

PREFACE

St. Ann's, 133 Granite Street, Worcester, is a Group Home institution, conducted by the Grey Nuns. The purpose of service is to provide group care and treatment for children whose needs cannot, adequately, be met in a family situation. The program is planned for short term, temporary care for both boys and girls, with an orientation to provide maximum opportunity of varying experiences, through group living and specialized services. (1) Care on a long-term basis, although the exception will be considered for each child, recognizing, however, that institutional care is an adjunct to more permanent planning and not a substitute for permanent care.

St. Ann's and its program is available for girls between the ages of five and sixteen, and boys between the ages of five and eleven. In the grouping of girls, the program is further delineated for girls between the ages of five and eleven, with an adolescent unit for girls between twelve and fifteen (upon admission). Twenty beds are available for the junior girls and a similar amount for the boys. Twelve beds are available in the adolescent unit, the full capacity, then, being fifty-two (52).

Although St. Ann's is owned, operated and administered by the Grey Nuns, lay men and women form an integral part of the program, as assistant houseparents, recreational supervisors, in maintenance, housekeeping, cooking and the many services necessary to the functioning of St. Ann's. Priests are assigned to minister to the spiritual needs of the children in care, as well as a permanent chaplain. Social Workers are available for consultation and casework services to the children and to the staff.

In offering a 24-hour service for children, and believing that all children need security, continuity and stability, St. Ann's attempts to meet these total needs in focusing on the emotional, spiritual, environmental, social and intellectual factors in offering its program to every child. Because children need affection and loving care, because children need to develop a feeling of self worth, because children need protection, guidance and training, because children need experiences that promote growth and development, because children need to form positive relationships, St. Ann's exists, and in its existence then, its commitment is not only to the care of children but to the best care that can be provided children. (2)

II INTAKE

Believing that a particular goal of institutional care is that no child should remain in institutional care throughout his childhood, admission planning must then incorporate some aspects of discharge planning.

In line with the standards of the Child Welfare League of America, an intake study is conducted in relation to every request for services for children at St. Ann's.

At present, summaries from referring agencies regarding children to be considered for placement at St. Ann's should be forwarded, by the social worker, to the director of admissions, who at the time of this writing (December 1964) is Sister Marie Doucette. The social worker will be given an appointment, within a

(1) In individualized planning, each child is offered services in line with individual need, such as case work, group work, psychotherapy, remedial reading, special class, etc.

(2) P. 14 - C.W.L.A. Standards for Child Care

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week, to discuss with the director, the houseparent of the group for which the child is considered, and the social worker at St. Ann's, possible admission and subsequent planning for the child. If admission is found to be in the best interest of the child, a pre-placement visit can then be arranged by the social worker, in conjunction with St. Ann's, and placement plans made accordingly.

Recognizing that emergency situations can exist, the request should be directed to the director of admissions. She will give consideration to possible admission without a summary on the child, but a summary will be expected within two (2) days.

Following the placement in emergency circumstances, a conference will be held between the social worker and the admission staff at St. Ann's within a week. As in all admission conferences, the purpose would be to establish between St. Ann's and the Agency assuming responsibility for the child, planning that would be in the best interest of the child, in considering such points as length of stay, school enrollment, visits by parents, visits by social worker, clothing and particular needs of the individual child. As an integral part of admission planning, periodic conferences will be arranged, in order to evaluate the progress of each child while in placement and as part of continued planning.

Believing that parents should be helped to use every opportunity to maintain their relationship with the child and to participate to the fullest of their ability, consideration at admission is given to their involvement in program planning with their child. In assessing total planning for a child, the factor of parental involvement is one of the considerations in the decision to accept a child for care. Parents should of necessity be involved in planning for placement both in terms of their acceptance of such planning and in preparation of the child for such planning. At the same time parents are seen in order to help them recognize that St. Ann's must assume certain parental functions while the child is receiving care and treatment. When a parent enters into a voluntary agreement with a child welfare agency for placement of his child, he retains his full rights and duties, with the exception of those that he agrees to delegate to the agency. Even after a court has vested legal custody of the child's person in the agency and unless the parent-child relationship has been terminated by judicial decree, the parent retains certain residual rights, including rights to reasonable visitation, information about the child's whereabouts and condition, determination of religious affiliation, consent to adoption, inheritance, responsibility for support and the right to notice and appearance at judicial proceedings involving the child (3).

In our attempt to involve all parents in planning for their children we have instituted programs of both an individual and group counseling nature, the purpose of which is:

- 1 - to preserve the parent-child relationship to the fullest possible extent.

- 2 - to enable parents to perform the parental role to the fullest possible extent.

3 - to insure parents exercise of their legal rights and responsibilities in ways compatible with the child's welfare (4)
(Confer outline on group meetings with parents of adolescent unit)

Over and above participation of parents consideration at the admission conference focuses on:

- 1 - Responsibility for medical and dental care
- 2 - Responsibility for schooling
- 3 - Responsibility for religious instructions
- 4 - Responsibility for visiting
- 5 - Responsibility for clothing and allowances
- 6 - Responsibility for arrangements for vacations
- 7 - Responsibility for support

(Confer admission summary)

Also as an integral part of the admission conference consideration is given to a planning conference after the child has been in placement for awhile. From a clinical observation point, housemothers and counsellors submit periodic progress reports encompassing areas of the child's functioning. This, plus school reports and casework services to both parents and child as well as reports from various specialized services constitute material for consideration of on going planning conferences.

Regarding the responsibility of the social worker of the referring agency, it would be expected that he would arrange for pre-entrance physical examinations, purchasing of clothing on an individual basis and providing casework services in conjunction with whatever plans are arrived at from the admission conference. * It is expected that the social worker will visit monthly with the children for whom he has planning responsibility. The director of admission will arrange for enrollment of children at the Granite Street School but transfer of school records must be arranged by the referring agency. Enrollment of children in schools other than Granite Street will be the responsibility of the referring agency.

(4) It is our hope that this service can be extended to all parents in the near future.

* (Every effort, however, should be made for parents to participate to whatever degree they can during this time.)

STATISTICS - January 2, 1964 ---- December 30, 1964

| | | |
|---|----|-----------------|
| Intakes - - - - - | 45 | |
| Interviews - - - - - | 46 | } Children - 40 |
| | | } Parents - 6 |
| Conferences with other agencies - - - - | 35 | |
| Conferences with staff - - - - - | 8 | |
| Conferences with administrator - - - - | 20 | |
| Supervisory Conferences - - - - - | 25 | |

During 1964 many developments have occurred in the social service program at St. Ann's. After many meetings and conferences with the Community Agencies we have been able to move along in the direction of a family counseling program both on a group and individual basis. At the initial step of application for admission, parents are involved in the process of service relative to their child for whom they are seeking care or for whom an agency is seeking care on behalf of parents (confer notes on intake process).

Inservice training programs have been embellished under the direction of the sister superior in conjunction with the "New England Association of Child Care Personnel". Both, the sister housemothers and lay housemothers, are attending sessions given under the auspices of N.E.A.C.C.P. using the staff and facilities of the Simmons College School of Social Work, as well as many staff personnel throughout New England in child care settings. At present Sister Superior is working on plans with the state Division of Child Guardianship for in-service training for 1965 at St. Ann's.

Renovations and additions have been made in more effective use of forms for a greater utilization of clerical time. In 1965 a particular emphasis will be placed on recording material. This will be especially meaningful with the expected increase in counseling services.

1964 has witnessed a greater use of St. Ann's facilities and service by the Community with requests being made by not only private parties, but as well by the following agencies:

1. Boards of Public Welfare
 - a - ADC Dept.
 - b - General Relief Dept.
2. Youth Guidance Clinic
3. Children's Friend Society
4. Youth Service Board
5. Family Service Organization
6. Division of Child Guardianship
7. Catholic Charities

We also began in 1964 to set down in writing the procedures and policies that will hopefully become the beginning manual for child welfare practice in the area of social services at St. Ann's. This work will continue through 1965.

Respectfully submitted,

R.J. GIARD acsw