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TREATMENT OF PROTECTIVE SERVICE CASES

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
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SUMMARY

This report focuses on the treatment of the children reported to the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare (D.P.W.) in May 1978 who were determined to be in need of protective services because they were abused, neglected, or sexually abused. Findings concerning three phases of treatment--case assessment, case activity, and case closure--are reported.

Professional reviewers collected information from the case records of children reported in May 1978 who were assessed in for treatment or who were already in treatment. Data concerning 413 children from 243 families were analyzed.

Children were recommended for 1.3 services each and received 1.9 services each on average. Foster care and counseling were the services most likely to be recommended and, also, to be received. Psychological services provided by non-D.P.W. staff were received by 53% of the children or their parents, foster care by 45%, counseling provided by D.P.W. staff by 40%, day care by 15%, homemaker services by 16%, and group care by 5% of the children.

Abused and neglected children placed in foster care were more likely to be minority children and to be from families who derived at least part of their incomes from AFDC or GR than children who were not placed in foster care. Foster children were also somewhat more likely to be from single parent families than children not in care. Children placed in foster care remained there for ten months on average. While most foster children were in only one foster placement, a large number were in two

or more foster homes. At the time of the case review, almost one third of all assessed in and already active children were still in foster placements. Social workers recommended continued foster placement or adoption for most of the children still in foster care.

Less than one fifth of the children who were assessed in or already active in May 1978 were rereported during the following year. As with the initial reports, the majority of rereports were for neglect.

The cases of only one fifth of assessed in and already active children were successfully closed in the year following the May 1978 report. Cases which were closed were characterized by less neglectful and abusive activity, both before and after the May 1978 report, and had fewer stressful events occurring in their lives than cases which remained open. Workers had little success closing cases involving minority children.

The final section of the report outlines some of the major concerns raised by the findings. It is suggested that future policy development is dependent upon investigation of such concerns as, the Department's reliance on foster care and the difficulty of successfully closing cases.

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Research and Evaluation collected case record information about children reported to D.P.W. in May 1978 as needing protective services.¹ Results show that approximately one third of these children were subsequently assessed in based on D.P.W. or private agency assessments or they were already active at the time of the report. Assessed in and already active children² were those children determined to be at risk of harm because they were "suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon [them] including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition," or because they were "determined to be physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth."³

This report focuses on the treatment of those children who were assessed in or already active in May 1978. Case records of the children were re-examined, approximately one year after the children entered D.P.W. care, in order to determine the following:

- case assessment (including: assessment responsibility and services recommended);
- case activity (including: length of time until services received, length of time services received, foster care, counseling, stressful events, and subsequent reports);
- case closure (including: status of cases, reason for case closings, and a comparison of open and successfully closed cases).

A statewide description of the protective services provided to children and their families is presented and, where appropriate, variations among D.P.W.'s six administrative regions are highlighted.

METHODOLOGY

Instrument

The instrument used to review case records was based upon the original instrument used by the Office of Research and Evaluation to collect information on children reported in May 1978. Additional items, designed to determine characteristics of the services received by children and their families, were incorporated. All items required primarily factual information and minimized judgmental decisions by reviewers.

Data Collection

Six reviewers conducted the case reviews. The training which reviewers received included descriptions of D.P.W.'s protective service intake and treatment procedures, and extensive practice using the case review instrument. Most data were collected by the reviewers from August through October, 1979.

Completion Rate

In its study of cases reported to D.P.W. in May 1978, the Office of Research and Evaluation included 513 children from 306 families who were assessed in or already active. Reviewers re-examined the records of 423 children. This report includes data involving 413 children from 243 families.^{4,5}

Cautions

The following three cautions should be remembered when interpreting the findings reported here. First, this report is based totally on case record information and is only as reliable as those case records. Thus, it is possible that certain regional variations may reflect different record keeping practices. Second, because not all case records were as detailed as the instrument required, some missing data resulted. Missing most often were dates of service recommendation and service delivery. Percentages should, therefore, be regarded as minimum estimates only. Third, the population used for this study may not be representative of all cases assessed in by D.P.W.

CASE ASSESSMENT

Assessment Responsibility (See Table 1)

Cases were assessed by D.P.W. at regional or Community Service Area (C.S.A.) offices or by private agencies.

- Statewide, 53% of the children reported in May 1978 received assessments by D.P.W. staff: 47% were assessed at a regional office and 6% were assessed at the C.S.A. level. New Bedford (13%) had the highest proportion of children assessed at the C.S.A. level.
- Private agencies were responsible for assessing 7% of the children.
- Statewide, 32% of reported children were already active cases and, thus, did not require assessment following the May 1978 report. Worcester (57%) and New Bedford (42%) had the highest rates of already active cases.
- Assessment responsibility for 8% of reported children could not be determined from the case records.

Services Recommended (See Table 2)

Services which were recommended during assessment are distinguished from services which were received. For the purposes of this report, a service was considered to have been recommended and/or received only if there was written indication of such recommendation and/or receipt in the record. By this definition, while a certain number of children did not receive the services which were recommended during assessment, a much larger number received services which had not been recommended. These latter services may, in fact, have been recommended by assessment workers but not recorded in the case records, or they may have been recommended by treatment workers after assessments had been completed.

A variety of protective services were recommended for assessed in and already active children.

- Statewide, 70% of the children had at least one service recommended for them or for their families. Children in Greater Boston (82%) and Boston (78%) were most likely to have had any services recommended, while children in Worcester (35%) and Springfield (53%) were least likely to have had any services recommended.
- The average number of services recommended per child, statewide, was 1.3. Greater Boston (1.9) and Boston (1.7) workers recommended the most services per child. Workers in Worcester (0.7) and New Bedford (0.9) recommended the fewest.

--Statewide, D.P.W. counseling (29%), foster placement (21%), and psychological services provided by non-D.P.W. staff (34%) were the services recommended for the most children and their families. Day care (13%), homemaker services (14%), group care (2%), and adoption (1%) were also recommended.

CASE ACTIVITY

Protective services were provided to most assessed in and already active children or to their families during the year following the May 1978 report.⁶ Most services were provided directly by D.P.W. staff or by D.P.W. contractors (e.g., group care and foster placement). However, many other agencies were also providing crucial support services for these families.

Length of Time Until Services Received (See Table 3)

Certain services were received much sooner after recommendation than were others.⁷

- Foster placements (16 days) were received sooner after recommendation than any other service.
- Children or their parents received D.P.W. counseling (32 days) and homemaker services (35 days) approximately one month after recommendations were made.
- Day care (59 days) was received nearly two months, on average, after being recommended.
- Group care (138 days) took the longest to arrange.*

Services Received (See Table 4)

Some services were received by more children and their families than were others.

- The average number of services received per child, statewide, was 1.9. Children received the most services on average in Lawrence (2.3) and Greater Boston (2.1). New Bedford (1.5) and Boston (1.7) children received the fewest services on average.

*Interpret cautiously--number of cases is small.

--Statewide, services received by the most children and their families were psychological services by non-D.P.W. staff (53%), emergency and/or ongoing foster placement (45%), and D.P.W. counseling (40%). Day care (15%), homemaker services (16%), and group care (5%) were also received. A variety of other services, including visiting nurses, core evaluations, and medical treatment, were received by 15% of the children.

--Statewide, 11% or 45 children had no indication in their case records of any treatment. Of these 45 children, 11 had moved or disappeared and 5 were determined not to be at risk. Thus, while there may have been contact between the treatment worker and the child or family, the case records indicate that 7% or 29 children did not receive any specific protective services.

Substantial regional differences were found in the types of services received.

--Children in Worcester (22%) and Lawrence (20%) were more likely to have received day care than children in other regions. Boston (8%) and Greater Boston (8%) children were least likely to be placed in day care.

--Homemaker services were provided most often in Greater Boston (29%) and Boston (25%), but were rarely received in Springfield (7%).

- D.P.W. counseling for children or their parents was received by the majority of cases in Lawrence (64%). However, D.P.W. counseling was received by only one third of the cases in Worcester (30%) and Greater Boston (33%).
- Psychological services from non-D.P.W. staff were received by approximately half of the cases in most regions. Children and their families in Boston (41%) were least likely to receive this service.
- Group care was provided most often for children in Greater Boston (18%).
- Children in Worcester (55%) and Greater Boston (53%) were most likely to be placed in emergency and/or ongoing foster care. Children least likely to receive foster placement were in Boston (37%).

Length of Time Services Received (See Table 5)

Some services were received for longer periods of time than were others.⁸

- D.P.W. counseling was the service which was received the longest on average (320 days).
- Children received ongoing foster placement for approximately ten months on average (302 days).
- The length of emergency foster placement was one month on average (31 days).
- Day care was provided for almost seven months (204 days).
- Homemaker services were provided for five months on average (154 days).
- Children spent almost four months (114 days) in group care.

Foster Care (See Tables 6 and 7)

Foster care was one of the most common protective services received by assessed in and already active children.

--Statewide, almost half (45%) of assessed in and already active children had at least one foster placement (emergency and/or ongoing) during the year following the May 1978 report. Children in Boston (37%) and New Bedford (38%) were the least likely to be placed in foster care. However, over half of the children in Greater Boston (53%) and Worcester (55%) received foster care.

--At the time of the case review,⁹ 30% of all assessed in and already active children were still in foster placement. Greater Boston (43%) children were most likely to still be in foster care. Children least likely to be in care a year following the May 1978 report were in Lawrence (24%).

--Worcester and Lawrence children had a much greater likelihood of returning home from foster care than children in other regions.

Children who received foster care and those who did not differed with respect to family background.

--Foster children (25%) were more likely to be minority children than those not in care (13%). Boston (74%) had many more minority children in foster care than other regions.

--Foster children (80%) were more likely to be from families who derived at least part of their incomes from AFDC or GR than children not in foster care (65%).

--Foster children (60%) were also somewhat more likely to be from single parent families than those not in care (53%). A substantial number of foster children in Worcester (83%) were from homes with only one parent present.

--Statewide, foster children were as likely to be boys as girls with an average age of 7.3 years.¹⁰ Foster children in Springfield (3.0 years) were substantially younger and Greater Boston children (8.7 years) were much older than children in other regions.

--Almost one half (45%) of foster children, statewide, had emotional and/or developmental problems noted in their case records. Foster children in Worcester (63%) were most likely to have these problems.

--There were no differences between foster children and children not in care with respect to age, sex, and the presence of emotional and/or developmental problems.

The following discussion concerns only the 185 children who received emergency and/or ongoing foster care.

--Children in Greater Boston (47 days) and Lawrence (18 days) waited the longest to be placed in foster care. Children in all other regions received placements almost immediately.

--Statewide, children received ongoing foster placement for ten months (302 days) on average.⁸ Children in Springfield (343 days) received the most ongoing foster care, while children in Lawrence (264 days) received the least.

- Statewide, most children (54%) were in placement for more than six months, with an additional 10% in permanent placements. Only 12% of foster children were in care for one month or less, 7% received from one to three months of foster care, and 12% were in placements from three to six months. Springfield (38%) had the highest proportion of children in permanent placements.
- While the majority of children (61%), statewide, were in only one emergency or ongoing placement since the May 1978 report, a large number were in two or more placements: 27% were in two placements; 8% were in three placements; and 5% were in four or more placements. Children in Springfield (92%) and Worcester (74%) were most likely to remain in one placement, whereas, children in Greater Boston (41%) were least likely to remain in their original foster placements.
- The majority of children (55%) were placed under a voluntary legal status. Springfield differed from other regions with only 23% of children placed with a voluntary status.
- Most placements were with foster parents who were unrelated to the children (72%), with 20% of children in placements with relatives.¹¹ Children were most likely to be placed with relatives in Boston (39%) and in Greater Boston (33%).
- Statewide, 65% of children were visited by parents while they were in foster care; 21% were not visited. Children were most likely to be visited by their parents in Lawrence (79%).
- Statewide, social workers recommended continued foster placement or adoption for 43% of the children who received placement.¹²

Counseling (See Table 8)

Counseling was received by more families than any other service.¹³

It was provided by D.P.W. social workers, by a broad range of professionals in other public and private agencies, and by private practitioners.

--Statewide, 25% of assessed in and already active children received counseling. Boston (33%) and Greater Boston (29%) children were most likely to be counseled. Approximately one fifth of the counseling received by children consisted of a psychological evaluation only. The remaining children received longer term, traditional therapy. Children in counseling were 10 years old¹⁰ on average and were as likely to be boys as girls.

--At the time of the case review,⁹ 13% were still receiving counseling. Boston (27%) and Greater Boston (20%) children were most likely to be in counseling a year after the May 1978 report.

--Parents were much more likely to be in counseling than were children. Statewide, 71% of the children had parents who received counseling. The majority of parents in all regions were counseled, with parents in Lawrence (87%) most likely to have received counseling and parents in Boston (55%) and New Bedford (58%) least likely to have received counseling. Counseling for parents generally focused on parenting skills.

--Statewide, D.P.W. counseling was received for almost eleven months (320 days) on average.⁸ Children and their parents in Worcester (244 days) received the least counseling.

Stressful Events (See Table 9)

Children and their families have experienced many stressful events since May 1978. For the purposes of this report, a stressful event was defined as a change or ongoing condition in the life of the child or his or her family which has a high probability of producing psychological stress in the child. An event involving the child or a member of the child's immediate family was considered to potentially affect the child. The following data do not a) purport to be inclusive of all stressful events occurring in a family, b) indicate the number of times a particular event occurred (e.g., multiple relocations or hospitalizations), or c) evaluate the effect of such changes on the child. The findings do, however, present a picture of families undergoing many potentially stressful changes in their lives.

- The most common stressful events were relocation, including family relocation and movement of the child to or from foster or group care, (69%), and legal involvement with D.P.W. concerning protective service custody issues (62%).
- Statewide, a substantial number of children or members of their families were hospitalized for medical (17%) or psychological (12%) reasons.
- Many children were in families with members experiencing psychological problems not requiring hospitalization (53%). Medical problems not requiring hospitalization affected 15% of the children, statewide.
- Serious marital stress or marital change, including divorce, separation, and remarriage, was noted in 32% of the case records, statewide.

- More than one fourth of the children (27%) were in need of special services in school or were CHINS (Children in Need of Services) referrals.
- Alcohol or drug abuse by the children themselves or by their parents or siblings played a significant part in the lives of 17% of the children.
- Statewide, 8% of the children were in families where there was criminal involvement, including arrest and/or imprisonment.
- Pregnancies, births, miscarriages, or abortions occurred in the families of 16% of the children.
- There were job changes, including loss of job, in the families of 11% of the children.
- Physical abuse of a family member, including child abuse and spouse battering, affected 17% of the children.
- Statewide, 8% of the children had a change of social worker during the year.
- Death of a family member was experienced by 4% of the children.

Subsequent Reports (See Table 10)

A certain number of children were again reported to D.P.W. as needing protective services while their cases were active with D.P.W. or a private agency.

--Statewide, 17% of the children who were assessed in or already active in May 1978 were rereported at least once during the year following the initial report.¹⁴

New Bedford (9%) had the lowest rereport rate. Greater Boston (40%) had a substantially higher rereport rate than other regions.

--As with the initial reports, the majority of children were rereported for neglect (56%). Reports of abuse were made for 20%, both neglect and abuse for 14%, and sexual abuse for 3% of the children.

--Children were most likely to be rereported by hospital/clinic personnel (14%), law enforcement officials/medical examiners/probation officers (11%), teachers/school administrators (11%), or by their friends or neighbors (11%).

--Reporters were more likely to be mandated³ (51%) than non-mandated (27%), with 10% reporting anonymously.

CASE CLOSURE

The protective services procedures manual suggests that services should be provided, "so as to substantially reduce, within 6-12 months, the probability of further harm".¹⁵ The option of extending services is available if, in the judgment of the Department, the family situation has not improved sufficiently.

Status of Cases (See Table 11)

Data suggest that, in most cases, workers were not able to reduce the risk of harm to the point where the cases could be closed.

--Statewide, 72% of the cases were still open at the time of the case review⁹; 67% were active D.P.W. cases and 5% were active cases at private agencies.

--Approximately one fourth (27%) of the cases, statewide, had been closed in the year following the May 1978 report. Springfield (47%) closed a greater proportion of cases than other regions.

Reason for Case Closings (See Table 11)

Not all cases which were closed can be considered to have been successful. For a case to have been closed successfully, the risk of harm to the children involved must have been reduced sufficiently in the judgment of the Department.

--The cases of only one fifth (20%) of assessed in and already active children were closed successfully at the time of the case review.

--Statewide, children were no longer considered by their social workers to be at risk of abuse or neglect in 72% of the closed cases. All case closings in New Bedford appear to have been successful.

--Children whose families moved out of state or disappeared accounted for 20% of case closings, statewide.¹⁶ It would not be wise to assume that cases removed from the Department's jurisdiction were successful closings. Family relocation or disappearance was the reason for the majority of case closings in Boston (79%).

--Statewide, 12 of the 23 children who moved out of state or disappeared were Hispanic; 7 of the children were white. In Boston, 9 of the 11 children who moved or disappeared were Hispanic.

Comparison of Open and Successfully Closed Cases (See Table 12)

A comparison of cases which were successfully closed and cases which were still open at time of the case review found the following differences.

- Children whose cases were closed successfully were somewhat older (8.4 years) than those with cases still open (7.4 years).¹⁰
- Workers had little success closing cases involving minority children. While 24% of open cases involved minorities, only 8% of successful closings were minority children. Specifically, no case closings involved black children, whereas, 9% of open cases were black. Only 3% of case closings were Hispanic as compared to 9% of open cases.
- Children with open cases (21%) were much more likely to have been reported to D.P.W. again during the year following the initial report than children whose cases were successfully closed (4%). Similarly, children whose cases were open (86%) were more likely to have indications of previous abuse or neglect in their records than children with closed cases (78%).

- Children with open cases (22%) were more likely than children with successfully closed cases (11%) to have been reported for both neglect and abuse.
- While children with successfully closed cases and those with open cases were just as likely to have received some type of protective services, successfully closed cases received fewer services on average (1.7) than open cases (2.1).
- Open cases were much more likely than closed cases to have received day care, group care, long and short-term foster care, and homemaker services.
- While children in open cases (29%) were more likely to have received counseling (D.P.W. and non-D.P.W.) than children in successfully closed cases (16%), their parents (73%) were somewhat less likely than parents in closed cases (82%) to have received counseling.
- Children whose cases were still open (4.3) had experienced substantially more stressful events during the year than children whose cases were subsequently closed (2.9).

It appears that successfully closed cases received fewer services on average, and in particular less foster care, than open cases, because there was less need for such services. Specifically, there was less evidence of neglectful and abusive activity, both before and after the May 1978 report, and fewer stressful events in cases closed successfully.

FUTURE CONCERNS

Appropriate treatment is related to the needs of the families being served. The case records of these families indicate a staggering amount of change going on in their lives. Because changing family situations suggest changing treatment needs, matching treatment to need becomes a formidable task. Keeping this difficulty in mind, researchers and policy makers should nevertheless begin to address the more salient concerns raised by the findings of this report.

It was assumed that assessed in and already active children were referred for protective service treatment because they were in need of such services.

Were services recommended and received commensurate with the needs of the clients?

Some services were recommended more often and some were provided more often than others.

Did availability of services influence which services were recommended and which services were received?

Almost half of the children studied were placed in foster care and remained there for a long time.

Why was foster care, intended to be the treatment of last resort, relied upon so often? Had others methods been tried and failed, were other treatment modes inappropriate, or were they unavailable at the time they were needed?

Protective service workers were able to successfully close only one fifth of assessed in and already active cases within one year of the May 1978 report.

Why were so few cases closed? Why was there even less success closing cases involving minority children?

The Department of Social Services (DSS) will assume responsibility for protective service cases on July 1, 1980. With the number of reports of abuse and neglect and the number of cases in care increasing at alarming rates, empirical investigation of the questions surrounding service delivery and case closure is of crucial importance to future policy development. It is only after these questions have been answered that DSS can begin to assess the quality and effectiveness of the treatment received by children and their families.

NOTES

1. Protective Service Reports in May 1978: A Preliminary Description, Office of Research and Evaluation, March 1979.
2. Assessed in children were determined at risk of harm and, therefore, in need of ongoing protective services, as a result of the May 1978 report. Already active children were already receiving protective services in May 1978, as a result of a previous report and assessment.
3. M.G.L. Chapter 119, Section 51A.
4. Ten children, identified in May 1978 as assessed in or already active, were in fact assessed out. They were excluded from the present study.
5. The sample used for this study (N = 413) was demographically comparable to the assessed in and already active population identified in May 1978 (N = 513). Mean age, sex, and ethnicity did not differ significantly. Protective service histories, specifically, indications of previous abuse or neglect and reports of abuse or neglect, were similar as were the report types of the May 1978 incidents.
6. Certain services, such as day care, group care, foster placement, and adoption were provided directly to children. Others, such as homemaker services, were provided to parents. Counseling was provided most often to parents but also to children. Percentages used in this discussion refer to children. Thus, 1) results concerning homemaker services should be interpreted as the percentage of children with parents who received this service; and 2) results concerning counseling services should be interpreted as the percentage of children and/or children with parents who received counseling.
7. The time between recommendation and receipt of a service could only be calculated for those children who received the services which had been recommended for them or their parents.
8. The maximum possible service delivery time for all cases was from May 1, 1978 until July 31, 1979, or 15 months.
9. Case review was always at least 14 months after the May 1978 report.
10. Age at the time of the May 1978 report.
11. The relationship of foster parents with 8% of the foster children was unclear from the case records.
12. Specifically, workers recommended securing release for adoption or permanent placement for 21% of children, continuing placement "as is" for 17%, and finding a new foster home for 5%. No recommendations were found in the case records of 22%. And, 34% of the children were no longer in placement at the time of the case review, having been returned home.
13. Counseling includes D.P.W. counseling and psychological services by non-D.P.W. staff.
14. Interestingly, 17% of children screened out in May 1978 were also re-reported: Screened Out Protective Service Reports: Who is Rereported?, Office of Research and Evaluation, February 1980.
15. Social Services Letter 24, March 27, 1978, I-80.
16. The cases of 8% of the children were closed for other reasons.

TABLE 1
ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITY¹

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Regional Office	49%(24) ²	50%(15)	38%(24)	55%(68)	65%(33)	32%(31)	47%(195)
C.S.A.	8 (4)	3 (1)	0 (0)	2 (3)	8 (4)	13 (12)	6 (24)
Private Agency	0 (0)	3 (1)	3 (2)	10 (12)	2 (1)	11 (11)	7 (27)
No Assessment Needed/Already Active Case	18 (9)	23 (7)	57 (36)	26 (32)	18 (9)	42 (40)	32 (133)
Unknown	24 (12)	20 (6)	2 (1)	7 (9)	8 (4)	2 (2)	8 (34)

¹Percentages in all tables have been rounded and may not always add to 100%.

²Numbers in parentheses represent the number of cases having this characteristic.

TABLE 2
SERVICES RECOMMENDED

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Average Number Services Recommended ³	1.7	1.0	0.7	1.5	1.9	0.9	1.3
Any Services Recommended	78%(38)	53%(16)	35%(22)	77%(95)	82%(42)	70%(67)	70%(280)
Day Care	23%(11)	3% (1)	3% (2)	17%(21)	14% (7)	12%(11)	13% (53)
Homemaker	31%(15)	3% (1)	2% (1)	19%(23)	26%(13)	6% (6)	14% (59)
D.P.W. Counseling	18% (9)	17% (5)	25%(16)	52%(65)	29%(15)	9% (9)	29%(119)
Psychological Services by Non-D.P.W. Staff	57%(28)	33%(10)	8% (5)	27%(33)	59%(30)	34%(33)	34%(139)
Group Care	6% (3)	3% (1)	2% (1)	0% (0)	6 (3)	1% (1)	2% (9)
Foster Placement	18% (9)	33%(10)	18%(11)	19%(24)	33%(17)	16%(15)	21% (86)
Adoption	0% (0)	0% (0)	3% (2)	0% (0)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1% (3)
Other Services	12% (6)	10% (3)	6% (4)	20%(25)	20%(10)	7% (7)	13% (55)

³The average number of services recommended, computed for all assessed in and already active children, is equal to:
$$\frac{\text{number of services recommended}}{\text{number of children}}$$

TABLE 3
 LENGTH OF TIME UNTIL SERVICES RECEIVED⁴

	Average Number of Days Between Recommendation of Service and Receipt of Service (N=413)	
Day Care	59 days	(21)
Homemaker	35	(35)
D.P.W. Counseling	32	(82)
Group Care	138*	(4)
Foster Placement	16	(78)

⁴This could only be computed for those cases having both a date of recommendation and a date of receipt in the case records.

* Interpret cautiously--small number of cases.

TABLE 4
SERVICES RECEIVED

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Average Number Services Received ⁵	1.7	1.9	1.8	2.3	2.1	1.5	1.9
Any Services Received	69%(34)	97%(29)	98%(62)	94%(117)	92%(47)	82%(79)	89%(368)
Day Care	8% (4)	13% (4)	22%(14)	20% (25)	8% (4)	10%(10)	15% (61)
Homemaker	25%(12)	7% (2)	10% (6)	18% (22)	29%(15)	10%(10)	16% (67)
D.P.W. Counseling	37%(18)	47%(14)	30%(19)	64% (79)	33%(17)	19%(18)	40%(165)
Psychological Services by Non-D.P.W. Staff	41%(20)	53%(16)	56%(35)	57% (71)	49%(25)	55%(53)	53%(220)
Group Care	6% (3)	0% (0)	2% (1)	5% (6)	18% (9)	1% (1)	5% (20)
Any Foster Placement	37%(18)	43%(13)	55%(35)	45% (56)	53%(27)	38%(36)	45%(185)
Emergency/ Shortterm	2% (1)	10% (3)	13% (8)	14% (17)	14% (7)	3% (3)	9% (39)
Ongoing/ Longterm	37%(18)	37%(11)	43%(27)	36% (45)	47%(24)	34%(33)	38%(158)
Adoption	0% (0)	3% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	41% (1)
Other Services	18% (9)	20% (6)	10% (6)	18% (22)	14% (7)	14%(13)	15% (63)

⁵The average number of services received, computed for all assessed in and already active children, is equal to:
$$\frac{\text{number of services received}}{\text{number of children}}$$

TABLE 5
 LENGTH OF TIME SERVICES RECEIVED⁶

	Average Number of Days Service Was Received ⁷	
	(N=413)	
Day Care	204 days	(46)
Homemaker	154	(58)
D.P.W. Counseling	320	(122)
Group Care	114	(16)
Foster Placement		
Emergency/Shortterm	31	(36)
Ongoing/Longterm	302	(151)

⁶For some cases, no dates of service delivery were available and these time periods could not be computed.

⁷The maximum possible service delivery period for all cases was from May 1, 1978 until July 31, 1979.

TABLE 6
FOSTER CARE⁸

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Children Who Received Foster Placement	37%(18)	43%(13)	55%(35)	45%(56)	53%(27)	38%(36)	45%(185)
Child Still Receiving Foster Placement at Time of Case Review	29%(14)	30% (9)	27%(17)	24%(30)	43%(22)	31%(30)	30%(122)
	(N=18)	(N=13)	(N=35)	(N=56)	(N=27)	(N=36)	(N=185)
Average Number of Days Until Foster Care Received	2 (9)	1 (7)	1 (9)	18 (24)	47 (15)	3 (14)	16 (78)
Average Number of Days Foster Care Was Received ^{7,9}	306 (17)	343 (11)	307 (26)	264 (45)	320 (20)	323 (32)	302 (151)
Number of Placements Since May 1978							
One	66%(12)	92%(12)	74%(26)	55%(31)	41%(11)	55%(20)	61%(112)
Two	22 (4)	8 (1)	14 (5)	38 (21)	30 (8)	31 (11)	27 (50)
Three	6 (1)	0 (0)	11 (4)	7 (4)	11 (3)	6 (2)	8 (14)
Four	6 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	3 (1)	2 (3)
Five	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Six	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (2)	3 (1)	2 (3)
Unknown	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	3 (1)	1 (2)
Length of Time Child In Placement(s)							
1-14 days	0% (0)	8% (1)	14% (5)	5% (3)	4% (1)	0% (0)	5% (10)
15-30 days	0 (0)	8 (1)	9 (3)	13 (7)	0 (0)	6 (2)	7 (13)
1-3 months	11 (2)	8 (1)	9 (3)	7 (4)	0 (0)	8 (3)	7 (13)
3-6 months	11 (2)	8 (1)	9 (3)	13 (7)	11 (3)	17 (6)	12 (22)
More than 6 months ¹⁰	50 (9)	23 (3)	60 (21)	50 (28)	59 (16)	61 (22)	54 (99)
Permanent Placement	11 (2)	38 (5)	0 (0)	13 (7)	7 (2)	6 (2)	10 (18)
Unknown	17 (3)	8 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	19 (5)	3 (1)	5 (10)

⁷The maximum possible service delivery period for all cases was from May 1, 1978 until July 31, 1979.

⁸Includes both emergency/shortterm and ongoing/longterm foster care.

⁹For ongoing/longterm placement only.

¹⁰No decision as yet to make placement permanent.

TABLE 6

FOSTER CARE⁸
(continued)

	BOSTON (N=18)	SPRING- FIELD (N=13)	WORCESTER (N=35)	LAWRENCE (N=56)	GREATER BOSTON (N=27)	NEW BEDFORD (N=36)	STATE- WIDE (N=185)
Legal Status of Placement							
Voluntary	50% (9)	23% (3)	60% (21)	59% (33)	52% (14)	61% (22)	55% (102)
Involuntary	50 (9)	62 (8)	40 (14)	41 (23)	44 (12)	39 (14)	43 (80)
Unknown	0 (0)	15 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Foster Parents							
Related	39% (7)	8% (1)	9% (3)	23% (13)	33% (9)	11% (4)	20% (37)
Not Related	56 (10)	77 (10)	91 (32)	75 (42)	44 (12)	75 (27)	72 (133)
Unknown	6 (1)	15 (2)	0 (0)	2 (1)	22 (6)	14 (5)	8 (15)
Parent(s) Visited Child							
Yes	67% (12)	54% (7)	69% (24)	79% (44)	52% (14)	56% (20)	65% (121)
No	33 (6)	31 (4)	11 (4)	11 (6)	30 (8)	28 (10)	21 (38)
Unknown	0 (0)	15 (2)	20 (7)	11 (6)	19 (5)	17 (6)	14 (26)
Recommendation Regarding Placement ¹¹							
Permanent Placement or Secure Release for Adoption	33% (6)	46% (6)	23% (8)	9% (5)	26% (7)	17% (6)	21% (38)
Continue Placement As Is	6 (1)	8 (1)	17 (6)	21 (12)	22 (6)	14 (5)	17 (31)
Find New Foster Home	17 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (3)	4 (1)	6 (2)	5 (9)
Return Child to Parent(s)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (3)	2 (4)
No Recommendation	22 (4)	15 (2)	6 (2)	18 (10)	30 (8)	39 (14)	22 (40)
Child No Longer in Placement -- Returned Home	22 (4)	31 (4)	51 (18)	46 (26)	19 (5)	17 (6)	34 (63)

⁸Includes both emergency/shortterm and ongoing/longterm foster care.¹¹For most recent placement.

TABLE 7

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

	BOSTON (N=18)	SPRING- FIELD (N=13)	WORCESTER (N=35)	LAWRENCE (N=56)	GREATER BOSTON (N=27)	NEW BEDFORD (N=36)	STATE- WIDE (N=185)
Mean Age ¹²	7.1	3.0	8.1	6.7	8.7	8.1	7.3
Sex							
Male	61%(11)	38%(5)	40%(14)	50%(28)	56%(15)	44%(16)	48% (89)
Female	39 (7)	46 (6)	60 (21)	50 (28)	41 (11)	56 (20)	50 (93)
Unknown	0 (0)	15 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Ethnicity ¹³							
White	27% (4)	64%(7)	68%(23)	89%(47)	91%(21)	74%(26)	75%(128)
Black	60 (9)	9 (1)	6 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	7 (13)
Hispanic	7 (1)	18 (2)	12 (4)	6 (3)	9 (2)	3 (1)	7 (13)
Other	7 (1)	9 (1)	15 (5)	6 (3)	0 (0)	20 (7)	10 (17)
Family Receiving AFDC or GR	67%(12)	85%(11)	80%(28)	84%(47)	67%(18)	86%(31)	80%(147)
Single Parent Household	61%(11)	54% (7)	83%(29)	52%(29)	63%(17)	50%(18)	60%(111)
Emotional and/or Developmental Problems Noted	44% (8)	46% (6)	63%(22)	36%(20)	44%(12)	44%(16)	45% (84)
Report Type							
Neglect Only	56%(10)	62% (8)	60%(21)	61%(34)	37%(10)	64%(23)	57%(106)
Abuse Only	11 (2)	7 (1)	23 (8)	16 (9)	7 (2)	14 (5)	15 (27)
Neglect and Abuse	33 (6)	23 (3)	6 (2)	21 (12)	37 (10)	19 (7)	22 (40)
Sexual Abuse	0 (0)	7 (1)	3 (1)	2 (1)	11 (3)	3 (1)	4 (7)
None ¹⁴	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (3)	0 (0)	7 (2)	0 (0)	3 (5)

¹²Age at the time of May 1978 report.

¹³Ethnicity percentages are based only on those cases for which the information was available in the case record.

¹⁴For some children, a report was filed with no clear description of symptoms.

TABLE 8
COUNSELING SERVICES¹⁵

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Children Who Received Counseling ¹⁶	33%(16)	23% (7)	21%(13)	23% (29)	29%(15)	24%(23)	25%(103)
Children Still Receiving Counseling at Time of Case Review	27%(13)	13% (4)	6% (4)	11% (14)	20%(10)	10%(10)	13% (55)
Children Whose Parent(s) Received Counseling	55%(27)	67%(20)	58%(43)	87%(108)	78%(40)	58%(56)	71%(294)
Average Number of Days D.P.W. Counseling Was Received ¹⁷	324% (9)	322 (12)	244 (14)	334 (75)	261* (3)	326 (9)	320 (122)

¹⁵ Includes D.P.W. counseling and psychological services by non-D.P.W. staff.

¹⁶ Mean Age: 10.1 years
Sex: Male (52%), Female (48%)

¹⁷ The maximum possible service delivery period for all cases was from May 1, 1978 until July 31, 1979.

* Interpret cautiously--small number of cases.

TABLE 9
STRESSFUL EVENTS¹⁸

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Average Number of Different Stress- ful Events	4.2	4.4	3.3	3.9	5.6	3.2	3.9
Death in Family	14% (7)	7% (2)	2% (1)	2% (3)	4% (2)	3% (3)	4% (18)
Hospitalization -Medical ¹⁹	25%(12)	37%(11)	8% (5)	16%(20)	30%(15)	8% (8)	17% (71)
Hospitalization -Psychological ¹⁹	4% (2)	10% (3)	13% (8)	18%(22)	8% (4)	12%(11)	12% (50)
Medical Problem	22%(11)	17% (5)	25%(16)	7% (9)	29%(15)	4% (4)	15% (60)
Psychological Problem	57%(28)	70%(21)	10% (6)	57%(70)	73%(37)	60%(58)	53%(220)
Relocation	78%(38)	73%(22)	62%(39)	70%(87)	77%(39)	63%(60)	69%(285)
Marital Problem	14% (7)	30% (9)	14% (9)	32%(40)	59%(30)	39%(37)	32%(132)
Job Change	2% (1)	10% (3)	18%(11)	11%(14)	18% (9)	9% (9)	11% (47)
Pregnancy, Birth, Miscarriage, Abortion	20%(10)	23% (7)	22%(14)	16%(20)	16% (8)	8% (8)	16% (67)
Alcohol or Drug Abuse	14% (7)	37%(11)	10% (6)	13%(16)	35%(18)	13%(12)	17% (70)
Criminal Involvement	16% (8)	10% (3)	0% (0)	6% (7)	26%(13)	1% (1)	8% (32)
Protective Service Legal Involvement with D.P.W.	63%(31)	53%(16)	78%(49)	60%(74)	69%(35)	52%(50)	62%(255)
Special School Services or CHINS	47%(23)	7% (2)	11% (7)	36%(44)	45%(23)	13%(12)	27%(111)
Change of Social Worker	6% (3)	7% (2)	5% (3)	9%(11)	24%(12)	2% (2)	8% (33)
Violence in Family	18% (9)	17% (5)	10% (6)	15%(19)	20%(10)	21%(20)	17% (69)

¹⁸In family during year following May 1978 report.

¹⁹Problem did not require hospitalization.

TABLE 10

SUBSEQUENT REPORTS

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=143)
Children Rereported Since May 1978 ²⁰	16%(8)	23%(7)	13%(8)	15%(18)	40%(20)	9%(9)	17%(70)
Report Source ²¹							(N=70)
Child							1% (1)
Parent/Guardian							4 (3)
Relative							9 (6)
Friend/Neighbor							11 (8)
Private Physician							1 (1)
Hospital/Clinic Personnel							14 (10)
Law Enforcement/ Medical Examiner/ Probation Officer							11 (8)
D.P.W. Social Worker							9 (6)
Social Worker-Private or Public Agency							7 (5)
Teacher/School Administrator							11 (8)
School Personnel							4 (3)
Anonymous							11 (8)
Other							1 (1)
Unknown							3 (2)
Report Source ²¹							
Mandated							51%(36)
Non-Mandated							27 (19)
Anonymous							10 (7)
Unknown							11 (8)
Report Type ²¹							
Neglect Only							56%(39)
Abuse Only							20 (14)
Neglect and Abuse							14 (10)
Sexual Abuse							3 (2)
None ¹⁴							7 (5)

²⁰Some of these children were reported more than once since May 1978.

²¹For most recent rereport.

¹⁴For some children, a report was filed with no clear description of symptoms.

TABLE 11
CASE CLOSURE

	BOSTON (N=49)	SPRING- FIELD (N=30)	WORCESTER (N=63)	LAWRENCE (N=124)	GREATER BOSTON (N=51)	NEW BEDFORD (N=96)	STATE- WIDE (N=413)
Status of Case ²²							
Active with DPW	65%(32)	37%(11)	75%(47)	71%(88)	71%(36)	66%(63)	67%(227)
Active with Private Agency	6 (3)	10 (3)	2 (1)	6 (7)	6 (3)	4 (4)	5 (21)
Closed	29 (14)	47 (14)	24 (15)	23 (29)	24 (12)	30 (29)	27 (113)
Reason for Closing Case	(N=14)	(N=14)	(N=15)	(N=29)	(N=12)	(N=29)	(N=113)
Child No Longer at Risk	21% (3)	64% (9)	67%(10)	76%(22)	67% (8)	100%(29)	72% (81)
Family Moved Out of State or Disappeared	79 (11)	29 (4)	27 (4)	3 (1)	25 (3)	0 (0)	20 (23)
Other Reason	0 (0)	7 (1)	7 (1)	21 (6)	8 (1)	0 (0)	8 (9)

²²Reviewers were unable to determine the status of two cases.

TABLE 12

CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN AND SUCCESSFULLY CLOSED CASES

	CASE STILL OPEN ²³ (N=298)	CASE CLOSED SUCCESSFULLY (N=81)
Mean Age ¹²	7.4	8.4
Sex		
Male	50%(149)	51%(41)
Female	49 (147)	49 (40)
Unknown	1 (2)	0 (0)
Ethnicity ¹³		
White	77%(203)	92%(69)
Black	9 (23)	0 (0)
Hispanic	9 (23)	3 (2)
Other	6 (15)	5 (4)
Emotional and/or Developmental Problem Noted	43%(129)	42%(34)
Single Parent Household	57%(170)	51%(41)
Report Type in May 1978		
Neglect Only	58%(174)	63%(51)
Abuse Only	14 (41)	16 (13)
Neglect and Abuse	22 (65)	11 (9)
Sexual Abuse	3 (10)	10 (8)
None ¹⁴	3 (8)	0 (0)
Protective Service History Before May 1978		
Indications Child Previously Abused or Neglected	86%(256)	78%(63)
Report of Abuse or Neglect Previously Filed	54%(160)	56%(45)
Report Filed After May 1978	21% (64)	4% (3)

²³At the time of the case review.

¹²At the time of the May 1978 report.

¹³Ethnicity percentages are based only on those cases for which information was available in the case record.

¹⁴For some children, a report was filed with no clear description of symptoms.

TABLE 12
 CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN AND SUCCESSFULLY CLOSED CASES
 (continued)

	CASE STILL OPEN ²³ (N=298)	CASE CLOSED SUCCESSFULLY (N=81)
Services Received		
Average Number Services Received	2.1	1.7
Any Services Received	92%(275)	94%(76)
Day Care	18% (54)	7% (6)
Homemaker	19% (58)	11% (9)
D.P.W. Counseling	40%(120)	47%(38)
Group Care	7% (20)	0% (0)
Any Foster Placement	51%(153)	23%(19)
Emergency/Shortterm	10% (29)	5% (4)
Ongoing/Longterm	45%(134)	21%(17)
Adoption	0% (0)	1% (1)
Psychological Services by Non-D.P.W. Staff and Other Services	70%(208)	74%(60)
Child Received Counseling	29% (85)	16%(13)
Child Whose Parent(s) Received Counseling	73%(216)	82%(66)
Average Number of Different Life Events	4.3	2.9

²³At the time of the case review.

