

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

THE NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN OF FISHWEIR
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this study is to summarize, document and evaluate information and facts about the growth and development of children necessary to give each child experiences that have meaning, purpose and value.

Chapter I discusses the physical growth and the social-psychological needs of children; further it describes some ways in which group dynamics function in a democratic atmosphere.

Chapter II reviews and then shows actual use made in Fishweir School Jacksonville, Florida of various techniques for gathering information about children.

Chapter III is devoted to a brief study of five selected pupils in the Fishweir School.

The writer has devoted years to a study of the characteristics of children and the ways and means of securing and using information regarding their growth and development. This paper is a summary in which an attempt is made to highlight these experiences.

While only a few years remain of an active teaching career this paper is regarded as an opportunity to express what the writer regards as significant points in dealing with the children entrusted to her care over a period of years at Fishweir School.

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CHAPTER I

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Physical Growth and Maturity

The term growth which is sometimes defined a progress toward maturity, may be applied first to the physical characteristic of the child. The term growth may also be applied to vocabulary, speech, locomotion, and social development. Since all phases of growth are interrelated, it is important that the teacher understand how children grow and develop.

Some basic generalizations about growth that are usually accepted are:

- (1) Individual growth is, in a sense unique; there are, however certain developmental stages through which children pass on the way to adulthood.
- (2) While growth takes place sequentially, individuals differ widely as to their rate of change from stage to stage.
- (3) Gradually differentiated development is a phenomenon common to all phases of growth especially in which instruction is concerned.
- (4) The various phases of growth are interrelated, but wide divergence sometimes occurs quantitatively and qualitatively as to physical, mental and social growth.

"The notion of development as a continuum, a growth sequence or a curve, has been a helpful one to students of

child growth and development."¹ Curves may show the general tendencies of growth, but each child makes his own curve with his own rate and individual direction of development.

Olson² uses a coined word organismic age, which he defines as "the average of growth ages at a selected chronological age point." He shows that when the organismic age for a child is calculated for successive ages and the points are plotted and connected, much stability and predictability in trend is revealed. A child tends to show growth in a more steady and predictable manner when the average of growth rather than a single attribute of growth is plotted.

When we examine the available data on the growth of children from the point of view of the child as a whole we find an underlying unity in structure, function and achievement. Although there may be a diversity in the level at which children are growing at a given age and in the various growth patterns, we will find that all growth is orderly and sequential. Olson says that the level and pattern have a familial basis suggesting that a child has an unfolding design which must be nurtured if it is to be fulfilled.³

¹Hollis L. Caswell and A. Wellesley Forshay, Education in the Elementary School, New York: American Book Co., 1950, p. 103.

²Willard C. Olson, Child Development, Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1949, p. 176.

³Olson, op. cit., p. 188.

"The maturation of the individual as a whole is a complex process in which there is a series of partial growth processes maturing in a sequential relationship."¹ Each phase of growth follows a definite pattern of beginning and end points, and each phase also follows an overall general pattern. The simple maturations start early and end early; the more complex maturations take a longer period of time.

Jersild² says that the changes, during the course of development, appear in many forms such as an increase in the size of the body and an increase in capacity. There is an increase in the power to concentrate. The mind is able to accomplish more complex tasks.

The most obvious aspect of physical growth is shown by height and weight. Research studies³ conducted by Olson and Hughes suggest that the physical maturity of a child, as indicated by his height, weight, and skeletal development may be an important determiner of reading readiness. At the present time, however, it is not advised that teachers accept the aspects of physical maturity that they can observe as infallible indicators of reading readiness. Such cities

¹A. J. Hugget and C. V. Millard, Growth and Development in the Elementary School, Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1940, p. 32.

²Arthur T. Jersild, Child Development and the Curriculum, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1946, p. 12.

³W. H. Olson and B. O. Hughes, "The Concept of Organismic Age", Journal of Educational Research, Vol. XXXV, January 1942.

as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles do recognize the difference in the maturation of children by delaying reading instruction in some schools until the second year.¹ Data collected about a group of thirty six fourth graders, who were studied at Fishweir School would tend to suggest that mental capacity, as indicated by intelligence tests, would be a surer guide to the achievement of a pupil than his physical growth and development. However, achievement usually depends upon a number of factors - all of which are important in readiness.

The outcome of normal development is increasing maturity. "The educational program of the school should be designed to help the child at any stage of his career to reach his potential level of maturity."² The health and physical development of the child should be the concern of the school since it is an important factor in the mental and social development of the child. The chart which follows indicates the type of information kept on pupils. In Chapter III, in connection with the case studies, the use made of such information dealing with individuals is indicated.

¹Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1950, p. 26.

²Jersild, op. cit., p. 11.

Data, Concerning A Fourth Grade Class At Fishweir School

Chron. Age: in Months ¹ :		Height :	Weight in Pounds :	Intelligence Quotient ² :	Achievement Test Grade Placement ³
1.	108	4' 3"	70 lbs.	108	4.1
2.	111	4' 3"	56½ lbs.	109	4.5
3.	109	4' 4"	51 lbs.	119	5.7
4.	109	4' 5"	73½ lbs.	71	4.4
5.	110	4' 5½"	55½ lbs.	126	5.9
6.	112	4' 6"	87½ lbs.	110	5.5
7.	112	4' 6"	66 lbs.	97	3.6
8.	111	4' 7"	69 lbs.	117	6.0
9.	108	4' 9"	63½ lbs.	107	5.8
10.	115	5' 2"	102½ lbs.	113	5.5
11.	116	4' 5"	61 lbs.	100	3.9
12.	114	4' 6"	68½ lbs.	94	4.8
13.	122	4' 6"	72½ lbs.	112	5.3
14.	111	4' 6"	68 lbs.	125	5.5
15.	115	4' 6"	72½ lbs.	109	5.2
16.	113	4' 6½"	83 lbs.	89	5.6
17.	123	4' 7"	70 lbs.	95	4.0
18.	113	4' 8"	72½ lbs.	128	6.6
19.	110	4' 8"	77½ lbs.	118	5.8
20.	106	4' 9"	74½ lbs.	131	5.6
21.	128	4' 9"	83 lbs.	100	3.9
22.	112	4' 9"	71½ lbs.	117	4.0

Data, Concerning A Fourth Grade Class At Fishweir School
(continued)

Chron. Age:	Height	Weight in	Intelligence:	Achievement
in Months ¹ :	:	Pounds	Quotient ² :	Test Grade
:	:	:	:	Placement ³
23. 118 :	4' 9" :	100 lbs :	100 :	4.4
24. 113 :	4' 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " :	95 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs :	108 :	5.5
25. 106 :	4' 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " :	84 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs :	132 :	5.8
26. 113 :	4' 10" :	88 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs :	71 :	5.6
27. 116 :	4' 10" :	99 lbs :	118 :	6.2
:	:	:	:	:

1. Girls - 1-10 Boys - 11-27 Actual Grade Placement at test - 4.4
2. New Progressive Achievement Test January 23, 1951.
3. California Mental Maturity Test, November 21, 1950 - S. F '47.

Developmental Tasks of Children and Youth

Developmental tasks have been called the guideposts which give an overall picture of growth and development. Learning to eat food at a regular time and in an acceptable way is a developmental task. Reorganizing one's thought and feelings about one's self in the face of bodily changes and accepting the reality of one's appearance are developmental tasks of early adolescence.¹ "Learning to participate in this

¹Robert J. Havighurst, Developmental Tasks of Education, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 86.

society and to adjust effectively to its processes poses for every child some of his most highly motivated and significant developmental tasks."¹

Our cultural pattern and the changes that take place in our physical make-up set these developmental tasks. Each child who comes to public school brings his background with him, a unique view of himself and his own world. The child's heritage influences strongly the pattern of his development. If the school is to guide the children to assume an acceptable place in society, the child must be made to feel that neither he nor his family has been rejected. Any change that one tries to make should be accomplished so gradually that such a change is not too radical a departure from what is acceptable to most members of the community.

Because of the difference in the development of children, it is imperative that teachers understand developmental tasks in order (1) that they will not put pressures on children at a time when these children are not ready (2) that they will be concerned when children, due to home pressure or other difficulty, seem not to be facing up to developmental tasks which the situation demands. Some children may be performing the tasks of early childhood. Others may be doing the tasks of late childhood; while others may be ready for the tasks of adolescence. Very early or

¹Helping Teachers Understand Children, The Staff of the Division on Child Development and Teacher personnel. Washington: University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 278.

very late maturing, while seemingly unavoidable in some cases, are precisely the pressure points which need wise council and sympathetic treatment.

Developmental tasks are interrelated in a complex fashion. Successful accomplishment of any task at the appropriate time not only facilitates the mastery of other tasks, which are worked on simultaneously, but such success creates readiness for succeeding tasks. Failure in developmental tasks predisposes the individual to further failure.

An understanding of the developmental tasks suitable to children at every stage of their development is invaluable to the teacher in meeting the needs of the children. She should understand that these tasks are neither to be hurried nor indefinitely postponed. Each stage of development requires new orientation and acceptance of such tasks. The first and the last of a group to pass through any of these developmental stages are likely to be noticed by the group.

In some cases without forcing the issue the teacher can help plan situations which will stimulate "getting on with the task", in other cases "to slow down the process." Helping those who develop extremely early and those who develop extremely late is a real challenge.

The Basic Needs of Children

The basic need of children are of great interest to us since the maximum development of the child depends on such factors as readiness, interest, motivation, and the satisfaction of his basic needs. The basic needs are divided into two classes, biological needs and psychological needs.

Prescott¹ classifies biological needs as "physiological needs that spring out of structure and bio-chemical equilibria." They include such things as adequate elimination, and a rhythm of activity and rest.

In order to satisfy many of biological needs, disequilibrium is created in the body that gives rise to a number of stimuli. When the need is satisfied, the drive disappears and a state of equilibrium is approached; this, in turn, leads to further need of adjustment. After exercise, the body needs rest; as rest is taken care of, a demand for further exercise or movement arises. Prescott maintains that activity should be followed by rest since a proper balance between the two is necessary for emotional adjustment and physical health.

The psychological social needs² are, according to Freud and Adler, the need for emotional security, the need for

¹Daniel Alfred Prescott, Emotion and the Educative Process. Washington: American Council of Education, 1938, p. 113.

²Herbert Carrol, Mental Hygiene, The Dynamics of Adjustment, New York: Prentice Hall, 1947, p. 10.

achievement or mastery and the need for recognition or status. When these needs are not satisfied, frustration and mal-adjustment follow.

Laurence E. Cole says:

"Out of these primary physiological needs the process of living with human beings brings social, economic, political, aesthetic, religious needs. Although some writers speak of social needs as secondary, they come to dictate out acts as ruthlessly as the physiological ones."¹

In order to identify children, who by their daily behavior suggest that their emotional needs have not been met, Louis E. Raths² divides these psychological-social needs into eight classes. They are: (1) the need of belonging, (2) the need for achievement, (3) the need of economic security, (4) the need to be free from the intense feeling of guilt, (5) the need of love and affection, (6) the need for sharing, (7) the need for self respect and (8) the need for understanding.

Identifying the Needs of Children

Explanation is not always easy in cases of maladjustment. Fenton³ points out that many psychologists, notably

¹Laurence E. Cole, William F. Bruce, Educational Psychology, New York: World Book Co., 1950, p. 235.

²Louis E. Raths, An Application to Education of the Needs Theory, New York: Ad Art Ptg. Service, 1949, pp. 6-18.

³Norman Fenton, Mental Hygiene and School Practice, Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 1943, pp.103-105.

the Freudian emphasize the dynamic character of the unconscious. In studying the behavior of children, we try to note not only what a child does but why. We attempt to translate certain classical psychiatric concepts into terms that will help us interpret behavior so that we can accept the behavior and try to guide the child toward further growth and development.

* To meet the pressures that are put upon him and which may come from within the child himself, a child may behave in a manner unacceptable to adults.

Louis P. Thorpe of Northwestern University Psychology Department says:

We can thus interpret a pupil's conduct, be it in the form of antisocial, destructive tendencies, or withdrawing regressive tendencies, as an overt expression of insecurity, anxiety or frustration. In short, what pupils do mirrors their attitudes toward life and how it has treated them.¹

A theory was formulated by Freud, Dollard and others, known as the "Frustration Agression"² hypothesis. Building upon this hypothesis, Raths names three "gross" manifestations of behavior that are indicative of frustration or emotional needs as aggression, submission, and withdrawing. From studies made by Dunbar and others, Raths adds a fourth

¹Louis P. Thorpe, Guiding Child and Adolescent Development in the Modern School, Education Bulletin #16, Los Angeles: California Test Bureau, 1951, p. 3.

²Raths, op. cit., p. 5.

manifestation, psychosomatic symptoms of illness.

All children display aggression in some form at varying times. Aggression may be channeled through activities in art, games, sports, or other activities so as not to prove harmful to property or the rights of others. It is the aggression that takes the form of offensive and domineering talk, of resentment of parents, teachers, and others, and the form of active rejection that is the concern of the school.

James Hymes¹ believes that it takes a long time to make a bully. Usually something has gone wrong. He may have had no problem last year. Something is bearing down on him. He cannot hit the real cause so he hits the children. It may be a new baby, his father may be out of a job, or someone may be sick. The investigator usually has a more difficult time and must look for a combination of factors related to the aggressive tendencies noted.

The child with the need of belonging may show aggressive behavior when he tries to force his way in the group. The child with the need to achieve may become aggressive when he tries and fails and receives so little praise. The show-off child, who may be seeking to gain the attention he fails to get at home, may be of this type. Attention should be

¹James Hymes, Listen, Teacher, The Children Speak, New York: Committee on Mental Health, 1949, p. 10.

focused on the rather consistent pattern of aggressive activities if we are to diagnose his trouble and help him meet his needs.

The submissive child is the one who follows the line of least resistance. He is timid, waits to be directed, and seldom protests. He may have been severely punished for aggressive behavior and may have lost all backbone. The submissive child has a deep need for belonging, since he has few companions. He may have the need for affection, since parents and teachers often give him little attention. He needs reassurance, since he is often afraid of making mistakes. He may be the child, who needs to be freed from the feeling of guilt. Often such a child is worried over little mistakes and may tend to become submissive or withdraw.

The third class which Rath¹ discusses are neither aggressive nor submissive, but express their frustration by withdrawing from society. The children who withdraw may engage in intricate and complex activities, which isolate them further from the group. From this group of children, who are quiet and introverted may come those who plan and innovate, the scientists and inventors of the future.² The withdrawn child may be the child who is too small to compete, for such a child either withdraws when he cannot compete and becomes introverted or develops defense reactions, which

¹Rath, op. cit., p. 5.

²Edward A. Strecker, John W. Appel, Discovering Ourselves, New York: Thomas Co., 1948, p. 229.

make him appear "pugnacious, egotistical or cocky."¹

The fourth class, which Rath discusses, is children who show signs of psychosomatic illness. Children who have been frustrated may develop psychosomatic illnesses such as eczema, rashes associated with allergies, cardio-vascular disturbances, hypertension or palpitation of the heart. These children may stutter or stammer, and may, according to Leo Kanner,² seek to avoid the necessity of speaking. These children may have disturbances of the kidneys or respiratory tract. They may be ill enough to be under the care of the doctor. The nervous, fearful child may be tired, dizzy, nauseated and actually paralyzed at times.

Plant has shown how necessary security or belongingness is. Security is given by parental love in a good home, where discipline is consistent and where harmony may compensate for many material lacks. Plant says that "security comes to the individual because of who he is, whereas adequacy is attained through what he can do."³

The school is concerned with interpreting the behavior of the child in order to understand the behavior and try to direct it into more acceptable channels. The school is concerned with making each child feel himself a person of worth.

¹J. Murray Lee and Doris May Lee, The Child and His Curriculum, New York: D. Appleton and Century Co., 1940, p. 26.

²Leo Kanner, M. D. Child Psychiatry, New York: Thomas Co., 1948, p. 511.

³James S. Plant, M. D. Personality and the Culture Pattern, New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1937, p. 100.

It is concerned with developing social behavior that will merit group approval and in fostering attitudes that will develop acceptable group behavior.

Group Dynamics and a Democratic Atmosphere

Group dynamics has been called the power that underlies group productivity. When we think of learning as a process of growth, we are interested in the climate in which learning takes place. Ruth Cunningham¹ says that the term "group morale" is frequently applied to the reaction of a group to its climate. We recognize that patterns of interaction and climate are interdependent. An appropriate pattern may create a favorable climate. The amount of success a teacher has in the classroom depends not so much on her technical skill as the knowledge and the atmosphere she is able to create.

Kurt Lewin,² who has been called the father of the dynamic movement, reported experiments by Lippit and White at the Iowa Child Welfare Station. They showed the difference between democratic and autocratic leadership. They showed that there was thirty times as much domination in the auto-

¹Ruth Cunningham, et. al., Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls, New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia College, 1950, p. 44.

²Kurt Lewin, Resolving Social Conflicts, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948, pp. 74-76.

cratic group. Lippit and White¹ report two types of reaction in the autocratic group, one characterized by aggression, the second by apathy.

Lippit and White exposed children to a third atmosphere, the laissez faire. They report a striking difference between the laissez faire and the democratic atmosphere, a difference which is decidedly in favor of the democratic atmosphere.

During the past decade experimental studies have been concerned with the development of group dynamics and have produced findings that may be incorporated into our teaching methods in our schools. Responsibility such as that involved in effective citizenship must be developed if students are to learn to live together in a democratic setting. Teachers should, therefore, be concerned with helping groups of students develop proficiency in translating ideals of democratic living into habits of behavior.

Techniques of group living must be learned, but techniques without understanding are hollow and meaningless. Leland P. Bradford,² Director of Research Center for Group Dynamics of the University of Michigan says:

¹Ibid., p. 81.

²Leland P. Bradford, Kenneth Benner and Ronald Lippert, "The Promise of Group Dynamics", National Education Journal, Vol. XXXVII, September 1938, p. 350.

Experimental findings indicate that groups can grow in their ability to work efficiently; to handle successfully emotional problems within the group; to bring out and use potential member contributions, to absorb such shock to the group as the loss of a member; inclusion of new people, conflict over leadership; to be objective about group problems and to see continuous improvement to the group.

If we are to meet the needs of the children, we should provide experiences that will give satisfaction within the group. To do this successfully we must study the cliques, gangs, sub-patterns and relationships in the group.

We should help the group verbalize its codes. A basic skill in group action is discussion. We are coming to realize, however, that whether it takes place in a formal learning situation, or in real life, discussion that leads nowhere, that fails to result in group action, falls short of its mark of contributing to the end of improved living. Members should learn to analyze and correct their own weaknesses in group discussion and activities. The quality of group discussion should be appropriate to life situations in a democratic group.

Group action depends upon the quality of the leadership. Very often leaders are chosen just because they are popular. They are chosen often for one of these four qualifications, physical strength, social strength, rational power or some particular skill in achieving goals, which the group recognizes. A project may be doomed to failure by a poor choice of leadership. A group should learn to assess

leadership behavior. The leader should evaluate critically his own leadership. The ideal leadership should be shared leadership. The teacher can help each member develop for effective group leadership, membership, attitudes and techniques.

Evaluation of group activities should be a continuous process for in this way democratic attitudes and generalized patterns of behavior may be developed and modified. Evaluation should include those evaluating and those evaluated. Self evaluation is performed in terms of one's needs, and it is certainly through this process that self direction is achieved. A pupil will work harder if activated by recognized needs toward goals common to the group.

CHAPTER II

SOME WAYS OF GETTING INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHILD

The preceding chapter has shown that each child is an individual, growing according to his own growth pattern. This pattern is structured by whatever comes from the germ plasm itself modified by a constantly changing social background. Since each child differs physically, socially, mentally and emotionally, teachers should use whatever reliable instruments are at hand to understand his unique character. In speaking of child guidance, Arthur Traxler has said:

The central idea is to gather as much relevant information as possible about each pupil, organize it so that it shows both status at any time and the growth over a period of years, and use these data with understanding in the distribution and adjustment of individual pupils.¹

Phases of Growth and Development of Children Needing Study

A group of teachers, who were making a survey of the testing program of Duval County, have compiled a table showing what we need to know about children. It was based on Edgar L. Harden's How to Organize Your Guidance Program.²

¹Arthur E. Traxler, Techniques of Guidance, Foreword, xii New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945.

²Edgar L. Harden, How to Organize Your Guidance Program, Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1950, pp. 17-19.

Harden shows that ideally a complete informative record about each pupil should contain the following:

1. Home and Social Background

Information concerning education, health, religion, citizenship, and language spoken in the home. The number of siblings, the types of home, and the general home conditions are important.

2. School History and Records of Classwork

Number and kinds of school attended, extra school activities, and any unusual successes or failures encountered. A complete record of all school work is significant.

3. Growth and Success in Different Fields of Study

A record of achievement tests will show this.

4. Academic Aptitudes

This will be revealed by mental maturity tests.

5. Health

Reliable information about mental and physical health will be valuable. Poor eyesight, defective hearing, color blindness, and emotional disorders are among frequent disabilities of children.

6. Educational and Vocational Interests

Pupil's interests, even though they change, give clues in vocational and educational planning.

7. Special Aptitudes

Information about aptitudes in art, music, athletics, mechanical ability, clerical ability or in other areas.

8. Personality

Does the child manifest anxiety, inertia, hostility or other negative symptoms that indicate personality disturbances.

9. Plans for Future

What are the educational and vocational plans of the student?

10. Personal problems

What are the personal problems with which the student needs help?

Some Types of Data Worth Collecting at Fishweir School

Some of the instruments¹ used by elementary teachers to ascertain the attitudes, interests, and abilities of pupils are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Cumulative records | 7. Autobiographies |
| 2. Health Records | 8. Self Rating Scales |
| 3. Conferences and interviews | 9. Scholastic Aptitude Tests |
| 4. Anecdotal Records | 10. Achievement Tests |
| 5. Case Studies | 11. Sociograms |
| 6. Questionnaires | 12. Home Visitations |

The state adopted Cumulative Record Folder, if kept as intended, furnishes in compact form much information about the child. It supplies a health record, a record of yearly grades of the child, a record of tests, and appraisal by teachers of personality traits with supplementary comments in unusual cases. It gives data on school attendance. There are, in addition, statistics about the parents, their marital status, education, health, economic status, and the siblings in the family. The folder contains samples of work, duplicate report sheets, anecdotal records and valuable

¹H. H. Remmers and Benjamin Shimberg, Problems of High School And Youth, Lafayette, Indiana, Perdue University, 1949, p. 27.

information. In this file is also kept the latest test and a profile chart of the child.

The new health records contain the medical history of the child. A complete medical examination is given the child at the time of his entrance to school by the family doctor. This form is kept up to date by recording the child's diseases and inoculations and the results of eye and ear tests. Any physical defects are carefully noted.

Conferences with individual children and with parents are most revealing. After the teacher has observed the child in the classroom, alone and in action with his peers in many places, a conference with the child may seem advisable. At such a time the anecdotal record is found to be a convenient method of preserving information about the conference, which will provide the teacher and future teachers with informative data. When the teacher is dealing with a difficult problem, interviews with leaders in community organizations are helpful in giving her information for greater understanding of the child.

Anecdotal records are kept in the child's individual file. They are valuable if they are objective and if they are carefully studied for recurring patterns of behavior. They assist, if the clues are carefully followed, in arriving at the emotional factors involved in the child's difficulty.

Case studies are helpful, particularly when the child presents a more difficult problem. Health, scholastic, and

all available records may be of value in making a detailed case study. The child is observed under varying circumstances, in many places and with different associates. The anecdotal record, if properly kept, is very valuable. When the child presents a particularly perplexing problem or one the teacher is not equipped to handle, psychological help should be obtained.

Questionnaires and autobiographies written by the children contain much information. "My Weekly Reader"¹ puts out an autobiographical form, a form about the child's wishes, that reveals causes of the child's unhappiness, and a citizenship form that indicates the attitudes of the child.

Self-rating scales are a means by which the child evaluates his own work and behavior. They are widely used in schools that attempt to place an increasing amount of responsibility for the direction of his school progress on the child himself. Many teachers use self-rating scales at report card periods.

Scholastic aptitude tests are given in order to provide adequate diagnosis to help in the adjustment of the child. The Duval County-Wide Evaluative Committee chose the tests to be used in Duval County by the following criteria: "validity, reliability, adequacy, objectivity, administrability, scorability, comparability, economy and utility." The New

¹ My Weekly Reader, Columbus Ohio: Americation Press Weekly.

California Mental Maturity Test, used in Duval County provides a general I.Q., a language and a non-language I.Q. Such a test is a guide in adjusting the work to the ability of the child so that he will not be working at his frustration level.

Achievement tests are used to find the range of achievement in the class. They disclose the weaknesses in such areas as reading, language and arithmetic. The results may be used to evaluate instruction. The aim of all achievement tests is the accurate determination of class and individual achievement to the purpose that meaningful instruction may follow. Such tests may be viewed in the light of values and objectives for the educational program; misuse may lead to an actual restriction or elimination of certain very valuable objectives.

The sociogram of a group is the charting of dynamic interrelationships expressed by the membership of the group.¹ A sociometric test reveals the natural grouping of the children and gives the teacher leads for "providing the children with working or living companions in whom they are most likely to find mutual response."² It also helps the teacher discover

¹Harry A. Greene, A. N. Jorgensen, R. J. Gerverick, Measurement and Evaluation in the Secondary School, New York: Longmans Green and Co., 1948, p. 182.

²Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Educational Association, Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools, Washington: 1950, p. 207.

isolates, who may be in need of achieving better peer status.

Home visits establish a better rapport between teachers and parents and the community. Hazel F. Gabbard,¹ specialist for extended services of the U. S. Office of Education says that another "R" has been added to the three R's. that of relationship. There is no substitute for a face to face conference with a parent concerning the child. Parents are made aware that the climate in which learning takes place is their concern and that the people, who guide their children in the educational experience are genuinely interested in their growth and development.

Extent to Which Fishweir School Obtains and Uses Various Types of Data

During the preplanning period at Fishweir School, teachers study the Cumulative Record File of the incoming class. The teacher makes any changes necessary in the data of the Cumulative Record after she receives the registration questionnaire filled in by the parent. Tests are recorded as they are given during the year. Anecdotes and other materials are added to the file. The file of the individual pupil is always available for use by the teacher and the parent when a conference is necessary.

¹H. B. Gabbard, U. S. Educational Bulletin, No. 3.
Washington: U. S. Office of Education, 1949.

Notes are added from time to time to the health record. This is important since the careful year-round observation of the child by the teacher may lead to examination by the Duval County or the family doctor. She notes the condition of the nose and throat. She notices his general appearance, whether he is extremely fat or thin; whether he tries easily, whether he has poor muscular coordination or poor posture. She notes behavior symptoms such as twitching, restlessness, nail biting, or excessive use of the lavatory. She notes lack of hearing acuity and may refer the child to an ear specialist. Reference to a specialist may be important since John G. Rockwell¹ indicates a thyroid deficiency is often associated with low hearing sensitivity. She may refer the child with speech defects to the speech correctionist. She is ever alert to the mental and physical health of the child.

Conferences and interviews were a part of the year's work in which the Fishweir Faculty sought to develop effective techniques for encouraging lay-participation in the Fishweir School program. The techniques of the interview were studied for it was believed by the Fishweir Faculty that the negative approach of complaint was often made to parents. Katherine D'Evelyn's Individual Parent-Teacher Conferences² gave

¹John G. Rockwell, "Some Psychological Factors", Mental Health in the Classroom. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1940.

²Katherine E. D'Evelyn, Individual Parent-Teacher Conferences, New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1945, pp. 1-25.

significant suggestions on the interview. From these suggestions the teachers were able to set the tone of interviews to the end that the conferences were more relaxed and friendly, and that the teacher was able to approach matters needing adjustment tactfully.

Anecdotal records were kept and used by most of the Fishweir Faculty to record particular incidents about a child. These were added to files of particular pupils.

When a child presented unusual patterns of behavior, a case study was made of the child extending over the entire year. Multiple hypotheses were made from the anecdotes collected. These areas were the physical processes, the affection, the peer group, the cultural, the self-developmental and the self-adjustive areas. If no satisfactory conclusions could be reached in light of the evidence collected, help was obtained from the Guidance Clinic of Duval County. Help was formerly obtained from the Psychology Department of the University of Florida.

The teacher was able to learn much about the children from stories that the children write about themselves and their summer experiences at the beginning of the term. Many of these and the printed questionnaires and autobiographical printed material may become a part of their Cumulative Record File.

Self-rating scales are in rather wide-spread use at Fishweir School. An attempt is made to have the pupils

participate in all phases of school activities. Evaluation of the work of the student helpers in the library, the cafeteria, the play ground, and the School Boy Patrol is made through the self-rating scales. The pupils are often asked to evaluate conduct through the use of questionnaires.

The results of the aptitude and achievement tests are as valuable to the teacher as the use she makes of them. "According to Grabbe¹ the gradual improvement portrayed in psychological experiments are known as learning curves." The Fishweir Teachers plot on last year's test cover the cover of this year's test so that development is pictured in a graphic way. She usually finds that achievement is in line with the mental capacity of the child. When a child of superior ability shows poor achievement she must watch for the physical and emotional factors involved. When achievement is surprising in the light of mental capacity, it is often necessary to be sure that the child is not being subjected to undue pressures.

Many Fishweir teachers use the sociogram in order to understand their group so that they can provide better working conditions for them. The sociogram shows the teacher the leadership of the group, helps the teacher direct that leadership into constructive channels, and helps her assemble

¹ Paul Grabbe, Worked in Cooperation with Gardner Murphy, We Call it Human Nature, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1929, p. 90.

more harmonious working groups. The sociogram points out the isolates, the children who need help, because a child's estimate of his own worth is often shaped, to a critical extent by the status accorded to him by his peers. It has been suggested¹ that when a boy, not accepted by the group, chooses girls, it is a sign of immaturity. The Fishweir teacher does endeavor to improve the group status of the child by studying the causes of his rejection, and uses every opportunity to do things in which he can excel. She understands that the "tele" that attracts a mutual choice to another may be the cause of minor conflicts.² No group is static so she charts sociograms often in order to further group dynamics and individual development.

The Fishweir Faculty made a year's study on "Building Better Home-School-Community Relationships". In order to secure lay-participation in the Fishweir program many homes were visited. One fourth grade teacher visited thirty-eight homes. She found ample justification in the saying "There is no one-way street between the school and the community".³ As

¹How to Construct a Sociogram, Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, New York: Columbia University, 1949, p. 28.

²Gardner Murphy, Louis Barclay Murphy, Theodore M. Newcomb, Experimental Social Psychology. New York: Columbia University, Horace - Mann Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, 1950.

³Educational Policies Commission, Education for All American Youth, Washington: National Education Association, 1944, p. 346.

a result of this teacher's visits she has had many conferences with parents and found means to induce parents to participate in the Fishweir School program.

CHAPTER III

GETTING AND USING INFORMATION ON FIVE CHILDREN IN FISHWEIR SCHOOL

Information on Pupil A

Pupil A transferred to Fishweir School at the beginning of the term. The teacher became interested in him especially because his father showed such concern over his inability to read. Pupil A was nine years and nine months old, older than most children of the group. In examining his record it was found that he had been retained in the second grade by his parent's request. Since he had tested 2.5 on the Metropolitan Reading Test in September of the year he was retained and 2.1 five months later, it would seem that the repetition of the grade had been inadvisable, granted testing conditions were the same.

Pupil A was taller than one half of the boys and heavier than three fourths of them. His complexion was clear. His eyes were small and deep set and sometimes had a strained look. This raised the question of visual difficulty, but when he was referred to the oculist by the school nurse, no glasses were recommended. Since Pupil A was overweight and sluggish in his movements, the teacher wondered if a glandular deficiency might be a contributing factor to his difficulties. A visit was made to discuss the question.

There was an atmosphere of happiness in the well-kept home where the pupil lived with his father, mother and two sisters. His father, a salesman by trade, also took an active interest in youth by serving as a scoutmaster and a Sunday School teacher. His mother helped with his school work. Some doubt was cast on the theory that Pupil A might have glandular trouble by the fact that he had had a complete medical examination that year.

The California Elementary Short Form Mental Maturity Test administered at the beginning of the fourth grade in November gave Pupil A an I.Q. of 90, a language I.Q. of 61 and a non-language I.Q. of 121. A similar test, given at the end of the term gave him a general I.Q. of 100, a language I.Q. of 85 and a non-language I.Q. of 129. The California Short Form Elementary Achievement Test, given in late November gave him a grade placement of 4.0 with a reading average of 2.6. One taken six months later gave him a total grade placement of 4.3 with a reading average of 3.5.

Pupil A was given many second grade level books to read. Library books were used as texts. He was allowed to read aloud when possible so that he was made to feel that he could read.

The support given Pupil A by a happy family made him an agreeable person. His group status was improved by the fact that he was able to illustrate stories with amusing action drawings. The persistence which enabled him to over-

come seemingly insurmountable reading difficulties merited class respect. He built model planes from intricate directions. He accomplished many tasks of fourth grade level with little help.

On the basis of the total information about Pupil A, his reading difficulties seemed to be minimized. One wondered if the psychological effect of support from his family, the acceptance of the peer group, his increased confidence, and his motivation had not, in large measure, insured his finding a useful place in life.

Information on Pupil B

Pupil B, a short, plump, dark pretty girl was nine years and three months old in the fourth grade. Her figure was maturing rapidly. She was of Hungarian Jewish parentage. Her cultural background was different from ours since she had spent most of her life in New York City. Certain incidents showed that while her father was interested in artistic things, he placed an undue importance on money.

She lived with her father, mother and one brother in a home which was furnished with many beautiful pieces of furniture and art objects. Her mother gave the girl directions in an impatient tone during the teacher's visit.

The question "Whom would you like to have as a best friend?" placed her as an isolate chosen by no one although each child had three choices. She did not join group games,

but preferred to play a game of horses with a girl, who shared her interest in horses.

Pupil B had a grade rank of 5.5 in the Progressive Achievement Test, Elementary Battery, given January 30 of the fourth year. The New Short Form Mental Maturity Test, Elementary Form gave her an I.Q. of 110. She could do neat, accurate work, but often chose to work at home so she could remain idle in school. She expressed herself well in written and spoken English.

She sought to gain group status by open defiance of the teacher. At other times she was courteous and considerate. She showed that she found support in the teacher by confiding in her that she had certain sex knowledge that she did not want known to her parents.

From the information gathered it would seem that Pupil B might have a feeling of guilt due to certain sex knowledge, which she thought she should not have. She certainly did not have group acceptance.

Everything possible was done to improve this pupil's group standing. In spite of the fact that she showed little inclination to help anyone she was given the opportunity to take an important part in committee work. She enjoyed being a hostess and was given this privilege often when we were entertaining. An atmosphere free from prejudice against creeds and races was maintained in the room always. Efforts were made to build up an appreciation of values in the class.

An interview with a fifth grade teacher showed that Pupil B was less obstinate than in the fourth grade. She seemed to have acquired better group acceptance.

Information on Pupil C

Because the teacher had decided against Pupil C about the ownership of some crayons, she felt that she may have done him an injustice; therefore, she decided to make a call on Pupil C's mother.

She reached a big old white house at the top of a hill at the end of a dirt road. Several cars were parked in the yard which indicated that the house was occupied by several families. The mother, who was barefooted led the teacher into a front room, which was furnished with unmatched furniture. After a short visit with the mother, a voice calling, "Mamma, I'm cold." caused the mother to explain that since they had no bathtub she was bathing the little brother in the sink. Pupil C had two younger brothers.

After the brother was dressed, in continuing the conversation with the mother, the teacher remarked that the boy seemed to think that the world was against him. The mother moved closer and spoke sotto voice, "You don't know the trouble we have. The landlord and the neighbors blame him for everything. Now he thinks you're against him on account of the crayons".

Pupil C was nine years and eight months old at the

beginning of the term. His eyes were large; his mouth wide and thin lipped and he seldom smiled. His body was wiry. He fought often and once remarked that he was afraid of his own strength. He found most unusual ways of drawing attention to himself. When questioned privately about the cause of a piece of misbehavior he gave as his reason, "I just wanted to be mean". He outlined the proper behavior perfectly.

His I.Q. given by the New California Primary Short Form Mental Maturity Test, taken in March, 1950 gave his I.Q. as 116. The Elementary Short Form Mental Maturity Test, taken November 20, 1951 gave his I.Q. as 112. His Progressive Achievement Test, Primary Battery taken November 28, 1950 gave him a grade level rating of 3.8 in the second month of the third grade. The elementary California Achievement Test, taken November 6, 1951 gave him a grade placement of 4.0 showing a gain of two months in a nine months time.

In reviewing the information collected the teacher found that he was economically insecure. His father had held various jobs. He had been employed as a soda fountain clerk, a pressing club assistant, and had held the job of radio repairman for several years. Anecdotal records from his file showed that he sought group standing by being victorious in fights and in thinking up unusual ways to attract attention.

He did not apply himself well to school work. The teacher used a good deal of praise when he did any task well. She tried to show him how well he could do tasks. He was

handicapped by the English spoken in his home.

A recent move to one family house, which the family was buying should give him greater security. It seems that only a change of values will make him do his best work.

Information on Pupil D

Pupil D's conduct was so troublesome in the third grade that he was referred to the Psychological Clinic of the University of Florida. At that time, he behaved contrary to all directions, interfered and disturbed on all occasions. In the fourth grade he disturbed less, but talked almost constantly to those around him during the working day. When called upon to recite he spoke in a hesitant halting manner.

He was a tall dark child, well built with dark eyes and a sensitive face. His mother was a trained nurse. His father was a diabetic so both were alert and concerned about physical development.

His Progressive Achievement Test, Primary Battery gave him a grade placement of 3.0 at the beginning of the third term. The California Elementary Achievement test gave him a grade rating of 5.3 at the beginning of the fourth year. The Elementary Short Form California Test of Mental Maturity gave him an I.Q. of 123 in November of the fourth grade. Although it was difficult to keep him working on any task, his comments showed that he read widely at home.

The University of Florida Clinic found that some of his

trouble might relate back to the time when he, his mother and father lived with his maternal grandmother under conditions of conflict. It was advised that the teacher, the mother, and the father work together with him on a definite planned program.

When the fourth grade teacher called at his simple home, she found that the parents were unwilling to accept the advice of the clinic. They were unwilling to remove the pressures from the boy. They would not let him eat what he chose or enjoy as much freedom as other members of the group since he was younger. He was eight years and eight months old at the beginning of the term. There were definitely conflicting ideas of discipline. The mother was firmer in her treatment of him. The father, a mailclerk over indulged him and nagged him until stopped by the mother. The clinic found that lack of agreement between parents had caused him to turn to misbehavior for attention.

A very close contact was kept by the teacher with Pupil D's home. The teacher overlooked his attention-getting antics whenever possible. She seated him where he could attract the least attention. She encouraged association with superior boys. She let him do school work with one of these boys to interest him in working up to his ability. At such times his constant chatter became meaningful.

In light of the information collected and in reviewing his behavior in the third grade as recorded by his teacher it

was found that his behavior was improving. With increased maturity it should improve further even though the boy's parents cannot reach full agreement. It is to be hoped that he will not continue to bring his emotional problems from home to school.

Information on Pupil E

Pupil E was mentally alert. While he showed an active interest in academic achievements, he developed skill in athletic contests. He was the accepted leader of the group, having been chosen as the one desired as a best friend by nine children of the group. It would seem that his acceptance was due to his unselfishness and willingness to help everyone and his academic achievements. He entered whole heartedly into any activity of the group.

His father was a successful lumber man. His mother interested herself in school affairs. She expressed some anxiety over the fact that John met only success and praise. His only possible fault was that he was a hard loser at games since he wanted to win at everything.

His New California Short-Form Mental Maturity Test given at the beginning of the term, November 21 gave him an I.Q. of 128. His Progressive Achievement, Elementary Battery Test taken January 23 in his fourth year gave him a grade achievement of 6.6 with a 99th percentile rank in most subjects.

It was easy to enrich his work on a grade level, extending his interests over a broad base. The boy's exceptional language facility, his accuracy in mathematics, his interest in exact scientific information, his perseverance and his ability to get along with others would seem to assure him a life rich in worth-while things even though his unselfishness might prevent him from making material gains.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

After making exploratory studies of the growth and development of children in many areas, the writer has attempted to use this knowledge of growth and development by applying such principles to a study of particular children. It has been pointed out in Looking Ahead in Education¹ that a trained worker in a scientific experiment reaches the same conclusion which would be reached by any other competent worker, who does the same experiment, using the same kinds of conditions, pupils, and procedures. It further stated that in educational experimentation the human unknowns are so great that most careful planning, execution and judging are requisites.

Children differ markedly because the contributing factors are so different that there is a wide margin of error. We may have to follow many clues and form many hypotheses before we arrive at a conclusion that will help a child solve his difficulty. Even when our method is wrong, if we make a child realize that we believe in him and that he has our support, we do a great deal. If a child gets recognition from his teacher and classmates he should make an advance

¹J. Wayne Wrightstone and Morris Meister, Looking Ahead in Education, Boston: Ginn and Company, 1945, pp. xiv and xv.

in all areas of growth. Gertrude Driscott¹ has said that as soon as a teacher has found causes of behavior and has been able to direct her classroom activities and relationships toward meeting children's needs as indicated by these causes, classroom activities should become a constructive experience both for the children and for the teacher. While no profound conclusions have been reached by the writer of this paper, it is felt that schools will do more to meet pupil needs as studies are made in which known principles of child development are applied in a practical way. The writer has been encouraged by the results obtained; without such encouragement in terms of actual progress observed, teaching would be a dull, routine affair, indeed.

¹Gertrude Driscoll, How to Study the Behavior of Children, Hollis Campbell, Editor. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947, p. 64.

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