A study of the breakdown of foster homes resulting in their closing.

Grace Doman
University of Windsor

William Scott
University of Windsor

Cornelius Van Velzen
University of Windsor

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A STUDY ON THE BREAKDOWN OF FOSTER HOMES RESULTING IN THEIR CLOSING

by

Grace Doman
William Scott, and
Cornelius Van Volzen

A research project presented to the School of Social Work of the University of Windsor in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work.

May, 1971

WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA
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M.S.W. APPROVAL

Approved by: Committee Chairman
Member
Member
School Director
Date April 16, 1971.
Research Committee

Professor Harry Morrow, Chairman
Dr. W. Wassef, Member
Mr. Moti Dhar, Member
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writers of this paper wish to express their appreciation to the many people who made it possible for them to conduct the research.

Special thanks is given to the research committee, Prof. H. Morrow, Dr. W. Wassef and Mr. M. Dhar for their assistance and direction throughout the project. Also we would like to thank the staffs of the two agencies involved, the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex, for their helpful cooperation which greatly facilitated our efforts.

Thanks too, to our patient typist, Mrs. W. Scott.

Lastly, we wish to give special thanks to the foster parents and former foster parents, who shall remain anonymous, without whose willingness to cooperate this paper could not have been written.
ABSTRACT

As partial fulfillment of the research requirement for the Master of Social Work degree at the University of Windsor, the authors undertook to study the breakdown of foster homes in the Metropolitan Windsor, Ontario area.

It was hypothesized that the breakdown of foster homes resulting in their closing was related to change of socio-economic circumstances of the foster parents, inappropriate placement of foster children and inadequate social work services of the agencies for foster parents.

The population for our research was restricted to the foster homes originally approved by a Children's Aid Society during the period from January 1, 1968 to December 31, 1969, by the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex located in Metropolitan Windsor, Ontario, (including Tecumseh and La Salle.) Half of the homes in the study were closed during the period January 1, 1968 to December 31, 1970.

Excluded were special foster homes, foster homes closed because of death of one foster parent, or adoption of the foster child, and foster parents who moved out of the area. As only twenty closed homes were available for the study according to the criteria set for this research, a sample of
twenty open homes was randomly chosen as a control group.

The data was obtained directly from the foster parents through means of a structured interview developed and administered by the three researchers.

Because of the limitations and problems encountered and also the inter-relatedness of the three dependent variables and the complexity of fostering, no dogmatic conclusions with a high degree of certainty can be stated in this study. However, some significant patterns and interesting observations appear to have evolved in the cases researched.

The findings concur with other major studies that fostering is mainly a working person's occupation and that foster parents are hard working people interested mainly in their families and homes.

There appears to be more incidence in the breakdown of foster homes in cases where the foster children are of the same age or older than the foster parents' own oldest child. Too, there appears to be some relationship between the sex of the foster child and the breakdown, as homes where boys were placed broke down more often. Also, the inability of the foster children to communicate adequately with the foster parents appears to be a significant factor.

Lack of preparation for the foster parents after approval and prior to placement of the foster child into the home, seems to result in the closing of some foster homes. Similarly, the non-involvement of the foster parents' own children in the discussion with the social worker prior to
placement of the foster child into the home appears to play an important part in the breakdown of the foster homes resulting in their closing.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is legislation in Ontario to protect children under sixteen, The Child Welfare Act of 1965.¹ There are Children's Aid Societies who carry out the functions as outlined in the Act. Children who are taken into the care of a Children's Aid Society are known as Wards. (See Chapter II, p. 27 for a complete definition of Wards.) Many are placed in substitute homes which have come to be known as foster homes. Those wards whom the Children's Aid Societies place in the foster homes are known as foster children. Children are brought into the care of a Children's Aid Society for various reasons, most notably being parental neglect, abuse, exploitation, broken homes, economic troubles, sickness and psychiatric problems.²

A 'foster home' is defined by the Child Welfare Act as a home other than the home of the child's parent in which a child is placed for care and supervision but not for the purpose of adoption.³

²Richard Haitch, Orphans of the Living, p. 3.
Foster homes as a natural setting for young children are very important as it is in the healthy relatedness of family life that the individual fulfills his need to be loved, his need to be respected and his need to believe. We have only to read an article like "Little Boy Lost,"[^1] which is a heart rending story about a boy who had many foster homes to get some idea of the great importance foster parents have in the lives of these children who are unfortunate enough to have to be cared for by someone other than their natural parents. More knowledge is needed to help obtain and support foster families in meeting the needs of the foster children. It was then, with great interest that we undertook research to see if there is a relationship between the breakdown of foster homes and change in socio-economic factors, inappropriate placement of children and inadequate services of the Agencies.

The researchers felt it would be helpful to review the development of foster care to give some picture of where fostering is at the present time. A thorough review of the literature seemed a reasonable theoretical framework within which the study could be carried out. Since human needs are much the same whether in the United States or Canada, we can predict successes or failures in fostering would have similarities in both countries. If this small study revealed likenesses to other studies, it was felt

there would be some degree of reliability to the findings.

**Historical Development**

Until about 1870 in North America most foster children were placed in orphan asylums. In the United States, Charles Loring Brace was notable in launching the foster care movement. He placed children from New York City on private farms in the Midwest. We read that Brace was not able to abandon completely the idea of foster care involving a property contract, but nevertheless, he introduced into foster care, a concern for the child's own parents even though his motive seems to have been expedience rather than the preservation of the family. He goes on to say the children still continued to be separated from their parents and shipped great distances. The Agency's commitment was still chiefly to placement; continuing involvement was tenuous and ill-defined at the best.

In Canada, tribute is paid to the late J. J. Kelso whose concern for protection of children culminated in the founding of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto in 1891. The Charter was granted in October of that year. As a result of his hard work for legislative protection, the first Children's Protection Act in Canada was passed in 1893 in

---


6 Ibid.
Ontario under the premiership of Sir Oliver Mowat. This Act concerned itself mainly with the neglected child and its administration was placed in the hands of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto so far as that community was concerned. That pattern was soon followed in other counties in Ontario and later spread to other parts of Canada.

Today's progress depends on yesterday's struggles. It is interesting to read about changes in philosophy and attitudes regarding the protection of children over the past several decades. B. W. Heise who worked on the proposed legislation to put the Bill before the House tells about how he was warned by his colleagues that he would get the government into trouble by introducing such a bill. His colleagues warned him that the Bill provided for interference with heads of families; because a man is head of his family he can do what he pleases even to cruelty to his children. The Bill was read a first time and went through without any very material amendment, thus giving Canada the first Children's Protection Act as mentioned earlier.

It is foster homes where wards of Children's Aid Societies are placed for care and supervision that the research-

---

8 Ibid.
9 Early History of the Children's Aid Society in Ontario, from a speech given by Mr. B. W. Heise, May 20, 1943.
10 Ibid.
ers undertaking this study are concerned about. More specifically, it is the foster homes of the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.

These societies were incorporated under the Act and received their charters in 1934 and 1899 respectively.\textsuperscript{11}

Review of Literature

Wolins points out that in accepting a measure of responsibility for the children the agency placed, it implicitly began to recognize that a foster family was different from a child's own family. He said the distinction was negligible, for all intent and purposes, and the agency withdrew from the scene and permitted the placement to evolve into a pseudo-adoption.\textsuperscript{12} He goes on to say, continuing attention to the foster family was given only after many reactions from the community and after Hart's report about problems in fostering in the 1880's.\textsuperscript{13} The development of Freudian psychology has stimulated fostering greatly since. Within the foster family, it was assumed, the child could experience the stages of child development in a more natural way.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{11}Facts about your Children's Aid Society, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{12}Wolins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 9.
Phyllis Burns writes that in the early days of the development of social services to children, the emphasis was largely on protecting them from grossly inadequate parents and on punishing parents who mistreated them. In the last few decades, she goes on to say, the natural family is stressed more so that preventive social work can help the children and their parents in their own homes.\footnote{15} We need only look at the 1970 Fact Sheet of Children's Aid Societies in Ontario to see her remarks borne out. This states only fourteen per cent of the children who were seen by the Children's Aid Societies in Ontario were taken into care in 1968.\footnote{16} This would indicate that children were taken into care only when the home situation was such that preventive services could not be effective. The Fact Sheet further shows only one-third of the fourteen per cent who came into care were returned to their parents.\footnote{17} Maas and Engler's study in the United States (1959) showed that a lack of sound, long range planning for children in care means that more children than is necessary are caught up in long-term foster care, usually with a procession through foster homes not equipped to cope with them.\footnote{18} These authors also say

\footnote{15}{Phyllis Burns, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 351.}
\footnote{16}{Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 1970 Fact Sheet.}
\footnote{17}{Ibid.}
\footnote{18}{Report to the Advisory Committee on Child Welfare to the Minister of Public Welfare, Ontario, p. 37.}
unless children move out of care within the first year to a year and a half of their stay in care, the likelihood of their ever returning home has sharply decreased.19

In 1963 in Ontario there were 13,769 wards in care (more than 9000 were Crown wards). In 1968 this number had increased to 18,228.20 A decrease in applicants to foster has made the problem of foster care still more acute. Finlay in his talk stated that seventy per cent of the children in care in Ontario were in foster boarding care.21 On the local level we get the same picture. In 1963, in the Children's Aid Society of Essex County there were 273 Crown wards. At the end of 1969 this number had increased to 361 Crown wards (total number of wards 460). For the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex these numbers for these years were respectively 184 and 251.22 As a result, there is more pressure on child care and especially on foster families. Finlay explains that with the advent of


20Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 1970 Fact Sheet.


221970 Annual reports and statistics of the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex. (At time of this writing, these figures are not officially published but released on request to the researchers.) The population for Essex County, which includes Windsor, La Salle and Tecumseh, was 238,301 in 1963 and 294,431 in 1969.
the new Child Welfare Act, 1965 the Children's Aid Societies were given a broader mandate to work with children and their families in their own homes. Although the number of Crown wards has increased, the percentage of children in care has declined somewhat due to the increased services to the families in their homes. Therefore, it stands to reason that many children coming into care as a last resource are presenting serious problems today. Garrett notes the greater prevalence and degree of emotional disturbance in children coming into care today than in the past. She attributes this to improved income maintenance programs that enable these families to stay intact. So the children remain in their own homes until emotional problems are severe enough to be drawn to the attention of the agencies.

It is interesting to note that at the end of 1970 the number of Crown wards had decreased in both agencies. In the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society there were 334 and in the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society there were 239 Crown wards.

According to Trasler, most applicants who become foster parents are looking for companionship for themselves or for

23 Finlay, op. cit., p. 2.


25 1970 Annual reports and statistics of the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society and the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex. (See footnote number 22).
their own child, or want a substitute for a child they never had or who is no longer with them—a child to fill an emo-
tional vacuum in themselves or their family. They do not want children with serious problems. If a foster child does not fulfill this emotional need the home might break down.²⁶

An Overview of Fostering

The literature indicates that most foster parents look at foster children differently than the social workers and these differences should be taken into consideration by the social worker in dealing with foster parents. It is for this reason we are interested in the foster parents' point of view and why we interviewed them rather than using the agencies' files.

Wolins (1963)²⁷ interviewed ninety-three foster parents, nineteen experienced social workers and seventy-eight members of the community in the United States to point out some differences between each group. On the question of what fostering was, seventy-seven per cent of the foster parents interviewed compared themselves to the child's natural parents. Nineteen per cent saw themselves as relatives.

In Wolin's study referred to above, one-third of the social workers compared the foster parents with adoptive parents, one-third with a unique role and one-third with

²⁶Gordon Trasler, In Place of Parents: A Study of Foster Care, pp. 126-27.
other roles such as staff members, professional parents or relatives. The study also showed confusion in parental visiting rights and in decisions about the foster child's education and legal authority. For instance, all social workers gave the natural parents the right to visit their children in care. Thirty-one per cent of the foster parents gave this right and twenty-four per cent of the community. Two-thirds of well-informed foster parents felt that a foster child should feel closer to his foster parents than to his own parents. This study clearly shows some differences in judgement and unless the worker is aware of them the selection of a foster home might soon result in a breakdown.

The foster parents of both agencies in our research carry the burden of child care as is the case in any agency (see Table 1). However, due to the decrease of foster home applications, more pressure is often put on them than perhaps should be. For example, in the non-Catholic Agency in 1969 there were ninety applications and in 1970 there were sixty-seven. Although these numbers are very interesting and show a decrease of wards in both agencies for the first time, the statistics are given only to point out the emphasis on fostering.

In the United States, studies have indicated the growing importance of foster homes over the years. Gradually

### TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN CARE IN BOTH CHILDRENS' AID SOCIETIES OF THE COUNTY OF ESSEX*

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<td>Receiving home</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group homes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding homes</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptive homes</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free homes</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions paid by Society</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions not paid by Society</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In home of parent</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>460</strong></td>
<td><strong>424</strong></td>
<td><strong>339</strong></td>
<td><strong>301</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Annual Reports 1969 and 1970 of both agencies of the study.

### TABLE 2
CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONS AND FOSTER HOMES IN U.S.A. BY SELECTED YEARS AND TYPE OF CARE (IN THOUSANDS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number in Care</th>
<th>Institutions Number</th>
<th>Institutions %</th>
<th>Foster Home Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Martin Wolins and Irving Piliavin, Institution or Foster Family, p. 31.*
the numbers of children in institutions are decreasing, while the numbers of children in foster care are increasing. (see Table 2).

Although there is a growing emphasis on fostering, Maas and Engler (1959) suggested in their exploratory study that foster care or institutional placements reflect the normal social process tendencies in the culture of a community. This means that if a community in an area has a separate culture they will emphasize more institutional than foster care. If there is an interdependent orientation the tendency will be associated with foster care. Interdependency seems growing and so does foster care. Maas and Engler, therefore, see patterns of fostering in a community.

Research on Foster Home Breakdown

In reviewing the literature about foster home breakdowns we can focus on the child as well as the foster parents. A breakdown of the foster home for a particular child does not necessarily mean a breakdown of the home resulting in its closing for the foster parents. There is much evidence about the rate of fostering breakdowns for foster children.

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31 Ibid., (Maas and Engler mean by 'interdependent' the tendency toward reciprocal interdependence of the units in the community and responsible to the other and to the whole as opposed to 'separateness' at the other end of the continuum of the system where the tendency was toward independent separation of the differentiated parts, each primarily responsible to self and to own group.)
Parker (1966) found in his study of 209 foster children that the rate of success (defined as five years unbroken care) in long-term placements was only fifty-two per cent in one English county. Dinnage and Pringle cite the following studies: Mitchell's study (1959) which noted that less than half of a sample of foster children in Scotland could probably expect to stay in one placement; Gray and Parr's study (1957) which found that during only one year about a quarter of their large sample of placements had broken down; and Ambinder's study (1965) which reported that the average thirteen year old foster child had had four to five placements. Maas and Engler quote similar findings.

Colvin and Ewaskos study (1958) suggests how the outcome of unsuccessful foster care may differ specifically from that of institutional care. Comparing two groups of disturbed children, one group having spent early childhood in multiple placements and the other in institutional care, they found that the institutional children had significantly lower impulse control, higher dependency and unrealistically

32 R. A. Parker, Decision in Child Care. A Study of Prediction in Fostering, p. 43.
33 Rosemary Dinnage and M. L. Kellmer Pringle, Foster Home Care, Facts and Fallacies, p. 69.
34 Maas and Engler, op. cit., p. 422.
high self-ratings than the fostered children.\textsuperscript{35}

Hannan (1959) and Dufour (1958) studies as referred to in Colvin and Ewaskos work both point out that children who spent their early childhood in residential care lack the ability to relate to adults and are therefore less successful in foster homes.\textsuperscript{36} Trasler (1960) affirms this also. He states:

The relationship between foster parents and child must, if it is to be satisfactory to each of them, be both an affectionate relationship and a genuinely reciprocal one. It is an essential condition of successful placement that the foster parents should be able to find some measure of response to the affection and care which they give the child. If this is not forthcoming, their affectionate attitude is likely to become replaced by feelings of hostility and frustration. The child who is seriously lacking in the capacity to form and maintain satisfactory relationships with others is clearly unable to show an adequate response to his foster parents' affection, and for this reason alone an attempt to place him in a foster home may fail.\textsuperscript{37}

Dinnage and Pringle report that Jenkin's (1965) findings indicate that the least successful fostering was associated with the needs to compensate for dissatisfaction, to overcome feelings of guilt, or to be important to a dependent.\textsuperscript{38}

Fanshel's study (1961) in Dinnage and Pringle's summary of the literature found that foster parents with mistrustful

\textsuperscript{35}Ralph W. Colvin, "Toward the development of a foster parent attitude test," in Dale Harris et al., editors, Quantitative Approaches to Parent Selection, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 44.

\textsuperscript{37}Trasler, op. cit., p. 20.

\textsuperscript{38}Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., pp. 146-47.
attitudes, strictness to children, and a factor he calls the 'benefactress of children' attitude tended to cluster together with poor foster care, and that the need to make up for past deprivation was associated with pathogenic attitudes, such as 'martyrdom' and suppression of aggression.\textsuperscript{39}

In reviewing the literature and research we found only one study done in which parents who had stopped fostering were interviewed. Beaulieu (1964) tried to find some of the causative elements involved in the annual loss of agency foster homes in the preliminary study.\textsuperscript{40} Among the ex-foster parents in his sample, the highest number of them appeared to have terminated their services to the agency for personal reasons (43.2\%). The next largest group of reasons for termination was an expression of discontent with the agency and/or worker (37.8\%). A small group had terminated their services for financial reasons (10.8\%). The remainder had terminated services for reasons more synonymous with child placement, i.e., placement of child in adoptive home and return of foster child to his natural parents (8.2\%). Because of the lack of research on breakdown of foster homes resulting in their closing, the researchers wanted to explore this further.

\textsuperscript{39}Dinnage and Pringle, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 137.

\textsuperscript{40}L. A. Beaulieu, \textit{To Obtain and Retain—That is the Problem. A Study of the Loss Factor in Foster Homes}, p. 7.
Research on the Socio-economic Circumstances of the Foster Parents

Gray and Parr (1957) as found in Dinnage and Pringle, studied a large and representative sample and found that the majority of foster parents (59%) were over forty years of age in England.\(^1\) Fanshel (1966) studied the age of foster parents at the time of breakdown.\(^2\) Thirty-nine per cent of the foster mothers were caring primarily for infants and twenty-nine per cent of the mothers caring for older foster children were forty years old or younger. Twenty-nine per cent of the former group were over the age of fifty compared with thirty-one per cent of the latter group. For the fathers a similar picture was found. Twenty-seven per cent of the fathers were forty or under of the infant homes and eighteen per cent for the non-infant homes.\(^3\) Trasler (1960) found somewhat similar percentages.\(^4\) He says these percentages seem somewhat surprising, since one might have anticipated that, because of the physical demands of infant care, this would be a responsibility handled largely by the younger parents. Wolins' (1963) findings concur.\(^5\)

On the whole, it appears that fostering is a working-

\(^1\)Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., p. 103.
\(^2\)David Fanshel, Foster Parenthood: A Role Analysis, pp. 22-23.
\(^3\)Ibid.
\(^4\)Trasler, op. cit., p. 237.
\(^5\)Wolins, op. cit., p. 115.
class occupation. Parker's findings support Gray and Parr that the highest and lowest income groups were under-represented. It is understandable that the community's poorest families would not have accommodation for fostering nor be accepted by the Children's Aid Society, but it is more striking that the upper class is under-represented.

Dinnage and Pringle report that Wakeford (1963) found that a group of sixty-six foster mothers were mainly working-class, had lower incomes, and poorer housing compared with controls selected at random.

Murphy (1964) in a study set in Montreal found that country and city families were outstandingly more successful (in terms of child's later progress rather than placement stability alone) than suburban families, especially with difficult or damaged children.

According to Fanshel's study (1966) most foster fathers are engaged in blue-collar work and have shifted away from the occupations of their fathers and their wives' fathers (farming and mining) to more widespread involvement in heavy industries. There was not much occupational mobility for the foster fathers. Wakeford (1963) also found that foster fathers tended to be downwardly mobile when their

46 Parker, op. cit., pp. 68-69.
47 Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., p. 40.
49 Fanshel, op. cit., p. 55.
occupations were compared with their fathers'.  

Several studies are done about the family background of the foster parents. Babcock (1965) describes an impressionistic profile of the typical American fostering couple based on detailed case records. She describes them as hard-working men and women from large families, limited in their education and ambitions, interested mainly in their own homes and families. Wakeford's research mentioned earlier also affirmed that the foster parents had few interests outside the home and had a special interest in large families. He stated that foster mothers, especially, found their chief satisfaction in their parent role and probably felt more comfortable with a family of children around them but were financially or physically unable to have more children of their own. Fanshel (1966) also found that foster mothers came from large families.

Studies on the Placement of Children

Because of the general increase of Crown Wards and decrease of applicants for fostering as indicated in the literature, child care workers have fewer foster homes from which to choose when placing a foster child. Therefore, this re-
sults in a difficult reality factor with which one must cope. As a result, foster homes might break down for the foster children and this might also lead to the closing of the homes for the Agency.

Properly matching foster parents with the foster children and vice versa as explained by Hart de Ruyter is very important. He says foster parents have certain expectations of foster children which are closely related to their motivation to foster. If these expectations are not fulfilled or not properly modified, he points out, the placement will probably break down.

According to Trasler, foster parents usually expect that the child they applied for will be a person who will welcome their love and respond affectionately to them. He states it is natural to expect this because foster parents expect this from their own children. He goes on to say if the foster parents emphasize one particular role to the exclusion of other roles, careful matching is necessary because the foster child might not be able to play the expected role. Parents might foster to have company for themselves after their children are grown up; the role planned for the child might be an adult one; the foster mother may be unreasonably possessive and fussy in her attitude toward the child and consequently breakdown might follow.

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54 Trasler, op. cit., p. 127.
Trasler continues that, although it is good that the child is accepted in the home, it is important in the success of a placement that the foster parents should be aware of the peculiar needs and difficulties of the child, and they should be able to modify their expectations and behaviour-norms in relation to the child when necessary.55

Dinnage and Pringle mention Fanshel's theory that foster parents' characteristics cannot be considered apart from children's, and that personality types able to care for a certain type of child do emerge with some distinctness.56 Beaulieu (1960), as reported by Colvin, studied the relationships between specific characteristics of foster parents and children and the success or failure of the placement.57 As might be expected, he says that matched characteristics of adult and child--such as parents' need for 'order' and child's 'high withdrawal'--were associated with success. Mothers showing a high need for Play (relaxation, amusement, entertainment) did best with children of low impulse control. Too, mothers with a high need for Play and Nurturance (protection, mothering, nourishment, aid) did best with children showing a low degree of withdrawal. Dinnage and Pringle describe Wagner's (1962) findings in a comparative case study of a good foster home that failed and of

55 Trasler, op. cit., p. 130.
56 Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., p. 15.
57 Ralph W. Colvin, op. cit., p. 45.
a doubtful one which succeeded. The significant point was
not whether foster parents had neurotic needs, but whether
such needs matched those of the child. 58

Trasler stated that many foster parents foster to
provide company for their own children. He says if this is
the main purpose, the foster child's failure to fill this
role almost always implies his rejection from the foster
home. 59 Parker's study again contributes useful findings,
the most decisive being that the presence of foster parents'
own children, if of the same age or younger than the foster
child, was significantly associated with placement failure. 60
Murphy (1964), as shown in Dinnage and Pringle, concluded
also that where there was a young 'own' child in the home,
placements tended to be unsuccessful. He added that women
willing to take boys, older children, or several children
at once, were especially successful with difficult children. 61
Etri's study (1959) as reported by Colvin found that inade­
quate foster parents tended to have asked for girls or for
children of the same sex as their own. He found that the
most adequate foster parents were younger than the least
adequate. This finding is at variance with Parker and Tras­
ler, but Etri's sample was a small one and she had a differ­

58 Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., p. 15.
59 Trasler, op. cit., p. 117.
60 Parker, op. cit., p. 98.
61 Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., p. 167.
The recruitment and preparation of the foster parents by the agency

The recruitment of foster parents is evidently a matter of personal contact as well as publicity campaigns. Only thirty-nine per cent of Gray and Parr's large sample had heard of fostering through newspapers and television; twenty-three per cent had heard through friends and relatives. Wakeford in his comparison of fostering and non-fostering housewives found that most of those not fostering had heard of foster care but were not interested in taking foster children. He suggests that publicity campaigns, though necessary, will be of limited value until they are linked to the arousal of community interest in the general problem of children in care. Only a small proportion of the applicants are accepted and used. From 140 replies to an advertisement, Devon County Council (1964) recruited twenty-five new homes. Sauber (1960) found that in New York fifteen per cent of applicants were accepted (Dinnage and Pringle).

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63 Dinnage and Pringle, op. cit., p. 103.
64 Ibid., p. 140.
65 Ibid., p. 17.
66 Ibid.
Although not many applicants meet eligibility require-
ments, Child Welfare Agencies are sometimes obliged to ap-
prove apparently less able applicants through pressure of
need, according to Trasler. He goes on to say that after
the approval of the home (social workers' judgements of
approval are not by any means unanimous) some preparation
of the foster parents seem necessary, which is suggested by
the research and literature. Trasler especially emphasizes
the preparation of foster parents with regard to their ex-
pectations and the separation from the natural parents.

Jolowicz explains that the loss of the child's parents
means that the child loses some of his confidence in relation-
ship with others. Thoughts and fantasies concerning his
natural parents continue to be an important element in the
child's life, even when he has established a firm bond of
trust with his substitute parents. He must understand the
reasons of separation from his natural parents, so that he
will not feel guilty himself. The child needs to think
well of his own parents. If foster parents do not make
allowance for discussion about natural parents, the child
will think that it is something shameful to talk about; he
feels guilty and lonely in his loyalty to his natural par-
ents and so a barrier grows up between him and his foster

67Trasler, op. cit., pp. 229-34.
Littner agrees with Jolowicz that if foster parents understand the child's needs in this area, the child will gain help and reassurance; his bond of trust and affection with his foster parents will then not be undermined, but strengthened.\(^6^9\)

Several authors (Fanshel, Wolins, Colvin, Parker) have tried to introduce a screening device for applicants but no specific research has been done about the exact preparation of the foster parents. Therefore, some preliminary study with foster parents with regard to this preparation is in order, because lack of preparation might also result in the closing of the home by the agency or parents themselves.

We should be very careful not to generalize on the basis of the above mentioned studies, because of the different geographical areas with a different child care practice, the small samples of many studies and the time the studies were done.

This study will be the second one known to the researchers in which foster parents who stopped fostering were interviewed. The authors of this research were interested in the point of view of foster parents who ceased to foster in comparison with those who are still fostering. The study was undertaken to determine if there is a relationship between

\(^6^8\) Alameda R. Jolowicz, *The Hidden Parent: Some Effects of the Concealment of the Parents Life upon the Child's Use of a Foster Home*, p. 3.

the breakdown of the home resulting in its closing and the change of socio-economic circumstances of foster parents, the inappropriate placement of the foster children and the inadequate preparation of the foster parents by the agency.
CHAPTER II

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this research was to explore and see if the breakdown of foster homes necessitating their closing in Metropolitan Windsor, Ontario (including Tecumseh and La Salle) is related to the socio-economic factors of the foster parents, the inappropriate placement of children, or inadequate support from the agencies. The study included cases from the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.

The two Children's Aid Societies which operate under the legislation of the Child Welfare Act, 1965, are concerned about situations which lead to the closing of foster homes. The research, it was hoped, would shed some light in this direction and be helpful to the two agencies in attempting to provide better services for foster parents and foster children.

The foster homes are very important to the Children's Aid Societies as a natural setting to place children who are in their care. It is generally believed that the natural home setting with substitute parents is the best setting in which to meet the needs of the children. There are some children in care of Children's Aid Societies who need insti-
tutional care, but the majority are placed in foster homes. The Societies have non-wards, society wards, and Crown wards.

Non-wards are accepted on a voluntary care basis by the Societies for short periods of time. In such instances, it is not required to go before the Juvenile and Family Court.

Society wards are those children committed to the care of the Children's Aid Societies through an order from the Judge of the Juvenile and Family Court for a period or periods not exceeding two years.

Crown wards are those children permanently committed to the care of the Children's Aid Societies through an order from the Judge of the Juvenile and Family Court. If it is felt to be in the best interests of the child, adoption may take place. Otherwise, a child is in care until majority is reached and continues to be supervised by the Children's Aid Society.

Many children are brought into care of the Societies because there has been a breakdown in their own parents' family functioning. This may be due to illness of parents, lack of adequate housing, marital difficulty, and many other reasons. Children are society (temporary) wards in the beginning and if rehabilitation of parents is successful within two years, the children are returned to them. In the meantime, foster homes or other placements are needed for these children. If the children are in continuous care for two years, they become Crown wards through the court. The Crown wards may then be adopted or may continue in the
same foster home.

Hypothesis

THE BREAKDOWN OF FOSTER HOMES RESULTING IN THEIR CLOSING IS RELATED TO CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE FOSTER PARENTS, INAPPROPRIATE PLACEMENT OF THE CHILDREN AND INADEQUATE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES OF THE AGENCIES FOR FOSTER PARENTS.

Working Definitions

"Breakdown of foster homes resulting in their closing" means the foster homes are permanently closed and not used for further placement of children by the Children's Aid Societies. The homes could have been closed for these reasons:
1) at the discretion of the Agency
2) at the request of the foster parents
3) by mutual agreement between the Agency and the foster parents.

"Socio-economic" for purpose of this study denotes only education, job classification, income and social mobility.

"Inappropriate placement of children" will include those children not ideally placed and where the Agency had no more suitable home available at that time.

"Inadequate Services of the Agencies" would include insufficient visits both qualitatively and quantitatively by the social worker to the foster parents' homes both prior to and during the preplacement period and for as long as the child remains in the home.
Operational Definition

A "foster home" in this study is a private home approved by the Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex for the placement of children in their care with the agency supplying financial assistance. This study does not include infant receiving homes where several infants are cared for on a short term basis prior to more permanent placement, and special foster homes in which foster children were living before approval was obtained from the Agency. Such children could be comprised of non-wards, society wards and Crown wards.

Both Agencies operate under the Child Welfare Act, 1965. Therefore, it was possible to use both Agencies for the population of this study which gave a more representative sample.

Population and Sample

Population

The population for our research was restricted to the foster homes originally approved by a Children's Aid Society during the period from January 1, 1968 to December 31, 1969, by the non-Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex located in Metropolitan Windsor, Ontario, (including Tecumseh and La Salle.) (See Appendix A). Half of the homes in the study were closed during the period January 1, 1968 to December 31, 1970.
Special foster parents who had foster children before the Agency approved their home were excluded also. Special circumstances led to the approval of these homes. A preparation by the Agency was often not possible because the children were already present or had found their own home before the agency became involved.

To facilitate our investigation in our limited time, foster parents who moved out of the area of our study or those who could not be reached by telephone were also excluded.

Foster homes closed because of death of one foster parent or adoption of foster child by foster parents were excluded from our population.

Sample

From the population defined above, two sub-populations were chosen; one consisted of those foster homes which were still open as of December 31, 1970, the other consisted of those which were closed as of December 31, 1970. The two Agencies provided us with lists of names, addresses and some telephone numbers where possible of the foster homes which were opened in the time period being researched.

The total sub-population of the closed foster homes for the two Agencies was 20 cases. This was comprised of thirteen closed homes for the non-Catholic Agency and seven closed homes for the Catholic Agency which met the criteria outlined above. We were successful in interviewing this total sub-population.
The total sub-population of the open foster homes for the two Agencies was thirty-eight cases. This was comprised of twenty-five open homes for the non-Catholic Agency and thirteen open homes for the Catholic Agency that were eligible for our study taking into consideration the specifications outlined above. From these, we drew a random sample of twenty cases on a ratio of two from the non-Catholic Agency and one from the Catholic Agency.

The number of open cases of twenty was randomly drawn in order that this control group would be identical in quantity with the closed foster homes being researched.

**Methods of Collecting Data**

For this research we used a structured interview administered when possible to both foster parents. (See Appendix B). When the foster father was unable to be present, the foster mother alone was interviewed.

The foster parents were telephoned by the interviewers to obtain appointments in their homes at the convenience of the foster parents.

A letter of introduction (see Appendix C) provided by the Director of the University of Windsor, School of Social Work confirmed authorization for the research by both Agencies. We felt this letter would help to alleviate any anxiety on the part of the interviewees during and after the interview.

A structured interview was chosen to be the best method to collect some pertinent data on such a sensitive topic for
the persons involved. We felt that responses would be received and questions could be properly explained if necessary. Also, the interviewers were able to help settle any feelings aroused by the questions.

The three persons who undertook this research collected the data personally. All had experience as caseworkers in the Agencies involved and had previously worked with foster parents. However, it was arranged that no researcher interviewed a former client.

The structured interview provided us with the data for our research in the three areas under study. The questions were related to:

a) Change in socio-economic circumstances of the foster parents; education, income, job classification and social mobility.

b) Inappropriate placement; type of child the foster parents wanted and received, having difficulties with the foster children while fostering, and the type and difficulties of the last foster child.

c) Services of the agency for the foster parents and children; preparation, continuation and termination of the foster child's stay with the foster parents.

In the following chapter the details of the findings of the data will be discussed.
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

General Findings

From the survey of the literature, the researchers realized that certain information of a general nature would be required from our respondents to ensure that the findings concerning our specific variables would be more meaningful. Included in this general information were areas pertaining to motivation, information about foster parents' own children and information concerning foster children as found in our structured interview, questions 1, 2, 42, 52, 53; 12, 13, 19; 20, 30, 31, 32, 35, 50 and 51, respectively.

Motivation is a very important factor in all three dependent variables. The prime motivating factor as shown in Table 3 is to fulfill personal needs of the foster parents.

As previously stated, major studies of Gray and Parr (1957) and Wakeford (1963) indicate that agency advertising does not play a big role in motivating foster parents to foster. Our findings as shown in Table 4 bear this out. The table indicates that next to own initiative, friends and relatives were the most influential factor in motivating the foster parents to foster. Accordingly we found in only seven cases of our study that the relatives were not favorable and seven cases of friends who were not favorable.
### TABLE 3

**MOTIVATION FOR FOSTERING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Open(^a)</th>
<th>Closed(^a)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company for own children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To supplement family income</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfillment of personal needs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22(^b)</strong></td>
<td><strong>22(^b)</strong></td>
<td><strong>44(^b)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)The words 'open' and 'closed' shown in this and subsequent tables represent open foster homes and closed foster homes.

\(^b\)In some of the above cases, respondents' answers were applicable in more than one category. This accounts for the totals exceeding 40.

### TABLE 4

**WHERE IDEA OF FOSTERING ORIGINATED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency Advertising</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbours</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own initiative</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>21(^*)</strong></td>
<td><strong>41(^*)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^*\)In some of the above cases, respondents' answers were applicable in more than one category. This accounts for the totals exceeding 40.
TABLE 5
RELATIVES' AND FRIENDS' FEELINGS ABOUT FOSTERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Relatives</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Friends</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Favorable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Favorable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 3, foster parents do not foster to supplement family income. The following table of our findings indicate most foster parents said they received adequate money, thus supporting this.

TABLE 6
ADEQUACY OF BOARD MONEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most Adequate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Adequate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated in Chapter I, foster parents' own children play an important part in success or failure of foster homes. Table 7 shows the number of such children in homes we studied.
As indicated, the open homes had slightly larger families.

The ages of the oldest own child of the foster parents when they commenced fostering were distributed as follows:

**TABLE 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Oldest Own Child of Foster Parents</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under five years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five to twelve years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over twelve years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is observed that the open foster homes had more school age children, while the closed foster homes had more preschool children.

The logical relationship between the period of fostering and the number of children fostered is clearly indicated in the following two tables.

**TABLE 9**

PERIOD OF FOSTERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of Fostering</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than six months</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than one year</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than one and a half years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One and a half years and over</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 10**

NUMBER OF CHILDREN FOSTERED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Child</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three children</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It becomes obvious that the majority of foster homes which broke down did so within the first six months.

It was thought possible that the visiting of natural parents at the foster homes and foster children returning to their own homes might be determining factors in the breakdown of foster homes. However, we found that ten children returned to their natural parents from the open homes, and seven from the closed homes. In four cases the foster parents of the open homes reported they were upset whereas five in the closed homes reported they were upset. The natural parents were reported to have visited those homes which remained open in eleven cases. In only four cases were similar visits reported to the closed homes.

We did not find in our study that neighbours had voiced strong negative feelings toward foster children. Three of the open homes reported complaints from their neighbours about their foster children whereas in the closed homes only two reported such incidents. Six of the open homes were aware of other foster children living in their neighbourhood while seven of the closed homes knew of other foster children in their neighbourhood.

As the remainder of our findings pertain mainly to our three dependent variables, namely change in socio-economic factors, inappropriate placement of children and inadequate services of the agencies, we will proceed to discuss these in relation to the breakdown of foster homes resulting in their closing.
Socio-economic Findings

Analysis of the following data pertaining to socio-economic factors is to see if the breakdown of foster homes is, in any way, related to change in socio-economic factors of the foster parents. It was thought possible that with the rise in socio-economic status, foster parents may cease to foster. The socio-economic factors considered are job classification, income, education and social mobility. As our study had to be limited to a short time period (January 1, 1968 to December 31, 1970) we could not expect to find many changes in job classification, income, education and social mobility. For this reason, all observations are being given.

Job Classification

As indicated in Chapter I, Gray and Parr as well as other studies, say that fostering on the whole is a working class occupation. Results of our findings as shown in Table 11 also indicate the professional in both the open and the closed homes is under-represented.

In the homes that closed, one foster father moved up from skilled worker to white collar worker. In the homes which remained open, there was more upward mobility; two foster fathers moved from unskilled worker to skilled worker and two moved from white collar worker to managerial position. This analysis then indicates there was more upward mobility in job classification for the open homes. Therefore, upward mobility in job classification does not appear to be a factor
in foster parents ceasing to foster from the sample in our study.

TABLE 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF WORK AT START OF FOSTERING</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White collar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled worker</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>19*</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One foster father was retired when fostering period started.

TABLE 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF WORK AT TIME OF INTERVIEW</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White collar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled worker</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>18*</td>
<td>19*</td>
<td>37*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One foster father was retired; one foster father died; one foster father was unemployed.
Income

Incomes of foster parents in the open homes at start of fostering and at the time of the interview appeared consistently lower than the closed homes as indicated in the tables that follow. It needs to be taken into consideration that the total family incomes include earnings of the wives. In the open homes three wives worked outside the home while only one did in the closed homes. Tables 13 and 14 give a general picture of income.

**TABLE 13**

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME AT START OF FOSTERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $7,500.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,500.00 and over</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 14**

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $7,500.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,500.00 and over</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although in the open homes there was more vertical mobility from unskilled to managerial than in the closed homes, the incomes remained lower on the whole in the open homes. At the beginning of the fostering period of the open homes, there were only ten who had incomes of $7,500.00 or over while twelve of the closed homes had incomes of $7,500.00 or over at the start of their fostering period.

Upon close examination, the two professionals in the open homes each had incomes of less than $7,500.00 at the beginning of the fostering period but had $7,500.00 or more at the time of the interview while the professional in the closed homes had $7,500.00 both at the beginning of the fostering period and at the time of the interview.

The fact there was more vertical mobility with the foster parents of the open homes probably indicates more job satisfaction for the breadwinner and possibly shorter working hours. Since there are more blue collar workers represented in the closed homes, this could mean working a good deal of overtime in order to make the larger income and consequently less time for foster children. We were unable to interview one family in the closed homes in our original sample and the reason given was that the foster father might have to work overtime so could not make an appointment for an interview. As mentioned in Chapter I, Beaulieu found in his study of ex-foster parents that the highest number of them terminated their services for personal reasons. The desire to work overtime to make more money can be for personal reasons.
It is interesting to note that in Table 6 about adequacy of board money that five of the closed cases indicated inadequate board money compared to four of the open homes. However, this cannot be considered very significant as the foster parents in the closed homes no doubt felt freer to give their honest opinions. Too, the question of enough money appears to become somewhat of a moral issue for the foster parents—is it right to be paid for giving loving care to a needy child?

Our findings do not clearly show that rise in income points to foster parents ceasing to foster. Foster parents of the closed homes in our sample, however, appeared to have more income at the beginning of their fostering period and at the time of the interview than did the foster parents in the open homes.

Education

As noted in Chapter I, Babcock describes foster parents as hard working men and women from large families, limited in their education and ambitions and interested mainly in their homes and families. Our findings on education show the majority of foster mothers in both the open and the closed homes did not have more than Grade XI education. However, the foster fathers on the average had more education than the foster mothers.

It is noted there was an increase in educational status of the two foster fathers in the beyond Grade XIII category.
in the homes which remained open. The tables follow which show the educational pattern for these families.

**TABLE 15**

EDUCATION OF FOSTER MOTHER AT START OF FOSTERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eight</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eleven</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade thirteen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than grade thirteen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 16**

EDUCATION OF FOSTER MOTHER AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eight</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eleven</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade thirteen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than grade thirteen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 17
EDUCATION OF FOSTER FATHER AT START OF FOSTERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eight</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eleven</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade thirteen</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than grade thirteen</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 18
EDUCATION OF FOSTER FATHER AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade eleven</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not more than grade thirteen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than grade thirteen</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19*</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One foster father died.

The data reveals that three foster mothers in the open homes worked outside the home as compared to one foster mother in the closed homes. Of the two of these three foster mothers of the open homes who worked, two had more
than Grade XIII education. The one foster mother who worked outside the home of the closed homes had more than Grade XI education. Some of the newer foster mothers are combining fostering with their careers. This is getting away a bit from the picture Babcock gives that foster parents are limited in education and in ambitions. It seems these foster mothers feel they can be ambitious in their careers as well as being interested in their homes and families. Many women today feel society should not be deprived of the benefit of the education they have received such as nursing and teaching. If intellectual stimulation can help to make a happier mother to her own children, there is no reason to believe the same cannot be said in the case of a foster mother. With the women's liberation movement today, we can expect more mothers and foster mothers will want to work. Working outside gives the mothers satisfaction as well as more income in the family. We observed foster fathers more active than was expected, for instance, in wishing to be interviewed. In eleven of the open foster homes and thirteen of the closed foster homes, both foster mother and foster father were interviewed. Fathers and foster fathers are taking on a more sharing role with children than formerly and this is no doubt due to movement toward more equal status for women with men. Since many foster children are in need of attention from the father figure, the fact foster mothers work outside the home some, should not have a damaging effect on the foster children if they are of school age. The quality of her warmth, love
and acceptance of the foster child is what counts most. Of the two foster mothers who had more than Grade XIII education who worked outside the home in the open cases, one had two children and one had three children of their own. The only foster mother in the closed cases who worked outside the home during the fostering period had no children of her own. The majority of families in both the open and closed homes had more than two children of their own as indicated in Table 7 in general findings so this points to Babcock's view that foster parents are interested in their homes and families.

The age of the foster parents was not asked in our study but the age of their own oldest child gives some idea as to whether or not foster parents, especially the foster mother might be real young. In the open homes, the oldest child of the foster parents was more than twelve years old in five cases; in thirteen cases, the oldest natural child was between five and twelve years of age, leaving two cases with children under five. There is a striking difference, taking into consideration our small sample, between the open and the closed homes in this area. In the closed homes, there were seven families whose own oldest child was under five years of age. Gray and Parr's study as indicated in Chapter I stated successful foster parents were found to be in the age range of forty to fifty. Since the foster parents in our study of the open homes do have older children of their own than were found in the homes that closed, it would seem
that the foster parents in the open homes were older. Following this, then, we can say age may be a factor since our study would point to foster parents older in our open sample than in our closed sample.

Social Mobility

Upon looking at social mobility as a factor in rise in socio-economic status, our study as indicated in the following table, resulted in foster parents reporting in only one case of a lot of increase in their social life during their fostering period. In two cases, the foster parents in the open homes reported their social life increased some. This would indicate then that family-centred attitude is important.

| TABLE 19 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| **INCREASE OF SOCIAL LIFE DURING FOSTERING PERIOD** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noted the one case where the foster parents reported their social life increased a lot during their fostering period had more than two foster children and the last one was over twelve years of age at time of placement. The
foster parents reported they attended foster parent meetings, found them helpful and also said they thought it would be helpful if social workers attended the meetings. The activity surrounding the needs of their foster children, especially outings to foster parent meetings could have been the reason they considered their social life increased a lot. It is further noted their income was between $5,000.00 and $7,500.00 at the beginning of their fostering period whereas it was not over $5,000.00 at the time of interview. It is unlikely, then, their social life would have increased on account of their joining social clubs, etc.

There is no clear indication that foster parents' increase in social life as a factor in social mobility caused them to cease fostering.

In our study, in eleven cases, the foster parents of the open homes reported they attended foster parent meetings whereas with the closed homes, the foster parents in only four cases reported they attended the meetings. Their opinions of helpfulness of such meetings is shown in Table 20.

Although in six cases of the closed homes, the foster parents reported they thought regular foster parent meetings would be helpful, while in only four cases, the foster parents in the open homes reported that they felt such meetings would be very helpful. However, the fact that in eleven cases of the open homes the foster parents actually attended the meetings as compared to foster parents in four cases of
the closed homes indicates the foster parents in the open homes were generally more motivated to learn all there was to learn. We have to take into consideration, the foster parents in the open homes would no doubt have fostered for a longer period as some foster parents in the closed homes fostered for less than six months.

TABLE 20

FOSTER PARENTS' OPINIONS OF HELPFULNESS OF REGULAR FOSTER PARENT MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Helpful</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Helpful</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 21

FOSTER PARENTS' OPINIONS ABOUT HELPFULNESS OF SOCIAL WORKERS' PRESENCE AT FOSTER PARENTS' MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Helpful</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Helpful</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is interesting to note of the three foster mothers in the open homes who worked outside the home, two attended foster parent meetings. The one foster mother who worked outside the home of the closed homes did not attend the meetings. In eight of the eleven cases of the open homes where foster parents attended the foster parent meetings, the family income was $7,500.00 or more. Were these the middle class?

The two professionals in the open homes and the one professional in the closed homes reported they had never attended the meetings. Hart de Ruyter said when they first started looking for suitable foster families they had the idea that professional people would make the best foster parents but found professional people tended to be too fixed in their opinions to accept help or advice from social workers. He goes on to say their attitude seemed to be that they had learned all there was to learn about children and could handle the foster child without any help from the social workers.\(^7\)

As mentioned earlier the majority of foster parents, twelve in the open homes and sixteen in the closed homes were skilled and unskilled workers. In this occupational classification, in seven cases of the open homes, the foster parents did not attend meetings and five did, while for this category in the closed homes, three attended meetings and

\(^7\)Hart de Ruyter, op. cit., p. 8.
thirteen did not.

This observation tells us that the foster parents on the whole in the open homes attended the foster parent meetings more than the foster parents in the closed homes and this was especially noticeable in the blue collar workers (skilled and unskilled classifications). We also learned that the foster parents in those cases where the foster father was a professional, did not attend foster parent meetings.

The following table indicates whether or not foster parents moved during their fostering period and if they considered their present housing an improvement. It was thought if they obtained much better living quarters, this might mean they moved into a more restricted area and also be an indication of social mobility.

| TABLE 22 |
| IF THERE WAS A MOVE, COMPARISON OF PRESENT HOME AND LOCATION TO PREVIOUS ONE |
|---|---|---|
| Much better . . . . . . . . | Open | 2 | Closed | 2 | Total | 4 |
| Better . . . . . . . . . . . | 2 | . | 2 |
| No better . . . . . . . . . . | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Not applicable (no move) . . . | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| Total | 20 | 20 | 40 |
As can be seen, it was in the open homes where more foster parents said their housing was an improvement on the previous one. Again there is no indication, considering moving to a better district as criteria for social mobility, that this was a factor in foster parents ceasing to foster. Looking at social mobility in areas of increase in social life and moving to a better location, there is no indication in our small study that this was a factor in foster parents ceasing to foster.

The foregoing analysis of factors—job classification, income, education and social mobility as used for determining socio-economic status does not indicate that if parents rise socio-economically that they tend to cease fostering. However, there were interesting observations which the literature also points out: It was the working class in our study who are giving the majority of service to the foster children as the professionals were under-represented; the professionals reported they did not attend the foster parent meetings; and foster mothers in some cases wish to combine their careers with fostering.

As stated at the beginning of the analysis of this variable, the short period covered in the study did not allow many changes in job classification, income, education and social mobility.
Findings pertaining to the inappropriate placement of the child

We have seen in the first chapter that foster parents have certain expectations about fostering and that these should be modified or more or less fulfilled in order that the foster parents continue to foster. In order to fulfill these expectations the foster child should be matched with the foster parents so that maximum security of the child's total development can be obtained on the one hand and the foster parents' needs fulfilled on the other, because foster parents indicate they foster mainly to fulfill their needs. (Table 3) In this way their service will be uninterrupted and mutually beneficial. Beaulieu has pointed out that besides meeting the immediate needs, effective child placement demands the existence of a continued surplus of prospective foster parents from whom proper selection can be made on the basis of the child and foster parent personality characteristics rather than the basis of the mere availability of a home. 71 With the decrease of foster parents applications (for the Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex in 1969 there were ninety and in 1970 there were sixty-seven applications) 72 matching will be increasingly difficult. Although the requirement of matching foster child and foster parents becomes more difficult, it still is an essential requirement of proper placement and for the

71 Beaulieu, op. cit., p. 2.
72 Information from reports from The Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.
success of the foster home.

To determine some indication of the inappropriateness of the placement some questions were asked about the type of child the foster parents wanted when they started fostering, some questions about the foster children's relationship with their own children, and questions about the last child they fostered. We assumed that for the closed homes the last child might have helped to trigger the breakdown resulting in the closing of the home.

Wolins has indicated in his study that seventy-seven per cent of his sample of foster parents saw themselves as natural parents. It follows that probably most foster parents would like to give continuous care to foster children as they would with their own children. However, we did not find this in our results as the following table indicates:

TABLE 23
REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC TYPE OF WARD
AT START OF FOSTERING PERIOD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporary ward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown ward</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is some explanation for these low numbers. The researchers found in most cases that the foster parents who were interviewed had little knowledge of the different types of wards and it was necessary for the researchers to explain the terms. So there seems to be little attention paid to the duration of wardship by the agency and foster parents, although it seems rather important. About half of the foster parents whose foster child returned to their natural parents were very upset about it, as we have seen in the beginning of this chapter. This also seems to affirm our position on this matter. It is interesting to note that of the open homes those five who requested a specific type of ward, received them, whereas of the closed homes only one of the three received the type of ward they requested.

Foster parents show more preference with regard to the sex of the child than to the type of wardship. The following table illustrates this. There is not much difference between the open and closed homes, except that the closed ones requested slightly more boys and had slightly more preference which sex they preferred. Of the open homes, six received a foster child of the sex they requested. Of the five who requested boys, three received them. The closed homes provide us with a different picture. Eleven received a foster child of the sex they requested. All eight homes which closed and who requested boys received them also. Three of the six who requested girls received them. These numbers seem to indicate that there is some
relationship between boys received and the breakdown of the home resulting in its closing. However, we cannot conclude on sex alone, but have to take into consideration the age of the foster child.

**TABLE 24**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7 (3)</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
<td>13 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5 (3)</td>
<td>8 (8)</td>
<td>13 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Preference</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20 (6)</td>
<td>20 (11)</td>
<td>40 (17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Received numbers in brackets.

The age of the foster child is a very important factor to be considered and foster parents show more preference for a certain age than for a specific sex. Table 25 shows the general distribution of the request for a specific age and if they received the child they wanted. The three main categories in age were based on a relevant distinction in the stage of the child development from pre-schooler, school age to teenager. Again, here we see that a higher proportion of the closed homes received the child of the age they requested.
TABLE 25

AGE BRACKET OF THE FIRST CHILD
REQUESTED AND RECEIVED*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under five years</td>
<td>11 (6)</td>
<td>10 (7)</td>
<td>21 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five to twelve years</td>
<td>5 (3)</td>
<td>6 (5)</td>
<td>11 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over twelve years</td>
<td>. (. )</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>4 (. )</td>
<td>1 (. )</td>
<td>5 (. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20 (9)</td>
<td>20 (14)</td>
<td>40 (23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Received numbers in brackets.

Eleven open foster homes and fourteen closed foster homes at the time of the interview had some preference with regard to sex and age together. (Table 26) Again, we see that parents who requested school age boys and teenagers, which seem difficult to place, received the child they wanted. The open homes did not request school age boys or teenagers. Our findings indicate also that five of the six who requested and received a school age boy or teenager fostered only one child, so that there seems to be an indication that the school age boy or teenager causes the breakdown resulting in the closing of the home.

We also can indicate that there is no positive relationship between specific foster children requested and also received, but that there is a tendency towards breakdown when the foster parents receive the specific foster children they
request, especially when they request a child which is more difficult to place. The request for a specific foster child in an application form, should therefore, not necessarily be complied with, especially not when the applicants ask for school age boys. The requests should be used by the social worker as a guide to find out the foster parents' motives and expectations for fostering and careful consideration and discussion with the foster parents seem necessary to prepare the foster parents for their specific child requested.

TABLE 26
SEX-AGE BRACKET REQUESTED AND RECEIVED*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex-Age Bracket</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys under five years</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>5 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls under five years</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>9 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys, five to twelve years</td>
<td>.. (.)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls, five to twelve years</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>2 (.)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys over twelve years</td>
<td>.. (.)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls over twelve years</td>
<td>.. (.)</td>
<td>.. (.)</td>
<td>.. (.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 (3)</td>
<td>14 (8)</td>
<td>25 (11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Received numbers in brackets.

Another way to compare the above results is to compare the foster child requested and the foster parents' own oldest child at the start of the fostering period.
TABLE 2

AGE OF CHILD REQUESTED AND RECEIVED AT THE
START OF THE FOSTERING PERIOD
COMPAIRED WITH THEIR OWN
OLDEST CHILD\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Own Oldest Child</th>
<th>Open Homes</th>
<th>Closed Homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under Five</td>
<td>Five to Twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Five</td>
<td>2(2)</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five to Twelve</td>
<td>5(4)</td>
<td>4 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Twelve</td>
<td>4(3)</td>
<td>1 (.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Foster child requested and received shown between brackets.

\(^b\) NP represents no preference.

This important table does not only indicate that the homes which closed have younger children than the open homes, but also shows that probably in their idealism, six of them requested an older child than their own oldest child, and one had no children at all. It is interesting to note that by comparing questions 36, 18, 19 and 20 of the structured interview (see Appendix B) it could be established that of the closed homes, two requested a younger child than their own oldest child, but received an older child than their own.
So in total, five of the homes which closed received a child older than their own oldest child.

The foster parents of the open homes at the time of the interview did not request an older child than their own oldest. We found that two received an older child than their own oldest.

Our study seems to indicate that foster children placed with foster parents with younger children will probably end up in the breakdown of the home resulting in its closing. This study, therefore, is in agreement with Parker, Trasler and Fanshel who had larger samples and who found similar results. Parker concludes also that foster children placed with foster parents who have children of the same age will often break down. There is some indication in this direction in our study, but our numbers are too small to indicate it clearly. Of the open homes, three out of six received a child the same age as their own oldest child as requested in the beginning of the fostering period, while five out of six received this type of child in the homes which closed.

The problems related to foster children and the foster parents' own children also indicate reasons for breakdown of the home. Three foster parents in the open homes reported there were problems for the children getting along together. Eight of the closed homes reported this problem. When we relate this to the last child placed with them, we get the numbers described in Table 28. For four of the closed homes, it was the only child the foster parents fostered, and all four
were of school age. All of the eight in the closed homes were of the same age bracket or older than their own oldest child. In the open homes two of the foster children were the oldest in the family and one was of the same age bracket of their own child. If our results and theory drawn from it are correct, those three open homes could be in serious danger of breaking down. In this table we have combined questions 34a and 34b in which we question if the foster child had problems getting along with their own child or vice versa.

The open homes saw the problems arising from both their own child and the foster child while three of the closed homes made some distinction. Two of them blamed the foster child. However, although it is an interesting finding and could show a different level of maturity of the open foster homes, the results are not conclusive. Therefore we pooled the questions together.

TABLE 28

PROBLEMS BETWEEN FOSTER CHILDREN AND FOSTER PARENTS' OWN CHILDREN RELATED TO THE LAST FOSTER CHILD PLACED WITH THEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of last foster child</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under five years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five to twelve years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over twelve years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The last foster child placed with the foster parents presented many problems. The distribution of the age of the last child placed with them suggests that we can expect slightly more behavior problems with the homes that broke down.

TABLE 29

AGE OF THE LAST CHILD PLACED WITH FOSTER PARENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under five years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between five and twelve years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over twelve years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table gives some indication that the child in the homes that broke down is slightly older than in the open foster homes, although we have already established that there is some indication for the foster parents of the closed homes to be younger than of the open homes. So a younger foster parent may have tried to take care of an older foster child.

The following table shows that the foster child of the closed homes presented more behavior problems than the children placed in the still open homes.

Mental retardation of the foster child is a factor
mentioned by several other researchers such as Trasler, leading to the breakdown of the foster home, but in our research it is not the case. The open homes had two more retarded children, but the numbers are not very significant. The open homes had slightly more foster children with 'physical' problems than the closed homes.

**TABLE 30**

**PROBLEMS OF LAST FOSTER CHILD PLACED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentally retarded</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain damage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other physical problems</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex problems</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School problems</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

^Trasler, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-93.

^Allergies are included although it is realized that they may have a psychological cause. However, research has not made it clear yet.
The real difference between the foster homes shows up in the behaviour problems. Although the closed homes had to cope with slightly more stealing, fighting, running and sex problems, the real difference shows up in school problems and communication problems. It is seen that the closed homes dealt with more school age children and also requested them in the beginning of the fostering period and therefore, we can understand the difference in school problems very easily. However, the difference in communication problems are more difficult to explain. Children in homes that broke down often lied, withdrew or did not want to talk at all and the foster parents had difficulties getting through to them. This seems a major factor in the breakdown resulting in the closing of the home. Foster parents should be rather adequate before being granted approval as a foster home. They must have a healthy relationship with their own children and must communicate with them rather well. They probably expect difficult children who have behavioural problems, but they feel confident that they will develop some relationship, so that some improvement can be expected gradually. However, the lack of getting through to the child makes them probably feel incompetent, so that they give up.

Trasler has emphasized that some relationship between foster parents and foster child must be developed in order to keep up the placement. If foster parents are not able to find some measure of response to the affection and care which they give the child, their affectionate attitude is
likely to become replaced by feelings of frustration and later of hostility.\textsuperscript{76} Of the last foster children placed with the foster parents who stopped fostering, eleven children (more than fifty per cent) lacked seriously in establishing some relationship with the foster parents. Five children placed in homes still open had a serious communication problem with their foster parents. This study re-emphasizes Trasler's study on the importance of establishing a relationship between foster parents and foster child in order to be a successful foster home. It is therefore important that a foster child placed with a foster parent has some ability to form a relationship. If a child cannot form relationships, maybe a group home should be considered. Littner (1956) has pointed out that the foster child might be reluctant or not able to establish a relationship. He might be afraid to relate to new parents because he has experienced rejection from the only adults he knew, his parents. Especially when he sees his placement as punishment, because of his 'misbehaviour', he might be very reluctant to establish some type of relationship.\textsuperscript{77} Research has shown that children who were institutionalized as a small child often lack the ability to relate intimately to other people.\textsuperscript{78} Our study indicates that several foster children were not able to relate to their foster parents, but we cannot establish the cause.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76}Trasler, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 39.
\item \textsuperscript{77}Littner, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 8-12.
\item \textsuperscript{78}Harris, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 43.
\end{itemize}
Further study would be necessary to develop more understanding in the underlying factors of lack of communication between foster parent and foster child in both Children's Aid Societies.

In this section it is shown that foster homes which broke down received more often the type of foster child the foster parents requested. However, their request seems often unrealistic because they requested often foster children who were older than their own oldest child or of the same age. (eleven out of twenty) This finding is in agreement with Parker's large study in England. So there is a relationship between breakdown resulting in the closing of the home and the age of the foster child placed with the foster parents. It was also found that there is some indication of a relationship between the breakdown and the sex of the foster child, a factor Parker did not take into account in his study. Foster homes with boys broke down more often. Finally, closed homes experienced many more problems with the foster children. These foster children showed especially behavioral problems and foster parents could not get through to the foster children because these children were often not able to communicate.

Findings pertaining to agency services

The foster parents' opinions of their social workers' ability to provide adequate services for them both during their period of preparation for fostering and during the actual time of fostering brought to light some interesting
comparisons between the open and closed foster homes.

As indicated in the following two tables, there was no significant preference expressed by foster parents to have a social worker of a particular sex. With regard to age, however, we found that more of those who continued to foster preferred to have a worker thirty years of age or over. Since this same group of foster parents reported the ages of their own oldest child at the time they started fostering to be older than those reported by the foster parents whose homes were closed, we expect they were likely older clients. However, it is admitted that this is only an assumption as the ages of the interviewees was not requested in the structured interviews.

TABLE 31
PREFERENCE IN SEX OF SOCIAL WORKER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated previously, the majority of homes that closed fostered for a period of less than six months. One questions then if there was a lack of adequate preparation by the social workers before approval was granted the foster parents.
Tables 33 and 34 reveal that there were found to be more foster mothers and foster fathers who were seen in excess of three times by their social workers prior to receiving approval to foster among the homes that remained open, than there were among those that closed. Perhaps there is a reluctance on the part of the social workers engaged in this screening process to delve too deeply into all ramifications of fostering during these early stages for fear of losing potential foster parents who are in short supply.

Of all foster parents of both open and closed homes interviewed in the study, there was only one foster mother and one foster father who stated they did not feel that they had seen their social worker a sufficient number of times prior to receiving approval from the agency to foster.

**TABLE 32**

**PREFERENCE IN AGE OF SOCIAL WORKER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under thirty years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty years and over</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked for their opinion as to how well or satisfactory was the foster parents' preparation by the agency for fostering, the replies indicated in Table 35 were re-
ceived which indicate that one more of the open homes than the closed ones considered their preparation was not satisfactory! Of the total of open and closed homes, eleven out of forty, 27.5%, expressed this opinion. Similarly, it was found that nine of the open homes compared with only six of the closed homes reported that the social workers had discussed fostering with the foster parents' own children prior to approval being granted by the agency. This appears to coincide with the findings in Table 28 that indicate more of the natural children in the closed homes had difficulty getting along with the foster children and vice versa.

TABLE 33
NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS FOR FOSTER MOTHER WITH SOCIAL WORKER BEFORE FOSTER HOME APPROVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One interview</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or three interviews</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three interviews</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wolins' findings that seventy-seven per cent of foster parents compared themselves to the natural parents of the children they foster should be borne in mind when the figures shown in Tables 36 and 37 are considered that indicate several, although not the majority, of foster parents did not con-
sider they had been told necessary background information pertaining to the foster child's special problems and needs. This appeared to be a problem for some foster parents in both open and closed groups.

### TABLE 34

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS FOR FOSTER FATHER WITH SOCIAL WORKER BEFORE FOSTER HOME APPROVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One interview</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or three interviews</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three interviews</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 35

FOSTER PARENTS' OPINION OF AGENCY PREPARATION FOR FOSTERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactorily</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfactorily</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 36

**Instances of Background Information Foster Parents Received Pertaining to Special Needs of the Foster Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 37

**Foster Parents Informed of Specific Problems of the Foster Child**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical problems</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological problems</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with own parents</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for coming into care</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was learned that exactly twelve of the twenty in each group of the homes in our study reported there having
been preplacement visits for the last foster child placed with them. Too, while there was no significant difference between the open and closed homes in the number of days notice given by the agency for the last child placed with them, it was found that fifteen of the total of forty homes received two days or less notice. Some reported no notice at all!

**TABLE 38**

NOTICE GIVEN BY AGENCY WHEN LAST FOSTER CHILD WAS PLACED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of days</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likewise, as indicated in Tables 39 and 40, there was no significant difference found between the open and closed homes in the number of days notice given by the agency when a child was removed from the home. Indeed, twenty-nine of the forty homes studied expressed the opinion that they were given "sufficient" or "more than sufficient" notice.

We found that the majority of foster parents in both the open and closed homes preferred to handle by themselves any school and medical problems that arose. (See tables 41, 42, 43, and 44) However, fewer of them handled these situa-
tions personally than would have liked to which would bear out Wolins's findings that the majority of foster parents think of themselves as assuming the same responsibility for foster children as they would for their natural children.

TABLE 39
DAYS OF NOTIFICATION WHEN CHILD HAD TO BE REMOVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of days</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 40
HOW FOSTER PARENTS FELT ABOUT NOTICE GIVEN WHEN CHILD HAD TO BE REMOVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than sufficient</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sufficient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 41
SOLVING OF SCHOOL PROBLEMS IF THERE WERE ANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handled by</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker together</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker separately</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 42
FOSTER PARENTS' OPINION OF WHO SHOULD HANDLE SCHOOL PROBLEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker together</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker separately</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### TABLE 43
SOLVING OF MEDICAL PROBLEMS IF THERE WERE ANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handled by</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker together</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker separately</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 44
FOSTER PARENTS' OPINION OF WHO SHOULD HANDLE MEDICAL PROBLEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster parents and social</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker separately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen below, there was little indication by any of the foster parents interviewed that they felt the social worker was trying to help them to cope with a problem but not the foster child and vice versa.

**TABLE 45**

FEELING OF FOSTER PARENTS THAT SOCIAL WORKER WAS TRYING TO HELP THE CHILD ONLY AND NOT THE FOSTER PARENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 46**

FEELING OF FOSTER PARENTS THAT SOCIAL WORKER WAS TRYING TO HELP THEM ONLY AND NOT THE FOSTER CHILD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Closed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We found that only half of the open homes (ten) preferred to be notified in advance of home visits by their social workers. Nineteen of this group of twenty reported, though, that they actually had been informed of a worker’s intended visits. At the same time, eleven of the closed homes stated they preferred to be notified in advance of a social worker’s home visit and that in nineteen of twenty cases they were notified accordingly—exactly the same number as in the group of open homes. There was only one case in the closed home group in which the foster parents advised they had no preference in the matter.

It was felt possible that cases in which more than one worker was supervising children placed in a home at one time might be distressing for the foster parents. While the findings revealed that most of the foster homes had only one worker at a given time, they also showed that the two homes which had more than two workers supervising children simultaneously were indeed found in the group of foster homes that closed.

How a new worker was introduced to clients of a worker who was leaving a case appeared to be of little importance in so far as a foster home breakdown was concerned. As indicated by the figures in Table 48, the majority of new workers were accompanied by the former worker to be personally introduced to the clients.
In summary, our limited study appears to indicate that there was little difference in the services provided to the homes which remained open and those that closed. Most important was the insufficient preparation of the foster par-
ents own children in both considering the importance of their presence in the home and discussing fostering with them prior to placement of foster children in the home.
CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Limitations and Problems

The limited time available for this research project by the researchers resulted in the study having to be restricted to a small sample of foster parents in a limited geographical area. Therefore, only forty foster parents, all located in urban areas, were interviewed.

The foster parents were informed of the study by telephone and were invited to participate. They were told that the interviewer would supply a letter of introduction at the time of the interview. The researchers felt that this method was the best way to gain full co-operation and alleviate any anxiety on the part of the respondents as was later proven. A copy of the letter of introduction was also left with both agencies involved. However, we found that foster parents in a few of the open homes showed some anxiety prior to the interview and called the agencies. The researchers felt, though, that any such anxiety was satisfactorily alleviated at the time of the interviews.

The limited time available did not allow for pre-testing the structured interview. Consequently, it was later found that questions 15, 18e, 27, 40 and 47 needed a 'non-applicable' category. It was also found that questions
34 and 35 were too vague and could have been better clarified. The researchers later realized that it would have been helpful to include questions pertaining to:

- age of foster parents
- number of siblings foster parents had
- age of first foster child received
- sex of last foster child received
- age and sex of last social worker
- family history of fostering
- whether or not foster parents were raised in urban or rural areas

Conclusions

Because of the limitations and problems encountered and also the inter-relatedness of the three dependent variables and the complexity of fostering, no dogmatic conclusions with a high degree of certainty can be stated in this study. However, some significant patterns and interesting observations appear to have evolved in the cases researched.

From our findings it is concluded that change in socio-economic status of the foster parents was not a significant factor in them ceasing to foster. However, the findings concur with other major studies such as Parker's, Gray and Parr's and others' that fostering is mainly a working class person's occupation--Babcock's description that foster parents are hard working people interested mainly in their families and homes, and Wakeford's findings that foster parents have few interests outside the home.

With regard to the inappropriate placement of children, the study indicated that there is some relationship between the age of the foster child placed and the breakdown result-
ing in the closing of the foster home. In cases where the foster children were older or of the same age as the oldest own child of the foster parents, there was a tendency for the foster home to break down. This agrees with Parker's study. Also, there is a further indication that there is some relationship between sex of the foster child and the breakdown, as homes in which boys were placed broke down more often. This factor was not taken into consideration in Parker's study. In addition, behavioral problems of the foster children, especially in the area of communication appeared significant in the breakdown of foster homes resulting in their closing. Trasler's research substantiates this finding.

There was no conclusive evidence that inadequate services provided by the agencies led to breakdown of foster homes. The researchers found, however, that a significant factor was a lack of preparation for the foster parents after approval and prior to placement of the foster child into the home. Most important was the non-involvement of the foster parents' own children in the discussions with the social worker prior to placement of a foster child into the home. Further, our findings indicated that foster parents wished to assume a fuller responsibility, especially in areas of medical and school problems. A less significant factor was the foster parents' wish to be given more background information of the foster children to afford them better understanding to meet the foster child's particular needs.
Recommendations

From the survey of the literature and the findings of this research project, it is recommended that:

--  endeavours be made to educate and arouse the community as to the needs and understanding of foster care in order to reach all segments of society as potential future foster parents.

--  requests for a certain type of child by foster parents be thoroughly investigated and discussed in order to ensure realistic fulfillment of their needs.

--  after approval of foster homes is obtained, the foster parents be given obligatory in-service training with qualified instructors prior to placement of the first foster child in their homes.

--  as indicated by our findings and other studies, where possible, the social worker responsible for placing the foster child make the ultimate decision in the choice of foster home for the child in order to take into consideration 'matching' and 'needs' of both the foster children and foster parents.

Proposals for further study

To obtain a clearer picture of change in socio-economic factors affecting fostering, a study over a longer period of time would be necessary. As indicated earlier, it was necessary to limit this study to a short period (2 years), to a limited geographical area, and to a limited number of var-
iables. As indicated in the literature in Chapter I, it would be helpful to include data such as age, family history of foster parents, and geographical location (inner city, suburban and rural).

With regard to placement, agencies are sometimes forced to place more than one child in a foster home because of the decrease in foster homes. Further research could be carried out to study the differential effects of this doubling up in these kinds of placements.

Also, a separate study is necessary to establish the relationship between the sex of the foster child and the breakdown of the home resulting in its closing, a factor Parker did not take into consideration in his study.

It is indicated in Trasler's study and this study that there appears to be a relationship between the background of the foster child and his ability to relate to adults. Therefore, a study could be undertaken to explore this factor in depth.

All information in this study was obtained from the foster parents and former foster parents. Therefore, it is felt that it would be helpful to conduct a similar study in which the social workers of the agencies would be interviewed to determine the effect of their needs on the decisions made pertaining to the selection and approval of foster parents and placement of foster children in particular homes—a factor discussed by Fansehl in the literature.
SCHEDULE FOR STRUCTURED INTERVIEW USED TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT FOSTER PARENTS AND FORMER FOSTER PARENTS

(Interviewer indicate whether foster home is open or closed and whether only foster mother is interviewed, or both foster parents are interviewed. Also indicate if questions are not applicable.)

open _____ closed _____ foster mother _____ foster parents ____

1. Did influence from any of the following sources prompt you to foster?
   (a) agency advertising yes no
   (b) relatives who had fostered yes no
   (c) friends who had fostered yes no
   (d) neighbours who had fostered yes no
   (e) own initiative yes no

2.a Did you wish to become a foster parent to provide company for your own child or children? yes no

2.b Did you wish to become a foster parent to supplement the family income? yes no

2.c Did you wish to become a foster parent to fulfill your own personal needs? yes no

3.a Do you prefer: (a) a male social worker?
   (b) a female social worker?
   (c) no preference

3.b Do you prefer your social worker to be:
   (a) under 30 yrs. of age
   (b) 30 yrs. of age or over
   (c) no preference

4. Do you think the agency prepared you for fostering children:
   (a) very well
   (b) satisfactorily
   (c) not satisfactorily

5.a Were you given background information pertaining to the special needs of the children you fostered?
   (a) never
   (b) sometimes
   (c) always
   (d) N/A

90
5. b Were you told about:
   (a) child's physical problems? yes no sometimes N/A
   (b) child's psychological prob- 
       lems? yes no sometimes N/A
   (c) child's relationship with 
       natural parents? yes no sometimes N/A
   (d) reason child taken into 
       care? yes no sometimes N/A

6. a Did foster mother see a social worker more than once before 
   home was approved? yes no

6. b Did foster mother see a social worker more than 3 times 
   before home was approved? yes no

7. Did you think this was a sufficient number of times? yes no

8. a Did foster father see a social worker more than once before 
   home was approved? yes no

8. b Did foster father see a social worker more than three times 
   before home was approved? yes no

9. Did foster father think this was a sufficient number of times? 
   yes no don't know

10. a Were you given more than 2 days notice before the last 
    child was placed with you? yes no

10. b Were you given more than 7 days notice before the last 
    child was placed with you? yes no

10. c Were you given more than 2 weeks notice before the last 
    child was placed with you? yes no

11. Did you feel that this was sufficient notice? yes no

12. Were there any natural children born during the period of 
    fostering? yes no

13. a Did you have at least one child of your own when you 
    started fostering? yes no
13.b Did you have at least two children of your own when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

13.c Did you have more than 3 children of your own when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

14. Were there any preplacement visits for the last child you fostered?  

   yes  no

15. Did the social worker discuss fostering with your own children?  

   yes  no

16.a Did you request temporary wards when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

16.b Did you request Crown wards when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

16.c Did you receive the type of ward you wanted? yes  no  N/A

17.a Did you prefer a female child when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

17.b Did you prefer a male child when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

17.c Did you receive a child of the sex you wanted?  

   yes  no  N/A

18.a Did you want a child under five years of age when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

18.b Did you want a child 5 to 12 years of age when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

18.c Did you want a child over 12 years of age when you started fostering?  

   yes  no

18.d Did you receive a child of the age you wanted?  

   yes  no  N/A

18.e Do you feel that the foster child's interests such as sports, music, reading, etc. were well matched to you or to your own children?  

   never  sometimes  always
18.f Were the foster children placed with you of the mental capacity that you indicated you wished to foster?

never  sometimes  always  N/A

19.a When you first fostered, was your own oldest child under five years of age?  

yes  no  N/A

19.b When you first fostered, was your own oldest child between 5 and 12 years of age?  

yes  no  N/A

19.c When you first fostered, was your own oldest child over 12 years of age?  

yes  no  N/A

20.a Have you fostered more than 1 child?  

yes  no

20.b Have you fostered more than 2 children?  

yes  no

20.c Have you fostered more than 3 children?  

yes  no

21.a Do you remember more than 1 social worker supervising children placed with you at one particular time?  

yes  no

21.b Do you remember more than 2 social workers supervising children placed with you at one particular time?  

yes  no

21.c As a rule, do you prefer to be notified in advance of your social worker's visit with you?  

yes  no

21.d Were you usually notified in advance of a social worker's visit to your home?  

yes  no  don't know

22. Do you feel you were involved with too many social workers in your period of fostering?  

yes  no  don't know

23.a Would you have liked more visits from your social worker?  

yes  no  don't know

23.b Would you have liked fewer visits from your social worker?  

yes  no  don't know
24.a If your foster child experienced school problems, were they usually worked out with the school:

(a) by you? Yes No
(b) by the social worker? Yes No
(c) by you accompanying the social worker to the school? Yes No
(d) by you and the social worker separately? Yes No
(e) N/A

24.b Which method do you think is preferable?

(a) by you? Yes No
(b) by the social worker? Yes No
(c) by you accompanying the social worker to the school? Yes No
(d) by you and the social worker separately? Yes No
(e) no opinion.

25.a If your foster child experienced medical problems, were they usually worked out with the physician:

(a) by you? Yes No
(b) by the social worker? Yes No
(c) by you accompanying the social worker to the physician? Yes No
(d) by you and the social worker separately? Yes No
(e) N/A

25.b Which method do you think is preferable?

(a) by you? Yes No
(b) by the social worker? Yes No
(c) by you accompanying the social worker to the physician? Yes No
(d) by you and the social worker separately? Yes No
(e) no opinion

26.a Did you ever feel that the social worker was trying to help the foster child, but not you, to cope with the child’s problems? never sometimes always

26.b Did you ever feel that the social worker was trying to help you, but not the foster child directly with the child’s problems? never sometimes always
27. If there was a change of worker, were you usually introduced:

(a) by the former worker accompanying the new worker?  yes no
(b) by letter?  yes no
(c) by telephone?  yes no
(d) by the new workers presenting themselves?  yes no

28.a When a child was to be removed from your home were you usually given more than 2 days notice?  yes no N/A

28.b When a child was to be removed from your home were you usually given more than 5 days notice?  yes no N/A

28.c When a child was to be removed from your home were you usually given more than 2 weeks notice?  yes no N/A

29. Was this notice: (a) more than sufficient?  
(b) sufficient?  
(c) not sufficient?

30.a If your home has been closed, did you foster for more than 6 months?  yes no

30.b If your home has been closed, did you foster for more than one year?  yes no

30.c If your home has been closed, did you foster for more than 1½ years?  yes no

30.d If you are presently fostering, have you been fostering for more than 6 months?  yes no

30.e If you are presently fostering, have you been fostering for more than 1 year?  yes no

30.f If you are presently fostering, have you been fostering for more than 1½ years?  yes no

31. Were there any foster children returned to their natural parents during your fostering period?  yes no
32. Were you upset when the children returned to their natural parents?  
   yes no N/A

33. Did natural parents visit the foster children at your home?  
   yes no

34.a Did foster children indicate problems getting along with your own children?  
   yes no N/A

34.b Did your own children indicate problems getting along with the foster children?  
   yes no N/A

35. In your opinion, were the children you fostered usually:
   (a) very difficult?  
   (b) difficult?  
   (c) not difficult?

36.a Is/was the last child placed with you under five years of age at time of placement?  
   Yes No

36.b Is/was the last child placed with you between 5 and 12 years of age at time of placement?  
   Yes No

36.c Is/was the last child placed with you over 12 years of age at time of placement?  
   Yes No

37. Did or does the last child placed with you have the following problems?
   (a) mentally retarded  
   (b) stealing  
   (c) sex problem  
   (d) fighting  
   (e) allergies  
   (f) brain damage  
   (g) other physical problems  
   (h) running  
   (i) communication (lying, not talking)  
   (j) school problems

38.a Was your husband a professional when you started fostering?  
   Yes No
38. b Was your husband in a managerial position when you started fostering?  
   Yes  No

38. c Was your husband a white collar worker when you started fostering?  
   Yes  No

38. d Was your husband a skilled worker when you started fostering?  
   Yes  No

38. e Was your husband an unskilled worker when you started fostering?  
   Yes  No

39. a Was the annual family income over $5000.00?  
   Yes  No

39. b Was the annual family income over $7500.00?  
   Yes  No

40. a Is your husband presently a professional?  
   Yes  No

40. b Is your husband presently in a managerial position?  
   Yes  No

40. c Is your husband presently a white collar worker?  
   Yes  No

40. d Is your husband presently a skilled worker?  
   Yes  No

40. e Is your husband presently an unskilled worker?  
   Yes  No

41. a Is the family income presently more than $5000.00?  
   Yes  No

41. b Is the family income presently more than $7500.00?  
   Yes  No

42. Do you feel that you have received adequate money for fostering children? 
   (a) most adequate 
   (b) adequate 
   (c) not adequate

43. Did foster mother work outside the home during the fostering period?  
   Yes  No
44.a When foster mother started fostering, did she have more than grade 8 education?  
Yes  No

44.b When foster mother started fostering, did she have more than grade 11 education?  
Yes  No

44.c When foster mother started fostering, did she have more than grade 13 education?  
Yes  No

45.a At the present time does foster mother have more than grade 8 education?  
Yes  No

45.b At the present time does foster mother have more than grade 11 education?  
Yes  No

45.c At the present time does foster mother have more than grade 13 education?  
Yes  No

46.a When foster father started fostering, did he have more than grade 8 education?  
Yes  No

46.b When foster father started fostering, did he have more than grade 11 education?  
Yes  No

46.c When foster father started fostering, did he have more than grade 13 education?  
Yes  No

47.a At the present time, does foster father have more than grade 8 education?  
Yes  No

47.b At the present time, does foster father have more than grade 11 education?  
Yes  No

47.c At the present time, does foster father have more than grade 13 education?  
Yes  No

48. Do you feel that your social life increased during the fostering period:
   (a) a lot
   (b) some
   (c) not at all
49. If you have moved since you first started to foster, do you consider your present housing location:
   (a) much better
   (b) better
   (c) no better
   (d) N/A

50. Did you ever receive complaints from your neighbours about your foster children?  
    Yes  No

51. To your knowledge, were there ever other foster children in your present neighbourhood?  
    Yes  No

52. When you started fostering, were your relatives' feelings about it:
   (a) very favourable
   (b) favourable
   (c) not favourable

53. When you started fostering, were your friends' feelings about it:
   (a) very favourable
   (b) favourable
   (c) not favourable

54. Did your marital status change during your period of fostering?  
    Yes  No

55. Have you ever attended foster parent meetings?  
    Yes  No

56. Do you think regular meetings with other foster parents would be:
   (a) very helpful to you?
   (b) helpful to you?
   (c) of no help to you?

57. Do you think that having social workers attend such meetings would be:
   (a) very helpful to the foster parents?
   (b) helpful to the foster parents?
   (c) of no help to the foster parents?
January, 1971

This letter will introduce , a student of the University of Windsor School of Social Work who is undertaking research pertaining to care of foster children in the Metropolitan Windsor area.

Approval has been received from the Roman Catholic Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex and the Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.

You are assured that all information discussed will be held in confidence and respect. No individual identification will be shown in the report.

Your cooperation in assisting the student with this research will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Harry M. Morrow,
Director, School of Social Work
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, Journals and Periodicals


Other Materials


Comparative monthly statistical report ending the month of December, 1970, Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.

Early History of the Children's Aid Society in Ontario, from a speech given by Mr. B. W. Hcise, May 20, 1943.

Facts about your Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.


Information gathered for total population of the County of Essex was obtained from the 1963-1969 city census and from verbal communication with the County Assessment Office.


Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 1970 Fact Sheet.


VITAE
Grace Doman was born December 30, 1914 at Petrolea, Ontario. She received her elementary and secondary education at SS #18 Enniskillen and Petrolea High School, respectively. After high school, business training was taken at H. B. Beal Technical and Commercial High School, London, Ontario.

Following graduation from there, Miss Doman worked five years in the office of the Parisian Laundry and Dry Cleaners Limited, London, Ontario; for Department of National Revenue (Taxation Division) in London, Ottawa and Windsor for twenty years with supervisory duties in the three cities. During the years with the Civil Service, there was further education in accounting and in office management acquired.

In 1965 a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Psychology was obtained from the University of Windsor. Miss Doman then took employment with the Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex.

In September, 1970 Miss Doman entered the Masters of Social Work program at the University of Windsor and expects to graduate in May, 1971 with a Masters Degree in Social Work.
William Scott was born September 8, 1933 in Hamilton, Ontario. He attended the King Edward and Tweedsmuir Elementary Schools and the Central Secondary School there and in addition received business training at the Park Business College in that city.

Mr. Scott was employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for five years and later by the Canadian Westinghouse Company Limited in Hamilton for nine years in which positions he worked in railway and industrial traffic respectively.

In 1968 Mr. Scott received his baccalaureate in psychology from the University of Windsor. He then entered the employ of the Children's Aid Society of the County of Essex until September, 1969 at which time he returned on educational leave of absence to attend the University of Windsor School of Social Work from which he graduated in May, 1971 with the degree of Master of Social Work.
Cornelius Van Velzen was born on March 31, 1942 in Lisse, The Netherlands. He received his initial education in The Netherlands which included the St. Wilhelms Elementary School in Lisse, The Sacred Heart Highschool in Oudenbosch from which he graduated in July, 1957 and graduated from St. Jean Baptist de LaSalle Teacher's College in Oudenbosch in 1962.

Mr. Van Velzen taught elementary school for about one year and a half and emigrated to Canada in September, 1964.

In 1967 Mr. Van Velzen received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Western Ontario. From September 1967 to September 1969 he worked at the Catholic Children's Aid Society in Windsor and was admitted that month at the School of Social Work of the University of Windsor from which he graduated in May, 1971 with a Master's Degree.