



eCOMMONS

Loyola University Chicago
Loyola eCommons

Master's Theses

Theses and Dissertations

1953

A Study of Adoptive Placements of Children Five Years of Age Or Over When Placed

Mary Alice McDermott
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses

 Part of the [Social Work Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McDermott, Mary Alice, "A Study of Adoptive Placements of Children Five Years of Age Or Over When Placed" (1953). *Master's Theses*. 1120.

https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/1120

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](#).
Copyright © 1953 Mary Alice McDermott

A STUDY OF ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS OF
CHILDREN FIVE YEARS OF AGE
OR OVER WHEN PLACED

by

Mary Alice McDermott

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Social Work
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Social Work

June

1953

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. Statement of thesis	1
1. Scope	2
2. Source	2
3. Purpose	3
B. Agency	3
II. BACKGROUND HISTORY	6
A. Natural family	6
1. Parents' marital status	6
2. Siblings	8
B. Total children placed	9
C. Physical and mental health	12
1. Physical examinations	12
2. Psychological testing	13
III. PLACEMENT HISTORIES	17
A. Reasons for removals	17
1. Court orders	19
2. Voluntary removals	20
B. Placements prior to adoptive homes	22
IV. ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS	25
A. Adjustment to age grouping	25
1. Five-Six years old	26
2. Seven-Eight years old	27
3. Nine-Ten years old	29
4. Eleven years old	30
5. Fourteen years old	30
6. Fifteen years old	31
7. Sixteen years old	31
B. Adoptive Parents	32
1. Ages and length of marriage	33
2. Reasons stated for adoption	35
3. Children requested and children placed	36

V. STATUS OF ADOPTIONS	38
A. Supervisory period	38
B. Lapse of time from placement to adoption	39
C. Placements which failed	41
D. Adoption pending	42
VI. CONCLUSIONS	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY	49
APPENDIX	52

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN STUDY GROUP ON BASIS OF AGE, SEX, RACE AND LEGAL STATUS	10
II. TEST RESULTS	15
III. DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS PRIOR TO ADOPTIVE HOME	22
IV. DISTRIBUTION OF AGES OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS AND LENGTH OF MARRIAGE AT TIME OF PLACEMENTS	33
V. REASONS STATED FOR ADOPTING A CHILD	35
VI. DISTRIBUTION SHOWING AGE AND SEX OF CHILDREN REQUESTED AND PLACED FOR ADOPTION	36

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of all children who were five years of age or over at the time they were placed in adoptive homes by the Lake County Department of Public Welfare, Gary, Indiana between the years of 1946-1951.

Adoptive placements for older children are considered problematic and difficult, "yet the children in this group make up a considerable part of those available for adoption".¹ The records of specific children in this group who were placed by a public agency were studied to determine what does take place in an adoptive placement of an older child. Adoptive parents often state they do not desire an older child because they are too set in their ways and present too many problems. This study was undertaken to determine just what problems these children did display after placement and how, if at all, did these problems affect the placement.

To complete this study, it would not be possible to present only the adoptive placement and the problems evidenced in placement. For that reason, background history of the child is included and some idea of composition of the child's natural family. In relation to this material, one chapter also deals

¹ Helen W. Hallinan, "Who Are the Children Available for Adoption?", Social Casework, XXXII, April, 1951, 164.

with the reasons for the child's removal from his natural home which eventually terminated in an adoptive placement. To conclude or supplement this material it is necessary to briefly discuss the adoptive parents and finally the status of these placements.

The study is composed of all children who were five years of age or more when they were placed in adoptive homes between 1946 and 1951 inclusive. This includes only those placements made by the Lake County Department of Welfare and does not consider any independent placements or relative adoptions.

This age group was used because the child of five is considered an older child and his placement is usually considered difficult.

It was stated above that this study included all children who were placed during this period. The total number of children placed was sixty-one, however, this study includes only fifty-six case records as five case records were not available.

To complete this study, three sources were used: the minutes of the Adoption Committee meetings, the case record of the individual child, and the foster home study of the adoptive parents.

The Committee is composed of all Supervisors, having responsibility for placement, and the Adoption consultant, with the Division Head of the Gary Placement Division serving as chair man. The worker carrying the case under consideration has temporary membership with the right to vote. The purpose of the Adoption Committee as stated in the County Manual is: (1) to determine whether a particular child should be placed for adoption and to decide upon the home into which the child should be placed; (2) to offer consultation to

any worker and supervisor on problems relating to adoption; (3) to evaluate existing policies and procedures in an adoption and to make recommendations to the Welfare Board when necessary.²

There were various reasons for writing this thesis, however, the principal one was to view the adjustment of these particular children after their placement in adoptive homes.

In addition to this one purpose, it is also hoped it may be of help in future adoptive placement. Furthermore, it may also contribute to selecting future adoptive homes for children in this older age group and to the thinking and planning for the older child who is available for adoption.

The Lake County Department of Public Welfare was officially established April 6, 1936, nineteen days after the Indiana State Welfare Act had been passed. Lake County includes a total population of approximately three hundred and seventy-five thousand people and Public Welfare services are extended by the office in Gary, with district offices in Hammond and East Chicago. These two district offices handle all problems with the exception of Parole which is handled by the personnel in Gary.

The original services offered by this department were: Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, Aid to Dependent Children, Child Welfare Services,

2 Policies and Procedures of Placement Division, Lake County Department of Public Welfare, November, 1947, 38, revised, 1953.

Parolee Supervision, Crippled Childrens Services, and Hospital commitment to Indiana University Medical Center.³

Currently, the Department is partially financing a County Mental Hygiene Clinic, offering medical care to all recipients of Public Assistance, and providing for local hospitalization of a limited group of individuals not receiving another form of public assistance. These services are offered in addition to those originally given.

As the material for this thesis was obtained from the records in the Placement Division, a fuller explanation of its services is given below.

The Child Welfare Division derives its origin from the Welfare Act which states that:

The State Department shall administer or supervise all public Child Welfare Services.... Some of these responsibilities are carried out by the Children's Division of the State Department of Public Welfare while others, notably to supervise the case of dependent and neglected children in foster family homes or institutions; especially children placed for adoption or those of illegitimate birth....are carried out by the County Departments with the advice and under the supervision of the Children's Division.⁴

The Child Welfare Services division is primarily a casework service division. Some children are cared for through foster home placement, some through placement in an institution, while a number are supervised in their own home. Adoptions are investigated and foster homes are examined for licensing. Eligibility for case work service in this division depends on the need for service and on the ability of the person in need to utilize such service.

3 Know Your Welfare Department. A Summary of Public Welfare together with an explanation of its Administration in Lake County, Indiana, for the three year period 1949-1951, xvii.

4 The Welfare Act of 1936 as Amended by Acts of 1941. Section II.

During the sixteen years the Department has been serving the public, an average of slightly over nine hundred children have received Child Welfare services each month. During the three year period from 1949-1951, Child Welfare services were extended to an average of 2305 youngsters each month.⁵

5 Know Your Welfare Department. 117.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND HISTORY

In this chapter, the topics to be considered are: the natural family at the time the child was originally removed from the home; the total number of children placed and their distribution by race, sex and age; and the physical conditions and mental capacities of these children who were later placed in adoptive homes.

THE NATURAL FAMILY

It is to be remembered that the references to the natural family here are made as it existed at the time of the original placements, not when adoptive homes were found. In many instances the family's status had changed when adoptive placements were made and information was not available about them at that time. Also this chapter deals with the background of the child and it is of value to see his family as it related to his eventual placement.

The total number of children in this study was fifty-six, however, this included several siblings from the same family. The parents were not considered as fifty-six different sets, therefore, but as individuals. There were thirty-eight mothers and fathers. This is the only place in the Thesis they will be referred to in this manner.

Fourteen of these couples were married, however, of this number, nine couples were separated. Only five couples were living together, and of these

five, three were living with their children, attempting to keep their home together. They were finding it impossible, however, and the children had to be placed. In two cases, a parent was hospitalized and the remaining parent found it necessary to place the child in order to go to work. In another situation, the parents were together but they were of limited intelligence and too inadequate to plan for their children.

The remaining two sets of parents were together but not with their children. One couple deserted together and left the children alone and to their own devices. The remaining couple was serving a term on the Penal Farm and expressed a desire to remain together after their sentence was fulfilled.

Seven couples had received legal divorces and completely dissolved their marriage status. Eight of the parents had never married but from their relations with one another had produced illegitimate children. The remaining nine couples were widowed, four fathers were deceased, and five mothers were not living.

Twenty-nine parents were in the home, nine fathers and twenty mothers. Twenty-four parents had unknown whereabouts, again the fathers were in the majority with seventeen, and the mothers numbered seven. The remaining fourteen had other whereabouts which included prison, institutions, out of state residence, and one father in the Army.

From the above information, it is evident that the majority of these children came from homes broken either by separation or divorce. They were not living with both parents and not subject to a normal home environment. This material concurred with that of a National Survey which states that "adopted

children born in wedlock are mostly from broken homes".¹ In the following chapter the reasons for their being removed from these situations will be discussed.

Aside from the parents involved in these situations, there were siblings affected also in the majority of cases. In only eleven cases, was just one child involved, the remaining forty-five concerned brothers and sisters. Of the forty-five, removal of all the children at the same time occurred in thirty-five cases. In the remaining ten cases, the children were removed at staggered times and/or in some instances all were not placed outside their own home.

For example, in a family of six children, the mother refused to bring the youngest child into court and the Judge decided to let her keep the baby but the others were ordered to be placed. In another situation, the oldest girl who was seventeen was left in the home to keep house for the father. There was some hope that the father would provide for the absent members and eventually they could be returned to him but this did not materialize. When the worker on the case realized definitely that the father would never adequately provide care for the children, the father was requested to sign consents for adoption so that some permanent plan could be made for the children who had been removed from this home. He did so and plans were then initiated to seek adoptive homes for the children. In other cases involving several children the children were removed one at a time as soon as a home could be found for them.

1 Adoption of Children, Children's Bureau Statistical Service, Federal Security Agency, Children's Bureau, Washington, D.C., 1951, 3.

Briefly, therefore, the siblings of these fifty-six were discussed. Of the fifty-six discussed here, many are brothers and sisters and will be referred to as such where necessary. Otherwise each child is considered an individual case. Also, it should be remembered that other children of the same family may have been placed in adoptive homes but are not discussed here as they did not come under this age group.

TOTAL CHILDREN PLACED

As stated in the beginning of the chapter, another topic to be discussed is the distribution of the children placed according to age, sex, race and legal status. The following Table on page ten illustrates this distribution.

Also as stated in the Introduction, there were sixty-one children placed but this study concerns only fifty-six as the working total, due to the inaccessibility of five records.

In this six year period, thirty-one boys were placed in comparison to twenty-five girls. This is interesting in light of Helen Hallinan's comments in her article that: "adoption agencies are faced with numbers of older children, mostly boys. . . . Agencies for the most part are flexible in their requirements for adoption for couples who are interested in older boys".² She indicates that boys are the hardest to place and fewer adoptive applicants request them. This study showed, however, that more boys than girls were placed.

² Hallinan, "Who Are the Children Available for Adoption?", Social Casework, XXII, 163.

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN STUDY
GROUP BY AGE, SEX, RACE
AND LEGAL STATUS

AGE	SEX		RACE		LEGAL STATUS	
	MALE	FEMALE	WHITE	NEGRO	LEG.	ILLEG.
5 thru 6	10	6	12	4	10	6
7 " 8	8	6	12	2	12	2
9 " 10	9	8	16	1	12	5
11 " 12	1	4	5	-	5	-
13 " 14	1	-	1	-	1	-
15 " 16	2	1	3	-	3	-
TOTALS	31	25	49	7	43	13

There were forty-nine White children placed during this period compared to seven Negro children, or 12 per cent of the total. According to the Census figures of 1950 for Lake County, the total Negro population of Lake County is 51,570 or about 13.8 per cent of the total population. With this in mind, therefore, the figure of 12 per cent does not seem to be too out of proportion with the total Negro population constituting 13.8 per cent of the population.

In most areas through the nation, the number of Negro adoptions is comparatively small. In a study of twenty-five states, the average percentage of non-White adoptions was 6 per cent. This non-White population was not defined but it is presumed this would include other races than the Negro. In five of these states, however, having a non-White population of 29 per cent the per-

centage of adoptions was 10 per cent. The article further stated another reason for the relatively small number of Negro adoptions is the inability of the agencies to find adoptive homes. In addition to this, many adoptive Negro children are "taken in" by relatives or friends and the child does not come to the attention of the Agency.³

Another factor which is in the reverse of the material stated in the article is that of Legitimate and Illegitimate births. According to this article, half the children adopted are born out of wedlock but in this study, only thirteen of the total were born out of wedlock. However, it should be noted that the article had reference to children who were placed immediately after birth. In this study, the children were not placed until the age of five and the majority of illegitimate children had been placed previously. The remaining forty-three were of legitimate birth. This might be explained by the fact that many of these children were from the same family. There was also relatively few unmarried parents which would relate to the fact that only thirteen children were illegitimate.

Also from the Table the information is gathered that the largest group of children placed was between the ages of five and ten. Forty-seven of the total fifty-six were included in this group. Thus even though these adoptive parents were willing to accept an older child, they preferred he be closer to the minimum age. The largest number of boys were placed in the five to six year old group while the girls fell in the nine to ten group.

3 Adoption of Children, Children's Bureau, 1951, 3.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

Before a child is placed by the agency, he must undergo a complete physical examination. This is in accordance with a policy of the State Board of Public Welfare which states: "each child upon acceptance by the child placing agency for placement in foster care shall be given a thorough physical examination by a duly licensed physician".⁴ This is in connection with foster care and likewise before an adoptive placement is made, "All children placed for adoption shall have thorough physical and whenever possible psychological examinations."⁵

Therefore, in accordance with the above statement all fifty-six children were examined before they were placed outside their own home. According to policy, no definite physician is specified. If the family specifies a particular physician, the Agency attempts to utilize his knowledge as he is familiar with the child. If they have not been under the care of a particular doctor, however, and have no family physician, the Agency may use its own discretion in the selection of a doctor. The Agency does not have a clinic available for the examinations. In an emergency placement, when time is a factor, the doctor is chosen who can arrange to examine the child on short notice. In other instances, the Agency utilizes the services of a certain few doctors who have worked with the Agency previously and are familiar with the policies and practices. Prior

4 Compilation of Official Rules and Regulations Adopted and Promulgated by the State Board of Public Welfare, State of Indiana, July 1, 1952, Title 3, Chapter II, Section b.

5 Policies and Procedures of Placement Division, 38.

to the completion of adoption, the child receives medical care as needed and when necessary. In the adoptive home during the supervisory period, the adoptive parents are expected to see that the child is given all the necessary care needed.

A child in this age group is difficult to place but a handicapped child or a child with a chronic illness offers additional problems. With this in mind, Lyle Lyon states in his article that: "It is almost always the normal child that is considered for adoption."⁶

None of the children in this study suffered from chronic illnesses and none were found to be permanently impaired or handicapped. Due to poor economic status or neglect, many of the children were found to be suffering from malnutrition but not to such a severe degree that any were permanently damaged. In other cases, the doctor recommended circumcision, tonsilectomies, and special diets but none were placed under supervised medical care. During placement prior to adoptive homes, the children do receive medical attention so that any necessary care can be administered and recommendations made for treatment.

As quoted previously in this chapter, before adoption placement is made, the child should have a psychological examination whenever possible. These tests are not regarded as infallible but if a child tests quite low and there is considerable doubt as to his mental ability, there would be a retesting at another interval to determine what progress had been made if any. Intelli-

6 Lyle Lyon, "Placing Older Children for Adoption," Child Welfare, January, 1949, 6.

gence can play a large part in the success of adoptive placement and yet "the adopting parents stress the appearance, nationality, health and person attractiveness of the child and that his intelligence is not usually considered".⁷

As one of the criteria for placement is the opportunity for growth, the social worker is constantly striving to place the child in a home where they receive stimulation to achieve their greatest capacity.

In the cases used for this study, thirty-three of the children were tested in the Mental Hygiene Clinic and the other twenty-three case records made no mention of testing. The tests used in these cases were the Revised Stanford-Binet; Thematic Apperception Test; the Rorschach; the Goodenough; Bender-Gestalt; Merrill Palmer Scale; and Draw A Man.

The scale used for the intelligence quotient was taken from that of the Stanford-Binet:

90-109	Normal	70-79	Borderline
110-119	Superior	69	Feeble-minded
120-139	Very Superior	50-69	Moron
140	Gifted	20-49	Imbecile
80-89	Dull Normal	0-20	Idiot

7 Eleanor G. Gallagher, The Adopted Child, Reynal and Hitchcock, New York, 1936, 96.

Based on this scale the thirty-three who were tested showed the following results:

TABLE II
TEST RESULTS

<u>I. Q.</u>	<u>Number</u>
Average.....	18
Low Average.....	4
High Average.....	4
Superior.....	2
Dull.....	3
Borderline.....	2
Total	<hr/> 33

The two children who tested in the Borderline area were twins and tested seventy-two and seventy-four. The adoptive parents were given this information but did not seem upset about it. They themselves had not had education beyond the seventh grade and although they were willing to send a child to school as high as possible, they would definitely be able to accept it if the twins could not progress beyond this level.

In another case, however, in which the child tested Dull, adoptive placement did not succeed. Complete failure could not be blamed on the I.Q., however, as this child was also emotionally disturbed. The examiner had remarked that this child appeared to have a greater capacity than she was exhibiting but due to her emotional difficulties could not function at maximum level. The parents selected in this situation found difficulty in coping with the child's emotional adjustment and when her intelligence appeared so limited, they found they could not meet this and asked that she be removed.

The twenty-three who were not tested appeared to fall in the Average group on the scale. Their school work and their general intelligence gave evidence of this and corroborated these facts. Some may have come a little below and some above but in general they could be classified as Average.

This chapter, therefore, has presented a discussion of the child's natural family at original removal; the distribution of the children placed according to age, sex, race, and legal status; and the physical and mental health of the children placed.

CHAPTER III

PLACEMENT HISTORIES

This chapter deals with the original reasons for removal of the child from his natural home. Also included in the latter part of the chapter is a discussion of the number of placements prior to the adoptive placement.

REASONS FOR REMOVAL

As stated previously, with the exception of four cases, these children were from broken homes and not residing with both their parents. These facts seem to coincide with those of a National Survey of twenty-five states. In this article, it stated that most adoptive children born in wedlock come from homes broken by divorce, desertion or separation.¹ In the development of this chapter, it will be illustrated that these were the foremost reasons for the break-up of the home.

Fifty-six children were removed from their own home and of this total, twenty-nine removals were voluntary and twenty-seven were executed at the order of the Juvenile Court.

These twenty-seven removals which were voluntary occurred under various circumstances. In some cases, the child had been receiving service in his own home but due to the environment to which he was subjected, there was no progress.

1 Adoption of Children, Children's Bureau, 8.

With the worker acting in a supportive role, she was able to help the parent see that the child would do much better if he were placed outside his home. When the parent was finally able to face the situation and overcome his guilt feelings, he was able to ask that the child be placed elsewhere. In other cases, the parents came to the Agency and asked that the child be placed. Some of the reasons stated for placement by the parent or parents were: employment of the parents and their absences from the home; illness of the parents, and inability to cope with the child. A few of the remaining cases originated in the Public Assistance Division as ADC cases. If the Public Assistance worker felt the situation was deserving of Child Welfare Service, a transfer conference was held and the situation was transferred to the Placement Division. If a recommendation for foster home care was made, this was discussed with the parents and placement was made.

The twenty-seven cases involving removal under court order, were made with the cooperation of the Probation staff of the Juvenile Court. The Judge of the Juvenile Court does not have any direct supervisory or administrative responsibilities over the department. The court does work closely with the department in cases referred by the department for dependency and neglect of children, failure to support, and problems of juvenile delinquency.²

The twenty-seven cases were referred in various ways. Some were referred by members of the community who reported cases of neglect and desertion to the Probation office. If, on investigation, the conditions were found to be

2 Know Your Welfare Department, 45-46.

true, the probation worker then obtained a court order to remove the child from the home and request the Department of Public Welfare to secure placements for the children. In other words, these cases which originated in the Juvenile Court could have been referred by various sources and the court and the Department of Public Welfare cooperated with one another in planning for the child. If a child is ordered to be placed and the parents will not consent, the only recourse left is to get an order from the court to take the child out of his home.

Fifty-one of these children were made Wards of the Department of Public Welfare by the Juvenile Court. After the Department was made guardian for the children, the parents may have had visiting privileges or they may not. In some situations, the court or the Department may decide it is for the child's best interest not to see his parents immediately following removal in order to facilitate placement.

The following discussion will be divided into those removals which took place voluntarily and those which occurred at the order of the court.

INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL

Twenty-two children were removed by order of the Juvenile Court as a result of neglect and desertion by the parents. These cases originated by referrals from the community regarding some of these situations. Some were also initiated at the time of placement by the Police Department. In situations of desertion, when the Police were called to investigate, they in turn referred the situations to the Probation officer of the Court or the Department of Welfare.

In one situation, the child was residing in his natural home and re-

receiving casework service. The child had been made a Ward of the Department previously but had been allowed to remain in the home of the mother under close supervision by the Department. The situation grew worse rather than better, however, and the Court ordered he be removed.

Another child was made a Ward by order of the Court as he had been abandoned by his mother in the hospital. The child was illegitimate and the mother having no plan for him, left the hospital without him and never returned. The hospital kept the child for four months, at the end of which the authorities contacted the Department and asked that he be removed. The child was removed from the institution, made a Ward of the Department and placed in a foster home where he remained for eight years. After eight years, he was placed in an adoptive home.

One situation involved an illegitimately pregnant girl who was confined in the Indiana Girls State School. After the child was born, he was placed in a foster home immediately.

Two children were removed and placed in foster homes at the time the parents were sentenced to the Penal farm. The parents were brought into court on a charge of neglect and after sentence was passed, the children were made Wards of the Department.

VOLUNTARY REMOVAL

Placement was requested by ten mothers who were working and had to be out of the home during the day and in some instances, during the evening. They requested temporary placement but in the final analysis decided to release the children for adoption.

Five children were placed in foster care due to illness of the parents. Two situations involved fathers out of the home and two mothers were hospitalized. The parent in the home requested placement because it was necessary that they go to work.

In three cases, the children were placed at the request of the unwed mother. One mother was fifteen at the time of the child's birth. She had thought she might eventually be able to make plans for the child and requested foster care until such time. He remained in foster care for five years at which time the mother concluded she could not take the child. She signed adoptive consents and the child was placed in an adoptive home.

Four children were deserted by their mothers and left in the home with fathers. The fathers found it impossible to hold a steady job and care for the children so he requested placement. This involved only two families, three children were from the one family, and one child from the other.

One mother requested placement for her child as she felt her profession did not permit a wholesome home environment for her child. She was a professional prostitute and had made attempts to make her living another way. She could not make a success of socially acceptable employment, however, and requested the child be removed.

Four children were placed after they had been evicted from their homes with their mother. The mothers requested placement so the children would have someplace to stay.

Two cases involved step-father situations. The step-father was beating the child and mistreating him in many ways. The mother, at last, came to

the Agency and requested the child be removed for his best welfare. In the other situation, the mother, a psychotic, committed suicide. Relatives took the child after the mother's death but soon requested the child be removed.

PLACEMENTS PRIOR TO ADOPTIVE HOMES

The following Table is an illustration of the number of placements the children experienced before they were placed in adoptive homes.

From the Table, it can be seen that placements ranged from one only to seven before the child was placed in an adoptive situation. Forty-one children were placed from one to three times prior to their adoptive homes and the remaining fifteen were placed and removed from four to seven times before adoptive placement.

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS PRIOR TO ADOPTIVE HOME

Ages	Number of Placements						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5 thru 6	7	1	5	3	-	-	1
7 " 8	6	3	2	1	1	1	-
9 " 10	3	3	4	-	3	2	-
11 " 12	3	1	-	-	-	1	-
13 " 14	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
15 " 16	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
Totals	19	11	11	6	4	4	1

Nineteen children experienced one placement and only one child was placed seven times before an adoptive home was found. This child was removed from his home at the age of two but was not placed in an adoptive home until the age of seven. Therefore, in a period of five years, he was placed in five individual situations before he was placed in an adoptive basis.

Age did not appear to be too great a factor although the younger children from five to ten seemed to have experienced fewer placements than the group from ten to sixteen. This might be attributed to the fact that the Agency attempts to place the child as young as possible and therefore, they do not experience frequent placement. It might also be attributed to the fact that the older child has more difficulty in adjusting to placement. Various reasons were given when the child was removed and replaced in another boarding home. The most mentioned cause, however, was failure of the child to adjust in the home.

The majority of these children who were removed from their homes were bewildered by what had taken place and what had happened to them. In those situations which had involved emergency placement, the child had been given very little or no preparation for this move. No one had given them a satisfactory explanation of what had taken place and their emotional turmoil took the form of behavior problems. Many were enuretic, aggressive, and hostile in their new surroundings. Others became withdrawn and fearful, particularly of the social worker as they associated the worker with removal from their home.

Following removal from their homes, forty-three were placed in foster homes; eight were placed in institutions; and five were placed with relatives.

of the eight children placed in institutions immediately, five remained until adoptive homes were found but the other three experienced foster home care before adoptive placement was made.

In two cases, after the children had been in foster care for a while, they were returned to their parents on a trial basis. Both attempts failed. In one case, the child remained in the natural home for thirteen days when it became evident this was not going to succeed. In the other case, the child remained approximately a month and then had to be replaced in a foster home.

It was stated previously that five children were placed with relatives when first removed from their natural homes. They had been placed in these homes with the approval of the Department as it was thought they might remain in these homes permanently. However, in each case the child had to be removed. In one situation, the child had been living with a grandparent but the grandmother went to work and asked to have the child removed. In the four remaining cases, the relatives decided they did not want to be responsible for the children and asked that they be placed elsewhere.

The discussion in this chapter concerned the reasons for original placement. This was broken down into voluntary removals and those which took place by court order. The latter part of the chapter briefly illustrated the placements the child experienced before adoptive placement.

CHAPTER IV

ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS

This chapter deals with the adoptive placement and the problems presented by the various age groups after these placements were made. The problems will be described and the manner in which the adoptive parents met these difficulties and attempted to help the child to adjust. There is no Table used for this part of the chapter, but reference may be made to Table I, page ten, for a breakdown of the age, sex and racial distribution of these fifty-six children. The chapter will be broken down by age groups and each discussed separately.

The last half of the chapter will deal briefly with the adoptive parents according to age, length of marriage duration and their motives for undertaking adoption.

Before a child is placed in an adoptive home, it must be determined that he is an adoptable child. Helen Hallinan describes the adoptable child as "one who has been legally surrendered by his parent or parents and who is able to contribute to and benefit from family life".¹ Not only must the child be adoptable but he must also be placeable which connotes good physical, mental and social adjustment. The following discussion therefore, includes the fifty-six placements and what took place.

1 Helen Hallinan, "Who Are the Children Available for Adoption?", Social Casework, XXXII, 161.

FIVE-SIX YEAR OLD

Sixteen children were placed from this group and of this sixteen, eight case records mentioned adjustment problems. The other eight gave no indication of any difficulties, therefore, it can be presumed that adjustment was satisfactory.

Four of these eight children were encountering difficulty in relinquishing their attachment to their natural family. One child was particularly concerned about his twin brother who had been stricken with Polio shortly before the children were removed from their natural home and surroundings. An exception was made in this situation and he was allowed to visit with this brother. The adoptive parents appeared to understand the tie between the boys and the fact that they wanted to visit did not seem to affect the placement.

Two from the above group of four could not understand why they had to change their name. They were also very puzzled by the idea that they were going to have two mothers. These adoptive parents were very understanding and explained many times just what took place in legal adoption and why their mothers could not keep them.

The remaining four cases, concerned children who presented behavior problems. They were aggressive and would try the adoptive parents as far as they could. All suffered from a feeling of insecurity and felt that if the adoptive parents really wanted them, nothing they did would provoke the parents. The worker in the situation had a two fold purpose. She had to interpret this behavior to the parents and at the same time she had to help the parent understand that the child could not go through life with no limitations placed on

him. One situation did not prove successful and the child had to be removed from the home. This will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

Three of the group also acted out their insecurity by enuresis, moodiness, stealing, lying and masturbating. These practices all stemmed from an insecure feeling and a seeking of pleasure and satisfaction.

SEVEN AND EIGHT YEAR OLD

Fourteen from this group were placed in adoptive homes and only five did not mention difficulties in adjustment.

Two situations concerned rivalry. In the one, the adoptive child was very jealous of her younger brother placed in the home on a boarding basis. She feared he might take the affection that was hers and not until he was removed to another foster home did she begin to adjust. In the other, the child was rivalrous of the other child in the home. The parents permitted him to act out his behavior and constantly reassured him that they could love him as much as their first adopted child.

After adoption, however, the latter child evidenced many serious behavior problems. The family returned to the Agency and requested the boy be placed in an institution. They felt they were unable to cope with him. It was explained that he was their responsibility now and they should attempt to work with him. The situation was accepted on a service basis and the parents and child were given casework service. With support from the Agency, the family seemed to gain a better understanding of one another's behavior and the problems that were hindering a better adjustment.

In another two cases, the children came from homes where they had been deprived of all love and affection. As a result, the children had not developed the capacity to love and were not capable of showing emotions. Not until the adoption was consummated, did the one child begin to show any progress.

In another case, the boy was exhibiting many behavior problems and having a difficult time of adjustment. The parents and boy appeared to have no understanding of one another. At the suggestion of the worker, they accepted treatment from the Mental Hygiene Clinic. Through a series of interviews they began to accept one another and placement was successful.

Though intelligence had not played the determining factor in other placements, in three of these, it gave a great deal of consideration. In the one situation, twins were placed in the same home. These girls had tested Borderline on their Psychometrics. There was some doubt to the success of a placement for them but the parents chosen fully accepted them. In fact, these parents helped the girls make acquaintances outside each other and through their patience and understanding, placement was very successful. The other child had been rated Dull after testing and the examiner had stated he might never go beyond the third grade. These parents also accepted this news and were able to deal with it.

In the last case, the child had been in the home since infancy. It was not until he reached the age of seven that the foster parents would consider adoption. Their main complaint was a lack of religious interest by the boy. Because he was not as interested in the Church of the adoptive parents,

they felt he was headstrong and stubborn but requested to keep the child and felt quite sure they could straighten out the problem.

NINE AND TEN YEAR OLD

Eleven of the nineteen cases in this group, cited adjustment difficulties.

Six in this group found the greatest difficulty in relinquishing their ties to the natural family. They felt they had to talk about their natural families and were very protective of them. In most situations, the parents were understanding and permitted the child to talk of their parents and express their feeling. They showed no jealousy of the natural parents and gradually the child relaxed in his new situation.

In all but one situation this occurred. In this particular home, three siblings were placed together. The adoptive parents could not accept reminders of the former family and rather than let the children express themselves would punish them. These parents were cautioned against completing the adoption too soon but they petitioned after the children had been in the home a month. They returned to the Agency at a later date and requested service as they were encountering difficulty with the children. The boy had attempted to run away and the two girls had been dealt with rather strictly. With help from the Agency, some progress seemed to be taking place and the children remained in the home.

The remaining cases could be grouped under the heading of insecurity. These children had great difficulty believing that the adoptive parents really wanted them and lived with the fear that they might be sent away. The outward

expressions were stealing, poor school adjustment, enuresis, lying and one child became accident prone.

ELEVEN YEAR OLD

From this group, five children were placed and only one record omitted any mention of adjustment difficulties.

Two had the trait of stubbornness in common and a strong will of their own. One child gradually adjusted and became a happy, secure individual. In the other, the child was removed from the first adoptive home and replaced. This placement also failed because both sets of parents were unable to cope with him.

One in this group had a strong attachment to her natural family which tended to conflict with her loyalty to the adoptive parents. When she would become unusually excited and upset, she developed a tic. The adoptive parents were strict with her and resented any mention of her natural parents. Adjustment was not smooth but she did remain here.

The last child had had experiences of being left alone and lived in constant fear that the adoptive parents would leave her. The adoptive parents gave a great deal of time to the child and did everything to increase her feelings of security.

FOURTEEN YEAR OLD

The only child placed in this group was mentioned earlier in the study as the one who tested low and was said to be retarded. The child remained in this home for three years before the adoptive parents initiated adoption proceedings. They did not begin legal action previously because of the boy's men-

tal retardation and they wanted to be positive they could face this permanently. They made their decision and fully realized the child would never complete school in the normal classroom situation.

FIFTEEN YEAR OLD

Two boys this age were placed. One placement did not terminate in adoption due to the death of the adoptive mother. This will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

In the second case, the boy had very strong feelings about the adoption and did not want his name changed. This was the biggest delay to the completion of the adoption but the parents were willing to wait until this was worked through and he could make his own decision. This he did in the final analysis.

SIXTEEN YEAR OLD

This girl was the oldest child placed during this period. She had been in an institutional setting and the worker became very attached to her. The worker asked for her release from the institution to be placed in her home on a free basis. This arrangement worked out so well and to the satisfaction of everyone concerned that the worker petitioned to adopt her. This procedure was a little unusual but due to the advanced age of the girl and the improbability of finding a home for her, this adoption was granted.

From the cases presented here, it can be seen that the most common problem was insecurity. This found expression in many behavior patterns such as enuresis, masturbation, stealing, lying, temper tantrums and rivalry or jealousy of other children in the home.

Another factor which influenced the adjustment was the child's over concern and attachment to his natural family. In some instances they were bewildered and puzzled by the thought of two mothers or fathers and could not accept the idea. In others, it was expressed in a reluctance to change their last name.

Problems were similar in relation to age grouping. From five to seven, the child acted out his behavior and expressed himself in this manner. From eight to eleven, the child began to use more subtle methods to test the adoptive parents. In the remaining group, fourteen to sixteen, the children were faced not only with the problems of adolescence but also the adjustment to new homes and parents.

ADOPTIVE PARENTS

When a child is placed in an adoptive home, the environmental factors are important but "primarily we want people who are able to give the child an opportunity for growth."² The social worker is concerned with the housing standards, the neighborhood, and physical environment but in selecting adoptive parents, the following are of great importance:

Personal adjustment of each of the prospective parents; their relationship to each other; their relationship to their own parents and siblings; their deeper as well as their expressed motives in seeking a child; their reason for not having their own children and attitude toward sterility; their ability to accept an adopted child; and their understanding of children and their needs.³

² Florence G. Brown, "What Do We Seek in Adoptive Parents?", Social Casework, XXXII, April, 1951, 155-156.

³ Ibid.

The discussion of the adoptive parents in the study will be brief and will not go into all of the above factors, however, it is well to keep in mind this was the criteria used in selecting these adoptive parents.

The following table is a graphic illustration of the ages and length of the present marriage of the adoptive parents. Note, too there are only fifty-two sets of adoptive parents due to the fact that two families received two children and one family received three.

TABLE IV

DISTRIBUTION OF AGES OF ADOPTIVE
PARENTS AND LENGTH OF MARRIAGE
AT TIME OF PLACEMENT

Parents	Ages at time of placement							Length of marriage at time of placement							
	30 35	35 40	40 45	45 50	50 55	55 60		5 10	10 15	15 20	20 25	25 30	30 35	35 40	
Adoptive Father	5	18	14	10	4	1	Adopt. Parent	11	23	11	4	1	0	1	
Adoptive Mother	10	15	13	9	4	1									
Total	15	33	27	19	8	2	Total	11	23	11	4	1	0	1	

From this table, the greatest number of the adoptive parents fall between the ages of thirty-five to forty-five. In view of the fact that the largest number of children placed were between the ages of five and ten, this would appear to be a good correlation. The ages of the adoptive parents would seem to be that which the natural parent would be with some variation. The men and

women in this age group would presumably be able to grow with a child in this age bracket and would be able to understand the child of this age group.

Couples in this age group would also be reasonably sure they would not be having children of their own. They might also have only one child and know they could not have any more of their own. For this reason they would be willing to take a child in the age group their natural child would fall.

In connection with the age category, the largest number of marriages appeared in the interval between ten to fifteen years. This, of course, does not include all of the above couples but the largest group were found in this area. A marriage which had been established for ten or fifteen years, would seem to indicate the stability and strengths of the union. By this time, the couple should be completely adjusted to one another and be aware of the other's preferences and dislikes. Also these marriages should be well enough established so that there is adequate economic security which is a factor considered in selecting the adoptive parents.

In this group, there were only five marriages of twenty years duration or more. There would be some danger in placing a child of this age group in a home where the couple was quite elderly and had been married more than forty years. The possibility of a good parent-child relationship would be slight and rather the relationship might be more like that of grandparent and grandchild.

There are many motives at work when a couple decide to adopt a child. However, in this study, only the expressed are to be observed. The following Table on page 35 illustrates the motives.

TABLE V

REASONS STATED FOR ADOPTING A CHILD

<u>Stated Reasons</u>	<u>Adoptive Parents</u>
No children of their own.....	13
Unable to have children.....	4
Love of Children.....	21
Companionship.....	14
Total.....	<u>52</u>

From the above Table, it can be seen that the most frequent reason stated was a love of children. To repeat, this is the expressed motive and the underlying or deeper reason may take various forms.

Sterility is often the motive for adoption as the family sincerely desire a child or children of their own but for organic reasons, this is impossible. While this is frequently the motive for adoption, many applicants find it difficult to express this. This would seem to be the case in these motives, as the Table illustrates that only four of the fifty-two couples expressed this as their reason for adoption. Although indirectly it was expressed by the thirteen couples who gave as their reason "No children of our own".

The remaining fourteen gave companionship as their reason. In completing an adoptive home study, the worker usually explores this motive thoroughly because it would not be too healthy to place the child in a home where he had to compete to take the place of one partner or the other. This category also included those parents who desired companionship for the other child or children in the house.

It is not shown on the Table, but fifteen of these adoptive parents had children of their own. The largest number were found to be between the ages of nine and thirteen. Therefore, relating this material to the data that the largest number of children placed were between the ages of five and ten, it might be concluded that companionship was a great factor.

In order to see the relation between the distribution of the children requested and children placed the following Table is presented.

TABLE VI
DISTRIBUTION SHOWING AGE AND SEX OF CHILDREN
REQUESTED AND PLACED FOR ADOPTION

Sex	Age and Sex of Child Requested							Age and Sex of Children Placed						
	to	0	3	6	9	12	15	thru	5	7	9	11	13	15
	3	6	9	12	15	18		6	8	10	12	14	16	
Male	7	6	13	5	1	2		10	8	9	1	1	2	
Female	4	1	12	4	-	1		6	6	8	4	-	1	
Totals	11	7	25	9	1	3		16	14	17	5	1	3	

The above Table illustrates the distribution of children requested and children placed for adoption. Though these people were willing to accept an older child the greatest bulk of these children requested fell between the ages of infancy to nine years. These total requests numbered forty-three. In comparison, the children placed between the ages of five and ten were forty-seven. It would seem probable to assume therefore, that these parents were

willing to accept a child older than the one requested and derived satisfaction from the experience.

The largest group of male children requested was in the bracket of six to nine and the largest group of males placed were between the ages of five and six. The largest group of girls requested were in the six to nine age bracket and the largest group placed were in the nine to ten year group.

This chapter contained a discussion of the problems in adjustment after adoptive placement and how the adoptive parents attempted to solve these difficulties. The latter half of the chapter surveyed the adoptive parents briefly according to age, reasons for adopting, and the children requested.

CHAPTER V

STATUS OF ADOPTIONS

In the previous chapter, the adoptive placement and the problems which resulted were discussed. In this chapter, therefore, the outcome of these placements will be discussed. The first part of the chapter surveys the length of time which elapsed between placement and legal proceedings. The discussion of the completed adoptions will also include those cases known by the Agency after the adoption had been completed. The latter part will deal with those placements which failed to result in adoption and what disposition was made of the child. This also includes those cases in which legal procedure has not been initiated.

After an adoptive placement is made, a supervisory period exists during which time the social worker from the agency makes regular visits in the home and observes the adjustment of the parent and child. This is done in accordance with Indiana Law which states: No adoption shall be granted in this state except after the court has heard the evidence and after a period of supervision by a duly licensed childplacing agency or a county department of public welfare. . . . The length of such period of supervision shall be within the sole discretion of the court hearing the adoption petition."¹ According to

1 Digest of Indiana Laws, Section III.

this law, therefore, there is no definite time stipulated for the supervisory period although it is felt that at least six months should elapse and "a year's waiting period is a protection to both the foster family and the child".²

As stated above, the longer the period of supervision, the more protection there is afforded for all concerned. Any problems which may develop to hinder placement or cause difficulties should be aired before the child is legally adopted. Thus, before legal steps have been taken, the adoptive parents have the right to return the child or to take steps to facilitate adjustment of the child in their home. The worker attempts to discourage the parents from rushing into legal procedure but if they persist, there is no law which prohibits them. When the worker submits her report to the court regarding the adoption petition, she may give her reasons if she thinks the adoption should not be granted at this particular time. The Agency may make such recommendation in the report to the Court but this does not give assurance that the Judge will grant such a recommendation as he is the final authority on the adoption.

A total of fifty-six placements were made during this six year period and of the total, fifty resulted in legal adoptions. Six did not. These last six will be discussed later in the chapter and the fifty will be included here.

To repeat, no definite time limit is stipulated as a supervisory period but at least six months is deemed advisable. This is repeated to show how it related to the following description of the fifty adoptions.

Eighteen cases, or 36 per cent of the total resulted in adoption after the child had been in the home from one to six months. The parents were

given the dangers involved in such practice but they persisted. In two situations no future difficulty was anticipated as the child had been in the home since infancy on a boarding basis. The foster parents had been approached frequently in regard to adopting the child. One family had refused due to financial circumstances and the other had stated they could not reach a decision. In both instances, however, when the child reached the age of six, they requested the placement be changed to adoptive. Very shortly after, legal procedure was initiated for adoption.

Another situation involved placement of four siblings in the same home. Three were in this age group, and the fourth child was younger. This particular family was advised very strongly not to rush into adoption but against the agency's advice they petitioned one month after the children were placed. The adoption was not granted for five months but since it had been consummated, the family has received casework service from the agency as there have been several problems regarding the children.

The next group, included 34 per cent of the total. This involved a lapse of six months to a year before adoption was completed. This is considered the most desirable period and there was no mention made in any of these cases of future contact with the agency after adoption took place.

While the supervisory period should not be too brief, it should also not extend for too long a period. If the parents do not seek to legally adopt the child after he has been in the home for a year, the worker attempts to encourage them to do so, if the adjustment has seemed to be good. If there are doubts that this placement may not be successful, the parents are urged to make

a decision regarding the children so that some plan may be worked out for him.

In nine cases, the child was in the home from one to two years before any action was taken. Six of these cases gave no explanation as to why they delayed other than they wanted to be absolutely positive this placement was going to work out.

One situation involved an inter-state placement which delayed action due to an out of state agency supervising placement. In another situation the parents continually talked of adoption but gave excuses for not initiating action. When the worker at last told them the child was going to be removed they started proceedings. The third involved a child who had been moved frequently and could not believe she was wanted for herself alone. Additional time was allowed in this case, to allow the parents to establish a sound relationship with the child.

In three situations, the child was in the home between two and three years before the parents legally adopted them. In each case, there were problems of adjustment and these were worked out before legal status was established for the child. One situation involved a fifteen year old boy who was very retarded. The adoptive parents requested sufficient time to adjust to the boy and determine whether or not they really wanted to accept this type child. Not only did they want to be sure they could accept this boy but they wanted to be positive they could cope with him.

The longest period which elapsed between placement and adoption was four years. Three children were in the home this length of time before they were legally adopted. In one of these cases, the child was having a particularly

difficult period of adjustment. The parents had become very attached to him, however, and requested that they be allowed to keep him. To facilitate adjustment the parents consented to attend the Mental Hygiene Clinic. After a series of interviews, all three members of the family began to show improvement and adoption was granted.

The six remaining cases did not result in adoption. Four of these placements failed completely and the child was removed from the homes. Two others include those situations, in which the child remained in the home but has not been legally adopted.

These four will be considered separately as the circumstances vary in each situation.

Case One, involved a child who was ten years of age when placed. She presented many problems in the home such as lying, stealing, enuresis, and disobedience. The adoptive parents admitted they could not cope with her and asked that she be removed. Upon removal from the home in 1946, she was placed in institutional care. After that time she had six boarding home placements until 1949 when she was returned to her own home. She could not adjust in this situation either and in 1950 was again removed to an institutional setting where she now remains.

The second case concerned a child who was placed in two adoptive homes, both of which failed. She was removed from the first adoptive home because the adoptive parents complained she was stubborn and unmanageable. She remained in a foster home for a while where she appeared to adjust and it was thought that she might make a successful adoptive adjustment. She entered a second adoptive

home but she caused such conflict with the grandmother in the home that removal was requested. Following removal, she was placed in the Children's Home and Aid Society School where she now remains.

In the third case, the adoptive placement was presumed to be quite good and the boy was making an excellent adjustment. The adoptive mother died quite suddenly and unexpectedly before adoption was completed, but the father expressed a desire to adopt the boy regardless. However, he altered his decision and asked that the boy be removed. He is now living in a foster home with his younger sister who has been legally adopted by this family. They have stated they do not wish to adopt the boy but they are willing to keep him for an indefinite period on a boarding basis.

The last case failed but the maladjustment was not deemed wholly the child's fault. The parents were quite rigid with him and no amount of explanation or advice from the worker appeared to have any effect. The situation became so tense that the child became the center of conflict and was blamed for causing marital discord between the parents. The Adoption Committee recommended his removal and he was placed in a foster home in 1947 where he now remains.

In the remaining two situations, the child remains in the adoptive home but has never been legally adopted. In the one situation, the child was placed in August of 1951 and during the first year the adoptive parents made no reference to initiating legal steps. When broached by the worker, they always found some excuse and at the last contact their reason for delay was due to a strike which had put the father out of a job for eight weeks. For financial reasons, they would not begin proceedings, and requested more time to build up

their savings. In the other, a petition was filed in 1949 but no final decree was ever given. The lawyer has never gone back to the court and the parents have not urged him to do so. The agency is working with this family and attempting to help them realize the value of legally adopting the child to insure him the security and the rights of inheritance. The family has also been advised of the emotional factors involved when the child is not really "theirs".

In this chapter, the status of the fifty-six placements was discussed. Fifty have resulted in legal adoptions, thirty-five of which were consummated at the end of the child's first year in the home. These adoptions which were legalized at the end of the year, involved the majority of the group from five to ten. The older child did not make as rapid adjustment. Four placements failed completely and two placements have not been terminated by legal action.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction, the statement was made that adoptive placements of older children are problematic to childplacing agencies. The child of five, is considered an "older" child and for that age and over, adoption homes are scarce.

Those couples who do not have children of their own, feel they have been denied the pleasure of the child's developmental period if they are refused an infant. Many couples are afraid they cannot cope with an older child as he is "too set in his ways."

Therefore, these placements are said to be problematic, not only due to the child's age but also in finding mature adoptive parents. They, too, need to understand that as much joy and satisfaction can be derived from a child of five as from an infant.

With these thoughts in mind, therefore, this study was done to see what problems a specific group exhibited after placement and what degree of success was attained.

Fifty-six children were placed in adoptive homes and of this number, fifty remained in the home and legal adoption took place. These placements would be termed successful, therefore, in the sense that the child remained in the home and was legally adopted. It is true, that from this fifty, four chil-

children were referred to the Agency for service after adoption was granted. This would not indicate, however, that the remaining forty-six did not encounter difficulty but rather that they did not return to the Agency. The total percentage of success, therefore, would be 89.3 per cent.

During the six years from 1946-1951, the Agency placed thirty-one boys in comparison to twenty-five girls. This was contrary to popular belief as boys are considered to be more difficult to place than girls. Agencies are often faced with a large number of boys and no homes for them.

Seven of the children placed were Negro of equal to 12 per cent of the total placed. According to National figures, non-White adoptions constitute 10 per cent of the total. Non-White may also include Mexican, Chinese and other mixtures and this would tend to distort the facts. In relation to the ratio of the geographic area used in this study, however, this percentage does not seem to be out of proportion. Also the same problem of suitable Negro homes is present in this area as in the rest of the country.

Intelligence of the child was considered in making these placements but did not constitute the main problem. Thirty-three children were given Psychometric examinations and the remaining twenty-three were not. Of those tested and those who were not, the majority of children were classified as having average intelligence. Two were diagnosed as Borderline but succeeded in making satisfactory adjustments.

With the exception of thirteen children, forty-three were born in wedlock. Of this number, all but four came from homes broken by divorce or separation. The parent remaining in the home proved inadequate and the child

had to be removed. Some parents were able to relinquish the child themselves. The remainder were not able to voluntarily release their child, and the child was removed under a court order.

In relation to the problems these children presented, the most common was insecurity. Bewildered by what had happened to them and not knowing what was to come next, they rebelled against their situations. They felt they belonged to no one and could not understand this. Difficulty in releasing their natural family also accompanied many of these children and conflicted with their desire to be accepted by the adoptive parents.

The adoptive parents were chosen with as much care as possible, in an effort to match child and parent. The majority of these parents were from thirty-five to forty-five years of age and capable of meeting the child on his level.

From this study, therefore, the placement of older children while problematic to the Agency does not seem to be as difficult as stated. Fifty children were successfully placed which indicates that 89.3 per cent of the total terminated in adoptions. With the exception of four cases, there was no contact with the Agency after adoption was consummated. This was achieved in various ways. Careful thought and consideration was given to the selection of the adoptive parents in an attempt to match parent and child. After placement was made, close Agency supervision was given and the worker was used in a supportive and consultant role. In those situations which required, community resources such as the Mental Hygiene Clinic were used.

Thus it may be concluded that the older child may be placed and will

adjust successfully. Not only can he be placed successfully, but he can also bring as much pleasure to the adoptive parent as the infant.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Brooks, E., Adventuring In Adoption, University of North Carolina Press, 1936.
- Gallegher, Eleanor J., Adopted Child, New York, 1936.
- Michaels, Ruth and Rondell Florence, The Adopted Family, New York, 1951.
- Prentice, Carol, An Adopted Child Looks At Adoption, New York, 1940.

B. ARTICLES

- "Adoption of Children," Children's Bureau Statistical Service, Washington, D.C., XIV, 1951.
- Brenner, Ruth, "Selection of Adopted Parents," Child Welfare, XXV, December, 1946, 1-6.
- Brown, Florence G., "What Do We Seek in Adoptive Parents?," Social Casework, XXXII, April, 1951, 155-156.
- Clothier, Florence, "Adoption Procedure and the Community," Mental Hygiene, XXV, April, 1941, 196-209.
- Clothier, Florence, "Placing the Child for Adoption," Mental Hygiene, XXVI, April, 1942, 257-274.
- Clothier, Florence, "The Psychology of the Adopted Child," Mental Hygiene, XXVII, April, 1943, 222-231.
- Clothier, Florence, "The Social Worker in the Field of Adoption," Mental Hygiene, XXI V, April, 1940, 210-215.
- Colby, Mary Ruth, "Problems and Procedures in Adoption," U.S. Children's Bureau, Number 262, 1941.
- "Essentials of Adoption Law and Procedure," U.S. Children's Bureau, Number 331, 1949.

- Hallinan, Helen, "Who Are the Children Available for Adoption?", Social Casework, XXXII, April, 1951, 161-167.
- Harra, Elizabeth, "The Foster Parent and the Agency in the Adoption Practice," National Conference of Social Work Proceedings, New York, 1941, 411-425.
- Hutchinson, Dorothy, "Re-examination of Some Aspects of Casework Practice in Adoption," Child Welfare, XXV, November, 1946, 4-7.
- Kahn, Margaret, "Adoption of Children with Problems," Child Welfare, XXVIII, October, 1949, 7-8.
- Kuhlman, Frieda and Robinson, Helen, "Rorschach Tests as a Diagnostic Tool in Adoption Studies," Social Casework, XXXII, January, 1951, 15-22.
- Lippman, Hyman, "Suitability of Children for Adoption," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, VII, April, 1937, 270-273.
- Lyle, Leon, "Placing Older Children for Adoption," Child Welfare, XXVIII, January, 1949, 3-7.
- Lyle, Leon, "Use of Fees in Adoption," Child Welfare, XXVII, October, 1948, 6-8.
- Michaels, Ruth, "Special Problems in Casework with Adoptive Parents," Social Casework, XXXIII, January, 1952, 18-23.
- Morlock, Maud, "Adoption," Child Welfare, XXV, December, 1946, 7-12.
- Ray, Alice K., "A Good Adoption Program," National Conference of Social Work Proceedings, 1945, 294-304.
- Schmidt, William D., "The Community and the Adoption Problem," Child Welfare, XXXI, May, 1952, 3-7.
- Theis, Sophie Van S., "Casework in the Process of Adoption," National Conference of Social Work Proceedings, 1942, 405-415.
- Ward, Margaret, "The State Welfare Department's Responsibility for Investigating Adoption Petitions," Child Welfare, XXX, June, 1951, 8-13.

C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Child Welfare Handbook, Children's Division, Department of Public Welfare, State of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Compilation of Official Rules and Regulations. Adopted and Promulgated by the State Board of Public Welfare, State of Indiana, July, 1952.

Digest of Indiana Laws. Referring to Child Welfare, Adoption Law, Section III.

Know Your Welfare Department. A Summary of Public Welfare together with an explanation of its Administration in Lake County, Indiana, for the three year period, 1949-1951.

Policies and Procedures of Placement Division. Lake County Department of Public Welfare, November, 1947, revised 1953.

The Welfare Act of 1936 as Amended by Acts of 1941, Section II.

APPENDIX I

SCHEDULE

CHILD

Identifying Information

Name _____
Case No. _____
Date of Birth _____
Sex M _____ F _____
Race W _____ N _____ Other _____
Legitimate _____ Illeg. _____

Health

Physical
Doctor's exam Y _____ N _____
Date given _____
Findings _____

Mental

Psy. test Y _____ N _____
Date given _____
Kind _____
Results C.A. _____ M.A. _____ I.Q. _____
Remarks _____

School History

In school at time
of removal from home Y _____ N _____
If no, reason _____
If yes, is child in
correct grade for age Y _____ N _____
In special school Y _____ N _____
If yes, kind _____

STATUS OF NATURAL FAMILY AT TIME OF CHILD'S REMOVAL

Father Living _____ Deceased _____
In home Yes _____ No _____

If no, whereabouts _____
Married to mother
of child Yes _____ No _____
If no, Div. _____ Sep. _____
If divorced has
father remarried Yes _____ No _____
Mother Living _____ Dec. _____
In home Y _____ N _____
If no, whereabouts _____
Married to father
of child Y _____ N _____
If no, Div. _____ Sep. _____
If divorced has
mother remarried Y _____ N _____
Parents together
Both natural parents in home
when child removed Y _____ N _____
If no, which M _____ F _____
Does absent parent see
child Y _____ N _____
If no, does he show interest
in anyway _____
Siblings
No. of brothers 0 _____ Y _____
No. of sisters 0 _____ Y _____
Whereabouts at time of
child's removal H _____ F.H. _____
Inst. _____ R _____
All removed from
home Y _____ N _____
If no, how many _____
If not, why not _____

PLACEMENT HISTORY

Date of removal from home _____
Reasons for removal _____
Voluntary removal Y _____ N _____

Court Order Y _____ N _____
 Placement following
 removal F.H. _____ Inst _____ Rel _____
 Kind and no. of placements
 prior to adoptive home
 F.H. _____
 Inst. _____
 Rel. _____
 Brief history of these
 placements _____

ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS

Age of child when placed _____
 Date placed _____
 Two or more placed in same home
 on adoptive basis _____
 Court order for
 adoption Y _____ N _____
 Parents signed release Y _____ N _____
 Child remain in first adoptive
 home Y _____ N _____
 If no, replaced in 2nd
 adoptive home Y _____ N _____
 If adoptive placements failed
 where was child placed _____

ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Length of present marriage _____
 Natural children Y _____ N _____
 Sex M _____ F _____
 Ages _____

Husband

Age when child placed _____
 Married previously _____
 Terminated Death _____ Div _____
 Children Y _____ N _____
 With father Y _____ N _____

Wife

Age when child placed _____
 Married previously Y _____ N _____
 Terminated Death _____ Div _____
 Children Y _____ N _____
 With mother Y _____ N _____

Adopted Child Desired

Age _____
 Sex M _____ F _____
 Not desired _____
 Reasons stated for adoption _____

PROBLEMS AFTER ADOPTIVE PLACEMENTS

Types: _____

METHOD OF HANDLING

STATUS OF ADOPTION

Legal procedure
 initiated Y _____ N _____
 If no, why not _____

Adoption completed Y _____ N _____
 Date of petition _____
 Date decree granted _____

REMARKS