

COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
OF
EDMONTON AND DISTRICT

YOUTH SERVICES DIVISION

REPORT OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE

PRESENTED TO THE YOUTH SERVICES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 1963

COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY SERVICES OF EDMONTON AND DISTRICT

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Report of Inter-Institutional Committee

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Since the beginning of Alberta's history, child-care institutions have been the basic resources for children unable to remain in their own homes. These institutions for children and youth have played a vital role in the lives of many children. The church has played an important part in the development of institutions for children and youth in Alberta. For many years the Provincial Welfare Department and the Municipal Welfare Departments were largely dependent upon the child-care institutions for caring for their wards.

In recent years other child-care services have developed and expanded in the community. These services include the foster care and adoptive care, emergency homemakers, day care and the social allowances programs.

In June of 1961 the Superintendent of Child Welfare outlined basic changes in policy which were taking place and would be taking place in the near future in the Provincial Welfare Department. These changes included the expansion of child protection services, foster care, and adoptive care programs. As a result of these changes it was expected there would be fewer wards of the Provincial Government referred to child-care institutions. It was further stated that those children who would be referred to institutions would be those whose needs would be better met in an institutional setting rather than in a foster or adoptive home.

In November of 1961, representatives of institutions for children and youth in Edmonton and District considered the following recommendation from the Youth Services Division of the Council of Community Services of Edmonton and District.

"It is recommended that the board of directors of Child-Care Institutions each appoint two delegates to serve on an Inter-Institutions Committee that will:

1. Examine what institutional services are required for children in Edmonton and District; and
2. Recommend policies and standards with regard to:
 - a) the placement of children in institutions,
 - b) the care of children in institutions,
 - c) the removal of children from institutions, and
 - d) the financing of childrens institutions.

"It is suggested that the committee be under the chairmanship of a member of the Youth Services Executive of the Council of Community Services of Edmonton and District; and that in addition to taking whatever steps may be required, the committee:

1. consider trends, policies and standards of other provinces and countries with regard to: the placement of children in institutions; the care of children in institutions; the removal of children from institutions; and the financing

of childrens institutions; and

2. examine the policies of the Provincial and City Welfare Departments with regard to the placement of children to determine the possible effects on and implications for child-care institutions."

The representatives from the child-care institutions recommended that this statement go to the Board of Directors of child-care institutions in the City of Edmonton. The recommendation was subsequently sent to each of the boards of directors of child-care institutions. By March 1962, seven institutions indicated their interest in participating in such a committee. These institutions were: The Edmonton Home for Ex-Servicemen's Children, The Alberta Protestant Children's Home, The Kiwanis Children's Aid Society, Sisters of Service Residential Club, Beulah Home, Saint Mary's Home and Technical School and the proposed Oakhill Boys Ranch.

Professor W. B. Dockrell of the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta was appointed by the Youth Services Executive Committee as chairman of this committee. Other members of this committee were as follows: Sister L. Tyszko, Sister Mossey and Mr. F. M. Feehan, Sisters of Service Residential Club; Mrs. N. A. McGregor, Miss E. Hunsperger, Beulah Home; Mrs. O. E. Wiltzen, Mrs. J. Adamson, the Alberta Proestant Childrens Home; Rev. Paul Maniscalco, Rev. John Dal Maso, St. Mary's Home and Technical School; Mr. T. G. Halford and Mr. G. W. Welsh, The Kiwanis Childrens Aid Society; Mrs. J. E. Peterson, Mrs. M. Morrison, Mr. J. E. Peterson, The Edmonton Home for Ex-Servicemen's Children; Rev. Ramsay Stuart, Oakhill Boys' Ranch.

METHOD OF STUDY

The committee used two study methods.

1. The committee invited reports from the Provincial Welfare Department, the City Welfare Department and Welfare Information Service. The committee requested specific information about children who were in care and about unmet requests for institutional care.

2. The committee conducted two surveys of institutions in Edmonton and District.

- a) a survey of information of current residents in institutions on May 4th, 1962.
- b) a survey of requests for child-care that institutions received during the two week period beginning May 7th.

A. STATISTICAL DATA

The following data have been tabulated from the reports which were submitted by 13 institutions for children and youth in the City of Edmonton and District. The institutions are as follows:

1. The Alberta Protestant Children's Home.
2. Beulah Home.
3. The Edmonton Home for Ex-Servicemen's Children.
4. The Kiwanis Childrens Aid Society.
5. Kiwanis House.
6. Misericordia Social Service Department.

7. O'Connell Institute.
8. Our Lady of Atonement Home.
9. Our Lady of Charity School for Girls (previously Good Shepherd Home).
10. Rosecrest Home.
11. St. John's House.
12. St. Mary's Home and Technical School.

TABLE 1

Information on Current Residents of 13 Institutions
For Children and Youth in Edmonton

Number and Sex of Children in Each Age Group

<u>Age</u>	<u>MALE</u>			<u>Age</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>Ward</u>	<u>Non-Ward</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Ward</u>	<u>Non-Ward</u>	<u>Total</u>	
Under 1	11	2	13	Under 1	5	2	7	20
1	1	1	2	1	-	-	0	2
2	8	-	8	2	3	3	6	14
3	7	-	7	3	2	2	4	11
4	6	1	7	4	4	4	8	15
5	5	-	5	5	5	3	8	13
6	11	9	20	6	6	4	10	30
7	4	4	8	7	8	4	12	20
8	7	7	14	8	4	11	15	29
9	13	8	21	9	6	7	13	34
10	1	6	7	10	4	9	13	20
11	8	2	10	11	3	6	9	19
12	6	12	18	12	4	8	12	30
13	7	13	20	13	8	3	11	31
14	4	20	24	14	13	1	14	38
15	6	23	29	15	20	5	25	54
16	4	20	24	16	30	10	40	64
17	2	5	7	17	26	4	30	37
18	-	-	-	18	12	17	29	29
Over 18	-	-	-	Over 18	5	29	34	34
Total	111	133	244	Total	168	132	300	544

The figures in the above table represent the children in thirteen institutions which participated in the study. The institutions varied a great deal in function and purpose. Some of these institutions were developed for specific purposes. For instance, three of the institutions are operated to serve unmarried mothers; one is operated for the specific care of retarded children. One of the institutions is a residential club for older teenage and working girls.

Seven of the institutions are similar in purpose and have similar clientele. An analysis of these institutions was made is described below.

ANALYSIS OF RESIDENTS OF SEVEN CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONS

May 4, 1962

The institutions included are: The Kiwanis Childrens Aid Society; Our Lady of the Atonement Home; Alberta Protestant Childrens Home; The Edmonton Home for Ex-Servicemen's Children; St. Mary's Home and Technical School; Our Lady of Charity School for Girls; O'Connell Institute.

I. CAPACITY: 520 Occupany (May 1962) 404 = 77.7%

II. RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION: Four of the homes are under Catholic sponsorship, with a capacity of 400 (77%). The three other institutions are under Protestant or non-sectarian auspices and have a capacity of 120 (23%). Keeping this in mind we find the following breakdown of children in the homes.

TABLE 2

	Under Catholic Sponsorship	%	Non-Sectarian or Protestant Sponsorship	%	Total	%
Catholic children	254	82.2	11	11.7	265	65.6
Protestant children	55	17.8	84	88.3	139	34.4
Total	309	100%	95	100%	404	100%

There are several observations which can be made about this table. It will be noted that there is a high percentage of Catholic children in these institutions. There are nearly twice as many Catholic children cared for in these institutions as Protestant children. Yet the percentage of Catholics in the Edmonton population is 23%. One fact which contributes to the number of Catholic children in care, is that a large number of children of Indian background are residents of these institutions. A high percentage of these children are of the Roman Catholic faith.

Another fact which is noted from this table is the large capacity of the Roman Catholic Institutions. The capacity of 400, is 135 more than the number of Catholic children in care. In contrast, the capacity of the Protestant and non-sectarian institutions is 120, which is 19 less than the number of Protestant children in care. It will be noted that fifty-five Protestant children are residents of Catholic institutions and eleven Catholic children are residents of Protestant or non-sectarian institutions.

III. AGE AND SEX BY LEGAL STATUS

TABLE 3

Age Groups	MALE		FEMALE			TOTAL		
	Non-Ward	Ward	Non-Ward	Ward	Not Spec.	Non-Ward	Ward	Not Spec.
- 3	1		3			3		
3 - 5.11	1	5	9	5		10	10	
6 - 8.11	20	8	19	9		39	17	
9 -11.11	16	21	22	12		38	33	
12-14.11	45	17	12	20	4	57	37	4
15-17.11	48	11	8	7	66	56	18	66
18 and over			2	2	12	2	2	12
Total	130	62	75	55	82	205	117	82

Male: 192 = 47.5% Male Ward: 62 = 32.3% (Non-Ward) = 67.7%
 Female: 212 = 52.5% Female Ward: 116 = 54.7% (Non-Ward) = 45.3%

In this table it will be noted that although over half of the female residents are wards of the government, less than one-third of the male residents are wards. This can be partly explained by the fact that St. Mary's Home and Technical School is included in this analysis. A large percentage of these boys are non-wards.

IV. LENGTH OF STAY

TABLE 4

Less than 1 mo.	13	=	5.7%
1 mo. to 2.9 mo.	9	=	4.0%
3 mo. to 11.9 mo.	91	=	39.9%
1 year or more	<u>115</u>	=	<u>50.4%</u>
Total	228		100%
N.A.	<u>176</u>		
	404		

An important fact to note in this table is that ninety percent of the children have been in these institutions for three months or longer and that slightly over half have resided in the institutions for one year or more.

V. FAMILY STRUCTURE - The analysis that follows Table 5 below is limited because the committee learned that the word "available" was variously interpreted by the institutions.

TABLE 5

	Ward	%	Non-Ward	%	Total
Parents living together			65	38.7	65
No parents available	41	78.9	23	13.7	64
Mother only available	8	15.4	41	24.4	49
Father only available	3	5.7	39	23.2	42
Total	52	100%	168	100%	220
N.A.					184
Total					404

It will be noted that 38.7% of the parents of non-ward children were living together. However, these figures have been affected by the number of non-ward children with parents available at St. Mary's Home and Technical School.

VI. REASONS FOR PLACEMENT

TABLE 6

	Ward	%	Non-Ward	%	Total
Broken home (temporary)	15	18.3	5	29	20
Broken home (permanent)	63	76.8	66	38.6	129
Behaviour Problem	4	4.9	18	10.6	22
Behaviour Problem and Backward in School			50	29.3	50
Parents at work			15	8.7	15
Other			17	9.9	17
Total	82	100%	171	100%	253
N.A.					151
Total					404

We note in this table the large number of children who were placed in these institutions because of broken homes. A fundamental question that can be asked here is what efforts are being made to bring the family together? It is noted that fifteen (or nine percent) of the non-ward children are placed because the parents are at work. Another question is whether this is a valid reason for the separation of the child from his family? Can the children not be supported in their own home? Does society have a responsibility to try to keep the family together?

VII. JURISDICTION

TABLE 7

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Provincial Ward	140	34.6%
Wards supervised by City Welfare Department	30	7.4%
Federal Ward	4	1.0%
Juvenile Offenders Branch	4	1.0%
Non-Ward	226	56.0%
Total	404	100 %

SURVEY OF REQUESTS FOR CHILD CARE

The committee requested the institutions for children and youth in the City of Edmonton and the Welfare Information Services of the Council of Community Services of Edmonton and District to keep a record of requests for child care during the two week period beginning May 7th and ending May 20th. Five of the sources returned the forms with the required information. These were:

1. O'Connell Institute
2. Our Lady of Charity School for Girls
3. Beulah Home
4. Kiwanis House
5. Welfare Information Service

This information is not of a statistical nature, but does provide a profile of the persons requesting a service in this area. Information on a total of sixteen inquiries was obtained representing the placement or potential placement of thirty-one children. A word of warning: we must not construe this as any kind of valid sample, but treat the information simply as providing some description of the requests for the placement of children in Edmonton.

AGE AND SEX - Children for whom placement was sought varied from under 3 to 18 years of age, with both sexes represented.

FAMILY STRUCTURE - Although some of the parents requesting placement for their children were living together, in a number of cases they were separated. Separation was due to a variety of reasons: husband in jail, desertion of either mother or father, death of one of the parents, legal divorce, and unmarried parenthood. In a number of cases the family situation was not recorded.

REASONS FOR PLACEMENT - We need to recognize that there may be reasons other than those mentioned by the inquirer for the placement of children. In some cases the reason given may, in fact, not be the most important reason. Desertion by the mother was one of the reasons given for placing the entire family of six children. Another indicated that placement was being sought for the family's seven children because the mother was working or planning to work. A third reason for placement referred to retarded children. Behaviour problems was also enumerated as a reason. Further reasons for the placement of children included: breakdown of foster home; parents' rejection; mother expecting another child; and health of the parent.

DISPOSITION OF REQUEST: How did the institutions and the Welfare Information Service dispose of the requests? Some cases could not be dealt with because of such factors as: wrong sex, wrong age, no vacancy. In other cases the application was taken under consideration, accepted or referred to some other agency.

SUMMARY

It must be stressed again that we need to be careful not to draw any conclusions from this "sample." It does serve the purpose however, of challenging us with a number of questions:

1) There appears to be a number of children who were being placed as a result of the mother working or planning to work. Why did the mother work or plan to work? If the reasons were financial ones, did she know of, or seek, financial assistance which would enable her to remain at home with her children? Had she considered using day care services?

2) It is noted that in a number of cases, the parents, for one reason or another, were separated. It would be helpful to know whether these parents had availed themselves of the family counselling services in the community, and whether there had been attempts to bring the family together.

3) Does this suggest the need for a centralized intake procedure?

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES NEEDED FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN EDMONTON BY AGE GROUPS

The following information about needed institutional services was compiled from reports submitted by the Provincial Welfare Department, the City Welfare Department, Welfare Information Service and from the survey which was conducted with the cooperation of 13 institution for children and youth in the City of

Edmonton.

Infants: The only infants who are cared for in institutions are those who are born of unmarried mothers or who are mentally retarded. There is no provision for mentally retarded children whose parents wish to retain legal guardianship.

Children 1 to 5 years of age: Very few normal children in this age group are presently in institutions.

It would appear that even at this age there is a need for institutional services for emotionally disturbed children.

Children 6 to 10 years of age: There is a need for increased services for retarded children in this age group.

There is also a need for increased services for emotionally disturbed children in this age group.

There are only a small number of normal Protestant wards in institutions. A much larger number of Catholic Provincial Wards are in Catholic Institutions. This is partly due to the large number of children of Indian background in child-care institutions.

Children 11 to 15 years of age: In this age group there is a need for further facilities for the care of pre-delinquent or disturbed adolescents.

There is a need for closed institutions for both boys and girls who cannot function in an open institution but where therapy and treatment will be available to help them establish sufficient controls to function in their own home, in a foster home, or in an open institution.

There is also a need for additional services for the mentally retarded child in this age group.

Children 16 years of age and over: There is a need for residential care for boys and girls who require a controlled setting in their efforts in becoming independent. The need for a girls home is particularly acute at this time.

There is also a need for service for unmarried mothers and their babies who can remain together in a Catholic institution.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Non-Ward Institutional Care of Normal Children

The committee recommends that urgent consideration be given to determining the types of care that are required for those essentially normal children whose parent(s) experience difficulty in keeping them in the home setting and who seek institutional care instead of relinquishing their responsibility through wardship. An example of such a situation is the widower who places his child or children in an institution but maintains contact with and responsibility for his offspring.

2. Financing

The committee wishes to emphasize that if the services in children's institutions are to be maintained and developed at a high level there must be a full and realistic assessment by government agencies and the United Community Fund of

the costs involved. This assessment should include a realistic evaluation of (1) operating costs; (2) capital expenditures; (3) costs for staff training. Where an institution is required to change its function serious consideration should be given to who should pay the costs involved in such a change. Special financial assistance may also be required during a period of transition.

3. Central Assessment Service

The committee recommends that serious consideration be given to the development of a central assessment service in Edmonton. Through this service, people in the community who wish to place their children either for day care or twenty-four hour care would be helped in developing the best possible plan in the interest of the child and the family.

It is suggested that in addition to a social worker that psychological and psychiatric services be available to this service.

It is suggested that rather than developing a new service, an existing service might be asked to take on this function. Agencies which might be considered in developing this service include the Regional Office of the Provincial Welfare Department, the City Welfare Department, the Family Service Bureau, Catholic Family and Child Service, the Guidance Clinic and Welfare Information Service.

4. Psychological and Psychiatric Services

The committee recommends that more extensive psychological and psychiatric services should be made available to the children's institutions. A social, psychological and medical assessment should be made of each child upon entering an institution. This would be a function of the proposed central assessment service if it were developed.

5. Mentally Defective and Emotionally Disturbed Children

Evidence made available to the committee indicated that there is a need for more extensive services for mentally defective and emotionally disturbed children in the province. It is recommended that the Provincial Department of Health and Provincial Department of Welfare define the child care services which they intend to provide in the future for these children.

6. Staffing

The committee recognizes the importance of having adequate well-qualified staff to care for the physical, mental and emotional needs of the children in care. Institutions differ in their staff needs depending upon their purpose and function. It is suggested that each institution review their staff needs related to this purpose using as a guide the standards developed by the Child Welfare League of America.

7. Staff Training Resources

The committee wishes to draw the attention of the Youth Services Division to the fact that there are no training resources in Alberta for people who wish to work in the field of children's institutions. It is further recognized that only a small percentage of those working in institutions have had the benefit of a university education.

The committee recommends that consideration be given to the development of

a program which would help to prepare students who wish to work in child care institutions.

The committee feels that the new technical institute would be the most appropriate school where this program could be developed. It is suggested that a course might be developed similar to that which is provided at the Ryerson Technical Institute in Toronto.

8. Inter-Agency Consultation

The committee recommends that there be increased consultation between agency social workers and the staff of child care institutions. In some cases, child care workers who have excessively high caseloads have very little contact with the children's institution where their child is placed. The committee feels that the insight which the institutional staff workers and the agency worker are able to share together can only be fully utilized with continuing communication between the two agencies.

9. Quality of Care

This study points out the fact that approximately one-half of the children in institutions have been resident there in excess of one year. The quality of care given by the children's institutions is of the utmost importance. The committee recommends that the Youth Services Division of the Council of Community Services support the present efforts of child care institutions to improve the quality of care, particularly in such areas as individual and group guidance, extra-curricular and academic supervision, recreation, vocational training and parent counselling.

10. Parental Responsibilities

The committee recommends that there be a greater emphasis placed in helping parents to accept their responsibilities in bringing up their children. It was suggested there be a closer relationship developed between the child care institutions, the Family Court and the various child care agencies with a view to working towards this end.

A further recommendation considered by the committee was that legislation be enacted whereby children could not be placed for residential care for a period of more than thirty days without notifying and consulting with the Provincial (or perhaps City) Welfare Department. The committee recommends that this suggestion be given further consideration.

11. Needed Institutional Services

The committee having examined the study report and evidence which had been made available to it, wishes to make specific recommendations with regard to the type of institutional care which is needed in the City of Edmonton and District.

(A) Evidence which has been made available to the committee indicates quite strongly there is need for increased institutional services for emotionally disturbed children. The Provincial Department of Health has undertaken some responsibility in this area by developing Linden House in Red Deer. The experience of committee members and those people who reported to the committee would indicate that there are a number of children in the Edmonton area who are emotionally disturbed and have need for institutional services as are provided for

at Linden House. The committee recommends that the Youth Services Division of the Council of Community Services meet with representatives from the Provincial Department of Health and the Provincial Department of Welfare for the purpose of discussing with them the need for increased services in this area.

(B) There is need for additional residential facilities for the mentally defective child. The Provincial Health Department has accepted responsibilities in this area. The committee recommends that the Youth Services Division of the Council of Community Services discuss with the Department of Health the need for additional services in this area.

(C) The committee recommends the development of small group homes in which between eight and ten children could live under the guidance of house parents. These would be designed for children and adolescents who cannot accept foster care and yet do not need a closed institution. The proposed Oakhill Boys' Ranch is an example of an experiment in this area. Presentations to the committee stressed the need for this type of service for adolescent girls.

(D) There is a need for residential centers for the older adolescent boy and adolescent girl who require a control setting in their first efforts to become independent. The Kiwanis House is an excellent example of a development in this area. However, this development only partially meets the need for teenage boys. The committee recommends that similar homes be developed for girls.

(E) There is a specific need for a closed institution for boys and girls who cannot function in an open institution and where therapy will be available to help them establish sufficient controls to function in their own homes, foster home or an open institution. The committee suggests that there is a need for a closed institution for Protestant girls. At the time the survey was undertaken approximately 30 Protestant girls were in the care of the Good Shepherd Home.

(F) The committee feels that there is a need for a service for delinquent children which would provide training and treatment in a closed institution close to Edmonton.

12. Study of Needs for Child Care Services

The committee is aware that the present study is limited in its scope and would recommend that a comprehensive study of the needs for child care services in the province as a whole be undertaken for the following reasons:

i) It is recognized that today in Alberta the child care institution is only one of a number of child care services in the community. These other child care services include the foster home program, child adoptive programs, home-maker services, day care services and the social assistance program. All of these programs are interrelated. In order to assess the need for child care institutions it is important to know the nature of the whole child care need and to what extent these other services are meeting this need.

In order to accurately assess the type of institutional care which is needed it is necessary to know:

- (a) How many children are in need of care outside the home.
- (b) What are the specific needs of these children.
- (c) Which of these children can best be helped through institutional care.

(d) What form of institutional care is needed.

ii) As will be noted in the report a large percentage of the children in institutions in Edmonton are wards of the Provincial Government. Provincial wards from various parts of the province are placed in institutions in Edmonton. In order to assess accurately the need for child care institutions in Edmonton it is necessary to recognize that these institutions help to meet child care needs from other parts of the Province of Alberta.

Feb. 5/63
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