Schools in Scotland More Available for the Benefit of Vagrant Children" of 1854 was the first legislative act to spell out the need for protective care for the neglected child who was without proper care and guardianship, and who could be differentiated from the delinquent and who was 1 not necessarily a pauper. The first Canadian legislation followed this pattern in the enactment of the Ontario Act of 1893, "An Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to and Better Protection of Children".

This act set the precedent for the appointment of a Provincial Superintendent of Neglected Children to assist in the organization of children's aid societies for the protection of children from cruelty, and to perform other duties of inspection, keeping records, visiting boarding

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1 17 and 18 Victoria, C. 74, 1854.
2 Statutes of Ontario, 1893, C. 45.
homes, et cetera. In addition to legalizing the curtailment of parental rights when the welfare of the child necessitated this, the Act marked the beginnings of juvenile court legislation in its provision for commissions to hear juvenile offenders apart from adult courts. In contrast to the United States and Great Britain, the first Canadian legislation made provision for the placement of dependent children in suitable family homes under a written contract, as well as for binding them out as apprentices.

Other provinces have followed the trend originated by this Ontario legislation. They have, however, found it necessary to legislate for the Superintendent of Child Welfare (originally called Superintendent of Neglected Children) to exercise the powers of a children's aid society in the areas where there was no society. In the more populous areas of Ontario and the larger cities of Western Canada children's aid societies have carried responsibility for protective work, but in the Western provinces the government has gradually assumed the larger share in direct participation in child protection and care in the outlying areas.

In Alberta this pattern has led to the loss of the voluntary-agency characteristics of the original Ontario plan with the establishment of local governmental units in the municipalities. Similarly, in Saskatchewan, legislation
of 1946 provided that all neglected children were to be made wards of the Minister of Social Welfare, and gave the minister regulatory power over all children's aid societies to the point of approving the appointment of the superintendent and the social workers of such societies.

The British Columbia Act of 1901, "The Children's Protection Act", maintained Canadian practice within the tradition of English law by empowering the state to assume guardianship of children in need of protection. It arranged for the appointment of a Superintendent of Neglected Children to carry out the administrative functions of such responsibilities. It authorized the setting up of children's aid societies composed of voluntary groups of private citizens incorporated under a charter for the purpose of providing guardianship and care to children committed to them by the courts. However, no satisfactory financial provision was made for discharging these responsibilities. By an amendment of 1910 the courts could order the municipality in which the child had residence to assume the costs for the child's care and issue an order against the parents for reimbursement of the municipality.

In addition to the measure of public responsibility expressed in the form of a government appointed Superintendent of Child Welfare with supervisory and reg-

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1 Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1946 C. 91.
ulating duties over the whole field of child welfare, the
greater part of the financing of such services has also
become a public responsibility.

With the great extension of public welfare
services during the past decade, the field of child-care
services has expanded from the earlier narrower field of
protection of neglected children, to that of the prevention
of conditions which foster neglect.

There is, in addition to the Protection of
Children Act, legislation under the "Adoption Act", the
"Children of Unmarried Parents Act", the "Mother's Allowance
Act", the "Juvenile Courts Act" and the Acts relating to
the establishment of Industrial Schools for boys and girls,
all dealing specifically with child-care services in the
province of British Columbia.

The Adoption Act of 1920 vested powers in the
Supreme Court and delegated special duties to the Superin-
tendent of Child Welfare, whereby the Supreme Court can be
petitioned to transfer the guardianship of a child from
the natural parent to adopting parent or parents. An
amendment of March 1953 has made it possible for the adopted
child to have the same status toward his adopting parents,
as well as their kin, as if he had been born in the family.

1 Adoption Act, 1920
2 Adoption Act. R.S.B.C. Section 10, 1953
The Children of Unmarried Parents Act, 1922, gave to the Superintendent of Child Welfare the duty of providing a measure of protection for every child born out of wedlock and the authority to take proceedings under the Act in order to provide for the best interests of the child.

The Mother’s Allowance Act permits the Superintendent of Welfare to make financial provision for children under 16 years of age (which can be extended up to 18 years if attending school) to enable them to remain under the personal care of their mother in their natural home, when the father is dead, divorced, has deserted or is totally incapacitated.

The Juvenile Courts Act provides for the establishment of Juvenile Courts wherever the Federal "Juvenile Delinquents Act" is brought into force.

The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, British Columbia

At the beginning of this century there was a growing awareness on the part of the people of Vancouver of the failure to provide protective services for children. In 1901 the Local Council of Women of Vancouver prepared a petition which was presented to the Provincial Legislature

1 Children of Unmarried Parents Act, 1922.
2 Mother’s Allowance Act, 1937.
3 Juvenile Courts Act, 1910.
by Captain Tatlow, M.L.A. for Vancouver. This eventually led to the enactment of the much-needed Children's Protection Act and later to the establishment of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver. The first child made a ward of this Society was a young girl who was living in the Alexandra Orphanage and whose mother was alcoholic and brutal. Her plight served as the main impetus to action to have legislation passed permitting the removal of custody from natural parents.

The early years of the society were difficult ones in which children from all over the province were committed by the courts to the care of the Society with little financial support from the government. It was not until 1909 that the Provincial Legislature passed an amendment to the Protection of Children's Act enabling magistrates to award the sum of one dollar and fifty cents a week for the care of wards, this financial responsibility being borne by the area in which the child had legal residence. In the period up to 1926 children made wards of the Society were housed in the institutional settings of the Alexandra Orphanage and Salvation Army Refugee Home and finally in the Wall Street Home. The use of the institution was intended to be only for temporary care while the child was being prepared for placement in a private home. The number for whom suitable "adoption" homes could

1 Angus, Anne Margaret, Children’s Aid Society of Vancouver, 1901 - 1951
be found continued to be less than the number committed
to the care of the Society. The Wall Street Home became
badly overcrowded and constituted the main financial
problem of the Society.

Except for some instances, notably in the care
of infants, no payments for maintenance were made for
foster home care. All such free-home placements were
considered as "adoption" homes, since the child was con­
sidered adopted if the family did not return him to the
agency as unsatisfactory.

The period from the beginning of the First
World War until 1926 was a particularly difficult time
for the Society. After 1909 the Society received the small
sum of $1.50 per ward for their weekly maintenance as
mentioned above. The balance of costs had to be met by
voluntary contributions from private citizens. Under the
pressure of this constant problem of securing sufficient
funds to provide for those children already in care, the
Society was unable to extend its service, or to carry out
any satisfactory program of prevention of family breakup.

In 1923 an amendment to the Infants Act increased
the maintenance rate paid by the municipality, city govern­
ment, or province, to the rate of three dollars per ward
per week. With children being committed from all parts of
the province the financial problem of the Society continued
to remain a serious one.

The British Columbia Child Welfare Survey of 1926 - 27 was prompted by growing awareness of the unsatisfactory state of the child-welfare services. The Committee conducting this survey realized the impossible task which the Society faced in trying to meet their obligations with such limited resources. In the final report recommendations were made for (1) the appointment of a capable administrative officer to carry out the reorganization of the agency; (2) the organization of a child protection field service; the organization of social investigation and supervision in connection with free home placement; the establishment of a boarding home system; the development of baby care.

With the carrying out of these recommendations the main framework for modern child-care services in Vancouver was established. The new superintendent of the Society, Miss Laura Holland, and her two assistants set about immediately to move the children from the institutional setting of the Wall Street Home to carefully selected private homes. At the Annual Meeting of the Society in 1930 Miss Holland stated, "A visitor (social worker) can only adequately supervise 35 to 50 children in foster homes .... At the present time each of the Society's visitors is

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responsible for approximately 80 children, and during the coming year it is essential that at least one more worker be added to the staff, if we are to measure up to a minimum standard". In the light of this statement, one might wonder what progress the Society has made during the past quarter century, since the present average case load of the field-service staff is not far below the 80 which, in 1930, was considered the limit if even a minimum standard of service was to be maintained. It is likely that many other changes have made this mere comparison of numbers an inaccurate measure of the adequacy of service, but it does indicate that in spite of the tremendous increase in our nation's wealth and our general acceptance of the importance of good child-care practices, the Society has been unable to finance the increase in staff required to lower the individual case load and so improve the standard of service.

One of the progressive steps resulting from the reorganization of the Society was the institution of a comprehensive program of preventive family casework. As a result, a greater number of instances of poor child care were investigated, and a greater number of children were given assistance in their own home rather than having to be brought into care.

Financial relief for the Society was gained through the acceptance by the Province in 1930, and the City of Vancouver in 1931, of full financial responsibility for
the maintenance of wards. The costs of preventive family casework services, protective work, and non-ward care placement are still dependent in the area of Greater Vancouver upon the voluntary contributions made through the Community Chest. The greater proportion of funds of the Society, however, are received from the maintenance costs which are collected from the municipality, city, or provincial area in which the child had residence. In the year 1954 the financing of the Children's Aid Society was instituted among various sources in the following ratios: Community Chest 15%; Vancouver City 37%; Other municipalities 12%; Province of British Columbia 34%; Others 2%. Since the greater proportion of financing is public, there has been considerable questioning of the present division of responsibilities for child care as between private and public agencies. Now that there is a general acceptance by the state of its responsibility for providing an all-inclusive program catering to the needs of children, the children's aid societies might well consider the possibility of turning their wealth of experience, facilities, and voluntary services to such tasks as the instituting of needed services in the treatment of disturbed children, research and other specialized services.

1 53rd Annual Report, Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B. C., 1952.
The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver is attempting in the best way it can, with the limited resources at its disposal, to meet the needs of children in the City of Vancouver. A representative picture of the variety of child-care services which the Society renders may be obtained from the numbers of children in various settings who were given some form of service in the year 1951. There were 14515 children in the homes of their families for whom some effort was made towards improving their care. During the year, 1638 children were cared for in a foster home setting, and 1026 children were given care in an adoptive home setting. Contact was made with private boarding homes in regard to the welfare of 300 children. With additional care to seven Jewish Overseas children, a total of 7486 children were given some assistance by the Children's Aid Society during 1951. With so much responsibility to be met partially by voluntary private contributions collected through the Community Chest and Council, it is remarkable that the child-caring service is as good as it is.

The Needs of Children

The primary function of child-welfare services is to ensure that the needs of all children are being met. Included among these are needs of a physical nature such as for food, clothing, warmth, shelter and medical care, as well

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1 53rd Annual Report, Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B. C. 1952.
as the less tangible but equally important need for love, affection and guidance. Normal child development is dependent upon the atmosphere of security which the child can experience only if these needs are being met. Satisfactory progress from one stage of his psychological and social development to the next depends upon such healthful influences as can come only from the security of a loving and understanding family group. Failure to experience this support delays or hinders the satisfactory emotional development necessary for successful adjustment in the home and community. The insecure and maladjusted adult is usually the product of a childhood in which the necessary elements of physical well-being, affection and guidance have been lacking during part or most of childhood.

The modern emphasis on the prevention of conditions which lead to neglect of children is based on the conviction that the needs of the child are best met as a member of his natural family unit. Preservation of the family requires a broad welfare program of adequate unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, mother's allowance, social assistance and health services to assist in preventing the kind of family disintegration caused by financial need.

Strengthening of the individual family also requires adequate provision for such services as homemaker,
temporary non-ward care of the children and supportive casework during periods of stress. In addition, the availability of community services of a health, educational, spiritual, counselling, and recreational nature are important in relation to the support which the family can receive from the community in general.

When all forms of support fail to maintain the health of the natural family or when there is abuse, neglect or abandonment of a serious nature, the child must be placed in a substitute home. In this province during the early days of child-care services the main resource for the care of dependent children was an institutional setting because of the lack of finances and organization required to place children in suitable private homes. After 1927 foster home placement became the accepted practice.

In the Province of British Columbia a child committed to the care of the Superintendent of Child Welfare remains a ward until the age of twenty-one years unless he is adopted, returned to the care of his natural parents, or in the case of a female ward, is married. Responsibility for his care and supervision remains with the supervising agency or the Superintendent of Child Welfare. The Protection of Children Act (1901) for British Columbia was revised in 1948 so as to make foster home placement an explicit part of official child-care policy.
If the Judge commits a child to a children's aid society pursuant to the provisions of this section, the society shall receive the child into its custody and shall make arrangements as soon as may be for the placement of the child in a foster home.

This stress on the importance of foster home care is further emphasized by the placing of the following limitation on institutional care for wards:

No child shall be maintained by a society elsewhere than in a foster home for a period exceeding six months, except with the written consent of the Superintendent who may at any time withdraw his consent.

Foster home care is an attempt to meet the needs of children for physical care, affection and guidance in a normal family setting with substitute parents. To leave his own family is always a very difficult and frightening experience for any child. It may be very damaging emotionally to a child even though the natural family would seem to have offered very little. The emphasis in modern child-welfare services is to work with the parents on the plan for removal whether the plan is for temporary or permanent care. Every effort is made to help the parents provide for the child's needs in his own home and failing this, to help the parents accept the need for other care and to assist in the preparation of the child for placement, in adjustment in the foster home, and in planning for possible

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1 R.S.B.C. c. 47, s. 8(12) 1948.
2 Ibid.
return of the child to his home at some later date. Where there is little possibility of the child's eventual return, or no likelihood of fruitful contact at any time in the future, the plan is usually for adoption of the child.

The Use of Commercial Boarding Homes:

The use of commercial boarding homes by the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver for the placement of adolescents has generally been as a last resort and in a time of emergency. The foster home, group home or subsidized boarding home are accepted forms of care for wards of the Children's Aid Society and the use of each is determined by the special needs of the individual child. With the increasing scarcity of available foster homes, the commercial boarding home was first used for adolescent boys who were so rebellious in the foster home setting that no foster parent could control them. Several factors have been responsible for the continued and increased use of these homes.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to locate sufficient foster parents willing and able to provide for overly aggressive or otherwise maladjusted adolescents. Experience has shown that the foster home placement of such adolescents has been a factor in upsetting the adjustment of other foster children and in the withdrawal by some foster parents from the agency service. Since foster home placement involves the building of a parent-child relationship, it also presents the child with the possibility of again
experiencing the harmful effect of rejection and desertion when the foster parents request replacement. For one reason or another some adolescents have made a more satisfactory adjustment in commercial boarding homes. The commercial boarding homes do not provide a supervised setting and lack many other elements which could be considered as desirable in the care of the adolescent. However, until there are alternatives available such as subsidized boarding or group homes, it seems probable that the commercial boarding homes will continue to be used by the Children's Aid Society to meet the needs of adolescents who for various reasons cannot adjust in a foster home.

The Setting of the Study:

Newspaper publicity regarding the imprisonment of a ward of the Children's Aid Society on a drug charge, after being apprehended in a Vancouver hotel, brought attention to the relatively large number of wards who were not living in foster homes. A survey, undertaken in October 1954, of the whereabouts of all wards of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver revealed that of the 1,120 wards in care 211 children were living outside foster homes. These children were found to be resident in group or subsidized boarding homes, in correctional or hospital institutions or in commercial boarding homes; others had become self-supporting and a number were classified as "lost". These several groups, classified according to the
nature of the placement at the time of the survey, form
the subject of separate studies. The present study con-
cerns the fourteen wards (thirteen boys and one girl) known
to be living in commercial boarding homes on October 31,
1954.

The Scope and Method of the Study:

Material for the study was obtained from the
Society's case records of the fourteen wards and of their
parents and foster parents. Examination of the records, in
conjunction with a knowledge of the professional literature,
indicated the relative significance of particular items of
information and these have been summarized and tabulated
under appropriate headings for each of the wards. This
information is examined in Chapters II and III with a view
to determining the reasons why these particular wards were
placed in commercial boarding homes and the extent to which
their needs were being met by such a placement.

In Chapter II the adjustment of the wards is
considered. Summary methods of classification have been
developed in order to analyse and compare the data, and the
possibility is explored of establishing some correlation
between the children's pre-admission care, their ages and
problems at admission, and the quality of their adjustment
while in the care of the agency. The suitability of the

1 Appendices 1 and 2.
particular commercial boarding homes being used by the fourteen wards is also considered in Chapter II.

In Chapter III the case-illustration method is used to trace the development of three wards, thereby indicating the probable causes of the success or failure of these wards in foster homes and the problems confronting the agency in meeting the needs of children who have been so badly damaged by an unsettled early family life. Conclusions arising out of Chapters II and III are summarized in Chapter IV with recommendations as to possible improvements in the case work services and resources for the care of dependent children.
CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF WARDS IN COMMERCIAL BOARDING HOMES

For various reasons foster homes fail to meet the needs of many adolescents. Most children are unprepared immediately to transfer their allegiance to substitute foster parents because of their conflict over loyalty to their natural parents. In many instances one or both parents remain in the picture, and conflicts arise around the loyalties and interests of parents, foster parents and foster child. Adjustment in a new foster home is particularly difficult for an older adolescent who is in the position of attempting to develop independence and break the ties to the parental figure.

Many who have failed to settle in a foster home setting might have eventually been able to do so if they had first been placed into a receiving home at the time of coming into care while a study was made of their background, a relationship with the agency was built up, and a comprehensive diagnosis was made of the needs of the child and many problems surrounding his coming into care. There are, however, among those adolescents who have suffered neglect and rejection from one or both parents over a period of years, a number who are frequently completely unable to accept foster home place-
ment even after an extended period of placement in an impersonalized setting. To attempt one foster home placement immediately after another when an adolescent fails to adjust in a foster home is frequently a damaging experience since such moves are seen as further rejection.

The commercial boarding home has one factor favoring the placement of adolescents in that it does not usually place them in the conflicting position of having to accept substitute parents. There are, however, so many needs of the adolescent which are not met in these homes that this one advantage is almost completely nullified. The commercial boarding homes fail to meet the needs of adolescents for sympathetic support, supervision and guidance, and because of this the agency has always stressed their use only as a last resort.

In the agency policy-manual outlining the use of the commercial boarding home two limitations are listed under the heading of "Placement Requirements":

1. A commercial boarding home should be used only for the placement of older children who are in school or employed and who are sufficiently adjusted to handle the freedom and responsibility of such a living arrangement.

2. Children placed in commercial boarding homes should be 18 years of age or older.

There is one main reason why the agency continues to place adolescents in commercial boarding homes and that is that there are insufficient receiving homes, no
senior boys' residence (group home) or treatment home available.

It has only been since January 1953 that the commercial boarding homes have been used for more than the occasional temporary placement of adolescents. At that time the number of adolescents in care had exceeded the number of available foster homes to the point where several were being housed in small hotels on what were originally intended to be temporary placements. Furthermore, the situation existed then, as it does at present, in which many foster homes prepared to accept adolescents, were filled to the point where overcrowding interfered with the success of the placement of those who might otherwise have settled.

In the remainder of this chapter and in Chapter III the data relating to the fourteen wards who were resident in commercial boarding homes on October 31, 1954 will be examined with particular reference to: (a) family background and experience before admission to care; (b) problems while in care and the role of the agency and the foster home placement in helping the child toward satisfactory adjustment; (c) degree of personal and social adjustment attained at the time of placement in the commercial boarding home and the suitability of this kind of placement for the particular needs of the children.
The analysis of the material will be carried out with the two major questions in mind: (1) Could these children have benefited from foster home placement if given adequate diagnosis, planning and services? (2) Was the nature of their problems and situations such that their needs could not be met through ordinary foster home care?

**Family Background and Care of Wards prior to Admission**

Information recorded in the agency's files on the wards and their parents reveals a uniform picture of unsettled pre-admission care. (See Appendix C)

**Table 1. Marital Status of Parents at time of Wards Admission to Care**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status of Parent</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother alone - unmarried</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother alone - separated</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father alone - separated</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father alone - widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural father and stepmother</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural mother and stepfather</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A summary of the marital status of the parents of the wards reveals that in the case of the ten families where the parents were married at the time of the birth of the ward, all had been either widowed, separated or divorced by the time of the child's admission to care. Of the four couples who were already divorced, and the two couples whose
divorce was granted after the children's admission to care, all except the father of ward #7 remarried. Accordingly, all the wards at admission came from either a partial family (unmarried mother) or a broken family, while for a large number of the group there was a common-law parent or step-parent present in the home situation.

All these wards, therefore, suffered from the handicap of having experienced the loss and rejection of at least one parent before the final separation at the time of admission into care. This loss of the love of the parents associated with these acts of separation, and the usual guilt feelings which this arouses, exert a disturbing emotional influence on the child which must be dealt with before he is ready to accept substitute parents. The carry-over into adolescence of unresolved elements from earlier stages of emotional development is especially important in the case of children of such unsettled family backgrounds. The unsettling effect of being committed to care during adolescence, together with the normal increased stresses of that age, virtually precludes the possibility of successful, immediate placement in a foster home.

When the pre-admission care and experiences of the wards are summarized as in Appendix C it is apparent that all the wards have been subjected to one or more disabling influences during their formative years. Those factors in the children's situations which manifestly militate against a satisfactory personal and social adjustment have
been classified under several broad headings and their distribution among the fourteen wards is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Classification of Wards According to Type of Disabling Factor present in Family Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disabling Factor (a)</th>
<th>Total Number of Wards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried mother/father unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desertion</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Incapacity</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Incapacity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Ill Treatment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Friction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt Rejection</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute Parents in Private Placements</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) See Appendix C for items included under the different categories.

Private placement with relatives or strangers is a common experience among this group of wards, eight of them having had from one to ten or more placements before being admitted into care. Desertion and moral incapacity of the parents also rank high in frequency of occurrence with overt rejection, chronic friction and physical ill treatment being present in seventeen of the cases.

If the number of disabling factors present in the family background is totalled for each ward, we have the following revealing groupings:

- one disabling factor for wards # 2, 5, 7
- two disabling factors for wards 3, 4
- three disabling factors for wards 8, 10, 13, 14
- four disabling factors for wards 9, 11
- five disabling factors for wards 1, 6, 12
When the above data are related to the subsequent careers of the children a significant correlation emerges between the frequency in occurrence of the disabling factors and the difficulties in adjustment and development experienced by the wards.

Those wards, #'s 2, 5, and 7, who experienced only one of the main disabling influences prior to admission were the only three of the group who could be considered relatively well adjusted at the time of this survey. All those who experienced two or more disabling influences had difficulties in foster home adjustment. As will be seen under the discussion of adjustment of wards while in care, only one out of the five who experienced 4 or 5 of the disabling influences, did not go on to committal to the Boys' Industrial School. This ward, # 9, was able to benefit from placement in a group home (the Boys' Receiving Home) and so was able to avoid further deterioration. The other four were too disturbed to settle even in a group home as was evident in their running away and committing further delinquent acts.

The correlation between the unsettling early family experiences and the difficulties in later adjustment is understandable as well as apparent. If the child fails to have his physical and emotional needs met he will be unable to gain the security necessary to develop inner

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1 See Appendix D for discussion of the criteria used in rating adjustment.
strengths and so to modify his desires into socially acceptable channels. Anxiety and insecurity arising out of lack of love and protection during the early crucial stages of development will hinder the development of feelings of self-worth and inhibit the child's normal emotional development. Similarly the lack of an adequate father and mother figure makes it difficult for the child to identify with the appropriate parent as a symbol of acceptable social behavior.

The affects of desertion, rejection, private placement and physical ill treatment are all threatening to the basic feelings of security since they symbolize the withdrawal of love and affection from the child. In any stage of development these acts of separation and rejection are disastrous in their delaying, or preventing of, normal psycho-social development. The lack of normal, healthy family influences in the families where the parents are morally incapable or in constant friction is confusing as well as frightening to the child.

The overall picture of the pre-admission care of this group is one of lack of security and stability. With the realization of how upsetting and confusing the many disrupting and disabling influences would be to any child, it is to be expected that the majority of the wards studied would not be prepared to accept substitute parents or to adjust to the demands of a foster home.
Reasons for Admission to Care

Consideration was given to the reasons for admission to care since these are usually indicative of the pre-admission care given to the wards and of the element of rejection with which the child's committal is invested. In five of the cases the parents were unwilling to provide further care, and in five others they were either ill or incapable of caring for the children. In the remaining four cases the one parent having custody of the child was either ill or incapable as well as unwilling to provide care.  

The large proportion of this group in which there is rejection or unwillingness on the part of the parent to provide for the child's care is an indication of the harmful experience to which the majority have been subjected. Considering the fact that normal healthy, physical, mental and social development is dependent on a home atmosphere of affection and security, it is obvious that many of this group will have entered the agency care with incomplete satisfaction of their basic emotional and affectional needs, and requiring an extended period in a much more protected setting than the average foster home can provide.

1 Summarized from data included in Appendix D.
Table 3. Distribution of Ages of Wards at time of Admission to Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at Admission</th>
<th>Number of Wards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under seven years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven years to ten years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven years to fourteen years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over fourteen years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All except two of the fourteen wards entered the care of the agency after the age of seven years. Four came into care between the ages of seven and ten years and the remainder were admitted sometime after their eleventh birthday.

Of the group of twelve who were admitted after the age of seven years, nine exhibited the behavior problems listed at admission (See Appendix B). Of the three for whom there were no problems listed at admission, one began exhibiting problem behavior soon after admission.

It is significant that those who exhibited behavior problems at the time of admission into care were also the ones who had experienced a relatively large number of disabling influences in their pre-admission care. This disturbed behavior was not only a result of their unsettled family living, but also in some cases precipitated the final rejection by the parents with refusal to provide further for
their care.

Adjustment of the Wards while in Care

An evaluation of the foster home placement history of the fourteen wards in this survey revealed the following: two made a satisfactory adjustment in foster homes. These two included ward # 5 who was admitted to care at ten months of age and ward # 2 who was fairly well adjusted and was not exhibiting any problem behavior at admission. Three had made only a fair adjustment in foster homes (wards # 4, 9, and 14); three made a good adjustment in the Boys' Receiving Home after failing to settle in foster homes (wards # 3, 10 and 13); five failed to adjust in either setting (wards # 1, 6, 8, 11 and 12), and were committed to a correctional setting; and eight failed to make even a fair adjustment in foster homes.

Further examination of the information available regarding the eight who failed to adjust in foster homes suggested a tentative correlation between the number of disabling influences, the age at admission and the problems exhibited at admission, and the subsequent ability to adjust in the various settings.

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1 One of the wards, # 7 a girl aged 17 years, was only briefly in care and was placed directly in a commercial boarding home. Her period in care was too brief for any evaluation of adjustment to be made.
Three Wards who Benefited from Receiving Home Placement

Descriptive material concerning those wards who failed to settle in foster homes but settled in the Boys' Receiving Home is set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward #</th>
<th>Age at Admission</th>
<th>No. of Disabling Influences</th>
<th>Problems at Admission</th>
<th>Number of Foster Home Placements</th>
<th>Time in Boys' Receiving Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>9½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lying, stealing, disobedience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2½ &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lying, stealing, nervousness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3½ &quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These wards could not be expected to settle with immediate placement into foster homes because of their age at admission, the fact that they had experienced several disabling influences in pre-admission care, and that two were exhibiting problem behavior at admission (wards # 3 and 13). Although ward # 10 went through six foster homes in a four year period, he did settle and make progress during his two year stay at the Boys' Receiving Home. The other two also made similar progress during their stay at the Receiving Home in spite of the upset state they were in at the time of their first placement in the Receiving Home.
### Five Wards who Failed to Adjust in Either Foster Homes or the Receiving Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward #</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of Disability Influences at Admission</th>
<th>Problems at Admission</th>
<th>No. of Placements in Boys Receiving Home</th>
<th>No. of Placements for Home Correctional Institutions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3 - BIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11½</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>truancy, lying, running away</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 BIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>stealing, lying, running away</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 - BIS Oakalla Penitentiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12½</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>stealing, lying</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 - BIS Oakalla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>stealing, running away</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 BIS Oakalla</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above summary shows four wards who failed to adjust in either foster homes or the Boys' Receiving Home. All were eventually committed to a correctional institution and it is significant that they are among the group who experienced the largest number of pre-admission disabling influences. They also exhibited the most severe behavior problems at admission, made the poorest foster home adjustment and ran away from the Boys' Receiving Home before committal to the Boys' Industrial School and Oakalla. Four were admitted to care during adolescence. The fifth ward (ward # 8), who was admitted to care at the age of five years...
was so disturbed emotionally by the time he was replaced from his first foster home at the age of eleven years, that he failed to adjust in thirteen other foster homes in which he was placed in the next two years before being committed to the Boys' Industrial School on a charge of incorrigibility.

If the agency had carried out adequate diagnosis, and also had the resources to implement the required treatment plan, they would not have placed any of this most disturbed group into a foster home without a preliminary period in a controlled treatment setting. Many authorities who have worked with disturbed adolescents would question whether they should ever be placed in a foster home setting. The case records of this group of wards would indicate that even the best foster home would fail to meet their needs for the following reasons:

a) The severe testing which these insecure children placed upon foster parents.

b) The many conflicts around parental figures and sibling rivalry which these adolescents possessed because of their unhappy, insecure early years.

c) The pattern of delinquent or problem behavior that is so upsetting to foster parents, foster families and the community.

d) The severe emotional problems which arose out of their past unstable and upsetting family lives.
All wards averaged close to one social worker for every year in care. The exception was ward # 6 who had ten workers over a period of five and one half years.

This frequent change of workers is a significant factor in relation to a group of adolescent boys such as these. Without exception, all have experienced rejection from one or both parents or on the part of foster parents. To children subjected to such damaging emotional experiences the importance of a consistent relationship with some adult cannot be over-emphasized. However careful the preparation and interpretation may be, numerous and frequent changes of workers only serve to increase the child's feelings of rejection, insecurity and helplessness.
Use of the Commercial Boarding Home as a Placement Resource.

Reason for Placement and Length of Placement

Of the group of fourteen wards, twelve had been in their present commercial boarding home for a period of less than one and one half months. Of the remaining two boys, ward # 5 had been in his commercial boarding home for three and one half months and ward # 1 for a period of five and one half months.

Several reasons have accounted for their placement at this particular instance in commercial boarding homes and for the brief period they had been in them.

Ward # 1: had refused to consider another foster home after he was asked to move from his last foster home. He had spent three and one half months in this commercial boarding home but two weeks after the survey date he was committed to Oakalla for car theft.

Ward # 2: had come from his country foster home to attend the Vancouver Arts School one and one half months before. There were no foster homes available for a boy of his age at this time.

Wards # 3, 10 and 13: had gone directly to the commercial boarding home where they had been for the past month after returning from Army Cadet Camp in Vernon, B. C. They were not returned to the Boys' Receiving Home

1 As of October 31, 1954.
as their vacancies were required for younger boys. Foster home placement was not considered because of past experiences.

Ward #4: had been in this commercial boarding home only twenty days and had been in two other commercial boarding homes but was placed in this one on his return from an unauthorized hitch-hiking trip he had made to try and locate his mother in Ontario.

Ward #5: had been in this commercial boarding home for three and one half months. He had located this home himself and had been paying his own board until he was laid off employment a few weeks before. He had had various jobs in logging camps and had been self-supporting for most of the previous year.

Ward #6: had been in his commercial boarding home for only the past one and one half months as he had voluntarily discharged himself from Grease Clinic at that time. He would not consider foster home placement.

Ward #7: had only been in her commercial boarding home for one month as she had found it on her own after returning from a runaway with a boy friend to Eastern Canada. She was in the care of the agency for a few months before being returned to her mother. She would not consider a foster home placement.

Ward #8: had only been in his commercial boarding home for the previous ten days and had been held the previous week in Ward R of the Vancouver General Hospital for mental observation. He was committed to Essondale eleven
days later.

Ward # 9: had been in his commercial boarding home for one month and had been moved there from the Boys' Receiving Home because of his age and the need of the Boys' Home for younger boys. No suitable foster home was available for a boy of his age.

Ward # 11: had only been in his commercial boarding home for the previous two days, having come directly from the penitentiary. No suitable foster home was available for a boy of his age.

Ward # 14: had been in his commercial boarding home for the previous month after being returned from a runaway from a country foster home to Saskatchewan. There were no suitable foster homes available.

Of the three comparatively well adjusted in this group of fourteen wards (wards # 2, 5, and the girl ward # 7), wards # 5 and 7 had located their commercial boarding home on their own initiative.

The remainder of the group required a supervised setting but there were no foster homes available which could cope with their behavior. As pointed out in other sections, most of this group could not have had their needs met in a foster home setting. However, the agency would have considered placing most of them in foster homes rather than commercial boarding homes if such foster homes had been available.
Table 5. **Age of Wards at Time of the Survey** (October 31, 1954)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Ward</th>
<th>Number of Wards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 &quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 &quot;</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 &quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 &quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 &quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the time of the survey the age of the wards resident in commercial boarding homes ranged from fourteen years to nineteen years. Four were sixteen years old and five were seventeen years old, so that nine of the fourteen were in the sixteen to seventeen years age-range.

Ward # 8 was awaiting admission to the Provincial Mental Hospital and was only fourteen years old.

Ward # 13 was only fifteen years old and had recently moved from the Boys' Receiving Home where he had been a resident for two and one half years. Wards # 5 and 6 were eighteen years old and ward # 2, who was attending Arts School, was aged nineteen years.

In evaluating the placement of these wards in a commercial boarding home in relation to their age, it must be remembered that the majority are boys who have had such an unsettled and unhappy early life that they have been too insecure to develop the degree of maturity which one would expect to find in the average boy of comparable
age. In view of the fact that the average child of a normal family would not be encouraged to move into such an unsupervised setting at the age of sixteen or seventeen years, even if he had the security of steady employment, it is unfortunate that a recognized child protection agency should find it necessary to use such settings for children who are so disturbed as to require more, rather than less, supervision than the average child of their age. It is noteworthy that in every case the other occupants of these commercial boarding homes were older.

**Employment History as an Indication of Adjustment**

At the time of this survey all of the group were depending upon the agency for room and board as all were unemployed except ward # 2, who was attending Arts School. Although ward # 5 was unemployed at the time of the survey, he was to be recalled to his former employment with a beam fabricating company as soon as further contracts were received.

With the exception of wards # 2, 5 and the girl ward # 7, all the group had had a poor employment record as far as part-time jobs. Of this group only ward # 10 and ward # 13 could be considered even fair risks for holding employment. Wards # 1, 3, 8, 9 and 12 were particularly poor risks in securing employment because of their exaggerated sense of inferiority and helplessness. Wards # 4 and 14 could not be expected to hold any employ-
ment which placed more than a minimum of demands upon them because of their borderline intelligence and lack of controls. Wards #3, 6, 11 and 12 were particularly poor risks in maintaining any employment because of their hostility to anyone in authority and their inability to put up with frustration.

It is typical of all children who have been deprived of the security of loving and supportive parents to lack the inner strength required to tolerate frustration and to delay immediate gratification for the sake of some long-term good. These children have suffered from emotional deprivation and are unable to give to others. This inability to give is reflected in their poor performance in the employment setting. It is reflected in their inability to accept the directing authority of the employer or supervising foreman. This inability to function in the employment setting is apparent in the work record of all the wards except wards #2 and 5, and the girl #7.

For most of this group to obtain and maintain employment would require close and supportive supervision in the form of making certain that they were to work on time, in giving constant encouragement and direction, and in helping with budget-planning. Obviously the majority in commercial boarding homes were not receiving this support.
Descriptive Material on the Commercial Boarding Homes in Use at the Time of the Survey

Of the eight commercial boarding homes used by the fourteen wards in this study, one had two wards; another had three wards; and another had four wards; while the remaining five had one ward each.

Of the eight commercial boarding homes, three are operated by married couples with children; two by widows without children; while one is operated by an unmarried man and an assistant.

The A commercial boarding home was a big three story reconverted residence in the Fairview district. There were four wards in this home and from ten to twelve older men. The landlord operated the house and cooked the meals with the help of one elderly man as an assistant.

The B commercial boarding home was operated by a married couple. He worked at steady employment elsewhere. He was a recent immigrant from Europe and had married a widow with two children (a boy of five and a girl of eight) by her first marriage. They had as boarders ward # 2 who attended Arts School and a spinster of thirty.

The C commercial boarding home was operated by a widow with a boy of thirteen and a girl of fifteen years.

1 The code letters by which the various commercial boarding homes are identified in Appendix B.
The maternal grandfather also lived in the home. There were two of the wards in this home (wards #3 and 9).

The D commercial boarding home was operated by a married couple with no children. There were no other boarders at the time of this study.

The E commercial boarding home was operated by a widow. There were from thirteen to fourteen other boarders in this home—men of various ages who worked at various jobs.

The F commercial boarding home for girls was operated by a widow in the West End region of Vancouver. There were from six to eight other girls in this home.

The G commercial boarding home was operated by a married couple with two children (a boy of seven and a girl of six). There were three wards in this home and from four to six older men of various ages.

The H commercial boarding home was operated by a widow with two children. There were from four to six other older men boarding.

**The Suitability of the Commercial Boarding Homes**

In assessing the degree to which the needs of the wards were being met in the commercial boarding homes, it was found necessary to adopt a negative approach. The agency used the commercial boarding home only out of necessity and all supervising workers were unhappy with the unsuitability of such homes for the placement of adolescents.
Therefore, the descriptions of these homes were largely in terms of the degree to which they were least like the average commercial boarding home.

The chart below lists the seven main undesirable factors in relation to the placement of adolescents that are found in the average commercial boarding home, operated on the basis of achieving the greatest financial remuneration at the least outlay of capital and the least expenditure of energy. If such factors were descriptive of the commercial boarding homes used in this study this was noted on the chart.

Table VI. Classification of Factors Prejudicial to Successful Placement in the Eight Commercial Boarding Homes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfavorable Factors</th>
<th>Commercial Boarding Homes (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E   F   G   H   Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of supervision</td>
<td>x    x    x    x    x    x   6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly (lack of sympathy)</td>
<td>x    :    x    :    x    2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Physical plant</td>
<td>x    x    x    x    x    6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Housing area</td>
<td>x    :    x    :    x    2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main motivation financial</td>
<td>x    x    x    x    x    6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable companions</td>
<td>x    :    x    :    x    2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of understanding</td>
<td>x    x    x    x    x    5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Identified by code letters: see Appendix B
The lack of supervision is particularly important for the majority of this group since they are immature, insecure and largely unable to set limits for themselves. Most of them drift easily into the company of other inadequate individuals. They must be awakened in the morning and set out in time to begin employment and need support and encouragement to look after their personal health, appearance and finances. Only two of the eight commercial boarding homes gave supervision which could be considered adequate.

The cold unfriendly atmosphere of the commercial boarding home is especially oppressive to most of this group of adolescents who are so inadequate socially. Their many experiences of deprivation and rejection have left many with a low sense of personal worth and a lack of a sense of belonging. They require more support than the average adolescent, who has been brought up in a secure family, to move into satisfactory contacts with others of his age group. The common complaint of this group is that the commercial boarding home is "lonely", "barren" and "there is nothing to do". Although only two of the eight commercial boarding homes could be listed as completely lacking in warmth, it is also true that even the best was lacking in providing as friendly and homelike an atmosphere as should be desirable.
The run down nature of the commercial boarding home building itself is often depressing with its shabby exterior, dark, dingy hallways and small dreary bedrooms. Frequently there is little or no recreational and social area as the livingroom area is small, dingy or solely for the use of the landlord. With only the four bare walls of a bedroom there is little inducement for an adolescent "to stay off the streets at night". Six of the eight commercial boarding homes were buildings which were of this run down, over-crowded character.

Many commercial boarding homes are in the run down, slum-like areas of town although only two of the eight commercial boarding homes in this survey were in such areas. These areas are lacking in playgrounds, recreational resources and are generally inhabited by a large number of inadequate individuals of immoral or criminal nature.

The fact that the main motivation of the landlord or landlady is financial is indicative in itself of the disadvantage of such a setting for the placement of adolescents. In all but two of the eight commercial boarding homes this could be considered the main motivation.

Unsuitable companions in the commercial boarding homes is typical of many of these homes, although only two of this survey were unsatisfactory because of this. These two had from ten to twelve other boarders of various ages and of unknown character. In every case the other occupants were older. One of these homes also had four of our wards as boarders.
In each case evaluation of the home included an assessment of the emotional and moral support which was likely to be given to the adolescent ward. This would be determined mainly by the character of the landlord and landlady who, in the ideal setting, would give affection, guidance and support, depending upon the needs of the particular adolescent. Only three of the group of eight could be classified as giving even a minimum of understanding and moral support.

As seen in the description of the pre-admission care and placement history, this group was made up of immature, unhappy and inadequate youngsters. They are lacking in confidence, in social skills, in education and trade skills, in a sense of belonging and of self-worth and in ability to set limits for themselves. They require more rather than less guidance from adults than the average adolescent of their own age. The majority of this group have tried and failed to secure such help in the foster home setting. To develop into adequate members of the community they need an extended period in a supervised setting with skilled adults who can give them the required support and guidance. Even the best of the commercial boarding homes in this study fail to begin to approach the level of service which should be considered a minimum.
CHAPTER III

CASE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE GROUP OF FOURTEEN WARDS

The three cases chosen illustrate some of the significant factors which effect the development of many children who come into the care of a children's protective agency when the natural family fails to meet their needs. More particularly, the histories of these three children, both before and during the period of care, exemplify typical situations found among the group who are placed in commercial boarding homes. These three cases are:

**Ward # 5:** A boy who came into the care of the agency as an infant of ten months but whose foster family broke up when he was aged seven and a half years. This case illustrates the harmful and upsetting nature of immediate replacement into another foster home. It points up the results of the lack of adequate diagnosis and planning for foster children, and of the lack of sufficient foster homes or group home resources. It also illustrates how important the first few years of family living are in the psycho-social development of the child. In this case the boy eventually settles in another foster home and makes a fairly adequate adjustment. This is in contrast to the majority of the rest of the wards in this survey who experienced very upsetting early family ex-
periences and were unable to relate to foster parents.

Ward #6: A boy of twelve and one half years of age who enters the care of the agency during his adolescence, fails to adjust in foster homes or the Boys' Receiving Home, and is committed to the Boys' Industrial School on three occasions. This case is typical of three or four more of the wards in this survey in the degree of disturbance which it shows resulting from a long, upsetting family experience of rejection, neglect and desertion. The amount of conflict around parental figures and lack of feelings of security and worth is excessive in the case of this ward. He cannot accept foster parents because of his unhappy relationship to his natural parents. He is too insecure and demanding to accept group controls or gain acceptance by his peers. Even the correctional setting was unsatisfactory because of the lack of segregation and the lack of an intensive treatment program. This case is an example of the four or five of this group who should have secured help in a treatment home setting at an earlier age, or at least at the time of admission.

Ward #3: A boy who comes into care during his late latency or early adolescent stage of psychosexual development at the age of ten and one half years, fails to adjust in a foster home but makes some progress in the Boys' Receiving Home. This case is typical of three in this survey group who failed to adjust in foster homes but
did make a good adjustment in the group-home setting of the Boys’ Receiving Home. This case illustrates how a long series of pre-admission placements, rejection and desertion had led to confusion and insecurity and the exhibiting of problem behavior of stealing and lying. Foster home placement failed to lessen his conflicts, but in the group-home setting he was able to test without being rejected, could better accept limits placed on him, and responded positively to group influences and the greater permanency of the home.

Case 1

Al was born in March 1936, of an unmarried mother who was mentally defective. Her parents reported that she was mentally retarded as the result of an attack of spinal meningitis when a child. The mother was later sterilized with the encouragement of her parents.

Al was placed in a private boarding home directly from the hospital, the plan being that the putative father would assist in payments for his care. The father was a carpenter of almost twice the mother’s age who was unemployed for a long period of time and so was unable to pay for Al’s maintenance. When the private boarding home mother no longer received payments from the maternal grandparents she notified them that she would not keep Al and so the grandparents requested that the Children’s Aid Society assume guardianship. He was therefore admitted to care at ten months of age.
Since the adoption policy of the agency at that time did not approve of adoption placement of babies of mentally defective parents, Al was placed in a foster home on a long term, indefinite basis.

Al spent six and one half years in this first foster home. The stability which this home offered him is in contrast to the unsettled family life of the majority of the group who subsequently found their way to commercial boarding homes. It would seem that it was the strength which he gained during these formative years which sustained him through the unsettled period which he experienced after the age of seven and a half years. The records for this period, however, describe his slow mental development. He appeared healthy but had a "dull expression". During his early years he experienced some difficulty with tonsils, adenoids and colds.

At the age of five years, Al was admitted to hospital for the removal of his tonsils and adenoids. In August of 1941, at the age of five and one half years, the file states: "Al is an affectionate little boy and foster parents are inclined to treat him a little too much as if he were still a baby".

At the age of almost six years, he was placed temporarily with a widow foster parent while the foster mother spent two months in hospital for treatment on her hip. The transfer summary on file at this time informed the new worker for Al that Al had received good care and
training in his foster home since admission, but that they were inclined to baby him. He was described as appearing to be "a little below normal in mentality. He is not able to understand that foster parents are not his own parents". The new worker described him as "a happy youngster, well behaved but too dependent on foster parents".

Al began school at the age of six and one half years. A new worker took over Al at this time and remained his worker for the next four difficult years of replacements. His school standing was D, but he was described as "not working to capacity".

On February 2, 1943, the day after Al's seventh birthday, the foster mother came to the agency to state that the foster father had left her to live with another woman. During the next two months the foster parents attempted to reestablish their marriage, but when separation became final, the foster mother asked for replacement of Al. The foster mother was extremely fond of Al but felt she could not offer him much. The records stated: "Al seems quite attached to this family and it is felt that it will be difficult to find a home where he will settle down and be as contented as he is at present."

Second foster home placement at the age of seven and one half years: On June 7, 1943 Al was admitted to the Vancouver General Hospital for possible mastoid condition. He was discharged five days later and taken to
his first replacement into another foster home. Al refused to go into the new foster home, stating that his former foster mother would not know where he was staying. He was taken back to his first foster parents who tried to explain that they could no longer look after him and wanted him to go to his new foster home.

The records would seem to indicate a quick adjustment in this new home. A month after replacement an office visit was arranged for Al and his first foster mother. Al repeated Grade 1B and his report in October of 1943 described him as "listless, dreaming, inattentive and not working to capacity". The next month the foster mother reported he complained of pains in his right leg and his side. The next month there were the first reports from school of petty thievery by Al. During Christmas his first foster mother visited after Al had gone to sleep, kissed him and cried, but did not wake him. The child was frequently ill with colds and ear trouble that winter.

On May of 1944, at the age of eight years, Al was tested by the Bureau of Measurements and his I.Q. was determined to be 58. He was therefore put in Special Class.

In December of 1944, at the age of eight years ten months, Al was admitted again to the Vancouver General for removal of his tonsils and adenoids. Later that month his foster mother became ill and was hospitalized. On December 29, 1944, at the age of eight years ten months, he
was moved to his third foster home. Al exhibited odd behavior at nights and this worried the new foster mother. His worker had difficulty in convincing Al that he could not return to his second foster home as he continued to request to return there because he did not like his new foster home. On April 4th, after three months of placement, Al ran away to relatives of his second foster parents. He continued to find it hard to accept the fact that he could not return to his second foster home and continued to be unhappy with his third foster home. His second foster father also explained why they could not take him back while the foster mother was in hospital.

On April 13, 1945 at the age of nine years one month, Al was moved to his fourth foster home. The foster parents took an immediate liking to Al but were worried about his queer behavior and "spells". The foster mother described his wandering around at night, groaning at night and making peculiar noises by day. The school testing stated his I.Q. rating had gone down to between 58 and 53. Seven days after his placement he was moved to the Receiving Home for observation.

This period prior to placement in the Receiving Home is typical of the damaging effect of replacement on a child who is upset and frightened by the loss or rejection of his substitute parents. His regression under the strain of this fear of rejection and loss is evident in the reports
of the school and foster parents. The school report at this time stated that Al was "irresponsible, destructive and unreasonably wilful". He was an exceptionally slow pupil with a very limited power of concentration. He had a poor attitude to work. He resented discipline and occasionally staged a tantrum in which he would kick, hit back and be most impertinent.

During the four months stay in the Receiving Home Al made steady improvement. He was described as having "lost his rather frightened, worried expression which he has had for so long, and seems to be much more at ease". However, he ran away from the Receiving Home to his second foster home and they agreed later to take him back. He made good progress in this home and the school report now stated he was working to capacity. After approximately eight months the foster parents notified the agency that they had bought a small store with two small rooms and so would not be able to keep Al and the other boy in the home.

Al was replaced in his fifth foster home at the age of ten years and one month. He had been seen at the Child Guidance Clinic while at the Receiving Home and they had recommended further investigation regarding his leg difficulties and pains in his side. Later examination in hospital revealed no physical basis for the complaints.

Al had begun to deteriorate again when he was moved for the second time from the second set of foster
parents. The new foster parents, his fifth, found him very likable and obedient at the start, but when he began testing them they became worried. He tested more severely than on previous occasions which is typical of the child who is being frequently replaced. One example was his refusal to go to bed until everyone else had done so.

The school teacher's report at this time stated: "Al has been very upset since moving from his former foster home and has shown a great deal of nervousness".

The foster parents then asked that Al be moved from the home because of his upset behavior. He had been in this home for three months during which time the foster parents had wavered between giving him up and keeping him permanently.

In his sixth foster home Al again made a strong attempt to make attachments. Although this home was a very long way from a special-class school, it was decided to keep him in special class. His teacher reported, "He even finds it a struggle to keep up in special class. His I.Q. is 53 and he is the least hopeful of the children." Al liked this home and there was no difficulty regarding going to bed. He continued to request visits with his second foster mother and these were arranged at the office.

During the past trying four years, Al had had the same worker. This was probably of great help to Al in sustaining him through the numerous changes in foster homes.
At this time, however, the worker left the agency and there began a period with changing workers.

Al's new foster mother began talking of replacement after eight months as he did not seem to be progressing and was too much responsibility. Various other reasons were given, such as the distance to school and the coming of her parents to live in the home, as reasons for replacement. Finally when Al threw a stone at his foster mother instead of putting it down as she told him to, she asked for his immediate replacement. He was moved to his seventh foster home at the end of June of 1947 at the age of eleven years four months.

Al spent the next five years in this foster home. The foster parents were long-experienced ones, who were known to be very accepting of backward children but who did have difficulty with older teenagers. By late fall Al's improvement was evidenced by a surprising improvement in his I.Q. rating which had now risen to 85, while his achievement quotient had risen from 113 to 114. He was seen again at the Child Guidance Clinic after six months in this home, and tested in the slow-normal to normal group.

After one year in this home he was described by his teacher as "without doubt the most intelligent of the children in the Special Class". The teacher stated he had improved tremendously since going to his last foster
home. It is interesting to note that during the unsettled period between the breaking up of his first foster home at the age of six years until the settling in his seventh home at the age of eleven years, his intelligence quotient had deteriorated to a level where the special class teachers and the Bureau of Measurement seriously questioned his capacity to benefit from school. This is in contrast to the school report of July 1949 which stated that he was now so bright that he was no longer at special-class level.

After several years difficulties arose between Al and his foster mother as he began to resort to fairly normal adolescent rebellion and independence. He remained in the home until the combination of Al's "cheekiness" and the poor health of the foster mother led to plans for replacement.

At the age of sixteen years he was moved to his last foster home in which he made a good adjustment while taking a vocational course in cooking. He then left for employment in logging camps and was unemployed at the time when this study was made. He was re-employed with his former employer shortly after that date and again became self-supporting.

Al is a boy in which the pre-admission care until the age of ten months in a private boarding home may have been lacking in stimulus to more rapid development of his mental abilities. Whether this is true or not, it is likely that
the affection and security to the point of over-protection which Al experienced during his placement in his first foster home until the age of seven years, laid the basis for the strength which eventually carried him through the difficult period of rejections and replacements which he experienced for the next four years. The early period of relative calm and security enabled Al to progress favorably, psychologically and socially, during the most important formative years. This is in marked contrast to the uncertainty, rejection and general unhappiness which was experienced by the remainder of this group, whose natural families broke down over a longer period of time and at a later time.

Al's problems in care began after the breakup of his first foster home at the age of seven years. The agency endeavoured in every way to support him and his foster parents towards successful readjustment. Although an intermediate placement in a Receiving Home after his first foster home broke up might have served to ease the break and to have made easier his move into the second foster home, it is certain that such a receiving home placement after the break-up of his second foster home was a real necessity. Careful planning at this time, based on sound diagnosis and evaluation, would have helped Al to deal with the confusion and rejection which he was then experiencing and might also have avoided the subsequent disruptive and unhappy experiences of further foster home
rejections, escape into psychosomatic illnesses and withdrawal in the school setting.

Although the use of the Receiving Home after the failure of his fourth foster home permitted Al to regain some of his sense of security and stability, the records do not indicate that any attempt was made to take advantage of that period to help Al deal with the confusion he must have had at that time as to who his parents or foster parents were, and why he could not be with them. All his replacements to this date had been carried out without satisfactory preparation, explanation, pre-placement visiting or satisfactory long-term planning. The story reflects the too often repeated pattern of the overtaxed worker who replaces the child on an emergency basis in the only home available, or in one of the few homes available at the moment, in the hope that eventually the child will settle. The folly of this procedure of continual replacement may be better appreciated when it is realized that, as in the case of Al, the testing of each new foster parent becomes more exaggerated as one set of foster parents is replaced by another. Each rejection serves to increase the amount of evidence of acceptance and love which the child demands as proof that these new foster parents will not also let him down.

The nature of Al's early development would indicate that he had gained sufficient physical and emotional satisfactions to be able to benefit from the foster home sit -
uation. However, the use of a receiving home, together with adequate diagnosis, planning and treatment before further replacement, may have saved this boy the long and, no doubt, damaging period of replacements. Had this pattern of continual replacements continued for a further period beyond his eleventh year, it is quite possible that a serious pattern of maladjustment would have become established concurrent with the usual more demanding period of adolescence.

AI did eventually make as good a personal and social adjustment as might be expected of a boy of his ability. He had located the commercial boarding home he was living in at the time of this survey, was reasonably happy with his lot, had a good attitude to the agency and a good sense of responsibility, and again became self-supporting shortly after the survey.

Case 2: A boy requiring intensive help in a treatment setting

Joe is an example of a boy who, entering the care of the Children's Aid Society during adolescence is so confused in his feelings towards parental figures, and so hostile to any directing adult, that it is virtually impossible to hold him either in a foster home or a group-living home. His pattern parallels that of wards # 1, 11 and 14 in that they were similarly admitted during their early adolescence or adolescent age and were in such a confused state as to their feelings towards their parents that they were unable to settle in a foster home and eventually
went on to correctional institutions.

The reasons for Joe's confused and disturbed state by the time that he was admitted to care at the age of twelve and one half years emerge clearly from a study of his family constellation and his unhappy experiences before admission. The father first contacted our agency when Joe was eleven years old to state that he wished to "get rid of" Joe because he had always been a behavior problem with his lying, stealing and fighting. At that time his mother stated that she was planning to leave her husband because he had been running around with other women for the past five years. She put all the blame on her husband for Joe's poor behavior because he always contradicted her authority so that there was always inconsistency or no limits at all for Joe. The father also admitted that for the last three years Joe and his brother, Jack, had been left alone most of the time while the parents went their separate ways.

The father was later sentenced to a month in jail for bootlegging and the mother deserted with another man. The boys then experienced a year of frequent moves to the grandmother and to several private boarding homes. The real damage to Joe, however, had come about much earlier through the rejection on the part of both parents in favor of his older brother, Jack, who was a model boy in both appearance and behavior. An intense sibling rivalry had been aggravating Joe's feelings of lack of worth and lack of security. Joe's intense feelings towards his brother
are evident in the following extract from the case records:

"During this visit Joe expressed great hostility and feeling towards all his family, and during this discussion showed great tension in all he did and said. He hated both his parents; they beat him up. His father and mother were so good to Jack; they took him (Jack) everywhere while he stayed at home. He remembers once when his father really beat him up; how Jack stayed in the kitchen laughing at him and drinking a bottle of pop. He said his mother was always after him or kicked him out".

When Joe and his brother came into care they exhibited such hostility to one another that the foster parents insisted Joe be moved by the second day. He went through three other foster homes and summer camp in the next month and a half because of his uncontrollable behavior. He spent almost a year in his fifth foster home, but it was a stormy placement in which a student worker was almost always on hand to support Joe in the foster home and in the school. Although this was an unusual foster home to the extent that the foster parents put up with such a constant turmoil, it was not satisfactory in other respects. Joe himself later stated he liked this home "because she (the foster mother) let me do just as I liked". Finally the foster parents stated they could only "put up" with Joe until the end of the school term.

One of the disrupting influences affecting Joe's adjustment in a foster home was the constant, dis-
turbine interference on the part of his father. It was impossible to gain cooperation from the father and it was impossible, and probably not advisable from a treatment point of view, to break the boy's compelling desire to seek out his father. However, the relationship of the father to Joe was an unhealthy one. The father had always boasted that Joe could beat up any other boy of his age. He had always told Joe "the world owes you a living--get it". He had always encouraged the brothers to resist authority. He himself was like an adolescent in his arrogance, his flashy dress, his ostentation of gaudy, gadget decorated cars, his aggressive and insolent manner and his hostility to all in authority. On one occasion he telephoned the agency and the case record reports the following: "He felt that the Children's Aid Society was going to have their hands full with Joe. Father implied that since he had not been able to do anything, nobody would, but did say that perhaps the agency could straighten Joe out. Father said that he had tried everything and even gave Joe a beating almost every night". The case record indicates incident after incident in which the father acts out the part of the "big shot" before Joe and his brother and behaves in a way to upset Joe in his foster home. The workers believed that the father felt guilty about failing to keep the boys "under his thumb" and so could not allow the agency to help the boys achieve security and make
attachments to foster parents.

When Joe was moved to the Boys' Receiving Home he spent a stormy month during which he constantly rebelled against routines and rules. He was continually in conflict with the other boys. Joe is an example of a boy who is too unsettled to benefit from a group home. He was still at the stage where he required help on an individual basis in, for example, a treatment home or a subsidized boarding home where he could be helped to work out his conflicts and fears around the rejection and abuse of his parents.

After one month in the Receiving Home, Joe was placed in the Vancouver Detention Home charged with accompanying another boy from the Receiving Home on several incidents of breaking into stores and thieving. Joe had been seen at the Child Guidance Clinic after about six months in care, and the Clinic was used on many occasions on a consultative basis during the next three years. On the basis of the decisions of a conference held at this time, the Court agreed to probation and replacement in the Receiving Home. Joe continued to carry on in an unmanageable way, truanted and finally ran away to the Interior with another boy, stole a car and was returned to the Detention Home. He was committed to the Boys' Industrial School at the age of fourteen years.

During the next two years Joe was committed to the Boys' Industrial School on two more occasions. He spent
seven months on the first committal, and then spent two months in a foster home of his own choosing before being recommitted for another seven months on a charge of breaking and entering. On release he spent six months in the home of the first social worker Joe had had at the agency. Although this was a period in which Joe made further progress his replacement was finally decided upon because of increasingly unmanageable behavior and the pregnancy of the foster mother. After a four month period during which Joe was fired from several jobs in town and from one in a mining camp, and was evicted from two rooming houses and the home of his grandmother, he was committed to the Industrial School for the third time on a charge of car theft.

After a period of five months he was released to find employment in a soft-drink plant. He later went through several jobs, each of which he held only briefly, as he would leave in a huff or be fired for fighting. Within a period of eight months he passed through several commercial boarding homes, at least eight rooming houses, and four hotels before being placed in the Detention Home on a charge of vagrancy. Two weeks after being released from here he was again charged with car theft and sentenced to six months in Oakalla. His release from Oakalla was made conditional on his voluntarily entering Crease Clinic, which he did, but he left after ten days with the Clinic reporting they could not help him. He spent the next two
and a half months in the commercial boarding home he was in at the time of this survey.

Shortly after this time Joe's case was the subject of a special study held as part of a Study Institute at a Provincial Probation Branch Conference. In this study the workers from the interested agencies, i.e. the Children's Aid Society, the Child Guidance Clinic, the Vancouver Detention Home, the Probation Department, and the Boys' Industrial School, all presented reports on the work which they had done with Joe. The picture was one of a constant attempt to give support to Joe in helping him accept the limits and responsibilities required of him, and to work out a happier relationship towards adults and to live with his conflicting feelings about his parents. The general consensus of opinion was that at admission to care of the Children's Aid Society Joe was not in a position to benefit from foster home placement since his main need was to work out his feelings towards his parents. Through the use of the correctional settings Joe was gradually helped to accept more frustrations and the limitations imposed by society. There were many setbacks, however, because of the many changes of workers and settings, and the lack of controls and resources.

Joe could not be given the protection or the supervision that he required either in the foster homes, correctional institutions or commercial boarding homes.
His relationship with his peers will always be strained because of his exaggerated need to prove his own worth. His relationship with authority-figures, such as the police and employers, will always be stormy because of his conflicting feelings around his father. His life in general is an unhappy turmoil because of his inability to withstand frustration and his persistently ambivalent feelings towards "mother persons" and his unsatisfied need for dependency.

Accurate diagnosis at the time of admission of the extent and nature of this boy's disturbance would have indicated that his needs could not be met by any of the resources of the agency or of the community. The very nature of a foster home, with its substitute parents, would aggravate the conflict which this boy had around parental figures. Even the ordinary group or receiving home would have difficulty in helping this boy in view of his inability to accept group controls or to achieve status in an ordinary group of boys of his own age.

The commercial boarding home was an unhappy setting for Joe since he was always clashing with both the landladies and the other boarders. Joe could make quick friends by his outgoing, solicitous manner, but he soon isolated himself by his sensitivity to criticism, his aggressive strivings to play the part of the "wise guy", his boastfulness and his violent temper. The commercial boarding home also failed to provide the limitations and
protection which Joe needed. This was shown very clearly
during the period before Joe's last return to the Boys' Industrial School and Oakalla. As he was ejected from
one commercial boarding home and rooming house after
another he became more aggressive and unreasonable in the employment situation and had to seek out more disreputable characters to gain some sort of acceptance until, it would seem, he had to resort to car theft to stop this continuous circuitous path of rejections.

Joe might have been prevented from deteriorating to the degree which he did if he could have been placed from the time of admission in a less conflict-arousing setting than a foster home, a setting in which contacts with the father could have been controlled and limitations could have been balanced with affection and acceptance. A good subsidized boarding home with good psychiatric supervision might have helped this boy at admission but ideally he should have had intensive psychiatric help in a treatment-home setting before eventual placement in a subsidized boarding home or a group-living home.
Case 3: An adolescent boy who was helped by a group-home placement

Ward #3 was chosen as a case illustration because his case is typical of many boys who enter care during early adolescence and who are psychologically unsuited for immediate foster home placement.

Ben was born in 1938 into what is reported to have been a comparatively happy home. It is quite likely that Ben experienced a satisfactory early life until the age of three years, at which time his mother died while his father was away in the armed services. From this time on his life was unsettled and lacking in security. He spent the next two years with a neighbor and then one year with an aunt.

At the age of seven years he came with his sister and father to this province where he was placed privately while his father made monthly visits. The next year he and his sister were moved to another home. From the age of eight until age ten Ben and his sister lived with the father, but they then moved to Vancouver and Ben and his sister were again placed in a private boarding home. After six months the private boarding home mother asked for replacement as Ben had been "lying and stealing almost constantly". He was admitted to the agency's care in the spring of 1949 at the age of eleven years.
On admission Ben was placed immediately into a foster home of a long-experienced foster mother who was "quite strict, unfortunately not too affectionate, but quite understanding and capable". During the first year in this foster home there were minor incidents of stealing from stores and some lying. Ben voiced his disappointment at not having been contacted by his father, but his father could not be located at that time. Ben made some tie to the foster father and the case record reported: "Mrs. E. said that Ben is Mr. E.'s pet. Mr. E. is very fond of him". Three months later the foster father died. When the two other boys in this home were moved Ben showed increased anxiety. His foster mother had frequently used the threat of removal to discourage Ben's delinquency. At this time Ben's school adjustment deteriorated rapidly. There were violent outbursts of temper and complete unwillingness to conform to school regulations. Ben was moved into special class but still failed to settle, complained of his teachers, and was finally expelled as unmanageable.

Placement in a receiving home at admission for the purpose of diagnosis would probably have discovered Ben's difficulties in relating to female figures and have helped him keep up a contact with his father. Ben made some approach towards a male worker during his stay in his first foster home, but was completely uncooperative with the next female worker. Some explanation for this inability to re-
late to female figures may be found in the desertion of his mother through death when he was three years old. Further hostility was probably built up through the many experiences of rejection and desertion associated with the frequent changes of homes in his earlier life. In his first foster home in the agency's care, the foster mother accentuated his feelings of insecurity by threatening to have him replaced when he was caught at stealing or lying. When the new female worker attempted to help Ben continue at school he refused to see her as she also represented authority. Ben had resisted placement and cried when removed from the private boarding home he was in at the time of entering care, and again resisted the move from his first foster home to the Boys' Receiving Home at the age of thirteen years.

Ben found it difficult to adjust to the rules of the Receiving Home and group-life experience. He complained of being "picked on" by the other boys. He had frequent outburst of temper against the limitations of the home, the regulations of the school and the punishment of other boys. He was able to continue, however, by being able to go at any time to his new male worker with whom he could discharge some of his hostility in outbursts and long talks and then receive support and encouragement to carry on.
Ben made slow but steady progress when new house parents came to the Receiving Home. He formed a good relationship with both and the improvement in Ben was remarkable. There was a decline in his outbursts against authority, and in delinquent behavior. The worker recorded the following: "Ben began to relate well with the house father and his trouble with authority began to lessen. He then was able to move very closely to the housemother. Here, he received a good deal of affection and attention which he had missed previously. Over a period of two months, Ben changed completely. He was happier, made friends more easily, was cooperative and helpful around the home".

The house parents again left the agency and Ben regressed to his former pattern of temper outbursts and stealing. The worker and the Juvenile Court authorities put greater pressure on him to conform and there was a slow improvement as Ben began to relate to the new house parents. The leaving of the former house parents had represented another desertion by a mother figure as well as a father figure. It was not as serious, however as the breakup of a foster home would have been, since Ben did not also have to readjust to a new school, a new home setting, a new worker and new friends. He was beginning to gain from the limitations and controls which the Receiving Home presented. His own precarious control over his impulses was strengthened by the consistency of the Receiving Home's
rules, the support of his worker and the group sense of belonging which the Home provided.

During the next year Ben made particularly good progress, in which the services of a student who worked closely with the agency on an evening groupwork program, using the facilities of the Home and the nearby neighborhood-house gym and woodwork shop, undoubtedly played a part. After two years in the Home the record summary states: "Ben has continued his progress in the Receiving Home in recent months. He has not been any kind of behavior problem and his temper outbursts have ended. He has become more of a "leading citizen" in the home and somewhat of a stabilizing influence. This is indeed a new role for Ben".

During the next year he made further progress as an outstanding member of Army Cadets. His school behavior continued to improve although his teachers remarked upon his lack of respect for property. When he returned at the end of summer from army cadet-training, he was placed at the age of sixteen years in a commercial boarding home as the Receiving Home was urgently needed for the placement of more upset boys and Ben was by now considerably older than the others in the Home. He failed to make a satisfactory adjustment in the first commercial boarding home because of his inability to get along with the other boy in the home. He was placed in a second commercial
boarding home where he settled better but continued to have difficulty securing employment. He had, in the meantime, broken into a coca-cola dispenser and was placed on probation.

The placement history of Ben illustrates the difficulties experienced by a boy who has been considerably disturbed by an unsettled early life in attempting to satisfy his emotional needs and to adjust to a foster home. The Receiving Home served as a treatment home in providing the protective setting where he could test without being expelled, and could receive the acceptance and support he needed to meet the limitations and demands of school, community and family living.

This history also illustrates the need for a group home or subsidized boarding home for older boys to aid in the transition period when they are moving out from a foster or receiving home and still need some support and supervision until employment has been secured and they are ready to meet the demands of complete independence.

Ben had difficulties in moving directly from the protected setting of the Boys' Receiving Home to the unsupervised setting of a commercial boarding home. This pattern of having difficulty in moving into the virtually unprotected and unsupervised setting of a commercial boarding home was repeated in the case of the majority of the boys in this study who moved from foster homes and the Boys' Receiving Home to a commercial boarding home.
CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey of the past and present adjustment of the fourteen wards of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver residing in commercial boarding homes has revealed the unsuitability of this form of setting for these wards. The nature of these homes is such that even a well adjusted adolescent with a stable family background would find living in them difficult. The majority of the wards resident in these homes had experienced such unsettled lives with their own parents and in foster homes that they were even less able to cope with the demands of such a setting and the resulting lack of supervision, support and guidance.

The care which child-caring agencies are giving to dependent children is not commensurate with the general welfare level of our society. It would seem that there is general acceptance of the importance and necessity for a comprehensive program for the meeting of children's needs, not only because these are considered the rights of all children, but also because without proper care during the formative years they may become a greater public burden as future inmates of prisons and hospitals. We are a wealthy
nation, and yet we are failing to provide satisfactory child-care services for want merely of adequate resources. The use of the commercial boarding homes by the Children's Aid Society is only one example of the numerous expedients to which child-caring agencies have to resort because of the limited funds at their disposal; unhappily these expedients are always to the detriment of the children.

The Need for a Variety of Placement Resources

It is noteworthy that all the wards studied were placed directly into foster homes on coming into care. In view of the family history, the nature of the pre-admission care, and their behavior problems at admission it can only be assumed that either (a) there was a lack of study, diagnosis and planning at admission, or/and (b) there were no resources available at the time other than the foster homes in which they were placed. For example, in the case of ward #12 of this survey, the agency was able to learn of the background, the behavior and problems of this boy before they placed him, since it was a period of several weeks after the court decision for committal before a foster home was located. The fact is that whatever the agency diagnosed in regard to his needs or determined as the necessary plan of treatment, there was, in actuality, no choice available of suitable foster homes, nor of any other placement resource, nor were the case loads low enough to give the boy and foster parents the casework support required for successful placement. In the
case of the majority, even less was known of the background at admission so that the initial placement could only be haphazard at the very best.

Furthermore, in spite of the aggressive and hostile behavior of a large number of the wards in this study, there was no alternative in most cases but to place them in another foster home or commit them to the Industrial School after the breakdown of one foster home placement. Three were eventually helped by residence in the Boys' Receiving Home, but the number of boys which this home can accommodate is only a small portion of the number requiring placement in it. Replacement in another foster home is a losing battle. Each replacement increases the child's feelings of rejection and insecurity, increases the severity of his testing and increases the barrier against the help which might have been given him. The unhappy experience of the foster parents discourages them from providing a home for another child and also discourages other prospective foster parents in the community.

The problem is one not only of limited placement resources but also of limited casework services which individual social workers can give to each case. The non-intervention of the social worker except at times of emergency is indicative of the support which was given to the wards and the foster parents in this study. Too high case loads together with low salaries have discouraged many
workers from longer service in the agency so that this turnover is one additional disrupting factor tending to increase the insecurity and confusion of wards. Here again, the lack of sufficient resources is not consistent with the concern which society expresses in the welfare of its children.

A. Receiving Home and Diagnostic Centre:

The most conspicuous need which emerges from the present study is for an induction centre for the placement of all children at admission to care and for reassessment between placements. In this centre study, diagnosis and planning would be carried out for the purpose of assuring the greatest possibility of successful initial placement. The placement would be planned to suit the needs of the individual child according to his physical, mental and emotional development. This would involve a careful assessment of his natural family relationships, his psycho-sexual development, his ego and superego strengths, and, from this, his needs for support and treatment. A decision would then be made as to whether foster home, adoptive home or institutional treatment would be the most appropriate. This process would help to minimize the possibility of further damage to the child arising out of the rejection and upsetting experience of replacement.

A period in such a neutral setting is important moreover, to enable the child to adjust to the loss of his family and to the acceptance of substitute parents. At the time of coming into care, each child would be given acceptance,
support and help with his conflicting feelings around parental rejection and the sense of guilt associated with this break. Such a setting would facilitate contact with the natural family and relatives particularly in regard to the possible return of the child to his natural parents, as well as to the nature of the parental contacts which might be encouraged.

There would be a planned and prepared movement towards the new setting of a foster home, adoptive home or institutional home in accordance with the diagnosis. A relationship of confidence between the child and the social worker and the agency as a whole would be built up at this time to assist the child in moving towards accepting substitute parents. The social worker would then act as a bridge between the child's own parent or parents and his new substitute parents. This includes working with both the natural and foster parents as a means of helping the child adjust in the new setting and accept placement. It requires working with the natural parent to accept the best possible plan for the child, and supporting the foster parents in understanding and accepting the child's difficulties in placement and his ambivalent feelings and loyalties to his own parents and siblings.

Pre-placement visits to the prospective foster home (or adoptive home) could be carried out in order to lessen the child's fears of the new setting and to observe whether there are the necessary beginnings of the parent-
child love and acceptance. In this preparation of the child for the move towards his new parents the support of the natural parents should be enlisted whenever possible, especially where the plan is for eventual return to the natural parent.

The institutional resources of the Children's Aid Society include, in actuality, three Receiving Homes. There is the 59th Avenue Receiving Home, with accommodation for twelve boys and girls under ten years of age; the Boys' Receiving Home for ten boys of eleven to fourteen years; and the Girls' Receiving Home for ten girls over the age of eleven years. These homes, however, are only occasionally used as receiving homes and are used instead chiefly as holding units for children unable to settle in a foster home setting. The 59th Avenue Receiving Home more frequently serves the function of a true receiving home in that it is used for some emergency initial placements, while there is some movement of the children back into foster home placement. As a rule, however, the homes are being used mostly as long-term, indefinite institutional homes where some treatment plan is attempted to reduce the disturbance of the children placed there.

The vast majority of new admissions to the Children's Aid Society are placed directly into foster homes, the greater proportion of them being admitted on an emergency basis and immediately placed in one of the
few foster homes available at the time. The lack of any true receiving-home arrangement for new admissions is possibly the most serious lack, and the most significant single factor, contributing to the numerous replacements and the establishment of more fixed patterns of disturbance in children admitted to care. What this costs in extra agency time involved in replacement and in continuing damage to dependent children is a factor too serious to ignore. It is a tragedy how so many children are permanently damaged by the haphazard initial placement and continuing replacements simply because of this lack of resources.

B. Boys' and Girls' Residences or Group Homes:

Although the establishment of a comprehensive diagnostic admission centre is possibly the greatest single service required at present, there is also a great need for a variety of institutional settings for those children who are unable to have their needs met in foster homes. The use of commercial boarding homes for this purpose is inexcusable for the reason that the care which these homes provide is on a level with what might be legally classified as parental neglect.

The present Boys' Receiving Home and Girls' Receiving Home are examples of the form of group home which is required for the various age groups. Since the needs of children vary as to age, interest, and psycho-social
development, a variety of settings are required, to include (a) separate residential units for children of different age range and different stages of development, (b) group homes for working boys and girls as distinct from those attending school.

Children admitted to care during adolescence will frequently not be able to adjust in a foster home, since the natural adolescent—striving for independence from parental figures is in conflict with the foster parents' wish to receive the adolescent as a member of the family. Group homes with skillful house parents do not precipitate to the same extent further conflicting feelings in the child around the loss or rejection of his parents.

Group homes provide a far more satisfactory setting for working with some natural parents. There is frequently not the clash of personalities, nor the conflict of loyalties which occurs when some children are placed in foster homes. The institutional form of care does not present as threatening a situation to the parent or child as that of having substitute foster parents succeed where the natural parents have failed, nor does it so obviously take the place of the natural parents in the affections of the children.

Group homes also provide a protective setting for the child who has experienced a long series of rejections and who has felt deeply the insecurity of change of
homes and parents. Even when house parents are replaced there is at least the continuity of the same home, school and foster siblings. Through the group home there is greater control of the resources and circumstances which can be used for the treatment needs of the child. House parents can be chosen who possess special talents, training and ability, and who can co-operate with the agency and other services integral to the treatment plan.

C. Subsidized Boarding Homes:

Such homes are needed for the placement of a relatively small number of children who cannot adjust to the parental demands of a foster home and are also not secure enough to function in a group. The subsidy, moreover, is a means to encourage foster parents of exceptional ability to give care to children with special needs, such as the handicapped child. Extra remuneration to certain homes is now being given in the recognition that such compensation is required where the impersonal relationship offers less satisfaction and often places greater demands on the houseparents.

D. Treatment Home for Disturbed Children:

The study of the fourteen wards resident in commercial boarding homes revealed that at least four had been victimized by such traumatic experiences over such a long time before admission to care that they required the help which only a treatment home could give. They were aggressive, hostile, delinquent and given to repeated
absconding, so that neither a foster home nor the Boys' Receiving Home was able to cope with their behavior. They were all committed to the Boys' Industrial School at one period or another but this institution could not provide the segregation or treatment program and facilities necessary to help such boys.

The present problem of inadequate placement resources is one which faces all the child-caring agencies in this Province. It is a serious and increasing problem. The increased urbanization of the lower mainland with its smaller family houses is a main causative factor in the relative decrease of available foster homes.

The growing need for more institutional centres as outlined in this chapter presents problems of financing which may be incapable of resolution under the present division of administrative functions. Since the increasing urbanization will serve to intensify the discrepancy between the demands on child-welfare services and the funds available, a change in function and responsibilities is clearly indicated. One possible solution may lie with the presentation of the true situation to the public with the object of transferring the responsibility for over-all child protection to the Provincial Government. With the Government responsible for the maintenance of basic child welfare services, the resources of the Children's Aid Society could be applied to the task of carrying out much-
needed research into the meeting of the special needs of children. The administration and operation of group homes, treatment homes and specialized diagnostic centres could serve as the basis for these pioneering operations into improved child-welfare programs.

In spite of the failures revealed in this study in meeting the needs of many of the wards, it must be remembered that this group is composed largely of adolescents who were greatly damaged before admission. They represent the group which the Children's Aid Society is particularly unable to assist because of its limited resources. There were remarkably few instances in the records which would suggest anything worse than the human failure of not being able to do any more for the client than the resources permitted. There were, on the other hand, many instances in which the agency's administrative and social-work staff, as well as the foster parents, gave far more time and energy than was demanded of them as part of their professional duties or of the foster home contract. Nevertheless, until more funds are made available to provide for smaller case loads, more foster homes and institutional settings, together with improved diagnostic and admission practices, and until more comprehensive welfare services are provided to offset the causes of dependency, it is probable that the commercial boarding home will continue to be used for want of any better alternative.
Appendix A

The following appendix was obtained from the case records of the fourteen wards and their parents considered in this study.

An explanation of the headings follows:

**Code Number (C.N.)** — Code number used to identify the case or child.

**Age (A.)** — Age of the child in years at the time of admission to the care of the Society.

**Siblings (S.)** — Number of children of the mother.

**Number of Siblings in Care (#S. in C.)** — Number of siblings in the care of the agency.

**Age and Race of Mother (A. and R. Mother)** — Age and race or nationality of mother. The age is as of October 31, 1954. Where mother is dead this is thus indicated — (dd.). The following abbreviations are used to designate various nationalities.

- Am. — American
- Aust. — Austrian
- Can. — Canadian
- Ch. — Chinese
- Eng. — English
- Fr. — French
- In. — Indian (North American)
- Ir. — Irish
- Phil. — Phillipino
- Sco. — Scotch

**Number of Social Workers (#S.W.)** — Number of social workers the child has had since coming into care.

**Length of Time in Commercial Boarding Home (L.T. in C.B.H.)** — Length of time in months which the child had spent in the commercial boarding home which he was in at the time of the survey.

**School Grade Achieved (S.G.Ach.)** — Grade which child had reached at the time of leaving school. S.C. is abbreviation for Special Class.

**Code Number of Commercial Boarding Home (C.N. of C.B.H.)** — The code number used for purpose of identification in this study.

**Number of Wards (# of Wards)** — The number of wards residing in the individual commercial boarding homes at the time of the survey.
Appendix A (cont.)

**Number in the Household (# in H.)** — Number of people other than wards also residing in the commercial boarding home.
### Appendix A

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Appendix B

The following appendix is made up of additional information obtained from the case records of the fourteen wards and their parents considered in this study.

An explanation of the additional headings follows:

**Present Age (P.A.)** — Present age refers to the age of the wards in this study on October 31, 1954.

**Referred By (Ref. by)** — Indicates the person who first approached the Children's Aid Society regarding the need for the assumption of the care of the child by the Society.

Mo. — Mother  
P.H.N. — Public Health Nurse  
Fa. — Father  
S.W.B. — Social Welfare Branch  
Neigh. — Neighbours

**Pre-Admission Placements (Pre-Ad. Place.)** — Number of placements of the child in private homes other than in the home of his natural parents before admission to the care of the Society.

**Number of Foster Home Placements (F.H.)** — Total number of foster homes which the child was placed in during his period in care.

**Number of Receiving Home Placements (R.H.)** — Total number of times in which the child was placed in a Receiving Home of the Society.

**Number of Committals to Correctional Institutions (Co. In.)** — Total number of committals of the child to Correctional Institutions.

B. — Boys' Industrial School  
O. — Oakalla Prison Farm  
P. — Penitentiary of British Columbia
### Appendix B

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Summary of Pre-Admission Experiences of the Fourteen Wards - Including Reason for Admission

Ward

1  Born of common-law union, deserted by mother. Father unable to provide proper care and child placed with grandmother who is physically punitive towards child. One other private placement. Child running away, stealing and general behavior problem.

2  Born of unmarried mother who later married man other than child's father and subsequently separated. Mother unable to care for the child.

3  Born of legal marriage. Mother died when child aged three. Father unable to provide care. Placed privately in four different homes. Private boarding home parents find boy unmanageable.

4  Born of legal marriage. Mother deserts and parents subsequently divorced. Father remarries and child living with father and stepmother. Step母亲 finds boy of borderline intelligence and unmanageable.

5  Born of unmarried mother who was mentally defective. Admitted to care when mother's parents will no longer pay for infant's care in private boarding home.

6  Born of legal marriage. Father brutally punitive; child neglected by parents in favor of brothers. Both parents promiscuous, constant friction leading to separation. Neither parent willing to provide care; placed privately in five different homes. Child lying, stealing, unmanageable.

7  Born of legal marriage, parents divorced. Neither parent willing to provide care.

8  Born of legal marriage. Child placed with grandparents by mother who established common-law relationship with another man while father overseas. Father ill and unable to provide care.
Appendix C (cont.)

Ward

9  Born of legal marriage. Father deserts. Mother ill and promiscuous, unable to provide care. Placed privately in four different homes.

10 Born of legal marriage. Mother rejecting of child and alcoholic. Parents divorced and subsequently remarried. Neither parent willing to provide care. Child placed privately in three different homes.

11 Born of legal marriage. Parents divorced and remarried. Child lives for period of time with each parent but neither willing to care permanently for him. Natural father and stepfather physically punitive. Placed privately in four different homes.

12 Born of common-law union. Mother deserts child and marries another man. Father alcoholic and physically punitive towards child. Marries woman who is a moron and prostituting and rejecting of the child. Placed privately in ten or more different homes.

13 Born of legal marriage. Mother deserts and father enters into common-law relationship with another woman. Stepmother rejecting of child. Placed privately in three different homes.

14 Born of legal marriage. Mother deserts; father brutally punitive and neglectful. Child of borderline intelligence and unmanageable.
Appendix D

Adjustment of the Wards:

Successful adolescent adjustment was considered under six main factors and the fourteen wards were then evaluated in respect to each.

The factors of good adolescent adjustment were listed as:

1) ability to deal adequately with daily frustrations.

2) ability to set limits for themselves or to accept limits set down by adults in relation to late hours, companions, leisure time activities, et cetera.

3) adequate feelings of belonging, confidence and self-worth.

4) ability to relate to adults and to achieve status with their peers in socially acceptable ways.

5) satisfactory identification with their own sex, including satisfactory adjustment in heterosexual social relations with their respective age groups in socially acceptable community activities.

6) normal progress in handling their conflicting and ambivalent feelings as to their adolescent strivings for independence and their continued need for some dependence on a supportive adult.

When the wards in this survey were rated in respect to these conditions of successful adjustment, it was found that only two (wards # 2 and # 5) rated well on all,
Appendix D (cont.)

the girl (ward # 7) rated well on most of the conditions but the remainder of the group were failing to rate satisfactorily on any of the conditions.

Of the eleven of the group who had failed to make a good adjustment, all were lacking in adequate feelings of self-worth, belonging and confidence. Most of them had difficulties in relating to adults and in gaining status with their peers in socially acceptable ways. Many were somewhat confused in their identifications as evidenced in their poor superego controls as shown in the high rate of anti-social or delinquent behavior. Most of them had failed to move into satisfactory heterosexual social relations and to participate in community activities. The lack of ability to deal adequately with daily frustrations and to set or accept limits was typical of all this group and was evidenced in their disruptive daily living and in their failure to secure and maintain employment.
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Articles:


