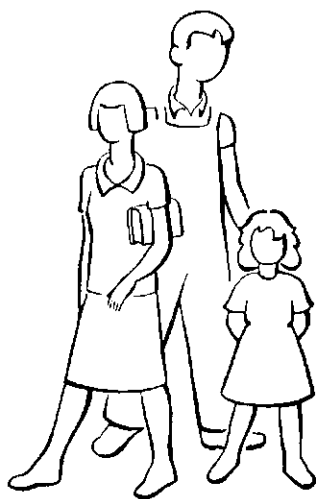


Children IN THE COMMUNITY

THE ST. PAUL EXPERIMENT

IN CHILD

WELFARE



Sybil A. Stone • Elsa Castendyck • Harold B. Hanson, M. D.

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FOREWORD

IN 1937 the Social Service Division of the Children's Bureau, working in cooperation with local public and private agencies, set up an experimental project in St. Paul, Minn., to study ways of discovering and getting treatment to children who were showing behavior difficulties.

The work fell naturally into two categories. There was first, the problem of identifying the children, of training workers in the meaning and the seriousness of unhappiness and misbehavior in children—workers who were in daily contact with many children, and therefore in key positions to identify those in need of service. When the children in need of service were identified there was the problem of putting them in touch with the community organization best able to give the service needed. The problems encountered in St. Paul, in both phases of this work, are likely to arise wherever similar work is undertaken. It is to be hoped that this report will be studied carefully by all who are concerned with community organization or social planning, and most especially by those who are working for a well-integrated program of service to children in their communities.

The Children's Bureau is indebted to the many agencies and organizations in St. Paul which cooperated in this study: The Community Chest, the Amherst H. Wilder Charity, the Ramsey County Board of Public Welfare, and the Juvenile Court for their official sponsorship of the project; the public and parochial school teachers and administrative staffs, without whose cooperation and good will the work could not have been done; and other social, educational, religious, health, and civic groups which assisted in so many ways. The University of Minnesota, colleges in St. Paul, the WPA, and the NYA found workers, paid and volunteer, for some of the special activities of the project. Chapter A. W. of P. E. O., the Zonta Club of St. Paul, and some individuals made financial contributions to the tutoring and group-work programs. The Division of Social Welfare of the State Department of Social Security assisted in assembling the statistical data. The Children's Bureau is also indebted to the professional people in St. Paul and throughout the country who gave their advice in planning for this study and in meeting problems as they arose.

The success of the project was due to the resourcefulness, capacity, and devotion of the directors and the staff. Plans for the project were developed by Elsa Castendyck of the Bureau staff, then Director of the Bureau's Delinquency Division, later termed the Child Guidance Division, and now responsible for the social-service aspects of the Bureau's work in the field of mental health. She recruited and organized the staff and gave general direction to the project throughout its history. The work in St. Paul was under the direction of Harold B. Hanson, M. D., whose skill and patience contributed more than any other factor to the success of the undertaking.

The following were on the staff during part or all of the life of the project: Jean M. Deutsche, Sybil A. Stone, Ruth Durward, Dwight A. Ferguson, Thompson R. Fulton, Henry W. Waltz, Jr., Helen Rowe, Robert B. Solomon, Alma Laabs (assigned by Amherst H. Wilder Charity), Thelma V. Brown, Elizabeth G. Hendrix, Dorothy Pederson, Muriel Krebs, and others who contributed to the work for shorter periods of time.

KATHARINE F. LENROOT,
Chief, Children's Bureau,
United States Department of Labor,
Washington, D. C.

INTRODUCTION

WHEN the United States Children's Bureau suggested that an experimental project might be located in St. Paul to study the problems, behavior, and adjustment of children and to develop treatment services, the suggestion was met immediately by a hearty welcome on the part of the St. Paul Community Chest and Council and the public and private agencies.

It came at an opportune time. The Council of Social Agencies, at the time the project was started, was completing an extensive study of child neglect and the attention of the community was already focused upon its services to children and, more especially, services to children in their own homes.

Competent performance in any field of social work or community organization is dependent upon competent personnel. The personnel selected by the Children's Bureau represented a variety of special skills and was characterized by a high degree of professional and personal leadership. A study and treatment program for children was developed which has left a lasting imprint upon the organization of community forces and the social planning of the community.

Many practical problems involved in the integration of services to children were brought to a focus in a typical area of the city. The ever-present problem of the coordination of community services and effort is typical not only of St. Paul but of every urban center. The experiment made the nature of the problem clearer which is always a necessary step in any planning.

St. Paul owes a debt of gratitude to the Children's Bureau; to Miss Katharine F. Lenroot, Chief of the Children's Bureau; to Miss Castendyck, and to the staff serving in this project, whose services by no means came to an end with the closing of the experiment.

LOUISE M. CLEVINGER,

Secretary, Council of Social Agencies and Social Planning Committee.

St. PAUL, MINN.

April, 1945.

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