DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 025 467 SP 002 032

By- Goldberg, Gertrude S.; And Others
New Careers: The Social Service Aide. A Manual for Trainees.
University Research Corp., Washington, D.C. Information Clearinghouse.
Spons Agency- Manpower Administration (DOL), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Work-Training Programs.
Pub Date Oct 68
Note- 176p.
Available from- New Careers Inst., Univ. Res. Corp., 1424 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
EDRS Price MF-$0.75 HC-$8.90
Descriptors- Communication Skills, Community Study, Curriculum, Employee Attitudes, Field Interviews, History, Home Visits, Information Storage, Job Skills, *Manuals, *Nonprofessional Personnel, *Occupational Information, Recordkeeping, Social Agencies, *Social Services, Social Welfare, *Trainees
Identifiers- *New Careers Program

This manual is intended for use by social service aide trainees in the New Careers Program and provides description and explanation of the history and background of social welfare, social services, skills important in individual services, clerical and administrative activities connected with social services, and procedures for working with community groups and organizations. An accompanying manual for trainers of social service aides (SP 002 031) is also available from the New Careers Institute. (SG)

NEW CAREERS: THE SOCIAL SERVICE AIDE

A Manual for Trainees

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October 1968

The preparation and distribution of this manual was provided for through contract with the U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, Bureau of Work-Training Programs.

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since man began to work for wages, he has worried and wondered:

- What will happen to me and my family if for some reason I can't work?
- Suppose I get sick or too old to hold down a job?
- What if there are no jobs available?

Even if he has a job and works hard, he still may not earn enough to support his family. Or he may worry about how his family will be supported if he should die suddenly.

Much of the story of social welfare has to do with society's attempt, over hundreds of years, to find answers to questions like these. As countries grew rich, as working people formed organizations such as trade unions, and as the ordinary man began to vote and to have a voice in politics, gains in social welfare were made.

Bad times and depressions also stimulated governments to improve conditions. With millions of people out of work and machines lying idle -- as they were during the Great Depression of the 1930's -- something had to be done to relieve poverty.

If we view matters through the eyes of the well-to-do rather than the poor, we find a different approach to the problem.

Questions asked by some well-to-do persons might include:

- Why should we pay taxes for people who won't work?

- How can we help people and at the same time make sure they won't refuse to work, even at a low-paying job?

- Perhaps we should help unfortunates like widows and orphans or the sick and the blind, but how can we do so without making it too easy for the able-bodied not to work?

- Why should people want to work if they can live on charity?

Social welfare legislation and social services as they exist today are the result of compromise or a tug-of-war between those who felt that social legislation would make life too easy for those in need, and those who were poor or who were more concerned about welfare than about idleness. The social services have made great progress over the years in meeting the needs of the poor and helping them to help themselves. Yet few people are satisfied with conditions as they stand now, and the debate about what to do grows more heated.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL WELFARE

I. English Influences

Many of our beliefs and ways of doing things in the field of social welfare have roots in the distant past. It is partly because they were developed in times and in societies different from our own that these beliefs and attitudes are difficult to change. The influence of the past can be seen today in the manner in which we help people in trouble. The thinking and practices that led to the English Poor Laws of the early 1600s were brought across the ocean by the first settlers. Despite great differences in our present way of life from that of the early settlers, the same kinds of thinking still exist and can be identified.

A. Charity in Preindustrial Society

As long as people lived off the land, that is, before a money and market economy developed, the kinds of problems they faced were quite different from the ones we face today. Almost everyone, including children and the aged, could be useful on the farm. When help was needed by the poor, charity was provided by the Church. There was no shame attached to receiving such aid, and it was considered a good deed to contribute to charity. To some extent, the lack of shame in accepting charity was due to the fact that almost everyone was poor, and perhaps only one step ahead of starvation. Epidemics, drought or famine affected everyone.

B. Eviction of People from the Land

As it became clear that more profits could be made by grazing sheep than by farming, landowners began to evict people from the land that they had worked for years. Farm land became pasture and many farmers became wanderers. Towns and industries had not yet grown enough to provide work for many people. What was to happen to the ex-farmers? They didn't care for the idea of working for someone else after they had shared the use of the land for so long. Some searched for work at decent wages; very few found it. Many people hid out in the forests and moors or became beggars, thieves, or vagabonds. But these dispossessed people were to become the wage earners of the future.

C. Forcing People To Work

The English government decided that something had to be done to make people work. The idea that people will not work unless they are forced to do so still affects our thinking and is expressed quite openly much of the time. Between the years 1350 and 1600, laws, regulations and decrees were used to force people to work. These laws included the following types of provisions:

1. Anyone giving money to beggars would be fined.
2. Able-bodied men might be whipped, branded with a hot iron, have an ear cut off or even hanged if they refused to work.

3. Children could be forcibly taken from their parents to become apprentices.

4. Work might be made available by supplying wool or flax to be woven at home, and if a person refused this work, he could be sent to a "house of correction."

D. Assistance for the Disabled

As time went on, it was recognized that the sick, the aged, and other disabled poor persons needed special consideration. Thus the laws came to reflect both a harsh attitude to force people to work and a more lenient attitude toward those who were physically unable to work.

E. The English Poor Laws

The famous Poor Laws of 1601 reflected both these attitudes. In giving aid to the disabled, the government was afraid that if living on charity became too pleasant, people might prefer not to work at all and might even make themselves disabled. Even today there exists much confusion concerning the intent of welfare policies for the able and disabled. The poor laws are important to us because they have guided welfare practices in England and in the United States for more than 350 years. They contained the following provisions:

1. Compulsory taxation -- Under the poor laws, compulsory taxation was used to raise money to help the needy. This was quite a change from the time when

all contributions were voluntary. Another major change was that "charity" was now administered by the government rather than the Church. The government appointed representatives in each parish or county to operate this program; they were known as "Overseers of the Poor."

2. <u>Able-bodied and disabled people</u> -- As noted, the Poor Laws provided for different kinds of treatment for the able-bodied and the disabled. Authorities were given the power to help the blind, the lame and others unable to work, and to build "convenient houses of habitation" for them. (These houses came to be known as almshouses or poorhouses.) Work was provided for the able-bodied, and idlers were subject to punishment. Children could be taken from their parents and made to work for someone else as an apprentice or an indentured servant.

3. <u>Relatives' responsibility</u> -- Children, parents and grandparents were all declared responsible for each other. Before a person could turn to the government for help, he was forced to seek support from those relatives who were required by law to aid him.

4. Laws of Settlement -- The Law of Settlement was added to the Poor Laws about 60 years after they were enacted (about 1660). Residents of a town did not want to support newcomers who might have come to their town only to obtain relief. So it was decided that a person had to live in a town a certain length of time before he became eligible for assistance. But it was difficult to predict who would become dependent. Consequently, the newcomer had to prove he could become self-supporting. If he couldn't prove this, he was denied the right to live there. Because of this ruling, groups of people were being escorted all across England for long periods of time looking for a community which would take them in.

II. American Beginnings

The health and welfare pattern of social services that developed in the American colonies was largely modeled after the English Poor Laws, with some differences due to the special conditions of the frontier. The pattern was a makeshift one since each colony developed its own regulations. In most cases, anyone needing help was considered a "pauper" regardless of the cause of his condition. Paupers included the sick, the handicapped, the aged, widows with young children, orphans, and the mentally ill, as well as the able-bodied poor.

A. The Principle of Local Responsibility

In the colonial period, local or town governments controlled many community affairs. They determined the prices of articles for sale, the kinds of handicrafts that the town needed, and the rules for apprenticeship. The local government also organized the defense against enemy attack. It was logical that local governments would also be responsible for the care of the poor. Their main concern was to prevent people who might become dependent from taking up residence in the town, thereby becoming eligible for relief. Unless people could prove they would not become dependent upon the town, they were kept out. Both men and women were subject to public whippings if they returned to the town, once warned away. In this way the towns kept down the number of poor and the costs of relief.

B. Outdoor Relief

When relief was given, it was usually dispensed to those who were living in their own homes rather than in institutions. This was called outdoor relief. (When people were given help in an institution such as a poorhouse, it was called indoor relief.) Outdoor relief took several forms:

1. Farming out -- Many paupers were boarded out to people in the community.

    a. Boarding -- A well-to-do person in the community was paid by the town to provide room and board to a poor person in his home;

b. <u>Auction</u> -- Orphans, neglected children, the disabled, the senile, the feebleminded and the insane were "sold" at public auction. Those bidders willing to undertake support at the lowest cost to the community were awarded the persons being auctioned. These bidders, as you might imagine, were not very charitable -- they usually tried to get the most amount of work out of the poor at the lowest possible cost;

c. <u>Contractual</u> -- A citizen agreed to take care of a certain number of paupers at a fixed price per head which was paid by the town. The paupers were put to work by the contractor, who was interested only in getting the most amount of labor for the least amount of expenditure.

2. <u>Dependent children</u> -- Dependent children were apprenticed or "bound out" until they reached the age of 21. Their guardians were supposed to treat them well and to teach them to read and write, but apprentices frequently complained of abuses, cruelty, and little opportunity for education.

C. Early American Social-Welfare Practice -- An Evaluation

There is much to criticize in the way dependents were treated in colonial times. While some people were kind and neighborly, help was often extended in a stern, cold, and straight-laced fashion. At one time, some localities required that those receiving aid from the community wear badges so that they could be easily identified. So welfare recipients wore a patch with the letter "P" for "pauper" sewn on their clothing. (This practice developed in England at about the same time that it occurred in the colonies.) Yet, in evaluating welfare practices, we must always consider the economic and political conditions of the times. The treatment of the poor during the frontier days was often more humane than during some future periods, when society could have afforded to be more generous.

III. The Rise of Indoor Relief -- Early Federal Period

Welfare practices were even harsher after the American Revolution than during the colonial period. There were four ways in which communities usually aided the poor by the 1820s.

1. Almshouse relief
2. Home relief
3. The "contract system," in which all the poor of a town were placed under the care of one or more householders at a fixed rate per year, month or week.
4. The "auction system," in which the town's poor were auctioned off to the lowest bidder, who would provide them with care in return for work.

The first almshouse or poorhouse was built in Massachusetts in 1662. The almshouse, which was to become an important part of the American social welfare scene, was rare in colonial times. About twenty years after the first almshouse appeared, the inmates were provided with work and the almshouse became a work-house.

The almshouse was for all categories of dependents -- the able-bodied, the disabled, children, the aged, the mentally ill, the physically handicapped, and the criminal. Because few distinctions were drawn among the inmates, the almshouse was regarded as <u>mixed</u> or <u>undifferentiated</u>. The idea that there should be almshouses for the helpless, workhouses for the able-bodied, and houses of correction for the criminals was suggested but never put into practice during colonial times.

In 1823, a state legislative committee reported that "the poor when farmed out, or sold, are frequently treated with barbarity and neglect by their keepers." However, this kind of indictment did not stimulate the use of the almshouse as the major source of public relief until later.

Manufacturing and commerce were growing rapidly in the U.S. during the early nineteenth century. Canals and railroads were being built. Steam-driven machinery was replacing the old handi-craft system of making products. The factory system, with its need for cheap and seasonal labor, began to dominate the economy. The working people faced low wages, long hours, and periodic depressions. In earlier times, a man was self-reliant as long as he was able-bodied, since he could subsist on the crops he grew or the proceeds from the sale or barter of handicrafts. But, as a wage earner or employee, he could only take care of himself when there was a job at decent wages.

Many in authority felt that the almshouse was the cheapest and most efficient way of handling dependency and that all other forms of aid should be abandoned. They also felt that, given the choice between the almshouse, with its prison-like character, and a job, the worker would choose a job. In short, the philosophy was that if assistance were given under sufficiently disagreeable conditions, the worker would have to accept any kind of job, no matter how menial. Again, there was confusion over whether welfare was to relieve need or to force people into industry. (This thinking in the United States was similar to the attitude in England, where outdoor relief was legally abolished in 1834.)

A. Responsibility of County, State, and Federal Governments -- the Advantages

Thus far we have been speaking about the township or locality as the unit of government providing social welfare. According to the Poor Laws, the local government was responsible for assisting the poor.

Local welfare responsibility is sometimes a handicap. For example, if a large unit of government contains several towns --

some wealthy with few residents dependent on welfare, and others poor with many such dependents -- it can raise funds for welfare from those citizens more able to pay. But if a small unit of government (a town) is poor, it is forced to cut welfare funds or heavily tax those who are only a little above poverty themselves. Larger governmental units make it possible for more systematic and uniform welfare practices to prevail over broader geographical areas. The movement from smaller to larger units, from town to county, state, or federal responsibility has been a slow and painful process -- and one that is far from complete.

The beginnings of this assumption of responsibility by larger governmental units occurred when particular groups of people, such as war refugees, became "State Poor" because the towns could not afford to support them. An example of this occurred in New York State when the state government reimbursed New York City for the aid it gave to great numbers of European immigrants. Others who had not lived long enough in a town to be eligible for relief were designated "County Poor."

1. Responsibility on the county level -- During the 1820's, the poorhouse became a county, rather than a town, institution when the towns could not afford to support their own poorhouses. County superintendents were put in charge of these institutions. As a result, the laws of settlement could be relaxed since there was no need to move individuals from town to town. Outdoor relief

was discouraged and many states went so far as to require that towns and counties have almshouses. This trend toward indoor relief as the sole form of public aid was to continue for some time.

2. Protest against the almshouse -- The almshouse was sharply criticized, just as the farming-out system had been before. A committee of state senators in 1856 reported that:

> The great mass of poorhouses . . . are most disgraceful memorials of the public charity. Common domestic animals are usually more humanely provided for than the paupers in some of these institutions.

IV. Nineteenth-Century Philanthropists and the Growth of Specialized Institutions

Aside from the government itself, there were always individuals who were concerned with the suffering of others and tried to do something about it. These people were known as humanitarians, philanthropists (literally, lovers of mankind), or reformers, depending on the activities in which they engaged or the times in which they lived. Whatever their reasons, private citizens and volunteers have been important in the development of social welfare legislation and social services.

In the nineteenth century, private citizens were instrumental in reforming the penal code, in organizing philanthropic societies, and in establishing institutions devoted to serving special classes of dependents. Most of these institutions were financed entirely or partially by government but were operated and managed by private groups.

A. Special Institutions

Some examples of institutions serving a special class of dependents are orphanages and schools for the handicapped. The first orphanage was established in the United States by a religious order in 1829. Schools for deaf children were opened in 1817 and 1824. Virginia had a hospital for the mentally ill in 1773. New York State established an asylum for the care of the insane in 1851.

1. The crusade of Dorothea Dix

During the 1840s, Dorothea Dix was a particularly far-sighted and energetic crusader for improving the treatment of the insane. She visited penitentiaries, jails, and almshouses for many years, presented her findings to the public and the legislators, and demanded action. The attention of law-makers was directed toward the "state of insane persons confined in cages, closets, stalls, pens; chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience." Her campaigning led to the establishment of more state hospitals for the insane and improved treatment in jails. Congress actually passed a bill appropriating land to be given to the states and to be used for the care of the insane, but the bill was vetoed by

President Pierce, who feared it would establish a precedent for federal responsibility for the poor.

2. The almshouse continues

In the early nineteenth century, specialized institutions for the insane and for criminals were the exceptions. Generally, all classes of dependents, including large numbers of children, continued to share the almshouse. Apprenticeship and indentured service had been the original ways of dealing with dependent children, but this gave way to confinement in almshouses or poorhouses, despite the wretched conditions and the children's exposure to criminal adults. There were, however, a few kinds of institutions which served only children -- orphanages, schools for the poor, reform schools for delinquents, and schools for deaf and blind children.

3. Charles Loring Brace and the Children's Aid Society

Another important reformer, Charles Loring Brace, founder of the Children's Aid Society, disliked the idea of children residing in orphanages and almshouses. He succeeded in gathering neglected and dependent children from the streets and tenements of New York City and shipping them to small towns and rural areas. Farmers, eager to acquire youngsters who would help with chores, would simply attend a public meeting and select the youngsters they wanted. In its crude way, this method of placing children stressed the advantages of a home for children as compared to institutional care. It also was an example of a trend in private welfare thinking that has continued -- recognizing the desirability of getting youngsters away from the unsavory and unhealthy influences of the city and of exposing them to the healthful influences of small towns and rural areas.

V. Social Philosophies Affecting Welfare Practices

The ideas, beliefs, values, and goals expressed at a certain time by various groups in the society are powerful forces in shaping the social policies that governments follow.

A. "The Land of Opportunity" Attitude and Its Effect

Because of the peculiar history of the United States, some ideas bearing on social welfare sank deeper roots here than elsewhere. One of these particularly American characteristics was the idea that America was a land of opportunity, which it was for many who came here. There were no titles, kings or feudal landowners. The soil was fertile and rich in resources. Unsettled free land, inhabited only by Indians, stretched across the continent. The early settlers carved farms and towns out of the wilderness, and fostered ideas of individualism and self-help. It was felt that if a person worked hard, he was bound to succeed. If he failed, it was his own fault and he should therefore be held responsible.

B. Puritanism

The dominant religions in the American colonies stressed the importance of hard work and thrift to achieve economic success.

The Puritans thought poverty to be a sign of spiritual weakness. According to the Puritan outlook, one's economic failure meant weak character which revealed itself in pleasure-seeking, extravagance, and laziness. It was felt that economic failure should be condemned, rather than relieved or pitied. A wealthy man, on the other hand, was considered to possess certain virtues such as thrift, reliability, energy, and industry. God smiled on the wealthy and the virtuous. If being poor meant that a man had moral weakness or a character defect, then the cure lay in moral discipline and correction. Sympathy and unrestricted charity, according to the Puritan outlook, could only lead to idleness and loss of incentive. Work was the "greatest moral regulator and corrective of all" -- the only way to maintain self-respect.

C. Laissez-faire vs. Government Intervention

One can see how a view which held that the individual was solely responsible for his status would also deny that economic conditions, or the state of society, could be responsible for a man's fortune. Puritanism went hand in glove with another philosophy which emphasized society's lack of social responsibility. It was called laissez-faire, from a French phrase meaning "leave alone." Laissez-faire describes the attitude that the best government is one which governs least. According to this view, government activities should be limited to a few functions such as maintaining law and order and national defense.

The argument about the role and responsibilities of a government in a highly industrialized society still exists, even though our government has moved away from the laissez-faire philosophy.

During most of the nineteenth century, the government aided business, despite the pretense of strict laissez-faire attitudes. Canals and roads were built, favorable tariffs imposed, currency controlled, millions of acres of land given to the railroads, etc. Indeed, to this day, many who condemn government intervention when it is for others, particularly the poor, welcome government aid when it benefits them or their businesses.

Reformers during this period argued that the government had the responsibility of taking positive steps to improve the lot of the poor. However, laissez-faire spokesmen claimed that free competition was essential if both society and the individual were to develop to the fullest. If the government were to provide relief or other assistance, this aid would come to be regarded as a <u>right</u> by the poor. Some people argued that the worst way of distributing money is distribution by the state and that thrift, effort, and responsibility would be discouraged if such transfers of income were to occur under government auspices. Others maintained that "no government is authorized to levy taxes on one part of the community which benefits another part."

D. Social Darwinism

The work of Charles Darwin, who wrote about the evolution of animal and plant species, was seized upon by advocates of laissez-faire, who used Darwin's teachings to preach a particularly strong brand of nonintervention called Social Darwinism. They compared animal life to society and spoke about the survival of the fittest. According to this view, all change must be natural and unhurried, as in evolution, and, consequently, must take a very long time. If the government took a part in it, both the fit and the unfit would survive and "natural selection" would not occur. And since the progress of man depended on "natural selection," any interference -- that is, any attempt to help the less fortunate -- would be against progress. Reform, they argued, was unnatural.

Social Darwinism was popular in the U.S. from about 1870 to 1880, a period of tremendous industrial growth. People were leaving the farms to work in the new mines, mills, and factories. Immigrants became the unskilled workers and did much of the heavy labor. The old towns became larger cities teeming with slum tenements. Labor began to organize unions to challenge long hours, low wages, and child labor.

The idea of Social Darwinism helped to dampen complaints about the ruthless business practices that were common at that time. Boiled down, this philosophy stated that nothing could be done about long hours, low wages, child labor, unhealthy working conditions, and other abuses of the working class and the poor.

VI. Forerunners of Social Work -- The Charity Organization Society and the Settlements

Alarmed by the negative effects of industrialization, such as strikes, riots, unsanitary conditions in cities, unemployment, depressions, and the apparent increase in the number of tramps and paupers, some of the more well-to-do people began searching for remedies. Their motives for doing this were complex and mixed. Genuine feelings of charity and compassion for fellow human beings were mixed with a fear of violence by the "dangerous classes" and guilt about living so well while others barely managed to exist.

Two movements, both voluntary, were of particular importance in promoting social welfare -- the Charity Organization Societies (COS) and the Settlements. Both reached the peak of their influence prior to World War I, during the Era of Reform.

A. Charity Organization Society

Sympathetic middle-class people were contributing money to individuals and to the many charity groups that were springing up during these years. Founders of COS felt that simply giving hand-outs encouraged pauperism and beggary. They believed that alms should be distributed systematically only after careful investigation and then only to the "deserving" poor. COS was the forerunner of today's Community Chest, United Givers Fund, etc.

1. COS goals

The first COS in the United States was organized in Buffalo in 1877. Soon after that the idea caught on, and many cities started similar societies. The aims of the societies were to relieve "deserving" poor people, discourage begging and vagrancy, systematize alms-giving by acting as a clearinghouse for all the city's charitable organizations, and encourage thrift, independence, and industry among the poor.

2. COS view of dependency

COS leaders saw dependency as the fault of the poor themselves, rather than of their circumstances. If one couldn't get by, there must be some moral or character defect in the individual. If this was the case, then alms would not be helpful but advice and education would be.

3. Friendly visiting

Advice and education to the poor were provided by a friendly visitor--a more fortunate person--who would visit the home of the applicant for charity and gather information on the person's problem, so that a decision could be made on whether to give relief. The friendly visitor would "encourage thrift, self-dependence, and industry through friendly intercourse, advice, and sympathy, and ... aid the poor to help themselves rather than help them by alms."

4. Opposition to public outdoor relief

COS leaders fought strongly against public outdoor relief or home relief. They felt that the only outdoor relief should be given by private charity organizations, or else it would be looked upon as a right. They argued that people work at what they get paid to do and if they are paid to beg, they will beg. As a result of the activities of COS and other groups, many large cities stopped giving public outdoor relief.

5. COS and reform

An examination of COS thinking reveals the influence of several of the philosophies we have described -- Puritanism, individualism, and *laissez-faire*. However, COS thinking began to change as the political atmosphere in the country began to shift in a reform direction toward having government undertake positive action about living conditions.

To some extent, COS joined the reformers. It fought for sanitary housing codes, parks, playgrounds, health measures, and better conditions in public institutions, such as almshouses and prisons. It also pointed out the need to take children and other categories of dependent persons out of the almshouses.

There were two reasons why COS abandoned its strict laissez-faire policies in favor of reform: the lessons of the depression of 1893-94 and the experience of the friendly visitors. COS workers visited the large numbers of people who were suddenly put out of work in the depression. Although they rarely achieved their demands, the unemployed sought public works, and soup lines were set up and manned by volunteers. How, then, could COS explain the sudden need of relief by millions of people as the result of character defects or the individual's lack of responsibility -- when most of these persons had been employed only yesterday? Clearly something had gone wrong with the economy if the able-bodied, employable poor were denied work.

6. Paid workers

Meanwhile, the wealthy friendly visitor was being replaced by a paid worker. Investigating "cases" in the field, the new workers found that poor housing, poor health, discrimination against Negroes and foreigners, and other social evils were responsible for individual problems in many instances.

B. The Settlement House Movement

The settlement represented a different way of dealing with social problems. University students, seeking to do something useful and worthwhile, decided to settle in the slum areas among the poor. (They were similar to today's VISTA volunteers.) They hoped that by being neighbors of the poor, they could make use of their educations by helping and influencing the poor. In turn, they realized they would have to learn about a working-class way of life from their neighbors. The settlement movement caught on in the United States and spread rapidly.

1. Settlement program

The typical settlement was a large house in a slum area which served as living quarters for middle-class, well-educated, idealistic young people and as a community center. Programs included recreation and educational activities, camping, classes in English and citizenship for newcomers, vocational training, health and cooking classes, etc. Different settlements often concentrated on different activities. For example, Henry Street Settlement in New York City started as a nurses' settlement, since its residents were nurses who initiated the idea of home visiting. Jane Addams, at Hull House in Chicago, the most famous of the American settlements, was concerned with the affairs of labor. She was active in many reform efforts and received the Nobel Peace Prize for founding the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Settlement workers were united by their desire to be neighbors of the poor and to be part of the community.

2. Settlement clientele

Because settlement workers were concerned with a different client group than COS, they were not primarily interested in alms-giving. They were more involved with the working poor and in building a better working-class neighborhood. Nor did they engage in friendly visiting. Community residents were encouraged to participate in the activities offered at the settlement. The settlement workers extended help in many different ways to people they were in contact with.

3. Philosophy of settlement leaders

The settlement leaders were reformers and did not believe in laissez-faire. They crusaded for decent housing and sanitation, the unionization of women workers, the end of sweatshops, fewer hours for women workers, the abolition of child labor, and for parks, playgrounds, and better schools. Many of the campaigns for social reform initiated by the settlement workers 70 years ago are still being carried on in different forms in today's community action projects.

C. Female Leadership Among the Early Social Workers

Women were leaders in the settlement and COS movements, but especially in the settlements. Leaders like Jane Addams, Florence Kelly, Lillian Wald, and Mar_ McDowell became prominent public figures. Women did the friendly visiting for COS. Forty years earlier, however, men had done the visiting for another society, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor.

VII. The Growth of State Responsibility for Social Welfare

After the Civil War, state governments began to assume a more direct role in welfare matters. This followed from the fact that more money was being provided by the state to local as well as to private agencies. Since the state provided the money, it had a right to know how these funds were being spent. At first, semi-official groups of volunteers represented the states in these matters, but these gave way to state Boards of Charity and state Commissioners of Charities. These boards finally became Boards of Public Welfare.

A. Abuses Exposed

The rise of state supervision revealed some of the deplorable conditions that existed in public institutions. For example, a law was passed in 1875 in New York as a result of the findings of investigative committees. That law required the removal of healthy children between the ages of three and 16 from poorhouses. Later this requirement was extended to include children of all ages. This type of action eventually led to the placement of children with families and the development of special institutions for dependent children.

B. Special Institutions for Special Classes of the Disabled

Specialized institutions were developed to care for the insane, epileptics, the feeble-minded, and others. While the trend was toward greater use of specialized institutions, all the states did not move at the same speed. As one would expect, differences in resources, in population, and in political climate affected the rate at which a state moved toward more humane treatment of its various groups of state dependents. By 1897, 16 states had boards engaged in setting standards, supervising local institutions, managing some institutions themselves, and raising funds.

C. State Outdoor Relief Programs

At the turn of the century, several states began to enact legislation to provide assistance in their own homes to persons considered especially needy or "deserving." Persons in that category were the blind, widowed mothers of dependent children, and by the 1920's, the aged. While these state programs represented a step forward, only a few states began such programs. State funds merely supplemented local fund raising and programs, and initiative for the programs rested with the locality responsible for their administration.

VIII. The Reform Era (1900 - 1912)

The Reform Era marked a change in the thinking and attitudes of many Americans about a number of important social questions. While no problems were really "solved" in that era, some new steps were taken which were unfortunately halted with the outbreak of World War I. By 1900, the U.S. had taken its place as one of the leading industrial nations of the world. The nation of farms was fast becoming a nation of factories, cities, railroads, and corporations, and there were more than a few millionaires. The new millionaires, the masters of the great corporations, or captains of industry as they were called, were replacing the old merchants, the small manufacturers, and the respected leaders of the past -- lawyers, professors, and ministers. But a new coalition, consisting of members of the urban middle class, the trade unions, and discontented farmers, protested against social ills and demanded certain changes. They wanted to put a brake on the monopolies and the huge corporations that were dominating society.

A. Restraining the Corporations

The federal government passed laws regulating monopolies, instituted suits against them, set up banking controls, and fostered laws for the inspection of food and drugs. Some states limited the hours of work for women and children in certain occupations, fixed utility rates, wrote housing codes, demanded safer and more sanitary conditions in manufacturing, etc. This government activity meant that the doctrines of laissez-faire and Social Darwinism had lost some of their former influence. Social reform became the order of the day. And there seemed to be a desire to create an environment dedicated to the service of mankind.

B. New Views of the Poor and of Poverty

A reappraisal of the causes of poverty was part of the social outlook of the humanitarians, progressives, and reformers. As we have suggested, the main concern of nineteenth century charity was the reform of the individual pauper, rather than the eradication of poverty. Poverty had been regarded as good "medicine," and a necessary spur to the less ambitious in society. During the Reform Era, however, people challenged the old ideas of poverty and began to view it as an evil -- a destructive condition that prevented rather than encouraged men to reach their potential. Those living in poverty, it was thought, might at a time of particular hardship or crisis slip down the ladder into pauperism.

C. The Muckrakers' Role in Shifting Social Attitudes

Another force instrumental in changing attitudes toward poverty during the Reform Era was the constant criticism of the wealthy that was found in magazines, journals, and newspapers. A group of writers, called Muckrakers, accused the great capitalists of cheating, bribery, unfair business practices, and moral decay. As a result, the stress on immorality as a cause of poverty began to lessen, and social and economic conditions came to be viewed as the causes of poverty.

IX. The Profession of Social Work

During the Reform Era, settlement workers and COS personnel began to refer to themselves as social workers and to speak of "social work." The volunteer friendly visitor, usually quite well off and with leisure time to visit the poor, began to give way to the paid, full-time worker. On the basis of their experiences, COS workers began to recognize that in order to be a good visitor, one needed understanding, skill, and knowledge, and that good intentions were not enough.

A. The Beginning of Professional Social Work Education

Recognition of the need for special skill and knowledge in order to be a good charity worker led to the establishment of educational programs for social workers. Special schools and training classes, especially in larger cities, were developed to train capable workers. Around the turn of the century, COS began summer training institutes that later evolved into year-round schools of social work. The new profession attempted, through these schools of social work, to pool knowledge from a variety of fields that seemed related to charity work. However, most workers never attended these graduate schools, but gained their experience and training in the field. While a large number of social workers now have professional training (two-year programs beyond the bachelor's degree), graduate social workers are still a minority in the social welfare field.

B. Concern of Social Work for the Total Life Situation

Institutions, hospitals, schools, and child guidance clinics became increasingly aware of the importance of having social workers on their staff and that the unique contribution of social work is the concern for the total life situation of a person or family. Institutions realized that doctors or nurses cannot be concerned with the patient's life or his adjustment outside the hospital or clinic. The patient's adjustment, however, his work problems, family relationships, handicaps -- all of which are important influences on his ability to profit from the major service of the institution -- are the interest of the social worker. Institutions saw that medical social workers enable the clients to make better use of medical services by helping with all problems. Similarly, the school social worker, with an interest in the total picture, helps students to use their education more fully.

C. Social Work Settings

Social workers today may be found in almost every kind of setting and field related to human needs, growth, and development. Various agencies and institutions employ workers who offer services directly to clients, supervise other workers, function as executives or administrators, and teach or train social workers. In direct service agencies, workers may also be involved as researchers in measuring the effect of social work services or in developing the knowledge and skills upon which practice is based. There are even some social workers involved in private counseling practice on a fee-for-services basis.

D. Professional Organizations

Medical social workers, psychiatric social workers, school social workers, and others began to organize their own associations, which led to today's National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The NASW sets certain requirements for membership, has a code of ethics, and works toward developing the highest possible standard of skill and service among its members. The NASW also prepares social-policy positions as a guide to its members and as a means of influencing legislators and government officials. Many NASW positions are aimed at improving social welfare programs and moving our country toward a more humane society.

E. Basic Social Work Methods

Social workers who are involved in direct services to clients are either caseworkers, group workers, or community organizers. The overwhelming number are caseworkers who usually work with one person or the members of one family at a time. Group workers offer service primarily to a group of clients, sometimes for the purpose of treating problems like delinquency or mental illness and other times for recreational and educational purposes. They may provide some help on an individual basis to members of the group, but working with the group is their principal method of service. Recently, there has been an increase in the number of community organizers, mostly as a result of the emphasis of the antipoverty programs on social change. Community organizers work primarily with groups for the purpose of social and community change, coordination of social agencies, and community cooperation. Often they offer help to individual members of the organization, but the major objective is to work toward the solution of problems that are experienced by many persons in a community. For example, a community organizer would be more likely to organize all the tenants in an apartment building with insufficient heat than to help just one tenant get heat (except in an emergency).

F. Social Work Values

The values which underlie social work and which have influenced its development have a strong influence on its practices and programs. Some of these stem from traditional religious beliefs such as a belief in the dignity and worth of the individual and his capacity for growth. There is great stress on the right of the individual to make his own decisions and there is consequently a conscious effort to avoid managing or controlling clients' lives. Clients are to be helped to greater independence rather than increased dependence. Social work values are also closely related to democratic ideals, including the right and responsibility of the individual to participate in the affairs of his community. There is a strong egalitarian (a belief in political and social equality) strain in social work. Indeed, enjoyment of a decent standard of living is viewed as a *right* of individuals and families. The social work philosophy holds that society should provide a climate which encourages individual growth and development.

X. The Great Depression

Following the stock-market crash in October 1929, businesses began to fail, unemployment mounted rapidly, and a downward economic spiral was set in motion. In 1932 and 1933, about thirty percent of the labor force was unemployed. White and blue collar workers were searching desperately for non-existent jobs. Hundreds of thousands of drifters hitch-hiked and bummed around the country as the vagrants of earlier years did. Shanty towns, called Hoovervilles, (Herbert Hoover was then President) sprang up, even in the cities. Soup kitchens and flop-houses attracted long lines of hungry, homeless men.

Matters were no better in rural areas. Daily foreclosures of mortgages and auctions on farms finally resulted in mobs of angry, armed farmers attending foreclosure proceedings in order to discourage prospective buyers from purchasing their land.

A. Social Welfare on the Eve of the Depression

In the 1900's, poor law practices and concepts still dominated the social welfare scene in the U.S. There were some exceptions such as mother's aid, workman's compensation, and in a few states pensions for the aged and the blind. As one historian pointed out:

> Even as late as 1929 it was still generally believed that public relief was the favor granted to the mendicant poor, that an application for public aid was one of the greatest humiliations a person could endure, that relief...should be granted only to those who

had legal claims of settlement, and that workers engaged in labor disputes should not be eligible for relief at all.

Consequently, when the Depression of 1929 hit the country, the U. S. had a "public assistance program still grounded in the law and social philosophy of the Elizabethan Code (Poor Laws) of 1601."

It would seem that faith in individualism and the economic system would be shattered by such a profound crisis. Despite the need for drastic measures to create jobs, relieve suffering, and start industry moving, very little was done between 1929 and 1933. It was argued that we had always managed without serious government intervention before.

B. F.D.R. and the New Deal

Franklin D. Roosevelt, who took office in 1933, was less hemmed in by beliefs of individualism and laissez-faire than his predecessor. Trial and error, innovation, and experimentation became F.D.R.'s hallmark. Roosevelt instituted many progressive programs, which became known as the New Deal.

1. The F.E.R.A. and federal responsibility for relief

The Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 (F.E.R.A.) channeled money into the states for unemployment relief, and few claimed that the unemployed were themselves responsible for their condition. Up to this point, relief had been dispensed primarily by voluntary agencies, but the gravity of the problem completely exceeded the resources and capabilities of nongovernment agencies. Now relief money had to be spent by public rather than voluntary agencies.

2. Special programs for youth

Special programs were established for unemployed youth. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided camps where young people worked on reforestation and other conservation activities for food, board, and $30.00 per month. The National Youth Association provided part-time jobs for students and others in schools, parks, playgrounds, and libraries.

3. The CWA and the WPA programs

One dramatic change by the government was the establishment of the Civil Works Administration, which was "to provide work and wages for four million workers, half from the relief rolls and half from the unemployed not yet on relief." This program was pushed through Congress as an emergency measure because the usual procedures of setting up work projects were too slow. It ended after a short time because it was deemed too radical and too costly. However, the idea of work relief, as opposed to ordinary public works, had taken hold. The Works Projects Administration (WPA), successor to the CWA, lasted from 1935 to 1943. Federal grants to states and localities amounted to approximately nine billion dollars during the lifetime of the WPA. Work was made available to technical, professional, and white collar workers, and to the unskilled. It is estimated that work was provided for more than three and one half million employables on the relief rolls.

XI. The Social Security Act

The New Deal programs were phased out as normal production increased with the onset of World War II. But the Social Security Act, passed in 1935 and amended many times since, has become the cornerstone of the American social welfare system. Up to this point, we have spoken of public assistance as a means of relieving the poor. But the Social Security Act was a social invention new to the U.S., because the heart of the Act was social insurance. There were innovations in public-assistance provisions -- chiefly, the introduction of federal grants to the states and localities for categories of dependents, but the social-insurance measures represented a new method of financing income maintenance and added a new group of assistance beneficiaries.

A. Social Insurance

Social insurance is contributory insurance, either of work, money, or both. That is, employers and/or employees pay taxes into a special trust fund administered by the federal government. After a certain number of payments, or time worked, the employee (self-employed can also participate) is considered insured. Once insured, the worker and his dependents are entitled to certain benefits. The insurance programs, prior to the passage of the medical care amendments, were called Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) and Unemployment Insurance (UI). As the name of OASDI suggests, people at a certain age are entitled to benefits, or if the insured should die, his dependents receive the benefits. If the insured should become permanently disabled, he is also entitled to benefits. Under UI, if the insured becomes unemployed, he is entitled to unemployment compensation.

1. Benefits as rights

An essential difference between social insurance and public assistance is that the social insurance law states the exact conditions of eligibility and the amount and nature of the benefit. This rules out any administrative discretion; that is, government workers or departments cannot exercise judgment as to whether the "claimant" is worthy or unworthy. The recipient is called a "claimant" in social insurance proceedings, not an "applicant," as in public assistance. His benefits are his by right or entitlement. The regulations and benefit tables are published and accessible to the public. Applicants for public assistance have always had to answer all sorts of questions about their family, property, savings, etc., in order to become eligible for financial help. This proof of financial need is called the means test. Applicants have resented the means test for being petty, humiliating, and an intrusion on privacy. In social insurance there is no means test, because benefits are paid regardless of need. There is no extensive personal investigation, merely verification of one's age, disability, employment status, or relationship to the insured. American traditions made law-makers more receptive to the idea of insurance rather than assistance. First, the insurance, as passed, was the result of or related to employment. Those not in a position to contribute by money or work to the insurance fund would not be covered or insured. Secondly, private insurance was also acceptable, and despite the differences between private and social insurance, the analogy to private insurance helped to gain conservative support for the bill.

2. OASDI

It is not always easy to determine whether or not a person or a family is entitled to OASDI benefits. For that reason, it is probably wise for persons who think they have a claim to get advice at the Social Security Office nearest them. Under certain conditions all of the following are entitled to benefits:

a. Retired workers, age 62 and over
b. Disabled workers of any age
c. Wives of workers entitled to retirement or disability benefits
d. Unmarried dependents of deceased or disabled workers
e. Dependent husbands of entitled workers
f. Widows or divorced wives of deceased workers
g. Dependent widowers, aged 62 or over, of deceased workers
h. Dependent parents, aged 62 or over, of deceased workers
i. No entitlement necessary for anyone over 72.

Furthermore, a lump-sum death payment may be made to the widow or widower if he (or she) is living with the insured worker at the worker's death.

3. Unemployment Insurance

The other social insurance established by the Social Security Act was Unemployment Insurance (UI). We have mentioned above several other methods that society has utilized to combat unemployment: charity, public relief, and public work programs. Unemployment Insurance is a different approach from the other relief measures. A worker, under certain conditions, is insured against the loss of his job. If he loses his job, he is entitled to receive cash payments for a certain number of weeks to tide him over until he finds a new job.

a. Administration of UI

Under the federal Social Security Act, state governments are compelled to set up unemployment insurance programs. UI is a state-administered program, in contrast to OASDI, which is administered directly by the federal Social Security Administration. State employment agencies handle benefit claims of the unemployed, and also try to place these workers in new jobs. Benefits vary from state to state, and maximum and minimum payments are set by state laws. The general aim of the state programs is to provide benefits to the unemployed worker that are equal to 50 percent of his former weekly wages. The maximum length of time that benefits can be received, in most states, is 26 weeks.

b. Employers taxed

In the UI program, workers do not pay taxes to the unemployment insurance funds. The employer contributes the total amount through a payroll tax. There are different ways of computing this tax in the various state programs.

c. <u>Coverage and eligibility</u>

Everyone who is employed is not necessarily covered by unemployment insurance. Those who are not covered by UI are agricultural laborers, domestics, employees of state and local governments, casual workers (not steady), and employees of non-profit agencies. However, some states have made separate provisions for state workers, a few for domestics, etc. If you work for a firm that employs four or more workers at least one day a week for 20 weeks a year, you are probably covered. If you are covered by UI, to be eligible for benefits you must not have left the job voluntarily (quit), or you must not have been fired for misconduct; you must not be unemployed as a result of a strike or labor dispute; and you must not have refused an offer of "suitable employment." Persons seeking unemployment insurance must register for work at a public employment office. Benefits are not granted automatically. The worker must file a claim that must be approved before benefits are paid. There is a waiting period of one or two weeks while the claim is checked.

4. Social Insurance and Poverty

While the invention of social insurance represented real progress, critics have continually pointed to weaknesses in the programs. The real poor -- those who have been unable to hold down a steady job -- may not be covered by social insurance. In the social insurance programs, the steady, regularly employed workers benefit most. The benefits are wage-related; that is, the benefits received either in retirement or when unemployed are directly related to the work income earned. The level of benefits, regardless of workers' earnings, are often criticized as being too low. Many people receiving Social Security payments have to apply for public assistance to supplement the small monthly Social Security check. Once again, the very poor are usually not the beneficiaries. While the check may supply extra income for the more well-to-do retired or disabled worker, it is not enough real income for the poorer worker who needs it for total support. In the case of unemployment insurance, many workers are not covered at all, and the payments are sometimes well below 50 percent of wages earned. And if there is serious trouble in the economy -- a recession or depression -- the 26-week period is not long enough. Another criticism of social insurance is the question of who really foots the bills. Some feel that employers merely shift the burden of their taxes to the consumers by raising their prices.

B. Public Assistance Under the Social Security Act

The Social Security Act did not establish a program of public assistance; "it merely made it possible for a state to receive federal funds if it established a program of its own." However, in order to get the federal grants-in-aid, as the funds were called, a state had to meet certain standards. In addition, the aid would only be given for certain categories of dependents -- the needy aged, the blind, and dependent children. (Later on, the needy "permanently and totally disabled" were added.) These programs are called: Old Age Assistance (OAA), Aid to the Blind (AB), Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (APTD), and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

1. Poor law principles in modern public assistance

According to federal regulations, a person must be in need in order to receive assistance. And to determine need, the state must consider all income resources that an individual or family has. In other words, there is a means test for public assistance under the Social Security Act, just as there was a means test for public aid in colonial times. Other poor law principles can also be recognized in the Social Security Act. Among these are relatives' responsibility, legal settlement, and local administration.

2. <u>Determining need -- state differences</u>

Ordinarily a person applying for public assistance is interviewed and investigated by an employee of a city or county welfare department where a decision has to be made as to whether or not the individual or family is in need. But different states have different definitions of need. There may be a general statement in the state or local laws that a person in need is one whose income and other resources do not provide "reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health." When this general definition is translated into dollars and cents, it often has little meaning. Generally, furniture, clothing, and personal belongings are not counted among one's assets. However, one state may consider an applicant not to be in need if he has more than $100, while another state will allow the person to have up to $1,200, under certain circumstances. The average is probably around $400.

State programs, in addition to differing as to definitions of need, also differ in regard to payment level, residence requirements, and other requirements.

Theoretically, a state welfare department develops a budget, which covers such needs as food, rent, clothing, utilities, and other necessities. The applicant's resources are then subtracted from the budget, and the difference determines the amount of the assistance payment. In practice, the allowances are quite low because states either underestimate the actual costs of items in the budget or grant only a certain percentage of the budget. Generally, the more wealthy states have more adequate allowances, but there are some miserly wealthy states. On the other hand, some poor states are relatively liberal in granting allowances.

3. Contributions of federal, state, and local governments

The federal government pays approximately 60 percent of the cost of the total public assistance programs that serve the categories specified in the Social Security Act and its amendments -- the needy aged, the blind, dependent children, and the disabled. Actually, there are rather complicated formulas for federal contributions to each program, and since 1958, federal contributions have varied slightly according to the per capita income of the state or its ability to pay for the programs. There is no limit on what a state or local government can allow to recipients, but there are maximum federal contributions to allowances in each of the four categories. Some programs are entirely financed by federal and state governments, while others get monies from all three levels of government. Those dependent persons who do not fit into the federal categories, regardless of the extent of their need, must be aided by state and/or local funds. These programs are referred to as General Assistance (GA), or in some states, Home Relief. Usually the standards in the general assistance programs, including the allowance levels, are lower than in the federally aided categories. There are also differences in state and federal contributions to the federally aided programs. Thus, in some states, two families with the same financial need may receive different allowances, depending upon which federal program they are covered by or whether they are in federal programs or the general assistance category.

4. Aid to inmates of institutions

The writers of the Social Security Act, hoping to strike a blow at the many institutions offering insufficient care to the poor, ruled that federal public assistance could only go to inmates of institutions if they were in medical institutions. This provision, of course, had the effect of discouraging indoor and encouraging outdoor relief among the states.

5. Old Age Assistance (OAA)

Old Age Assistance payments, like those of the other federal programs, were to be paid in cash, rather than in some form of goods. Thus, recipients were assured the right to choose how they wanted to spend their funds. Since states have so much leeway as to payments and there are no federal minimums (that is, states are not denied federal monies regardless of how low their budgets are; they merely get less money from the federal government), there is great variety among the states. The federal and, in general, the state and local contributions are more generous in the OAA programs than in those for children and the disabled but lower than for the blind. However, the standards are low in any case. Mississippi paid aged individuals $41 a month in 1967 and Wisconsin $103. The average OAA budget for the country was about $80 a month last year.

6. Aid to the Blind (AB)

The Aid to the Blind pattern is very similar to that of the OAA. A person must be blind to be eligible, but blindness is related to income rather than to the degree of blindness -- that is, a person is aided if his handicap keeps him from earning a living. Blind people are not automatically eligible, for there is a means test. However, the federal law is a little more lenient with the blind in that the blind can keep some of the money they earn, in contrast to aged workers, all of whose earnings are deducted.

Average cash payments to blind persons are on the whole a little higher than for the aged -- slightly over $90 a month last year.

7. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)

AFDC is the fastest growing category and one that has stirred up the most controversy. It is more greatly affected by employment opportunities now that families with two unemployed, able-bodied parents in the home are eligible. Although the underlying concept of the program is that children are better off living in their own homes rather than in institutions, public reaction and the laws themselves, until recently, were concerned with the behavior of the parents rather than the needs of the children. Thus, until 1962, families with two able-bodied parents in the home were not eligible; unemployed fathers often deserted their families so that their wives and children could receive aid. One of the controversial aspects of the AFDC program is the so-called "man-in-the-house" regulation in some states. Authorities, believing that mothers are receiving AFDC under false pretenses when there is a man in the home able to support the family, may check up at unexpected hours to make sure that the father is really absent. It is felt that recipients of public assistance lose some of their rights because of their dependence on public aid. Recently, legal action has been taken against this provision on the grounds that it is an invasion of privacy.

For some reason, the payments in the AFDC programs are considerably lower than in other federal programs. The average recipient receives about $35 to $40 a month, and, while children in a family may require somewhat less money than an adult in a family or one living alone, the difference in allowances is much greater than the difference in need. Here again, the low payments may be related to society's feelings about the parents' behavior rather than the children's needs, for many children aided in this program are born out of wedlock. Also, we may have more sympathy as a society for the aged and the handicapped than for children, or there may be prejudice against the clients of the AFDC program, in which Negroes are in greater evidence than in other categories.

Recent amendments to the Social Security Act indicate that society is not sure whether it wants AFDC mothers to work or stay at home with the children. Obviously, if mothers are to be encouraged to work, we owe their children some social services to substitute for parental care, such as day care programs. Some state AFDC programs require mothers to accept "suitable employment," thus making it impossible for some needy mothers to stay at home and care for their children.

8. Services for Children

Thus far we have been speaking about AFDC (financial aid to families with dependent children). But children have special needs which must be met to make it possible for them to grow into healthy and happy adults. They need loving and concerned parents, guidance, education, and medical care, to name a few examples.

Over the years a number of social agencies, both public and private, have developed which provide child welfare services. They try to help when parents and/or communities are unable to meet their responsibilities. These services for children may be categorized as supportive, supplementary, or substitute services.

a. Supportive services

Services of this type are mostly provided by child guidance clinics, family service agencies, etc. A typical problem might be poor intra-family relationships, or there may be some difficulty in child rearing. The primary aim of supportive services is to keep the family together. Child welfare agencies often step into situations where children have been neglected or abused. Services offered in such situations are called protective, that is, they are designed to protect the children. Frequently, if abuse is carried to an extreme, the police are notified.

b. Supplementary services

Supplementary services are designed to help out in situations where there is evidence of either the parents' or community's inability to fulfill its responsibilities toward children. Homemaker and day care programs plus financial assistance through AFDC are supplementary services that a social agency offers.

The homemaker service furnishes home help to families with children. The homemaker not only helps with the household routine but also assists in preserving wholesome family living in times of stress. For example, if there is no homemaker available when a mother is sick in the hospital, or the like, the children have to be placed. Day care, on the other hand, provides for the "care of children away from their homes during some part of the day," which supplements normal care in the home.

c. Substitute services

Substitute services are used in more serious situations, i.e., when the child can no longer live at home. In these circumstances, a substitute family is needed. The child may be placed in a foster home or in an adoptive home. Placement with a foster family may be temporary, but adoption is permanent.

Sometimes institutions, rather than substitute homes, are used for placement. These might be residential treatment centers -- institutions for the handicapped or retarded, training schools for delinquents, etc.

d. Child welfare agencies

Child welfare services are provided by a variety of agencies. There may be many specialized private or voluntary agencies that offer counseling, adoptive, protective, and other services in the community. Or it may be that the only services available are those provided by the county or city department of public welfare. Within that department there may even be subdivisions, such as a unit for financial assistance and another unit for counseling and other nonfinancial services.

e. The Social Security Act and child welfare services

The Social Security Act originally made some provision for federal support of health programs for children in rural areas. The Children's Bureau (now in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) initially administered the program. Gradually, larger grants were extended for maternal and child health care, broader child welfare services, research, training, and demonstration projects. AFDC programs have also been broadened by a series of amendments to the Social Security Act, which have made federal support of services, such as counseling and foster care, possible.

9. General assistance

General assistance is a "residual" program; that is, it provides financial assistance to the needy who are not eligible for help under any other program. In some places, it is known as home relief. About 700,000 people were receiving general assistance in 1965. By way of comparison, approximately two million aged and three million children received public assistance payments that year.

Since there are no federal funds -- and, hence, no federal regulations or standards -- the states and localities are free to set their own. As one might suspect, these programs most closely resemble the poor law practices inherited from England. The people in the federal assistance categories -- the aged, disabled, and children -- have some special handicap or condition that evokes the sympathy of others. That they seem to be more deserving of consideration is shown by the federal government's role in their assistance. But in the case of those who have less claim on the sympathy of people because they seem less worthy or more able to care for themselves, attitudes toward them and their treatment by state and local governments resemble traditional approaches to the "able-bodied" poor.

Strict eligibility requirements are enforced in general assistance programs. The means test is applied even more severely. And some states will not grant any assistance at all if there is an "employable" member in the family. Payments are usually lower than the benefits received under the federal program, and in some areas, benefits are not given in cash. The cash payment, as we noted, respects the individual's right to handle his own affairs and is an important and humane principle of the Social Security Act. Instead, vouchers are distributed that can be exchanged for merchandise at a store. Some states will only give emergency or short-term assistance. Maximum payments, which are quite low, are set on benefits, and there are time limits after which benefits are no longer paid.

Since the financial burden of the general assistance programs falls on the states and, to a large extent, the localities, the amount of monies available varies greatly among programs. The same is true for the other aspects of these programs, such as eligibility requirements. Benefits and eligibility vary not only among states but from locality to locality within a state -- as if individuals and families in neighboring counties had different basic needs.

10. Public Housing

Protest around the turn of the century led to the establishment of housing codes and other regulations that were geared to ameliorate the harmful effects of overcrowded housing. These regulations were applied to all new buildings and to older buildings that failed to meet the new housing standards.

a. <u>The beginnings of publicly subsidized housing</u>

Despite regulatory activities, it became clear that enough decent housing was not available to the poor at prices they could afford.

Under special circumstances, the federal government has shown an interest in building housing. For example, during both World Wars, the government undertook to provide housing for workers who were considered essential to the war effort. During the Depression, the Wagner-Steagall Bill was enacted as the United States Housing Act of 1937, which, in order to provide jobs and to get the economy going, called for tearing down slums and constructing public housing for low-income groups.

b. <u>Organization and extent of public housing programs</u>

The Housing Act of 1949 marked a turn in the nation's housing goals. The act provided for redevelopment of blighted land, the use of federal credit, and authorized loans and subsidies for low-rent housing. It was the policy of Congress to provide adequate housing units for urban and rural nonfarm families with incomes "so low that they are not being decently housed." In most cities, independent local housing authorities were set up to manage the projects.

Congress periodically changed (and often reduced) the number of housing units to be built. These public housing units never amounted to a large proportion of the housing available to low-income families--approximately one percent of the total housing for this group. Since the need for public housing is so great, there have always been long waiting lists for public housing, despite the many criticisms of the program.

c. <u>Criticisms of the public housing program</u>

Because of the scarcity of apartments, complicated procedures for tenant selection have been devised. Many prospective tenants have been rejected by the housing authorities for family instability and/or crime records. In addition, after the tenant is accepted, there are rules and regulations that must be followed, which are often more strict than those required of tenants in private housing. A separate housing police force is maintained and tenants are subjected to surveillance and inspection to determine whether their housekeeping is adequate. These measures lead to the justifiable feeling on the part of some tenants that they are being forced to give up their independence in exchange for housing.

Reaction against the physical characteristics of public housing often accompanies public housing residents' feeling that they are being treated differently. Housing projects have been built as inexpensively as possible and according to a rigid formula, with the result that projects look more like institutions than homes; they rarely blend into the rest of the neighborhood. Many have been built in out-of-the-way locations. Public housing tenants feel, with justification, that they are isolated and apart from the real community.

The sense of separation is reinforced by the fact that all of the residents of projects are of the same income level. Those who begin to earn more money are usually considered no longer eligible for public housing. Yet, it is likely that members of this particular group are, or will become, the leaders in a project community.

Perhaps the most important criticism in the opinion of some is that the projects have taken on a segregated character. Middle class whites have mostly tried to have projects built in less desirable areas. Regardless of admission policies, whites have tended to seek housing elsewhere, so that the projects often contain not only one economic class but one ethnic group.

d. Overcoming limitations in public housing

In order to overcome some of the weaknesses to which we have referred, community centers have been installed in the projects, where young people participate in recreational activities, day care centers operate, and tenant or other adult groups meet.

Consideration is being given to: mixing middle- and low-income housing; locating projects in middle- rather than in low-income areas; changing the physical design of projects; modifying the present eligibility regulations; and to making it possible for higher-income tenants to remain in the projects. Many other ideas, such as paying subsidies to low-income families to be used toward the cost of private housing, are also being considered.

In discussing problems in public housing, we should add that some public housing managers feel that some tenants are careless about property, and that they are unconcerned about the property's maintenance. Critics point out that often a short time after a new project opens, walls are marked, elevators are broken, and unsavory behavior is widespread.

The majority of families who live in public housing maintain that they like it. They appreciate its conveniences and see it as an improved, protected environment. Public housing can be regarded as a start. Some lessons have been learned from past experiences, and a larger, improved program can be designed to provide low-cost housing to the many who need it. Clearly, the private market has shown that it is unable to accomplish the goal of providing low-income housing on its own.

C. Medicare and Medicaid

A basic change in the nation's welfare policies occurred in 1965, when the Medicare and Medicaid Amendments to the Social Security Act were passed.

1. Medicare

Medicare (Title 18) is a type of social insurance -- health insurance. There are two parts to the Medicare program:

- Hospitalization Insurance to help cover the cost of hospitalization and related care, and
- Medical Insurance to help with doctor bills and other health expenses.

Practically everyone over 65 is covered by Medicare. Health insurance cards, for identification purposes, are mailed to those eligible.

a. <u>Benefits</u>

There are three kinds of benefits or assistance in paying bills: those paid to patients while they are in the hospital; those for care in an institution after hospitalization, such as part-time nursing care, physical therapy, etc.; and out-patient hospital diagnostic benefits, such as X-rays, blood tests, etc.

b. <u>Payment by the insured</u>

The benefits under Medicare are not free. The patients, since this is contributory insurance, have to pay part of the hospitalization costs, part of the extended-care benefit (depending on the length of stay), etc.

c. <u>Financing</u>

The hospital insurance program is financed by special "contributions" from employees, self-employed persons, and employers. Employees and employers pay an equal amount. The "contributions" (tax) comes to a very small percent of an employee's pay -- one half of one percent.

The medical insurance program is voluntary. Each person can decide whether he wants to join the program and pay $3.00 a month to be covered. Medical insurance pays for doctor's services, medical supplies, and other medical services, and for some home health services. But again, the patient pays part of the expenses. In this instance, medical insurance covers 80 percent of the expenses <u>after</u> the patient pays the first $50. Payment by the government can be made either to the patient or directly to the doctor.

2. <u>Medicaid</u>

Medicaid (Title 19), in contrast to Medicare, is not a social insurance program but is more like the public assistance programs. The federal government grants funds to states to set up a program of medical assistance for the needy.

a. <u>Medical indigence</u>

The Medicaid bill invokes the concept of medical indigence. Recognition is given to the fact that people may be able to handle their ordinary, everyday expenses, but not be able to pay for medical care. For example, a family of four may be getting along on $100 a week--paving for their rent, food, clothing, and other necessities. But they would be completely unable to handle an operation or even dental bills. Thus it is possible for a state to develop a plan that provides free medical care for families whose incomes are above the poverty line.

b. Administration of Medicaid

Applications for Medicaid are processed through the local departments of welfare. Because of negative attitudes toward welfare, many people who were eligible for Medicaid did not apply for assistance when the program began. Up to now, payments for medical service have been made under the public assistance program, but, as the states develop their Medicare programs, this feature of public assistance will be discontinued. It will be up to the states to decide what medical indigence is, and who is eligible. Since the states are bearing part of the costs, there will be variations in eligibility among them.

3. Extension of government's welfare role

Conceivably, the passage of Titles 18 and 19, the Medicare and Medicaid amendments, can be viewed as a real breakthrough--an extension of government concern into a new area of human welfare. There may be some administrative snafus as the medical programs are being set up. Once they get underway, there is the possibility of extending the coverage to an even larger portion of the population. For example, the age at which people become eligible for Medicare can be lowered, and the income at which individuals and families become eligible for Medicaid can be increased.

XII. Attempts to Change Social Conditions

During the 19th century, writers like Charles Dickens and Jacob Riis described the shocking conditions that existed in certain sections of the growing cities. While there has been some improvement -- public sanitation and building codes, for example -- the conditions in the run-down or slum areas of our cities have much in common with those described by 19th century critics. It is commonplace to talk of the crisis in the cities, and there have been many plans and proposals for changing these conditions. In this section, we will point to a few important conditions that affect the daily life of the slum dweller. The recent creation of a new federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reflects increasing national concern over problems of our cities.

A. Slums

The most obvious characteristic of a slum area is that the people living there are relatively poor. Usually, if people have the money to move to other areas, they do leave the slum, often for the suburbs.

1. Housing

Slum housing is usually run-down and overcrowded. In today's cities, in contrast to the past, there may be large, low-cost housing projects along with older, deteriorated housing. In addition to overcrowding, which some observers consider less severe than sixty years ago, slum housing has such unhealthful conditions as falling plaster, rats, lack of paint, faulty plumbing, unlit halls and stairways, the odor of decay and garbage, and many other building-code violations. In slum housing, fires are a great hazard. There are greater losses of life, more injuries from fires, and higher incidences of property damage in the slums than in other parts of the city or in the suburbs.

2. Social problems

There are more welfare cases, higher rates of crime and illness, more broken families, and more incidences of moving in and out of the slums than there are in higher-income neighborhoods. Some of the moving is the result of urban renewal programs, which have torn down slum housing and often replaced it with middle- or upper-income housing, or nonresidential buildings -- thus reducing the total number of housing units available to poor families. Part of the moving into slum areas is the result of in-migration -- the move from one part of the United States, like the South or Puerto Rico, to urban industrial centers, where greater opportunities are thought to exist.

3. Minority groups

Today the slums of the inner cities are populated mostly by minority groups, although it is important to remember that even in urban areas, the majority of the poor are white. Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican-Americans do, however, inhabit slums in large numbers, especially in relation to their percentage of the total population. In previous generations, the tide of immigration carried Irish, Germans, Jews, Italians, Slavs, and other groups into the same slums. Some remnants of these older ethnic groups are still found in some of the slums. Except for Negroes, who have been in this country longer than most other ethnic groups, many minority group members have a language problem that makes their adjustment more difficult. When minority group members venture out of their neighborhoods for jobs or housing, there is considerable likelihood that they will meet discrimination -- one reason why they are more frequently confined to their neighborhoods than other city dwellers.

4. Community services

Although the slum neighborhood needs the best in community and social services, chances are that services are inadequate. Garbage is often not picked up regularly; streets are infrequently cleaned; policemen are hard to find; schools are often old, overcrowded, and poorly staffed. Thus, efforts are needed not only to help individuals one by one but to develop better neighborhoods and communities. This in turn means fostering community participation and building strong organizations of neighborhood residents that can take action, exert pressure, and, hopefully, improve conditions.

B. <u>The New Federalism</u>

The "crisis" in the cities, the existence of poverty in the midst of plenty, the lack of opportunity for disadvantaged youth, and continuing inequalities and discriminatory practices against members of minority groups have led to an upsurge of social protest in recent years. This outcry, as voiced by the Civil Rights Movement, is one of the important reasons for an increased activity by the federal government on behalf of the poor and the disadvantaged. The increased activity of the federal government in combating social problems has been referred to as the <u>New Federalism</u>.

There are two important reasons for increased federal activity. First, the national government is the only branch of government with sufficient resources (taxing power) to finance wide-scale programs. Furthermore, there is increasing recognition that social problems, including the problems of the cities, are national ones. For example, many large cities are supporting more and more people on welfare. Many of the recipients are newcomers to the cities who have been forced off the land as a result of the mechanization of Southern agriculture; or they are Puerto Ricans unable to find suitable employment on the island. Certainly, it is unfair to saddle the cities to which they migrate with the responsibility for solving social problems and problems of adjustment that newcomers are bound to have. Furthermore, the national economy profits from and depends upon the residential mobility of the labor force and should be expected to assume responsibilities for some of the problems and dislocations caused by migration. Increasing federal action does not mean that localities are not involved. An examination of the new programs indicates a complex mixture of participation by all levels of government.

C. Economic Opportunity

The phrase, economic opportunity, is used to characterize many antipoverty programs and is the name of the 1964 Act that is the federal government's major and most highly publicized antipoverty effort. While many kinds of efforts, including preschool education, are relevant to economic opportunity, job training and employment are the most important parts of many of the antipoverty programs. It is the purpose of most of these programs to make the disadvantaged more employable by supplying them with educational and vocational training for jobs that do exist. But it is not at all clear that the disadvantaged can be trained to fill the jobs that are available -- largely white-collar work requiring more formal education than most poor people can easily or quickly acquire. Employment following graduation from many of these training programs has by no means been automatic. In the following discussion, we mention a number of economic opportunity programs provided for by new legislation. The new programs are by no means a substitute for the employment agencies, vocational counseling services, and other established programs to aid job seekers and prospective workers.

1. Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA)

The MDTA, which is administered by the various state employment services, provides classroom and on-the-job training for semi-skilled, skilled, office, and professional jobs. Public agencies and schools do most of the training, but private industry, unions, and other groups can also do it. Most MDTA programs include basic education as well as training on how to get a job and keep it. The classroom program is usually set up as a "multi-occupational" project where unemployed or underemployed people receive training in a wide range of jobs and levels of skill. After such broad training, a trainee then chooses which specific job he wants to train for. Some of the more popular courses have been welding, nursing, stenography, and office work. The on-the-job training programs usually do not supply basic education, but instead teach people how to do a job by actually having them work at it, starting with basic aspects of the job and then moving step-by-step toward doing the whole job. A few programs have combined classroom and on-the-job training elements.

The MDTA is designed to give priority to unemployed family heads, although one-fourth of the openings are now available to youths between the ages of 17 and 22 who have never worked before. Unemployed adults receive up to $10 more than their unemployment insurance would be. The young people in the program are paid less. An MDTA training period may last up to 72 weeks, but most run between 20 and 24 weeks.

2. <u>The Vocational Education Act of 1963</u>

This act authorizes the U.S. Commissioner of Education to establish "residential vocational schools to remove boys from slum environments." Area vocational schools, work-study programs, or other projects may be set up under the act. In theory, any disadvantaged person in or out of school can receive vocational education in any type of school. Community groups, feeling the need for vocational training, should submit requests to the local Board of Education.

3. <u>Job Corps (Title I of the Economic Opportunity Act, 1964)</u>

The Job Corps, one of the most highly publicized antipoverty programs, is open to unemployed youth between the ages of 15 and 22 who have dropped out of school, who have graduated but cannot find or hold a job, who don't have skills that are in demand, or who cannot pass education tests for army entrance. Training is done by large private industries, colleges, states, nonprofit private groups, and federal conservation centers. Both basic education and skill training are offered. The Job Corps, although it teaches urban employment skills as well as conservatio skills, resembles the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's in its offer of <u>residential training</u>. Trainees receive food, board, medical care, a small living allowance, and, when they leave, $50 for each month they were in training. Training is full-time since a person is always near his teachers and fellow students, and he is away from the noise, overcrowding, and perhaps, family troubles at home. However, many youths get lonesome and/or find it difficult to re-enter their usual family and social life after they leave the Corps. Whether youth are really prepared for jobs that are, and will continue to be, in demand has been continually asked about the Job Corps program.

4. Neighborhood Youth Corps (Title I of the EOA, 1964)

This program has two parts. It gives students jobs so they can stay in school and it provides work experience to young people who are out of school. Youth between 15 and 22 are eligible. They may work for state or local governments, private nonprofit agencies, including unions, and community action agencies. The work they do must in some way be a service to the public, preferably in jobs that will help poor people. The Corps is administered by the Manpower Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor and has four general types of projects: those in which students may work up to 15 hours a week while going to school full-time; those in which unemployed young people not in school may work up to 32 hours a week for up to two years; those in which unemployed youths going to school part-time may work up to 32 hours a week; and summer projects for students who may work up to 32 hours a week for six to eight weeks. All youths receive at least $1.25 an hour. Most projects include basic education, job training, and counseling.

5. Economic Opportunity Loans (Title IV of the EOA, 1964)

This program, operated by the Small Business Administration, provides for lending money to low-income people so they can expand or start a small business in a poverty area. In addition to the loans, people may receive training and technical assistance. These loans can only be for profit-making businesses; cooperatives and nonprofit organizations are not eligible.

6. Work Experience (Title V of the EOA, 1964)

The aim of this legislation is to give unemployed and low-income adults work experiences so that they will earn money and improve their chances of getting a regular job. Any adult on public assistance and parents of dependent children who are poor but don't qualify for AFDC can get this training. State public welfare agencies operate the work-experience programs or designate nonprofit private organizations to operate them. Little formal training is given; it is felt that many people need to learn good work habits before they get regular jobs and so the program provides one or two years of paid work in public services. Projects usually provide personal counseling, special medical care and other social services such as day care for the children. A few projects offer basic education, skill training, and job placement.

7. Operation Mainstream (Section 205(d), EOA, 1964)

This is primarily a work experience program in small towns and rural areas for long-term unemployed persons whose income is below the poverty level. Although anyone over 22 years of age can enroll, most people are over 45. Most Mainstream projects have dealt with conservation and beautification: improving parks and playgrounds, planting flowers and trees, and making small repairs to community buildings. This program has also sponsored the Foster Grandparents Program in which older people help in day care centers, Head Start programs, and schools. Mainstream programs can be run by community action agencies, private nonprofit agencies and state and local public agencies.

8. New Careers for the Poor

In order to make social services more attractive to clients whose life experiences and ways of life differed greatly from the lives of professional workers, some of the antipoverty programs in the early 1960's began to experiment with the use of aides drawn from the neighborhoods served. Homemakers, community organizers, and parent-education aides from poverty areas were thought to be effective workers because they were familiar with the neighborhoods and with the clients who were the targets of these programs. Aides had long been used in social services, and indeed a minority of all social welfare personnel have the full two years of professional training. But seldom before had untrained workers been considered such an important asset to the delivery of services -- having a special knowledge and know-how to add to that of the professional. Because they were from the same neighborhoods and groups as the recipients, the new workers could offer help in a friendly, relaxed manner that could possibly bridge the gap between the professionals and persons on the receiving end of services. Persons who observed that the aides were valuable social service workers began to recognize that the employment of many poor persons in social agencies would help to solve two other important social problems -- unemployment in poverty areas and the great shortage of manpower in human service programs.

In 1967, it was estimated by one expert that there were close to 75,000 aides, most of them in jobs developed as a result of the antipoverty program. Many were in community action programs; others in Head Start, and still others were to be employed as teacher aides through Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or in the Medicare program. The Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), at a 1966 convention, had recommended that five million jobs for nonprofessionals be created in public services. The Scheuer Amendment to the EOA, under which you are being trained, calls for approximately thirty-five million dollars to employ and train unemployed persons for jobs in public services. Thus far, there have been sizable numbers of jobs created for the poor in human services; hopefully, many of these will lead to careers in which persons acquire formal education and on-the-job training sufficient to advance to a variety of levels, including that of the professional.

D. Community Action Programs (Title II of the EOA Act of 1964)

This title of the act is the section that has stirred up a great deal of controversy. The Office of Economic Opportunity, the agency set up to carry out the EOA Act of 1964, is authorized to encourage and support community action programs (CAPs) which mobilize community resources to combat poverty with the "maximum feasible participation of the residents" of low-income areas. Because the language of the act is very broad and can be interpreted in different ways, many different types of CAPs have developed. These range from the Head Start programs to the organization of adult social protest groups.

1. Head Start

Head Start provides special educational instruction for children before they enter kindergarten. The theory behind the program is that disadvantaged children will be more ready for regular school if they have a prekindergarten program that compensates for their so-called "cultural disadvantages." Disadvantaged youngsters are to be exposed to the same cultural stimulation as middle-class youngsters. It has long been recognized that most preschoolers, advantaged or disadvantaged, profit from nursery school. There are three types of Head Start programs: short summer programs for children going into the first grade; follow-through programs during the school year for children who were in a summer Head Start program; and full year programs for children not yet in school. Medical and social services are provided to children and their families. Parents are expected to take an active role in running the programs, and there is also provision for the training of local people to work in the programs.

2. Action programs

Protest groups may be organized with CAP funds to deal with such issues as welfare, housing, jobs, or any problems that the community decides to tackle. Some of the action programs undertaken by different communities are: remedial education; services for young children such as day care centers; tutorial programs; job development programs emphasizing job placement of unemployed and low-income persons; employment information and counseling; job training and education for unemployed adults; development of cooperatives or buying clubs; consumer education; and expanding and helping low-income people to use health clinics, legal services, and homemaking services. Each community has been free to set its own priorities.

3. Coordination through neighborhood service centers

A way of coordinating the use of public services is through a neighborhood service center where the residents can come in for help with any problem. The workers at a center can give advice, offer help themselves, or refer people to other agencies for help. A center can give assistance in such fields as employment, housing, health, homemaking, day care, and legal services. It became apparent that the poor were not taking advantage of the complex city-wide agencies that had developed. The neighborhood centers were established to assist residents in dealing with these agencies and to offer other useful services.

4. The problem of control

Conflicts have arisen in various communities over who was to control the funds and the action projects. Local governments, professionals, and the poor have been part of the coalitions controlling the programs. Several cities have tried to solve the dilemma in various ways, such as having elections by the "poor" to elect representatives to sit on the antipoverty boards. Some OEO agencies have set fixed ratios of representatives from various parts of the community. Congress partially settled the dispute by ruling that the local governments must retain control of the projects.

E. Other Important Antipoverty Programs

There are a few other programs that social service workers should be familiar with.

1. Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Title VIII of the EOA

Volunteers live and work directly with low-income people and assist in antipoverty projects. The VISTA program is very much like the Peace Corps in foreign countries. Most volunteers are college students or recent graduates. But some volunteers are highly-skilled teachers, lawyers and community organizers (some of whom are retired). VISTA volunteers are paid a small sum by the federal government and serve the communities free of charge.

2. <u>Legal Services to the Poor (Section 222(a) of the EOA)</u>

The purpose of this program is to give poor people equal justice. They are to be provided with good legal services so that they can defend their rights in and out of court; laws are to be made more fair, understandable, and responsive to the needs of the poor. Most programs are located in poor neighborhoods in places like storefronts and are provided free of charge to low-income people who live in the area. The legal work is done by lawyers assisted by neighborhood people who are hired to help out. The lawyers give services on such issues as tenants' rights, divorces, credit and repossession. They may also reach out into the community to find people who need legal help. They may run educational sessions to advise people of their rights in many situations. They may help with legal reform by preparing "test cases" for the courts. They may also help groups to organize neighborhood corporations and cooperatives.

F. Model Cities

Conditions are growing worse in many urban slum neighborhoods throughout the country, while the nation as a whole is prospering. A few statistics from one of the major cities will help to show how great the problem is: of the 8,100,000 people living in New York City, more than 1,700,000 live in the major slum area. Nearly 1,000,000 other New York residents live in changing neighborhoods which are threatened with deterioration of housing, schools and community facilities. Nearly half the city's families have incomes under $6,000 per year and fully half of these are living below the poverty line. "Improving the quality of urban life is the most critical domestic problem facing the United States." With this declaration, Congress launched the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966. Model Cities, as this program is known, is the federal government's recognition of the fact that cities of all sizes lack the ability, especially the money, to deal effectively with the critical problems facing them. It also recognized the need for "balanced comprehensive attacks" on the inadequacies of education, employment, health, safety and physical condition of many of our cities.

The goals and priorities of the Model Cities Act, as set out by Congress, were:

> to plan, develop, and carry out <u>locally prepared</u> and scheduled comprehensive city demonstration pro-

> grams containing new and imaginative proposals to rebuild or revitalize large slum and blighted areas...and to accomplish these objectives through the most effective and economical concentration and coordination of federal, state and local public effort....

Federal grants are available to pay up to 80 percent of the cost of planning and developing comprehensive city demonstration programs. Projects or activities may be funded totally under existing federal programs, or existing programs can be supplemented by special grants of up to 80 percent of the total non-federal contribution required. These supplemental grants are not earmarked for any one specific project or activity but can be used by the city to assist any activity included as part of the demonstration program -- even those not supported by a federal program. The model cities law determines the eligibility of neighborhoods, and it limits the total impact in any one city to approximately 10 percent of the population. The city chooses from among its eligible areas and then selects the programs that are to be funded. A model cities program should include a broad range of projects and activities designed to renew selected neighborhoods, both socially and physically. Plans should include activities to rebuild, revitalize, or expand housing, job and income opportunities; reduce dependence on welfare; improve educational facilities and programs; combat disease and ill health; reduce crime and delinquency; enhance recreational and cultural opportunities; establish better access between homes and jobs; and generally improve living conditions for the people in the selected neighborhoods.

While the program is very limited at present, it does provide a chance to experiment with the design and delivery of new and existing programs and services.

XIII. The Social Welfare System -- An Overview

In assessing our present welfare system and planning how to improve it, we must recognize that individuals and societies have many needs and that there is no one answer to our problems -- that different programs, policies, and social inventions have their time, place and purpose -- that many things must be done at the same time.

Solving the urban "crisis" involves planning for education, medical care, housing, and sound community development. Overcoming poverty entails having real jobs for everyone willing to work, putting an end to discrimination, raising minimum wages, social security benefits, and unemployment insurance benefits, and implementing changes in public welfare. Social services, to be truly effective, must be reorganized, enlarged, coordinated, and made available to all, without being tied to the public assistance program.

Progress of this kind will not come about with a "business-as-usual" approach. The American people must make clear that they intend to utilize our great wealth and productivity for human welfare. This means recognition of the fact that the standards and attitudes of yesterday are not suitable guides for today; nor will today's be for tomorrow in our rapidly changing world.

Up to this point, society has tended to view people whose income is derived from public funds as second-class citizens. Exceptions are made at times for some people, like war veterans. We have shown the origin of this attitude and suggested that, given the stage of economic development we have reached, it creates a great deal of damage and unnecessary suffering. The right of human beings to income must be accepted along with other rights such as the right to education or civil rights.

The right to work can be guaranteed if the government steps in when private enterprise cannot provide suitable jobs at decent wages. However, many people, for various reasons, should not be expected to work; either because of illness, age, family responsibility, or other reasons. Here, American democracy has the responsibility of providing adequate income under dignified conditions and of overcoming prejudices toward those exercising their social welfare rights.

The basic issue is really not one of whether or not the nation can afford it. Rather, it is what kind of national priorities we want to set. Is the U.S. ready to make a national commitment to work for greater equality and the abolition of poverty? How can we stimulate movement toward social justice for minorities and the acceptance of all as human beings of worth and importance?

SOCIAL SERVICES

I. Social Agencies

Whether they work in a large modern office in which hundreds of people are employed or in a dingy storefront office, nearly all social service aides provide or assist in the actual delivery of services. They usually work in a social agency, or a social services department of an institution.

The provision of social services is the response of these agencies or departments to the requests for help of people, usually called clients, who have certain problems that they feel they cannot solve or handle without assistance. Usually, clients do not pay for these services. Instead, the need for services has been recognized by the community and financed primarily through taxes, or less frequently, through private donations.

Social agencies offer concrete or "bread-and-butter" services, like money or housing; they also provide aid in the form of talking or counseling. Actually, the two types of services are seldom entirely separate. For example, people often need considerable counseling when they apply for financial aid to a department of public assistance because they feel defeated, discouraged, or ashamed. A social worker's primary task may be to help them prove their eligibility for assistance -- that they meet the various regulations that are required of recipients. But the worker can also, by what he says, by the warmth he shows, and by his interest in the client as an individual, help him to feel better about himself and his problems.

A. <u>Problems Handled by Social Agencies</u>

There are many types of problems for which clients seek social service aid. Some of the most common types of problems handled by social agencies are:

1. <u>Housing problems</u>:
    a. Apartment seeking
    b. Eviction or threatened eviction
    c. Homelessness
    d. Overcrowding
    e. High rent
    f. Vermin or other unsanitary conditions.
2. <u>Economic and/or employment problems</u>:
    a. Insufficient income
    b. Debts, garnishment
    c. Budgeting and money management
    d. Entry into job market
    e. Vocational or job training
    f. Employment barriers
        (1) Physical handicaps
        (2) Emotional illness
        (3) Retardation
        (4) Prison or narcotic record.

3. Practical-personal problems:

   a. Health

      (1) Physical

      (2) Mental

   b. Physical handicaps

   c. Family planning

   d. Child care

   e. School adjustment

   f. Out-of-wedlock pregnancy

   g. Marital

      (1) Interpersonal conflict

      (2) Separation

      (3) Divorce

      (4) Desertion

   h. Police action

   i. Probation, parole

   j. Family relationships (other than marriage partners)

B. Some Characteristics of Problems

As we all know, troubles seem to come together as a group of related problems. A breadwinner whose major problem is severe illness may lose his job which will probably cause financial problems. He may, as a result of inability to go to work and support his family, become severely discouraged and depressed. His marital relationship may suffer, and the stability of his home may be threatened. Some of his children, upset by the changes in their home life, may begin to have problems at school, such as truancy or academic failure.

Problems like these have to be considered in relation to such general social conditions as the availability of employment, racial and ethnic discrimination or the quality of education. The lack of a high school diploma, for example, may or may not be a problem, depending on the availability and requirements of jobs in the community. In the past, there was much unskilled work available for persons with little education, but now greater skills and more education are required for many jobs.

Understanding a problem also involves knowing how most people tend to handle the type of situation involved, or what is considered "normal" or customary behavior under the circumstances. For even if we respect the right of people to be different providing that they do no harm to others, their difference or deviance from the normal sometimes becomes a problem because of the way that people in the community regard such behavior. The behavior of certain groups of clients, newcomers from rural areas, for example, may differ from that of the majority of city dwellers. It is important for social service aides to recognize what behavior is considered normal among the group they serve and to help clients handle problems that result from the differences between their customary behavior and that which the community expects.

C. Agency Goals and Functions

When we discuss a social agency's goals or purpose, we are sometimes referring to the reasons it was established or the goals that have been developed during its years of service. For example, some settlement houses may have been founded to help European immigrants adjust to American life; now that the former newcomers and their children have moved out of the neighborhoods where the settlements are located, the settlement is faced with either moving with them or serving new residents of the neighborhood. Because times have changed and the new groups have had different experiences before coming to the city, the settlements have to develop new goals if they are to adequately help a different clientele. Even if they move with the older groups, their goals would change because their former clients have changed. Sometimes an agency continues to hold onto its old aims when they are no longer suited to the problems in the community.

Agencies usually have long-range as well as immediate goals. For example, a public assistance agency has as its immediate goal the provision of financial help for people who would otherwise be without income; but its long-range goal may be to help the clients become self-supporting. Sometimes these short- and long-term goals may be in conflict because allowances are so low and receiving them is so humiliating that people's health and self-respect suffer, and they have little incentive to seek work. As a result, they become less capable of the independence and self-support that is the goal of the agency. Most people in the social work profession agree, however, that both long- and short-run goals can best be served by generous allowances offered in a spirit of respect and trust for the applicants. Another example of the contrast between immediate and long-range goals is in the health field: an outpatient clinic may have the short-range goal of curing present illness but the long-range purpose of preventing sickness.

It is important for social service workers to remember that we often become so busy doing our daily tasks on the job that we forget <u>why</u> we are doing them. This is especially likely in big organizations or bureaucracies where the work is divided among many persons, each of whom performs only part of the service to a client. It is important to continually ask ourselves why we are performing certain tasks and what their immediate and ultimate effect is on our clients and community. As a start in this direction, consult the list of problems usually handled by social agencies in Section IA of this chapter. Check those with which your agency and your department are concerned and add to the list any that are omitted. Then try to determine what the short- and long-term goals of the agency are in dealing with these problems. Continue to ask yourself these questions, because, as we mentioned, goals should change with changing conditions and clientele. Also, you are more likely to perform your everyday tasks with enthusiasm and dedication if you are aware of your reasons for doing them than if they become routine chores.

D. Public Agencies

Most social service workers are employed in public social agencies which were established either by city, state, or local governments or as a result of some legislation. Although the staff has considerable leeway for making decisions concerning the everyday administration of programs, the overall goals and policies are set by the laws that established public agencies.

1. Civil Service

In a public agency a voluntary group of citizens may serve as an advisory board, but the day-to-day work is done by employees of city, state, or federal governments whose employment is regulated by civil service. For each type of job in these agencies persons are required to have certain "objective" qualifications, based on education and experience, rather than "who you know," and they often have to pass written examinations. The qualifications are set by the civil service commission for local, state, or federal governments, which have determined that they are necessary to perform a certain job. You can understand how the qualities of social service workers (who should, above all, be warm, friendly people, interested in others) would be hard to determine by such methods. It is also clear that the introduction of new workers like aides, who may have less formal education and job experience than others who formerly did their jobs, might be difficult to accomplish under civil service regulations. Of course, the civil service was begun to assure fair employment practices in government services and to prevent jobs from being awarded purely on the basis of political friendship. But sometimes the qualifications that were set up for certain jobs became fixed and unrelated to changing staff needs.

The rating and promotion of civil service workers are conducted on the basis of the aforementioned objective criteria. Unfortunately, these sometimes exclude traits that are hard to measure, such as warmth, concern for clients, and assertiveness on behalf of clients, and emphasize factors that are easier to determine by tests, such as knowledge of rules and regulations, and correct use of agency forms.

Are there any civil service regulations affecting your job as an aide? How do they affect your hiring, job performance, continued employment, and promotion?

2. <u>Accountability</u>

One difficult thing about working in a public agency or one supported by public funds, such as antipoverty agencies, is that it is somewhat like working in a goldfish bowl. The public quite correctly feels it has a right to watch over all programs and to hold the agency accountable to them. In addition, legislators, newspaper reporters, and members of citizen groups frequently check to see that public agencies are doing what the law says they should. Sometimes these groups are not necessarily looking after the interests of the clients, but are, in fact, protecting their investment. Sometimes, they ask, "Why do we have to pay high taxes to support welfare chiselers?" -- even though most investigations have discovered little cheating when you consider how many people are being served. You can easily understand the conflict between professionals who think they know what clients need, the taxpayers, and the clients themselves, who may feel they know best what they need and how they should be helped. The new antipoverty agencies have tried to respond more to the needs of the poorer clients and to the problems as they are seen by the clients.

E. Antipoverty Agencies

Our recent increased awareness of the needs of the poor and of their right to have a voice in our society has led to the antipoverty legislation (see Basic Curriculum) and to new agencies established with money granted under these laws. Most funds have been granted by the federal government to newly formed local groups rather than to established public or voluntary agencies. Often there is a requirement that the state and local governments contribute some financial or other support, but they, too, have often granted money directly to the new agencies rather than setting up new public agencies in the city or town. These new agencies have not been operated under civil service regulations. Much of their initial flexibility was related to their newness, but in some cases, they have already begun to become rigid and divorced from the clients and problems for which they were intended. Sometimes another criticism has been made about these agencies -- that their lack of strict regulations has led to an unprofessional approach to services.

F. Voluntary or Private Agencies

Voluntary agencies came into existence as a result of the concern of private citizens about certain social problems or about problems that could not be met by public social welfare agencies. Many voluntary agencies came into existence before the public agencies. (See the discussion of Charity Organization Society and Settlements.) Often, their focus was changed when the government assumed major responsibility for the problems they had been designed to meet. While they have at least some support from private contributions, most also receive some government funds. Private agencies must meet public standards in programs for which they get public money, but the voluntary agencies are free to choose whom they want to serve and have greater flexibility in hiring staff. This leeway can mean that the private agencies are able to help some persons who would otherwise not be served, but it can also mean that these agencies are able to ignore those they do not wish to serve.

G. Your Agency

Now, let's take a look at your agency and consider it in relation to some of the characteristics of social agencies just mentioned.

1. Was your agency established by federal, state or local law? If not, how was it established?
2. What are the sources of funds for your agency? Public, private or a combination?
3. Are there laws concerning the selection of clients served by your agency, or is it entirely up to the agency to decide whom it will serve? In either case, is there much room for staff judgment?
4. How do the sources, availability of funds, and legislation, if any, affect the services of your agency?

H. Social Agency Staff

The quality of services offered by an agency depends to a great extent on the quality of its staff. What are the qualifications and the assignments of the workers in your agencies with whom you have close contact?

1. Supervisory staff:
   a. Tasks
   b. Required training, education, and experience.
2. Nonsupervisory professional workers:
   a. Tasks

b. Required training, education, and experience.

3. Aides:

a. Tasks

b. Qualifications.

4. What other kinds of staff are employed in your agency? What are their tasks and qualifications?

1. <u>The Aide and the Professional Staff</u>

Aides usually have less formal education and often less job experience in a social agency than other staff involved in offering services. For this reason, they may have certain problems in working with more highly trained staff. You have been chosen because life's experiences, your familiarity with the client group or the neighborhood, and your natural ability to get along with and to be helpful to people make you a good candidate for the job of aide.

This initial training and that which you get on the job will help you become familiar with the social service professions as well as with your own particular assignment. Since you will be doing some tasks that others with more education have done in the past, they may feel you are less qualified than they. The fact that some aides are able to form a cordial relationship with clients more easily than some professionals may also lead these professionals to resent some aides.

Some staff members in other agencies who are unfamiliar with the services aides can perform may think you know less than you do, and they may be unwilling to work with you on a case or feel uneasy about doing so. They may fail to recognize your natural talents for the job, the training you have had on the job, and the supervision you are getting. It is up to your agency to make your status and abilities clear to workers in other agencies. And you should feel free to ask your supervisor to pave the way for smooth working relationships with other agencies if this type of trouble exists. It is important for you to be prepared for the possibility that there will be problems like the ones we have just mentioned and to think in advance how you will handle them. One of the most important things for you, and for all other social service workers, is to know what you can and cannot do -- what you are qualified to do and what you must refer to others with different skills, knowledge, education. One basis of a good working relationship between professional and aide is mutual help. Aides can share with professionals their knowledge of the neighborhood and the client group, and professionals can share their knowledge and skills with aides.

J. Promotion in Social Agencies

We have already referred to some of the hiring practices of social agencies in our discussion of civil service. It is particularly important for you to know how you can advance on the job. One way to become a better worker and to get ahead is to get additional training, either on the job (what is usually called in-service training) or at a vocational school, training institute, community college, or university. High-quality performance and/or length of time on the job may also be reasons for a promotion or a raise. When you keep the same job but get more money for it, this is usually called an increment. Sometimes, increments are awarded on the basis of quality of performance; at other times, all the workers in a particular job or category of employment get a raise.

In public agencies operated under laws that provide for staff improvement, tuition and living allowances for study outside the agency may be offered. It is to the benefit of the agency and to the general quality of social services in the community when agencies assume responsibility for staff development and continuing education. It is important for you to know whether your agency offers any training and educational opportunities for which you could qualify. It is also important to know how you can advance yourself in the same job. Other rights, or protection against unfair treatment such as unfair evaluations of your performance, should be learned, as well as how to make use of them.

1. What are the educational and training opportunities available to aides in your agency?

a. In-service education

b. Education and training outside the agency

c. Increments

d. Promotions.

Often workers' rights and opportunities are obtained and protected by groups of workers such as unions, organizations of social service workers (similar to professional associations), or nonunion staff organizations in a single agency.

2. What groups serve the interests of workers in your agencies? And how does one join them? What are their benefits?

   a. Unions

   b. Professional associations

   c. Staff organizations

   d. Other.

K. <u>Determining the Quality of Agency Services</u>

Since social service workers have a commitment to work for the welfare of people that goes beyond their loyalty to a job in any particular social agency, it is important for them to be able to tell when their own or another agency is doing a good job. To evaluate a social service, you need to think about the goals themselves as well as how they are being carried out, which always involves the quality of staff.

1. Agency goals

Are the goals of an agency related to people's need or have they been forgotten in the hustle and bustle of doing business? Are we so busy protecting property in the public housing program that we forget that buildings were constructed for people to live in? Have we provided grass for children only to spend all our energy keeping them off of it? Do we feel that even if the goals of the agency were accomplished, the important needs of people would not be met? For example, are we concerned primarily with children's recreation in settlement programs when there is a greater need to help them make better use of schooling through tutorial programs, field trips, and the like?

2. Carrying out agency goals

Often the goals of an agency are sound, but the way they are carried out prevents achievement of goals. For example, few whose concern is for poor people could quarrel that it is good to relieve financial need. But when the amount of money granted is so low that recipients are still very needy, then the agency is not achieving its goals. Or, if allowances are fairly adequate but people can only get them if they have lived in the city or state a certain period of years, then many needy people are not being helped. Unfortunately, people are no less needy because they have lived in a town only a few months. The long-range goal of public assistance--the creation of selfreliance, may not be achieved when every penny of earnings is deducted from the public-assistance grant and there is consequently no financial incentive to work. Or self-respect, an important ingredient in creating independence, may not be developed when the means test is used to determine eligibility. This test can be a humiliating blow to self-esteem.

3. Agency staff

In thinking about agency staff, it is important to ask whether they are qualified to do the jobs they are assigned. Do agency requirements permit them to do their job? Is the task of the aide in the public housing program one of a policeman or is he to help create a decent atmosphere for living? It may be that people meet all the agency requirements of education and experience but still lack the concern for clients that is essential in any social service job. Does the agency settle for staff that fall short of the standards it sets? Are there obvious lacks, such as workers' inability to speak the clients' language or total unfamiliarity with the background and way of life of the clientele? Does the agency employ people from the neighborhood served or who are members of the same ethnic group as the clients? If such persons are hired, are they used in showcase fashion or do they actually help the agency to understand the clientele better and to be more aware of their problems? Do staff, no matter how well qualified, have enough time to serve clients adequately?

4. Decision making

One important question to ask about an agency is how decisions are made. Do the professional staff, who have the training and experience to be able to contribute to policy- and program-planning, have a role in making decisions? Are those workers directly involved with clients able to affect policy, or is everything decided by the administrative staff or persons further removed from service, such as a lay advisory group? Is the board influenced by the opinions of staff at all levels?

If an important goal of social welfare is to increase the independence and self-respect of people, then it is important that clients have a voice in agency affairs. If we actually believe in people's right to self-determination and in their worth, then we believe that clients' views of what agencies should do are very important. Are there any people from the neighborhood and the client group on the advisory or policy-making board of the agency?

What rights do clients have to protest or appeal agency decisions, such as the refusal of the housing authority to rent them an apartment or the welfare department's decision to deny them financial aid or withdraw homemaking service? Is there an opportunity to question policy as well as the way it is interpreted? For example, if it is the agency's policy to deny housing to fatherless families, then it is this policy, rather than the refusal to house them, that a female-headed family might want to appeal. Does the agency let clients know of its right to appeal decisions, or is this a right in name only?

5. Evaluating your agency

Considering your own agency, once again, try to answer the following important questions about any social agency.

a. If it met its goals, would your agency be helping to meet the important needs of community residents? Which residents, the most needy or those better off?

b. Do its programs come near to achieving its goals?

c. What say do clients and staff (at various levels of authority) have in making its policies and programs, in appealing its decisions?

d. Are qualifications for staff and the staff themselves suitable for carrying out the goals and the program of the agency?

e. Are there aides or neighborhood workers on the staff, and is their unique knowledge of the clients and their problems being tapped?

II. Clients of Social Agencies

Many clients of social agencies are disadvantaged -- that is, they may lack income, have inadequate housing, and have serious problems in getting along with others, etc. And as a result of their handicaps, they often lack respect from other members of the community and, equally important, from themselves. Sometimes they and we forget that just because they have problems does not mean that they lack strengths -- in fact, many of our clients are able to get by or to live with troubles that would swamp many of us.

A. Social Characteristics

It is the purpose of a social service to reduce or lessen the disadvantages that our clients have, to offer cash when there is no money, decent housing when it is dilapidated. We will speak later of the ways in which people need to be helped either to want, to find, to qualify for, or to make the best use of social opportunities or social services.

The characteristics of our clients, such as their racial or ethnic group, their birth place and their education, influence not only the problems for which they need our help but their ability to use the help we offer. For example, a Negro client may be in need of financial help for many reasons related to his race, such as his birthplace in a rural area where schools, particularly for Negroes, were substandard, and where medical services were inadequate. As a Negro, even allowing for the fact that he is undereducated, he may have been discriminated against in the scramble for unskilled work, and the poor housing which his income and his race limit him to affects his spirit or morale. And some of these conditions may affect his ability to use help, particularly if the social worker he sees is white and he has been accustomed to hostile treatment by whites, even in social agencies. His suspicion may lead him to doubt the sincerity of the friendship, advice, or counsel which the worker offers, no matter how unprejudiced the worker is. Indeed, it is important for us to recognize that the first reactions of clients to us are sometimes based on what we symbolize rather than what we are; we must, by our concern, willingness to help, and our skill, help them to overcome this resistance to us. But at the same time, it is important not to be insulted when clients are angry or unfriendly to us because they expect we will treat them as others have treated them in the past. The way all of us respond to others is based on our past experiences, and many of our clients have had more than their share of bitter experiences.

Thinking now of the clientele of your agency, what are some of their social characteristics?

1. Income
2. Race
3. Ethnic group
4. Education
5. Housing
6. Employment status
7. Family composition
8. Age
9. Health
10. Birthplace
11. Other

B. Different Meanings of Clients' Attitudes and Behavior

The conditions or characteristics we have mentioned above all affect people, but they by no means mean the same thing to everyone. One family with low income may have more spirit, get along better with others and among themselves, and strive harder than another poor family, perhaps because they have been less poor for a shorter period of time or for some other reason. One of the most important characteristics of social work's way of viewing and helping people is the determination to understand the meaning that a circumstance, a behavior, or a problem has for the individual. What may seem to be bad housing to one client may seem adequate to another, such as a person who has lived in the worst slums of San Juan. It would be wrong to conclude that the person from San Juan lacked ambition or motivation to get ahead -- he has already shown enough of that to leave his home to come to the mainland, and he may have already bettered himself in relation to what he had before. On the other hand, we should be careful not to conclude that the way of life of poor persons or persons who belong to minority groups is necessarily different from those who are better off and who belong to the majority race or ethnic groups. Some of their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, or what we call culture, may be different from those of the majority of people; other attitudes may be quite similar to those of the majority. There will also be great differences in beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes among people who have common social characteristics. All of the poor have seen the way people live on T.V. or in the ads. In fact, it is sometimes the difference between, on the one hand, what they want and others have and, on the other hand, what they know they can get that makes some bitter, hopeless, down-and-out.

It is important to have in mind some of the ways that people feel and the results in general of not having what they consider to be enough money, of suffering racial discrimination, or of living for a long time in crowded, unsanitary housing. Knowing this in advance provides the aide or social worker a clue about what the person is going through. Some notion of how conditions affect people may help us to probe or to dig deeper to learn a person's true feelings, for he cannot be expected to reveal them immediately to a stranger.

Above all, we must strive for <u>empathy</u> in our work with clients. This means that we try to put ourselves in their place. We do not feel sorry for them but try to understand what it would feel like to be in their shoes. Part of developing empathy is avoiding the tendency to assume that we know how "anybody" would feel about being poor or being a Negro and to find out what it feels like to the person we are trying to help. We must not let the way <u>we</u> would feel get in the way of learning how <u>he</u> feels about it.

Looking back over the list of client characteristics (II A), think of the variety of ways that different people might feel or respond to the same condition, experience, characteristic. Did you, on your first time through, assume that all people would respond the same way?

C. Being a Client or Receiving Help

Being on the receiving end of a relationship is a position common to our clients, and although it is our goal to serve them, their dependence on us is sometimes a problem in itself. If one has no money, then he must ask for public assistance in order to eat. But having to depend on a social agency for resources that most people get by themselves or from their family or close friends is hard and sometimes humiliating.

All of us are to a certain extent dependent on circumstances beyond our control -- our health, which sometimes fails no matter how well we care for ourselves, the availability of employment at a certain time or place, and the problems of our family. Indirectly, we are all influenced by forces outside ourselves. For children to be dependent on their parents is natural. But for adults to be directly dependent on social agencies for the necessities of life rather than themselves or others with whom they have a close personal relationship is likely to affect their self-esteem. Since the recipients of welfare services are often looked down on by the community, it is hard for them to feel comfortable about their dependence, even if they recognize that their need is not their fault. It is certainly a fact that many of our clients have less control over their lives than most people do and that they are likely to feel weak and powerless.

To offer social services in such a way as to help people maintain their dignity is one of our most difficult and important tasks. To begin with, we must really believe in their <u>right</u> to these services. A knowledge of the development of these services tells us that social conditions and circumstances, rather than the individual, are largely responsible for the needs of people. It is hard in this society not to judge a man's worth by his pocket book, but unless we respect our clients for their strengths, and unless we realize that all people have dignity no matter how much life has worn them down, we really cannot <u>aid</u> them. For example, a middle-aged man who has supported his family all of his life and suddenly becomes too ill to work, can be helped to respect his past assumption of responsibilities, and to understand the ways in which he can continue to function as father and husband, if not breadwinner. If we are honest with ourselves, we will know how much luck, other persons, and general social conditions account for our own independence, and that we have all been dependent in one way or another at some time in our lives.

In addition to offering help with respect and understanding for the client, there are ways of reducing his actual dependence on outside forces.

Organizations of clients and their supporters protect or assert the rights of clients. There are also organizations of welfare recipients, tenant councils, and local action groups that can help clients increase their power. Clients' participation on the advisory boards of social agencies is also a way of increasing their control. While it may not necessarily mean that clients have any more influence over the services -- over eligibility regulations, levels of assistance, etc. -- the presence in the agency at all staff levels of persons from their own income, racial, ethnic or neighborhood group may reduce their feelings of being dependent on impersonal outsiders. Awareness of the feelings that clients might have as a result of depending so greatly on outsiders may help us to understand behaviors that would otherwise seem mysterious. For example, a client may act as if he does not need the help your agency offers even when you know he desperately requires it, or he may be resentful rather than grateful. He may behave this way because he thinks more gracious behavior would show how helpless he is. Acting as if he does not need help may be his way of denying to himself or simply to others how desperate he is. These actions are his way of holding on to his pride. Sometimes his behavior will be carried to the extreme of refusing to ask for help -- in which case one of our tasks is to help him realize that it is a strength to seek help for himself and his family. A worker should also realize that overly gracious behavior on the part of clients may be an attempt to hide their true feelings of resentment and embarrassment over dependence.

SKILLS IMPORTANT IN INDIVIDUAL SERVICES

In this section we are not attempting to discuss every possible kind of skill an aide might need to provide services to individuals and families. Nor can we describe how to do every task you might be called upon to perform during your career in social service. Anyone who is competent and satisfied in this field must have an openness to new learning and must actively seek the new knowledge, information, and skills that enable him to do his job. The supervisor is the closest, day-to-day source of help to you. In-service training courses will help you to develop greater competence. You will probably know which things you do best. There will be others with which you are less comfortable and less competent. These skills are the ones for which you should seek immediate help rather than developing bad habits which become harder to change the longer you continue them.

I. Attitudes

Our attitudes influence everything we do. Attitudes affect not only beliefs and principles but plans of action as well. In order to be helpful, the aide must believe in the client's right to service, and the manner of providing service must be one that shows respect for the client's right and ability to make his own choices. Underlying the client's right to service is a conviction that society is basically responsible for the problems of individuals and responsible, therefore, for helping them. Your study of the development of social welfare should have helped you to acquire an appreciation of social responsibility for human needs and of the rights of persons seeking help from the community. You are not doing a client a favor when you help him, and you should not expect his gratitude or thanks. Service to individuals is your job. As a citizen, he has a right to the services your agency employs you to offer.

Attitudes cannot be concealed from others; they are apparent in the way we treat people. Most of us can recall an incident, perhaps in a large public clinic, an income tax office, or the complaint desk of a department store, where we quickly got the feeling that there was little hope that we would get what we wanted. We knew that the "no" would come swiftly and coldly. We did not expect to be understood, nor even to have the opportunity to fully explain our side of the story. We got this feeling partly because of experiences we had before -- and our clients have had loads of these experiences -- and because this situation resembled others where the answer was a quick "no." Workers were ambling around the office chatting with one another or perhaps sitting at their desks having coffee while we waited, seemingly by the hour. Contrast this experience with another, perhaps in the same office, where the worker came out promptly or sent someone else to tell you that she would see you within a certain length of time. When the worker greeted you for the first time, she had an attitude of interest that made this a satisfying contact even if you did not get exactly what you came for.

A. Importance of First Contact

From the individual client's point of view, the first person to see him represents the agency and affects the client's view of the agency from that time on. As was suggested in the example we have just given, the basic requirement of the first contact is to convey an interest in the client himself and in his problem. This interest should be accompanied by a calm but by no means uncaring manner -- a calm assurance that gives the client a feeling that things can be worked out and that there is no need for him to panic.

B. Uniqueness of Each Person and Problem

Aides are selected because of their natural concern for people and their ability to convey that interest to people. But it is easy to become bogged down during the day's work and to treat someone as if he and his problem were a routine matter. Remember that no one's problem is ever routine to him. One way to maintain your basic attitude of interest is to remind yourself that there is no routine person or problem. Every problem is unique and has its own little twist, despite the fact that its general outlines resemble many other stories you've heard.

C. Your Own Problems

It is extremely difficult to concentrate fully on someone else's problems if you are burdened or preoccupied with your own. If it sometimes becomes impossible for you to come to work without your problems or without forgetting them for the time you're on the job, it might be in the best interest of the clients if you stayed at home that day. It would be a good idea to find out what your agency policy is in regard to time off under those conditions.

II. Communication

We live in an age of communication. Words and pictures are sent around the globe in seconds. But unless people understand what is being sent or said, they will never understand each other. There is a great difference between expressing a meaning and communicating a meaning. It is not enough for the worker's words to be understood; it is vital that they be understood as they were meant.

It is easy to forget that the same words have different meanings to people of different backgrounds. Then, too, it is often not the words as much as the implication of the words that must be made clear. An example of confused meanings is the different meaning which the phrase "lower class" has to social workers and their clients. To the professional, it has a particular factual meaning; it refers to persons with low income, and limited formal education. To others, especially those who find themselves referred to as "lower class," it may suggest or imply inferiority, poor moral standards, and inadequacy. Workers may also find that the word, marriage, must be used with caution. For instance, to be asked the question, "Are you married?", a seemingly matter-of-fact inquiry, may embarrass some people. If someone is quite religious and recognizes only a church marriage, he may not consider a civil ceremony a true marriage.

A. Jargon

The use of specialized words and terms that are peculiar to a special field or type of training is called jargon. Every job, trade, or profession develops a jargon of its own. Persons who use these terms every day often forget that they may sound strange and confusing to others. In your work with professionals from many different fields and with people from different agencies, you will pick up much of their language. When you use it, try to be sure that the people you are talking to know what you are saying. While you should always try to understand the meaning of clients' language, don't use it yourself unless you feel comfortable. Always make an effort to be understood and to speak clearly. Do not assume that people will accept you just because you use certain jargon. You may not sound as "professional" as some of your co-workers, but it is most unprofessional to use jargon improperly.

Related to the problem of jargon is the tendency in social agencies to refer to programs and agencies by letters -- AFDC for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, for example. This may be a convenient shortcut in the office, but do not assume that clients or persons in other fields will know what they mean.

B. Unspoken Communication

Sometimes misunderstandings arise not from what is said, but from what is not said. Inner feelings or attitudes often show through in looks, gestures, or tone of voice. A person may be very angry, and though he tries hard not to show it, his anger often makes itself known to the person he is talking to, not in his words but in such ways as an angry look or a clenched fist. The person who is angry is sometimes not aware that his listener is picking up the hidden message he is sending out. People are extremely sensitive to these nonverbal or unspoken forms of communication. If you are having trouble getting through to people, it may be that you are sending out hidden messages, indicating anger, unfriendliness, or a patronizing or "looking-down" attitude. The people you are trying to reach might be responding to these inner feelings rather than to your words. All effective communication depends to a great extent on your knowing how you really feel, not on how you think you should feel.

III. Interviewing

Much, in fact most, of what you do as a social service aide may be considered interviewing, though not all talking with people can be thought of as interviewing. If you meet a client on the street by chance and stop to chat about the weather, you would not think of that conversation as an interview, nor would you need, in this chance meeting, to necessarily act as a worker and discuss the client's problems. On the other hand, we must not think that we have to be in the office or have an appointment with a client in order to offer services. If the client had something important on his mind, you might be passing up an important opportunity to help if you refused to be the worker in a chance meeting.

A. Listening

Listening is one of the fundamental skills in interviewing. The first step is to relax. By letting the client talk, the worker gets an idea of how to formulate questions that the client should be asked, and also learns how to phrase questions and statements so the client will understand. Even if our primary task is to get answers to a set of questions, we can probably learn most by letting the client talk rather freely at first. He will usually answer many questions before they are asked. And often, what he says and the way he says it will suggest the proper way of approaching him for additional information that is required.

B. Active Listening

One way to be sure you have understood what the client is telling you is to "feed back" what you think he said and give him a chance to correct you or to change what he said. However, if your feedback is critical of his behavior, then he may change what he says to please you, and he will not necessarily mean what he says. On the other hand, your criticism may make him feel that he has to explain and justify his statements or his behavior in order to protect himself. You may not like some of the behavior of some of your clients, but you can like them or be interested in helping them without approving of all their actions. If a client feels he cannot tell you what he actually feels or does without being criticized, you will not be able to help him. If you are critical, you may stifle his communicative ability, and you will not know whether he is revising his statements in order to make you understand or because he feels you want him to or will not like him, otherwise. If he revises because of what you want, the new version will not truly reflect what he thinks.

C. Ventilating

Sometimes before the client can examine the facts of his situation he may have to ventilate his feelings or let off emotional steam. Once his feelings are out in the open, he can more honestly examine them, and his views of himself or his problems may become more realistic. You should encourage the client to express his feelings. The way people feel is a fact, and you cannot change feelings by telling people they should not feel that way.

D. Solutions

If a person develops his own plan for solving, or at least dealing with, a problem, he is more likely to feel he wants to carry it out. If he can think out loud with someone he sees as being interested, understanding, helpful, and uncritical, then he will feel better able to explore possible solutions to his problem. One way to develop a plan for dealing with a problem is ask him to think of several ways in which the problem could be handled. If he has left out one that you have thought of, you can suggest it or help him to see it as a possibility. Then you might get him to imagine for himself some of the outcomes or effects of each solution. If he makes the choice himself from among several alternatives, he is more likely to act or to carry out the plan. It is then <u>his</u> plan rather than yours or someone else's.

E. <u>Asking Questions</u>

Since most of the service we offer is based on an accurate accumulation and understanding of the facts and feelings presented by the client, we need to get as clear an understanding as possible. As you will recall from our discussion of listening, there are many questions that do not need to be asked at all, since people will tell them to you naturally, often out of the emotional pressure of the moment, if given the opportunity to talk. In the first interview your listening should be keyed to getting the answers to certain questions: why the person came to the agency or what problem he thought your agency could help with; what the problem is from his point of view; and the solution that he seeks. No matter how freely the client expresses himself, usually you will have to ask some questions in order to clarify for yourself as well as for him his problem and the help he expects to get for it.

It takes a lot of self-control to ask only those questions that are related to giving the client the help he needs, rather than following some interesting sideline in the client's story. We need to be careful to distinguish between "<u>probing</u>" (asking questions in order to get additional facts that we need) and "<u>prying</u>" (we all know what that is). One of the topics most often subjected to prying is that of the client's marital relationship. Thus, if a mother comes to the agency to request help in getting additional clothing for children in school and happens to mention that her husband is not much help in disciplining the children since he is "running around," we must not get sidetracked on the husband-wife relationship. Instead, we try to deal with the immediate problem presented by the client. In future contacts, it may become important to ask questions about the marital problem, depending on the husband's problems, your agency's program, and your assignment.

Your natural sensitivity to the feelings of other people should help you to word questions in such a way that they are asked tactfully. Your manner, tone of voice, and intent in asking the question are more important than the exact way it is phrased. As often as possible we must ask questions in such a way as to leave the client's pride and self-esteem intact. For example, if you are interviewing an unemployed man whom you suspect is a heavy drinker, and you need to make some judgment of how much of a problem his drinking is in order to offer the most suitable service, you might ask, "About how much do you drink per day?" Thus, you accept the fact that he drinks and eliminate the need for him either to confess that he drinks or to make excuses about his drinking.

A good general rule is to ask questions for two purposes: to obtain specifically needed information and to direct the client's conversation into fruitful channels. This may seem to contradict the statement previously made about listening. But you are listening for a purpose, to understand what the client is asking you to help him with and what point he is trying to make in order to get that help. Sometimes it is necessary to help him refocus on the main reason he came to the agency. We can get him back on the track with questions and with comments. Sometimes the only difference between questions and comments is in the inflection or pitch of your voice. Your questions and comments can be a restatement of what he has said. They also enable you to ask, in effect, "What happened next?" For example, when the unemployed man explains how he was misused at the employment office, you can make a brief comment sharing or supporting his indignation over his treatment. Doing so then allows you to ask questions about the rest of what he needs to tell you.

IV. Relationship

Everything we have said about communication, attitudes, listening, asking questions, and commenting forms the basis of your relationship with a client. The relationship must be one of mutual confidence and cooperation. For the psychiatrist and some other professionals, the relationship, in and of itself, may have great importance. But for the social service worker, the relationship is formed for the purpose of offering the client a service.

A. Effect of Agency

How much confidence and cooperation really exists between the client and the worker depends to some extent on the kind of agency in which service is offered. Workers employed by locally run antipoverty or other "grass-roots" organizations can expect the most confidence and cooperation since the client has some say, at least through his representatives, in how the agency is run. In an authoritarian agency, such as the courts or correctional institutions in which the client is offered services not by his own choice but because someone considers him a problem or feels that he has a problem, the client may not be fully cooperative. You must not be disappointed when this is the case.

It is the worker's responsibility to set the limits of the relationship so that the client will not be deceived into thinking that the worker can do more than his agency will permit him to do. For example, if a tenant in a public housing project is considered a problem by the management, it would be unfair of the aide to accept confidences of the client concerning illegal activities or other infringements of housing rules and regulations that the aide might need to report or use against the tenant.

B. Competition Among Workers

In most social agencies, there are several types of staff involved in contact with clients. Where there are social service aides and professional social workers, issues frequently arise about who has the "best" relationship with the client -- who knows most about the client, who understands the client best, or who the client feels more comfortable with. Such rivalry is not helpful to the client. A homemaker, for example, can become more friendly with a client than the caseworker who sees the client only for a short interval at a time. But there is no need for rivalry or jealousy between the homemaker and the caseworker. The services of each should complement those of the other. The client is not private property. Workers on all levels need to share insights with one another to offer better service to clients.

C. The Aide's Closeness to the Client

Sometimes the aide knows a client before he comes for services, and the two may consider themselves as equals. This kind of relationship has special advantages as well as obvious disadvantages. The disadvantages can be held down if the aide carefully maintains confidentiality. It is especially important for aides who are continually in touch with other community persons who also know the clients to keep from talking about any problems or any services given to clients. It is, of course, good for the agency for aides to speak generally about services so that neighborhood people will know more about the services the agency offers and be more familiar with it, but this kind of advertising of agency services is different from gossiping about clients. Aides must walk the difficult tight-rope between being friendly and informal in their contact with clients and quite professional about maintaining confidences. In a way, this is not really just being professional; it is being most helpful and being a friend in the true sense if one can be trusted with knowledge of the most personal nature.

One way to walk this narrow line is for the aide to understand clearly the purpose of the relationship with a client -- and to help the client understand it. When the worker and the client agree on what problems the agency can help with, they are more likely to stick to the matter at hand. Matters that are not the business of the agency or of the worker can usually be avoided in this manner.

The aide's major advantage is that he can "talk turkey" to the client. There can be more "give-and-take" in the relationship than in the usual relationship between a professional worker and a client. The aide is viewed as an "insider"; the professional is seldom viewed that way, no matter how helpful he may be.

V. Intake, Screening, Information Giving

Intake, screening, and information service all require the same basic kinds of "know-how." In all of these, you will probably be the first worker in your agency to greet the client, and the client's confidence in your agency's ability to help him will to a great extent depend upon how you handle this first contact. All that we have said about establishing rapport, listening, showing interest and concern apply here.

A. Identifying the Problem

In addition to setting the tone for the client's future relationship with the agency, you will need to develop the ability to quickly determine the nature of the problem he presents and to make a judgment about what the next steps for you and the clients are. This is not an easy thing to do, since the problem presented, like so many problems, may lead in many directions. For example, you may be faced with a "crisis," such as a family's eviction because of nonpayment of rent due to the father's recent hospitalization for a terminal illness (one that will take his life). The children, you quickly learn, have not been able to attend school. The mother comes to your agency and talks in depressed tones mostly about the fact that the children are missing school -- probably because she cannot face the more grave problems of her husband's expected death and their homelessness. In this situation, the client needs help in pulling herself together and getting herself going (mobilizing herself, we often say) and in focusing on her problems, one at a time, starting with the most serious or those requiring immediate attention. It will be obvious to the worker that this client is overwhelmed by the seriousness of her very difficult problems. And, recognizing that she is at a standstill, the worker needs to become more active and involved in making plans and carrying them out than he would be if the client were better able to cope with the problems by herself, or with just a little help.

B. Themes and Clues

Generally, the aide will be responsible for offering help with the problems for which the client requests aid. No matter how involved the story, there is a certain recurring theme -- a topic that the client keeps returning to. This theme is usually the worker's clue as to what the client needs. Of course, the other main clue is what the client actually says he wants. The client's definition of a problem is important in offering service.

C. Explaining Agency Function

When you and the client both have a clear understanding about the problem and the possible help available it is then the worker's role to interpret or tell the client what the agency can do and how it goes about providing services. The client is not interested in everything your agency does -- just those services which would be helpful to him. Don't bother him with a complete description of what your agency does.

It goes without saying that the worker who does intake must be well aware of the services provided by the agency. That worker must know what the policies of the agency are; who is eligible and under what conditions; how long it takes to get services or whether there is a waiting list; and whether there is any additional or collateral information the agency will need to collect from persons or organizations, other than the client, in order to know whether a client is eligible or to find out enough to be able to help him.

In the case example of the family with the dying father facing eviction, the worker, being sensitive to the strain that the mother is under, would not burden her further with a recitation of rules and regulations about the agency services. Chances are the worker would immediately begin to help the mother qualify for emergency financial and housing assistance, if the worker's agency could offer such help. Otherwise, the worker would help her to get such services from another agency by referring her to that agency. (See the section on referral.) The worker would short-cut as much red tape as possible. This might include helping her make out the necessary forms to apply for financial help, that is, to prove that she and her family are in need. In this case, the worker would not give her the forms to take home and return at some later time. Many of the questions on the forms will have been answered in discussing the problem already so that the worker would need only to check the facts that he does not remember and those that were not discussed. The worker should know which facts require proof or verification other than the client's statement and from what sources this information is available and acceptable to the agency. From among the various ways that this proof can be obtained, the worker should be able to help the client choose the easiest one for him. In the case we have been discussing, the worker might call the hospital to learn the details of the husband's condition from the social service worker assigned to the ward or department in which he is being treated. Or, if that is not possible, the aide might write a letter to the hospital asking for the needed information in order to make it easier for the client to complete the application and supply the missing facts. While the worker is dealing mostly with the problem presented by the client, that of getting the family rehoused, she might call the school and inform teachers of the problem, reassuring them that the children will be helped to get back to school. Thus the aide may help to prevent other problems from occurring.

D. Intake Forms

Most agencies have some kind of form to be filled out by the intake worker or by the client when agency contact is begun. The questions on the form can be useful in helping the worker to direct conversation in such a way that the needed information can be obtained. It is to the worker's advantage to be thoroughly familiar with the form so that she can ask questions in the order that they make sense in the interview, rather than the order in which they are listed on the form. Also, the worker may find it helpful to "translate" some of the phrases used on the form so that the client can answer more carefully, if the client is actually involved in filling out the forms himself.

If the client group is non-English-speaking, then the forms the clients use should be in the language of the clients. In any dynamic agency, the worker can feel free to bring this suggestion to his supervisor and to expect that the agency will want its forms to be useful rather than a hindrance in serving clients. Clients will also feel much more at ease and welcome if an agency has made the effort to "speak their language" in this way. In these small, as well as in larger ways, agencies communicate their genuine concern for clients.

VI. Referral

You will need to help many clients to use other social agencies, both those clients who continue to use your agency and those who are either not eligible or whose problems are not the concern of your agency. A social agency and its staff have a responsibility for helping people with problems that are not the primary work of the agency; their problems are no smaller because they are ineligible or the service is inappropriate for meeting them. The social service worker has a concern with the whole person; people are not split up into parts like work assignments.

It is the task of the workers to put the client in touch with or to refer him to other social agencies that have been set up to cope with either some or all of his problems. Sometimes the worker will play the major helping role, part of which will be assisting the client to use resources outside the agency. For example, the worker may help the client primarily with a health problem of her oldest child. However, it may become apparent that the family has a severe financial problem, and in fact, has an income below the amount at which people are considered eligible for public assistance. The worker may continue to help the client plan for the care of the child and to cope with the family problems created by a sick child requiring much attention from the mother. He can also inform the parents of their eligibility for financial assistance, encourage them to apply if that is necessary, tell them how and where to apply, phone the worker in the welfare agency to make an appointment, and help them to prove their eligibility if they request or need that assistance.

A. Preparing the Ineligible Client

From the beginning of an intake interview, the worker may recognize factors that might keep the client from being eligible, such as living outside the geographical area served by the agency or failing to meet income, age, or other requirements for service. As soon as it becomes apparent that the client is ineligible or that the agency does not provide service for the main problem, the worker should begin to prepare the client to obtain the service of another agency. It is often important to keep him from continuing to tell the story that he will have to re-tell at the appropriate agency.

1. Disappointment inevitable

No matter what the worker does, there will probably be some disappointment, even anger, when the client learns that the agency cannot help him. Often it takes a lot of effort for a client to bring himself to an agency and to come to the point where he can ask for help. To learn that the agency cannot help him may be very difficult.

2. Appealing the ineligibility decision

It is the worker's job to be patient with the client who responds angrily to being turned down. If the client feels that he is being unjustly treated by you or your agency, there may be some way to help him appeal the decision. The worker should be aware of the procedures for appealing and should be ready to interpret these to the client, to offer him help in making an appeal, or to suggest that he seek the help of groups (like a welfare recipients' league) that specialize in protecting the rights of applicants. If the client wants to "talk to someone higher up," the worker should be prepared to arrange this interview or to direct him to the higher-level staff member. This request is not a personal insult to the worker; many of us have wanted to go higher up, to speak to someone who has more authority to make exceptions.

Client protests of this sort should be regarded as "healthy," and should be courteously handled. A client who feels that he has been given a fair opportunity is better able to use other resources that are offered.

B. Knowledge of Community Agencies

Considerable knowledge of community agencies is necessary if referral is to be skillful and helpful. To begin with, particularly in a large city, it is difficult not only for the clients, but for workers as well, to have a full knowledge of social resources. This involves more than having a city directory of social agencies. Most cities do have a directory published by an association to which many agencies belong -- a welfare council or council of social agencies. If your city has such a directory, you should familiarize yourself with it. In addition, some neighborhoods in large cities have guides to agencies serving neighborhood people. If there are such guides available and they are helpful in the neighborhood you serve, you should obtain a copy and become acquainted with it.

Beyond these useful listings you will probably need to develop your own resource file, one that is specially compiled for your clientele. It is simply not enough to know that an agency exists and that it serves a certain client group; you must know whether services are actually or immediately available or if there is a waiting list of eligible clients for services. You must know what hours services are offered, if workers speak the foreign language that some of your clients might require, etc.

You must understand each agency and the way it works. Otherwise, you will not be able to make proper referrals. The best way to achieve this understanding is to visit each agency, talk with the workers, find out what they are doing, and how your clients can use the services of the agency. It is important that you establish a good working relationship with the workers to whom you will be making a referral, and it will help for you to meet them in person, rather than just over the phone. Above all, you must try to imagine that you are the client using the agency so that you will be able to help clients prepare themselves for this contact. For example, if a clinic is big and confusing, you will tell the client exactly how to find his way, or how to get information once he's there.

Once you have information about an agency, including your reactions and impressions, write it down. You cannot keep all this information in your head. Make a directory of services, perhaps a loose-leaf notebook, a telephone book, address book, a card file, or whatever else you find convenient to use. The information about each agency should include:

1. Name, address, and telephone number of agency.
2. Name, title, office number, and phone extension of person or persons to whom referrals are made.
3. Hours the agency is open and when various services are provided. (For example, a welfare agency may have a shelter open at all times but its office for making public assistance applications is only open during daytime hours, Monday through Friday.)
4. Eligibility, including important facts about special groups served (age, income, residence, etc.).
5. Types of problems handled or services offered.
6. Public transportation routes to the agency.
7. Foreign languages spoken by workers.
8. General impressions.

In organizing your directory, you can use subject or problem headings. For example, file information about agencies dealing with housing problems together. Or you may find it easier to list all agencies alphabetically. In this case you will have to remember the exact names of agencies.

A resource file is no good unless it is up to date. It is very discouraging for a client to be sent to an agency for services which were available last month but have been discontinued. Every few months, if you are not constantly in contact with an agency, you should call the intake worker of the agencies to which you refer and inquire about shifts in services, new services, hours, etc.

While you may want to keep a resource file that is easiest for you to handle, information about resources also should be shared throughout the unit and recorded on a central unit file, if possible. If you learn about a new service, or a new group becomes eligible for an old service, spread the word systematically to other workers, either by an office memo, at a staff meeting, or in some other way generally used in your agency for sharing such information.

C. <u>Broker Service</u>

Telling a client about a service is not the same as making a referral; the task of referral is seldom that simple. Referral is a broker service in which you see that the client and the needed service get together.

It is often necessary to work with a client for quite a while before he, and sometimes you, see the need for a certain service -- for example, psychiatric care for a child who is constantly causing trouble in school. It is not simply that the client lacks a knowledge of services, but rather, that he needs to be helped to see that the child needs such care. On the other hand, the problem may be a matter of eligibility and of proving that the client and his problem fit the agency services. Sometimes there is no resource for the client. (In our discussion of group and community services, we shall be talking about how the need for resources is identified and how services are developed.) Or the problem may be to exert the pressure by yourself as a worker, or to encourage your supervisor, your agency, or organized groups in the community, including groups of clients, to influence the agency to expand its services or make them available to new client groups.

It may be necessary not only to help the client to see the need for a service, but also to keep reassuring him of its ability to help him or his need for it, even after he is in touch with the agency. You may have to confer with workers in other agencies, not only to let them know that your client will be coming to the agency, but to learn about the contact he makes and ways in which you may be able to encourage his best use of the services. Similarly, if a client has been referred to your agency, it is important to consult workers in the referring agency about your contact with him. They may be more familiar with the client and his case and able to offer valuable advice on serving him more effectively.

In making referrals, you need to learn what other agencies need to know about a client and how to describe his problems clearly and concisely in a way that will be most helpful to workers in the other agency. You need not describe all the details of your contact, but only what the other workers need to know in order to avoid having the client and the workers rehash information you could have supplied.

Naturally, you will not make a referral (unless it affects the client's health and safety or that of others) unless you have the client's permission. You must also ask him if it is all right to tell the other worker about certain problems that you have been discussing. Often your referral serves as an introduction of the client to the other agency. On the other hand, it is preferable to have the client make as many of the arrangements as possible with the other agency, for it offers him the chance to exercise his independence. In that case, and ideally, your job is to help him to anticipate what his contact with the other agency will be like. Referral practice during your training period should involve familiarizing yourself with the major resources you'll be using. Role playing will help you work with clients and with workers in other agencies.

VII. Home Visiting

In addition to the individual services you perform within the agency, you will probably be visiting some clients in their homes.

A. Reasons for a Home Visit

There are many possible reasons for home visits, depending, of course, on the agency in which you work. If the client is old and/or ill, intake may be conducted in the home. An agency dedicated to providing service will extend itself and consider the convenience of the client rather than that of the agency. It may, in terms of time, be more efficient to conduct interviews in the office, but both because of what one can learn from a home visit and how the client feels about your coming to him, the advantage of visiting him cannot be measured in terms of time.

Another reason for a home visit may be to accommodate a client who would otherwise have to bring a number of small children with her to the office. Or, if the problem is one related to lack of household equipment or rundown housing, one look is worth a thousand words of description. The home visit is important in understanding how a family functions, how well the mother is able to run the home, and the interaction among various family members. The worker may also be able to meet other family members, such as teen-agers who may find it difficult to talk openly in an office. What are some additional reasons for visiting in the homes of clients?

B. Proper Behavior in a Client's Home

While office interviews should be relaxed and informal, home visiting is likely to be even less businesslike. Even

though you are there on agency business to find out some facts, or to get something accomplished, be prepared to chat, or to accept a cup of coffee, allowing the client to be the host or hostess. This helps the client feel that she is giving, rather than always "taking" the services you provide.
Take time to chat with others in the home or with friends who drop in. Remember, it's the client's home, and neighbors may drop in -- in which case, you have to interrupt or discontinue your discussion. You should either be invited by the client or ask and receive his permission to come. You have no automatic right of entry into a client's home, and, as an aide, you should always make sure that you never undertake an assignment in which a person's privacy is not respected. We hardly contribute to a person's sense of worth or his feelings of independence if he feels that even his home is not his own.

When you visit in a home, you may observe behavior and conditions that may upset you. Sometimes, if a house is in utter disarray, you will not "approve" of the client's homemaking. The apartment may be extremely dirty and the hallways may reek with the odor of urine. It may be that part of your work with a client will involve helping him or her to change some of the behavior you see or observe, such as severe physical punishment of children or even child neglect. But you will never be able to help the client to change if you display a critical attitude in his home. This does not mean that you cannot be frank with him when you are discussing problems, but you must learn to control yourself. You may be terribly upset by severe overcrowding and vermin -- and you should be. The client may ask you to support his reactions to the dilapidated condition of the building, but this is very different from delivering a sermon on cleanliness.

A brief story about a very bad housekeeper should help to illustrate the sensitivity of even the most careless housekeeper. A social worker once visited a client's apartment in a public housing project. There was only a scattering of battered furniture, and the client was facing possible eviction for extremely poor housekeeping. The worker sat down and was casually chatting when she slipped off her shoes. After she left, the client remarked to a homemaker who had been helping her, "Who does she think she is to come in my house and take off her shoes and put her feet up on my couch? I may be sloppy, but this is my home."

While home visits are more relaxed, don't forget why you came. Once again, as an aide you are a worker with an assignment and no longer simply a friend. If you fail to address yourself to the problems for which the client has sought help from the agency, you will be visiting neither as a friend nor as an aide.

VIII. "Concrete" Services

Providing "concrete" services is sometimes looked upon as requiring less skill than "talking" services. However, provision of concrete services requires considerable judgment and skill and cannot be performed in a routine manner. Often the offering of concrete services is accompanied by considerable talking and counseling.

Deciding when to provide a service is an important judgment. Generally, the aide should consider himself an "enabler." He helps clients to do things for themselves, to make use of some opportunity or resource such as a clinic or a camp for the children. He backs up clients, helping them to do those things that need doing. This may take the form of verbal encouragement or advice and suggestions. Or it may involve physically doing something with the client.

A. Escort Service

One thing a worker can do is to accompany the client or arrange for someone else to go with him in order to increase the likelihood of his making the best use of services or using them at all. Escort service is to enable the client to keep his appointment at a clinic, to visit a sick child in a mental hospital some distance away, etc.

Why would a client need an escort? He might be old or have difficulty traveling because of physical disability. In this case, the escort can actually help to assure his safety. The client may be a newcomer to the city, unfamiliar with the language and with systems of transportation. In such a case, escorting him one time can serve to teach him how to get around better or to get there by himself the next time. The escort can also act as an interpreter at the clinic or the family service agency. The client may not be able to express himself because of lack of education or insecurity in a large, complex office. Or the client may be facing a very difficult situation, like visiting a dying relative. In these cases, the escort may go along to provide emotional support. In many of these cases, the escort may only be necessary for a first, difficult trip, but in others, escorting the patient will have to be continued for several trips.

In providing escort services, you should not hesitate to step in for the client if he actually needs it or seems unable to talk or to assert himself. But -- never act for the client unless he cannot do it himself. It is best for him to do the talking, to ask for what he wants, etc. Your being there may be just enough support for him to carry this off successfully. Also, you can use the opportunity to learn more about how your client functions in the community, in contrast to how he presents himself in your office. Also, serving as an escort will enable you to familiarize yourself with a social agency and to learn, to some extent, what it is like to be a client rather than a worker from another agency.

B. Shopping

Another "concrete" service may be to shop with the client to help him get the most for his money. If this service is required of aides, in-service training should deal with consumer habits.

In addition to general consumer know-how, the worker needs to be "hip" to the shopping resources in the community. This can be done by establishing and maintaining contact with local social-action groups that are concerned with consumer problems. If shopping is one of your assignments, your name should be on the mailing lists of all local consumer-service agencies.

C. <u>Child Care</u>

What to do with children while their parents handle family matters away from the home is an ever-present problem in the slums of our cities. If the social service aide has a continuing relationship with a family, the aide should be prepared, at some point, to help the mother work out long-range care for the children such as nursery school, day care, or Head Start. But, in a pinch, it may be necessary for the worker to stay with the children while the mother is on an important errand.

Child care is never wasted staff time. First, it really convinces the client of the agency's desire to be of help. Second, it provides an opportunity to observe home life, which should help you in working with the client.

It is probably unnecessary to remind you that you should merely be a stand-by for the mother, rather than to try to bring about any changes in family routines, no matter how urgently they may be needed. You should, therefore, get careful instructions from the mother concerning needs of all the children you will be caring for, including any special problems, such as care for a sick child. Do not create confusion and undermine the mother's role by failing to carry out her instructions. Once again, respect the client's privacy and authority in his own home.

IX. Limitations of Individual Services

It is sometimes preferable to work with persons on a one-to-one basis. For example, the client who comes to an agency with a problem that embarrasses him may feel more comfortable talking in private with only one person. Indeed, it is hard for some of us to talk about our problems with any outsiders. A person who feels particularly unloved or especially unhappy at the time will probably profit from a contact in which he is the sole object of a worker's concern -- in contrast to his being one of a group of persons served by the worker.

A. The Group as the Preferred Unit of Contact

There are some very good reasons, however, based on efficiency or on offering better service, for using group, rather than individual, services. For example, certain kinds of activities, such as explaining rules and regulations in public housing or how to get information required of everyone who applies for public assistance, can be handled in a group of clients. Working with a group will save the worker's time, and sometimes, the questions or problems that one client raises will help another to learn what is expected, required, and/or offered.

Sometimes a person's problems stem from loneliness or are the result of his inability to get along with others in a group -- the family group, his neighbors, a community group. In those cases, the best service or at least an important service would be to offer him a chance to practice or to iron out his way of getting along with others; or to give him a little extra push in getting together with others, if he is shy and slow to make contacts outside the home. For newcomers to the city, such group experiences with recreation as well as community education are helpful. Sometimes the group is helpful in showing persons that others have problems like them. People may feel less bad off or less "bad" if others are in the same circumstances. The group is also a "reality" situation, for it may help the worker to see how the client behaves in a group, which is more normal or more like everyday life than the worker-client interview. The group also provides a chance for the client to practice changes in behavior in a "real" situation.

B. Social Action

Sometimes, the agency works with a number of individuals who have the same problems. These can perhaps be handled on an individual basis, but it is less efficient and less permanent to do so. For example, if many of the clients of a neighborhood service center have similar housing problems such as no heat, rat infestation, or peeling plaster, workers can help them to handle complaints individually -- and sometimes an emergency such as no heat in winter needs immediate individual attention. But problems like this continue to occur to many individuals unless some pressure, such as a group of tenants complaining to city rent agencies or conducting a rent strike, forces a landlord to make the repairs or provide the missing services to a whole building or group of buildings. If many clients find shopping prices in the neighborhood high, then individual budgeting won't help much. If a group of residents complains to the management and shows where prices are higher than in other stores in the city, or, as a last resort, pickets in front of the store or boycotts it, the prices may go down. These and other problems can only be solved through organized activities. In the following sections, we shall be discussing some of the knowledge, skills, and techniques required for the various group and community services you may be asked to offer.

CLERICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Tasks such as record keeping, taking messages, and filling out forms are vital to the delivery of social services. No matter how good your relationship with clients or your skill in helping them, their needs will be poorly served if clerical and administrative tasks are ignored. Sometimes this kind of work is hard for those of us who enjoy less routine activities and who prefer the active challenge of interpersonal relationships. But we should recognize that it is not particularly helpful to a client in need of emergency help if his phone message is lost at our agency. It's hard enough for a person to pour out his problems and collect all the information that some agencies require without the additional hardship of having to do it again because his file or folder has been misplaced. And no matter how friendly and understanding you are as an aide, that client has a right to resent having to repeat all the painful facts.

Many social agencies have well-established procedures for recording the important facts about clients and our contacts with them. Usually, agencies collect what is called face sheet information. Does your agency have a face sheet? If so, study carefully what facts are required and try to think of the reason each of the questions on it is asked. If you recognize the reasons, you may be able to do it less routinely, and more important, you will be able to let clients know why you have to ask certain questions. Sometimes you can fill in these facts during the course of your contact with a client; and, in some cases, you don't have to get all of the information. The face sheet is just a convenient way of recording facts such as name, address, income, and the like. Other agencies, however, require that many facts be collected in order to find out if a client is eligible. And this information must be collected before service can begin. In any case, it is important for you to recognize the ways people may feel about being asked personal questions and having to provide a lot of information about themselves.

Study all of the other records your agency requires, in addition to the face sheet. Examine every item on each one in order to determine what is being asked and why it is required.

I. General Rules for Record Keeping

Every agency requires different kinds of records and different degrees of completeness of detail. Every worker will develop his own way of gaining this information from different types of clients. Some who are "hip" to agencies because they have been to many may simply give you this information as a matter of course and, in fact, expect to be asked, while others may need more explanation. But no matter what individual differences there are, there are some simple rules to remember in keeping records.

A. Record Immediately

Do not rely on your memory. Write down facts when you get them from the client, providing you have explained to him what you are writing and why you must do it. You will be seeing many clients in a day, and no matter how clearly a client comes across to you and how interested and involved you become in what he tells you, you will forget these facts unless you record them immediately.

B. Write Clearly and Legibly

The forms and records of any agency are partly for the purpose of assuring that services can be offered in a continuous fashion regardless of whether the same worker is always available to see the client. The agency continues to serve the client even if workers come and go, or are simply absent or away. If a client happens to come in or need immediate help when you are out to lunch, another worker should be able to look at your notes in the folder and fill in for you. If the writing is illegible, this goal cannot be achieved. For this reason, too, the meaning of questions must be understood by all workers and questions answered in a similar fashion by all workers. Agency forms are not the place for creativity and originality. Uniformity is required.

C. Choosing What Is Important

On some records you need record only simple facts, while others require that you summarize or give a brief version of what happened, or what the client's problems are. Interviews are sometimes long, and much is learned about a client. Much of it is important to the client, and indeed, everything that is said -- our very gestures -- may help to convey our concern for our clients. But we cannot record and store all our feelings about our contacts with every client. Nor is it efficient to have to read a long record to find out a few important facts about the agency's contact with him, such as his problem, the goals of our help for him, etc.

What kinds of summaries of contact does your agency require? The best way for you to learn how to record in this manner is to practice on some cases. Perhaps you could read some complete records of an interview or listen to a phonograph or tape recording of an interview and try to decide how to summarize the contact. Much depends on asking yourself what is important or what you and other workers would need to know in order to give service. Enough should be written that the relationship with a client or the service goes forward and he and you or another worker do not have to repeat unnecessarily what went on in earlier interviews.

II. Filing

The way that an agency stores information is important for some of the reasons we have already mentioned. No matter how well a client's records are kept in order, they aren't much good to the agency or to him if they cannot be found. Usually agencies have active cases stored in one place, and those not presently being served, or inactive cases, stored elsewhere.

Every agency will have a different filing system, depending on the service and the clientele. What is the system in your agency? The best way for you to become acquainted with it, whether you will be required to put records away, secure them from the file, or both, is to practice. Take some folders and practice putting them away. Then ask a supervisor or other staff person to check your work. Also see if you can rapidly find a client's folder.

No matter what the system of filing, establish the habit, even if you are very busy, of either putting a record back in the files or wherever it is to go (such as in a central spot for someone else to file or in a pick-up basket) immediately after using it. Records lying around helter-skelter are more likely to get lost and might also give clients the uneasy feeling that the facts of their lives are scattered about for everyone to see.

III. Letter and Phone Contacts

Much client work and much service is transacted by mail and over the phone. It is important to maintain the same standards of friendliness and concern on the phone or in written messages to a client that you have in the office. Since the client cannot see you, cannot recognize the concern that is written on your face, or see the friendly gesture or feel an affectionate hug, you will need to try to convey your feeling by what you say, by the tone of your voice, by remembering to ask how he is, or asking him to say hello to one of his children for you, or to inquire how a certain visit to school turned out.

Try not to limit your conversation simply to business or the reason he or you called.

It is important to record your phone contacts if they involve significant information- or service-giving. Do so immediately or as soon as possible. Be sure to write down legibly phone messages for other workers on the phone pads your agency uses. Again, each worker should use the phone message form the same way so that it is understandable to all.

Try to keep in mind how important the message for another worker is and whether it needs immediate attention, even before the worker will return. Perhaps an effort should be made to reach the worker immediately. Consult his or your supervisor if it is an important matter or if it is difficult for you to judge its importance.

Once again, write legibly, and place the message in the place where the worker will look for it, that is, in the place established by the unit or the agency. Leaving phone messages lying around is just as poor service as leaving folders and records about.

Your agency may have some form letters for you to send to clients in order to simplify, speed up your work, and ensure that the correct information is given or acquired. Do you understand the forms and the reasons for them? Will the client understand, or is there a language problem, a reading problem, or an understanding problem? If so, make arrangements to have the letter translated, write or phone explaining what is meant, arrange or have him find a way to have it read if necessary, or to supply a written answer.

No matter what kind of form letters there are, never send one without some personal note. This can be your way of helping the client understand that you know him personally and are thinking of him, and that he is not simply another "case."

Once again, practice writing letters or sending ones that are prepared by the agency. Make up some situations and describe some real clients, and write them some letters for a variety of different reasons. Read them to others in your trainee group and discuss how various clients might react to them and whether the letters will be likely to accomplish their purpose -- whether the aim is to cheer a sick client, to get some needed information, or merely to respond to the client's note.

IV. Record Keeping and Research

Sometimes records have another purpose, in addition to direct service to the client whose contact is recorded. An agency may be trying to determine how well a service is working or to <u>evaluate</u> it. Or, a particular record may be used to help provide facts or <u>data</u> related to some basic research questions about the clientele, such as the nature of family patterns within a particular group, or attitudes toward education, or spending habits of the poor.

The agency staff concerned with this task may use existing forms and methods of record keeping to find out what they want to know. Or they may ask that workers find out certain added facts that will help them.

While it is important to be sure that clients' rights are protected, particularly that their privacy is not invaded and confidentiality is not sacrificed, aides should remember that, in the long run, research and evaluation lead to better service. What the researchers find out about the effects of our services can help us to modify and improve them. And what they can tell us about the behavior of our clients helps us to understand them and their problems better and to provide sounder services. Always find out <u>why</u> certain facts are being sought by researchers. But try to assist them in getting the information they need. Once again, legibility, recording soon after contact, and thoughtful and concise summarizations are important. They will give researchers a more factual account of service and clients.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

I. Types of Community Work

There are two major types of activities for aides in the community. First, the aide attempts to spread knowledge of agency services and to increase their use by community residents eligible for them. In addition, the aide learns how community persons feel about agency services and relays his findings to agency staff. Together, these two activities make up what has been called the bridge function of the aide -- the linking together of residents in the community and social services.

Another part of the aide's community work is to gather support from individuals and groups or to help them develop the strength to make certain changes in community conditions and services. Here the aide is involved in social action.

A. Recruiting Clients

Many persons are unaware of the services that are available to them, particularly in poor communities. A mother may want to work but may be unable to do so because she has no reliable, well-qualified person to care for her children. She may not know that there are day care services in the neighborhood for which her children would be eligible. On the other hand, the problem may be a lack of sufficient day care centers in a community, in which case community residents may be helped to take action to secure such services.

There are several important tasks involved in spreading the word about community services.

1. You need to know as much about the services as an intake worker who explains them to the client applying for help -- who is eligible, what exactly is offered, the hours when service is offered, etc.

2. You need to know who in the community needs but seems not to be using services. This involves finding out the most efficient way to reach as many people as possible, preferably in groups rather than individually. Are they likely to belong to a group, and if so, what kind? It makes no sense to go to a parent-teachers meeting at a school to explain what legal services are available to poor persons when the people who need them most do not attend such meetings. They may not belong to any official, organized groups but perhaps may be members of social groups that exist mainly for mutual benefit, like a home town club or a card club. They may only belong to a church and, if so, to a small storefront church, rather than to an established larger church. Finally, those who most need information about services may be unaffiliated with any groups or gatherings. If the persons you are trying to reach belong to informal groups, you will have to speak to the group in a way that is most likely to be understood by the members, and this will involve knowing something about the group and the usual way that people talk and act in it.

If the persons are unaffiliated, you will have to find the best ways of getting the message to them in their homes or on the street.

B. Delivering the Message to Community Persons

Obviously, agencies should not and probably cannot be linked with people unless their services are genuinely needed by the people. We often speak of clients as being "unmotivated" to use agencies, when perhaps they fail to use services because the services are not as useful as they might be. It is the job of the aide, who serves as bridge between the agencies and the community, to inform agency staff of the attitudes of community residents toward services.

There will probably be established procedures in your agency for passing on what you learn to those persons in a position to make changes in the agency. Learn these procedures carefully, and never fail to report what you have learned from individuals and groups. In turn, do not fail to report back to community residents what the results of your efforts are. If you seem to ignore their opinions, they will gradually cease to think it worthwhile to let you know how they feel. Your request for their comments will have seemed a mere courtesy rather than purposeful.

It may be that your agency could make a change but chooses not to or is not in a position to make the changes which are requested. Even if you are on the side of some of the community persons, you must relay the message to them, informing them of whatever right they have to appeal the policies of social agencies.

You must be careful to remember that, no matter how strongly you disagree with agency policy, you are an agency employee. Your role is to make your opinions and those of others known to agency administrators and perhaps to join other staff members in attempting to influence these decisions. It is not your role to work against the agency as if you were a community resident, rather than a staff member. It is very hard to keep these roles straight, especially when you are a community resident yourself and have much in common with the persons who are criticizing the agency. Above all, avoid giving community persons false hope by confusing your understanding of their position with your ability to get something done about it.

C. Agency and Community Change

Community persons may criticize certain things about agency services that are within the power of agency officials to change. For example, they may let you know that services would be more widely used if there were evening hours or if there were translators for persons who speak a foreign language. These types of changes can be made by administrators and require no new laws or decisions by elected officials such as the mayor or governor. The agency staff may even be able to modify public housing policies, such as those that deny apartments to women who have illegitimate children. Obviously, some of the objections raised by community residents are more likely to be greeted with a positive response than others.

There are other types of needed changes in community services that the agency staff cannot make and that therefore require enough community support to influence legislators or other government officials. It may be that services are not so much under-used as insufficient. Community residents can be encouraged to take action that will lead to increased services, such as collecting signatures on a petition for presentation to an elected official, writing letters to the newspaper, organizing a march in support of the measure, or sending a delegation to Washington or the state capital. The choice of action plans depends upon what goes on in the community, the type of changes sought, the steps already taken, etc., to name a few considerations.

It may be that the desired action is not directly related to your agency but very much influences how your agency services are used. For example, although you may be on the staff of the welfare department, you still may be able to assist community residents in securing better housing, since they can hardly be led toward greater personal and financial independence (the goal of income maintenance programs) if they are being dragged down by deteriorated housing. Or you may advocate changes in shopping facilities because you know that high prices and inferior merchandise make it harder for welfare clients, as well as other poor people, to get by. Bringing about changes in community conditions and services not directly affected by your agency may be a less difficult role for the aide than for the professional, partly because it is less likely to involve the kinds of conflict of interest that we have mentioned above.

II. Gaining Knowledge of the Community

Part of getting to work in the community is getting to know about it. You may be a resident of this neighborhood and even hired as an aide partly because of your knowledge of it and your contacts with other community residents. But even so, you need to take a look at the community from your new position as an aide. For example, you may have been active in educational affairs and may be informed about educational problems, and about groups interested in improving education and persons who have the ability to make decisions or who have power in the field of education. If your job is concerned with welfare, housing, or recreational facilities, you will need to find out about different individual groups, and those people who are involved and who have influence in these other fields.

Depending on your assignment, you may have to get in touch with organized groups in the community that are interested in some of the problems the agency wishes you to work on; reach all groups in order to inform persons about agency services; or recruit persons who are probably unaffiliated with groups but who need to be reached. You will also need to know something about how to get things done in this particular community, such as which legislators are likely to be helpful with what type of community problems. In addition to whatever you know about the community already and what information your agency possesses, you should be familiar with some ways of gaining these kinds of information.

You may be able to find out about established groups and something about community problems from a neighborhood association to which many groups belong. Such organizations are often interested in a variety of community problems. There may be a city-wide health and welfare council that coordinates the work of all agencies and groups interested in welfare problems. A council may be able to put you in touch with local groups involved in the problem. There are certain city-wide groups interested in particular problems, like housing, civil rights, and education, and these may be a source of information about problems, perhaps even on a neighborhood basis. They may also be able to put you in touch with local people who are concerned with these problems. There may be a local social agency, a local university, or an agency concerned with social research that has made a study of community problems and conditions and can supply you with facts about the problems you are working on. Maybe you have a friend who can put you in touch with others who are interested or influential in the problem area to which you are assigned.

Finally, you must be out in the community, talking with people on street corners and park benches, interviewing shopkeepers, meeting people who congregate at the corner grocery, talking with clients and their friends, and observing the activities of youngsters, the use of playgrounds, the conditions of housing, and the like. A balanced knowledge, based on personal observation and perhaps on your experience as a resident, and on factual information if that is available, is a desirable foundation for community work.

Learning about the community, its people, its groups, and its problems is a continuous process, partly because there is a great deal to learn, and partly because there is much change. As you work, you may become a specialist in certain areas, such as housing, recreation, and police protection. But, for the most part, you will be a generalist, a "jack of all trades." You must not only keep informed about the community through your contact with the people and groups in it -- from clients to community leaders -- but you must also keep abreast of local, regional, national, and even world events that may influence your work. If the mayor announces that his office will find jobs for youngsters this summer, you will want to be the first to know, so that you can quickly let neighborhood persons know how they can take advantage of this opportunity. If Congress is considering a housing bill, you may want to bring this to the attention of community groups and urge that they either support or oppose it.

This sounds like a big job -- and it is. No one will expect you to have these skills and abilities immediately. But your work and your training should aim you in this direction. You can never know all there is to know about particular problems, much less about a number of problems. You should therefore develop ways of learning how to get information and where to find and how to use the skills of specialists, experts, and consultants in your community. One of your major resources is, of course, your supervisor and other experts in your agency.

III. The Relationship of the Aide to Community Groups

The relationship between the aide and community groups depends on the nature of his assignment, characteristics of the groups served, his own style of working, and other factors. For example, if the aide is trying to recruit clients or to establish a pressure group to work for quicker responses to housing-code violations, he may have to act as an *organizer*. He will have an active role and will persuade, urge, and convince. If he attends a meeting to explain his agency's services or a certain policy of the agency, he will be a guest speaker and will try to relate to the group as he has observed others doing. This active role is suitable to the aide, who may be a community resident and who can be expected, more than the professional who is an outsider, to understand the needs of the community.

Frequently, the professional community worker has been an *enabler*, one who helps the group to function better, but who usually does not assume a leadership role. He encourages organization, helps to smooth relations between members, gathers needed information, etc. The idea is to encourage the group to be independent of the worker, to develop its own leadership, and to make its own decisions and plans. Sometimes, aides will be enablers, too.

Probably you will find yourself playing a number of these roles, often with the same group. As you begin assignments and as work progresses, you will need to determine which roles will be most helpful to the community group in achieving its goals.

IV. Skills Important to Community Work

In this discussion, it is impossible to cover all the skills required of the aide who works in the community. Many of these you will have developed already as a citizen, parent, or active participant in your community. Since most community work involves formal or informal participation in meetings, our discussion will deal mostly with the aide's behavior in regard to meetings, as well as with some steps that might be taken by a group to solve a community problem.

A. Getting People To Come to a Meeting

Getting people to come to a meeting can be a very difficult job. You may be asked to recruit people and get them interested. This may mean going from door to door, or talking with people in supermarkets, laundromats, bars, churches, etc. If you have friends in the community, ask them to help you. If you don't have friends there, try to get to know people you've seen once or twice, particularly your clients in individual services.

People will be more likely to come to a meeting if a friend asks them to go. Calling on a person lets him know that you are interested in him as a person. It gives him the feeling that if he comes to the meeting he will not be a stranger -- he will at least know one other person, you.

A personal visit is more likely to get results than a phone call or a post card. Phone and mail contacts are helpful reminders after a personal visit or contact has been made. Of course, it will not always be possible to see each person individually. A committee composed of people who have already indicated their willingness to attend can be used to attract more people. Sometimes, if you know one person in a building or on a block, get him to ask his neighbors. People are more likely to come if they are invited by someone they know well and can trust. When you can get people to help you encourage attendance, the chances for a successful meeting are increased.

B. Observing a Meeting

Observing a meeting is important for several reasons. First, it helps you develop the skills needed to organize a meeting. It also may give you some clues about how a certain group or certain community residents behave at meetings. If you have to participate in a meeting, you can better gear your remarks to the style they're accustomed to. It would be helpful for you to attend a variety of community meetings as an observer with your supervisor or with a person who is experienced in running or helping to organize meetings; this way you can ask questions on the spot.

Here are some of the things to look for when observing a meeting; they more or less suggest some guidelines for a successful meeting, as well.

1. Were people friendly or unfriendly? Was there much talk among people before the meeting started? Did guests and new members feel welcome?
2. Was the meeting a suitable length, or too long? (Meetings are seldom too short!)
3. Was there a written agenda? Did everyone get a copy? Was there an orderly presentation of business?
4. Did the officers seem well prepared?
5. Did everyone get a chance to have his say or did one or two people dominate the meeting?
6. Did members have an opportunity to propose and vote on their own motions, or was action already decided by the officers?
7. Were things accomplished? Were decisions made or left undecided? Were decisions railroaded through without sufficient time for members to think about what was at stake?
8. Were people chosen or elected to do jobs and report at the next meeting?
9. Did discussion stick to the matter at hand and move toward a solution?

10. Was there an agency worker (like yourself) present? What was his role? Did he take over the meeting or did he let the chairman run the meeting? Did he step in at the right times to help the members over the rough spots, offer advice, information, etc.?

These are only a few things to keep in mind when observing a meeting. What are some of the other items you would want to watch for?

C. Setting Up a Meeting

If you are asked to set up a meeting or advise other people on setting up a meeting, here is a checklist of things to do:

1. Does everyone know where and when the meeting is being held? Have reminders been sent out or calls made?

2. Are there enough seats for everyone? A place for hats and coats?

3. Are there name tags or cards for each person? Are there blank tags and a marker for the names of people who come unexpectedly? If there are no tags, is there another way for people to be introduced to each other?

4. Are there copies of the agenda for everyone? If not, can it be put on a big poster or blackboard? Is there room on the agenda for topics to be added by the group?

5. Are there people who can interpret or translate for those who speak a different language?

6. Will someone be selected to take notes at the meeting, so that decisions and discussions are not lost?

7. Will a report of the meeting be sent to each person who attended? To others who couldn't come?

8. Did you have printed material from your agency to hand out? If not, are you prepared to tell the group members what they need to know about the agency's services?

9. Are you prepared to introduce yourself to the group? To tell them something about yourself?

10. Have other people been helped to participate in the meetings? Have they been supplied with information and given a chance to discuss or even practice their part?

Obviously, some of these items may not apply to the kind of group you are working with or to the type of meeting that will be held. There may be some other considerations, like child-care arrangements if it is important for mothers to attend. What are some of the items you will want to add and how will you handle some of those suggested?

D. Goals of a First Meeting

Certain things need to happen at the first meeting of a group if it is to be successful in launching its program.

1. People should get acquainted and exchange points of view.

2. Group members should agree on what they will tackle first.

3. The group should agree on how it will tackle the problem.

4. People should be given responsibilities for working on the problem.

5. The group should agree on the time and place for the next meeting.

6. The members should make plans for bringing in other people who need to be involved in the next meeting.

You may have to run the first meeting. If this happens, you should let the group know that you are taking this responsibility only until the group has an opportunity to select its own chairman. As temporary chairman, you should keep certain things in mind.

1. Try to create an informal atmosphere where people feel free to talk and exchange ideas in a friendly way.

2. Try to provide a sense of direction so that members will see that the meeting is getting somewhere.

3. Ask questions which help to make other people's remarks clearer.

4. Summarize from time to time.

5. Suggest that the group consider one idea at a time.

6. Bring people back to the topic if they get off the track.

7. If other members are able to do some of these things, let them. This means they are on the way to taking over the group themselves.

E. The Agenda

It is a good idea to start out with an agenda (a written list of things to be discussed). The agenda can be made up in advance of the meeting by you, or preferably, by a committee of members. Copies of the agenda should be available to everyone who comes to the meeting. This helps people to stick to the topics and gives them an idea of what will happen next. However, the agenda should not keep people from discussing other topics; it should not interfere with the flexibility to deal with new problems as they arise.

F. Keeping a Group Going

Here are some ways of keeping a group going or of holding the members' interest, enthusiasm, and belief in the value of group efforts to solve community problems.

1. The more people involved in the planning and leadership group, the more likely you are to have an ongoing, active group. Members lose interest in a one-man organization. If a number of people are contributing leadership, the skills, interests, and resources available to the group are that much greater.
2. Seeing a problem through and then moving on to another one, perhaps of more importance, not only maintains interest but increases involvement in community affairs.

3. Making the first project one that will succeed will help maintain interest and confidence in the organization.

4. Taking time at the end of a meeting to plan for the next meeting is a good way to get people interested in the next meeting or in coming again.

5. Bringing new people into the group helps members feel that it is worth being part of the group. New people bring new ideas, too.

6. The agenda should make sense to the group and should be easy to follow.

7. Time should be planned so that all members can take part in discussions. People bring their own concerns with them to meetings, and will often use a meeting as a place for "letting off steam."

8. Members should take increasing amounts of responsibility for the group as time goes on. You should be available for advice and direction, but leadership should usually be passed on to the members.

G. <u>Steps for Helping a Group Solve a Problem</u>

What follows is an example of how you as a worker can insure that a group works together to solve a community problem. We have illustrated these steps with a simple problem, one that does not involve much conflict or controversy. Although you will be working on problems which may be more complicated and more controversial, the steps outlined can help you focus on how to go about helping a group. But they will not insure success, which depends on many factors, some beyond your control.

1. Help the group to spell out the problem -- Fifth and Elm is a dangerous corner; there are too many accidents there; we need to do something about it.

2. Make sure everyone understands the problem clearly -- Does everyone know where Fifth and Elm is? Can you prove that it's a dangerous corner? What facts and figures do you have? What information do you need to make the problem clear? How do you go about getting this information?

3. Help group members decide what result they want -- The group wants the corner to be safe at all times.

4. Think of ways to solve the problem -- Put in a traffic light; put up a STOP sign, make the area a play street closed to traffic; post a policeman at the corner.

5. Check each possible solution and decide which is the best -- (1) A traffic light requires more money to install than a STOP sign and the city is likely to be in favor of something less costly. (2) If the street is made a play street, the problem is solved only during the day, the business establishments on the block would oppose this move, and their support could be helpful for a different solution. (3) A policeman would only be posted during heavy traffic hours. The danger is there full-time.

6. Select the best solution -- A STOP sign seems the best way to handle this situation and the one most likely to be acceptable.

7. Plan and organize for action -- How does the group ask for a traffic sign to be installed? Who knows the procedures? What information is needed to support the request? Who should be asked to help with the group's effort? Who will be in charge of what? What will the timetable be for the various steps? Do we have an alternative plan if we are turned down?

8. Evaluate progress as you go along -- What steps should be taken according to the plan of action? What steps have been taken? What have been the results? If something didn't work, why didn't it? What changes in plans have to be made as a result of what has happened?

9. Follow-up on the action -- Are people carrying out their responsibilities on time? If the city said it would act, has it done so? Has the group sent letters of thanks to people who are helpful? What did the group learn about getting things done? What should be done differently next time? What was satisfying? What wasn't satisfying? Why?

Now take a problem that you will be helping a group to solve, and try to use this outline as a guide to your activities with the group. How would you change the guide?

NOTE

You have been chosen to do a very important job. It is important to you for your personal needs and satisfactions, but it is perhaps more important for the benefits it will bring to the agency you work for, your neighborhood and community, and the thousands of people to whom you will represent hope.

The material you have read and studied here is meant to help you see that hope is not destroyed. But the answers to the many problems you will face won't be found here -- they can only come from you. What we have tried to do is explore some of the general problems and ways you might deal with them.

Some of what has been written here will not apply to you, your agency, or your community. You and your supervisor will have to decide what you can use. If the material here is going to help you in any way, you have to make it your own. Just because it is written down doesn't make it necessarily right. It is not meant as a "bible" and should not be used as such. One part of it may be right for someone in another agency or community; a different part may be right for you. Always keep this in mind when reading. If you have any questions, ask your supervisor or other workers in your agency. Reading, asking questions, discussing, and making additions and corrections where necessary are the best ways to make this material work for you.