Preventable Runaways: Adolescents who leave home with the knowledge and permission of their parents

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PREVENTABLE RUNAWAYS:
ADOLESCENTS WHO LEAVE HOME WITH THE KNOWLEDGE
AND PERMISSION OF THEIR PARENTS

by

Leonard Kander

A Thesis
submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the School of Social Work
in Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Social Work
at the University of Windsor

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1988
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to develop a
system for the automatic analysis and valid
reporting of medical data. This system is based on
the principles of information theory and
computational theory. The system is designed to
provide a comprehensive and accurate analysis of
medical data, thereby facilitating the
interpretation of medical information.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Prof. R. Chandler, Chairman
Dr. W. Gallant, Member
Dr. J. Hoffman, Member
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was, firstly, to examine a selected group of adolescents and their parents where the adolescents have stated their wish to leave an otherwise healthy family environment earlier than would be appropriate. Thus, this study is an attempt to make a contribution to existing knowledge on this subject. With this, the role played by stress within the family and the effectiveness of the coping mechanisms will also be explored. Secondly, the study explores from the adolescent's point of view the social services required to make the transition from a dependent individual to independent.

In order to examine the above-mentioned areas, three areas of the literature will be reviewed. The first is parent-adolescent communication, followed by parent-adolescent conflict and then finally, the adolescent runaway. This literature plus the answers to a questionnaire will help open the door with new material on the preventable runaway.
This research study was classified as hypothetical developmental and will use a cross-sectional case study design. The research instrument was a questionnaire in which there were 63 people sampled. The breakdown was 26 adolescents and 37 parents.

The results of this study point to some general conclusions. Firstly, the families sampled were having problems in communication. This communication problem was many sided. The parents knew that communication was creating conflict in the family and were trying to remedy the situation, but often they did not know how or their effort was not enough. The parents had an inflated notion of the level of communication in the family and the level of relationships in the family. The adolescent scores for relationships and communication were consistently lower than their parents. It was concluded that the adolescents wish to leave home was a cry for help and that leaving home was not their main objective. Hence, the term preventable runaway.

Recommendations were made as a result of the findings.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Chairman of my committee, Professor Robert Chandler for his guidance, support and encouragement in the undertaking of this research. My gratitude also goes to Dr. Wilfred Gallant and Dr. John Hoffman for all the time and effort they have spent on this research project.

In addition, my thanks go to Sandy Anderson, Program Coordinator of the Adolescent Crisis Service, for allowing me to obtain the sample population from the files of the agency. I would also like to thank the families who agreed to participate in the study. Without their willingness to share information about themselves, this research study would not have been possible.

Above all, my deepest gratitude goes to the members of my family who have provided incredible support, encouragement and guidance during the past months. In particular, I thank my wife and children for their unending support and patience throughout the past three years.
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Chapter 1

**INTRODUCTION**

A major role of the traditional family unit is to prepare children for lifetime experience, including in most cases the establishment of a family of their own. Part of the family's function, in other words, is to provide a haven, a training ground for the offspring preparatory to their leaving that family unit and causing the cycle to begin anew. One might even say that the family exists in order that it might go out of existence, or at least that it might ultimately change its structure in response to the inevitable dispersal of the family members. Rashkis and Rashkis (1981) put it thus:

> It is axiomatic in our culture that the offspring of any family is to grow up in his family of origin, leave it and found a family of procreation. This is the most important act that most people accomplish in their lifetime, and it would follow that the most important parental task is to prepare children to carry it out. (p. 236)

This is an important point for the social worker preparing to explore the question of adolescents leaving family environments: if it is axiomatic that the offspring is going to leave at some point, the important question from
a social worker's point of view concerns "when" and "under what circumstances" the leaving is to take place. The answer usually involves the adolescent and his or her family.

The question has gradually increased in importance as the minimum level of education which society expects (and requires) of adolescents has increased. Unlike much earlier societies—hunting and agrarian societies, for example, where adult status was usually reached at physical maturity or shortly thereafter—today's industrialized society imposes a prolonged educational and training process, the result of which is the postponement of adult status well beyond the years of physical maturity. In industrialized countries such as Canada and the United States, the transition from childhood to adulthood has become a very lengthy process (Specht & Craig, 1982). In fact, recent decades have probably seen the most rapid change with the explosion of electronic capacities and the consequent increasing emphasis on training.

From a social point of view, therefore, there is no longer a clearly defined point at which leaving home is "appropriate": what is appropriate for one offspring may in fact be quite inappropriate for another. More than ever it would seem, the case of the adolescent leaving home is one where sensitivity, judgment, and--increasingly--knowledge must play a part.
For many years, social workers who were involved with the family environment had to face the problem of the "runaway", usually defined as the adolescent who leaves home without warning or consulting parents, and frequently leaving without trace (Fry, 1982). Typically the runaway has been thought of as an adolescent member of a dysfunctional family, who has been subjected to some identifiable abuse or stress which has led to the decision to leave home. The runaway has probably been a social problem for as long as dysfunctional families have existed. Literature on the runaway in this classic sense abounds, some of which is later reviewed.

It seems probable that within the foregoing definition of runaways there have always been some who, prior to making their departure from home, have felt constrained to warn their parents of their intention, or even to consult with them. Such a decision might merely reflect consideration for the feelings of the parents, or respect for their right to know, even where the decision to run away is itself firm and fixed. In other cases, the adolescent's desire to consult may be at least partly a *cri du coeur* for help before taking such a serious step into the unknown. Whatever the reason, at least a portion of such cases ultimately result in the parents and adolescents together
turning for help to a crisis centre or other professional agency.

The present study is concerned with this restricted portion of the runaway population—or perhaps more accurately the would-be or preventable runaway population. Consultation with parents prior to the act, and the subsequent seeking of help, introduce an element of delay into the running-away process, allowing time for attention to be focussed on the problems as seen by both the adolescent and the parents involved. A basic premise of this study is that informing of parents, and the seeking of professional assistance by parents and child together in such cases, are becoming more common than they have been in the past. This would be difficult to quantify objectively with such information. The author's only real evidence concerning numbers consists of observations made while working with the Adolescent Crisis Service of Windsor and Essex County over a period of months. Nevertheless, those observations showed clearly that the would-be runaway cases are coming forth for help including parents as well as the would-be runaway. Furthermore, that experience suggested to the author another possibility—namely that, among the cases of adolescents wanting to leave home, there may be an increasing number where the classic reasons associated with
the dysfunctional family (alcohol, drugs, sex abuse) play little if any part in the decision. In the families which
were involved, a number of factors were involved.

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to examine a selected group of adolescents and parents in the situation just described: that is, where the adolescents have stated their wish to leave an otherwise healthy family environment earlier than would, in their own interests, and by most accepted social standards, be considered appropriate. In such cases, there are few if any fixed parameters to work with, no rules of thumb as to age, sex, amount of education, or physical or mental characteristics or level of maturity that indicate at what point leaving home becomes in the adolescent's interest or socially "acceptable". Moreover, one would not expect to find in these cases abuse, or conditions rooted in drugs, alcohol or other symptoms of dysfunction which would indicate that leaving home may be necessary to protect the child's own mental or physical health.

The specific purpose of this study is to make a contribution to existing knowledge on this subject, by reporting the results of direct questionnaire contact with adolescent children involved in these cases, and with their parents. This study is thus an attempt to open up at least
a small window, which will allow one to see the kinds of circumstances and problems arising in the family, which propel adolescent children toward a decision to leave home. The objectives will be to view these through the eyes of the people directly involved.

This study will closely examine the role of stress within the family, and the effectiveness of the coping mechanisms. During the life cycle stage of adolescence, extreme levels of stress and pressure can be brought to bear upon the entire family system. Olson, McCubbin and Associates (1983) observed that during the adolescence of children, parents experience greater levels of stress than at any other time. Bowen (1982) found a circular relationship insofar as stress during adolescence may lead to marital conflict, which in turn plays a destructive role in an adolescent's own development. The parents' marital relationship can itself seriously affect the psychological and emotional development of the adolescent.

It follows that the successful completion of the stage of adolescence depends heavily on the effectiveness of the family coping mechanisms. Within a healthy family structure, conflict between members can quickly be identified and effectively defused. In an unhealthy family
structure the coping mechanisms are prone to break down, usually with devastating results.

A secondary purpose of the study is to discover, from the adolescent's point of view, the social services required to make the transition from a dependent person to independent. The first priority of the social worker in such cases should be, of course, to attempt to maintain the integrity of the family bonds whether or not this means living together in the family home. Nevertheless, where this is not possible, the question arises: what alternatives exist? The fact is that somehow such a child must be sheltered and maintained, and probably given further education or training before that child can be considered an independent adult.

The many-sided and complex nature of this question puts any full treatment of it beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the perspective of the adolescent in it will be addressed, in the expectation that this would be useful in any wider study of the question.

1.2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The rationale for the study lies in the belief that research is very much needed into the causes of this growing phenomenon—including the effects of peer pressure, economic
circumstances, and, as already indicated, family conflict. Exploring, describing and explaining this problem will help give practitioners a better understanding of what they are facing. Until the underlying reasons are discovered, one cannot help in the way a therapist should.

1.3. SUMMARY

Before going forward to review the relevant literature it might be useful to recapitulate the main ingredients laid out so far. Runaways and society's problems of dealing with them have existed as long as families have, although in the past they seemed to have resulted from dysfunctional family life which may have been rooted in abuse (physical, sexual, or psychological) or other identifiable causes. Parents, in most cases, were not informed of the adolescent's intention.

At the present time, there are some signs that this may be changing. The case seems to be becoming more common where adolescents are wishing to leave healthy families; and in such cases parent consultation may well be more frequently the norm. In such cases, the challenge will be to learn why the adolescent may wish to leave the healthy family. The Review of the Literature (chapter two) therefore, emphasizes the successful ingredients of the healthy family. A major emphasis will be placed in the literature review on the relationship between communication
circumstances, and, as already indicated, family conflict. Exploring, describing and explaining this problem will help give practitioners a better understanding of what they are facing. Until the underlying reasons are discovered, one cannot help in the way a therapist should.

1.3. **SUMMARY**

Before going forward to review the relevant literature it might be useful to recapitulate the main ingredients laid out so far. Runaways and society’s problems of dealing with them have existed as long as families have, although in the past they seemed to have resulted from dysfunctional family life which may have been rooted in abuse (physical, sexual, or psychological) or other identifiable causes. Parents, in most cases, were not informed of the adolescent’s intention.

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and conflict as ingredients of the healthy family. Adolescent runaways and the trends and reasons of the runaway will also be reviewed to determine if any relationship exists with the adolescent leaving a healthy family.

Chapter three concentrates on the research design and methodology. It deals with research classification, population sample, data collection procedures and the research questions. It also presents limitations of the study.

Chapter four is a presentation of the statistical findings. The final chapter, chapter five, analyses these findings, and suggests some conclusions of a more general nature. This chapter also offers recommendations for future research.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Generally speaking the literature portrays the period of adolescence as one of increasing turmoil. Konopka (1973) divides the life stage of adolescence into three phases: early, middle, and late periods. In early adolescence the child experiences bodily changes of puberty and mental changes of cognitive maturity. The middle stage of adolescence is a time when youths seek an individual identity and increase their social circles by starting to date. Their peers also become much more important. Late adolescence is the period in which decisions are made about the future. At this point, the young person’s thought processes have matured, and Keniston (1975) feels that only the life experiences of adulthood are what the adolescent is missing.

Of the three stages, the middle one, during which the adolescent is seeking his or her own individual identity, stands out as the most difficult. This period seems to fit
most closely Anna Freud's (1969) reference to adolescence as a "developmental disturbance", which, according to Specht and Craig (1982, p. 196), Freud sees as "necessary in order for the individual to form a new identity apart from the earlier role of a dependent child in the family". During this period of searching for identity, the adolescent is thrown into an inner conflict because on the one hand the search seems to require at least some disengagement from the family, while on the other hand strong cravings for family support remain within the adolescent.

Sprecht and Craig sum up the conflict as follows (1982, pp. 195-196):

According to psychoanalytical theory, adolescence is a period of great inner turmoil, characterized by the need to master increasingly strong sexual impulses and the revival of unresolved oedipal conflicts. The adolescent tries to deal with these frightening impulses by disengaging from the family but experiences inner conflict because of the simultaneous desire for continued parental love and support.

To some extent the peer group provides a means of exiting from the family during adolescence, experimenting with roles and developing more mature relationships. But always in the end it is family support that is the crucial element (Noller & Bagi, 1985) to help the adolescent progress through the period without major problems. Indeed,
Caplan and Grunebaum (1967) cited the family as the most potent socialization force in our society.

This theme of adolescence as a period of upheaval, and the family as the most crucial source of stability for the adolescent is repeatedly stressed in the literature. Knight and Bon (1985) found that adolescence is a stage of life which encompasses psychological, physiological and social changes. Freud (1969) also points out that during this stage, conflict with parents is normal, but implies that the extent of conflict can be limited if parents are tolerant of the child’s new competencies and if they set appropriate limits for behaviour. The enormous burden that falls upon the family as a unit is emphasized by Freud’s contention that, during this phase, there is a fine line between a healthy family and a dysfunctional family.

From these initial observations it seems clear that relationships within the family—on the one hand communication between parent and adolescent, and on the other hand, conflict—are the two areas of family activity most likely to have an impact on the adolescent who may be motivated to leave the family environment early. Again it is emphasized that, while the considerable literature on adolescent problems contains many studies of problems rooted in drugs, alcohol or sex, these areas remain outside the
substance of the present paper—not because they are considered unimportant in any general study of runaways, but because of the present intent to focus at least primary emphasis upon runaways from family situations where these play no part. There may well, of course, be some overlap.

2.2. PARENT-adolescent COMMUNICATION

Though research has been done on the relationship between parent-adolescent communication and the social and cognitive development of children (Grotevant & Cooper, 1983; Steinberg, 1981), there has, according to Barnes and Olson (1985), been little research on parent-adolescent communication and its relationship to family functioning. This appears to be a significant gap in the research; later findings in the present study suggest that communication problems can play a major role in adolescent decisions to leave home, regardless of the general level of health of the family. Possibly what advancement there has been in this area is exemplified by Sonne (1985) whose contribution seems to lie in his emphasis on growth of both the adolescent and the family during the adolescence period.

Sonne's (1985) treatment of growth emphasized that not only does the adolescent grow during the period of adolescence but the entire family also grows. Moreover, if the growth process is impeded, countergrowth may occur. The
growth of the adolescent may be impeded until an occurrence such as positive family communication helps to advance the development of the adolescent child.

Normally, a healthy family moves forward through the various stages of the life cycle. However, at times families may become "stuck" at a transition point, or one part of the family may move forward more quickly than another. They may become stuck because of conflict or developmental life cycle stresses such as death or illness. At such times communication may break down. Until the family resumes functional communication patterns it will remain stuck in a position of countergrowth.

Communication may also become dysfunctional or unhealthy for other reasons related to the life cycle. Relative ages are important. For instance, three parents aged 29, 40 and 65, will in all likelihood experience different difficulties with their adolescents because of the life cycle stage which they are currently experiencing. The 29-year-old and the 65-year-old may well experience more difficulty raising an adolescent than the 40-year-old as a result of their position in the life cycle.

The adolescent is moving into a period when procreation is imminent. If he has unfinished work from before birth or birth on, he must complete much of it or he will be unable to develop his ego and his identity to a degree where he can with reasonable comfort rearrange his
relationship with his family so that he can appropriately leave home on his way to establishing his own separate heterosexual and procreative adult situation. (Sonne, 1985, p. 184)

Like Sonne (1985), other authors and researchers have reported on communication and its effect on the growth processes of adolescents. Sonne appears to be discussing growth processes in a very broad sense while others have focused on specific problem areas. For instance, Steinberg and Hill (1978) in their study had found that changes in the intergenerational patterns of communication, could be linked to a change in the physical maturity of the male adolescent. However, it was not stated what came first or if one causes the other to change. As the adolescent matures, patterns of communication will change also.

It is during the adolescent years that communication within the context of the family is crucial. The adolescent’s identity formation is itself affected by family communication (Barnes & Olson, 1985). Discussions between parent and children were found to facilitate significantly the development of increased levels of moral reasoning in adolescents (Stanley, 1978). An adolescent is much better able to arrive at an appropriate and mature decision after discussions with a parent than without such discussion.
Gotevant and Cooper (1983) stress through their research that communication is crucial to ensuring the successful separation of adolescents from their families of origin and their moving on with their own life processes. Their findings indicate "the importance of communication to helping family members strike a balance between separateness from and connectedness to each other" (Barnes & Olson, 1985, pp. 438-439). Not surprisingly one of the causes of family conflict can be communication breakdown.

Unresolved communication breakdown, or complete absence of communication, are major contributing factors to problems in families. In 1968, Dreikurs and Soltz found that the absence of communication was the most distancing factor between parent and adolescent. Communication moves in stages. The absence of verbal communication does not occur suddenly. There is usually a buildup to this drastic stage. A minor conflict between a parent and an adolescent, if not quickly and effectively resolved, may escalate and result in a complete breakdown of communication. Left unresolved, this stage of absence of communication causes considerable and unsolvable turmoil between parent and adolescent.

The importance of communication in maintaining the integrity of the family is highlighted by findings that there is a difference between the communication patterns of
healthy families and those of dysfunctional families. Healthy families try not to allow conflict to become so severe that it causes an absence of communication between parent and adolescent. Gantman (1978) describes healthy families as having clearer communication, more freedom of expression, more cooperation and more sensitivity among family members than dysfunctional families. On the other hand Forisha-Kovac (1983) describes unhealthy families as being "characterized by almost universal intergenerational antagonism, mutual hostility, indifference or apathy, and lack of cohesiveness" (p.329). Hunter (1985) used the following categories in which these discussions were examined the growth process by narrowing it even further. Hunter studied adolescents' perceptions of discussions with parents and friends. This was completed in reference to the following categories: academic/vocational, social/ethical, family, and peer domains. For this study Hunter used three age groups: 12-13, 14-15, and 18-20 year olds. 

In this study it was found that discussion levels for parents remained quite high in all age groups in the areas of academic/vocational, social/ethical, and family. Peer relationships were discussed by adolescents more with friends than with the adolescent's parents. An interesting finding was that parents tended to explain their views more
than they tried to listen to their children's (Hunter, 1985). Many parents feel the need to preach their life's learning experiences rather than take the time and patience to understand what their adolescent feels is their own unique problem. It is much easier to preach than it is to listen and think of a resolution to the problem.

Hunter (1985) postulated that various forms of parent-child communication affect adolescent social development. For example Thorlindsson and Wieting (1981) stated that "parent-adolescent communications in which free expression of opinions is valued more than deference to social status are associated with higher levels of moral judgment." Hunter (1985, p. 433). Hunter explains that it is critically important that the adolescent express an opinion and stand up for himself, even towards the adolescent's parents rather than accept everything that is said to the adolescent. Further to this, family communication patterns are seen to undergo changes as adolescents grow older. The adolescent's input in decision-making as part of family discussions increases with age. Normally, the mother's input declines whereas the father maintains an authoritative position (Hunter, 1985), which creates a balance of power in the family.
The communication process of the family is important to
the therapist when making a complete and accurate
assessment. Many models are used as tools to aid in
reaching the most complete and accurate assessment possible.
One which includes communication as an important part of the
model is The McMaster Model of Family Functioning developed
by Epstein, Bishop and Levin (1978). In this model the
researchers use affective responsiveness and communication
as two of the six major dimensions of family functioning.
The other dimensions which can be indirectly related to
communication are: problem solving, roles, affective
involvement, and behaviour control. "In contrast to
the other two dimensions, communication is
the model uses communication only as part of the entire
spectrum. "The model deals with the full spectrum of family
functioning from health to pathology" (Epstein et al., 1978,
p. 20). Their model of family functioning is based on a
systems approach which draws from the communication theory,
learning theory, and transaction approach (Epstein et al.,
1978). Although this model is useful for the practitioner
it lacks specific focus on parent-adolescent communication.

Another model in which communication is a major
dimension and one which was a possible choice to be used in
the present study, is The Circumplex Model of Marital and
Family Systems (Olson et al., 1983). Although it was not
selected for use in this study, it is a valuable tool for the assessment of the entire family system in preparation for the treatment process. This model includes communication as a major dimension of family life. Families are measured according to their amount of cohesion or adaptability. Using the model, families can be grouped into sixteen different types of marital and family systems. The sixteen types are then divided into three main types of families: balanced, mid-range, or extreme.

In this model communication is considered "an input of facilitating dimension" in that it facilitates movement of families on the other two dimensions of cohesion and adaptability" (Barnes & Olson, 1985, p. 438). Family cohesion refers to the amount of emotional bonding between family members, and family adaptability refers to the family's ability to reorganize in whichever way may be needed to respond to different situations and developmental stresses. Developmental stress may well be caused from the different life cycle stages of everyday life such as illness, unemployment or death.

"The authors of The Circumplex Model maintain that communication is the mechanism families utilize to share their changing preferences, needs, and feelings" (Barnes & Olson, 1985, p. 438). It is the communication which changes
the level of, and measures the amount of cohesiveness and adaptability in families. "While positive communication facilitates movement to different levels of family organization, a lack of communication skills or negative communication is believed to inhibit the family system's ability to change levels of cohesion and adaptability" (Barnes & Olson, 1985, p. 439).

Barnes and Olson (1985) "attempted to describe the nature of parent-adolescent communication, as perceived by parents and their adolescent children, in different types of family systems" (p. 438). As part of their research, 426 "normal" families completed a questionnaire. It was found that families with better parent-adolescent communication were higher in family adaptability, and family satisfaction. The importance of this finding is relevant to the focus of the present study which examines families that on the surface appear to have healthy patterns of communication and yet, upon closer examination, are found to be experiencing difficulties with communication, the extent of which may not be recognized by the family itself.

Initially, there appears to be considerable research on parent-adolescent communication. However, that part of it that is relevant to the present study is quite limited principally because, for reasons already explained, no
direct account will be paid to research dealing with drugs, alcohol and abuse in relation to communication difficulties. There is general agreement that healthy communication helps families move from one stage of the life cycle to another without the dislocation that can result from transition points. Such communication can be expected to keep the desire of the adolescent to leave home to a minimum. A breakdown of communication, however, can lead to conflict between adolescent and parent, and then the consequences can be more serious.

2.3. PARENT- ADOLESCENT CONFLICT

Most of the literature supports the hypothesis that conflict arises out of some sort of communication breakdown, which in turn can result in a power struggle between parent and adolescent. Such a power struggle may manifest itself in various forms. In healthy families, parents do not resort to physical force to ensure their decisions will be adhered to. However, "in the absence of physical force, parents face the reality that their power resides solely in the adolescent's acceptance of their authority position" (Stewart & Zaenglein-Senger, 1982, p. 457). When conflict arises, the parents may feel that they have lost control over the adolescent's behaviour, which threatens parental esteem.
Parental esteem may be threatened because the balance of power is shifting from parents to adolescent. In other words, the basis of authority has begun to erode, and the stage is set for the parent-adolescent power struggle already indicated (Stewart & Zaenglein-Senger, 1982). The power struggle occurs partly because parents fail to realize that changes in their children require alterations in their own parental roles. In order to change parental roles, the communication patterns between parent and adolescent have to be changed.

Efforts to minimize and resolve problems and conflicts during adolescence are imperative. Thus families must strive to maintain positive communication and parents must be sensitive to the many-sided impact of adolescence upon the family system. James Hall (1984) one of the leaders in the field of parent-adolescent conflict, has described such conflict as a "social problem". He identified several characteristics of the conflict relationship between parent and adolescent. These are:

- Not enough positive or supportive communication.
- Too much negative or defensive communication.
- Poor problem-solving skills. More specifically, problems not described in operational terms; few alternative solutions examined before acting; poor decision making and planning.
- Poor negotiation skills. More specifically, poor statement of own opinion; failure to ask for other's opinion; poor ability to give and receive praise and criticism; poor compromising skills; poor listening and paraphrasing skills. (p. 487)
Hall (1984) even finds communication, or its absence, to be the principal cause of conflict between parents and their adolescent children. However, such conflict need not be constant.

As already noted, during adolescence the family as a whole passes through developmental stages; and the impact of adolescent children upon the system may be significant (Lewis, 1986). This impact can be negative or positive; and, of course, with a negative impact may come conflict. It appears, however, that studies of conflict situations in healthy families are relatively rare; most such studies have been carried out on dysfunctional families. In Lewis's words, "careful studies are rare, however, and little is known about the factors that influence the way normal families react to the adolescence of their children" (Lewis, 1986, p. 30). Hall (1984), and Stewart & Zaenglein-Senger (1982), have reported that research on parent-adolescent conflict is lacking. Nevertheless, therapists cannot ignore the conflict problem and must at least treat the symptoms. Even though research and evaluation on the treatment process are still inadequate (Hall, 1984), there are some treatment modalities which are widely used in working with clients trying to work out parent-adolescent conflict.

If the conflict between parent and adolescent is to be resolved or minimized, the burden of change lies on the
parent (Stewart & Zaenglein-Senger, 1982; Hall, 1984). This is reflected in the number of parenting programs offered by social agencies. Programs such as STEP/Teen by Dinkmeyer and McKay (1982) and Active Parenting by Popkin (1983), stress communication as a means of understanding the adolescent and resolving problems between parent and adolescent.

Though clinical interventions are also available to parents and adolescents, studies report that more effective intervention is possible with parents, because the restructuring of parenting techniques is usually the most effective method of resolving family conflict (Stewart & Zaenglein-Senger, 1982; Hall, 1984). Hall (1984) discusses three treatment modalities which are: treatment with the adolescent only, treatments with parents and adolescents, and treatment of parents only. He found that treatment with the adolescent has not been adequately researched. "Primary intervention with the adolescent only for parent-adolescent conflict has not been thoroughly evaluated. Some evidence exists that this approach may be a viable one, but a stronger argument has been made for the direct involvement of parents" (Hall, 1984, p. 488).

Looking at treatment involving both parent and adolescent, Harvey Rosenstock and Ken Vincent (1979) studied
the effect of parental involvement on the outcome of adolescent treatment. In their study the adolescents were treated individually and in groups and the parents were invited to participate in group or individual sessions. Rosenstock and Vincent found that there was a 62% success rate for adolescents whose parents attended a group, 67% success rate for adolescents whose parents were seen individually, and, there were no successes for adolescents whose parents were not involved in the treatment. The researchers rated success only if there was no display of the initial symptom. In some, the second attempt included success but the individual was unwilling to enter treatment again.

Although this approach involving both parent and adolescent, has been widely used, conclusions are mixed on its effectiveness. Hall (1984) summarized that

...most approaches were not adequately evaluated, those that were evaluated had severe methodological problems. Thus it appears that several principles and techniques may be beneficial to parent-adolescent conflict resolution, but that more research and model-building are needed. (p. 491)

The third modality involves working only with the parents. For parents with younger children, this approach has been widely used with a high success rate (Hall, 1984). In this model the therapist works with the parents who then treat the child. There are both positive and negative effects to the use of this model. Hall (1984) points out
that the main negativity is that when working with the parent only, the therapist misses the main unit of analysis which is the parent-adolescent dyad. Also, the adolescent is not aware of what is occurring in the treatment sessions and at this stage in life, if possible, should be included.

However, there are two important positive elements to this treatment format. The first is that parents show a real desire to improve the family situation and are willing to try new patterns of behaviour and communication and to change old unsuccessful ones. The second element is that the parents may be the only ones willing to enter treatment because the adolescent is unwilling, making this approach the only alternative (Hall, 1984). Furthermore, intervention at the parental level helps to increase parental awareness of the various developmental stages in the growth process through which the adolescent child is passing (Kidwell, Fischer, Dunham, & Baranowski, 1983). Again, Hall (1984) stresses that this approach too, has not been thoroughly evaluated. Obviously, more research and evaluation is needed in this field so that a model can be used in the treatment of parent-adolescent conflict.

Thus, communication breakdown between parent and adolescent creates conflict between the two. During this stage in life of both the parent and the adolescent, this
conflict becomes a power struggle. If the conflict is not resolved either through internal changes in the family or through outside treatment, the adolescent may then be motivated to run away from home. The level of functioning of the family will be a major determinant of whether the adolescent will consult the parents about this departure.

2.4. Adolescent Runaways

As normally used, the term "runaway" refers to an adolescent who has left home without either consulting or informing parents. This differs somewhat from the topic of the present paper, which is in fact the would-be runaway: The adolescent who may strongly wish to leave home but, before doing so, is at least informing parents, and discussing this intent with them. Thus the decision whether to include a section on runaways in the present literature review had to be carefully weighed. Most of the existing literature on runaways deals with the subject post factum, and concentrates on finding reasons why such action was taken. By the nature of the case, most studies of runaways are necessarily confined to interviews with the adolescent only, which can put a limit on the significance of information obtained, since cross-checking of the parent's point of view may be precluded by many factors. Moreover, even though no hard-and-fast line can be drawn, it must be assumed that most such cases are from dysfunctional
families, whereas the would-be runaways of the present study could come from any type of family.

Nevertheless, the decision was taken to include the review. One reason for this is that the problem of runaways, however defined, is extremely common. In the United States each year, hundreds of thousands of youths between twelve and eighteen run away from home (Roberts, 1981). Official statistics reveal only a portion of the problem (Shellow, Schamp, Liebow, & Unger, 1967) because only a minority of runaways are ever reported (Justice & Duncan, 1976). The literature is therefore abundant and it provides a useful overview of the reasons given by adolescent runaways for their decision, and thus serves as a helpful backdrop to the current study.

What emerges most clearly from this review is confirmation that poor communication leads to problems with parents, which in turn leads to intolerable situations for the adolescent. Ambrosino (1971) and Robey, Rosenwald, and Rosenwald (1964) found that most young people who run away from home, do so because of intolerable situations. The primary reason is one which focuses on their parents (Homer, 1973). Exploring the problems with the parent even further, Adams (1980), and Adams and Munro (1979), found that the
most frequently mentioned problem pertained to the vast
topic area of parent-child communication.

Other factors have also been cited by runaways to
explain why they ran away from home. These include
discipline and/or rejection (Johnson & Carter, 1980);
criticism (Chapman, 1978); inadequate parental control (Wolk
& Brandon, 1977); low empathy (Spillane-Grieco, 1984); and
differences in values (Blood & D'Angelo, 1974). Still other
reasons are linked to the parenting skills of their fathers.
Haley (1980), for example, theorizes that, when a father
expects too much from the adolescent, that adolescent can
develop running-away behaviour.

The History of the Study

Fry (1982) completed a Canadian study in Alberta to
clarify the father's role in cases of adolescents who run
away from the home. "The specific purpose was to examine
the interconnections between paternal personality attributes
and socialization techniques with adolescent personality
attributes and their association with adolescents' runaway
behaviors" (Fry, 1982, pp. 348-349). Two hundred
adolescents and their fathers took part in the study. This
research project showed that the personality variables of
both father and adolescent are important contributors to the
adolescent running away.
The results can, however, be most accurately explained and interpreted within a mediational model, i.e., the father’s personality and adolescent’s personality are both important in affecting adolescent running away behavior but the adolescent’s personality is the mediating factor. (Fry, 1982, p. 357)

Fry (1982) identified other father factors and adolescent factors which influenced running away behaviour. The father factors refer to deficiency in the following: father affection, child centeredness, communicativeness, and consistency. The adolescent factors are: the degree of rebelliousness, impulsivity, lack of responsibility, and low school academic performance. The characteristics may also be used in some instances for the adolescent who leaves home with the knowledge of the parents.

The literature on runaways shows a fairly direct connection between conflict in the family and the decision to run away. Shellow et al. (1967) showed that family conflict has a direct bearing on adolescent runaway behaviour. In their study they found that three-quarters of the families with runaways had conflict over school performance, friends, and rejection of family values and rules. Other researchers have found conflict to be centered around eating dinner with the family, arguing, church, friends, and not being home enough (Kinloch, 1970). Schmuck (1971) found that the adolescents felt that their parents do
not listen to them, do not allow them privacy, and interfere too much in their social life, and that the adolescents lack respect and trust for their parents.

Not surprisingly, according to Johnson and Carter (1980), the runaway has been rejected in both home and school, which helps to lead the adolescent to a low self-image. The families of runaways "are typically marred by high rates of internal conflict, divorce, residential mobility, and death" (Johnson & Carter, 1980, p. 485). In these families the children are disciplined by their parents in physically and psychologically abusive ways. The parents are acting out the frustrations of their own lives and use the children as scapegoats. Because the children are defenseless they are very convenient. In the home the children are unable to please the parents.

Not only are the children unable to please their parents in the home but they are often failures in school (Johnson & Carter, 1980). They are placed in slow learner classes, or given failing grades, and are ostracized by teachers and peers. The child tends to feel like an outsider in the school and home. "Their chronic truancy--their need to escape the school milieux that brutalizes them--is the functional equivalent of running away from home" (Johnson & Carter, 1980, p. 486).
A child spends a substantial portion of his or her day in the school. Another significant portion of time is spent in the home. When the child is ostracized in both places it is not surprising that the child will soon begin to think about running away. "Children flee their homes and schools when the cumulative experience of marginality breeds intolerable loneliness and alienation" (Johnson & Carter, 1980, p. 486).

Johnson and Carter (1980) found that runaways feel detached from their surroundings and emotionally uninvolved in their own world. They start to hate themselves and wish to escape. "In escaping their world, they also seek escape from its most disturbing and hated product: themselves" (Johnson & Carter, 1980, p. 486).

There are similarities between the adolescent with whom this study is concerned and the adolescent runaway. Spillane-Grieco (1984) states that the average teenager is not much different from the runaway, at least to the extent that in both cases a lack of understanding has existed between them and their parents. Both the adolescent and the parents are in a period of transition during the child's stage of adolescence. When they are both going through changes this can be stressful on all concerned.
It was found in this study that although the nonrunaway adolescent may not feel totally understood, feeling very loved and positively regarded made a critical difference with respect to the adolescent’s relationship with his/her parent(s). This communication of being loved and cared for can compensate for the feeling of not being totally understood. It also gives the family members a sense of self-worth and dignity, and allows them to continue to grow and be effective. (Spillane-Grieco, 1984, p. 74)

2.5. SUMMARY

The existing literature seems to leave little doubt that a significant relationship exists between an adolescent’s motivation to run away from home, and the level of communication which exists among the members of the adolescent’s family. Where communication is maintained at a high level, such motivation is much more likely to be low. The principal link in this causal relationship is found in the conflict between adolescent and parent(s) which most frequently results from poor communication. Where the literature seems to be somewhat inadequate is in the matter of distinguishing between the dysfunctional families and healthy families. Thus it is generally assumed that runaway situations occur mainly in dysfunctional families, even though the evidence of this is somewhat one-sided, being based largely on surveys of the runaways themselves. Certainly, runaway behaviour can be found in both types of family but the difference, if any, is still far from clear. As the present study proceeds, the case of the would-be
runaway (perhaps called more accurately the preventable runaway since consultation opens up the possibility of a reversal of the adolescent’s original decision) will be examined more closely to see, among other things, whether this case is more typically identified with the dysfunctional or the healthy family.
DESIGN LOGIC AND METHODOLOGY

As has been indicated, an apparently increasing social phenomenon is that of the would-be or preventable runaway, the adolescent who wants to leave home much earlier than is considered the norm for society, but who consults with his or her parents regarding this wish. It is this willingness to consult, thereby opening the door to possible remedial action, which sets this group apart from runaways in general, who simply leave home with no consultation. The current study is intended to examine this phenomenon.

3.1. CLASSIFICATION

The study is hypothetical-developmental in nature. It uses a cross sectional case-study design outlined by Tripodi (1985) in Grinnell's Social Work Research and Evaluation.

Hypothetical-developmental studies pursue a description of a social happening in order to generate concepts which can ultimately be developed into specific research questions.
(Tripodi, 1985). It is at this level of knowledge-seeking that concepts are developed, variables are identified and research questions established. It is, therefore, one way open to the researcher in pursuit of a higher level of knowledge (Tripodi, 1985).

"The purpose of research questions is to seek simple facts" (Tripodi, 1985, p. 233). According to Tripodi (1985, p. 236) "specific criteria that must be met to produce evidence that the desired knowledge objective is obtained" are conceptual translatability and hypothesis researchability. When these are satisfied then the researcher may attain useful concepts, hypotheses and questions. Conceptual definitions must be clear and concise. The concepts must then be operationalized into terms that can be precisely measured. The research questions posed must lend themselves to being adequately investigated. When all the above requirements are met, the criteria of conceptual translatability and hypothesis researchability are met as well (Tripodi, 1985).

3.2. DESIGN LOGIC AND STRATEGY

This study explores a social phenomenon--adolescents leaving home. Concepts, including the adolescent leaving the home environment, parent-adolescent conflict, and others, after having been defined for the purpose of the
study, have been adapted to fit the needs of the study. This approach makes possible the adequate investigation of the research questions and provides conceptual translatability and hypothesis researchability (Tripodi, 1985).

The data collected as part of this study will help to answer the following questions through the analysis.

1. Why do adolescents want to leave the family home environment?

2. What occurrences in the family are precipitating, or have precipitated, the adolescent’s wish to leave?

3. What are the families’ major problem areas?

4. To what extent have the level of communication existing within the family, and the difficulties which may be impeding communication, been contributing factors to the adolescent’s wish to leave?

5. To what extent has the level of relationship existing within the family, been a contributing factor to the adolescent’s wish to leave?

6. What social services does the adolescent need in order to make the transition?

7. Is the adolescent or family able to find the needed social services?
3.3. THE CONCEPTS

The concept of an adolescent generally refers to a young person between the ages of 13 and 19 years. Such person is said to be in the stage of adolescence. Additionally adolescence should be regarded as a life cycle stage through which an entire family passes, not the adolescent alone (Lewis, 1986). The importance of this will be seen repeatedly in the findings of the current study. Adolescence is a period of change for all family members and a time when the family system must adapt to changes in boundaries. These changes in boundaries are natural transition points through which all adolescents and parents pass. As the adolescent demands more independence, family boundaries must become more flexible. As parents find that they no longer command the same authority as when the child was younger (Carter & McGoldrick, 1982; Kidwell et al., 1983; Combrinck-Graham, 1985), flexibility on the parental side is required.

Leaving the family home environment. For this study the concept of leaving is associated with the adolescent’s desire to leave the parent’s home in order to live elsewhere. Family home environment is identified as the parental home in which the adolescent is currently residing.
Precipitating occurrences refer to the events in the parent-adolescent relationship which contribute, directly or indirectly, to the adolescent's wanting to leave the family home environment. For this study precipitating occurrences will be determined by the responses to questions 2 and 3 of Part B.

Level of communication is the amount of verbal or non-verbal exchange of information. In this study the level of communication will be taken to be reflected in the total score which a family receives on Bienvenu's "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory", which makes up Part C of the questionnaire. This will indicate whether the family is having problems in communication.

The level of relationship existing within the family refers to the level of interacting, mutuality of interest and mutual respect existing among members of the family. These will determine the level and quality of the relationship existing within the family. For measurement purposes, use will be made of the family scores attained in Hudson's "Index of Family Relations", which made up Part D of the questionnaire to be described presently. This measure is also intended to indicate whether the families are healthy or dysfunctional.
Social services as a concept refers to agencies whose function is to promote the welfare of the community and the individual. Specifically, the concern here will be to determine the social services which a would-be runaway and his or her parents need in the Windsor and Essex County area.

In this study the reader may also come across terms which, within the context of the study, carry a connotation slightly different from what is normally implied. Some examples are the following: 

Parent-adolescent conflict: this refers to a power struggle between the parent and adolescent. Such conflict most frequently arises from parental attempts to maintain control over decision-making (Stewart & Zaenglein-Senger, 1982). Neither the parents nor the adolescents are static; both are changing according to their own social and biological clock (Kidwell et al., 1983). When differences cannot be accepted by one or other or both, conflict ensues. This conflict according to Petzel & Riddle (1981) is characterized by anger, communication difficulties and ambivalent feelings between family members.

Runaway: this refers to the adolescent who leaves the family environment without either seeking permission or
giving prior indication of intention to the family (Fry, 1982).

Would-be runaway or preventable runaway: this refers to the adolescent who wishes to leave the family home yet discusses with the parents this wish to leave. The reasons for, and the implications of, the adolescent’s willingness to discuss in this case, are central to the present study.

The approach in this study does not contemplate any attempt to verify a pre-existing hypothesis, because the questions have not been sufficiently researched at this point. The focus will be on exploring a new field in which information is still fragmentary.

Plans, structures, and strategies of investigation used to answer research questions, are known as research designs (Kerlinger, 1973). These set out the procedures for the development, modification or expansion of knowledge (Finestone & Kahn, 1975). Consequently, as already indicated, this study will be a cross-sectional study. The objective will be to propose insights, ideas, and questions which may be of some use in practice and may suggest avenues of further study. A significant portion of the study will be descriptive in nature. "The basic strategy of this design is to thoroughly describe a single unit during a
specific period in time." (Tripodi, 1985, p. 245) The unit to be described comprises adolescents in Windsor and Essex County who are leaving home, or have indicated that they wish to do so, with the knowledge and permission of their parents. The objective of describing this unit will be to answer the research questions set out above.

3.4. SAMPLING

The classification type for this study is non-probability sampling as set out by Seaburg (1985). In this procedure the probability of inclusion in the sample is unknown and different for each individual. In a hypothetical-developmental study one can have less than precise representation of the population.

The type of non-probability sampling to be used was purposive. In purposive sampling the social worker is assumed to have sufficient knowledge related to the field of study to ensure the selection of persons who are best suited to be part of the sample. With the background knowledge gained in education and experience in the area of study, the researcher anticipates being able to select the candidates who best fit the criteria to be included in the sample.

Thus the sampling plan appropriate to this type of study does not demand the same level of rigor as is required
in other methods. The researcher of a hypothetical-developmental design should be cognizant of the important relationship between the sampling done and the subsequent development of ideas for future studies (Tripodi, Fellin & Meyer, 1983). A sample drawn from a narrowly defined group, all within a similar social structure, and all facing a similar problem, may reasonably be expected to yield conclusions which will provide reliable leads or stepping-stones for later, more in-depth, research.

The sample for this survey was selected, with permission, from the files of the Adolescent Crisis Service of Windsor and Essex County. The sample consisted of adolescents aged 14 to 20, and their parents. There were in all, 37 parents (23 mothers, 14 fathers) and 26 adolescents. The adolescent or parent, or both, had been in contact with the Adolescent Crisis Service specifically in connection with the adolescent's wanting to leave home. Neither the adolescents nor the parents had had any other involvement with another social service. A further description of the selection process for the sample population will be found in chapter four.

"The population is the totality of persons, events, organizational units, case records, or other sampling units with which the research problem is concerned" (Seaburg,
1985, p. 133). The population for this study comprises adolescents who leave or wish to leave home with the knowledge and permission of their parents. Because the parameters of the population are unknown a non-probability sample is necessary.

The Adolescent Crisis Service is for all practical purposes one of two social service agencies in the Windsor and Essex County region which are best suited to deal with adolescents and their families in cases where the identified problem is the adolescent's wish to leave home. Because most of the population which uses a social service agency, comes to the Adolescent Crisis Service, this agency clearly provides the sample material most appropriate to this type of study.

There can always be some residual doubt about a sample's representativeness of the population. Though the significance of this may not be as great in the present type of study, it nevertheless cannot be ignored. If the sample is representative of the population from which it was drawn, the experiences, beliefs, changes, or whatever factors are observed for the sample can be assumed to be very similar for the entire population. (Slonim, 1960, p. 134)

A sample is representative of the population from which it is drawn to the extent that it contains the same distribution of variables of substantive concern to the study as does the population. (Seaburg, 1985, p. 133)
According to Seaburg it is rare for a sample to be drawn which perfectly represents the population. Though every effort was made to ensure the representativeness of the population selected for this study, no claim is made that perfection was reached.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT AND ANALYSIS

The basic collection instrument for data was a set of questionnaires addressed to adolescents and their parents. The adolescent was asked to respond to one questionnaire and the parent to another. The results of both completed questionnaires were then evaluated and analyzed. In an effort to ensure the highest possible rate of return, the questionnaires were hand-delivered and later picked-up. The sample size being limited, the return rate was a very important factor.

The advantages of using the questionnaire were:

1. Considerable savings in comparison to the higher costs of conducting interviews.
2. Considerable time saving, in comparison to the many hours involved in face-to-face interviewing and travel time.
3. Questionnaire completion at respondents' convenience.
4. Greater assurance of anonymity.
5. Standardized wording.
6. No interview bias.
7. Possibility of gathering relevant data from personal records or colleagues before answering items.
8. Respondents more accessible by mail than with face-to-face interviews. (Bailey, 1978, p. 276).
Assurance of anonymity was deemed extremely important to elicit both cooperation and accurate unbiased answers. In order to ensure such anonymity, each respondent was asked to place the completed questionnaire in a large envelope. In order, to make identification impossible, all envelopes were without mark of any sort. The questionnaires delivered to each family bore a number on each one, making possible the grouping of parents with their adolescents. This in turn made possible the analysis of data by families.

By undertaking the seemingly supererogatory task of collecting the data research personally, the researcher was rewarded through avoidance of some of the disadvantages stipulated by Bailey (1978). For instance a low response rate was avoided because all the questionnaires were picked up at a pre-arranged time. At any point, it could be easily determined which questionnaires had not been returned. Furthermore, this method gave the researcher some control over the time period which the respondents had to complete the questionnaire. One thing learned was that a researcher must be able to summon reserves of patience, understanding and flexibility--tempered always with some firmness--if returns are to be the most complete possible!

The questionnaire itself consisted of four parts. Parts A and B were each one-page questionnaires, the
questions prepared by the researcher, created to deal with (a) general information, and (b) the research questions one to five, as set out in Section 3.2. Part C consisted of an existing instrument designed by Millard J. Bienvenu, Sr. (1969) to measure communication between the parent and adolescent, entitled "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory". This Inventory contained a separate and different questionnaire for parents and adolescents. Each questionnaire consisted of 40 questions which could be answered yes, sometimes, or no. Since this test had been used by numerous researchers, its validity, and reliability had already been tested and were deemed to be sufficiently proven. The present study makes use of Bienvenu's "Inventory" in terms both of comparison of total scores, and of analysis of the implications of the responses given to individual questions by the sample population in the study.

Part D consisted of another existing instrument created by Walter Hudson (1982) entitled the "Index of Family Relations", which measures family relationships. In this questionnaire, the respondent answers by using a number from one to five. The numbers stand for: 1-rarely or none of the time; 2-a little of the time; 3-some of the time; 4-a good part of the time; and, 5-most or all of the time. Since this scale had been used by many researchers, its validity and reliability were high. The total amount of
time required to complete all four sections was approximately twenty to thirty minutes.

The question of validity and reliability of the scales that the researcher developed himself was considered with some care in advance of their use. Three measures were taken to help attain the needed control. The first was to consult with professionals knowledgeable in the field of adolescents. The second step was a pre-test on adolescents, which was conducted in a formal classroom setting. The final measure taken was to confer with the above-mentioned professionals about the results of the pre-test. These efforts were made in an attempt to ensure adequate content reliability and validity.

These painstaking exercises were needed in view of the demands placed upon anyone preparing a survey questionnaire. As with a computer so with a questionnaire: the information that comes out is only as good as the information that goes in.

The degree to which a measuring instrument is doing what it is supposed to do and the degree to which it is free from error is called measurement validity and reliability. If social workers do not know how valid and reliable their measures are, they can put little faith in the results they obtain and the conclusions they draw from those results. (Bostwick & Kyte, 1985, p. 161)

A valid measuring instrument has been described as doing what it is intended to do, as measuring what it is supposed to measure, and as
yielding scores whose differences reflect the true
differences of the variable being measured rather
than random or constant errors. (Anastasi, 1976,
p. 181)

Data are collected and analyzed by
quantitative and qualitative devices, and there is
a consideration of the extent to which conclusions
can be made regarding tentative answers to the
major questions of the investigation. (Tripodi et
al., 1963, p. 2)

From the data gathered in the questionnaire responses, it
was the task of the researcher to draw valid conclusions and
inferences consistent with the responses. In terms of the
four parts of the questionnaire, this task proceeded as
follows.

3.5.1. STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Part A was developed by the researcher to identify
socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The
parents and adolescents each were asked to respond to a
different set of questions. The objective of this
separation was to make possible obtaining a complete picture
of the family, leaving out no important details. Having all
respondents fill out Part A also helped in checking for
accurate information as it was possible to check responses
for their consistency.

Part B was a questionnaire also developed by the
researcher. It addressed the research questions: 1. Why do
adolescents want to leave the family home environment? 2. What occurrences in the family are precipitating, or have precipitated, the adolescent's wish to leave? 3. What are the families' major problem areas? 6. What social services does the adolescent need in order to make the transition? 7. Is the adolescent or family able to find the needed social services? The questionnaire developed for this section consisted of a selection of possible answers which relate to each question. The respondents were to select the responses which most accurately conveyed their position at the time the matter of possibly leaving home arose. Responses were ranked, and the mean, mode or median found for each question. From this set of data, inferences and conclusions were drawn.

Part C was the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" designed by Millard J. Bienvenu, Sr. in 1969. There was an "Inventory" to be completed by the parent and a different one to be completed by the adolescent. In this, forty statements are included, each with three possible responses: yes, sometimes, and no. Each response received a score of zero, one, or three with a favorable response given the higher score. This section dealt with research question 4: to what extent have the level of communication existing within the family, and the difficulties which may be impeding communication, been contributing factors to the
adolescent's wish to leave? The "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" measures the perceived communication between parent and adolescent. It is believed that communication failure is a major problem in families of today (Bienvenu, 1969).

Individuals are measured by the total communication score which they receive on the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory". The higher the score the higher the level of communication between parent and adolescent. After individual scores are tabulated, a mean family score is calculated to indicate the level of communication per family.

Part D consisted of the "Index of Family Relations" (IFR) developed by Walter Hudson (1982).

The IFR can be used as a measure of the familial environment of the client (a rough index of the quality of family life for, and as perceived by, the client), and it can be used in helping the client to deal with problems in relating to the family as a whole. (Hudson, 1982, p. 5)

For this study the IFR helps to identify the level of the relationships in the family which precipitated the adolescent's wish to move. This pertains to research question 5: to what extent has the level of relationship existing within the family, been a factor to the adolescent's wish to leave? To some extent, the Index was
used to infer backup confirmation of some observations already made with respect to communication.

The IFR is a structured 25-item scale in which the respondents had a choice of answers with corresponding numbers of one to five. Since some questions would indicate a negative family relationship, reverse scoring is completed for the required numbers. Hudson's method of scoring and interpreting the results were followed.

An important feature of the CMP (Clinical Measurement Package) scales is that each of them has the same clinical cutting score of 30. That is, if a person scores above 30 on any of the CMP scales it is almost always found that the person has a clinically significant problem in the area being measured while persons who score below 30 are generally found to be free of such problems. (Hudson, 1982, p. 22)

The "Index of Family Relations" (Hudson, 1982), uses a cutting score of 30 to determine whether there is a problem in family relationships. A score of 30 or under is said to be free of relationship problems, while a family with a score of more than 30 is said to have relationship problems. The higher the score the more severe the problem. Hudson cautions about interpreting scores which are on the borderline. He feels that before this can be assessed accurately, more information is needed. Hudson also cautions about examining answers to specific items on the scale. He says the scales were not designed for such uses, "and their use for such purpose must be avoided" (1982, p.
23). To the extent that individual responses on the "Index of Family Relations" were used in this study, they were used with restraint, and only to provide parallel support.

The data analysis was completed through the use of a computer program. The program was SPSS/PC+ 1988. This program was offered through the Computer Centre at the University of Windsor.

3.6. LIMITATIONS

"Potential limitations are often numerous in even the most carefully planned research study" (Fischer, 1981, p. 456). The limitation of validity and reliability were not a significant concern with two of the scales being utilized, provided they were administered with the required care. Both Hudson's IFR and Bienvenu's "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" had been tested with similar samples and had been proven to be reliable and valid. As indicated, the only real potential for question arose in relation to the scales developed for Part B. While pre-testing was undertaken in an effort to ensure content validity, nevertheless levels of validity and reliability have not been determined.

In a cross-sectional study the researcher is seeking to explore new areas. The sample for this type of study is not
generalizable to a larger population of adolescents and their families. However, it may be considered applicable to similar client groups which match the one used for the purpose of this study.

Other limitations to this study included the lack of the flexibility in question format which can often be attained in interviewing. The researcher had no opportunity to observe non-verbal behaviour, which under some circumstances, add to the findings of the study. In questionnaires of this type, the researcher has no control over the environment or over the conditions under which the respondents responded. There is no control over those questions which are left unanswered; and finally the respondents might not state what they truly believe but rather what they feel should be said (Epstein, 1985), though is not a characteristic of the questionnaire method only. These are limitations over which there is no control, but the researcher was aware of them and took them into account when reporting the findings.

Although the researcher was not able to control the environment in which the respondents chose to complete the questionnaire, suggestions were made during the initial telephone conversation. Furthermore, the questions left unanswered were left as missing figures in the analysis so a
number was arrived at exclusive of the missing data. Although this precaution was undertaken, questions left unanswered were very insignificant in number and meaning. These were some ways in which the researcher took the limitations in which he had no control into consideration.

3.7. SUMMARY

The objectives of social work are to help individuals, families, communities, and groups of persons who are socially disadvantaged and to contribute to the creation of conditions that will enhance social functioning and prevent breakdown. (Tripodi, Fellin, Meyer, 1983, p. 93)

Research will help social workers to achieve their objectives of helping people. This study seeks to answer questions about adolescents leaving their home environments with the knowledge and permission of their parents.

The classification of this study is hypothetical-cross-sectional. The research seeks to explore a social phenomenon which seems to be increasing in the Windsor and Essex County area. By systematically describing this phenomenon it is hoped that the profession will gain insights into this area and that concepts and ideas for further research will be generated.
Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter is a presentation of the data which were gathered from the responses to the questionnaires. The format of this chapter follows the format of the questionnaires.

4.1. POPULATION DESCRIPTION

The population was selected from the files of the Adolescent Crisis Service. After meetings with the Program Coordinator it was agreed upon that a third year social work student placed at the Adolescent Crisis Service would, as part of his requirements, sort through the files to find cases which he thought would fit the study. He was given a list of characteristics of the population sought. The 50 families first identified in this manner were then further screened by the researcher and the final population was determined. Of the 63 respondents to the questionnaire, 23 were mothers, 14 were fathers, and 26 were adolescents. Not all the mothers and fathers were parental matches; two sets of questionnaires were completed by two mothers only (the adolescents were unwilling to participate); one set of
questionnaires was from a mother and father (adolescents were unwilling to participate); six sets were from a mother and one adolescent; two sets were from a mother and two adolescents; eleven sets were from a mother, father and one adolescent; one set was from a mother, father, and three adolescents; and one set was from a father and two adolescents.

4.2. MOTHERS

The following is an analysis of Part A of the questionnaire as completed by the mothers. Of the total number of respondents, 23 were identified as mothers. Part A asked the respondent to identify herself/herself as mother or father and to provide information pertaining to age; marital status; length of marriage, separation or divorce; number and ages of children; occupation; and household income. Of the mothers, twenty-four (55.8%) were less than 30 years of age; ten (22.2%) were between 30 and 40 years of age; and five (11.4%) were female heads of households.

4.2.1. Age of Mothers

The age of the mother respondents ranged from 33 to 49 years, with a mean of 40 years and a mode of 35 years. Table 1 shows the distribution of the mother respondents' range of age.
Table 1

Mothers' Ages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2. Length of Present Marriage of Mothers

The length of the mothers' present marriages, as provided by the mothers, ranged from 2 years to 26 years. The mean was 15.4 years and the median 20.0. Table 2 shows the distribution of the length of the mothers' present marriages. There were nine mothers who left this blank so the researcher assumes nine mothers were not married at the time of the study.
Table 2

Length of Present Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Marriage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cum Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.3. Marital Status

The respondents were asked to indicate their marital status as single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, or common law. No respondents were single or widowed. The majority or 52.2% were married, followed by 21.7% divorced. There were 12.0% who were separated and 13.0% who were living common law. Table 3 shows a distribution of the marital status of the mothers.
Table 3

Marital Status of Mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common law</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.4. Length of Separation or Divorce of Mothers

Eight of the mothers responded that they were currently divorced or living common law. These eight mothers had a mean length of time of separation or divorce of 6.9 years and the range was from 1 year to 16 years. Two of the mothers were divorced for three years which was the most frequently occurring length of time. Table 4 shows the distribution of the length of time of the mothers’ separation or divorce at the time of the study.
Table 4

Length of Separation or Divorce of Mother

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.5. Number of Children

Table 5 presents the distribution of the number of children that each mother has. The range is from 1 to 5 children with 30.4% having 3 children. The mean is 2.87 children which is higher than the national average.

Table 5

Number of Children by Mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.6. Occupation of Mothers

There were six occupation categories from which the respondents could select; namely, professional, labourer, skilled tradesman; homemaker, unemployed or other. One of the 23 mother respondents did not answer this question. Of the 22 mothers who did, 73.7% or 16 worked out of the home. More mothers classified themselves as labourers than any other and the category of homemaker ranked second (see Table 6). One mother listed "other" and indicated that she was a student.

Table 6
Occupation of the Mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Valid Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.7. Household Income as Listed by Mother

Household income as reported by the mothers varied greatly from a low of $14,000 to high of $150,000 (see Table 7). Four mothers did not indicate an income, two of whom
wrote "confidential". The mean income was $47,421 and the median was $40,000.

Table 7

Household Income as Listed by Mother

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Valid Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 23 100.0 100.0

4.3. FATHERS

The following continues the analysis of Part A of the questionnaire as completed by the fathers. Of the total number of respondents, 14 were identified as fathers, of
whom 13 were married to or living common law with another respondent.

4.3.1. Age of Fathers

The age of the father respondents ranged from 36 to 56 years (see Table 8). This compares to the mothers' age range of 33 to 49 years. The mean age of the fathers was 42.8 years which was 2.8 years higher than the mean of the mothers. Table 8 displays the distribution of the ages of the father respondents.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.2. Length of Present Marriage of Fathers

The length of the fathers' present marriages ranged from 2 to 26 years, which was similar to that of the mothers. Even though the range was similar between fathers and mothers, the mean was 16.4 years for the fathers compared to 15.7 years for the mothers. This was attributable to the fact that one father completed the questionnaire and his wife did not. Table 9 presents the distribution of the length of the present marriage as reported by the fathers.

Table 9

Length of Present Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
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<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.3. Marital Status

Of the 14 fathers all were married or living common law. Twelve (85.7%) were married and two (14.3%) were living common law.

4.3.4. Length of Separation or Divorce of Fathers

Two of the fathers responded that they were separated or divorced, one for three years and the other for five years. Because all the fathers had indicated that they were currently married or living common law, the divorce or separation indicated by these two fathers must have occurred during a previous marriage.

4.3.5. Number of Children

Comparing the number of children as reported by the mothers (Table 5) to the number of children as reported by the fathers (Table 10) it can be seen that the range is the same; 1 to 5. However the percentages are different because of the smaller number of fathers than mothers. The most frequently occurring numbers of children for fathers are 2 and 3 compared to the mode of 3 for the mothers. Table 10 shows a distribution of the number of children as reported by the fathers.
Table 10

Number of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.6. Occupations of Fathers

Of the 14 fathers involved in the study, 12 (85.7%) were labourers, 1 was a professional, and 1 a skilled tradesman. This is shown in Table 11 which is the distribution of the occupations of the fathers.

Table 11

Distribution of Occupations of Fathers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Tradesman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.7. Household Incomes as Reported by Fathers

Table 12 shows a distribution of the household incomes as reported by fathers. It is evident that the incomes of the fathers are similar to the incomes of the mothers (see Table 7). Although they were similar there exists a difference in the means (fathers' mean income was $63,923, mothers' mean income was $47,421). This difference is explained by the fact that there were more mothers who completed the questionnaire than fathers and that two mothers did not complete this particular question.

Table 12
Household Income as Reported by the Father

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Valid Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>MISSING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4. THE ADOLESCENTS

Twenty six adolescents from 21 families completed the questionnaire. Some families had the experience of adolescents wishing to leave home with more than one offspring. If this was the case then more than one adolescent response per family was received.

4.4.1. Age of Adolescents

The adolescents who responded to the questionnaire had an age range of 14 to 20 years of age. It has already been stated that adolescence is between 13 and 19 years of age. However, because part of the sample dates back two years, a 20- and 19-year-old become acceptable since at the relevant time, they were in adolescence. As shown in Table 13 the mode is 15 years of age and the median is 16 years. Of the respondents 42.3% were either 15 or 16 years of age.
Table 13

Age Distribution of Adolescent Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2. Grade Level of Adolescents

Of the adolescents involved in this study 84.6% were in high school. One adolescent was attending university and currently enrolled in year 3. The remaining 11.5%, or 3 out of the total of 26, were no longer in school. The ages of those no longer in school were 18, 18, and 19 years, while the 20-year-old was the one attending university. Table 14 shows the distribution of the academic grade level of the adolescents at the time of the study.
Table 14

Grade Level of Adolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3. Sex of the Adolescents

Of the 26 adolescent respondents, 6 (23.1%) were male and 20 (76.9%) were female.

4.4.4. The Position of the Respondent in the Family

Respondents had four choices from which to indicate their position within the family: oldest, middle, youngest, or only child. Half of the respondents were in the category of oldest child, and the remainder decreased from there. Table 15 shows the distribution of each adolescent respondent's position in the family.
Table 15

Adolescent's Position in the Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oldest</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MISSING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.5. Living Arrangements of the Adolescents

Of the total of the adolescents 34.6% resided with a natural mother. This group was the mode. It was followed closely (30.7%) by adolescents who lived with both of their natural parents. The remaining 34.7% lived with a natural mother and step-father, natural father and step-mother, or other. The other was listed as Leone Residence, a girls' residence in the City of Windsor. This distribution is shown in Table 16.
Table 16
Living Arrangements of the Adolescents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living With</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Mother</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Parents</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural mother &amp; Step-father</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural father &amp; Step-mother</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5. QUESTIONNAIRE - PART B (Question 1 through 6)

The remainder of this chapter presents the responses to questions one through six of Part B. These questions were intended to elicit (a) the reasons why the adolescent wanted to leave the home, (b) the general relationships within the family, and (c) the social services which the respondents feel are necessary to assist an adolescent to become an independent individual. In general, the data are presented here with little analytical comment, the latter being the purpose of chapter five.

4.5.1. Reasons why the Adolescent Wanted to Leave the Home

According to the responses given by most mothers, the adolescent wanted to leave the home because of poor
relations with the parent(s). Of the mothers, 54.5% believed that parent-adolescent relations were the problem. Among the fathers, 35.7% felt this was the problem. The fathers’ predominant response (50%) was that the adolescent wished to leave because of a lack of freedom; in the case of the mothers, this ranked second (40.8%).

Interestingly, the adolescents’ responses were quite like those of the mothers. The adolescents (53.8%) felt that poor relations with the parent(s) constituted the main reason for their desire to leave the home followed by lack of freedom (38.5%). The responses of "wished to be on own" and "peer pressure" were very much less frequent. Table 17 shows the frequency and distribution of responses given by mothers, fathers, and adolescents.
Table 17

Reasons Why the Adolescent Wished to Move out of the Family Home as Perceived by the Mother, Father and Adolescent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Mothers (freq.)</th>
<th>Mothers (%)</th>
<th>Fathers (freq.)</th>
<th>Fathers (%)</th>
<th>Adolescents (freq.)</th>
<th>Adolescents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wasn't getting along with parents</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of freedom</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wished to be on own</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2. The Adolescent Argues with the Parent(s)

Of the four selections, namely, "frequently", "sometimes", "hardly at all", and "never", eleven of the mothers (47.8%), and seven of the fathers (50.0%) felt that the adolescent and parent argued "frequently". The adolescents were evenly split between "frequently" and "sometimes". Only one respondent, an adolescent, selected "never". Table 18 is a frequency distribution of the amount of arguing between the parent(s) and adolescent.
Table 18

Amount of Arguing Between Parent(s) and Adolescent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Arguing</th>
<th>Mothers (freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
<th>Fathers (freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
<th>Adolescents (freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly at all</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.3. The Quality of Parental Relationships

Four possible descriptions were available to describe parental relationships with one another: "never get along", "sometimes don't get along", "always get along", and "one-parent family". Of these, the most commonly selected was "sometimes don't get along"—mothers 47.8%, fathers 61.5%, adolescent 46.2%. Two adolescents felt that their parents "never get along" while three adolescents felt that their parents "always get along".

The parental relationship as seen by fathers was somewhat better than as seen by mothers. Among the fathers 38.5% believed that they "always get along", a view held by 17.4% of the mothers. Among the adolescents, 7.7% felt their parents "never get along" and 11.5% felt that they "always
get along". Table 19 sums up the distribution of these responses. An analysis of these results shows the

Table 19

The Quality of Parental Relationships in the Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mothers (freq.)</th>
<th>Mothers (%)</th>
<th>Fathers (freq.)</th>
<th>Fathers (%)</th>
<th>Adolescents (freq.)</th>
<th>Adolescents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never get along</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes don't get along</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always get along</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-parent family</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 MISS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.4. Major Problem Area in the Families

The majority of respondents perceived "communication" as the most prevalent problem in the home, selecting this above "finances", "marital problems" and "other". The second most frequent response was "other", selected by 26.1% of the mothers, 46.2% of the fathers, and 28.9% of the adolescents. Unfortunately, in view of the unexpected strength of the category "other", here exists one of the study's limitations. "Other" was left unexplored and must probably remain so until
further research can be completed. In the event, one is forced to assume that the first three categories cover the major relevant choices, though the tantalizing question of what reasons underlay the not-inconsiderable choice of "other" unfortunately must remain unanswered.

Finances and marital problems ranked very low as major problems. In fact, no respondent perceived marital problems to be a problem area in the family; and only 8.7% of mothers, 7.7% of fathers, and 15.4% of adolescents believed finances were a major problem area. Table 20 shows the frequency and distribution of the families' major problem areas.

Table 20

Families' Major Problem Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Area</th>
<th>Mothers (freq.)</th>
<th>Mothers (%)</th>
<th>Fathers (freq.)</th>
<th>Fathers (%)</th>
<th>Adolescents (freq.)</th>
<th>Adolescents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital problems</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.5. Social Services Required by an Adolescent out of the Home

The question of which social services would be required by an adolescent out of the home, especially as perceived by potential users and their families is important to the overall study. In order to help adolescents and their families, therapists must know what is available and what services families require. The choices from which the respondents could select encompassed most areas of social service currently available in Windsor and Essex County, namely, legal aid, welfare, job training, family counselling, group homes, crisis counselling, hostels, health counselling and "other". No respondents selected "hostels" and only one respondent, an adolescent, selected "health counselling".

Among mothers, job training (21.7%), and family counselling (21.7%) were seen as the most important services for an adolescent out of the home. These were followed closely by "crisis counselling" (17.4%) and "welfare" (17.4%) At the bottom of the scale were "group homes" (8.7%) and "other" (8.7%).

Fathers chose family counselling (35.7%) as the most important service needed by an adolescent out of the home. Second was "crisis counselling" (28.6%) and third, "job
"training" (21.4%). The choices of "legal aid" (4.1%) and "welfare" (4.1%) ranked low and no fathers selected "other".

The adolescents also believed that "family counselling" (30.8%) was the most needed social service required. Unlike the parents' responses, however, "welfare" (26.9%) ranked second and "crisis counselling" (3.8%) ranked very low.

Table 21 sets out the frequency of these responses.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Service</th>
<th>Mothers (freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
<th>Fathers (freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
<th>Adolescents (freq.)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal aid</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family counselling</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group homes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis counselling</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostels</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health counselling</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.6. Availability of Social Services

To assess whether the respondents found area social services adequate in a general sense, they were asked to choose among "never", "sometimes", "frequently", or "did not try".

"Sometimes" was the most common selection by mothers (43.5%) and by fathers (42.9%). And, although it did not rank first with the adolescents 30.4% of them also chose "sometimes".

Only a small percentage of the mothers (17.4%), fathers (7.1%), and adolescents (17.4%) indicated that they could never locate adequate help from the area's social services. A larger percentage of the mothers (26.1%), fathers (23.4%), and adolescents (17.4%) appeared satisfied at having located adequate help frequently. Table 22 shows the frequency and distribution of the answers.
Table 22

Adequateness of Social Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Mothers (freq.)</th>
<th>Mothers (%)</th>
<th>Fathers (freq.)</th>
<th>Fathers (%)</th>
<th>Adolescents (freq.)</th>
<th>Adolescents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not try</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6. THE "PARENT-adolescent communication inventory"

The "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" is a device for measuring family communication (Bienvenu, 1969). It comprises two sets of 40 questions, one to be answered by parents and the other by adolescents. For each question, one answer must be selected: yes, sometimes, no. These are "scored" out of a possible total of 120. The score of the Inventory reflects the level of parent-adolescent communication in the family. The higher the total score received by the respondent, the higher the level of parent-adolescent communication. In addition to providing a means of measuring communication in a given setting, the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" also provides the basis
for a better understanding of the ingredients that go to make up good communication in general.

The range of total scores for the mothers was between 48 and 102 with a mean of 77.174, or 84.3% of the possible score and a standard deviation of 15.590. The median was 81 out of 23 possible responses.

The fathers’ total scores ranged between 39 and 101. The mean was 72.357, or 60.3% of the possible score with a standard deviation of 18.492. The median was 71 out of 14 possible scores.

The adolescents’ scores ranged between 15 and 109. The mean was 63.192, or 52.7% of the possible score with a standard deviation of 21.561. Out of the 26 respondents the median was 81.0. Table 23 shows the total scores and frequency of scores of the mothers, fathers, and adolescents on the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory".
Table 23

"Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother Score (freq.)</th>
<th>Father Score (freq.)</th>
<th>Adolescent Score (freq.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48 1</td>
<td>39 1</td>
<td>15 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 1</td>
<td>52 1</td>
<td>27 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 1</td>
<td>55 1</td>
<td>41 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 1</td>
<td>57 1</td>
<td>45 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 1</td>
<td>62 1</td>
<td>50 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 1</td>
<td>65 1</td>
<td>51 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 1</td>
<td>69 1</td>
<td>54 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 1</td>
<td>73 1</td>
<td>55 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 2</td>
<td>79 1</td>
<td>60 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79 1</td>
<td>85 1</td>
<td>62 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81 2</td>
<td>88 1</td>
<td>63 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 1</td>
<td>93 1</td>
<td>68 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 1</td>
<td>95 1</td>
<td>72 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 2</td>
<td>101 1</td>
<td>76 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>77 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>81 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>83 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>85 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>86 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average parental score in each family is mostly consistent with that of the adolescents. Table 24 shows the family score of the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory". Table 24 also shows that the mean parental score of 75.229 or 82.7% is slightly higher than the mean family score of 70.946 or 59.1%. The mean family score has a standard deviation of 15.378.
Table 24

Family Scores on the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family ID</th>
<th>Mother Score</th>
<th>Father Score</th>
<th>Average Parental Score</th>
<th>Adolescent Score</th>
<th>Family Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>052</td>
<td>073</td>
<td>082.5</td>
<td>051</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>050</td>
<td>073</td>
<td>060.0</td>
<td>027</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>087</td>
<td>076</td>
<td>087.0</td>
<td>050</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>088</td>
<td>073</td>
<td>088.0</td>
<td>050</td>
<td>58.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>079</td>
<td>083</td>
<td>080.0</td>
<td>050</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>083</td>
<td>080.0</td>
<td>050</td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>083</td>
<td>089</td>
<td>083.5</td>
<td>055</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>063</td>
<td>089</td>
<td>063.0</td>
<td>060</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>055</td>
<td>083</td>
<td>065.0</td>
<td>065</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>093</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>097.0</td>
<td>054</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>007</td>
<td>070</td>
<td>070.0</td>
<td>054</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>048</td>
<td>039</td>
<td>043.5</td>
<td>015</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>083</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>083.5</td>
<td>091</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>086</td>
<td>057</td>
<td>071.5</td>
<td>077</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>093</td>
<td>083</td>
<td>093.0</td>
<td>081</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>074</td>
<td>065</td>
<td>069.5</td>
<td>081</td>
<td>69.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>074</td>
<td>093</td>
<td>063.5</td>
<td>055</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>102</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>088.5</td>
<td>081</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>081</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>081.0</td>
<td>091</td>
<td>88.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>072</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>072.0</td>
<td>041</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>085</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>070.0</td>
<td>076</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>079</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>079.0</td>
<td>083;109</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>081</td>
<td>095</td>
<td>081.0</td>
<td>054</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>086</td>
<td>052</td>
<td>069.0</td>
<td>072</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1,775 1,013 1,805.5 1,643 1,702.7

N = 23 14 24 26 24

Mean 77.174 72.357 75.229 63.192 70.946
4.7. **INDEX OF FAMILY RELATIONS**

The "Index of Family Relations" (Hudson, 1982) was used in the present study to determine whether a family was healthy or not. Hudson uses the cutting score of 30 to determine if there are problems in the family. Scores above 30 indicate a problem in family relationships, the higher the score the more severe the problem. Although the cutting score of 30 will be adhered to, the reader should keep in mind that in measuring problems within families there is no exact point which indicates with certainty that a family is not experiencing difficulties. This figure is more arbitrary than an exact finding; there are many exceptions.

The mothers' mean score was 28.087 with a standard deviation of 15.057 and a standard error of 3.140. The median was 25.0 with 14 of 23 or 60.87% of the mothers being at the cutting score of 30 or below. The scores ranged from 4 to 58.

The fathers' scores were very similar to those of the mothers. While the mothers' mean is 26.087 the fathers' is 23.843 with a standard deviation of 15.974 and a standard error of 4.269. The median is 20.5 with 9 of 14 or 64.286% of the fathers being below the cutting score of 30. The range of the fathers' scores was also similar to the mothers' scores with the lowest being 5 and the highest score 56. The
mothers and fathers view the family relationships as functioning in the same manner.

The difference between the adolescents and the parents' view of the family relationships is apparent when one discovers that the mean score of adolescents is 43.2 with a standard deviation of 25.367 and a standard error of 4.975. The median of the adolescents' scores was 40 with only 4 of the 26 adolescents or 26.9% being below the cutting score of 30. The range of scores was very large with the lowest score of 7 to the highest score of 106. Table 25 shows the frequency distribution of the scores of the mothers, fathers, and adolescents.
Table 25

Frequency Distribution of the Respondents' Scores on the Index of Family Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother Score (freq.)</th>
<th>Father Score (freq.)</th>
<th>Adolescent Score (freq.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 23 14 26
### Table 26

The Mean Scores of the Parents on the Index of Family Relations Compared to the Mean Score of the Adolescents in the Family Compared to the Mean Family Scores of the Inventory of Family Relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Parents Mean Score</th>
<th>Adolescents Mean Score</th>
<th>Family Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>68.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.0</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>40.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>106.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>36.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>17.0</td>
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<td>37.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Adolescents Total</th>
<th>Family Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>623.5</td>
<td>895.2</td>
<td>785.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32.729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26 shows that 62.5% of the mean parental scores are at or below the cutting score of 30 while only 28.6% of the mean adolescent scores are below the cutting score of 30.
This is compared to 45.8% of the mean family scores below the cutting score of 30.

4.8. SUMMARY

Chapter four has presented the statistical data which were gathered from the respondents who completed the questionnaires. Overall 63 questionnaires were completed. The identifying information, Part A, was presented in some detail to aid future researchers who might have occasion to add to the study, or to do studies involving similar populations.

Chapter four may be said to have presented the "facts" of the case, the lists, the tables and some of the statistical relationships based directly on the information gathered. Facts standing alone, of course, are barren. Only through interpretation can they acquire meaning and significance in the form of applicable conclusions, and of identification of issues for possible future research. In chapter five, the task of interpretation is undertaken.
Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has now reached the point where it becomes possible to suggest conclusions concerning the case of the preventable runaway. Some conclusions can be advanced with reasonable certitude, some on a tentative basis only. The questionnaire survey which has been described, and whose statistical results have been presented in chapter four, had in fact a dual objective. The sample population consisted exclusively of families in which an adolescent had discussed with his or her parents the adolescent's desire to leave home. A primary objective of the questionnaire, therefore, was to probe the circumstances of these family environments with a view to deducing the reasons for this desire to leave home. What gave rise to it? Did the pressures come from outside the home or from inside? What kind of relationships exist among family members? Through the gradual increase of understanding provided by such questions as these, it is felt that at least some of the intended runaways in future might be led to reconsider their decision, to the benefit of themselves and their families.
Throughout the analysis, emphasis has been placed upon the family as a holistic unit, in which the integrated family is seen as a reality independent of and greater than the sum of its parts. It is assumed that, if it is possible through professional intervention to avert the premature break-up of a family unit, then this should be done; and that consequently one task of the researcher is to try to add to the understanding of underlying causal pressures—in this case, those pertaining to the preventable or would-be runaway. As seen, the questionnaire consisted in part, of two measurement devices (the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" and the "Index of Family Relations"). An effort is made to integrate the results of these into the analysis (especially the communication inventory) insofar as they supplement the main body of the questionnaire with details on two of the central determining influences in such cases: family communication and family relationships.

Finally, if prevention ultimately proves unattainable or unfeasible in the case of a preventable runaway, a question arises as to the social services that would be required in the transition of the adolescent from dependent to independent status. A review of these constitutes a second objective of the current study, particularly from the point of view of how such agencies are perceived by the
adolescents and their parents. The framework of the analysis is provided by the seven research questions as previously set out in chapter three.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Table 1 to 16 in chapter four. The questionnaire reference is Part A for both parents and adolescents.

A survey of the demographic characteristics in the sample does not reveal any startling deviations from what might be considered a normal pattern for families. Age ranges of parents, the age differences between fathers and mothers, past experience in the form of previous marriages and divorces, adolescents' levels at school, carry no evident suggestion that these are families where running away might be a problem.

A preponderance pertaining to the sample is, however,

It would appear from Table 11 that a preponderance of the fathers in the sample were labourers, and frequently these indicated their wives were labourers as well. This doesn't reveal much, beyond the fact that families where the father (and mother) are labourers are certainly not immune from the problem. It could imply, of course—without certainty—that they are indeed more likely to experience
it. But the fact that professionals and skilled trades are represented as well, shows that this is not a problem confined to a particular type or level of occupation.

The same observation could be made of income levels. The sample clearly suggests that the runaway problem—at least that of the preventable runaway—is not clearly related to income levels of families. In the majority of families, both parents were working so that in the sample population, finances were adequate if not affluent. The mean family income was comfortably high; the majority of families had a well-provided way of life. Since both parents were working, the obvious question arises as to whether more and perhaps different problems exist between parent and adolescent when the parents are frequently out of the home and the adolescent is left unchaperoned for periods of time without a parent.

The preventable runaway in the sample is most frequently the eldest child in a family in which both parents work, and upon whom the parents place a great deal of responsibility for the care of younger siblings or other household duties. Moreover, because the child is the eldest or first born, the parents themselves are still learning by trial and error the skills of parenting. Only further studies could show whether the phenomenon will repeat itself
as the younger siblings reach the later stages of adolescence. For now, attention shifts to the conditions existing within the families themselves, with emphasis on those circumstances which may have contributed to the decision to leave the home.

5.2. WHY DO ADOLESCENTS WANT TO MOVE OUT OF THE FAMILY HOME ENVIRONMENT?

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Table 17, page 76. The questionnaire reference is to Question 1 Part B.

The motivation for an adolescent’s wanting to leave the family home must derive either from factors within the home itself, or from factors existing outside the home: a push from within, so to speak, or a pull from outside. Some combination of the two is, of course, possible. The results of the questionnaire seem to leave little doubt that it is the push from within that is the dominant reason. The pull from outside is negligible.

This conclusion rests on the frequency of the selection of (a) "wasn’t getting along with parents", and (b) "lack of freedom", as the reasons for the adolescent’s wish to move out of the family home. These two categories together
comprise an "incompatibility factor". Category (a) refers to the general level of perceived incompatibility between the adolescent and parents, which for both mothers (54.5%) and adolescents (53.8%), was the most frequently selected reason. Among fathers, the incompatibility factor was high (35.7%) but was exceeded by category (b), lack of freedom.

Lack of freedom, for an adolescent at home, is (and is seen to be) in direct proportion to parentally-imposed restrictions. For parents, who exercise their discretion in determining and imposing the restrictions, the resulting lack of freedom of the child directly affects, for good or for ill, the compatibility they perceive existing between themselves and their adolescent children. Restrictions which, to the parent, are clearly in the adolescent's own long-term interest, may be actively resented by the adolescent and seen as another indication that the parent simply cannot be "gotten along with".

Taking categories (a) and (b) together, therefore, as a measure of what the researcher has called a "compatibility factor", it is clear that this was seen by all three groups as the overwhelming reason for the decision to leave home: mother (95.4%); fathers (85.7%); and adolescents (92.3%). It might be argued, of course, that, to some respondents, "lack of freedom" could have suggested a desire to be free
of the restrictions of home, and would thus be "a pull from outside", and therefore should not be put forth as an internal compatibility factor. However, when viewed in combination with category (c), "wished to be on own", which category was virtually ignored by the respondents—only one father selecting it, and no mothers or adolescents—this argument loses almost all its force.

The fourth category—(d) "peer pressure"—evoking the "copy-cat syndrome"—was selected in so few cases as to suggest it plays little part in the decisions. To the researcher, having seen so many adolescents and their families coming to the Adolescent Crisis Service with the identified problem of wanting to leave the home, it had seemed natural to assume that peer pressure might play a significant role in the decisions. The responses clearly indicate otherwise.

The results of research question one, therefore, support a contention that the reasons for the intended runaway's decision to leave home should be looked for first in the conditions prevailing in the home environment itself. Thus the study now proceeds to look at some specifics of the kind of interaction existing within the intended runaway's family: first between the parents and the adolescents, and secondly between the parents themselves.
5.3. WHAT IS OCCURRING IN THE FAMILY WHICH PRECIPITATES THE ADOLESCENT'S WISH TO LEAVE HOME?

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Tables 18 and 19 pages 77 and 78. The questionnaire reference is to Question 2 and 3, Part B.

Question 2 of part B of the questionnaire reflects the researcher's view that the amount and the kind of arguing between parent(s) and adolescent is a reasonably reliable indicator of the existing potential for pressure on the adolescent. Of course, the mere fact of argument need not in itself imply a pressure build-up; argument is often only a spirited exchange of opinion, an amiable verbal jousting and, as such, it may provide a valuable release of pressures. Thus it is not only the amount but the kind of argument that counts. To gain some insight into this latter, the interpretation of the questionnaire is supplemented in this section through drawing upon some questions which related to argument, from the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" and one question in the "Index of Family Relations" to provide at least a subjective view of intensity of argumentations.

As for the amount of arguing, almost half of the sample chose the top category "frequently" in Table 18, which was
consistently the highest choice of all three groups. Adolescents seem to see arguments with their parents as a slightly more frequent occurrence than do their parents themselves. If the two high categories, "frequently" and "sometimes", are combined, they represent the opinion of 78.2% of the mothers, 78.6% of the fathers, and 84.6% of the adolescents. Interestingly, when these results are viewed against the answers to statement 9 on the "Index of Family Relations", more parents (62.1%) than adolescents (50%) feel that the family argues "too much . . . some, a good part, or most or all of the time". This seeming anomaly—in which the adolescents are more persuaded of the frequency of argument but less persuaded of its being "too much . . . of the time"—would probably not surprise most parents, who have been impressed by their child's seemingly infinite capacity to engage in argumentations long before adolescence.

As for the intensity of arguments in the family, some clues can be inferred from answers on the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory". In particular there is a strong (and disturbing) suggestion that many parents lack confidence both in their own ability to exert authority and also in the willingness of their adolescent children to accept it. As was clear from the literature review, this is a crucial point that every parent must ultimately confront.
The following examples are chosen from the Inventory because they pertain to situations where argument are most likely the principal ingredient:

2. Does your child wait until you are through talking before they have their say?

Parents reporting yes: 30.3%
Parents reporting sometimes: 10.2%
Parents reporting no: 59.5%

26. When a difference arises are you and your child able to discuss it together (in a calm manner)?

Parents reporting yes: 24.3%
Parents reporting sometimes: 29.7%
Parents reporting no: 45.9%

37. Does your child really try to see your side of things?

Parents reporting yes: 13.5%
Parents reporting sometimes: 48.6%
Parents reporting no: 37.6%

39. Does your child accept your reasons for decisions you make concerning them?

Parents reporting yes: 10.8%
Parents reporting sometimes: 54.1%
Parents reporting no: 35.1%

Summing up, 60% of the parent group do not feel their adolescents are listening to them, 46% feel they cannot discuss differences in a calm manner, and more than a third feel the child will neither try to see nor accept the parent's decisions. On their side, the adolescents do not see themselves under the same degree of pressure as the parents. In answering statement 2 above, for example,
adolescents split at approximately one-third for each answer. When asked if mothers "really try to see your side", adolescents replied yes (42.3%), sometimes (30.8%), and no (28.9%). When asked if they hesitate to disagree with either of their parents, only 11% of adolescent replied yes, and 62% replied no. Clearly, parental authority is not strong throughout the sample, though it is not certain that parents fully perceive this, as will presently be seen.

Leaving the question of arguments within the family for now, the study briefly examines the parental dyad. The relevant data are to be found in Table 19. If the data in that table are adjusted to integrate the mothers who are part of one-parent families, the result would be that mothers and fathers view the dyad approximately the same, slightly less than two-thirds selecting "sometimes don't get along" and more than a third "always get along". The "never get along" category is negligible, and the picture is thus of a parental group which, in total, enjoys a normal internal relationship.

In their manner, in their experience of one another, the parents of these adolescents point.

The foregoing reveals nothing that constitutes the push from within which was earlier said to have led to the adolescents' desire to leave home. What appears to be going on in these families is consistent with a healthy family atmosphere. There has been no evidence of seriously
impaired functioning or relationships, either between adolescents and parents or between the parents themselves. All are growing and changing at this stage of the family's development, and differences of opinion are a sign that each is developing an individual identity. Even the suggestion of weakened parental authority should not in itself give rise to foreboding because that too is part of the process, provided parents are aware of it and are attempting to compensate appropriately.

At this point, a brief digression might suggest a direction for later study. One potentially important implication does emerge from the foregoing discussion of arguing between parent and adolescent. There it was pointed out, in inferences drawn from questionnaire responses, that many parents lack confidence both in their own authority and in their children's acceptance of it. Though by no means a sole causative factor, this could contribute to leaving-home decisions in subtle ways yet to be fully explored. This researcher has discovered, for example, in many experiences with would-be runaways, that many of these adolescents want their parent(s) to take charge and tell them what they must do. But frequently in these situations, the parents will not take control. As the questionnaire reveals, many are likely to hide under a blanket of seeming self-pity, convinced that their child will not listen, will not discuss
problems calmly, and will not try to see the parent's side. These parents seem to find it very difficult to set rules for their children to follow. They want to be friends first and parents second. What they do not realize is that both can be accomplished at the same time with better results.

Despite the usual protests one hears from them, many adolescents do not really want all the freedom their parents give them. On occasion, adolescents will jolt the parents with the threat of leaving home in hopes that the parents will take control and make them stay home. After all, as has been repeatedly pointed out in the literature, adolescence is a period of upheaval, and the family is the most crucial source of stability for the adolescent. It is extremely unlikely that this fact is not perceived, even intuitively, by most adolescents today. Often all it requires is that the parents communicate to the adolescent their true feelings, saying no you cannot leave, and only, of course, if these are their true feelings. Many parents are afraid to do this; they are afraid of driving their adolescent children away, not realizing that that is in fact what they are doing.

Returning now to the main argument, the objective is still to shed light on what reason within the family led to the adolescent's wishing to leave the family environment.
Next, therefore is an examination of question 3 of the research questions: What are the families' main problem areas?

The main perceived source of family problems in the sample group is that of communication: it was selected by 65.2% of mothers, 46.2% of fathers, and 57.7% of adolescents. Finances and marital problems proved to be insignificant choices. The spontaneous selection of "communication" by each of the three groups in the sample is interesting, particularly in light of the earlier review of the literature where it was seen that communication plays an overwhelmingly important part in the development of the family with adolescent members. A breakdown of communication can lead to conflict which in turn can produce the symptoms of a power struggle between parent and adolescent, leading finally to an intolerable situation for the adolescent in which the alternative of leaving home becomes attractive.

5.4. WHAT ARE THE FAMILIES MAIN PROBLEM AREAS?

The data pertinent to this section are to found in Table 20, page 79. The questionnaire reference is to Question 4, Part B.
Having seen communication selected as the major problem within the families, it now becomes desirable to determine the level of communication in the family and to see what kind of communication difficulties the families are experiencing. To do this an examination of responses to the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" is necessary.

5.5. To what extent have the level of communication existing within the family, and the difficulties which may be impeding communication, been contributing factors to the adolescent's wish to leave?

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Tables 23 and 24, pages 85 and 86. The questionnaire reference is Part C.

The mean adolescent score on the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" is lower than the mean adolescent score supplied by Bienvenu (1969) for comparison purposes. The mean score calculated by Bienvenu for 1556 high school students was 78.80 with a standard deviation of 21.65 points, while in the present study had the mean communication score with the adolescent was 64.77 with a standard deviation of 21.56. Although the means vary by 14.03 the standard deviations are almost identical. The lower mean score apparently reflects the fact that the
population of the present study was confined exclusively to situations involving would-be runaways. They were picked for the study because they were experiencing difficulty. Bienvenu's population, on the other hand, was randomly picked and many of course would not have similar problems and their scores would be predictably higher.

Bienvenu (1969) has not supplied comparison figures for the parents' group. The total parent mean communication score for this study was 75.35 with a standard deviation of 16.66. In keeping with findings which will shortly be outlined, the adolescents' communication scores in individual family units were consistently lower than the parental communication scores. This appears to be because adolescents see communication as a greater problem than do the parents. Moreover, to admit to a problem in the family might be seen by many parents as admitting failure. The parents are the ones who have molded and shaped the family. They are the leaders, for them to recognize a severe problem would be to recognize a failure personally for themselves. However that may be, a palpable gap does exist, not only in the communication itself, but in the perception of it by parents on their side and adolescents on theirs.
5.5.1. THE ADOLESCENTS’ VIEW OF COMMUNICATION AS SEEN IN THE PARENT-adolescent COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

As part of the adolescent’s form of the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" there were nine open-ended statements concerning family life which the adolescent was asked to complete. Though these give no firm statistical basis for conclusions, they do provide strong qualitative evidence. Overall, the completed sentences revealed no single consistent view held by adolescents but rather mixed views of negative and positive feelings about the family's communications. Some comments reflected the conditions of healthy families and some those of dysfunctional families--families experiencing difficulty navigating through the life stage of adolescence. For example, to the uncompleted statement "At home I feel _________", many adolescents added "great", "loved", "comfortable", or "safe and secure"; but many also felt "unwanted", "neglected", "lonely" or "like a criminal". To the statement "My family _________", most of the adolescents revealed that they felt very good about their families, although a small minority had negative feelings such as "My family sucks", "should be closer", "doesn't trust me", or "is not".

Interpretation of open-ended responses must be subjective at best. Reviewing all of the completed
statements, it is the researcher's judgment in this case that adolescents in the sample were placing upon themselves a portion of the responsibility for the problems the family is experiencing. They feel that if they change some patterns of behaviour or communication, the family situation will improve. For instance, in completing the statement "It would probably help matters at home if I ________", the adolescents placed upon themselves the onus of change by using phrases such as "tried to understand a little more", "would agree more", and "controlled my anger and learned to accept things".

In addition, the adolescents all wanted things changed in their lives. They completed the sentence "If I could change two things in my life they would be _________", "to have never run away", "to have more money", "to have everyone getting along", "to have a mother that didn't work so much", "to have more communication", and "to get along with my brothers and sisters". Overall, their statements were responsible and considered, further evidence of the importance that their wished-for changes might play in their lives and personal growth process.
5.5.1. THE PARENTS' VIEW OF COMMUNICATION AS SEEN IN THE "PARENT-ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION INVENTORY"

As was pointed out in chapter two, there has as yet been little research on parent-adolescent communication and its relationship to family functioning. Nevertheless, some conclusions are fairly well established. There seems little disagreement, for example, that during the adolescent years the level of communication within the family unit will be under shifting and unpredictable pressures; and that, in most cases, if this level of communication is to be prevented from falling to the point where damage can start occurring, positive action within the family is required. Coping mechanisms of various sorts must be used, amounting to no less than an unremitting rear-guard action aimed at shoring-up the family's defenses against the things that threaten communication.

It can therefore be taken as a healthy sign that the families in the sample group identified communication as the major problem facing them. Recognition of the problem by parents was further confirmed in the supplementary questions to them on the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory". These questions were directed at the "generation gap" which was immediately defined as "breakdown in communication". In the sample, 62% of parents identified this gap between themselves and their "child" as either moderate or large. A
negligible 2.7% found no gap at all. Further, all indicated their conviction that the gap (breakdown in communication) is universal among families, and three-fifths of the participants see it as a growing phenomenon.

There seems thus to be full recognition by parents that communication breakdown is an issue to be faced—or, more positively, that healthy communication within families is a condition to be actively promoted. As often in social issues, however, the objective may be clear without any clear indication of the means to attain it. Examination of the responses of parents to the questions of the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory", raises even further questions of whether the communication problem though recognized, is being effectively coped with. Are the members of the family only partially aware of the extent to which communications may have already broken down? Might it be that the parents in particular, though they sense some deterioration in communication, have an exaggerated notion of how effectively their chosen "coping mechanisms" are working? As the review of some key responses proceeds, it should be kept in mind that the sample is composed exclusively of families that have already experienced a problem, if not of an actual runaway, at least of an intended and possibly preventable one.
Some of the responses in the Inventory suggest that parents may indeed have an exaggerated notion of the effectiveness of their efforts to cope with communication problems. Some two-thirds of parents, for example, indicated that family conversation is "easy and pleasant at meals" but only 39% of their adolescent children shared their view. To the question, "Does your family have good times?" 70.3% of parents said yes; 50% of adolescent said yes. One question asked both parents and adolescents whether the parent tries "to make your child feel better when he/she is 'down in the dumps'". Parents responded with an exuberant 76% yes response, a sharp contrast to the 23% yes response from adolescents. To this same question 8% of parents answered no, as compared to 31% of adolescents. A similar disparity of opinion (or of perception) appeared even over asking for the adolescent's opinion on the matter of spending-money. Here the responses were in almost reverse order, the weight of parents' answers averring that they do ask the child's opinion, and those of the child that they do not.

The picture which unfolds is that of families that have a potentially serious communication problem, which is clearly recognized by the parents, who resort to what they consider coping mechanisms, but who fail to appreciate the
extent to which these mechanisms are falling significantly short of doing what they are intended to do.

Surveying the "inventory" responses yields further insights into the nature of the communication problem itself. Discussion of personal problems is surely a major channel of family communication. On the vital question, "Does your child discuss personal problems with you?" almost three-quarters of the mothers and half of the fathers felt their child does discuss personal problems with them. On their side, however, significant numbers of adolescents stated they do not discuss their personal problems with either parent, the number who said "no" in the case of their mothers being 50% and the fathers 65%. The possibility of different perceptions looms large.

Two other questions at the heart of communication: (1) "Does your family talk things over with each other?" To this, 60% of parents responded yes compared to 31% of adolescents. Only 8% of parents replied no, compared to 31% of adolescents. (2) "Do you find it hard to say what you feel when talking with your child?" The same question, worded appropriately was put to adolescents. Only 8% of parents found any such difficulty, compared to 50% of adolescents. Conversely, 78.4% of parents found no difficulty telling their feelings to their children, while
only 23.1% of children felt similarly easy revealing their feelings to parents. Other studies have shown that boys are particularly slow to open up to the point of expressing their feelings.

There seems little doubt that these findings reveal the existence of real communication problems, compounded by the fact that parents either are partly unaware of their existence or are unduly optimistic about the competence of their particular coping mechanisms. But what of the adolescents? Do they not bear some of the responsibility for poor communications? Earlier, reasons given by adolescents for their desire to leave home had to do mainly with the situation within the family, rather than the pull from outside. Furthermore, for the average adolescent in a reasonably healthy family, neither peer pressure nor the vision of freedom on one’s own is usually enough to outweigh the security offered by the family during the adolescent years. This being so, a reasonable person could expect to see some kind of positive contribution coming from the adolescent to increase and maintain communication, the moreso since, as suggested above, the adolescents tend to place upon themselves some of the responsibility for the family’s problems.

The results show that positive contributions from the adolescents are by no means universal. A key question put to both parents and adolescents asked each whether the
adolescents help parents understand them by saying how they think and feel. On neither side does the response suggest more than a token effort on the part of the adolescents to do this. Just under a third of both parents and adolescents state that such help is not offered. An equally unimpressive contribution from the adolescents is seen in the question to parents "Do your children show interest in your interests and activities?" to which slightly more than a third responded yes and 30% no.

While no one could reasonably expect from adolescents the same awareness of communication problems and coping mechanisms as from their parents, the fact that there is seemingly so little such awareness in a sample group whose common denominator is would-be runaways does seem to be worth noting. There are, of course, many gray areas, as in the question to parents "Do you pay compliments and say nice things to your child?" (presumably meant to reveal a coping mechanism at work). Here, the responses from parents were quite strongly positive. When the same question, whether parents pay compliments, was put to adolescents, the responses were decidedly tepid. It is possible that some of the compliments were so fulsome as to be deservedly dismissed. That is to say, no smart adolescent is likely to be moved by superlatives which he knows full well are not deserved. Another possibility, not much discussed or
understood, is that some adolescents may see "compliments" which are meant to patch up poor communication, in the nature of intrusions, and thus not welcome.

To summarize this survey of the results of the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory":

1. Parents in this sample group recognize that lack of communication with their adolescent children is an important family problem. There is evidence that the family has met a need for parents to communicate with their children.

2. Parents, however, do not appear to appreciate the true nature and extent of the problem. They have a very imperfect perception of the extent of the alienation of both their adolescent children which has already resulted from the partial breakdown of communication.

3. As for coping mechanisms to which they might resort to remedy the problem, the parents either do not know what remedies to try, or lack the skills to be able to try them effectively. To complicate matters, many parents probably do not recognize their own deficiency in this respect, and thus instead of alleviating the problem, may unwittingly be making it worse.
4. On their part, the adolescents in the sample show little indication of a disposition to "meet their parents half-way" on the communication problem. In some families, it may be only the confrontation with the actual possibility of leaving home that could change the adolescent's disposition in this respect.

Now that the matter of communication has been explored this study now turns to the determination of what extent the level of relationship existing within the family has been a contributing factor to the adolescent's wish to leave the home.

5.6. TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE LEVEL OF RELATIONSHIP EXISTING WITHIN THE FAMILY BEEN A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THE ADOLESCENT'S WISH TO LEAVE?

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Tables 25 and 26, pages 89 and 90. The questionnaire reference is to Part D.

The "Index of Family Relations" was designed "to measure the degree, severity, or magnitude of a problem that family members have in their relationships with one another" (Hudson, 1982, p. 5). The "Index of Family Relations" can
also be used to measure family environment and the quality of life of an individual. With their parents, the Index is used here not only to measure the family relations but also to determine whether the family is healthy or dysfunctional. From the results of the Index (Table 26) almost two-thirds of the parents score below the cutting score of 30, identifying them as healthy families and free of relationship problems. The adolescents, on the other hand, perceive the family relationships differently. Like the adolescent scores of the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory" in which the majority were opposite to those of the parental scores, similarly, the adolescent scores on the "Index of Family Relations" are, in virtually every case, notably opposite those of the parents. Where the parent seems typically disposed to regard the family as healthy, the adolescent regards it as dysfunctional—only one-quarter perceived their family as healthy.

From an examination of the scores on the Index a number of conclusions can be drawn which are consistent with and reinforce those reached by the "Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory". Primarily, parents perceive the family relationships in a different and brighter light than
do the adolescents. Furthermore, in cases where the parents and the adolescents agree upon their scores, the family situation is likely to be healthy: when the scores of the parents were similar to those of the adolescents, the family score was usually below the cutting score of 30.

As stated earlier, adolescence is a period of turmoil for the entire family. The families sampled have had difficulty in this stage of life but the majority have coped and handled the problem in a manner characteristic of a healthy family. These coping mechanisms and the manner in which the problems are handled can make the difference which distinguishes the healthy family from the dysfunctional. A healthy family uses the help offered whereas a dysfunctional one sets up roadblocks for therapists and makes no constructive use of the available guidance.

In summary, it has been found by the completion of the "Index of Family Relations" that families with the identified problem of an adolescent wanting to leave the home, or the would-be runaway, can be from both healthy or dysfunctional families.
5.7. **WHAT SOCIAL SERVICES DOES THE ADOLESCENT REQUIRE IN ORDER TO MAKE THE TRANSITION?**

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Table 21, page 81. The questionnaire reference is to Question 5, Part B.

This question was intended to determine the social services which, in the adolescent's mind, are the most relevant to making the transition to independence. Yet there seems something almost anomalous here. After examining the responses to this research question, to which most of the adolescents responded that they felt the need for counselling, one wonders at their intent to leave the home as the options of welfare and job training ranked very low in selection. It was evident that the results were simply further confirmation of what has been suggested earlier—that the adolescent sample did not really want to make the transition to living autonomously or independently rather they wanted to attempt to make their home situation more tolerable.

Perhaps it was more their intention to gain the attention of the parents rather than to be on their own. By discussing their desire to leave home with the parent, the adolescent is letting out a cry for help—counselling to be
exact. This element is crucial to the study of the preventable runaway. If caught early through family communication patterns, the problem may be effectively resolved and the family can continue to move in a forward motion through the stage of adolescence.

The focus of the study now changes to the exploration of whether those that use the social services in Windsor and Essex County are able to find the needed resources.

5.8. IS THE ADOLESCENT OR FAMILY ABLE TO FIND THE NEEDED SERVICE?

The data pertinent to this section are to be found in Table 22, page 83. The questionnaire reference is to Question 6, Part B.

The availability of social services to adolescents and their families in the Windsor area are adequate. The adolescent population is one whose needs change quickly, because they themselves are growing and changing rapidly. Most respondents felt that they were able to find the social services sometimes or frequently. There is, however, a discrepancy in the data. Although the sample was derived from the files of the Adolescent Crisis Service, part of the sample selected "did not try" or "never". It can be assumed
that because part of the sample involved were family members of would-be runaways, that particular individual had never sought out a social service for help.

What needs to be addressed is the type of social service agencies needed for the adolescent population, and whether those services are available. It is obvious from this study that the primary social service required is that of counselling. In the Windsor and Essex County area this service is met by a number of agencies both public and private. However, a definite void is seen in the availability of lodging for the adolescent runaway population. If one is an abused woman, an addict or alcoholic, or even a stray animal there are a number of places available for temporary lodging and assistance. However, an adolescent, especially an adolescent male, has virtually no place other than the streets to go. This is a perplexing question because female adolescents have a number of options. There is definitely a void in services available to adolescent males in Windsor and Essex County.

After a thorough examination of the results, a presentation of conclusions, recommendations and issues for further research is necessary.
5.8. **CONCLUSIONS**

The following are the principal conclusions which emerge from the study of the sample of families which had encountered problems of the preventable runaway.

1. The preventable runaway is a phenomenon that can occur in either healthy or dysfunctional families. It seems likely to be found relatively more often in healthy families, simply because the pressure and provocation on the adolescent to move out of such a family is of a lower intensity. To illustrate, the pressure on an adolescent to run away, without discussion or consultation with anyone, is bound to be higher in the case of an adolescent living with a drunken abusive parent then in the case of an adolescent living in a family whose only dysfunction exists for example, of poor communications. The findings in this study suggest that it is not a characteristic of any particular occupational or income group.

2. The profile of the preventable runaway is that of an adolescent, 14 to 17 years of age, from a family which is currently experiencing difficulty moving forward through the life stage of adolescence. The family, although experiencing difficulty, is perceived by the parents as being relatively healthy. Moreover, the adolescents want to maintain and keep intact their family bonds. Their desire
to leave home is a cry for help from a situation which the adolescent finds stressful and anxiety provoking.

3. The impetus for the decision for the adolescent to leave home, in the preventable-runaway sample used in the study, is rooted inside the family, not outside. Peer pressure, and the desire to be on one's own, played a negligible part in the final decision.

4. Indications were seen in the sample that many parents lack confidence in their ability to exert the authority appropriate to their role. Though the point was not pursued, it was implied that this could have at least an indirect bearing on the runaway decision in some cases, notably in cases where the adolescent does not want all the freedom their parents give them. This could be a subject of further study.

5. Communication emerged as the major problem in the sample families. Not surprisingly, there are some basic differences between the perceptions of communication and their role as seen by adolescents and by their parents. This difference in perception can exert a negative influence on the effectiveness of any coping mechanisms which parents may attempt to use to shore-up sagging communication levels. More important, there is a strong tendency for parents,
particularly among fathers, while recognizing the existence of communication problems, to underestimate their potentially erosive effect on family cohesion, and conversely to overestimate the effectiveness of their own efforts to cope with communication problems. This, combined with the adolescents' tendency to attach a greater importance to communications, can produce a dangerous situation in which a potentially remediable problem can escalate into a seeming conflict.

6. On the adolescent's side, conflicting forces are encountered. This is not surprising, considering the exceedingly stressful developmental period the adolescent is in. On the one hand, feelings of responsibility for the problems were felt, yet these did not translate themselves into positive efforts to cope, to meet the parents half-way. The fact seems inescapable that the adolescent cannot be relied upon to show initiative where communications are breaking down. At their particular stage, where virtually all of life and experience lies ahead of them, nothing seems certain, nothing stable. Thus the ambivalence observed is both natural and expected.

7. The principal onus has to rest on the parents to make communication work. The objective of this study has not been to provide a prescription for parents to do this.
The main point here is that in the sample of the preventable runaway families studied, the strongest indication was that communication was not effective, that parents recognized this, and that they were failing to take effective steps.

5.10. RECOMMENDATIONS

After exploring this phenomenon of the preventable runaway, it is only appropriate to conclude with recommendations derived from the study’s findings and conclusions. The parents must bear the most responsibility for change within the family. It is through their change, guidance and realization that there is a problem, that the turmoil of adolescence will be lessened for the adolescents, thereby allowing the family to move smoothly through the turbulent waters of this life cycle stage.

The available parenting programs, such as STEP/Teen, which are designed to improve communication between parent and adolescent, are excellent means of combating and dealing with communication and conflictual problems within families. These programs, however, are not widely offered, have a cost involved, or simply do not reach the intended population. This researcher suggests that the parenting programs be offered not only through government or private agencies but also through the educational systems. Teachers most often are the first to recognize a student in distress. Through
their identification, an adolescent and parent may be led to the appropriate services. The convenience of a parenting program through the school, be it by school social workers or guidance counsellors, would greatly eliminate the stigma attached to attending a social service agency allowing for a wider and otherwise neglected population to be assisted.

...and concluded in a healthy family...

Although social agencies in the area provide adequate counselling services there is an obvious void in other resources for an adolescent out of the home. The question of lodging is all but ignored for an adolescent male, and an adolescent female fairs not much better—waiting lists are lengthy for admittance to a home for girls. Society has made it extremely difficult for the adolescent to leave home. Unless the adolescent is an addict, alcoholic or abused he or she is virtually ignored, left to fend for themselves on the street or forced to exist in an intolerable home environment. No problem however insignificant, trivial, shallow or unimportant should be ignored if it is perceived by the adolescent as significant.

5.11. ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While examining the data which this study has presented, a number of new questions have arisen. For this reason and to further enhance the research completed in this study, it is imperative that areas for additional research
be set out. It has been shown that the propelling force for an adolescent to leave the family home environment is a push from within the home. It is evident that a study of the causes of conflict would be beneficial to the parent-adolescent population. Secondly, a further exploration of those areas of communication in which conflict is likely between parent and adolescent in a healthy family, is required to add to the very limited research in this area.

In addition, research is also required to study the needs of the ever changing adolescent population. Social services for the adolescent are lacking and at times outdated. What was required five years ago by an adolescent is not necessarily required now or in some instances is required to a greater extent than what is currently available. A study of these issues would enhance the knowledge base of all practitioners dealing with adolescent problems.

In conclusion, any further research in the realm of parent-adolescent communication can only serve to increase the knowledge, understanding and effectiveness of treatment of the preventable runaway.
APPENDIX A

The text on the page is not fully visible or legible. It appears to be a continuation of the previous page.
Dear Respondent:

Thanks very much for being willing to participate in the important research survey which we discussed on the telephone. As promised I am enclosing the questionnaires and am asking that you complete them.

I want to assure you again of the complete confidentiality of this survey. There is no identifying information requested of you. The information you give, and even the fact that you took part in the survey, will be kept in the strictest confidence.

As I stated on the telephone, I am a Master's student in Social Work at the University of Windsor. I have worked as a social worker with the Adolescent Crisis Service for the past 18 months. The research I am doing is for my Master's thesis, on adolescents out of the home. With the permission of the Service, I selected your name as part of the survey, because I believe you can provide very helpful information. When all the information is put together, it well greatly increase our understanding of the problem from both the parents' and the adolescents' point of view.

Please note that at the top of each questionnaire, there is the word "Adolescent" or "Parent". The questionnaire marked Adolescent is to be completed by the adolescent and the one marked Parent is to be completed by the parent(s). Please answer each question without leaving any blanks.

If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me through the Adolescent Crisis Service. Thanks again for your participation and for the time you devote to this.

Yours sincerely,

Leonard Kander
PART A: General Information--Parent(s)

Instructions: This form is to be completed by each parent

1. Please circle whether you are the mother, or the father of the teenage son or daughter on whom this study is being made.

   mother       father

2. Your age: __________

3. Length of present marriage: __________

4. Marital status (check one)
   single ____ married ____ separated ____
   divorced ____ widowed ____ common law ____

   If separated or divorced, how long has it been? ______

5. Your children: ages of boys ________________
                     ages of girls ________________

6. Your occupation: __________________________

7. Approximate household income: ______________
Part B:

Circle one: Mother Father Adolescent

Instructions: Please circle only one response per question.

1. The adolescent wished to move out of the family home because
   a) wasn’t getting along with parent(s)
   b) lack of freedom
   c) wished to be on own
   d) peer pressure

2. The adolescent argues with the parent(s)
   a) frequently
   b) sometimes
   c) hardly at all
   d) never

3. The parents or adults in the home
   a) never get along
   b) sometimes don’t get along
   c) always get along
   d) one parent family

4. Our family’s major problem involves
   a) finances
   b) communication
   c) marital problems
   d) other

5. Circle the social service which an adolescent out of the home would require the most.
   a) legal aid
   b) welfare
   c) job training
   d) family counselling
   e) group homes
   f) crisis counselling
   g) hostels
   h) health counselling
   i) other

6. We were able to find adequate help from the communities social services.
   a) never
   b) sometimes
   c) frequently
   d) did not try
FORM P
PARENT-adolescent Communication Inventory

Developed by
MILLARD J. BIENVENU, SR.  1979 Revision

This questionnaire is to better understand how you and your children talk and communicate so we can better understand the good points in your relationship and also where you may be having problems. You'll find it both interesting and helpful to make this study.

DIRECTIONS

1. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers to it. The most helpful answer to each question is your indication of the way you feel at the moment.

2. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. We want you to be as frank as possible. You cannot receive a grade because all of the answers are considered right answers for you.

3. Please answer each question without taking too much time. Answer each question according to the way you feel right now, not the way you usually feel or may have felt last week.

4. Use the following examples for practice. Put a check (✓) in one of the three blanks on the right to show how the question applies to you and to your ways of communicating with your children.

   Yes
   Some-
   Times
   No

   Usually
   Seldom

Do your children listen to your side of things? [ ]

Do you let your children know when you are worried about something? [ ]

5. "The YES column is to be used when the question can be answered as happening most of the time or usually. The NO column is to be used when the question can be answered as seldom or never. The SOMETIMES column should be marked when you cannot answer YES or NO. USE THIS COLUMN AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE." Most parents are able to give a yes or no answer to these questions.

6. Read each question carefully and mark your personal answer to it. Be sure to answer every question.

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Published by: FAMILY LIFE
PUBLICATIONS, INC. Box 427
Saluda, N.C. 28773
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<td>26. When a difference arises are you and your child able to discuss it together (in a calm manner)?</td>
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<td>29. Does your spouse really try to see your child's side of things?</td>
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<td>30. Do you allow your child to get angry and blow off steam?</td>
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<td>31. Do you consider your child's opinion in making decisions which concern him/her?</td>
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33. Do you find your child’s tone of voice irritating?
34. Do you try to make your child feel better when he/she is “down in the dumps”?
35. Do you really try to see your child’s side of things?
36. Do you encourage your child to tell you his/her problems?
37. Does your child really try to see your side of things?
38. Do you tend to lecture and preach too much to your child?
39. Does your child accept your reasons for decisions you make concerning them?
40. Do you feel it hard to say what you feel in talking with your child?

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER:

1. Is there a “generation gap” (breakdown in communication) between you and your child?
   - Large Gap
   - Moderate Gap
   - Slight Gap
   - No Gap

2. In your opinion, does a generation gap exist between American teenagers and their families (speaking of American families in general, not your family)?
   - Large Gap
   - Moderate Gap
   - Slight Gap
   - No Gap

3. If you feel there is a gap do you think it is larger than in previous generations?
   - YES
   - NO

4. How satisfied are you with the way your family communicates with each other?
   - Very Satisfied
   - Fairly Satisfied
   - Unsatisfied
   - Very Satisfied

(CIRCLE ANY QUESTION THAT WAS NOT CLEAR AND MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS)
**PART D:**

INDEX OF FAMILY RELATIONS (IFR)   

Today’s Date ____________________________

Circle one: Parent/Adolescent

This questionnaire is designed to measure the way you feel about your family as a whole. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by placing a number before each one as follows:

1. Rarely or none of the time
2. A little of the time
3. Some of the time
4. A good part of the time
5. Most or all of the time

Please begin.

1. The members of my family really care about each other. __________________
2. I think my family is terrific. __________________
3. My family gets on my nerves. __________________
4. I really enjoy my family. __________________
5. I can really depend on my family. __________________
6. I really do not care to be around my family. __________________
7. I wish I was not part of this family. __________________
8. I get along well with my family. __________________
9. Members of my family argue too much. __________________
10. There is no sense of closeness in my family. __________________
11. I feel like a stranger in my family. __________________
12. My family does not understand me. __________________
13. There is too much hatred in my family. __________________
14. Members of my family are really good to one another. __________________
15. My family is well respected by those who know us. __________________
16. There seems to be a lot of friction in my family. __________________
17. There is a lot of love in my family. __________________
18. Members of my family get along well together. __________________
19. Life in my family is generally unpleasant. __________________
20. My family is a great joy to me. __________________
21. I feel proud of my family. __________________
22. Other families seem to get along better than ours. __________________
23. My family is a real source of comfort to me. __________________
24. I feel left out of my family. __________________
25. My family is an unhappy one. __________________
Dear Respondent:

Thanks very much for being willing to participate in the important research survey which we discussed on the telephone. As promised I am enclosing the questionnaires and am asking that you complete them.

I want to assure you again of the complete confidentiality of this survey. There is no identifying information requested of you. The information you give, and even the fact that you took part in the survey, will be kept in the strictest confidence.

As I stated on the telephone, I am a Master's student in Social Work at the University of Windsor. I have worked as a social worker with the Adolescent Crisis Service for the past 18 months. The research I am doing is for my Master's thesis, on adolescents out of the home. With the permission of the Service, I selected your name as part of the survey, because I believe you can provide very helpful information. When all the information is put together, it will greatly increase our understanding of the problem from both the parents' and the adolescents' point of view.

Please note that at the top of each questionnaire, there is the word "Adolescent" or "Parent". The questionnaire marked Adolescent is to be completed by the adolescent and the one marked Parent is to be completed by the parent(s). Please answer each question without leaving any blanks.

If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me through the Adolescent Crisis Service. Thanks again for your participation and for the time you devote to this.

Yours sincerely,

Leonard Kander
Part A: General Information—Adolescent

Instructions: This form is to be completed by the adolescent.

1. Your age: ______________
2. Grade: ______________
3. Circle your sex: Male Female
4. Number of children living at home (not counting yourself) ______________
5. Where do you fit in the family? (Circle one)
   Oldest In the middle Youngest Only child
6. At home I live with:
   ___ natural mother ___ natural father
   ___ step-mother ___ step-father
   other (specify) ____________________
Part B:

Circle one: Mother Father Adolescent

Instructions: Please circle only one response per question.

1. The adolescent wished to move out of the family home because
   a) wasn’t getting along with parent(s)
   b) lack of freedom
   c) wished to be on own
   d) peer pressure

2. The adolescent argues with the parent(s)
   a) frequently
   b) sometimes
   c) hardly at all
   d) never

3. The parents or adults in the home
   a) never get along
   b) sometimes don’t get along
   c) always get along
   d) one parent family

4. Our family’s major problem involves
   a) finances
   b) communication
   c) marital problems
   d) other

5. Circle the social service which an adolescent out of the home would require the most.
   a) legal aid
   b) welfare
   c) job training
   d) family counselling
   e) group homes
   f) crisis counselling
   g) hostels
   h) health counselling
   i) other

6. We were able to find adequate help from the communities social services.
   a) never
   b) sometimes
   c) frequently
   d) did not try
FORM A
PARENT-ADOLESCENT
COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

Developed by
MILLARD J. BIENVENU, SR. 1979 Revision

This questionnaire is to better understand how you and your parents talk and communicate so we can better understand the good points in your relationship and also where you may be having problems. You'll find it both interesting and helpful to make this study.

DIRECTIONS

1. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers to it. The most helpful answer to each question is your indication of the way you feel at the moment.

2. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. We want you to be as frank as possible. You cannot receive a grade because all of the answers are considered right answers for you.

3. Please answer each question without taking too much time. Answer each question according to the way you feel right now, not the way you usually feel or may have felt last week.

4. Use the following examples for practice. Put a check ( ) in one of the three blanks on the right to show how the question applies to you and to your ways of communicating with your parents.

   YES       Somewhat       NO
   Usually   Sometimes      Seldom

   Do your parents listen to your side of things?   ______  ______  ______

   Do you let your parents know when you are worried about something?   ______  ______  ______

5. "The YES column is to be used when the question can be answered as happening most of the time or usually. The NO column is to be used when the question can be answered as seldom or never. The SOMETIMES column should be marked when you cannot answer YES or NO. USE THIS COLUMN AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE." Most young people are able to give a yes or no answer to these questions.

6. Read each question carefully and mark your personal answer to it. Be sure to answer every question.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>Some-</th>
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<td>24. Do you feel that your mother trusts you?</td>
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<td>25. Does your father have confidence in your abilities?</td>
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<td>26. Do you hesitate to disagree with either of your parents?</td>
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<td>27. Do you fail to ask your parents for things because you believe they will deny your requests?</td>
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<td>28. Does your mother criticize you too much?</td>
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<td>29. Does your father really try to see your side of things?</td>
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<td>30. Do either of your parents allow you to get angry and blow off steam?</td>
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<td>31. Do either of your parents consider your opinion in making decisions which concern you?</td>
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<td>32. Does your father criticize you too much?</td>
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<td>33. Do you find your mother's tone of voice irritating?</td>
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<td>34. Do your parents try to make you feel better when you are &quot;down in the dumps?&quot;</td>
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<td>35. Does your mother really try to see your side of things?</td>
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36. Do you feel that your mother lectures and preaches to you too much? _____ _____ _____
37. Do either of your parents explain their reason for not letting you do something? _____ _____ _____
38. Do you feel that your mother lectures and preaches to you too much? _____ _____ _____
39. Do you ask your parents about their reasons for decisions they make concerning you? _____ _____ _____
40. Do you find it hard to say what you feel at home? _____ _____ _____

(CIRCLE ANY QUESTION THAT WAS NOT CLEAR AND MAKE SURE YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS)

Please write down the first thing that comes to your head when you read these sentences.

AT HOME, I FEEL ______________________________
MY FAMILY ______________________________
THE HARDEST SUBJECT TO DISCUSS WITH MY PARENTS IS ______________________________

THE PERSON WHO BEST UNDERSTANDS ME IS ______________________________
(just your relationship to that person, not the name)

IT WOULD BE EASIER TO TALK TO MY MOTHER IF ______________________________
IT WOULD BE EASIER TO TALK TO MY FATHER IF ______________________________
IT WOULD PROBABLY HELP MATTERS AT HOME IF ______________________________
I FEEL CLOSER TO MY PARENTS WHEN ______________________________

IF I COULD HAVE TWO THINGS CHANGED IN MY HOME LIFE THEY WOULD BE:
1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
PART D:

INDEX OF FAMILY RELATIONS (IFR)  

Today's Date ____________________________

Circle one: Parent/Adolescent

This questionnaire is designed to measure the way you feel about your family as a whole. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by placing a number before each one as follows:

1. Rarely or none of the time
2. A little of the time
3. Some of the time
4. A good part of the time
5. Most or all of the time

Please begin.

1. The members of my family really care about each other. ____________________________
2. I think my family is terrific. ____________________________
3. My family gets on my nerves. ____________________________
4. I really enjoy my family. ____________________________
5. I can really depend on my family. ____________________________
6. I really do not care to be around my family. ____________________________
7. I wish I was not part of this family. ____________________________
8. I get along well with my family. ____________________________
9. Members of my family argue to much. ____________________________
10. There is no sense of closeness in my family. ____________________________
11. I feel like a stranger in my family. ____________________________
12. My family does not understand me. ____________________________
13. There is too much hatred in my family. ____________________________
14. Members of my family are really good to one another. ____________________________
15. My family is well respected by those who know us. ____________________________
16. There seems to be a lot of friction in my family. ____________________________
17. There is a lot of love in my family. ____________________________
18. Members of my family get along well together. ____________________________
19. Life in my family is generally unpleasant. ____________________________
20. My family is a great joy to me. ____________________________
21. I feel proud of my family. ____________________________
22. Other families seem to get along better than ours. ____________________________
23. My family is a real source of comfort to me. ____________________________
24. I feel left out of my family. ____________________________
25. My family is an unhappy one. ____________________________
REFERENCES


VITA AUCTORIS

Len Kander was born on July 1, 1958 in Windsor, Ontario. He attended both elementary and high school in Windsor. After high school he attended the University of Windsor graduating in 1978 with a Bachelor of Arts (Urban Studies), and again in 1979 with a Bachelor of Education.

Following graduation from university, he obtained a teaching position with an Indian Band in an isolated community in Northern Saskatchewan. For the following six years Mr. Kander taught in various communities in Saskatchewan.

To further his education and interest in the field of adolescents, Mr. Kander returned with his wife and children to Windsor in 1985 to attend the University of Windsor to complete the Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work Programs.

He received his Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1987 and expects to graduate in the fall of 1988 with a Master's Degree in Social Work.