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*FAMILY LIFE AND CHILD PROTECTION IN IOWA*

*1950 - 1959*

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# FAMILY LIFE AND CHILD PROTECTION IN IOWA

1950 - 1959

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## GENERAL BACKGROUND

Some of the major trends in the 1950's affecting family life in Iowa are the same as for the nation as a whole. These changes and the present patterns of family life in Iowa provide the background for the deliberations of all of the committees of the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth. In this report, an attempt is made to establish what major changes have been occurring in patterns of Iowa family life and in the programs and activities related to the welfare of Iowa families and children. Some tentative inferences of expected developments are offered. Some particularly significant problem areas are highlighted.

Four major sections follow. The population base of the state is discussed. A summary of major changes in family life patterns follows. The protective care section combines information, problems and programs associated with illegitimacy, runaways, adoptions, neglected and dependent children. The final section focuses on public and private programs and activities which were not previously discussed and which seek to contribute to the improvement of Iowa family life.

### A. THE POPULATION BASE

Although Iowa population is growing slowly, it is becoming less important in terms of the total number of people in the national population picture. On the basis of approximations, Iowa's population has increased about six percent since 1950. However, the total United States population has increased over fifteen percent in the same period.

Significant changes in population have continued to occur within the state during the years since 1950. Some of these shifts have importance for planning for families and youth. These are:

1. The percent of rural population has continued to decline. In terms of population, Iowa now may be considered an urban state. Sixty-nine of the 99 counties lost population from 1940 to 1950 in spite of the small total increase in state population. From 1950 to July 1, 1958, 66 counties continued to lose population. Eight of the counties lost more than 10 percent each and 21 counties lost from five to 10 percent each of their 1950 population. These have been principally rural counties.
2. The rural-farm population has also declined steadily. The average farm size has been increasing. Farm employment has been falling.
3. Most of the increase in population has been centered in cities or in counties adjacent to large cities. For the most part, these have been cities of 10,000 or more persons.



More than one third of all of the people of Iowa now live in cities of this size.

4. Although the absolute numbers are small, another important segment of population has been the open country non-farm population. From 1940 to 1950, this category of population increased 39 percent. It has continued to increase in the present decade.
5. Population levels may have become stable or even slightly increased in many county seat towns. However, inspection of the age-sex composition of these towns shows that a disproportionate number of the residents are in the two non-productive spans of years: under 18 and over 65.
6. The increased number of young persons needs specific attention. By 1957, there had been an estimated increase of 16.4 percent over the 1950 baseline in the number of youth under 18 years of age. An increase of 25 percent was observed between 1950 and 1957 for children five to fifteen years old. At the present time, approximately 35 percent of the state population consists of youth under 18 years of age.

These population changes have tremendous implications for organizing community resources which serve Iowa families. Community activities probably will become increasingly centered in larger towns, those with populations greater than 5,000, or perhaps 10,000 persons. The result may be a consolidation of community institutions. Witness school consolidations in Iowa. Similar trends will probably occur among churches, clubs, and other community organizations. This should not necessarily be viewed as a loss of local neighborhood identification. For any organization to function effectively and meet a wide variety of the needs of its members, it must have an adequately-sized population upon which to draw. In many Iowa communities, a sufficient population base for the development or maintenance of effective organizations can be achieved only by increasing the area served; and hence, increasing the numbers of members or potential members. In many cases this will mean merging existing institutions, as schools, churches, clubs, and very likely ultimately governmental units.

The shifts in population from rural to urban areas of the state obviously indicate the growing importance of business and industry in Iowa. Increasing industrialization will aid in solving some of the problems with which Iowa communities have been confronted: low tax bases for schools and other community services; lack of employment opportunities for the over-supply of farm labor; and the deficiency of leadership for community activities.

On the other hand, industrialization presents some new risks. Working mothers are an established part of the economic picture in Iowa. Mothers did not go back to the home after World War II ended; in fact, many more have taken work outside the home in the past decade. As their children became able to care for themselves, some women who had previously been leaders in civic organizations, resigned and went to work. Some problems of substitute leadership developed. Questions are raised about the effects of maternal employment upon the personal and social characteristics of the children. While there are scattered and fragmentary reports from teachers and children's group leaders of the deleterious



impact of the employment of mothers upon the behavior and personality characteristics of their children, little systematic data are available on the subject. Fortunately, research on this problem is being conducted in Iowa and elsewhere in the nation. In Iowa, studies on relations between employment of mothers and family relations or the personality characteristics of children are in progress in two small-town communities and in one metropolitan area. Preliminary results from the study in the metropolitan area indicate that very little relationship exists among rates of maternal employment during the preschool years of children's lives and the emotional characteristics of 7th and 11th grade children.

Further study needs to be given to various aspects of this situation. Day care services for young children have increased in this decade, not only under agency auspices, but also on a commercial basis, most of the latter in private homes.

Another possible problem involved in the industrialization of Iowa is the increasing number of farmers who engage in full or part-time non-farm employment. The burden of dual employment may give rise to family relationship and youth problems. Some current research by Iowa State University sociologists and economists is underway on this problem.

Several other conditions related to the state's population and economy need to be examined briefly. The industrial trend in Iowa continues to take up some of the oversupply of labor on its farms, as farms become more completely mechanized and larger. (Horses at work in fields have become a rare sight in this state.) However, Iowa, which boasted some 30 years ago of one of the higher per capita incomes in the nation and of more generally equitable distribution of the wealth, is not in this decade in the front ranks. National estimates of per capita income and of Iowa's rank among the states show that Iowa is below the national average, and below all of its neighboring states except one. In 1957, Iowa ranked 28th among the states in personal income. This has a direct bearing on the willingness and ability of the public to meet the challenge of changing times if financial investments are involved.

Because Iowa was not as industrialized as many states, it did not have as high a ratio of workers covered in the early years of the social security program for survivors. The rate of payments up to the present time has been below the national average for the population size. This left children in many of the most rural counties of the state with little benefit from the survivors' program. The bulk of the payments were made to families in urban areas where the coverage came earlier. With fairly general coverage of the non-farm population, and the extension to the farm population, this pattern is changing.

#### B. SUMMARY OF TRENDS IN IOWA FAMILY LIFE

Some of the changes in family life since 1950 are encouraging; other changes give rise to concern. Changes by different areas of family and youth relations are provided in the following discussion:



## 1. Infant and Youth Mortality

The infant mortality rate was 24.7 in 1950 (number of infant deaths per 10,000 live births.) In 1957, this figure was 20.9. The great advance in the survival of infants may be seen if we look at the 1940 rate which was 36.8. From 1940 to 1950, there was a decline of about one-third in the infant mortality rate. The decline was about 43 percent between 1940 and 1957.

Mortality of older children also declined. The mortality rate for children under five years of age was 6.7 in 1950. It rose to 7.3 in 1951, but has consistently declined each year since 1951. In 1957, the mortality rate for children under five was 5.8. Mortality rates for children age five to nine, 10 to 14 and 15 to 19 years of age were similar in 1950 and 1957. The rates were 0.5, 0.4, and 0.6, respectively.

In the last few years rates have stabilized. Great gains in maternal and prenatal care, hospital deliveries and infant care in the 1940's and during this decade account for the dramatic reductions in infant and child deaths. Very likely rates will decline slightly as the increasing advances in medical sciences are made available to the general population.

## 2. Maternal Mortality

Maternal death rates have also declined consistently in the last several decades. In 1940, there were 34.0 maternal deaths per 10,000 live births. By 1950, these had declined to 5.8 - a decline of approximately 83 percent. The rate continued to drop in the present decade. There were only 1.9 maternal deaths per 10,000 live births in 1957. This is only 33 percent of the 1950 rate and only 5.6 percent of the 1940 rates. Again, we probably can expect a slight, but not marked, decline in maternal death rates in the coming years. These figures reassure us that child bearing and infant survival can almost be assured to Iowa families.

## 3. Ages at Marriage

The median ages at marriage for both brides and grooms dropped sharply between 1950 and 1958. In 1958, the median age at marriage for brides entering their first marriages was 19.7 years whereas in 1950 it had been 21.2 years. For grooms, the change in median age at marriage was from 23.8 in 1950 to 22.1 in 1958.

In addition to median ages at marriage, it would be well to examine changes between 1950 and 1958 for percentages of brides who were 17 years of age or less, 18 years of age or less, and 20 years of age or less. These data are reported in the table below:

PERCENT OF ALL MARRIAGES WHICH INVOLVED BRIDES AND GROOMS  
IN IOWA OF THE GIVEN AGES IN 1950 AND 1958

DATE	17 YEARS AND UNDER		18 YEARS AND UNDER		20 YEARS AND UNDER	
	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom
1950	11.6	1.3	30.6	4.9	60.4	21.7
1958	16.0	4.3	38.4	10.7	68.6	32.4



#### 4. School-age Marriages

The changes in numbers of married individuals in 1950 and 1958 who were 17 years of age or under represents increases in marriages among persons of school age. The percentage for grooms was 1.3 in 1950 and 4.3 in 1958. For brides the percentage increased from 11.6 in 1950 to 16.0 in 1958. In Iowa, the 18-year old bride comprised the modal category. Therefore it is not surprising to find considerably larger percentages of brides reported for the 18 and under category. Some of these brides would not have finished school by the time they were 18. However, most of these brides and a considerable portion of the grooms most likely had graduated from high school and were married immediately thereafter.

The same trend as observed for the 17 year or younger bride and groom was found for the 18 year-old bride and groom. For brides, the percentage increased from 30.6 in 1950 to 38.4 in 1958. For grooms, the increase was from 4.9 in 1950 to 10.7 in 1958.

It is very easy to become alarmed over these increases. The truth is that they represent increases from a very small percentage base to a slightly larger base. It is also important to know what percentage of persons 17 and under are married. The only opportunity for obtaining these data is at census years. In 1940 approximately 0.3 percent of male youth and approximately 3.5 percent of female youth in the United States who were aged 14 to 17 were married. By 1950, the percentages had increased to approximately 0.9 percent for males and 5.4 percent for females. Data for Iowa youth between the ages of 14 and 17 followed the national trend, but at a decreased level. In 1940, 0.2 percent of the Iowa males and 2.2 percent of the females between the ages of 14 and 17 were married. By 1950, these percentages for Iowa youth had increased to 0.6 percent for males and 3.4 percent for females.

The point is that large relative percentage increases are observable, but that the incidence of school-age marriage within the population is still quite low. However, the increases which have been observed and the concern over this trend has led to research into school-age marriages in several states.

In Iowa, Burchinal has studied factors related to high school marriages and some of the strains on these marriages. He found that early marriage was frequently linked to an advanced or accelerated dating history. The data were based upon interviews from 60 married girls and an equal number of individually matched unmarried control girls. In contrast to the control girls, married girls had begun to date earlier, go steady earlier, date more frequently at each year beyond age 14, date older men, and had been "in love with" a greater number of their dates or steadies. The married girls also had a greater number of friends who married before completion of high school. The married girls more likely reported their mothers had also been teen-age brides than control girls.

Some of the bases of strain in these marriages were evident from the interview responses of the 60 married girls. The average income for the couples was \$57 a month for living expenses in the Spring of 1958. How did the couples live on these incomes? The answer is that they did not. Their parents very frequently subsidized the marriages. Only about one third of the couples had maintained their own residences since marriage. The other two thirds lived at some time or other or continuously with one or the other or both of the in-law families. Almost half of the couples had also received direct cash supplements from parents.



The tensions of married life as is, not as it may be ideally conceived by romantically oriented young people, were reflected in the brides' reactions to this question; "If you had it to do over again, would you still have married when you did?" Forty-five percent of the girls said they would have done the same thing again. Another 46 percent said they would have finished high school first, gone to college, or worked a few years before they would have married. The remaining 9 percent of the brides gave other reasons for waiting. They regretted the fact they had begun steady dating so young, that they and their husbands were not sufficiently mature for marriage, or that they were not well enough established financially for marriage.

One other principal reason for marriage of high school girls and boys was the pregnancy of the bride. In a survey of 80 percent of Iowa public high schools, Burchinal found that 42 percent of the 730 girls who were reported to have married in 1958 were definitely known to have been pregnant at the time of marriage. High school principals were not sure of another 28 percent of the girls. This left only 30 percent of the brides who were definitely known not to have been pregnant at the time of their marriage. Among the 157 high school boys who were reported to have married in 1958, principals reported that 77 percent were involved in pregnancies. Lack of accurate knowledge was reported for 12 percent of the boys. Only 11 percent of the boys were definitely reported by their principals not to have been involved in pregnancies.

If we assume that one half of the "don't know" cases were in fact pregnancy-provoked marriages, and this is probably a very conservative estimate, then over half, approximately 56 percent of the high school girls and approximately 83 percent of the high school boys who married were involved in "forced marriages."

Marriages of school-age persons raise many questions for families and school and community leaders. There is a debate going on over what conditions, if any, are appropriate for the attendance of married students in public schools. Involved are sociological, pedagogical and legal elements. As to the latter, the Iowa Attorney General as early as 1926 expressed the opinion that under the statute a rule forbidding the attendance at a public school of persons upon the fact of marriage was unreasonable and therefore unenforceable. (See Perkins vs. Board, 56 Iowa 476; Murphy vs. Board, 40 Iowa 429; Kinzer vs. Board, 129 Iowa 441.) The State Department of Public Instruction has pointed out that school boards do have authority to exclude students from school when their presence is inimical to the general welfare of the student body, but punitive policies relating to the fact that a student marries should be amended or revoked.

A recent survey of the policies followed by Iowa public and parochial schools showed that a wide variety of policies existed. In general, policies were much less restrictive than might have been expected. Newspapers frequently give attention to the schools which expel married students or permit them to attend school only under special conditions. Less frequently do we hear about the schools which help and encourage married people to continue their education. In the survey, we found little support for restrictive policies. We found that marriage rates were about the same among schools of the same size regardless of the "toughness" of the attendance policy. We also found that schools tended to follow a more lenient policy for the attendance of married boys compared to nonpregnant married girls. Also, some schools reflected elements of Victorian embarrassment over pregnancy of married girls.



Some of the salient findings of the survey of schools policies which may be of interest are:

1. Eighty-one percent of the public schools and 60 percent of the Catholic schools returned questionnaires.
2. Marriages are not confined to larger schools. Percentages of public schools reporting one or more marriages among students by sizes of the 10-12th grade enrollments were: 34 percent for those with less than 50 students; 49 percent for 50-99 students; 74 percent for 100-149; 76 percent for 150-199; 71 percent for 200-299; 98 percent for 300 and over. The overall figure for public schools was 55 percent.
3. Marriages are less frequent in Catholic schools. When public and Catholic schools were matched by size, 52 percent of the public schools and 25 percent of the Catholic schools reported at least one marriage. The mean number of marriages was 1.1 and 0.5 respectively.
4. Only 28 percent of the public schools and 38 percent of the Catholic schools reported an officially stated policy for attendance of married students.
5. Policies were adopted by school boards for 98 percent of the schools which had an official policy.
6. Official policies for Catholic schools generally were adopted earlier than those of public schools. Five percent of the public schools with official policies adopted them prior to 1950; 67 percent of the Catholic schools had done so.
7. For both public and Catholic schools, policies were more lenient for attendance of married boys than for married girls.
8. Restrictiveness of attendance policies appeared to have little effect on the frequency of high school marriages.
9. About 19 percent of the public schools and all the Catholic schools required or encouraged nonpregnant married girls to withdraw from school. Another 5 percent of the public schools suspended girls for a set period of time, 9 percent handled each case on an individual basis, and 29 percent reported no particular action was taken. Only 39 percent of the schools encouraged these girls to continue their education.
10. About 13 percent of the public schools and 88 percent of the Catholic schools required or encouraged married boys to withdraw. Another 2 percent of the public schools suspended boys for a set period of time, 6 percent handled each case on an individual basis, and 20 percent reported no particular action was taken. About half of the schools encouraged married boys to continue their education.
11. Attendance of pregnant married girls was generally discouraged; 29 percent of the schools automatically suspended a married girl upon knowledge of her pregnancy; 21 percent encouraged withdrawal; 20 percent set a specific time for attendance (usually 4 months before the expected delivery); 13 percent handled it on an individual basis; 10 percent left the decision up to the girls; and 7 percent permitted attendance only if she would graduate prior to the birth of the baby.



12. Girls who were married prior to their pregnancy were generally permitted to re-enter school in the semester following their delivery. Time intervals varied from one month to the semester following the child's first birthday.
13. For girls who were pregnant prior to their marriages, the most frequent policy was to require withdrawal from school. Thirty eight percent of the schools followed this policy. Other schools used time consideration and the appearance of the girl as guides.
14. Generally girls who were pregnant prior to marriage were not permitted to re-enter school automatically. About one third of the schools would not consider re-entering. The bulk of the schools considered each case independently. Only about 5 percent of the schools left the decision up to the girl.
15. Only 16 percent of the schools permitted obviously pregnant married girls to participate in graduation ceremonies.
16. Data on characteristics of married students were reported for 740 girls and 157 boys. These are very likely under-enumerations of the number of marriages.
17. Junior and senior girls were most frequently involved in marriages. Among boys, it was seniors. The mean age for girls was 16.6; for boys, 17.2 years.
18. About 83 percent of the marriages of boys involved premarital pregnancies. This was true of about 56 percent of the marriages of girls.
19. The proportions of "forced" marriages was higher for farm girls, 69 percent, than for non-farm girls, 55 percent.
20. Girls from lower economic families were slightly more frequently involved in pregnancies, 58 percent, than girls from higher economic families, 50 percent.
21. Whether pregnant or not, married girls generally withdrew from school. Approximately 91 percent of the sophomore, 81 percent of the junior and 70 percent of the senior girls did so.
22. Withdrawal among boys was not as high, 58 percent for the sophomore and junior boys, and 43 percent for the senior boys.
23. Few married students who voluntarily withdrew or who were compelled to withdraw from school had re-entered school by the time of the survey; 8 percent of the married girls and 9 percent of the married boys had done so.
24. Only 12 percent of the girls married boys who were attending high school; 80 percent of these girls were pregnant at the time of their marriages.
25. About 64 percent of the boys married girls who were attending high school.

The trend data cited earlier indicate that marriages of school-age persons will continue and probably become even more frequent. This projection places a two-fold burden on families, schools, churches, and other community institutions.



First, we need to develop programs to prepare youth for successful married life regardless of the ages at which they marry. Since a pregnancy was involved in a majority of the cases, we need to give particular attention to the adequacy of our young people's knowledge about human sexual behavior. Research done by Burchinal at Iowa State University indicates that parents fail to provide girls with an adequate body of sexual knowledge. Very likely the same conditions held for boys. Such knowledge not only includes competent information about human sexual relations and issues surrounding conception, but also knowledge about the factors involved in human sexual responses - the ability to control one's levels of arousal before one proceeds or is pushed further along the path of intimacy than one desires. The family, school, and church share in this responsibility.

Education in the physiology and psycho-sexual nature of humans is not all that should be included in education for marriage and family life. Young people need to be helped in other areas, including self-understanding, understanding of interpersonal relations, development of values, the meaning of love, and an adequate understanding of the realities of married life.

Second, once a legally valid marriage has been established, adults might better help make it a success instead of turning their backs on the young couples. No matter how injudicious it is, youthful marriage is not a penal offense. Therefore, individual planning with the young couple which will give them a maximum opportunity to utilize the educational and other resources of the community is essential.

If the current college view toward marriage were used as the criterion for high school attendance policies, married students would be granted the same opportunity for an education as unmarried students. Such a policy would be congruent with the responsibilities of American education to provide an education for all youths who are willing and able to receive the education. This "open-door for all policy" is demanded by the basic legal and social requirements to support, not to destroy the marriage relationship. Societal efforts are generally extended towards sustaining a marriage, once contracted.

One final condition related to youthful marriage in Iowa should be discussed. This concerns the Iowa marriage laws. Iowa has the lowest minimum age for marriage in the upper mid-west. It is, therefore, a Gretna Green for school youth from neighboring states fleeing their marriage laws. It is one of the factors in the rate of marriage of youth under 18 years. For several sessions of the legislature, bills were filed to raise the Iowa minimum to that of neighboring states, without avail. Clergy, clerks of court in border counties, family life specialists, have advised this reform. It has been referred to the committee studying revision of the children's code. Under common law, Iowa recognizes as valid any marriage between a girl of 12 and a boy of 14; statutory limitations are respectively 14 and 16.

Statutory recognition of common law marriages has been abolished in all states surrounding Iowa, but Iowa still retains this. An ad hoc committee of the Iowa Commission considered this, and recommended against any change at that time because of the possibility of affecting the stability of existing informal marriage arrangements and the legitimacy of the children involved. Arguments advanced for



abolition of the common law marriage are: it was a device for validating marriages consummated without license in pioneer days when license-issuing officers and celebrants were not readily available; it recognizes what is not registered, and of which there is no automatic legal proof. In most instances in which proof has been attempted, it could not be established. It is used loosely to cover what is really an illegal union, and becomes a complicating irregularity in public assistance cases. The insecurity of no statute marriage has been proven in many cases to be emotionally devastating, particularly to the women involved. It no longer provides the protection and security which it offered under pioneer conditions. Since all parties can now secure a marriage license which will register the marriage unquestionably, their resort to the common law union is of very dubious merit.

## 5. Divorce

Marriage appears to be more enduring in Iowa in the late 1950's than it was in the middle to late 40's. In 1950 the divorce rate per 1000 population in Iowa was 2.0. In 1946, the peak rate was 3.8, but in 1958 the rate was only 1.5. The number of divorces granted in Iowa in 1950 was 5,367. This declined to 4,241 in 1958. It is interesting to note that in 1920 a larger number of divorces, 44,738, was granted than in 1957 or 1958.

The number of children affected by divorce has increased slightly during the present decade. In 1950, 50.9 percent of all divorces were granted to couples having no children. In 1958, this was true of only 41.1 percent of all divorces. There has been little change in the number of divorces among couples having one child, but increases have occurred among couples having two or more children. Twenty-five percent of divorces granted all couples in 1950 involved one child; one child was involved in 24.3 percent of all divorces granted in 1958. The 1950 and 1958 percentages for divorces involving two children were 13.9 and 17.6; three children, 5.8 and 9.9; four children, 2.8 and 4.1; and five or more children, 1.5 and 3.1 respectively.

The mean number of children involved in divorces shows how slight the change has been since 1950. In that year, 2647 divorces involved 5,026 children, a mean number of 1.9. By 1958, the figure had increased to 2.09. For couples who had never been married before, the mean figures were 1.96 in 1951 and 2.13 in 1958. For couples with children obtaining divorces in which the husband or wife or both had been previously married, the mean number of children affected by the divorce in 1951 was 1.78. This figure increased to 1.99 in 1958.

One may be encouraged by the decrease in the absolute number of divorces or by the decrease and recent stability of the divorce rate. On the other hand, the slight but consistent rise in the mean number of children affected by divorce suggests numerous family problems.

The Iowa divorce picture is contrary to that of the nation. On the national scene, divorce rates, whether determined on a population basis or in relation to the number of existing marriages, have been declining. This is also true in Iowa. But the actual number of divorces for the nation as a whole is increasing each year. In Iowa, we have observed a decline not only in the divorce rates, but also in the actual number of divorces. Why this difference between Iowa and the nation as a whole exists is not clear. The decline in divorces granted in Iowa may reflect the population out-migration pattern in the state. Non-mobile persons and non-mobile families may be less prone to divorce. We do not assert this fact. We offer it as one hypothesis.



## 6. Housing

While the state has a housing law covering urban areas, and cities have authority to enact housing codes of their own, there is no general state housing law. Efforts to secure this have been made without success. A code which will set minimum standards for rural as well as urban areas is needed.

An urban renewal plan was enacted in 1957, not as a public program, but enabling voluntary groups to organize and raise money to join with the federal program for slum clearance and urban renewal. Only one city is well along on its project. The housing situation became acute when the interstate freeway program developed, and removed hundreds of low-type housing units before new construction under urban renewal became available. The housing shortage for Negroes was particularly serious. Civic organizations helped the Negroes battle for a fair chance for the housing available on a non-segregated basis. Plans are moving ahead to prevent new slum areas from developing.

Instead of moving out of mobile homes during the 1950's, more Iowa families moved into them. In the mid-decade, the State Health Department reported that Iowa had mobile home parks in 74 counties housing more than 9000 persons. "The present-day mobile homes we see attached to automobiles and trucks and conveyed down the highways lends a modern twist to the old covered-wagon homes our ancestors used a hundred years ago to move from one place to another until they found a satisfactory spot to establish a permanent home."

In 1954, a law became effective requiring all places with two or more mobile homes to be licensed by the State Department of Health. More than half of the first parks inspected could not be licensed until changes were made. In all, 283 parks were licensed in 1954, providing homes for 9,406 persons.

There has been a steady increase in the number, up to a total of 386 parks in 1958, and in the first nine months of 1959, 375. As of October 1, 1959, 400 additional applications were pending, some not meeting standards and being given time to make necessary improvements, while others had not been inspected.

The number of persons living in the mobile home parks also increased greatly, almost 50 percent in five years: 1955 - 9,974; 1956 - 11,313; 1957 - 13,029; 1958 - 14,029. When one takes into account that these figures include only persons living in parks with at least two mobile units each, it is apparent that these are far from total figures. There are many single units parked on vacant lots or in back yards. With legal supervision of parks, facilities have been definitely upgraded, and the number of non-modern units is dwindling. The newest mobile homes have sanitary facilities inside. Winter heating, however, is a problem some heating devices used are classed as dangerous.

The law does not allow an owner to build a mobile home park, or rebuild one, without a permit from the State Department of Health. In 1958, 82 such permits were issued. Parks have been located in all but six or seven of the 99 counties, and probably exist in all of them. Some cities have recently adopted stricter control of mobile housing for public health reasons. Ordinances in these cities limit the time that a person may have a mobile home on an individual lot, the shortest time known to the Health Department being 48 hours and the longest six months. After that time, the mobile home must be moved to a licensed park



with suitable sanitary facilities. These city ordinances are stimulating the construction of mobile home parks.

While mobile homes are being used as long-time dwellings in one place for some families, they cannot be blocked up on foundations in cities of the first class without violation of the State's urban housing law. None of the trailers now built meet the minimum statutory requirements as to lighting, cubic air space per person and ceiling height, for permanent housing. Therefore, these homes remain on wheels in the large-city parks, often with skirting around the outside to reduce under-the-floor cold air in winter.

The largest mobile home parks are at institutions of higher learning, where the mobile unit owned by the young married student sometimes provides much better housing than he can secure in remodeled homes which offer apartments for students. The mobile homes in all the parks must be owned by the individuals - park owners are not known to supply them on a rental basis. The state institutions no longer own and operate mobile homes as they did early in the 1950's for their students; private enterprise has taken over.

With the improvement in size and equipment of mobile homes, the type of persons using them as long-term dwellings has been upgraded. These homes have become the dwellings of choice for many substantial middle class workers, retired people, persons whose employment makes mobility an asset, and others who find that they can have a better quality of housing for their money than in permanent homes. In Iowa, young people with children more commonly live in mobile homes than do older people. This housing is also chosen by many skilled and unskilled workers because it makes mobility with jobs possible, and it provides independent housing for those who often have trouble renting apartments because they have children or they are migrants. It has been observed that some farmers are now purchasing mobile homes and placing them on foundations for their hired men and families. Permanent tenant houses have been the pattern in the past.

### C. PROTECTIVE CARE

#### I. Neglected and Dependent Children

Since the first White House Conference in 1909 pointed up for the nation the problems of homeless dependent childhood, vast changes have occurred in the care of such children and in helping families so that their children need not be placed in foster care. Iowa's home assistance programs other than general poor relief have been instituted since 1909, first as mothers' pensions (1913) and later as aid to dependent children (1944). Service programs to families, both public and private, have been strengthened and extended especially in the past decade, with the result that fewer children in proportion to the total number of children in Iowa's population are now in paid foster care or in adoptive homes under agency supervision. Some of this trend may also be related to financial resources coming from better protection of workers in industry (through workmen's compensation, social security benefits, industry pensions, etc.). Financial dependency as the reason for placing children in institutions has been virtually eliminated.



During the 1950's, there was a quite steady and consistent decline in the number of children in paid foster care under supervision of an agency. On January 1, 1959 there were 29.5 percent fewer children (1577) than on January 1, 1950 (1966). The reduction in the ratio of all Iowa youth under 18 was even more dramatic - from a rate of one in 365 to only one in 588 on January 1, 1959. The reduction was almost the same for public as for private agencies. In the last three years of the period, the number and rate appear to have stabilized.

The cost of foster care has grown enormously in the past decade. In 1958, the private agencies in Iowa spent approximately one million dollars more than in 1948, taking care of a total number of children during the year which was 23 percent less than in 1948 (down from 4859 to 3738). The average annual cost per child cared for more than doubled, from \$301 to \$664. The cost of care at the state homes for dependent children also more than doubled in the same period, from an average of less than \$1200 per year per child to more than \$2400. (The difference between the cost of private agency and state institution care arises from several factors, but mainly because of voluntary donations to the former and because the private agencies do not have to purchase education for the majority of their children nor community health and recreation facilities provided without direct charge to all children, whereas the state must purchase these services fully for its wards). This increase arises not only from economic inflation, but also from changes in agency service.

Increased emphasis on the need and right of the child to remain in his own family has changed the focus of treating the problems of neglected and delinquent children. Casework to children in their own homes in an effort to rehabilitate without removal is the rule now in Iowa. Most of this service is given by child welfare workers in the county welfare departments, except in urban centers where voluntary agencies offer some specialized services. All counties now assume responsibility for services to children regardless of financial status, although there has been little increase during the decade in the number of workers giving full time to the public child welfare program. Much of the responsibility must still be carried by assigned public assistance workers. The need for more trained personnel is immediate and extensive.

While the number of children in the care of agencies and institutions away from their homes decreased during the decade 1949-1958, the number receiving service from county welfare departments increased 29 percent, not including those also receiving public assistance. Some local family boarding homes have been developed for children needing only temporary care away from home. More are needed.

If situations require removal of children from their own homes, evaluations are more carefully made as to whether this must be permanent or if there is a reasonable possibility of returning them when substantial changes have been made (in the child or in the family). If the separation is temporary, efforts are made to maintain and strengthen family ties. County workers no longer refer all the children needing foster care to agencies and institutions for unspecialized custodial care. The voluntary agencies have been freed to develop services for emotionally disturbed children, with highly trained staff, medical and psychiatric treatment and remedial education.



There is some indication that increased skill is essential at the local level in evaluating the potential strengths of poor homes and the ability of case workers to help very inadequate parents do a better job of rearing their children. The better recognition of problems in the early stages should avoid leaving children with parents who can only damage them so severely that intensive treatment with outside agencies will later be necessary when the children are too old and their attitudes and patterns of behavior too ingrained to be successfully altered. The reduced number of children in the custody of foster care agencies is valuable only if the substitutes offered contribute positively to the constructive development of the children.

These more disturbed children now coming to agencies realistically need a different and varied type of facility. Accordingly there have been changes in program by some of the existing agencies in an effort to provide more adequate facilities. There is increased use of foster homes for disturbed children, increased use of the group home and small institution. With these changes has come an increase in the cost of care per child and recognition of the necessity for more residential care.

State institutions have not been able to specialize, but the legislature in 1959 provided more psychiatric service for them and other service has been much improved since 1950. Since these institutions take children mainly by court commitment, selective intake is not feasible because service must be given to children not admitted to other facilities. Legislative appropriations to the Board of Control of State Institutions have never included funds for family boarding care of state wards. At the beginning of 1960, the legislature's interim committee authorized \$25,000 for foster care, thus permitting the state to offer its dependent child wards a variety of facilities as do the voluntary agencies. In the past, state institutions had to depend largely on free, wage or adoptive homes.

Iowa has a record of keeping more of its children who are in paid foster care in institutions and fewer in family boarding homes than do most states. Efforts were made during the 1950's to reverse this trend. The highest ratio of foster care children in institutions occurred in 1950, when more than 83 percent of those under agency care away from their own homes were in institutions. This was reduced to the lowest in many years in 1956 - less than 68 percent. In the next two years this increased again to over 71 percent. Iowa has more institutional facilities in proportion to the number of children needing foster care than do some other states. This fact, combined with the difficulty of maintaining an adequate supply of family homes and the cost of good boarding home care, tends to encourage the use of the existing institutions. Also, as mentioned above, the Board of Control could not, for lack of funds, develop family boarding homes, and its program, the largest single one in Iowa, had of necessity to remain largely on an institutional basis.

Another trend which has developed in the decade is to send children living in private institutions to public schools of the community, and also to have them participate in local church and youth group activities. The institutions serve a more specialized function and no longer attempt to be self-sufficient in all areas of child life.



No new institutions have been established in the 1950's and several have been closed. The largest Protestant denomination, surveying its needs and making recommendations for service on a long-range basis in 1959, was exploring the need for "half-way" houses for troublesome youngsters for whom plans could not be made easily - those who had no decent home surroundings, did not adjust in foster family homes, and yet did not seem after careful diagnosis, to need the highly regimented program of the state training schools. Under consideration also was a proposal to try a modified form of institution-family life setting for youth leaving the training schools or mental hospitals whose families could not provide post-institution rehabilitation. This would involve some well-trained supervision, but youth would be helped to secure and stay on jobs, become self-supporting, pay their own way, and when sufficient evidence of adjustment existed, they would be helped to go out on their own in the community.

In 1950, the Committee on Education of the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth reported a minimum of 45 nursery schools, so-called, operating for profit in Iowa, with complete lack of control of standards. It recommended immediate steps toward state regulation. This has been accomplished, many poor operators have been eliminated, and the programs of the better facilities strengthened. State standards have been published, with help from experts in the field of child development and nursery education assisting in the compilation. In 1959, 61 nurseries, including several under agency auspices, were reporting to the State Department of Social Welfare. These served more than 3,000 children in 1958. Only 19 were licensed in 1950.

The changes during the decade have involved more interprofessional coordinated effort in behalf of individual children. In order to change family situations when disturbed children are moved to residential facilities, several agencies must work together and plan toward a common goal of returning the child to his own home, both being much improved. The family is often at a considerable distance from the facility which provides treatment for the child. The need for common understanding and more thorough evaluation of the problems which upset children to the point where professional treatment is necessary has become much clearer in recent years. This involves not only the treatment agencies, but also the schools, the county welfare departments, peace officers, the juvenile courts, and the medical profession. The Iowa Commission's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency has experimented with an interprofessional clearing house on extremely difficult situations of disturbed children in an effort to evaluate how such problems can be recognized earlier and brought under intensive and continuous treatment.

The State Department of Social Welfare instituted an experiment in 1959 to develop better planning for individual children on the basis of their needs by paying part of the cost of foster care of children with residence in Iowa, and all the cost of children without any established legal settlement who become foster care charges in the state. Some commitments of children were being made on the basis of the cheapest care available, or using the nearest facility without ascertaining if it would be suitable for the child. Also, some children needing treatment in foster care were denied it because of financial problems relating to lack of legal settlement. The program is demonstrating that state funds for this purpose are needed.



Part of the Commission activity has been directed toward evaluation of the laws relating to guardianship and custody of children, protection of children in foster placements, juvenile court procedures; and submitting material to a legislative research committee for evaluation and development of remedial legislation. This will be prepared for the 1961 session of the General Assembly.

## 2. Runaway Study

In 1954, the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth, in conjunction with the Division of Child Welfare of the State Department of Social Welfare, made a special survey of the problem of runaway children in order to secure information for program planning in the state, and also to answer questions raised by the United States Senate's Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee investigating Juvenile Delinquency. Questionnaires were sent to all county welfare departments, sheriffs, full-time police departments, Travelers' Aid organizations and juvenile probation officers asking for details about runaways dealt with in 1953 - age, sex, residence; cost of emergency care, if any, and who paid the bill; where detained. In addition, an analysis was made of the police bulletins issued weekly by the State Bureau of Criminal Investigation, which included "wanted" juvenile runaways.

Replies were received from all but 14 of the 99 counties. Since this survey concerned itself only with interstate runaways, the number was relatively small, and an unduplicated count was not possible, since names were not secured. The largest county reported 120 handled by the city police, 46 by the county probation office, 17 by the sheriff, 12 by Travelers' Aid, 8 by the county welfare department. This situation was repeated throughout the state. The bulk of the cases were handled by local police; the second largest group by sheriffs. The smallest number came to the attention of the county welfare departments. Very little money was spent on these children; in almost all instances, refunds were secured from parents or guardians.

From the results it was apparent that runaway children are looked upon as a police responsibility, and not until it was found impossible to get a child home promptly did the social agency come into the picture. Of the hundreds reported, only 41 cases reached county welfare departments. There was almost a complete lack of casework service to the runaways, unless such service was given at home. Moreover, there was no general referral to agencies of the home community. In some instances, agencies and institutions which had worked with certain children were glad to be rid of them and would not authorize their return home.

Lack of funds was a major handicap in holding runaway children for careful planning. Investigations take time, and emergency care is costly. Efforts were always made to return a child to those responsible for him in the briefest possible time and with the least expense. Social agencies, not having adequate funds often for local responsibilities, hesitated to get involved in what might be long-term expenses if runaway children were held for development of a treatment plan. However, a police chief who deals with quite a few runaways during a year stated: "I think it should be mandatory for the home to be investigated by a local worker and try to iron out the problems of the child and of his parents." A welfare director in an urban county commented: "The runaway child is old enough to be interviewed regarding his attitudes and reasons for running away. The home situation can be reviewed. An evaluation would be made of plans with the parents and agencies in their community for return of the child and for follow up service."



Detention was generally provided in city or county jails, except in the four communities having separate juvenile detention facilities. In some rural counties, older youth were held in jail, while younger children stayed in the sheriff's quarters or at the home of the probation officer.

The running away of some mentally defective and mentally ill juveniles was a definite problem, and also of those leaving other types of custodial or remedial institutions. A substantial number of girls eloped; others were taken across state lines for immoral purposes, or they accompanied adult male criminals. Involved in this was often the issuance of marriage licenses in violation of the laws of both Iowa and some other state, without any attempt to verify age.

Juvenile courts rarely received a case of an interstate runaway. Those they did see were chiefly resident children, running away from probation and prior jurisdiction of the court, and some were fugitives wanted for major offenses, such as breaking and entering.

The term "runaway" does not fit many of the juveniles who "run away", because they go by car, stolen or otherwise. They are really "wheelaways."

The police bulletins of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation have reported an average of 513 runaways per year for the five years 1954-1958, inclusive. About 70 percent were boys, and one fourth of the boys were delinquents (compared with only 10 percent of the girls). Nearly three-fourths of the boys were 16 years old or younger, eight percent being under 14 years. Of the girl runaways, 77 percent were 16 years or less, and 10 percent were under 14. The girls were consistently a little younger than the boys. The median age of the boy runaways (non-delinquent) for the five years was 15.5 years, and for the delinquent, 17.3 years. The median ages for the girls were 15.4 and 17.1 years respectively.

It has not been possible to develop a program for runaways, but this is coming closer to reality as the State Department of Social Welfare instituted a pilot program of assisting counties with the cost of foster care of children.

### 3. Illegitimacy

The problem of unwed parenthood is general over the state, and no county has escaped some representatives during the past decade. There has been a substantial increase (from 1225 in 1950 to 1500 in 1958), 22.5 percent in this period in the number of mothers, and an increase in the ratio of live births which are illegitimate from slightly less than 20 per thousand in 1950 to over 24 in 1958. The latter year was the highest on the record. The count was based on reports, not only by the Bureau of Vital Statistics, but also from those reported to the State Department of Social Welfare as illegitimate, although possibly reported otherwise on birth certificates. The ratio of teen-aged girls increased somewhat, those in the twenties went down but there was a substantial increase in the ratio of women in their thirties and forties - reflecting divorce conditions. However, there was an actual numerical increase in all age groups, with the greatest percentage increase of those 30 years and older - 80 percent.



One disturbing pattern is that of the increase in the number of repeaters - those girls who have previously had children out of wedlock. This is increasing far more than the number of unwed mothers. In 1948, one-ninth (11.5 percent) of the single girls were previously unwed mothers; in 1958, 18 percent were repeaters. One-sixth of those in 1958 were less than 20 years old. The median age of repeaters is generally about 24 years; for all unwed mothers it is 20 years.

The burden falls heaviest on the nonwhite group, with approximately ten times as many children born out of wedlock in proportion to the total nonwhite births than the rate for white children. The increase among the nonwhite has been much more rapid than among the white; for instance in 1954, the nonwhite mothers were 7.8 percent of the total unwed mothers; in 1958, they were over 12 percent of the total. The illegitimate white births were 2.16 percent of the total white births in 1958; the nonwhite were 21.6 percent of all nonwhite births to Iowa residents.

The nonwhite repeaters are also increasing more rapidly than the white ones, from about one-fifth of all repeaters in 1954 to almost 28 percent in 1958. In 1958, 15 percent of the white mothers had older illegitimate children, and 42 percent of the nonwhite mothers. In 1954, 34 percent of the nonwhite mothers had previously had a child out of wedlock.

The problem of adequate care for these children is constantly before the agencies of the state. Normal white children can be placed readily for adoption if their mothers wish to surrender them. Over the years approximately half of the illegitimate children born in Iowa are adopted by non-relatives. A small number of white mothers who keep their children and receive public aid are apt to be women who have been married and have legitimate children on assistance. The nonwhite children cannot be placed readily for adoption. Adoption is also not a part of the cultural pattern of the nonwhite population as it is among the white. Many of the nonwhite unmarried mothers must have public aid to support their children.

The increasing rate of illegitimacy presents many problems to communities and to the state. The legislature has from time to time wrestled with the problem of enforcing support from deserting parents. While there are more legal facilities for action now, these can never solve the economic need since many of the legally liable fathers have two or more families to whose support they should contribute. The result is that none are adequately provided for. A legislative investigation of the public relief situation is currently being made. It is most complex, with cultural, economic, social, housing, family life factors which must be considered.

Agencies with child placing programs have been steadily increasing their services to unwed mothers, including financial aid when necessary, in order to help them plan wisely for the welfare of their children. Many of these children are placed for adoption by unlicensed agents, sometimes with painful results. More effort will be directed to this area. Fewer girls now avail themselves of the services of residential maternity homes, as a greater variety of agency service has become available. If funds can be supplied to finance a mother at the time she needs it and where she needs it, planning with her can be more effective.



A study is currently being made as to what happened to a sample of children born to unwed mothers in the even numbered years from 1942 to 1952, whose mothers retained custody. A first impression is that many of the mothers married later, and their husbands adopted the children.

#### 4. Adoption

In the decade 1949 to 1958, an average per year of 1722 decrees of adoption were granted in Iowa courts. Authorized agencies placed 30 percent of the children, almost all with non-relatives; non-authorized intermediaries placed about 21 percent with non-relatives; and 49 percent were adopted by stepparents or relatives. The largest number of children (1861) for whose adoption petitions were filed in one year was in 1958, an increase of more than 23 percent since 1949. The increase was more rapid in the second half of the decade than in the first half, the average per year in the first half being 1676 children, and in the second, 1769. In the past 20 years, the number of children adopted increased 160 percent.

The public has shown much more concern than in previous decades about the protection of children in adoption, and also in placing children as soon as possible when custody of the natural parents is terminated. The demands upon agencies for adoptions has at times made it necessary for them to discontinue taking applications from persons who wished to adopt. The emphasis has always been on finding the best possible home for a child rather than a child for people desiring one.

The number of children placed by agencies in the past decade averaged 516 a year, and those placed by unauthorized persons averaged 351 (2 out of 5 of all non-relative adoptions). However, the ratio of agency placements to unlicensed placements varies considerably from year to year. In the past ten years, the low was slightly over half agency placements (52 percent in 1954) and the high was two thirds (66.2 percent in 1950). In 1958, agencies placed 65 percent. Most of the non-agency decrees have been granted in urban counties to which mothers came for delivery of children they could not keep. About one fourth of these involved at least two states, and sometimes more counties.

In the area of agency adoptions, there has been increased emphasis on earlier placement of infants, directly from the hospital where they are born if possible. There has also been a broader interpretation of the "adoptable" child to include a wider age range as well as children with physical handicaps and those of mixed racial background. In the selection of the adoptive families increased emphasis is placed on the people themselves rather than on material or factual information. There is less stress on "matching" and more on the parent's ability to accept differences and assume normal risks. There are efforts toward earlier selection of couples through various screening devices and fewer but more skilled and focused interviews.

Increased use is being made of group discussions in addition to individual interviews, quite generally done with prospective adoptive parents in the intake process. It is also used to some extent in preparing prospective adoptive parents who are about to receive their child to care for the infant and meet the everyday problems of adjustment.



There is considerable fluctation in adoptions completed by authorized agencies, although this is becoming a larger part of their work. On January 1, 1950, about one child in 1000 in Iowa was in an adoptive home on an agency placement pending a decree; on the same date 1959, about one in 1045 was so situated. This was nearly a six percent reduction in the ratio of agency placements of our total youth population, although there was a numerical increase of 56 children. The number of children in their adoptive homes awaiting decrees of adoption on January 1, 1959, 889, was the highest in a decade of agency service. Only once prior to 1956 were there 800 or more; since then, there have never been less. In 1950, the agency-placed children awaiting adoption represented less than one-fourth of the agency-served children; in 1958, they were 36 percent of the total under care.

Approximately 98 percent of the children adopted in Iowa are of the white race. It is difficult to find permanent homes for nonwhite children, and some remain in their own homes or in paid foster care when permanent adoptive homes would be much more desirable for them.

About 10 percent of the children adopted in the 10 years were full or half orphans. There were 17 times as many half-orphans as full orphans. Of the full orphans, one-third were placed by agencies, one-third by non-licensed persons, and one-third remained with relatives. Nearly three-fourths of the half-orphans remained in their own homes and were adopted by stepparents (about 14 times as many stepfathers as stepmothers).

Over 20 years, there has been some change in the pattern of adoption. Adoptions now include far more children both of whose parents are living. In 1938, nearly 14 percent of the relatively small number of children adopted (687) were full or half orphans, and the majority of the remainder were illegitimate. In 1958, only slightly more than nine percent of the children adopted had lost one or both parents, and less than half of the remainder were illegitimate. Adoption has ceased to be mainly for the illegitimate child or the one left without parents.

Records kept for six years reveal that an average of 120 children per year were adopted because their married parents who were still living together did not want them, or they were removed from parental custody by court action. One-sixth were given to relatives; more than one-third were placed with strangers without agency services, and the balance were placed by agencies, half by public agencies having custody by court action.

There has been a gradual increase in the stepparent adoptions along with a growing number of children involved in divorces. Some are quite unstable. Several hundred petitions filed by stepparents during the decade have never been granted and divorces occurred in some cases before there could be a hearing on the petition to adopt the spouse's children. Each year a small number of children have been adopted for the second or third time when adoptive homes broke up. There were 21 of these in 1958. There are possibilities of involved legal problems in these situations, since Iowa law permits a child to retain full inheritance rights from all persons who have ever been his legal parents.



Adoptions by stepparents and relatives are chiefly of legitimate children-- those who have lost one parent in death or who are the victims of divorce. Approximately 71 out of every 100 legitimate children who are adopted remain with one parent or with a relative. Almost exactly the same proportion of illegitimate children are placed with non-relatives. Of those adopted without agency service, approximately three-fourths are illegitimate, while slightly less than 70 percent of those placed by agencies are illegitimate. Over the last ten years, the percent of all children adopted who are legitimate has remained fairly stable-- about 52 percent.

The problems of birth certificates for foreign born children brought to the United States for adoption have been thoroughly studied in Iowa, and through Iowa officials, planning has proceeded so that a plan was eventually worked out for new birth certificates in the adoptive names which do not convey the impression that the children are native-born citizens. There were various devices for supplying birth data, none of which were satisfactory in comparison with the vital records for native born children. The new plan is to be a joint one between the state vital records offices and the United States State Department (which will keep original records for citizen children born abroad) and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (which will keep the records for alien children born abroad and coming here for permanent residence).

About one-fifth of the adoption petitions are not granted within the year in which they are filed. Most of these are non-agency placements held by the court for observation, or stepparent petitions on which the parties delay action. Within two years from the filing date, all but five percent have been disposed of. Only a very few petitions are denied. Disapprovals sometimes continue without conclusive action.

Iowa couples have had additional opportunities to adopt children during the 1950's through availability of some foreign children and some from the large maternity homes in Kansas City, Missouri. All those placed with Iowa families have been carefully supervised through public child welfare services. Foreign children have averaged 30 per year and the Kansas City children from 10-15 per year.

With the increased demand for children to adopt, several lawsuits have tested some provisions of the law and indicated areas in which legislation should be revised. A committee of the Iowa Association of Children's Agencies has been studying this field for two years, and has published a set of principles which are basic to agency practice and agreed to by all. They are continuing with an interprofessional committee to develop recommendations to the legislative committee preparing revisions of the Children's Code.

Two studies have recently been made by University graduate students: (1) why and how persons who had completed the adoption of an infant obtained the child in the way they did and what the thinking of the applicants was when planning to secure a child; (2) the attitudes and reactions of persons who applied to agencies for children during a certain period of time and were not accepted. These are being used to improve agency service.



The Hospital Services of the University of Iowa College of Medicine also held an interprofessional conference on adoptions, which may be continued in other years.

#### D. PROGRAMS AIDING IOWA FAMILIES

Many of the activities and programs discussed in the protective care section of this report could have been included in this section. The present section focuses on family life education developments in Iowa, marriage counseling, services to minorities, programs of family service agencies, and public assistance programs.

##### 1. Marriage and Family Life Education

There is considerable evidence that in our present society more people have need for more family life education than ever before. This holds true for Iowa. The success of marriages and families seems to depend more than ever on the determination and readiness of the husband and wife to create a successful home through their efforts and through whatever help they can obtain. There is a very real need in Iowa for family life education which involves individual readiness for marriage - throughout the entire family life cycle. The latter includes taking the family right through to the aging stage.

There seems to have been some real progress in family life education, but it has been very sporadic, not integrated and hard to measure. And - it has not been nearly enough. Those who are involved in family life education keep few records; and it is impossible to get an accurate picture of what is being done statewide. Many persons and organizations doing family life education report, "...the results of our program are quite intangible." Some of the specific developments in marriage and family life education include the programs of the following organizations.

a. The Iowa Council on Family Relations, an affiliate of the National Council on Family Relations, has attempted to bring together professional and semi-professional persons involved in family life education. There have been conferences, projects, film and literature bibliographies, surveys of family life education in the high schools and similar activities sponsored by this Council.

In the fall of 1956, a new pattern of combining the resources of professional people and a strong lay organization was worked out with much success. The Iowa Council and the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs combined in the establishment of five separate family life conferences in different towns in the state. The Council provided the professional personnel (36 participated) and the Federation provided the local planning and other resources. Ninety-three communities were represented in these conferences, and the 36 professional people came from many organizations, institutions and agencies of the state. Total attendance was 887 people (547 adults and 340 school youth).

The Council co-sponsored a workshop on family life education as a part of the meeting of the Secondary Education Conference at Iowa State Teachers College in April, 1957.



In August, 1959, the Council co-sponsored and co-hosted (with Iowa State University) the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations which brought to Iowa the outstanding leaders and researchers in the family area. Many Iowa people, both professional and lay leaders, attended this conference.

In October, 1959, the Council organized a workshop for teaching family relations in high school. Forty-three teachers and administrators attended the one-day workshop. The high level of interest pointed the way to further and more highly organized workshops. The Council plans to provide one or more workshops with emphasis on the content of marriage and family relations courses at the high school level.

b. The Protestant Churches. Since 1950, the Protestant Churches, their clergy and their lay leaders have developed an increasing interest and concern for family life education, though most lay leaders are still not aware of the needs. There has been little systematized family life education work, excepting for the Methodist follow-up of their national conference. Several denominations nationally have developed curriculums in their religious education program which they hoped would integrate church and home, and the local Iowa affiliates have followed the national lead.

Much work has been attempted on an individual church basis; but there has seldom been effective follow-up. Occasional meetings have been held for various age groups in some churches. A few times, denominations have sent a representative to national meetings and had some follow-up on this. There is an increasing use (spread, at least) of literature from the National Council of Churches and the headquarters of the various denominations. Family Life Week in May has received increasing emphasis. There has, also, been a small - yet significant - increase in church family life camps, where some effective family life education has been carried on.

At present considerable attention is being paid to various aspects of family life in a number of organizations of the church. There is little or no consistency, with some churches (especially some of the larger ones) doing considerable in this area, and many churches doing little or nothing.

There is evidence that considerably more attention will be given to family life education by the churches, both in the number of churches involved and in the breadth of their programs in this area. But there is need for professional help for the local pastor and his church. Both the family approach to Christian Education and Family Camping will probably increase rapidly. Iowa Protestant Churches are badly in need of leadership and other kinds of help in this area; and an increasing number of pastors and churches are becoming concerned about this.

c. The Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church in Iowa has, especially in certain areas, done some very effective work in the area of family life education. In one diocese alone, Pre-Cana conferences for engaged couples have been held in 30 counties of the state. The Cana Program for married couples (husband-wife problems, problems of parenthood, and teenage stage problems) has made considerable progress; and the Christian family movement has been in effect since 1953. In this latter, couples meet in homes every 2 weeks, with groups of 5 or 6 couples.



There has been an increase in College Lenten marriage forums at Loras College, the Mercy School of Nursing and Clarke College. Parent Education, to promote religious education of the pre-school child and high school age youth, has increased. Also, there has been a further development of retreats, discussion clubs, letters and directives. And the every day instruction in high school and college has increased.

The Cana Conferences in one Diocese alone reached between 4000 and 5000 people. In this same diocese 300 affiliated couples were reached through the Christian Family Movement, and approximately 500 college students were reached through the College Lenten marriage forum.

There are many indications that the family life education program in the Roman Catholic Churches will spread and improve in effectiveness.

d. The Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers. Following the lead of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Iowa Congress has been placing increasing emphasis upon family life education through its statewide program, its radio programs, its literature, and its local programs.

Parent education has been and is being carried on through classes and workshops for district chairmen, a number of workshops in the districts, etc. (These latter are designed to train lay leaders). There are monthly radio programs on five stations, which use as their bases subjects from the NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER MAGAZINE. There are a number of radio study clubs in the state.

This family life education is continuing at the present time. There is a trend toward evening classes in order to accommodate fathers, teachers, and working mothers. There are more programs for young parents and it is predicted that the need for these will continue to expand. There is definitely a need to reach more people; and very definite indications that as the organization grows and the parent-education program develops, there will be a serious need for more well trained lay leaders. In the future, effective ways must be found to provide this training.

e. The Federation of Women's Clubs. Under the report on the Iowa Council on Family Relations, will be found a summary of the highly successful fall family life conferences in 1956, co-sponsored by the Federation and the Iowa Council.

In 1958, 118 clubs in Iowa reported taking part in community conferences on family relationships. In the same year, there were 454 club lessons on family relationships given in some clubs ... some of the clubs had as many as 9 lessons.

There is a growing interest in the field of family relationships on the part of the Club women and the Clubs themselves. There is much interest in teen-age codes of ethics, and there is a trend toward community conferences on family life. The Federation reports a definite need in the future for more professional guidance, both in programming and in conducting conferences.



f. The Iowa Farm Bureau. In both the Women's Program and the Young Couple's Program there seems to be an increasing need and request for more family life education. The specific need and interest listed in the Information Bulletin for rural young couples in Iowa was home and family. One of the trends evident in the Women's Program appears to be more programs for the family.

g. Extension in Child Development and Family Relationships - Iowa State University.

Since the White House Conference of 1950, a major emphasis has been given to the findings and recommendations of that conference. At the beginning of the 1950's subject matter was stressed and taught by a specialist, a county home economist, or a lay leader.

More recently, a program has been developed for teenagers and their parents, through assemblies of teenagers in the high schools and a follow-up evening program for their parents, the latter usually promoted by the teenagers. There has been rapid growth in this program from the 1955-6 school year to the 1958-9 school year. It reached 9 high schools, 2,499 teenagers and 80 parents the first year, and 154 high schools, 33,539 teenagers, and 9,637 parents in 1958-9.

Other aspects of this extension program are: parent education, preparation for retirement, and discussion groups for couples and others.

In 1957-58, 205 vocational homemaking teachers were teaching over 8000 adults in 155 cities, in addition to their high school classes. The state supervisor reported: "Such a program strives to help adults strengthen family life and improve their homes. Since new ideas are being developed at a rapid rate, homemakers need to study continuously. Also, the part men, women, and even children take in family life is changing so parents often need to take a new look at their jobs. . . they expand their vision of the importance of their role in society as a result of education for family living."

These activities will be continued. Also, there will probably be considerably more use of television as a medium to reach parents. No doubt there will be more teenage assemblies in high schools, with follow-up parent meetings. More counties are giving county-wide emphasis to this program. Some of these counties have already achieved a functioning county council of youth and parents.

In 1959-60 a series on "Understanding Teenagers" will be telecast over a station that will reach a maximum audience of parents in counties where major emphasis is being given to parent-youth understanding.

There is an increasing need for trained area consultants to assist groups in counties to move constructively in organizing and operating county councils, or other such means of meeting needs of youth and their parents on at least a county-wide basis.

In addition to these extension-related activities, the Department of Economics and Sociology has been conducting a series of one-half hour television programs on topics related to high school age marriages. These programs were first telecast over WOI-TV, Iowa State University, but were made available to other stations later.



Family life education is also furthered in Iowa by means of the articles which regularly appear in IOWA FARM SCIENCE, a monthly magazine published by the Cooperative Extension Service of Iowa State University. Family life education articles are written by University staff members in sociology, child development, home management, household equipment, foods and nutrition and textiles and clothing. IOWA FARM SCIENCE is received by approximately 40,000 families in Iowa. Reprints of articles are used in adult education and other county extension work. Press releases are used to further disseminate research findings and interpretations.

h. Parent Education - Sponsored Jointly by the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station and the Extension Division of the University of Iowa, Iowa City.

This program has involved a number of aspects. There has been the preparation of study lesson plans available to individual members of the Iowa Congress of Parents and Teachers, as well as to local chapter officers. A radio series, "Know Your Children", has been given over Station WSUI each week.

The teaching program has resulted in a fast-growing undergraduate and graduate series of university courses; and the correspondence course on "Child Study and Parent Education" has had rapid growth.

Community services have included workshops and programs. Help has been given in formulating materials and conducting individual PTA and Parent Education meetings. State and district Parent Education workshops have been staffed annually. The staff has worked with a variety of other state organizations interested in parent education: American Association of University Women, mental health associations, city child study clubs, the Federation of Women's Clubs.

There have been several projects in the publication area. "Family Footnotes" is a relatively new newspaper column which is distributed weekly for publication to all Iowa daily newspapers. This has been added to the long established column "Understanding Iowa's Children" which is released weekly to the state newspapers published on a weekly or semi-weekly basis. In addition, there have been made available categorized booklists, film lists, bibliographies, Research Station Bulletins, and booklets.

Plans for the future involve a continuation and expansion of these types of services.

i. High Schools and Colleges. There is no recent or accurate data on family life education being carried on in the high schools and colleges of the state. In 1954, the Iowa Commission on Children and Youth sponsored a survey (done by Dr. William Kenkel, Department of Economics and Sociology, Iowa State University) of courses in family life education at the high school level. Only a small percent of the high schools had such courses; and there is evidence that this percent has not increased much in recent years. There is considerable evidence that there is a very real and present need for effective family life education courses in all or most of our high schools.

Furthermore, education for family living begins with the child's earliest years and extends throughout the elementary school as well. An extensive research program in Iowa, the Preventive Psychiatry Research Program at the University of Iowa, is investigating the possibilities and effects of helping children from the earliest years to extend their appreciation of the forces operating in the development of the human personality.



The need at the high school level was definitely indicated in the report by the Iowa Life Adjustment Education Commission of a 1956 survey made of all the 1949 graduates from a carefully selected sample of 45 high schools in the state, small and large, urban and rural. The study included ten fields of interest on which the former students were asked to rate the extent to which their high school experience had given them useful information: vocational skills, developing and maintaining good health, civic affairs, economic competence, cultural and recreational interests, personal adjustment and self-expression, marriage and family relationships. The graduates rated their schools as having given them far less helpful information on marriage and family relationships than on any other field in the list. Two-thirds of the boys and over half of the girls reported having received "little" help. Less than ten percent of the boys and 14 percent of the girls stated they received "much" information. The developing of such courses and the finding of adequate personnel to teach them is one of the pressing needs Iowa faces in the next decade.

Most of the liberal arts colleges have courses on marriage and the family; but some of them are more on the study of the family as an institution and little on preparation for marriage. There is a great need for expansion here, too, in the next decade.

Both Iowa State University and the State University of Iowa (through its Iowa Child Welfare Research Station and Extension Department) are rapidly expanding teaching, extension and research program in family life. Iowa can well be proud of the work done and being done in the family life area by these two institutions. Both have outstanding leaders in the field.

j. American Social Hygiene Association. During part of 1957 and all of 1958, Iowa was one of four states in a family life education project of the American Social Hygiene Association. The ASHA furnished a consultant to various groups, local and state, planning and doing family life education. This consultant worked with PTA groups (state and local), local schools, pastors (local and state leaders), key personnel in public education, adult educators, etc. Aid was given in the development of family life education curriculum materials in home economics and related fields, which materials were distributed throughout the state. As a part of this program there were also TV and radio appearances, workshops at Upper Iowa University (for public school teachers), talks to the state association of school superintendents, etc.

This work was curtailed when funds gave out for the project. But one thing has continued as a part of this program for Iowa: a conference on family life for school administrators and pastors co-sponsored by the ASHA and Wartburg College held on October 8 and 9, 1959.

It is hoped that money can be secured from a foundation or individual donor to carry on the work of this four-state Mid-West project (including Iowa).

## 2. Marriage and Family Counseling.

This section of the report has limited value, due to the fact that marriage and family counseling is not a well-defined area of professional work, nor do those persons and organizations doing counseling, with rare exceptions, keep records of counseling cases, the number of cases and similar data.



What evidence is available seems to indicate a bit of progress; a workshop on marriage counseling, more concern about marriage and family counseling on the part of pastors and churches, some attempts of professional persons involved with families to get together for exchange of ideas and information, etc. Mostly, it seems, the same few carry on with the counseling; and there is evidence that more competent counselors are needed in Iowa.

a. Iowa Council on Family Relations. In March, 1958, this affiliate of the National Council on Family Relations conducted the first Marriage Counseling Workshop ever held in Iowa. Forty-eight persons from various professions attended. In three cities there were follow-up functioning groups of persons who were and are in some way involved with counseling families or family members. These were called "Family Counseling Clearing Houses". For the future, the Iowa Council plans another Marriage Counseling Workshop in March, 1960, to be held at the University of Iowa. Plans also call for a marriage counseling workshop in April, 1960, to be held in the western part of the state at Sioux City.

b. Clergymen of Various Churches. In the past, as well as in the present, clergymen of all faiths have been involved with family counseling demands. There has been an increasing concern by individual clergymen and their churches about the problems involved and the need for special training and help for clergymen. Some denominations have had special meetings and workshops for some of their own clergymen. These are increasing. There is a definite indication that the future will bring more need for family counseling on the part of clergymen and more awareness of the need for clergymen to have in-service training and other help. In 1960 tentative plans were formulated by the Iowa Council of Churches and Iowa State University for an Institute on, "The Counseling Part of the Pastor's Job."

c. Family Service Agencies. There are four in Iowa which belong to the Family Service Association of America: Des Moines, Sioux City, Davenport and Waterloo. There are four others without national affiliation. They are doing an increasing amount of marriage and family counseling; the Des Moines agency, for example, reports that over one-third of their present case load involves marriage counseling. There has been an increase in requests for help in parent-child relationships but these are much smaller in proportion than the requests for marriage counseling.

In the future, these agencies expect a continued increase in the number of requests for marriage counseling and some increase in the number of requests for help in parent-child relationships.

For more details, see section 4: Developments Within Voluntary Family Service Agencies, page 31.

d. Mental Health Clinics. These clinics have always done considerable marriage counseling, though it is difficult to find a break-down of their cases which are distinctly marriage counseling cases. They report more marriage counseling than in the past. The number of these clinics is increasing gradually and the prediction is that there will be more need for marriage counselors on their staffs.



e. Private Counselors. There are no accurate figures on the number of persons doing private marriage counseling or the number of persons who have been so counseled. It is definite that the private counselors who are competent (psychiatrists and others) are few and far between. There is some evidence that the number of counselors is increasing gradually, and that the case load of the private counselor is more and more taken up with clients who require help with marriage problems. There is definitely a need for more competent counselors and a better organized way of keeping data on cases counseled.

### 3. Services to Minorities.

Several urban centers have had human rights committees during most of the decade, and in the past two years, there has been a State Commission on Human Rights appointed by the governor (no commission has been established by the legislature). These have actively promoted racial and religious equality and justice, and marked progress has been made.

One observer remarked that the Negroes of Iowa have made substantial progress, probably because of the efforts of the human rights and interracial commissions, and partly because they are becoming better educated, are organized, and have definite goals toward which they are working. This observer thought that more attention needed to be given to the Spanish and other Latin Americans, both resident and migrant. Some Iowa cities, particularly Des Moines (a "white collar" city) have large numbers of clerical workers in offices. It is noted by employers that many girls with Latin backgrounds have limited vocabularies and skill in using English grammar. They do not measure up in skill to Anglo-American girls even with their high school education. It is reported that the language barrier is a real problem to them - they speak their Latin languages at home and do not have the social opportunities which would elevate their occupational skills.

For the first time, during the last 1950's the problems of migratory agricultural farm families received some attention. A direct result was a demonstration in one area of the state which included a public health program, immunizations, a day care center and for two years, a mobile migrant ministry project. An indirect result was the development of public opinion which led to much improved housing for the largest migrant family camp. Another was the admission of children to two additional school systems for the short time they were in the area.

Iowa's problem of migrants is not as large as in some of the neighboring states, and it is scattered over a wide area. Approximately 3,000 persons, workers and children, come each season for a variety of crops. There are no readily available health facilities for them, only a few school districts urge the children to attend and no housing supervision. Some is very good and some extremely bad. Through the interest of a leader in the United Christian Youth movement, many organizations and church groups around the state have learned about conditions and are aroused to the point where they will be responsible for further leadership in behalf of these underprivileged families.

Services to Indians on the tribal lands have been extended, with staff time from the state child welfare services and funds for foster care from the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs. Recent legislation provided state funds for law enforcement through the county sheriff's office. Other funds were appropriated to the state welfare department to finance general relief for those not eligible for aid to dependent children, for whom the county makes no provision.



Iowa opened its doors during the 1950's to many refugee families from Europe. While some went to very rural areas where assistance in making adjustments was limited, others had the advantage of immediate education toward citizenship. Voluntary groups provided social events which brought together the foreign families and helped them become acquainted with each other and with native families. These services stabilized a number of situations where serious trouble developed, and saved a home in Iowa for the children.

#### 4. Developments Within Voluntary Family Service Agencies.

Iowa has added only one voluntary family service agency during the 1950's. There are now eight. Many of the functions they serve in urban centers are being assumed by county welfare departments in other areas, often without much experience or skill. A number of leaders have been challenging this dearth of family counseling service, pointing out that people are being told to seek help in time for "sick marriages," and when they ask for service, it is not available. Some persons able to pay fees for counseling have gone great distances to agencies with skilled staff.

A report from the private family agency field in Iowa states: Major Changes in Focus and Emphasis in the Family Field. The family service field has changed in many ways during the past ten years. I shall attempt to discuss trends in the entire field though it is necessary to recognize that acceptance of these changes varies from agency to agency. I believe that Des Moines, and probably the other three agencies in Iowa which belong to Family Service Association of America, have insofar as possible, followed the national trends.

##### Decrease in Financial Relief Giving

Before the depression of the 1930's, family agencies were giving a high proportion of the relief to their communities. The Government took over the large relief programs necessary during the depression and family agencies found new areas of usefulness. Their philosophy at the present time is that maintenance relief should be given by tax-supported agencies. Some family agencies give no relief. Others, like the Des Moines agency, fill in gaps in public welfare but only when the giving is accompanied by attempts to improve public welfare. They also give some financial assistance when it is needed as a part of a casework plan.

##### Change in Types of Problems Accepted

Family Service has changed its program to fit into changing community needs and resources. In Des Moines, one-third or more of the applications are for marriage counseling. Others ask for help with troubled relations between parent and children. Next come the problems in which there are psychological factors often



combined with needs in the concrete area. Mental illness and personal maladjustment result in social difficulties and bring people to a social agency known for its counseling. Some of these clients need help to find psychiatric treatment, and many referrals are made by the institutions when the patient leaves the institution. Many of the chronic conditions which do not yield to psychiatric treatment are known off and on for years in family agencies. The less acute psychological difficulties may remain in the family agency. It is the frequency of such problems that has led to the use of psychiatric consultation by many family agencies.

#### Changes in Method of Casework Services

Family agencies still give help with information and with the various reality problems common to families and individuals. In fact, some times the only way to help a mentally ill patient is through these concrete services and the warm relationship with the caseworker who is giving them. However, much more than formerly, casework treatment is through interviews in the office. The purpose is to help the client understand the causes of his difficulty, to relieve his feelings of anger or hurt, and to give him a relationship with a person who understands and can help him to make the needed changes. More and more family agencies are using a diagnostic or evaluation method similar to that in the psychiatric clinic. The early period in the casework service is used to explore the difficulty, possibly with the help of the psychiatrist, and then to decide what help the client needs and where he can get it best.

#### Greater Emphasis on Evaluation and Treatment of the Entire Family.

We have long known that personality structure and behavior patterns grow largely out of the early family situation. Family agencies have given leadership in attempting to understand interaction between family members and then in treating the situation.

#### A Feeling of Responsibility for the Very Difficult Family

There are families in which adverse behavior patterns and ways of living have been handed down through generations and are now damaging the children of this generation. Sometimes they are poor families with mental retardation or mental illness and delinquency; but often they are families of more than average education, a recognition of what they are doing to their children and willingness to pay a fee for service. The aim in casework treatment is to break through the unfortunate family patterns so that the present generation may have a better chance for healthy adjustment. These are frequently long time cases and involve a combination of help with reality problems, with feelings, attitudes, and conflicts.



### Fees For Service

With the change in type of problems, has come a change in the financial and social situation of our clients. The majority are independent financially and accustomed to paying for all services. Therefore, family agencies have developed a policy for fee charging, though the charge is seldom enough to pay the total cost of the service. There are always groups of clients from whom no fee is asked. These often include Juvenile Court and Public Welfare referrals. A fee is never asked if it will interfere with the client's accepting service.

### Participation in Community Planning

With our growing awareness of the seriousness of increased delinquency, divorce and mental illness, community planning and cooperation has become more and more important. In the large cities and in some counties which do not have a large city, there is some kind of welfare planning body. Some of these in Iowa have during the 1950's reorganized on a county-wide basis, replacing the much narrower city-only approach. Thus, both service given by agencies and fund-raising extends to all people in the county. In Des Moines, this is the Council of Social Agencies, which takes responsibility for study of changing needs, for organization and for cooperative work with families when they need the services of more than one agency. Projects which are receiving emphasis are: planning with the state institutions for organized service to inmates upon release, work with the aged and the chronically ill and service for multi-problem families. In addition to the planning within the Council of Social Agencies, such as Family Service and the Juvenile Court or Family Service and the schools.

Family Service is constantly aware as is the community, that changing social and economic conditions and increase in knowledge of human behavior require that all services study and work together. This is true not only of social agencies but of the other professions and the many groups interested in the welfare of children and families.

## 5. Public Assistance and Poor Relief Developments

A major change for which agencies in Iowa worked for 20 years was achieved in 1959 by removal from the poor law of a century-old provision to prevent persons who come into a county and appear to be poor from acquiring a legal settlement by serving a notice to depart on them. This notice was a permanent barrier to acquiring settlement unless certain legal steps were taken by the recipient, about which he usually did not know. The basic period of residence required for a settlement was reduced from two years to one. A few years earlier, the legislature removed the legal limit of poor relief which might be granted per person per week, one established at the close of the Civil War. It is now possible for Iowa counties to grant relief according to the needs of persons with fewer restrictions than formerly.



Probably the most significant development in the Public Assistance programs during the past decade has been the ever increasing emphasis on the extension of casework services to recipients of all categories of assistance. This was substantiated by Congressional amendments to the Social Security Act in 1956. This purpose is stated well in the amendment to Title IV - Grants to States For Aid to Dependent Children, "For the purpose of encouraging the care of dependent children in their own homes or in the homes of relatives by enabling each State to furnish financial assistance and other services, as far as practicable under the conditions in such state, to needy dependent children and the parents or relatives with whom they are living to help maintain and strengthen family life and to obtain the maximum of self-support and personal independence consistent with the maintenance of continuing parental care and protection, . . . "

Section 402 of Title IV has also been amended by the following addition requiring states to "provide a description of the services (if any) which the state agency makes available to maintain and strengthen family life for children, including a description of the steps taken to assure, in the provision of such services, maximum utilization of the other agencies providing similar or related services." Iowa has stepped up its staff development program since 1955 and was well able to move into an intensified service program.

To implement the amendments to the ADC act, a state-wide program of intensive service to selected ADC cases was started in the fall of 1957. A few cases from each worker's caseload were selected so that all workers would have the benefit of special supervision and training in dealing with complex problems. This project was to continue for a year and as much longer as warranted by the individual case. In the fall of 1958, progress in each selected case was evaluated.

Although a total of 665 cases were selected, it was possible to tabulate only 658 cases. In these, 1132 problems were recognized in six rather broad problem areas:

1. Illness, physical handicaps and other health problems (304 cases);
2. Conflict of family relationships (225 cases);
3. Employment - lack of useful skills (200 cases);
4. Behavior problems of parents (147 cases);
5. Problems of community attitudes and relationships (94 cases);
6. Inadequate homemaking and management (162 cases).

Practically all cases selected were multi-problem ones, presenting more than one problem other than the need for financial assistance.

There were two evident benefits from this project; first, there was evidence of favorable movement toward self-improvement on the part of recipients in approximately three-fourths of the selected cases; and, second, faith of the workers in their own ability to give casework service was considerably enhanced. This carried over to more adequate service to bother families, and more awareness of problems.



In January, 1959, provision was made to meet more fully the medical needs of children as a part of the assistance grants. For many years the needs of children for glasses and dental care have been recognized in the grants. In addition to this program, and effective as of January 1959, the State Department policy was revised to extend remedial blind care and provide treatment for children with crossed eyes.

Despite the fact that the ADC program at present still meets only 85 percent of budgeted need, state policy has been liberalized to the extent (during 1958) that family income may be used to meet all or part of the flat 15 percent reduction in minimum budgets (due to lack of funds for full budgeting of families) before any deduction from grant is made for basic needs.

Although Iowa's law places no ceiling on ADC grants, appropriations have permitted payment of 100 percent of the subsistence budget during only four years since 1944. The eligible children have had to live on less than enough to promote maximum health and well being on a minimum basis. In August, 1955, a statutory maximum of \$175.00 was placed on the grants. This meant that even though a family needs were \$300.00, \$175.00 was all that it could receive through the aid program. The statute was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court on February 5, 1957, and the restriction was removed by the legislature in 1957. Many children suffered hardships during this period, dropped out of school and sought work without adequate preparation for advancement.

One measureable result of the ADC program is the fact that of all the school-age children (15,533 under 18 years) who are being supported in full or in part from ADC funds, only 150 are not in school.

During the period from January, 1950 to January, 1959, the number of children being supported in full or in part from public funds has very nearly doubled, as has the number of ADC cases. In January, 1950, there were 4,981 cases involving an estimated 17,114 eligible children and adult caretakers while in January, 1959 there were 8,322 cases with 30,768 recipients, including eligible children and adult caretakers. This is to a considerable extent related to the rapid increase in the rate of young children (under 15 years) in Iowa's population and instability of more marriages involving children. In the same period, the number of children cared for by agencies in their institutions and foster family homes decreased in the face of a steadily rising population of young children. With financial support on a more adequate basis than before the advent of ADC, it has become possible for agencies to strengthen family life, and give better services to children in their own homes, reducing the need for foster care.

As the program has been liberalized, mainly through greater diversification of recognizable needs and the recognition of the medical needs, the cost will increase. It will replace cost of care formerly paid from purely local real estate taxes.

There has been a significant change in the causes of deprivation of parental care and support during this period. The Federal Old Age and Survivors' Insurance has removed from the rolls many cases where the father is deceased thus increasing the percentage of divorce and desertion in the remaining total. This has followed the general social trends. For example, the following percentages



represent the causes of child dependency at present in terms of what has happened to the family wage earner:

Deceased	4.2 percent (formerly over half)
Incapacitated	23.9
In Penal Institution	8.3
Unwed	6.6
Divorce, Separation, Desertion	50.1
All other causes	6.8

The most outstanding problem in the past has been failure to meet the full needs of children through the ADC program. Limited funds have been responsible for this situation and have resulted in restrictions, such as budget reduction, and payment of only a certain percentage of the established need. Inadequate grants and continued deprivation might well be a forerunner of juvenile delinquency.

There has been a lack of adequately trained personnel to give needed casework service at the county level as well as a limited number of casework consultants to provide supervision to the county agencies, particularly in the areas of child welfare and Aid to Dependent Children.

In Iowa assistance grants are related to individual budgets. Standards for budgeting are established on a scientific basis, with the help of material from the Department of Agriculture, the Heller Study Committee, and the National Home Economics Association, and consultation from specialists in dietetics and nutrition in the State Department of Health.

Throughout the years the Iowa Legislatures have appropriated funds to meet the needs of persons receiving Old Age Assistance and Aid to the Blind on the basis of total of budgeted need.

In 1959, the legislature initiated a limited program of aid to the disabled, which will benefit families of children. A state-wide medical program as part of the public assistance supervised by the state, was established by the State Welfare Department, and is providing more consistent medical and dental care to children than formerly.

The major unmet needs in public assistance are:

1. State-wide general relief program which would have comparable standards and administration in all parts of the state. At present, there are many inequalities of administration, of tax resources, of medical care, under the three systems of public relief provided by Iowa laws:
  - (a) the state-wide public assistance program of four categories (old age assistance, blind aid, ADC, aid to the disabled);
  - (b) local county poor relief for those ineligible under (a);
  - (c) Soldiers' Relief



The Family Life Committee of the Iowa Commission in 1950 called attention to the problem of three separate relief set-ups, with different laws of eligibility and standards and personnel for administration. In 1959-60, this is being studied by a special legislative committee looking toward remedial legislation.

2. Payment of full-budget grants in ADC instead of 85 percent of minimum budget.
3. More adequate housing for low and middle income groups.
4. Assistance available to non-residents, migrants, and transients.



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2. Payment of full-dollar grants to the extent of 50 percent  
 of minimum budget.

3. More adequate housing for low and middle income groups.

4. Assistance available to non-graduate students and their  
 parents.