MCGILL UNIVERSITY

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT AND DISCHARGE

A Study Comparing Environmental and Psychological Factors Related to the Entry Into and Exit From Foster Care

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the relationship between environmental deficit and foster care placement. The questions central to the study were: (1) how important is environmental deficit as a cause of foster care placement and (2) how important is the improvement of environmental circumstances, relative to improvement in parental behavior, child behavior and personal circumstance, to the eventual return of a foster child. These questions were asked in a context comparing psychological (behavior) issues versus environmental issues with regard to the placement and discharge of foster children.

Employing Q-sort technique, data was gathered from natural parents on the reasons for placement and on changes since placement. The reasons and changes were categorized into four distinctive child welfare related categories. This was done to compare the psychological (behavior) and environmental points of view. The categories were parent behavior and child behavior, representative of psychological issues and environmental circumstances and personal circumstances, representative of environmental issues.

The research sample was composed of forty natural parents who had placed their children through the Children's Service Centre in Montreal. Half of the sample consisted of parents whose children had been returned; the other half consisted of parents whose children remained in care.

Respondents were required to sort out first, the most important reasons for their child's placement and second, the most important changes since placement. Selected background characteristics of the families and placement were also examined.

The results of the study showed that a high proportion of parents placing their children were poor, that environmental conditions did most significantly account for placement, and their improvement could most significantly predict a child's return.

Length of time in care also significantly accounted for differences between the returned and non-returned groups.

The combination of environmental change and length of time in care accounted for 36% of the amount of variance between the return and non-returned groups.

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A.L.P.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to identify the relative influence of four categories of variables (parent behavior, child behavior, personal circumstances, and environmental circumstances)[1] on the entry into and exit from foster care. Particular attention is given to the possible effects of environmental factors such as income, housing and external social supports, because these have not received sufficient empirical attention as causal factors with regard to entry into and exit from foster care.

Although most studies correlate low socio-economic status with foster placement[2], environmental factors, especially economic factors, have been assumed, since the institution of social security during the depression, to have little causal relationship to foster care placement, largely because the need for foster care was thereafter substantially reduced. However, this assumption has not been tested.

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[1] Parent behavior includes such variables as emotional difficulties, neglect and drinking problems; child behavior includes such variables as trouble with police, trouble in school, and mental handicap; personal circumstances includes such variables as physical illness, hospitalization, and death of a parent; environmental circumstances includes such variables as income, housing and availability of extended family. The details of these categories will be presented at the end of this chapter.

[2] Shirley Jenkins and Mignon Sauber, Paths to Child Placement (New York: Community Council of Greater New York, 1966); Henry S. Maas and Richard E. Engler, Children in Need of Parents (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); Ilze Skuja, "Characteristics of Families Bringing Children Into Care" (M.S.W. thesis, McGill University, 1968); Marie-Reine Lepage and Katherine Stenger, "Factors Leading to the Placement of Children into Foster Care (M.S.W. thesis, McGill University, 1966). These are a few of the studies which correlate low economic status with foster placement.

Alfred Kadushin comments in his volume on child welfare, that "the rate of children in substitute care of all kinds had declined sharply after the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, a confirmation of the potency of the social insurance and public assistance programs in maintaining children in their own homes."[1]

Ilze Skuja, in her study states that "until recently, most children required placement because their parents could not bear the expense of adequately providing for them. Today, financial reasons per se, do not constitute the major reason for child placement. Although related economic factors such as employment, lack of skills and indebtedness, do pose difficulties, these do not seem to be immediate causes of placement requests."[2]

Furthermore, though most studies confirm that foster care is predominantly used by the poor, it is commonly recognized that most poor people do not place their children in care. Many people, as well, who are not poor make use of alternative private arrangements for substitute child care. These arguments tend to support the emphasis in foster care research on non-environmental issues. Approaches taken in studies examining placement causes have followed this direction and have tended to exclude a thorough investigation of environmental and economic factors while focusing on interpersonal and psychological variables.

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[1]Alfred Kadushin, Child Welfare Services (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1974), p. 401.

[2]Skuja, p. 56.

Jenkins and Sauber defend the exclusion of ec onomic factors from their investigation by stating that "It should be noted that money has not been mentioned as a distinct factor relating to the placement of children. The reason for this is that inadequate financial resources comprise an underlying factor which is present to one degree or another in almost all cases where children are in foster care at public charge..."[1] The authors go on to suggest that the inclusion of this factor would have oversimplified the issues involved.

The flow of children into foster care continues.[2] The length of time spent in foster care has not been reduced.[3] The problem of prevention of foster care has not been solved. The most commonly employed social service intervention accompanying placement has been casework which is psychologically oriented. At the same time the literature recognizes the need for preventive action primarily in terms of environmental factors. Rosemary Dinnage, for example, in her anthology of foster care research concludes as follows:

> "while facilities should be improved, it is argued that the large numbers of children entering care can only be reduced by a serious attempt to alleviate the "poverty-syndrome" - low incomes, exclusion from the main stream of society, lack of opportunity and family breakdown."4

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[1]Jenkins and Sauber, p. 71.

[2]Children's Service Centre Statistics, Montreal, March, 1976, pp. 2,3. The statistics report that 900 children received foster care services between March, 1975 and March, 1976; of these, 571 were actually foster boarding care.

[3]David Fanshel, "Status Changes of Children in Foster Care" Child Welfare LV (March, 1976), p. 145. This study reported that 36% of the original sample remained in care at the end of the five year study.

[4]Rosemary Dinnage, Facts and Fallacies of Foster Family Care (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967), p. 95.

Statements such as this one, however, are rarely reflected in government policy and social work practice.[1]

If it can be shown that environmental factors are significantly implicated in placement and return, the emphasis on the casework approach to treatment in foster care cases needs to be reconsidered.

The purpose of this study is to determine which type of factors, environmental or psychological, more significantly accounts for foster care placement and return. It is hoped that this information might provide a basis from which to develop policies and programs intended to reduce the incidence and length of foster care placement without sacrificing the welfare of a child.

Previous Research on Placement and Return Factors in Foster Care

Several studies have investigated reasons for foster care placement. Two studied with this as the central purpose were the studies by Jenkins and Sauber, and Ilze Skuja.

Jenkins and Sauber investigated 425 families placing 891 children in New York City in order to identify conditions, in the year prior to placement, that led to placement. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with the natural families themselves. Precipitating as well as contributing causes were examined.

The study found that only a third of the families were two-parent families, that public assistance was the largest source of income and that half the sample had health problems. Examination of precipitating causes revealed that physical illness of the child's caretaker was

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[1] In 1971, for example, the Quebec government rather than seeking to alleviate this syndrome, passed a law requiring natural parents to pay for their own children in public substitute care.

responsible for 29% of the placements. Seventeen percent of the placements was caused by the child's own emotional problems. Mental illness of the child's caretaker caused 11% of the placements. Severe neglect and abuse precipitated 10% of the placements, while 30% were the result of various family problems.

The method of data collection, that is direct family interviews, allowed for more detailed investigation. However, as noted previously, the examination of environmental factors was intentionally limited.

Ilze Skuja conducted a study of placement factors in Montreal through the Children's Service Centre. The author examined the agency records of seventy families who had placed their children in 1966. The purpose of the study was to analyze the characteristics of families placing children and the reasons underlying placement requests. Precipitating and contributing reasons were identified and cross-checked.

The examination of precipitating reasons revealed that 25 families (out of 70) placed their children because of the monther's emotional condition. Twenty-one families placed their children because of the mother's hospitalization and twenty-one were caused by parent separation. Separation was generally linked to such other factors as neglect, pregnancy, hospitalization, and mother's desire to go to work. Abandonment and neglect were the third and fourth more important reasons for placement. Mother's physical condition, desertion, and father's emotional condition completed the range of most important reasons. Several other reasons including death of parent(s), child behavior and abuse accounted for fewer than four cases each.

Contributing reasons included parental inadequacy, marital breakdown, economic difficulties, youth of parents, parental rejection, lack of skills, unwed parents and poverty. These were listed above according to importance. The author warns that "the contributing reasons were often deduced from the content of the files"[1] This warning is apt, because as Dinnage states "Methods of record keeping are so inadequate at present as to be not even suitable for the collection and collation of all the basic statistics...."[2]

The study also found, as have similar studies, that families were generally of low socio-economic status. As well, employment and income were found to be often irregular.

The question of exit from foster care has been examined extensively by David Fanshel.[3] This study comprised five years of longitudinal investigation into the discharge outcome of six hundred, twenty-four children who entered foster care in New York City in 1966. It attempted to correlate selected placement characteristics with discharge characteristics.

Fanshel found, according to the interim report, that during the first year of placement the following placement reasons correlated with

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[1]Skuja, p. 61.

[2]Dinnage, p. 30.

[3]The bulk of this study was published in two reports: David Fanshel, "The Exit of Children from Foster Care: An Interim Report" Child Welfare 50 (February, 1971); and in David Fanshel, "Status Changes of Children in Foster Care" Child Welfare 55 (March, 1976).

exit from care. Thirty-one percent of the children leaving care in the first year had entered because of their caretaker's mental illness. Twelve percent had entered because of their own behavior problems. Fifty-five percent had originally entered care as a result of their caretaker's physical illness. Parent's unwilling to assume, or unwilling to continue care, neglect and abuse and family problems each correlated with leaving care in the first year.

In his final report[1], Fanshel found that 36.4% of the children who entered care five years earlier were still in care. Fifty-six percent were discharged. The remainder entered adoption or special treatment institutions.

A major purpose of the study was to find variables that would significantly predict discharge from care. Of all the variables tested to predict discharge, the following were found to be most promising: parental visiting, evaluation of the mother, activity of the caseworker, ethnicity and age of the child at placement.

However, when Fanshel determined the amounts of variation these independent variables could explain altogether it amounted to 18% in the first year of discharge, 19% in the second year of discharge, 31% in the third year of discharge, and 18% in the fourth year of discharge. Fanshel comments that "It must be kept in mind, however, that such low predictive yields are not uncommon in the social sciences, and the finding simply indicates that much investigatory work involving

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[1]This report appeared after the currently reported study was underway.

new types of variables remains to be done if the discharge phenomenon is to be brought under firmer predictive control."[1]

These above reported studies on placement and discharge phenomena have not provided as much information on related environmental issues as on interpersonal issues. Research in the area of foster care placement itself has not provided thorough understanding of the environmental issues possibly involved in this social problem. It was necessary to refer to research in related areas for information on environmental and economic factors.

Previous Research on Family Functioning and Economics

The following two studies demonstrate the impact of economic factors on issues of family functioning.

The study by Jeanne M. Giovannoni and Andrew Billingsley[2] was primarily concerned with comparing neglectful poor families with adequate poor families. The sample was considered socio-economically homogenious. The sample of two hundred was divided by ethnicity and maternal adequacy. Such factors as child-rearing practices, family background, social functioning and current situation were investigated.

The most outstanding finding was the relationship found between maternal adequacy and financial condition. "Within a group of families

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[1]This is a major purpose of our study in examining reasons for both placement and discharge according to environmental and psychological factors.

[2]Jeanne M. Giovannoni and Andrew Billingsley, "Child Neglect Among the Poor: A Study of Parental Adequacy In Families of Three Ethnic Groups" Child Welfare 49 (March, 1970).

all of whom can be considered poor, there was higher incidence of extreme poverty among neglectful families."[1] The poorer the poor families were, the more likely they were to be maternally inadequate.

Because maternal adequacy and foster care can be related, this finding is considered to be significant for foster care research.

Results from the second study by Irene Olsen[2] support the influence of environmental, in this case financial, resources versus casework services in the area of improving family functioning. At the outset, the author asks the question: "Why, in the administration of public assistance, are we unwilling to supply what a family needs to stay together, when we will pay double this amount if the parents give up their children to foster care?"[3] In order to measure the comparative effectiveness of increased grants and experienced caseworkers, the authors studied one hundred, fifty families. Half of the families were given increased A.F.D.C. grants and half were given standard grants. The families were randomly assigned to either experienced or inexperienced caseworkers. It was found that, according to such outcome criteria as family health, social participation, satisfaction and living conditions, that the most important factor in positive family functioning outcome was increased financial aid.

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[1] Giovannoni and Billingsley, p. 199

[2] Irene Olsen, "Some Effects of Increased Aid in Money and Social Services to Families Getting AFDC Grants", Child Welfare 49 (February, 1970).

[3] Ibid, p. 94.

These two studies underline the importance of investigating the influence of environmental factors on placement into and return from foster care. And, as seen from the former study, this research should comparatively investigate the influence of psychological factors.

The two-fold purpose of this study was to determine first what deficits, environmental or psychological, most significantly account for foster care placement (or in what combination) and second what changes (improvements), environmental or psychological (or in what combination) most significantly correlate with a child's return to his natural parent(s). The question is not necessarily how it happens, that is by what methods or interventions, but rather what happens to permit a child's return.

Setting for the Study

The Children's Service Centre in Montreal was the agency through which the study was conducted. It is mainly a child-placing agency, serving the Montreal and outlying regions, along with the Catholic Family and Children Services Agency. The principal areas of concern for the Children's Service Centre are the unmarried parent, foster care and adoption. In 1975-76 it served nine hundred children through its foster care department. Of these nine hundred, five hundred, seventy-one were in foster family or group home boarding care. The others were in special institutions, self-supporting or under supervision in their own homes.[1]

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[1] Children's Service Centre Statistics.

Approach Taken in this Study: Conceptualizations

The present study was based on the premise that foster care is caused not by single causes but by clusters of causes. This theory of multiple causation was supported by research done by Marie-Reine Lepage and Katherine Stenger.[1] They concluded that "In all the sixty family cases, underlying factors combined with precipitating factors, thus showing that clusters of factors were involved in the placement of children into foster care. On overviewing the precipitating factors with the underlying factors in each of the sixty family cases, the precipitating factor often represented a "desperate cry" for help from a rather deteriorated family".[2]

Rather than investigate precipitating and contributing reasons as did Jenkins and Sauber and Skuja, the present study intends to investigate which combination, from among all the reasons equally, but classified environmentally and psychologically, best account for placement and return. The classification of causes according prepicitating and contributing factors tends to assume an importance for precipitating reasons that may not necessarily exist. The precipitating causes may be simply "the straw that broke the camel's back."

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[1]Marie-Reine Lepage and Katherine Stenger, "Factors Leading to Placement of Children into Foster Care" (M.S.W. thesis, McGill University, 1967).

[2]Ibid, p. 143.

In order to avoid this possible error, this study has not classified reasons into precipitating and contributing factors. The various individual reasons will be scaled in terms of importance to eventual placement, not in terms of chronological occurrence.

This research is based on a comparison of the psychological position on foster care issues with the environmental position on foster care issues. The psychological position situates the reasons for placement and its treatment within the individual or in the relationships between individuals. The treatment is to strengthen the internal resources of the individual(s) involved. The environmental position situates the reason for placement and its treatment within the environment of the individual(s) involved. The treatment is to strengthen external resources.

It is acknowledged that the division of causal factors into psychological and environmental categories can be considered arbitrary because the two categories are often interrelated. However, the division was considered necessary in order to provide direction for the development of foster care programs and policies which are rooted in one or the other position.

The possible combinations of these factors, regarding reasons are as follows:

1) Psychological deficiency and environmental deficiency

2) Psychological deficiency without environmental deficiency

3) Environmental deficiency without psychological deficiency

4) No environmental deficiency and no psychological deficiency

For the discharge situation, the changes which facilitate return can take the following form:

1) Changes in the psychological situation and changes in the environmental situation.
2) Changes in the psychological situation without changes in the environmental situation.
3) Changes in the environmental situation and no change in the psychological situation.
4) No change in the environmental situation and no change in the psychological situation.

These formats allow for measurement of those combinations which incur placement and facilitate discharge.

The present study hypothesizes that environmental factors more significantly account for both placement into and discharge from foster care.

In order to undertake this examination and test environmental significance, four categories (referred to earlier) of possible reasons for child placement were developed. These categories correspond roughly to the psychological and environmental positions presented above. The four categories, and the items included in each category were developed from findings in previous studies[1], from the literature[2], and from a review of Children's Service Centre files.

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[1]Jenkins and Sauber, Skuja, Lepage and Stenger; and David Fanshel and Henry S. Maas, "Factorial Dimensions of the Characteristics of Children in Placement and Their Families" Child Development 33 (February, 1962).

[2]Dinnage; Kadushin; Victor George, Foster Care: Theory and Practice (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970).

The items are expected to represent, in their variety and level of generality, an exhaustive range of possible reasons for foster care placement.

The first two categories relate to the psychological position in that these causes of placement are predominantly situated within or between the individuals involved in placement. The first category, referred to as parent behavior is primarily related and central to the psychological position, whereas the second category, referred to as child behavior, is secondarily related and peripheral to the psychological position. It has been ordered this way to reflect the relative importance of parental and child behavior (especially young children) in the functioning of a family.

The third and fourth categories are related to the environmental position; environmental circumstances, is primarily related and central to the environmental position, whereas the fourth category, names personal circumstances (or chance circumstances), is secondarily related and peripheral to the environmental position. It represents the chance circumstance or happenstance, such as illness, in the lives of invidiuals, which to a large degree cannot be causally situated in the individual but which tax environmental resources. The second and fourth categories are peripheral to the essential comparison of psychological versus environmental but were necessarily included in order to include a full range of reasons for child placement. The first and third categories are central to the comparison, nonetheless for purposes of testing the hypothesis the second and fourth categories were included as equally important. It is

hypothesized that the category, environmental circumstances, will be shown to be more significant in accounting for child placement than the other three categories. Further, the same four categories have been itemized to represent possible relevant[1] changes or events since the time of a child's placement. A fifthe category, named Foster Care Circumstances, was also developed as this dimension, in terms of what happens, becomes important once a child is in care. It is hypothesized that the category, environmental circumstances will be shown to be more significant in accounting for child return than the other four categories.

Using these categories in the research design and a scoring method that will equate low score with category importance either in accounting for placement or return, the two yypotheses of this study are presented as follows:

Hypotheses

1) Among the reasons for child placement, those reasons included in the pre-determined category, environmental circumstances, will be scored more significantly in accounting for child placement than those reasons included in three other pre-determined categories, parental behavior, personal circumstances, or child behavior.

2) Of the changes or events occurring between the time of placement and the time of the child return, or, in the case of non-return, between placement and the time of the research interview, those changes or events included in the category of environmental circumstances will be scored to be more significantly representative of the returned cases (half the sample) than of the groups of cases still in care (half the sample); and this category will be more significantly represented than changes/ events included in any of the four other pre-determined categories, parental behavior, personal parental circumstances, child behavior or foster care service circumstances.

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[1]Relevant in relation to reversing conditions that led to placement; i.e. changes/events that would facilitate a child's return.

II. METHODOLOGY

Instrument Design: Theory and Application

The two hypotheses were tested by applying Q-sort methodology in interviews with natural parents. Natural parents, rather than social workers, were interviewed because parent perceptions about their own pre- and post-placement circumstances were considered most reliable. Agency files were inadequate[1] and social work staff experienced considerable tunronver; consequently these latter two sources could not provide adequate information. Although some might argue that parent perceptions are biased this form of data collection has been established.[2]

Q-sort methodology, developed by William Stephenson[3] especially for use in the social sciences, is a method that facilitates correlations between persons and clusters or factors. It involves the preparation of a list of variable items (usually sixty items or more) relevant to the concepts being researched to be sorted out by truth or importance, etc., by the respondent. These items can be structured according to pre-established categories. The respondent is instructed to sort the items (printed on cards) into a predetermined number of scaled piles according to the item's judged truth or importance.

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[1]Rosemary Dinnage in Foster Care: Facts or Fallacies, p. 30 observed that most record keeping methods are inadequate for research purposes. This seemed especially true concerning details of environmental circumstances before and after placement.

[2]Jenkins and Sauber relied on parent interviews for data collection in their study Paths to Child Placement.

[3]William Stephenson, The Study of Behavior (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

The sorted results are expected to follow a statistical normal distribution as only a specified numbers of cards may appear in each pile, with the middle pile containing the most cards. Each card must be placed in one pile or another and each pile should contain the specified number of cards. The results can be recorded quickly.[1]

This methodology was chosen for several reasons. It allows for less direct interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee giving the latter a higher degree of anonymity than the typical verbal interview, thus reducing the possibility of provoking responses considered socially acceptable.

Further, it permits the respondent to sort through all possibilities before arriving at a choice. The forced choice aspect of Q-methodology, in addition, prevents the loss of any information. The structured Q-sort is considered especially appropriate to theory testing[2], as is intended by this study in the comparison of the psychological position versus the environmental position. Finally, it is easy to administer and score and enjoyable to do.

In order to test the two hypotheses, two separate Q-sort instruments were developed. The first Q-sort (hereafter referred to as Q-1) was prepared to measure the reasons for placement; the second Q-sort (hereafter referred to as Q-2) was prepared to measure the changes that occurred after placement.

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[1]Fred Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Science Research, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1973), pp 581-599.

[2]Ibid, p. 593.

Correspondingly, two separate sets of indices were developed for use in the Q-sorts. For Q-1 (measuring reasons for placement), a set of four indices, equivalent to the four previously mentioned categories of possible reasons for child placement (i.e. parent behavior, child behavior, personal circumstances and encironmental circumstances) was developed. Each of the four indices contained twelve Q-items, each item describing an aspect of placement causation relevant to its related category. Therefore, Q-1 contained forty-eight items in all. These Q-items were prepared following, as much as the study's time limits allowed, the example and suggested principles presented by Jack Block in The Q-Sort Method in Personality Assessment and Psychiatric Research.[1] The clarity, importance and sufficiency of the items was discussed and evaluated with other social workers. For Q-2 (measuring post-placement changes), a set of five indices, equivalent to the five previously mentioned categories of possible relevant changes since placement (i.e. changes in parent behavior, changes in child behavior, changes in personal circumstances, changes in environmental circumstances, and foster care circumstances) was developed.[2] Each of these five indices contained ten Q-items, each item describing an aspect of change relevant to its related category. Therefore Q-2 contained fifty items.

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[1]Jack Block, The Q-Sort Method in Personality Assessment and Psychiatric Research (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1961), 52-61.

[2]The Q-2 items were also prepared according to Block's suggestions in The Q-Sort Method in Personality Assessment and Psychiatric Research.

The small difference in the numbers of items in Q-1 (in, which there are twelve items per four indices) and in Q-2 (in which there are ten items per five indices) permits almost equivalent total item amounts in Q-1 and Q-2.

Sixty to one hundred items per Q-sort is usually suggested; however the use of slightly fewer than sixty items was necessary for this study and considered acceptable.[1] In order first, to accomodate the large number of items required by Q-methodology, second, to maintain a similar level of item generality[2], and third, to equalize the number of items in each category, forty-eight items were prepared. Forty-eight seemed to best accomodate all three conditions. Similarly and in order to make Q-2 as structurally similar to Q-1 as possible, fifty items were prepared for Q-2. The following is a list of the categorized and indexed items from Q-1, as these items appeared printed on the Q-deck of cards. They were worded to answer the question, "As a reason for placement, how true were the following items?" The wording was intended to be as inoffensive as possible. Respondents were instructed to sort each item into one of five rank-ordered piles according to the truth of each item as it related to the cause of their child's placement. The five rank-ordered piles will be described later.

The respondents were unaware of any categorization of the items. They were presented as a randomly shuffled deck of cards. However to clarify the research design and structure of the Q-sort, the items are here listed by category.

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[1] Kerlinger, p. 583

[2] The use of too many items would have increased the risk of the inclusion of some items within others.

1. Parent behavior

Parent(s) didnot take care of the child properly.
One parent (or both) did not like the child.
One parent (or both) did not have enough patience.
Parent(s) drank.
Parent(s) in a mental institution (out patient or on a ward).
Parent(s) left the child for a very long time.
Parents fought.
One parent (or both) was in jail.
One parent (or both) took drugs.
One parent (or both) was hurting the child too much.
One parent (or both) had emotional problem, or was emotionally ill.
One parent (**or** both) did not want the responsibility of parenthood at this particular time.

2. Child behavior

Child was uncontrollable.
Child was mentally handicapped.
Child was physically handicapped.
Child was in trouble with the police.
Child ran away.
Child was having trouble at school.
Child was dangerous to the well-being of others.
Child was withdrawn.
Child was showing delinquent behavior.
Child didnot act his age.
Child seemed disturbed.
Child did not get along with brothers and/or sisters.

3. Personal circumstances

Parent was a single parent.
One (or both) parent was or recently had been physically ill.
Child was illegitimate.
One (or both) parent was handicapped.
There were too many children at home.
One parent (or both) was too young to be a parent.
One parent (or both) was in hospital for physical reasons.
Mother was pregnant.
One parent (or both) was dead.
Another child was physically, mentally or emotionally ill.
Parent(s) had to leave the city and could not take the child.

4. Environmental circumstances

There was not enough income to support the child properly.
The house was too crowded.
There were no relatives nearby to help.
There were debts.
There were no day care facilities available for my child.
Parent(s) needed to work.
There was no homemaker services available.
The house was in bad condition.
Parent(s) could not get help for problems.
There was no one to look after the child when parent(s) was at work.
There were alot of financial difficulties.
Parent(s) needed more training or schooling.

The Q-2 items were presented to the respondent after Q-1 had been completed and the results recorded. Most items but not all reflected possible improvements or events that might lead to a child's return.[1] Q-2 items were worded to answer the question, "As concerns any changes or events since your child's placement until his return or until this interview, if he is still in care, how true have the following changes or events been?" As in Q-1 the items were presented as a randomly shuffled deck of cards. Here they are listed according to category.

1. Changes in parent behavior

Parent(s) feels emotionally better.
Parent(s) feels more ready to take the responsibility of parenthood.
One parent (or both) is likely to care better for the child.
Parent(s) drinks or uses drugs less.
Parent(s) has returned home after leaving for a period of time.
One parent (or both) is no longer in a mental institution.
One parent (or both) is no longer in jail.
Parents get along better now.
Parent(s) have not changed much.

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[1]Those few items that were included in the Q-sort to represent non-improvements (either negative changes or homeostasis) in the family's situation were given a negative value when the index scores were calculated.

2. Changes in child behavior

Child is more independent.
Child is more controllable.
Child no longer needs special care outside of the home for a mental handicap.
Child seems more stable.
Child is less withdrawn.
Child no longer needs special care outside of the home for a physical handicap.
Child can help in the family now.
Child no longer displays delinquent behavior.
Child's behavior has become worse.
Child has not changed much.

3. Changes in personal circumstances

Parent is no longer a single parent.
There are fewer children now at home.
One parent (or both) is not longer physically ill or handicapped.
Parent(s) is older now.
Parent(s) are now separated.
One parent (or both) is no longer hospitalized for physical reasons.
Another child is no longer ill.
Parent feels more capable of bringing up children alone now.
Domestic circumstances are now more settled.
There were no significant changes in the family's physical health and/or domestic situation.

4. Changes in environmental circumstances

Parent(s) got a job.
Parent(s) has a better and/or larger home.
There are now homemaker services available for the family.
Parent(s) is no longer as much in debt.
Relatives are now nearby and willing to help.
There is now more income to support the child.
There are now day care services available for my child.
There is now help available for looking after the child.
Financial difficulties are no longer as serious
There have been no important changes in the family's resources or circumstances.

5. Foster care circumstances

Child ran away from the foster home.
Foster family and natural family had trouble getting along.
Foster family had trouble caring for the child.
Foster parent became ill.
Child had trouble adjusting to the foster home.
Foster family moved.
Foster family got additional new responsibilities.
Child experienced many different foster homes.
There was a change of social workers.
There were no important changes in the foster care situation.

The nine indices were constructed in accordance with the guidelines presented by Earl R. Babbie in Survery Research Methods.[1] Because the categories of parent behavior, child behavior, personal circumstances, and environmental circumstances can be difficult to separate out from each other in an itemized way, care was taken to ensure the unidimensionality of each index. This was not always easy, but it is felt that this was finally achieved. The success of the index construction can only be evidenced initially on the basis of face validity and pre-test results. However, at the time of final data analysis the indices were internally validated and most items were found to correlate significantly.[2] External validation was not feasible because of lack of comparable external data either from agency files or social workers recollection.

In addition to the two Q-sort instruments to measure reasons for and changes since placement, a short questionnaire was developed to

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[1]Earl R. Babbie, Survery Research Methods (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973): 256-265.

[2]Details of internal validation are presented in Chapter III.

obtain selected demographic data for each respondent.[1] The data included such factors as pre- and post-placement marital status, family size, income sources and amount, resource use, as well as the age of the child at placement, race, length of time spent in care, former placement experience and court custody. This type of data is similar to data collected in former research.[2]

Administration

Respondents were contacted initially by letter to inform them of the study; this contact was followed up by a telephone call inviting their participation in the study. Participation was voluntary and confidentiality assured. Interviews were conducted in the homes of the natural parent(s) and lasted approximately one hour. Only one of the parents in each family was expected to participate and most frequently this was the mother.

Respondents were instructed how to do the first Q-sort. They were instructed to sort each item in Q-1 according to the degree of truth each item represented as it related to the cause of their child's foster care placement. If an item was very true, respondents were to place it in the first pile. The pile was labelled, "These statements are MOST TRUE" and was expected to contain three items. Items appearing in the first pile were given a score of one. If an item was true but not quite as important as items appearing in the first pile, the respondent was instructed to place it in the second pile. The second

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[1]The questionnaire is presented in Appendix B

[2]Jenkins and Sauber, Maas, Skuja and Fanshel gathered similar data.

pile was labelled, "These statements are TRUE" and was expected to contain twleve items. Items appearing in the second pile were given a score of two. Items that were neutral were to be sorted into the third (middle) pile. This middle pile was labelled, "These statements are neither especially true nor untrue. They can be neutral, unapplicable, or just not important." Eighteen items were to be sorted into this pile. These items were given a score of three. The fourth pile was labelled, "These statements are UNTRUE." Twelve items could be placed in this pile and were given a score of four. The fifth and last pile was labelled "These statements are MOST UNTRUE." Only three items were to be sorted into this pile and were given a score of five. The lower the item's score, therefore, the more important was the item as a reason for a child's placement. A mean score for each of the four indices was calculated so that the lower the mean index score, the more important was this index as a reason for placement.

The second Q-sort measuring changes since placement was administered and score in the same manner exactly except that the middle pile had to contain twenty (not eighteen) items.

Finally the respondents were administered the three page questionnaire.

Pretest

The research instrument was pretested on four natural parent respondents, two whose children were still in care, and two whose children had been returned to them.

The pretest results indicated that only slight modification of the demographic questionnaire as well as in the wording of some Q-sort items

was required. Two questions on marital status were added. The respondents did not find the Q-sort forced choice to be troublesome.

Sample

A sample population of forty natural parents was obtained through the co-operation of the Children's Service Centre which provided this study with access to its records.

Two groups of twenty natural parents each were required for the research. The first group was composed of parents who had their children returned from foster care placement (hereafter referred to as the returned group). The second group was composed of parents whose children were still in foster care placement (hereafter referred to as the non-returned group).

This division made it possible to compare like sized samples with regard to changes which have occurred since placement thus allowing determination of which variables are best associated with a child's return home from placement.

The potential sample population was delimited in the following ways.

1. Potential respondents must live within a reasonable driving distance from Montreal.
2. Potential respondents had to be contactable by telephone.
3. Potential respondents must have had a child in care for at least three weeks.
4. Potential respondents had children placed in Children's Service Centre foster family or group homes.

5. Potential respondents had children who were not yet self-supporting.
6. Potential respondents were to have last placed a child between 1971 and 1976.
7. Potential respondents were able to speak English.
8. Potential respondents did not have children in adoption probation.
9. Potential respondents were no considered emotionally fragile by their social workers.[1]

Given these initial perameters, a potential research population of 123 cases was identified.[2] Of the 123 cases, 51 were returned and 72 were non-returned. From this population, a research sample of twenty returned and twenty non-returned cases were randomly selected.[3] The selected sample was interviewed during the period March 1, 1976 to June 1, 1976.

The files of the sample were reviewed in order to evaluate the accuracy of the data obtained from the forty clients. Eventually, this became unfeasible because of lack of recorded data comparable to the obtained research data.

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[1]A list of especially fragile clients was obtained from Children's Service Center foster care workers. Clients who appeared on this list were not considered for the sample. Approximately 30 out of an original total of 368 clients were listed. Social workers, unaware of the list, later vetoed the inclusion of six clients during the process of sample selection. The veto may have biased the sample slightly in the direction of better psychologically functioning parents. However, the bias would exist for both returned and non-returned groups.

[2]A total of 368 (this figure precluded clients living too far away) was reduced to 123 when contact by telephone was considered.

[3]This total population was further limited during selection to 83 because, inspite of file recorded telephone ownership, 40 out of the 123 clients had wrong numbers recorded, telephones disconnected or private numbers installed.

Analysis of Data

The following statistics were calculated employing the standard computer programs described in the SPSS Manual.[1] Q-items were scored from one to five, with one representing most positive salience and five representing most negative salience. Background characteristics from the questionnaire and files were coded and measured.

(1) Correlation coefficients were calculated from all scored Q-items with each Q-item related within an index and for all Q-items with their related Q-index mean score to determine the internal validity of each Q-index. This analysis was done using SPSS subprogram PEARSON CORR.[2]

(2) Frequency distributions of coded backgroundcharacteristics (obtained from questionnaires and from files) and of scored Q-item distribution were calculated, using SPSS subprogram FREQUENCY.[3]

(3) Crosstabulation of background characteristics and selected Q-items, using SPSS subprogram CROSSTABS.[4]

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[1]Norman H. Nie, C. Hadlai Hill, Jean G. Jenkins, Karin Steinmenner, Dale H. Bent, SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975).

[2]Ibid, p. 280-285.

[3]Ibid, p. 181-202

[4]Ibid, p. 219-245.

(4) Mean sample scores were compared using SPSS subprogram T-TEST,[1] in the following ways: a comparison of placement status by selected background characteristics; a comparison of placement status by selected Q-items; a comparison of each Q-index score by every other index score; and a comparison of Q-1 environmental index by an index combined from the other three Q-1 indices.

(5) Multiple regression analysis of selected data, using SPSS subprogram REGRESSION.[2] This program provides for a correlation matrix of all pairs of variables entered and also performs a step-wise multiple regression analysis, using length of placement, pre-placement services, and the five Q-2 indices as independent variables, and placement status as the dependent variable. The step-wise multiple regression ranks the entered variables according to their ability to predict the dependent variable.

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[1] Ibid, p. 267-275.

[2] Ibid, p. 320-367.

III. FINDINGS

Application of the Instrument

Forty interviews, twenty with natural parents who had their children returned from foster care and twenty who had children still in care, were completed. Demographic and Q-sort data were obtained for each case.

Although Q-methodology presumes forced choice, it was not always possible for respondents to follow this structure. In this sample, half could and half could not. Those who could not experienced most difficulty filling the least extreme, or middle piles. Inspite of this, every respondent placed each item for both Q-sorts. Therefore, no information was lost.

Q-sort scores did not necessarily follow a normal distribution in half the tests completed, however a normal distribution was not a precondition for analysis. Rather, since numerical values were assigned to the order of the Q-items and since each item did receive a numerical value from each respondent, it was possible to quantify and analyze all items and indices.

Index Validation

In order to validate the Q-sort indices used in this study[1] an analysis of Pearson Correlation coefficients[2] was performed comparing all items in each index with each other and with the index itself.

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[1] Internal index validation is recommended and explained in Babbie, p. 266-267.

[2] Using SUBPROGRAM PEARSON CORR from Nie et al., SPSS Manual, 2nd ed., p. 280.

In each index, every item correlated well with at least two others. Any item which correlated with the index at a significant level of .05 was retained. Any item that elicited a significant level less than .27 was eliminated. Ten items elicited slightly higher than valid significance scores. However, the decision was made to retain these ten borderline items on the basis of their relatively significant scores and their provision of useful information. Seven items (out of an original 98 items for the two Q-sorts) were deleted. The remaining 91 items for nine indices were considered validated and were retained. The Q-sort analyses were performed with the modified indices.[1]

Profile of the Sample

Demographic data was obtained for the variables included in the study. No attempt had been made to match the returned with the non-returned group on each demographic variable because this would have been neither possible nor desirable with a random selection process.

Family Composition

At the time of placement (hereafter may be referred to as pre-placement), 25% of the total sample population was married, that is, living as a couple. Seventy-five percent were either separated, widowed, single, or divorced. At the time of the

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[1] For results of Index Validation, see Appendix D.

child's return, or for the non-returned group, at the time of the research interview (these times will both hereafter be referred to as post-placement), 35% were living as a couple and 65% were either separated, widowed, single or divorced.

At placement, 26 families had seven or more members. The remainder had between five and six members. At post-placement, 31 families were composed of four or fewer members while two had seven or more members. Twenty-four families had two or fewer children at pre-placement, while eight families had five or more children. Thirty families had two or fewer children at post-placement, while three had five or more children. The following table presents family composition distributions.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY COMPOSITION CHARACTERISTICS

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS	Pre-placement		Post-placement	
	f	%	f	%
Marital Status				
Married	9	22.5	15	37.5
Separated	14	35.0	9	22.5
Divorced	4	10.0	5	12.5
Widowed	1	2.5	2	5.0
Single	12	30.0	9	22.5
Number of Family Members				
One	0	00.00	9	22.5
Two	9	22.5	8	20.0
Three	10	25.0	9	22.5
Four	7	17.5	5	12.5
Five	3	7.5	4	10.0
Six	5	12.5	3	7.5
More than six	6	15.0	2	5.0
Number of Children				
None	0	00.0	12	30.0
One	10	25.0	11	27.5
Two	14	35.0	7	17.5
Three	4	10.0	5	12.5
Four	4	10.0	2	5.0
Five or more	8	20.0	3	7.5

Placement Characteristics, Age, Race and Resources Used

As concerned legnth of time in care, one child spent less than one month in care; eleven children spent between one and six months; seven spent between six months and one year; and twelve were in care between one and two years; while nine were in care for more than two years. In half these cases, the children were still in care "at the time of the research interview."

In the research sample, six children had been placed before while thirty-four had never been placed before.

Eight children had been placed by court order, twenty-eight had been placed voluntarily and in four cases information on court custody was unavailable.

Thirteen of the sample families were black and twenty-seven were caucasian.

From data gathered concerning resources used before and after placement, it was found that eighteen of the families had used community, social, or familial resources before placing their children, while twenty-two had used none of these resources at all before placement. Post-placement, twenty-six families used some resource(s) and fourteen had used no resource after their child had been placed. Table 2 shows these findings. (see Table 2)

Income

At pre-placement, 40% of the sample were receiving income from employment. The remaining 60% received income from welfare or unemployment insurance benefits, or from other sources (e.g. savings).

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF PLACEMENT CHARACTERISTICS, AGE, RACE AND SERVICES USED

CHARACTERISTICS	SAMPLE	
	f	%
Length in Care		
Less than one month	1	2.5
one month - six months	11	27.5
six months - one year	7	17.5
one year - two years	12	30.0
over two years	9	22.5
Age at Placement		
0-2	14	35.0
3-5	6	15.0
6-8	8	20.0
9-11	6	15.0
12 and over	6	15.0
Placed Before?		
Yes	6	15.0
No	34	85.0
Court Custody		
Yes	8	20.0
No	28	70.0
Unknown	4	10.0
Race		
Black	13	32.5
Caucasion	27	67.5
Services Used Before Placement?		
Yes	18	45.0
No	22	55.0
Services Used After Placement?		
Yes	36	65.0
No	14	35.0

At post-placement, 57½% were working and 42½% were living on welfare, unemployment insurance or other benefits. Forty-seven and a half percent were receiving welfare (not including IUC or other types of assistance) at pre-placement; at post-placement, 30% were receiving welfare. Table 3 presents these findings.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Economic Characteristics	Pre-placement f	Pre-placement %	Post-placement f	Post-placement %
Income Amount				
Below $5,000.00	29	72.5	19	47.5
$5,001.00 -$7,000.00	6	15.0	11	27.5
$7,001.00 - $9,000.00	3	7.5	4	10.0
$9,001.00 - $11,000.00	2	5.0	3	7.5
Over $11,000.00	0	0.0	3	7.5
Income Source				
One job	15	37.5	19	47.5
Two jobs	1	2.5	4	10.0
Welfare	19	47.5	12	30.0
Unemployment Insurance	1	2.5	2	5.0
Other (e.g. savings)	4	10.0	3	7.5

Calculation was made to determine what proportion of the sample could be considered poor according to an official standard.[1] Seventy-two and a half percent of the sample population were calculated at or below this poverty level at the time of placement. Forty-five percent fell on or below the poverty level at post-placement.

[1]The guidleine employed bv this study are set out in "Income Distribution by Size in Canada: Preliminary Estimates" (Statistics Canada, 1974):7.

This standard presumes that "families who, on an average, spent 62% or more of their income on this type of goods and services (i.e. essential) were considered to be in straightened circumstances."

Crosstabulations and T-Tests

Crosstabulation of Placement Status by Selected Q-items and Selected Background Characteristics

An analysis of Q-item frequency[1] was performed on Q-items for the two Q-sorts. Items with a frequency of five or more at either extreme of the Q-sorts (either extreme positive salience with a score of 1 or extreme negative salience with a score of 5) were selected for crosstabulation[2] with placement status (returned or non-returned). The selected Q-items are presented in Appendix C.

Results from the crosstabulation analysis revealed no significant differences between the returned and non-returned groups as regarded the selected Q-items.

Crosstabulation of selected background characteristics[3] by placement status revealed significant differences between the returned and non-returned groups in post-placement family size and post-placement number of children.[4]

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[1]Using SUBPROGRAM FREQUENCIES from Nie et al., SPSS Manual (2nd Ed.) p. 181.

[2]Using SUBPROGRAM CROSSTABS from Nie et al., SPSS Manual (2nd Ed.) p. 219.

[3]These selected characteristics included pre- and post-placement marital status, pre- and post-placement income amounts and sources, pre- and post-family size and number of children, length of placement, age of child, and if placed before. Except for the last variable these were not dicotomously coded and therefore used in crosstabulation before being recoded for use in similar T-Test analysis.

[4]An explanation suggested for this finding is that the non-returned group have at least one child, often more, still in care. This would imply a significant reduction in family size and number of children. The returned group have one child, or more, returned home, thereby significantly increasing family size and number of children relative to the non-returned group.

The following table shows these significant results.

TABLE 4

CROSSTABULATION OF PLACEMENT STATUS BY SELECTED BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics / Placement Status	Returned	Non-returned	P value
Post-placement family size			
One member	0	9	.012
Two members	4	4	
Three members	6	3	
Four members	4	1	
Five or more members	6	3	
Post-placement number of children			
No children	1[a]	11	.006
One child	8	3	
Two children	8	4	
Three children	2	0	
Four or more children	1	2	

[a]In one case the child was not living at home weekdays but had been nevertheless returned to the natural parent's private care.

T-Test of Placement Status by Background Characteristics

A T-test[1] (comparison of sample means) of placement status by background characteristics was performed to determine the level of similarity between the returned and non-returned groups. It was assumed that if the groups were not significantly different with regard to their background characteristics, differences between the two groups elicited from analysis of Q-indices could be attributed

[1]T-Tests were done using SUBPROGRAM T-TEST from Nie et al., SPSS Manual 2nd ed. p. 267.

with more confidence to the Q-sort variables.

Results from the T-test revealed significant differences between the returned and non-returned groups in three areas: the post-placement number of family members; the length of placement; and the number of resources used before placement. The returned group had more family members at a significance level of .003[1]. The children still in care (non-returned) were more likely to have been in care longer at a significance level of .027 and their families were more likely to have used more resources before placement at a significance level of .012. Apart from these three factors, no other significant differences between the two groups were indicated.[2] The following table presents results from this T-Test. (see next page).

Analysis of Q-Sort Data

Background characteristics did little to explain differences between the returned and non-returned groups. A further analysis was conducted to determine whether reasons for placement and/or changes since placement might account for differences between these two groups.

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[1] This has already been explained.

[2] In comparison of means the P value of the difference between returned and non-returned groups with regard to post-placement number of children was .200. However, when comparison was by category, the P value was .006 and has been explained.

TABLE 5

T-TEST FOR PLACEMENT STATUS BY BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics	Returned	Non-Returned	P value[b]
Pre-placement Marital Status	1.80[a]	1.75	.714
	+-.410	+-.444	
Post-placement Marital Status	1.65	1.60	.752
	+-.489	+-.503	
Pre-placement Income Source	1.85	1.60	.250
	+-.745	+-.598	
Post-placement Income Source	1.50	1.60	.664
	+-.607	+-.821	
Pre-placment Income Amount	1.40	1.40	1.000
	+-.754	+-.681	
Post-placement Income Amount	1.80	1.75	.852
	+-.834	+-.851	
Pre-placement Family Size	2.95	2.90	.920
	+-1.468	+-1.651	
Post-placement Family Size	3.60	2.25	.003*
	+-1.142	+-1.482	
Pre-placement number of children	2.30	2.40	.773
	+-1.031	+-1.142	
Post-placement number of children	2.80	2.15	.200
	+-1.240	+-1.843	
Length of placement	1.35	1.70	.027*
	+-.489	+-.470	
Age of child	2.60	2.60	1.000
	+-1.501	+-1.501	
Placed Before?	1.90	1.80	.389
	+-.308	+-.410	
Pre-placement services used	0.35	1.20	.012*
	+-.671	+-1.240	

TABLE 5 (cont'd)

Characteristics	Returned	Non-Returned	P value[b]
Post-placement services used	1.25 +-1.164	1.20 +-1.576	.910
Race	1.60 +-.503	1.75 +-.444	.324
Court Custody	2.85 +-2.681	2.15 +-1.663	.328

[a]These numbers represent the means of the numerically coded characteristics plus or minus S.D.

[b]P values are from 2-Tailed T-Tests.

*These are significant.

T-TEST OF PLACEMENT STATUS BY INDEXED REASONS FOR PLACEMENT

A group t-test comparing the indexed reasons for placement, that is the mean index score results from Q-1, for the returned and non-returned groups, showed that the two groups had scored similarly for the four Q-1 indices. The following table presents this finding.

TABLE 6

RESULTS OF GROUPS T-TEST OF PLACEMENT STATUS BY Q-1 INDEX SCORES

	Returned	Non-returned	P value**
parent behavior index	3.2370* +-.415	3.1585 +-.522	0.602
child behavior index	3.2325 +-.429	3.2380 +-.422	0.968
personal circumstances	3.0409 +.-281	3.0364 +-.409	0.968
environmental circumstances	2.7415 +-.493	2.6840 +-.403	0.691

*These numbers represented the mean score + or -S.D.
**P values are from 2-Tailed T-Test.

T-Tests For Q-1 Index Scores

As well, for the total sample, the lowest mean index score[1] with regard to reasons for placement, was calculated for the environmental circumstances category at 2.7127. The T-Test analyses showed that this score was significantly different to the three other index scores, whether compared individually or in combination. The following table represents this analysis.

TABLE 7

T-TEST FOR COMPARISON OF Q-1 MEAN INDEX SCORES

		P- value[c] when compared with these indices			
Index	Mean Score	Parent Behavior	Child Behavior	Personal Circumstances	Environmental
Parent Behavior	3.1977[b] +-.467	1.000	0.740	0.122	0.000
Child Behavior	3.2352 +-.420	0.740	1.000	0.053	0.000
Personal Circumstances	3.0386 +-.346	0.122	0.053	1.000	0.000
Environmental Circumstances	2.7127 +-.448	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
Combined Index[a]	3.1572				0.000

[a]This category represents the combination of the three indices: parent behavior, child behavior and personal circumstances.

[b]These numbers represent the mean score plus or minus S.D.

[c]P values are from 2-Tailed T-Test.

[1]The lower the score, the more salient the category as a reason for placement.

Similar analysis of Q-2 mean index scores for the total sample was not necessary as the study was not concerned with post-placement change in general but rather in post-placement changes that facilitated a child's return home. The total sample mean scores were, however, calculated and are presented in order to show that changes in general didnot necessarily occur in the areas perceived as reasons for placement.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON OF Q-1 AND Q-2 MEAN INDEX SCORES

Index[a]	Q-1 Mean Score	Q-2 Mean Score
Parent Behavior	3.1977	2.7094
Child Behavior	3.2352	2.7694
Personal Circumstances	3.0386	3.0333
Environmental Circumstance	2.7127	2.8500
Foster Care Circumstances		3.4028

[a]This represents both Q-1 (reasons for placement) categories and Q-2 (changes since placement) categories except Foster Care Circumstances which is pertinent only to Q-2.

T-Test of Placement Status with Q-2 Index Scores

In order to determine whether placement status might be explained by changes since the placement of a child, a T-Test comparing the Q-2 index scores of the returned and non-returned groups was performed. A significant difference between the two groups emerged for the index measuring changes in environmental circumstances since placement at a .008 significance level.[1]

[1]Because a result in this direction was predicted, P value for one-tailed probability may be employed, producing a P value of .004 for this variable.

The results of this test are shown in the following table.

TABLE 9

T-TEST OF PLACEMENT STATUS BY Q-2 INDEX SCORES

Index	Returned	Non-returned	P-value[b]
Changes in Parent Behavior	2.7562[a] +-.422	2.6625 +-.408	0.480
Changes in Child Behavior	2.8500 +-.350	2.6889 +-.320	0.137
Changes in Personal Circumstances	3.0409 +-.305	3.0364 +-.317	0.968
Changes in Environmental Circumstances	2.6667 +-.373	3.0333 +-.449	0.008*
Foster Care Circumstances	3.3833 +-.642	3.4222 +-.409	0.821

[a]These numbers represent the mean scores plus or minus S.D.

[b]P-values are from 2-Tailed T-Tests.

T-Test of Q-2 Environmental Index Items

Based on the results of the preceding analysis, a T-Test was done comparing placement status with the individual items from the changes in environmental circumstances index. The results of this test showed that significant differences between the returned and non-returned groups existed for three environmental items: that

there was now a homemaker available at a P value of .058; that there was now more income for the family at a P value of .021; and that now relatives were available to help with child care tasks at a P value of .030. These results are shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10

T-TEST OF PLACEMENT STATUS BY INDIVIDUAL ITEMS FROM THE Q-2 ENVIRONMENTAL INDEX

Item	Returned	Non-returned	P value[b]
"Parent(s) no longer as much in debt"	2.60[a] +-.940	2.90 +-1.021	.340
"Parent(s) got a job"	3.00 +-.562	2.85 +-.988	.560
"There are now homemaker services available for the family"	2.75 +-.967	3.30 +-.801	.058*
"There are now day care services for the family"	3.00 +-.562	2.95 +-.826	.824
"There is now enough income to support the child"	2.50 +-.827	3.20 +-1.005	.021*
"Parent(s) has a better or larger home"	2.80 +-.834	3.10 +-.718	.230
"Financial difficulties are no longer serious"	2.65 +-.933	3.10 +-1.021	.154
"There is now help available for looking after the child"	2.55 +-.945	2.60 +-.883	.864

TABLE 10 (cont'd)

Item	Returned	Non-returned	P value[b]
"Relatives are nearby and willing to help"	2.70 +-1.302	3.50 +-.889	0.30*
"There have been no significant changes in the family's resources"	3.55	3.25	.341

[a]These numbers represent the mean Q-score for each item: the lower the score the more salient the item in terms of post-placement changes.

[b]P-values are from 2-Tailes T-Tests.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Finally, a step-wise multiple regression[1] test was performed on selected variables to explain the variance between the returned and non-returned groups. The selected variables included the two variables, length of placement[2] and pre-placement resources used, that demonstrated significant differences relative to placement status from among the background characteristics. Also included were the five Q-2 indices, changes in parent behavior, changes in child behavior, changes in personal circumstances, changes in environmental circumstances, and foster care circumstances.

The variable best accounting for the variance between the returned and non-returned group was found to be changes in

[1]Using SUBPROGRAM REGRESSION from Nie, et al., SPSS Manual (2nd ed) p.320.

[2]This variable has been found to have predictive value by Maas and Engler but Fanshel found it to be less valuable. For purposes of T-Test and Multiple Regression analysis, length was dicotomously coded so that the difference was between under one year versus over one year in care.

environmental circumstances. This variable appeared first in the multiple regression print-out, correlated best with return of child and explained seventeen percent of the variance in placement status. Length in care emerged second in terms of this analysis. The following table demonstrates the results.

TABLE 11

STEP-WISE MULTIPLE REGRESSION WITH SELECTED VARIABLES

Summary Table

Indenpendent Variables	Multiple Correlation Coefficient	Square of Correlation Coefficient[a]	RSQ Change	Simple Correlation Coefficient
Changes in Environmental Circumstances Index	0.41474	0.17201	0.17201	0.41474
Length of Placement	0.60520	0.36627	0.19426	0.35044
Number of resources used before placement	0.63416	0.40216	0.03589	0.40081
Changes in Personal Circumstances Index	0.64654	0.41801	0.01585	0.09123
Changes in Child Behavior Index	0.65339	0.42692	0.00891	-0.23942
Foster Care Circumstances Index	0.65641	0.43087	0.00395	0.03703
Changes in Parent Behavior Index	0.65682	0.43142	0.00054	-0.11508

[a]Cumulative measure of the proportion of the variance in score explained by the independent variable.

IV. DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the Findings

The background characteristics of the study's total sample population were similar to the populations investigated in former studies.[1]

It was expected, for example, that many from the sample would be single at the time of placement. This finding is also reported by Skuja.[2] It was also shown that although fewer parents were single at post-placement, many were still single. As well, no significant difference was revealed between returned and non-returned groups regarding pre- and post-placement marital status. It appeared that a natural parent is likely to be a single parent but that status change does not often occur after placement nor is this change associated with a child's return home.

Findings on income source and amount were expected and similar to findings reported in previous research. Almost half the sample were receiving welfare at the time of placement. Jenkins and Sauber reported that 38% of their sample were receiving public assistance prior to placement.[3] Post-placement, the proportion receiving welfare diminished to less than a third of the total sample. It appears that natural parents are likely to be welfare

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[1]This includes the sample used in the studies by Jenkins and Sauber, Skuja and Maas and Engler.

[2]Skuja, p. 43.

[3]Jenkins and Sauber, p. 46.

recipients but after placing their children, close to a fifth of those on welfare can get off the welfare rolls and gain employment. However, as no significant difference was found between the returned and non-returned groups for post-placement welfare status this movement into employment was not positively associated with a child's return home.[1]

The incidence of poverty is higher among families placing children in foster care than for the rest of the population. Close to three-quarters of the sample were calculated to be living on or below the employed poverty line[2] at the time of placement. The proportion of the Canadian population living on or below this poverty line is 12.3%.[3] For Quebec, this proportion is 15.3%.[4] According to this standard, natural parents are six times more likely than the Canadian population (and four times more likely than the Quebec population) to be poor.

Although poverty status often imporved after placement, this improvement was not significantly associated with returned status.

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[1] Results showed that non-returned was more likely associated with getting a job, whereas returned was more likely associated with remaining on welfare. Neither result was significant, however.

This finding suggests a conflict between policies to get parents off welfare and also to return children home to their parents.

[2] Income Distribution by Size, p. 7.

[3] Ibid, p. 16.

[4] Ibid.

As regards the other characteristics investigated, the sample profile appeared similar to sample profiles presented in other research. The conclusion was drawn that this sample was a fairly representative one. The sample was comprised of parents who were often single parents, living on welfare, or else on marginal incomes, with young children whose children remain in care for more than a year.

As concerned resources these families had used pre-placement, nearly half the families had used no child care related resources at all, including friends and extended families. Even post-placement, after agency contact, 35% had not used any formal or informal resource at all. For a third of the sample, it seems that foster care was the only resource used at any time.

The remainder of the analyses consisted of comparisons between the two (returned and non-returned) groups. The two groups were judged from T-Test results to be demographically matched. That is,there were no significant differences for investigated demographic variables except three: length of placement, family size, and number of pre-placement services used. As has been suggested, family size would be expected to be significantly smaller for the non-returned group. Therefore length of placement and number of pre-placement services used were the only two variables that differentiated the groups significantly, and were unexplained.

The longer the placement, the less likely was a child to be in the returned group. This resembles a finding reported by Maas and Engler "that generally, the children who returned home were the children who had been dependent a much shorter time, on the

average, than those remaining in care."[1] Fanshell did not agree that length in care necessarily had such predictive value, indicating that in his study "almost a fourth of the children left care after a sojourn of two years."[2] However, because of the salience it revealed in this study's T-Tests it was included in further analysis, along with the number of pre-placement services used.

Not only were the two groups demographically similar but their reasons for placement were all alike. When the two groups were compared as to their reasons for placement, whether for reasons of parent behavior, child behavior, personal circumstances, or environmental circumstances, no significant differences appeared. That is, the reason for placement did not influence the eventual return or non-return of the child. Therefore, no prediction could be made on the basis of reasons for placement about a child's return.[3] This finding further supports the similarity of the two groups.

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[1] Maas and Engler, p. 350.

[2] Fanshell, "Status Changes of Children in Foster Care," p. 149. In this study, 25% were discharged in the first year of care, 13% in the second year, 8% in the third, 9% in the fourth and, 7% in the fifth year.

[3] This finding is not necessarily contrary to findings from Sinyard's study concerned with workers' predictions of length of placement. She found that of the three predictors, selected from former research, to predict duration of care, reason for placement ranked third, while parent attitude and agency-parent contacts ranked first and second. This can be found in Sinyard, p. 57.

It was found, as predicted, that negative environmental circumstances accounted for placement cause more significantly than did negative parent behavior, child behavior, or personal circumstances. Considering the variable had not been as thoroughly investigated in previous research as had the other variables, this finding has important implications for foster care policy and further research. However, based originally on research in related areas and on observation, this finding was predicted. Given the large proportion of the sample living on marginal incomes, it is understandable that much of the reason for child placement would lie in lack of environmental resources.

The remaining discussion is concerned with the comparative differences, rather than similarities, between the returned and the non-returned group. An examination of relevant post-placement changes revealed the significant difference between the two groups occurred in terms of environmental changes. Those parents whose children were returned to them perceived a significantly greater improvement in their environmental circumstances than those parents whose children had not been returned. Further, only in this area of change (i.e. environmental circumstances) was there any significant difference revealed between the returned and non-returned groups.

Although both groups perceived a high level of change (improvement) in their own parental behavior, no significant difference appeared in this area between the two groups. Again, although both groups perceived change in child behavior, no significant differences appeared to distinguish the returned from the non-returned. Personal circumstances did not, on the whole, change for

either group; nor did foster care circumstances rate importance. Neither index revealed any significance in differentiating the returned from the non-returned group.[1]

It was concluded that when parents experience improvements in their environmental circumstances, their parental behavior and their child's behavior, it is likely the children will be returned home. However, if parents experience imporvements in their parental behavior and their child's behavior, but not in their environmental circumstances there is no indication that their children will be returned to them. It is suggested that the important variable accounting for return home is the change in the natural family's environmental circumstances. In other words, when environmental circumstances improve (from the parent's point of view) a child will more likely return home.[2]

The most meaningful items, in terms of predicting return, from among the possible changes in environmental circumstances, were the following three: increased income, availability of homemaker services, and proximity of helpful relatives. Both economic, and formal and informal resources improve likelihood of return.

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[1] Refer to Table 9.

[2] Somewhat contradicting the argument that suggests that changes in behavior produce changes in environment, or visa versa, it appears that behavior changes occur in both cases (returned and non-returned) but that environmental changes only occur in the case of returned.

How much of the variance between returned and non-returned can be attributed to change in environmental circumstances? Given the high degree of change experienced in parental behavior, how much variance between the groups can be explained by this variable? How much can be explained by changes in child behavior and personal circumstances and by foster care circumstances themselves? Given the unexplained significance of length of placement and number of pre-placement services used, how much variance can be explained by these two variables?

The multiple regression analysis done to answer these above questions, revealed that of all the selected variables, environmental circumstance improvement best accounted for the variance between the returned and non-returned groups. Length of placement and number of pre-placement services used ranked second and third in accounting for group variance. The four remaining variables accounted in this order: personal circumstance changes, child behavior changes, foster care circumstances, and finally parent behavior changes. Of these variables, child behavior changes and parent behaviour changes correlated negatively with return.

Change in environmental circumstance correlated well with return home and alone accounted for 47% of the variance between return and non-return. The first three variables, environmental change, length, and pre-placement services, all correlated well, and together accounted for 40% of the groups' variance. The last four variables did little to explain the variance, nor did they correlate well with return.

In summary, the research showed that many sample families placing their children were poor. It also revealed that lack of environmental resources was considered the most important cause of child placement. In addition, it showed, that children returned home when their natural families experienced improvements in their environmental circumstances.

This suggests that, although, environmental need has not been explicitly considered in former child welfare research (mainly because it rarely directly precipitates placement), further research in this area might be fruitful.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study suggest that some foster care placements might be averted if child welfare policies existed to offer families at risk of placing their children environmental services and resources such as income transfer and more flexible homemkaer services. Similarly, if more effort was directed at improving the environmental circumstances of families with children already in care, discharge would be facilitated and length of care reduced.

This is not to suggest that the direction of foster care remedial services (e.g. casework) change abruptly, but that they be substantially supplemented (e.g. with environmental services) in order to maintain children in their own homes or to facilitate their return.

Limitations

There are some limitations to this study. Because the major research concern was with what precipitates entry into and exit from

foster care, rather than how, these occur, the study did not include variables related to process. There are, however, several such variables whose inclusion would have strengthened the study.

Francis Sinyard in her research on prediction of length of care, found that two variables, not included in this study, demonstrated salience in predicting length of placement: parental attitude and the number of parent-agency contacts.[1] She also found reason for placement to have some importance in this question. This variable was included in this study and found to be non-significant in terms of discharge. However, as length of placement emerged important in terms of discharge in this study, the inclusion of parental attitude toward placement and parent-agency contact, might have qualified the findings of this study.

As well, Fanshel found that parental visiting was an important variable in some foster care discharge[2], as well, might have qualified results.

Another limitations was that the results are based on parents' perceptions without professional verification. The reasons for this approach have been given; however, it does comprise a limitations and results need to be interpreted with this in mind.

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[1]Sinyard, p. 57.

[2]Fanshel, "Status Changes of Children in Foster Care," p. 155.

In addition, the study assumed the conviction, expressed and documented in a recent Child Welfare League Study,that the incidence and length of foster care placement must be reduced.[1] Because of this position, and also because of time and scope limitations, the effects of placement and/or return on the children themselves were not investigated.

Finally, it was not feasible to investigate the permanency of discharge. It is possible that some of the returned group did not remain returned over a period of time. This study, was however, a short retrospective (data was collected only for the period 1971-1976) study without recourse to information to evaluate the quality of discharge.

Recommendations for Further Research

A prospective study, to examine the questions examined in this retrospective study, is recommended for reasons of information accuracy and accessibility to current professional sources, as well as the possibility of examining quality of discharge.

The findings from the question on use of resources by natural parents showed that many families used no resources either before or during foster care placement. It would be interesting to determine the reasons for this.

As well, the environmental index, although composed of similar (environmental) items, could be divided into economic and service

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[1]Mary Ann Jones, Renee Neuman and Ann W. Shyne, A Second Chance for Families, (New York: Research Center, Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1976): 4-12.

(informal and formal) categories to determine the relative importance of each in terms of placement and discharge.

Finally, it is recommended that further explicit investigation of environmental issues as they affect consumers of social services, be undertaken.

V. SUMMARY

This study focused on the relationship between environmental deficit and foster care placement. The questions central to the study were: (1) how important is environmental deficit as a cause of foster care placement and (2) how important is the improvement of environmental circumstances, relative to improvement in parental behavior, child behavior and personal circumstance, to the eventual return of a foster child. These questions were asked in a context comparing psychological (behavior) issues versus environmental issues with regard to the placement and discharge of foster children.

Employing Q-sort technique , data was gathered from natural parents on the reasons for placement and on changes since placement. The reasons and changes were categorized into four distinctive child welfare related categories. This was done to compare the psychological (behavior) and environmental points of view. The categories were parent behavior and child behavior, representative of psychological issues and environmental circumstances and personal circumstances, representative of environmental issues.

The research sample was composed of forty natural parents who had placed their children through the Children's Service Centre in Montreal. Half of the sample consisted of parents whose children had been returned; the other half consisted of parents whose children remained in care.

Respondents were required to sort out first, the most important reasons for their child's placement and second, the most important

changes since placement. Selected background characteristics of the families and placement were also examined.

The results of the study showed that a high proportion of parents placing their children were poor, that environmental conditions did most significantly account for placement, and their improvement could most significantly predict a child's return.

Length of time in care also significantly accounted for differences between the returned and non-returned groups.

The combination of environmental change and length of time in care accounted for 36% of the amount of variance between the return and non-returned groups.

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Appendix A - Covering Letter

McGill University
March 4, 1976

There is a research study being done with the help of the Children's Service Center so that better directions-for-service for natural parents and their children can be considered. The study is being done by Mrs. Arleen Paré and I am asking for natural parents to take part in this study. Participation in the project should not take up more than 45 minutes of your time and would be greatly appreciated. I will be telephoning you to talk about the study and ask if you are interested. I need the help of natural parents to do this study and hope you will be able to participate in it.

Yours truly,

Arleen Paré

Appendix B - Questionnaire

Ia) What was your marital status at the time of your child's placement?

1. married ( )
2. deparated ( )
3. divorced ( )
4. widowed ( )
5. single ( )

Ib) What was your marital status at the time of your child's return/or at the time of this interview?

1. married ( )
2. separated ( )
3. divorced ( )
4. widowed ( )
5. single ( )

IIa) What was the source of your family's income at the time of your child's placement?

1. wages from one job ( )
2. wages from two jobs ( )
3. public assistance (welfare) ( )
4. unemployment insurance ( )
5. other ( )

IIb) What was the source of your family's income at the time of your child's return/or at the time of this interview?

1. wages from one job ( )
2. wages from two jobs ( )
3. public assistance (welfare) ( )
4. unemployment insurance ( )
5. other ( )

IIIa) What was the annual amount of your family's income at the time of your child's placement?

1. below $5,000 ( )
2. between $5,001 and $7,000 ( )
3. between $7,001 and $9,000 ( )
4. between $9,001 and $11,000 ( )
5. over $11,000 ( )

IIIb) What was the annual amount of your family's income at the time of your child's return/or at the time of this interview?

1. below $5,000 ( )
2. between $5,001 and $7,000 ( )
3. between $7,001 and $9,000 ( )
4. between $9,001 and $11,000 ( )
5. over $11,000 ( )

IVa) How many people were living in your family unit and dependent on the above reported (IIa) total annual income at the time of your child's placement?

1. two ( )
2. three ( )
3. four ( )
4. five ( )
5. six ( )
6. seven ( )
7. more than seven, specify how many ( ) _____

IVb) How many people were in your family unit and dependent on the total annual income reported in question IIIb at the time of your child's return/ or at the time of this interview?

1. one ( )
2. two ( )
3. three ( )
4. four ( )
5. five ( )
6. six ( )
7. more than six, specify how many ( ) _____

Va) How many children were living at home at the time of your child's placement?

1. one ( )
2. two ( )
3. three ( )
4. four ( )
5. five ( )
6. more than five, specify how many ( ) _____

Vb) How many children were living at home at the time of your child's return/or at the time of this interview?

1. none ( )
2. one ( )
3. two ( )
4. three ( )
5. four ( )
6. five ( )
7. more than five, specify how many ( ) _____

VI) From the time of your child's last placement to the time of return, how long was the placement/or from the time of your child's last placement to the time of this interview, how long has the placement been?

1. less than one month ( )
2. 1 month (plus 1 day - 6 months ( )
3. 6 months (plus 1 day) - one year ( )
4. one year (plus 1 day) - two years ( )
5. more than two years, specify how long ( ) _____

VII) How old was your child when last placed?

1. 0 - 2 ( )
2. 3 - 5 ( )
3. 6 - 8 ( )
4. 9 - 11 ( )
5. 12 or more ( )

VIII) Has your child even been placed before?

1. yes ( )
2. no ( )

IX. The following is a list of resources.

a) Which of them were available to you at the time of your child's placement?
b) Which of them were available to you at the time of your child's return/or at the time of the interview?

a)			b)
( )	1.	day care	( )
( )	2.	homemaker services	( )
( )	3.	after school programs	( )
( )	4.	therapy for self/child/or family	( )
( )	5.	increased financial aid	( )
( )	6.	babysitters	( )
( )	7.	relatives who could help you	( )
( )	8.	neighbours who could help you	( )
( )	9.	unknown	( )

Appendix C

List of Selected Q-Items for Crosstabulation with Placement Status

I. List of Positivity Salient Selected Q-1 Items:

1. "Parent was a single parent"
2. "One parent (or both) was physically ill."
3. One parent (or both) was in hospital for physical illness.
4. One parent (or both) did not have enough patience.
5. Parents fought.
6. One parent (or both) had emotional problems.
7. There were no relatives nearby to help.
8. There were alot of financial difficulties.
9. There was not enough income to continue supporting the child properly.

II. List of Positivity Salient Selected Q-2 Items:

1. Parent(s) feels emotionally better.
2. Parent(s) feels more ready to take responsibility of parenthood.
3. One parent(or both) is more likely to care for the child properly now.
4. Child is now more controllable.
5. There are fewer children at home now.
6. One parent (or both) is not longer in the hospital for physical reasons.

III. List of Negatively Salient Selected Q-1 Items:

1. Child was uncontrollable.
2. One parent (or both) did not like the child.
3. Parent(s) drank.
4. One parent (or both) was in jail.
5. One parent (or both) took drugs.
6. One parent (or both) did not want the responsibility of parenthood.

IV. List of Negatively Salient Selected Q-2 Items:

1. Foster family had trouble caring for the child.
2. Foster family and natural family had trouble getting along.
3. Child ran away from the foster home.
4. Child experienced many different foster homes.
5. Relatives are nearby and willing to help.
6. There were no important changes in the family's resources.
7. Child's behavior had become worse.
8. Parent is no longer a single parent.

Appendix D

Results of Index Validation

Q-1 Parent Behavior Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	1.000[a]	.093	.248	.106	.217	-.321	.208	.162	.008	.129	.265	.430	.372
	.001[b]	.565	.123	.513	.177	.043	.196	.316	.958	.425	.098	.006	.018
2	.093	1.000	.082	.002	.0	.412	.156	.113	.339	.275	.095	.373	.489
	.565	.001	.613	.988	1.000	.008	.334	.485	.032	.086	.559	.018	.001
3	.248	.082	1.000	.046	.309	.191	.065	-.011	.281	.090	.195	.420	.475
	.123	.613	.001	.778	.810	.237	.689	.944	.078	.578	.227	.007	.002
4	- .106	-.002	.046	1.000	.172	.294	.302	.222	.107	.160	.033	-.014	.447
	.513	.988	.778	.001	.287	.065	.057	.168	.509	.322	.838	.930	.004
5	.217	.0	.039	.172	1.000	-.161	.391	-.031	-.154	-.248	.213	.077	.217
	.177	1.000	.810	.287	.001	.320	.012	.847	.342	.122	.185	.636	.178
6	-.321	.412	.191	.294	-.161	1.000	.019	.236	.255	.160	-.026	.204	.434
	.043	.008	.237	.065	.320	.001	.906	.141	.112	.324	.870	.207	.005
7	.208	.156	.065	.302	.391	.019	1.000	.405	.097	.334	.222	.154	.501
	.196	.334	.689	.057	.012	.906	.001	.009	.552	.035	.168	.343	.001
8	.162	.113	-.011	.222	-.031	.236	.405	1.000	.217	.281	.389	.045	.451
	.316	.485	.944	.168	.847	.141	.009	.001	.178	.078	.013	.780	.003
9	.008	.339	.281	.107	-.154	.255	.097	.217	1.000	.085	.322	.156	.433
	.958	.032	.078	.509	.342	.112	.552	.178	.001	.599	.043	.336	.005
10	.129	.275	.090	.160	-.248	.160	.334	.281	.085	1.000	.008	.282	.433
	.425	.086	.578	.322	.122	.324	.035	.078	.599	.001	.959	.078	.005
11	.265	.095	.195	.033	.213	-.026	.222	.389	.322	.008	1.000	.087	.485
	.098	.559	.227	.838	.185	.870	.168	.013	.043	.959	.001	.591	.002
12	.430	.373	.420	-.014	.077	.204	.154	.045	.156	.282	.087	1.000	.622
	.006	.018	.007	.930	.636	.207	.343	.780	.336	.078	.591	.001	.001
13	.372	.489	.475	.447	.217	.434	.501	.451	.433	.433	.485	.622	1.000
	.018	.001	.002	.004	.178	.005	.001	.003	.005	.005	.002	.001	.001

KEY: 1 - Parent(s) did not take care of the child properly 2 - Parent(s) did not like the child 3 - One parent (or both) did not have enough patience 4- Parent(s) drank 5 - Parent(s) in a mental institution 6 - Parents fought 7 - One parent (or both) was in jail 8 - One parent (or both) took drugs 9 - One parent (or both) was hurting the child too much 10 - Parent(s) left the child for a very long time 11 - One parent (or both had emotional problems or was emotionally ill 12 - One parent (or both did not want the responsibility of parenthood 13 - Parent Behavior - Index.

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value.

Appendix D-1

Q-1 Child Behavior Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	1.000[a]	.285	.165	.424	.217	.531	.123	.210	.313	.107	.071	.148	.507
	.001[b]	.074	.308	.006	.178	.001	.447	.192	.049	.509	.663	.361	.001
2.	.285	1.000	.223	.130	.275	.335	.130	-.131	-.136	.0	.146	-.095	.279
	.074	.001	.165	.420	.086	.034	.421	.418	.402	1.000	.368	.558	.081
3.	.165	.223	1.000	.260	.554	.570	.378	.106	.167	.440	-.039	-.216	.553
	.308	.165	.001	.105	.001	.001	.016	.514	.301	.004	.809	.179	.001
4.	.424	.130	.260	1.000	.025	.383	.366	.143	.202	.282	.0	.052	.481
	.006	.420	.105	.001	.875	.015	.020	.376	.210	.078	1.000	.750	.002
5.	.217	.275	.554	.025	1.000	.492	.447	.212	.299	.455	.258	-.138	.653
	.178	.086	.001	.875	.001	.001	.007	.188	.061	.003	.108	.394	.001
6.	.531	.335	.570	.383	.492	1.000	.470	.060	.412	.121	.213	-.018	.670
	.001	.034	.001	.015	.001	.001	.002	.713	.008	.456	.186	.909	.001
7.	.123	.130	.378	.366	.447	.470	1.000	.291	.641	.425	.511	.365	.741
	.447	.421	.016	.020	.007	.002	.001	.068	.001	.006	.001	.021	.001
8.	.210	-.131	.106	.143	.212	.060	.291	1.000	.503	.106	.360	.356	.482
	.192	.418	.514	.370	.188	.713	.068	.001	.001	.515	.022	.024	.002
9.	.313	-.136	.167	.202	.299	.412	.641	.503	1.000	.288	.576	.383	.708
	.049	.402	.301	.210	.061	.068	.001	.001	.001	.071	.001	.015	.001
10.	.107	.0	.440	.282	.455	.121	.425	.106	.288	1.000	.094	.024	.511
	.509	1.000	.004	.078	.003	.456	.006	.515	.071	.001	.562	.880	.001
11.	.071	.146	-.039	.0	.258	.213	.511	.360	.576	.094	1.000	.478	.478
	.663	.368	.809	1.000	.108	.186	.001	.022	.001	.562	.001	.002	.002
12.	.148	-.095	-.216	.052	-.138	-.018	.365	.356	.383	.024	.478	1.000	.334
	.361	.558	.179	.750	.394	.909	.021	.024	.015	.880	.002	.001	.035
13	.507	.279	.553	.481	.653	.670	.741	.482	.708	.511	.478	.334	1.000
	.001	.081	.001	.002	.001	.001	.001	.002	.001	.001	.002	.035	.001

KEY: 1 - Child was mentally handicapped 2 - Child was physically handicapped
3 - Child ran away 4 - Child was dangerous to the well-being of others
5 - Child was having trouble at school 6 - Child was in trouble with police
7 - Child was showing delinquent behavior 8 - Child was withdrawn
9 - Child 3as uncontrollable 10 - Child did not act his age
11 - Child seemed disturbed 12 - Child did not get along with brothers and/or sisters 13 - Child behavior index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value.

Appendix D-2

Q-1 Personal Circumstances Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	1.000[a]	.398	-.162	.374	.143	.015	-.190	.108	.200	.059	.009	.048	.379
	.001[b]	.013	.316	.017	.378	.926	.240	.532	.216	.716	.955	.764	.016
2.	.398	1.000	-.077	.258	-.124	.165	-.003	.249	-.158	.305	.074	.210	.535
	.013	.001	.633	.108	.445	.306	.981	.121	.330	.055	.649	.193	.001
3.	-.162	-.077	1.000	-.164	.286	-.195	.429	.0	-.031	-.105	-.007	-.212	.268
	.316	.633	.001	.342	.073	.227	.006	1.000	.849	.516	.966	.188	.093
4.	.374	.258	-.164	1.000	.051	.325	-.056	.097	.023	.541	.304	.003	.551
	.017	.108	.312	.001	.751	.040	.731	.549	.940	.001	.056	.984	.001
5.	-.143	-.124	.286	.051	1.000	-.066	.052	-.210	-.154	.017	.057	.057	.249
	.378	.445	.073	.751	.001	.682	.749	.192	.343	.914	.726	.726	.120
6.	.015	.165	-.195	.325	-.066	1.000	-.040	.236	-.049	.276	.287	.230	.400
	.926	.306	.227	.040	.682	.001	.806	.141	.761	.084	.070	.152	.010
7.	-.190	-.003	.429	-.056	.052	-.040	1.000	.090	.185	.122	.105	.077	.363
	.240	.981	.006	.731	.749	.806	.001	.580	.252	.451	.516	.634	.021
8.	.108	.249	.0	.097	-.210	.236	.090	1.000	-.261	.155	-.072	.305	.407
	.532	.121	1.000	.549	.192	.141	.580	.001	.104	.337	.657	.055	.009
9.	.200	-.158	-.031	.023	-.154	-.049	-.185	-.261	1.000	.283	.010	.386	-.109
	.216	.330	.849	.940	.343	.761	.252	.104	.001	.077	.951	.014	.503*
10.	.059	.305	-.105	.541	.017	.276	.122	.155	-.283	1.000	.422	.124	.501
	.716	.055	.516	.001	.914	.084	.451	.337	.077	.001	.007	.443	.001
11.	.009	.074	-.007	.304	.057	.289	.105	-.072	.010	.422	1.000	.091	.436
	.955	.649	.966	.056	.726	.070	.516	.657	.951	.007	.001	.576	.005
12.	.048	.210	-.212	-.003	.014	.230	-.077	.305	-.386	-.124	.091	1.000	.202
	.764	.193	.188	.984	.929	.152	.634	.055	.014	.443	.576	.001	.210
13.	.379	.535	.268	.551	.249	.400	.363	.407	-.109	.501	.436	.202	1.000
	.016	.001	.093	.001	.120	.010	.021	.009	.503*	.001	.005	.210	.001

KEY: 1 - Child was illegitimate 2 - Parent was a single parent 3 - Parent was 4 - One (or both) -arent was handicapped 5 - There were too many children at home 6 - Mother was pregnant 7 - One parent (or both) was in hospital for physical illness 8 - One parent (or both) was too young to be a parent 9 - Another child was physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped 10 - One (or both) parent was dead 11 - Parent(s) had too leave city and could not take child 12 - Parent(s) needed to stablize domestic circumstances 13 - Personal circumstance index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value

*This item was deleted (because of poor correlation with index scores)

Appendix D-3

Q-1 Environmental Circumstances Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	1.000	.015	-.166	-.187	-.343	-.110	.177	-.098	.239	.036	.095	.346	.179
	.001	.923	.306	.247	.030	.498	.274	.545	.137	.824	.557	.020	.268
2.	.015	1.000	.482	.118	.254	.032	.227	.100	.384	.032	.518	-.016	.560
	.923	.001	.002	.467	.113	.841	.158	.538	.014	.844	.001	.920	.001
3.	-.166	.482	1.000	.084	.276	.086	.235	.048	.311	.025	.401	.101	.466
	.306	.002	.001	.605	.084	.597	.144	.768	.050	.877	.010	.533	.002
4.	-.187	.118	-.084	1.000	.238	.173	.392	.401	-.163	.023	.130	-.070	.348
	.247	.467	.605	.001	.138	.283	.012	.010	.313	.313	.421	.664	.028
5.	-.343	.254	.276	.238	1.000	.197	.216	.349	-.087	-.071	.355	.006	.433
	.030	.113	.084	.138	.001	.221	.179	.027	.597	.661	.024	.969	.006
6.	-.110	-.032	.086	.173	.197	1.000	.100	.488	-.182	.248	.336	.026	.415
	.498	.841	.597	.283	.221	.001	.539	.001	.259	.126	.034	.871	.008
7.	.177	.227	.235	.392	.216	.100	1.000	.416	.255	.307	.144	.141	.639
	.274	.158	.144	.012	.179	.539	.001	.008	.111	.054	.373	.364	.001
8.	-.098	.100	.048	.401	.349	.488	.416	1.000	-.047	.046	.338	.174	.587
	.545	.538	.768	.010	.027	.001	.008	.001	.771	.777	.032	.282	.001
9.	.239	.384	.311	-.163	-.087	-.182	.255	-.047	1.000	.044	.153	.045	.308
	.137	.014	.505	.313	.590	.259	.111	.771	.001	.785	.343	.780	.053
10.	.036	.032	.025	.023	-.071	.245	.307	.046	-.044	1.000	.005	.179	.363
	.824	.844	.877	.313	.661	.126	.054	.777	.785	.001	.973	.269	.021
11.	.095	.518	.401	.130	.355	.336	.144	.338	.153	.005	1.000	.312	.701
	.557	.001	.010	.421	.024	.034	.373	.032	.343	.973	.001	.049	.001
12.	.346	-.016	.101	-.070	-.006	.026	.141	.174	.045	.179	.312	1.000	.411
	.020	.920	.533	.664	.969	.871	.364	.282	.780	.269	.049	.001	.008
13.	.179	.560	.466	.348	.433	.415	.639	.587	.308	.363	.701	.411	1.000
	.268	.001	.002	.028	.006	.008	.001	.001	.053	.021	.001	.008	.001

KEY: 1 - The house was in bad condition 2 - Parent(s) needed to work 3 - There were no homemaker services available 4 - There were debts 5 - There were no relatives to help 6 - There were no daycare facilities for my child 7 - There were alot of financial difficulties 8 - Parent(s) Parent(s) could not get help for problems 9 - Parent(s) needed more training or schooling

10 - There was not enough income to support the child properly 11 - There was no one to look after the child when parent(s) was at work/school or taking care of chores 12 - The house was too crowded 13- Environmental Circumstances Index

Appendix D-4

Q-2 Parent Behavior Change Index

Items and Index

	1	2	3	4	5**	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	1.000[a]	.117	.088	.175	.248	.161	.001	.272	.089	.052	.517
	.001[b]	.471	.586	.278	.122	.321	.992	.089	.582	.749	.001
2.	.117	1.000	-.363	.430	-.148	-.023	-.167	.289	.091	-.055	.405
	.471	.001	.021	.006	.360	.888	.303	.070	.575	.736	.010
3.	-.099	-.363	1.000	-.259	.059	-.067	.438	.217	-.014	.293	.067
	*.586	.021	.001	.106	.715	.677	.005	.178	.928	.006	.678*
4.	.175	.430	-.259	1.000	-.134	.017	-.021	-.119	-.353	-.120	.284
	.278	.006	.106	.001	.409	.915	.896	.462	.025	.458	.075
5**	-.248	-.148	.059	-.134	1.000	-.166	-.064	-.171	-.209	-.281	-.684
	.122	.360	.715	.409	.001	.304	.691	.290	.194	.079	.001
6.	.616	-.023	-.067	.017	-.166	1.000	.017	.077	.148	.138	.393
	.321	.888	.677	.915	.304	.001	.914	.634	.363	.394	.012
7.	-.001	-.167	.438	-.021	-.064	.017	1.000	-.212	-.135	-.004	.112
	.992	.303	.005	.896	.691	.914	.001	.187	.403	.977	.480*
8.	.272	.289	-.217	-.119	-.171	.077	-.212	1.000	.262	.088	.410
	.089	.070	.178	.462	.290	.634	.187	.001	.102	.589	.009
9.	-.089	-.091	-.014	-.353	-.209	.148	-.135	.262	1.000	.252	.318
	.582	.575	.928	.025	.194	.363	.403	.102	.001	.115	.045
10.	.052	-.055	.293	-.120	-.281	.138	-.004	.088	.252	1.000	.528
	.749	.736	.066	.458	.079	.394	.977	.589	.115	.001	.001
11.	.517	.405	.067	.284	-.684	.393	.112	.410	.318	.528	1.000
	.001	.010	.678*	.075	.001	.012	.480*	.009	.045	.001	.001

Key: 1 - Parent(s) feel emotionally better 2 - Parent(s) feel more ready to take the responsibility of parenthood 3 - Parent(s) has returned home after leaving for some time 4 - One parent (or both) is likely to care better for the child now 5 - Parent(s) have not changed much 6 - One parent (or both) is less likely to hurt the child 7 - One parent (or both) is no longer in jail 8 - One parent (or both) is no longer in a mental institution 9 - Parent(s) drinks/uses drugs less 10 - Parent(s) get along better now 11 - Parent Behavior Change Index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient.

[b]These numbers represent the P value

*These items were deleted

**This item was calculated to correlate negatively with other items.

Appendix D-5

Q-2 Foster Care Circumstances Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4**	5	6	7	8	9*	10	11
1.	1.000[a]	.393	.094	.120	.311	.018	-.072	.369	-.118	.223	.433
	.001[b]	.012	.561	.457	.051	.910	.659	.019	.465	.166	.005
2.	.392	1.000	.164	.073	.318	.179	.136	.333	-.069	.473	.572
	.012	.001	.309	.653	.045	.269	.400	.035	.670	.002	.001
3.	.094	.164	1.000	-.191	.518	.265	.342	.226	-.395	.355	.669
	.561	.309	.001	.237	.001	.098	.030	.161	.012	.024	.001
4.**	.120	.073	-.191	1.000	.281	-.127	-.025	-.113	-.165	-.227	.026
	.457	.653	.237	.001	.079	.432	.877	.488	.307	.157	.871*
5.	.311	.318	.518	.281	1.000	.535	.312	.376	-.194	.181	.705
	.051	.045	.001	.079	.001	.001	.050	.017	.228	.263	.001
6.	.018	.179	.265	-.127	.538	1.000	.157	.175	-.023	.295	.542
	.910	.269	.098	.432	.001	.001	.332	.278	.886	.064	.001
7.	-.072	.136	.342	-.025	.312	.157	1.000	.040	-.218	.093	.479
	.659	.400	.030	.877	.050	.332	.001	.805	.176	.568	.002
8.	.369	.333	.226	-.113	.376	.175	.040	1.000	-.222	.112	.525
	.019	.035	.161	.488	.017	.278	.805	.001	.167	.489	.001
9.*	-.118	-.069	-.395	-.165	-.194	-.023	-.218	-.222	1.000	-.217	-.531
	.465	.670	.012	.307	.228	.886	.176	.167	.001	.179	.001
10.	.223	.473	.355	-.227	.181	.295	.093	.112	-.217	1.000	.541
	.166	.002	.024	.157	.263	.064	.568	.489	.179	.001	.001
11.	.433	.572	.669	.026	.705	.542	.479	.525	-.531	.541	1.000
	.005	.001	.001	.871**	.001	.001	.002	.001	.001	.001	.001

Key: 1 - Foster parent became ill 2 - Foster parent got additional new responsibilities 3 - Child had trouble adjusting to foster home 4 - Foster family moved 5 - Foster parents had trouble caring for the child 6 - Foster family and natural family had trouble getting along 7 - There was a change of social worker 8 - Child ran away from the foster home 9 - There were no important changes in the foster care situation* 10 - Child experienced many different foster homes 11 - Foster Care Index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value

*This item was calculated to correlate negatively with other items

**This item was deleted.

Appendix D-6

Q-2 Child Behavior Change Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.*	1.000[a]	-.425	.157	-.032	.270	-.175	-.125	.357	-.306	.236	-.587
	.001[b]	.006	.333	.845	.091	.280	.440	.023	.054	.141	.001
2.	-.425	1.000	-.006	-.088	.561	.005	.150	.378	.421	-.124	.650
	.006	.001	.968	.587	.001	.975	.355	.016	.007	.444	.001
3.	.157	-.006	1.000	.327	.041	-.048	.325	.073	.142	.093	.286
	.333	.968	.001	.039	.799	.769	.041	.653	.379	.567	.073
4.	-.032	-.088	.327	1.000	.211	.521	-.081	-.036	-.183	.033	.243
	.845	.587	.039	.001	.191	.001	.616	.825	.258	.836	.131
5.	-.270	.561	.041	-.211	1.000	.099	.041	.527	.492	.192	.657
	.091	.001	.799	.191	.001	.543	.799	.001	.001	.234	.001
6.	-.175	-.005	-.048	.521	.099	1.000	.393	.196	-.139	-.123	.358
	.280	.975	.769	.001	.543	.001	.012	.225	.392	.447	.023
7.	-.125	.150	.325	-.081	-.041	-.393	1.000	-.259	.174	.093	.013
	.440	.355	.041	.616	.799	.012	.001	.106	.281	.567	.933**
8.	-.357	.378	-.073	-.036	.527	.196	-.259	1.000	.194	-.205	.625
	.023	.016	.653	.825	.001	.225	.106	.001	.228	.204	.001
9.	-.306	.421	.142	-.183	.492	-.139	.174	.194	1.000	-.181	.557
	.054	.007	.379	.258	.001	.392	.281	.228	.001	.261	.001
10.*	.236	-.124	.093	.033	-.192	-.123	.093	-.205	-.181	1.000	-.471
	.141	.444	.567	.836	.234	.447	.567	.204	.204	.001	.002
11.	-.587	.650	.286	.243	.657	.338	.013	.625	.557	-.471	1.000
	.001	.001	.073	.131	.001	.023	.933**	.001	.001	.002	.001

Key: 1 - Child's behavior has become worse* 2 - Child is more independent
3 - Child no longer needs special care outside home for mental handicap
4 - Child no longer needs special care outside home for physical handicap
5 - Child seems more stable 6 - Child no longer displays delinquent behavior
7 - Child can help in the family now.** 8 - Child is now more controllable
9 - Child is less withdrawn 10 - Child has not changed much*
11 - Child behavior Change Index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value

* These items were calculated to correlate negatively with other items

** This item was deleted.

Appendix D-7

Q-2 Personal Circumstances Change Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8**	9	10	11
1.	1.000[a]	-.333	-.024	-.311	.044	.044	-.005	.005	-.364	-.023	-.020
	.001[b]	.036	.882	.050	.785	.784	.972	.972	.021	.886	.901*
2.	-.333	1.000	.192	-.097	.452	-.044	-.239	-.166	.069	.088	.306
	.036	.001	.233	.551	.003	.787	.137	.304	.669	.587	.054
3.	-.024	.192	1.000	-.127	.055	.100	.152	.290	.015	.161	.215
	.882	.233	.001	.433	.733	.539	.349	.069	.924	.319	.182
4.	-.311	-.097	-.127	1.000	-.081	-.083	.092	.111	.101	-.096	.171
	.050	.551	.433	.001	.619	.610	.571	.494	.534	.554	.291
5.	-.044	.452	.055	-.081	1.000	-.058	.130	-.092	.335	.198	.665
	.785	.003	.733	.619	.001	.720	.424	.569	.034	.220	.001
6.	-.044	-.044	.100	-.083	-.058	1.000	-.103	.083	-.021	-.037	.285
	.784	.787	.539	.610	.720	.001	.526	.609	.898	.817	.074
7.	-.005	-.239	.152	.092	.130	-.103	1.000	.219	.021	.089	.328
	.972	.137	.349	.571	.424	.526	.001	.175	.896	.582	.038
8.**	.005	-.166	.290	.111	-.092	-.083	.219	1.000	.040	-.017	-.193
	.972	.304	.067	.494	.569	.609	.175	.001	.803	.917	.233
9.	-.364	.069	-.015	.101	.335	-.021	.021	.040	1.000	-.040	.410
	.021	.669	.924	.534	.034	.898	.896	.803	.001	.805	.009
10.	-.023	.088	.161	-.096	.198	-.037	.089	-.017	-.040	1.000	.433
	.886	.587	.319	.554	.220	.817	.582	.917	.805	.001	.005
11.	-.020	.306	.215	.171	.665	.285	.328	-.193	.410	.433	1.000
	.901*	.054	.182	.291	.001	.074	.038	.233	.009	.005	.001

Key: 1 - Parent is no longer a single parent* 2 - Parent(s) no longer physically ill or handicapped 3 - Another child is no longer ill 4 - Parents are now separated 5 - Domestic circumstances are now more settled 6 - There are fewer children at home 7 - Parent feel more capable of bringing up children alone now. 8 - There were no significant changes in family's physical health and/or domestic situation** 9 - Parent(s) is no longer in hospital for physical reasons 10 - Parent(s) is older now 11 - Personal Circumstances Change Index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value

*This item was deleted

**This item was calculated to correlate negatively with other items and index.

Appendix D-8

Q-2 Environmental Circumstances Change Index

ITEMS AND INDEX

	1	2	3	4*	5	6	7	8	9	10**	11
1.	1.000[a]	-.123	.120	.046	.388	.050	.467	.195	.066	-.159	.551
	.001[b]	.449	.458	.774	.013	.759	.002	.227	.682	.325	.001
2.	-.123	1.000	.037	-.187	.084	.158	.085	-.116	.008	-.222	.242
	.449	.001	.818	.246	.606	.330	.601	.473	.960	.167	.131
3.	.120	.037	1.000	.200	.290	.108	.144	-.079	.069	.102	.397
	.458	.818	.001	.214	.069	.505	.375	.620	.672	.530	.011
4*	-.046	-.187	.200	1.000	-.081	-.096	.189	.308	.379	-.351	.176
	.774	.246	.214	.001	.619	.555	.240	.053	.016	.026	.277*
5.	.388	.084	.290	-.081	1.000	.225	.351	.042	.058	-.337	.634
	.013	.606	.069	.619	.001	.163	.026	.796	.721	.033	.001
6.	.050	.158	.108	-.096	.225	1.000	.123	-.103	-.162	-.173	.298
	.759	.330	.505	.555	.163	.001	.447	.525	.318	.284	.062
7.	.467	.085	.144	-.189	.351	.123	1.000	.340	.143	-.289	.663
	.002	.601	.375	.240	.026	.447	.001	.032	.378	.070	.001
8.	.195	-.116	-.079	.308	.042	-.103	.340	1.000	.453	.052	.469
	.227	.473	.626	.053	.796	.525	.032	.001	.003	.750	.002
9.	.066	.008	.069	.379	.058	-.162	.143	.453	1.000	.098	.478
	.682	.960	.672	.016	.721	.318	.378	.003	.001	.547	.002
10.**	-.159	-.222	.102	.351	-.337	-.173	-.289	.052	.098	1.000	-.382
	.325	.167	.530	.026	.033	.284	.070	.750	.547	.001	.015
11.	.551	.242	.397	.176	.634	.298	.663	.469	.478	-.382	1.000
	.001	.131	.011	.277*	.001	.062	.001	.002	.002	.015	.001

Key: 1 - Parent(s) is no longer as much in debt 2 - Parent(s) got a job
3 - There are now homemaker services available for the family
4 - There are now day care services available for family*
5 - There is now more income to support the child 6 - Parent(s) has a better and/or larger home 7 - Financial difficulties are no longer as serious 8 - There is now help available for looking after the child
9 - Relatives are nearby and willing to help 10 - There have been no important changes in family's resources or circumstances**
11 - Environmental Circumstances Changes Index

[a]These numbers represent the correlation coefficient

[b]These numbers represent the P value

*This item was deleted

**This item was calcuated to correlate negatively with the other items and index.