CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE VISITING TEACHER
TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

APPROVED:

[Signatures]

James F. Webb
Major Professor

George O. Beamer
Minor Professor

[Signature]
Director of the Department of Education

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School
CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE VISITING TEACHER
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THESIS

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Frances M. Babcock, B. A.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

It is the purpose of this study to examine the work of visiting teachers or school-social workers in various places which have employed this service for a number of years and to determine some of the contributions which such service makes to the over-all program of the elementary school from the standpoint of services to the child, to his family, and to the teachers.

Method of Procedure

Publications, with special reference to magazine articles and publications of the United States Office of Education, were studied to gain background information concerning the work of the school-social worker. The tenth issue of the Social Work Yearbook was also consulted, as were various books on educational sociology.

A questionnaire was then sent to selected cities and states employing school-social workers to determine the purposes of the program, the types of cases handled, specific things done for these cases, the methods which the worker used with various persons and agencies, and the benefits derived by the child, by his family, and by the teachers.
Definition of Terms

The terms "visiting teacher" and "school-social worker" are used interchangeably in this study. These terms are used in practice in various school systems to designate the same work. In the report of a conference called by the Commissioner of Education and held in the United States Office of Education, Washington, D. C., in June, 1945, the question of an appropriate title was considered, and the decision reached is given as follows:

The subcommittee to consider the question of title favors 'school social worker' or 'school counselor.' It is suggested that in publications concerning visiting teacher services it be made clear that the terms are used interchangeably with visiting teacher.1

There was no agreement among the members as to title. Some objected to the term "counselor" because of its established use for another service in many systems. The members were divided on the use of the terms "visiting teacher" and "school-social worker." While the term "visiting teacher" is often confusing and misleading and does not adequately describe the work done, the services of a "school-social worker" as a function of the public schools are in some instances difficult for a superintendent to justify before an economy-minded board of education. However, it has been found that the same functions designated by such a well

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established school term as "teacher" are quickly and easily accepted by the same board of education. Some members of the committee thought that the matter had already been established in some places beyond the probability of change, since the various titles had already been written into law creating the service in some states. A few members of the committee, after further consideration and consultation, wrote the Office and expressed the belief that the matter should be deferred until a more favorable time. The two days allotted to the meeting were not sufficient to discuss the situation thoroughly and to come to an agreement. However, no action has yet been taken. The official organization of this group was first called the "National Association of Visiting Teachers"; later, "American Association of Visiting Teachers"; then "American Association of School-Social Workers"; and now "National Association of School-Social Workers." These changes demonstrate how thinking among the members has evolved.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the work which the visiting teacher does. It does not include the functions of other personnel in the guidance departments of schools or the work of any other school personnel, except as such work is related to the function of the visiting teacher. Any mention of other personnel will be made to explain how the visiting teacher cooperates with them and how the work is related.
The study is further limited in that the work was studied only in those schools reporting guidance services, pupil-personnel services, or visiting-teacher services. These school systems were chosen as representative of the systems using school-social work services. No attempt was made to discover the extent of the employment of visiting teachers in the schools.

Related Research

Most of the research done in this field has been conducted by the United States Office of Education, Washington, D. C. As early as 1921 a study was made in the United States Bureau of Education (now United States Office of Education) which attempted to determine the number of visiting teachers employed at that time. The Bureau reported the impossibility of doing so because of the varied titles used and the overlapping of duties of visiting teachers with other officials, attendance officers, vocational assistants, or consultants, and particularly teachers of special classes.

In 1945 Katherine M. Cook, Consultant in Educational Services, United States Office of Education, made a study of visiting-teacher services. In this study she reported the results of a questionnaire sent to all cities of the United States with a population of 10,000 or more. She also showed

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the extent of the work at that time, the number of visiting teachers used, their various titles, salaries paid them, their functions, and qualifications for certification.³

From time to time articles have appeared in Education for Victory and School Life, publications of the United States Office of Education, which reported new programs initiated, recent legislation by states regarding the services, salary schedules, and general information. In 1946 Katherine M. Cook issued a leaflet reporting on a conference called by the Commissioner of Education and held in the United States Office of Education in June, 1945.⁴

Sources of Data

Cities were selected from the American Educational Directory, 1946, which reported guidance services, pupil-personnel services, or visiting-teacher services. A questionnaire was sent to the cities therein listed, requesting information about the visiting teacher or school-social work program in each city. Questionnaires were also sent to a few states which have state-wide visiting-teacher programs. Some of the replies were carefully answered, while others had apparently been hurriedly filled out without much thought. On the whole, the answers were satisfactorily written. Some systems sent


⁴Katherine M. Cook, Visiting Teacher Services.
bulletins which outlined and defined the work in that particular city. Some made special comments regarding the work or by way of explanation.

Bulletins prepared by the United States Office of Education were also consulted, as well as the tenth issue of the Social Work Yearbook. Other works studied included Educational Sociology, by Frederick E. Bolton and John E. Corbally; The Field of Social Work, by Arthur E. Fink; Education for Victory, and School Life.

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5Frederick E. Bolton and John E. Corbally, Educational Sociology.


7Education for Victory, Publication of the United States Office of Education.

8School Life, Publication of the United States Office of Education.
CHAPTER II

PURPOSES OF A VISITING TEACHER PROGRAM AS
RELATED TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In order to understand the work of the visiting teacher, the purposes for the establishment of the programs were studied. In various handbooks for different school systems these purposes were stated as they were related to the broader aims of education.

Democracy's concern for the development of individuals not only implies that all the children should attend school, it also implies that each child should be given opportunities to develop in such a way that his life will be satisfying to himself and useful to society.¹

The recognized needs of the system and of the children to be served is the generally accepted criterion for the type of visiting-teacher services to be provided. Such differences in situations and consequent incentives for the establishment of a new service may be illustrated by the fact that the need for professional services concerned with school attendance was an important incentive leading to the provision of visiting-teacher services in Louisiana while the special need for attention to delinquency was a primary incentive leading to the provision for visiting-teacher services in Michigan. The situations in these two states might well necessitate emphasis, at least in the beginning stages, on different functions or aspects of a total visiting-teacher service program.²


²Katherine M. Cook, Visiting Teacher Services, p. 7.
A statement concerning the visiting-teacher work in Syracuse, New York, relates:

The visiting teacher is the social worker in the school. She comes to the school staff to give specialized individual help to those children whose maladjustments are preventing them from getting what they should from their school experience and also to help the school to better understand and serve these children. Her interest in the child is to help further his all around growth and to provide the kind of experiences which will help him to the fullest development within his own individual capacities and limitations.\(^3\)

In an article in the *Education Digest*, Helen E. Weston has this to say concerning the modern school's responsibility to the children:

Today the school's responsibility requires more than throwing a welcome mat before the school door. Our most careful educational plans often fail because of some element in the child's life outside the school. . . . The most important of all learnings are emotional attitudes in a well adjusted personality, and the ability to face reality without evasion.

Behavior is an index to the growth of the individual personality. It either indicates an adjustment in keeping with the age of the child or serves as a symptom of something amiss. Personality changes constantly as the result of the related activity of body, mind, and environment. All past living influences the present and charts the course for future personality development. These concepts are basic to any visiting-teacher program.\(^4\)

Table 1 was constructed to show the purposes of visiting-teacher service in the cities and states studied. While there

\(^3\)Syracuse, New York, Public Schools, *Visiting Teacher Department Objectives and Procedures*, p. 2.

\(^4\)Helen E. Weston, "The Contribution of the Visiting Teacher," *Education Digest*, VI (May, 1941), 42.
were reflected in the answers the differences of emphasis because of differing local conditions, four main purposes were noticeably repeated. These purposes were interpreted as the underlying principles. Some answers stated these principles directly, whereas in others they were only stated indirectly or implied.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helping the child use more effectively what the school offers</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding and removing cause of problems already existing</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing the development of problems</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying on a program of mental health in the community and school</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stating these principles in common terms was difficult, because the questionnaire permitted statement of the purposes in each system in different terms. This was necessary because other services within the school systems determine somewhat the type of work that the visiting teacher does and the resources at her command for carrying on that work. These purposes overlap with the purposes of other school personnel. The overlapping of purposes is proper because the entire work of the school is directed toward one goal, the growth and development of the child.
The Handbook for Visiting Teachers for the State of Virginia describes the work of the visiting teacher as follows:

Visiting-teacher work unites the efforts of the home, the school, and the community in the solution of problems which prevent children from attending school or from profiting by school experience. Each of these services (i.e., guidance, supervision, special education, rehabilitation education, and visiting-teacher work) has been developed not as a separate unit but as an integral part of the whole program in which there is cooperative work toward a better understanding of the individual and his needs.  

Similar purposes were revealed in the replies to the questionnaire as they were reported by forty-one school systems.

"How the Work Grew from the Modern Philosophy of Education

Frederick E. Belton and John E. Corbally said that

'The visiting teacher is the inevitable development of a great social movement in the school field.' . . . 'In spite of modifications of curriculums, ability groups, and special educational facilities, all aimed to fit the school to the child, it became apparent that in many cases the school was still failing to achieve its objectives. Personality difficulties within the child or undesirable factors in the home or community often thwarted the school's efforts. School principals and teachers came to realize that the cooperation of the home was essential in carrying out any remedial program. So the visiting teacher, because of her dual training as teacher and social-case worker, was introduced to assist school principals in studying and treating the children whom, in

5Virginia State Board of Education, op. cit., p. 4.
spite of various modifications, the school did not fit.\(^6\)

Every experienced teacher who has studied carefully the children with whom she works has sometimes felt completely helpless when confronted with some of the problems which children face daily. Many children come to school with problems of broken homes, bad or even vicious environment, overcrowded and inadequate housing, insufficient diet, insufficient clothing, and a variety of other insufficiencies.

At the other end of the scale are many children from so-called good homes where the exterior appearances are deceiving and conditions within are as damaging to the child as are those conditions in homes where children are deprived of the necessities of life. Some of these children suffer from unfavorable comparisons with other members of the family or community; some are not wanted by their parents and have never experienced real parental affection; some have been held to too rigid and mature standards for their age, whereas some have been over-protected and hence have become inadequate with their peers.

Besides these two groups there are those who leave school early, never to return. Ruth Strang, in reporting on the discussions at the institute sponsored by the Alliance for Guidance of Rural Youth at the headquarters of the National Education Association said that

... Children were dropping out of school beginning with the first grade; a very small percentage completed high school. Obviously school counselors, if they were available, and teachers could not guide pupils who were not in school.  

As every teacher knows, too, not every child who has these adverse circumstances in his environment suffers as greatly as others. Some children find sufficient compensation in some other member of the family, in a pet, in a grandparent, or in someone else. Some succeed in school and achieve highly as a compensation for adverse circumstances. Unfortunately, however, not all children are able to solve their problems in any of these ways. There still remain that small number of children who have not succeeded in making a good, or even satisfactory, adjustment to their environment either at home or at school and who do not do so even under very excellent conditions in the school.

These children show their maladjustment in various ways. Some become boisterous, trouble-making, and belligerent. Some show maladjustment by stealing, lying, truancy, and other forms of delinquency. There are others who withdraw and turn into themselves, resorting to excessive daydreaming and fantasy. Often these children are regarded as good children in the school and neighborhood. Actually they may need help as much as those who are overt in their behavior. These children are sometimes thought to have low intelligence. It may

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7Ruth Strang, "Developing Guidance Services for Rural Children and Youth," *Childhood Education*, XXVI (February, 1950), 279.
require long and detailed study of every phase of their
life to discover that they have ability and then longer and
more intense therapy to help these children respond to normal
interaction with people.

In a booklet published by the Board of Public Educa-
tion of the School District of Philadelphia, Edith M. Everett
says that

The need for individual counseling in our
schools has become more apparent as education has
increasingly concerned itself with the personal as
well as the mental and physical growth of pupils.
A brilliant pupil may fail academically because of
personal maladjustment; a myriad of pressures and
conflicts existing within the individual or his en-
vironment may block the learning process. From this
standpoint alone, a counseling service is needed.
However, when we consider the larger objectives of
education involving the emotional and social maturity
of pupils, counseling becomes an essential and inte-
gral part of a sound educational program. . . .
The extent to which education must in the future
place greater emphasis upon personal growth is very
evident in the following social picture of the
United States:

. . . a high rate of juvenile delinquency
5 per cent, or 1 out of 20, will spend some
time in a mental institution.
8 per cent, or 1 out of 12, babies born out
of wedlock.
10 per cent, or 1 out of 10, suffer from a
mental breakdown at some time in their lives.
33 per cent, or 1 divorce was granted for
every three marriages in 1945.

Not for one moment is counseling held forth
as an answer to these complex and baffling social
problems. But there can be no denying that coun-
seling has a vital role to play in their preven-
tion. We know that behavior patterns are estab-
lished in early childhood. A youngster who gets
off to a bad start may later carry his maladjust-
ment into his every phase of living—through
adolescence into marriage, work, and social
activities. The capacity to live and work harmoniously with others at the adult level must have its beginnings in kindergarten and be developed throughout the child's entire school career.8

In Philadelphia the persons who carry on the duties of visiting teachers are called "school counselors." No distinction is made between their work and the work of the counselors in the high schools.

Thomas L. Hopkins describes the growth of personality as follows:

The personality is comprised of (1) a constantly changing outer shell which acts as a buffer to protect (2) the inner self which is the central core or the very heart of the growing personality. Its fluctuating collection of memories, attitudes, meanings, habits, hopes gradually emerge into a philosophy of life. When the self becomes injured the integrating qualities of the personality become impaired. Deep shocks to young children penetrate through the outer shell into the developing self and disrupt the unity of the personality.

Attention to personality development is therefore a prime necessity both in the home and in the school in order to safeguard the integrity of the growing self.9

The types of behavior such as lying, stealing, aggressiveness, truancy, and withdrawing are indications that the inner self has been or is being hurt, and unless the cause of the hurt is discovered in time and corrected, the personality becomes impaired so that the child is unable to use


most effectively the school situation, or any other social relationship.

How the Service Helps Prevent Problems

Since the prevention of damage to the personality is one of the purposes of visiting-teacher services, one of the questions dealt with methods of achieving this purpose. Two methods were presented. They are: (1) recognition of symptoms in the early stages, and (2) carrying on a preventive program both in the school and in the community.

Early recognition of symptoms may be made by the teacher, principal, juvenile authorities, parents, or occasionally by the child himself. Since this is a school service, the classroom teacher is the most important single person in seeking aid for children. The training, sympathetic understanding, tact, and cooperation of the teacher are vital in the early stages of trouble. By marshalling the resources of the school and of the community, children are often helped before their problems become serious. The visiting teacher helps by the case study method in discovering where the cause lies and then through her knowledge of community agencies assists in dealing with the situation.

A few systems reported that the visiting teacher worked for the most part with the kindergarten and first four grades. In some systems the majority of visiting teachers were placed in the elementary grades. One system reported that about a
third of their cases were from the kindergarten, first, and second grades.

The preventive program may consist of working with the classroom teachers toward a better understanding of children and their problems; working with parent groups on children's problems; providing clothing, lunches, bus fare, medical and dental care for indigent children through various community agencies.

The visiting teacher is a student of child behavior and of social conditions which affect the child. Whatever the problem may be, she seeks first to discover the root of the trouble. She works with the principal, the classroom teacher, the parent, and the child himself in order that the situation may be improved for the child. She is acquainted with the services offered through agencies other than the school. She uses any and all of these sources in working with the school, the home, and the child as she seeks ways to help him with special problems. This involves understanding individuals and groups and a knowledge of many kinds of services. It requires skill in working with pupils, school people, parents, and representatives of various agencies.\(^\text{10}\)

\(^{10}\)Virginia State Board of Education, \emph{op. cit.}, p. 5.
CHAPTER III

SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE VISITING-TEACHER PROGRAM

In Chapter II the purposes of the visiting-teacher program were considered as they are related to the broad objectives of the educational program in the elementary school. This chapter deals with the case load of the visiting teacher and the types of cases with which she works.

One of the questions included in the questionnaire requested a list of the problems for which teachers and principals asked help. These were tabulated. Some systems sent handbooks which included information concerning the case load and the percentage of the school population helped by the visiting teacher.

Case Load of Visiting Teachers

Cook reported on a study made by questionnaire in which she tabulated the results of a question concerning the present visiting-teacher load. The answers varied so greatly that she concluded the following:

It is apparent that there is no widely observed standard as to the number of children one visiting teacher should serve. The Michigan plan, which provides State aid to local districts for establishing the service, adopted the 'general estimate that one visiting teacher should be able to serve a school population of 2,500.' In some cities the area to be
covered, or number of schools rather than number of children, is the criterion considered in visiting teacher assignments. In others visiting teachers are located in central area offices which are called upon for service to schools in the designated area as needs arise.

The data quoted above are, of course, only rough indications of the actual working load of the visiting teachers in the cities reported, since duties assumed and the assistance available differ widely among cities. In some cities advisory and consultative services of several specialists, social workers, psychologists, and the like are available, who presumably assume or share many duties which in others are solely those of the visiting teacher. The availability and services of public and private social agencies, welfare clinics, etc., also affect the amount and kind of work of visiting teachers, as does the school or system organization itself. The visiting-teacher's work may be confined largely to serious behavior problems and consequently relatively few children, or she may work closely with the classroom teachers on minor adjustments in which case she is usually concerned with a high percentage of the total enrollment. Where social agencies are well staffed and offer considerable help to the school in certain social problems, the visiting teacher need act chiefly as liaison official between such agencies and the schools. In other cities little help from social agencies or specialists of any type in or out of the school system is available. In them the visiting teacher must carry a far heavier burden.¹

Both the Michigan Department of Public Instruction and the Louisiana State Department of Education make recommendations about the case load of visiting teachers. Since both those states have state-wide programs, it is assumed that their recommendations are carried out by the school systems in those states.

The Louisiana booklet says:

To deal most effectively with adjustment and attendance problems, a visiting teacher should not

¹Katherine M. Cook, The Place of Visiting Teacher Services in the School Program, p. 21.
be required to serve too large a school population. It is estimated that approximately 2 per cent of all school children will at some time need assistance beyond that which the home and school can give—in other words, will need to be referred to the visiting teacher. Ideally the case load per visiting teacher should be from 50 to 60, or a school population of from 2500 to 3000. Based on the 2 per cent estimate, the present case load of visiting teachers in Louisiana ranges from 36 to 533.2

It is well to remember that the program in Louisiana was initiated because of the problem of non-attendance, especially in the rural areas. The problem in Michigan was that of combating juvenile delinquency. The state law establishing the service provided for programs designed for the prevention and treatment of behavior problems of children.

Both truancy and delinquency are indications that the child has a problem which is too difficult for him to solve. The same problem may cause either symptom. So it is not surprising that Michigan recommends the same ratio of visiting teachers, even though the need which brought the service into being was somewhat different.

The number of visiting teachers required for an effective program cannot be stated with finality. The need for the services of visiting teachers will naturally vary from one school district to another, and even in individual neighborhoods within school districts. The need in any district or neighborhood will not necessarily remain constant. The demand for the services of a visiting teacher will also to some extent depend upon the availability

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2Louisiana State Department of Education, Visiting Teacher Services in Louisiana, p. 15.
of other child welfare resources. Present research and experience have demonstrated that one visiting teacher is required for an enrollment of approximately 2,500 children. Usually about 2 per cent of the children will require the assistance of a visiting teacher to some degree. Consequently the active case load will ordinarily average between 40 and 70 children per month. Under special circumstances the Superintendent of Public Instruction may approve the assignment of a visiting teacher for a heavier or lighter case load.3

Types of Cases with Which the Visiting Teacher Works

Table 2 lists the types of problems which are referred to the visiting teacher. One reply stated that these were the reasons given for referral and not necessarily the problem found. The same is probably true of all the answers, because the real problem is often quite obscure and difficult to find. One major problem may be hidden by a number of minor symptoms which can easily be mistaken for the source of trouble.

Some systems listed personality and behavior under their many symptoms such as withdrawing behavior, shyness, and bullying. When this was done, they were tabulated only one time under the main heading. These traits would affect the social adjustment also, but only those who stated social adjustment were tabulated. This tabulation may partially account for the low number reporting social adjustment as one of the functions of the visiting teacher. It was often

3Michigan State Department of Public Instruction, A State Program for Visiting Teachers, p. 7.
difficult, too, to distinguish between those problems of economic need and problems of home or neighborhood. In general, home and neighborhood problems were interpreted as problems other than economic ones in the home. Parental neglect may have been included in some cases where simply home problems were listed. School adjustment was interpreted as those problems of placement or recommendation for special classes. A few replies also listed teacher-pupil misunderstanding.

**TABLE 2**

**FUNCTIONS OF THE VISITING TEACHER AS REPORTED BY THIRTY-NINE SCHOOL SYSTEMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality and behavior problems</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School adjustment</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular and non-attendance</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and physical needs</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home or neighborhood problems</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic need</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquent behavior</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social adjustment</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental neglect or guardianship</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No attempt was made to tabulate the number of functions of the visiting teacher in each system. This has been done in a study by Katherine Cook. She says:

The responsibilities commonly assumed by professionally prepared visiting teachers include the following: (a) attendance duties or acting as attendance officers; (b) working out problems causing non-attendance; (c) assisting in adjustment of behavior problems; (d) helping with home-school relationships; (e) referral of appropriate problems to outside agencies; (f) direct treatment of children's difficulties.\(^4\)

Helen E. Weston says that

Help is asked when the teacher, principal, or parent is blocked by the child's inability to use constructively the classroom situation.\(^5\)

Another authority says that

The field workers have primary responsibility for working with children who are illegally absent from school. They may also work with those who are showing problems of behavior or personality, particularly in schools where there are few problems of attendance. The school first establishes, whenever possible, whether or not the attendance is illegal, and attempts to effect an adjustment.

The field worker functions in a direct relationship to the child and his parents in enabling them to adjust personal and social problems which are affecting adversely the child's social adjustment. He also facilitates the use of all services within the school system and makes available the resources of related community agencies.\(^6\)

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\(^4\)Katherine M. Cook, The Place of Visiting Teacher Services in the School Program, p. 25.

\(^5\)Weston, op. cit., p. 43.

In the list of problems suggested for referral, behavior and personality problems are listed as: (1) truancy, (2) stealing, (3) temper tantrums, (4) excessive daydreaming, (5) inability to accept authority, (6) inability to get along with pupils—aggressive, resentful, or non-conforming behavior, (7) attention-seeking—showing off, withdrawn, timid, or fearful behavior, (8) physical symptoms or complaints of emotional origin.
CHAPTER IV

THE VISITING TEACHER AT WORK

This chapter deals with the visiting teacher as she works with children, parents, teachers, child guidance clinics, and other social agencies in the community. A further explanation is given of the things which she does for the types of problems listed in Chapter III.

How the Visiting Teacher Works with Persons and Groups

Discussing the visiting teacher at work, one authority makes some general statements which are applicable to work with people who have problems:

In working with people there are a number of abilities which the visiting teacher should seek to develop. Ability to listen with sympathy and understanding is an art which may be acquired through finding genuine interest in the individual who is troubled. It requires on the part of the listener a kind of composure, friendliness, simplicity in manner, and an attitude of attentiveness which puts the other person at ease. Through listening the visiting teacher may learn much about a person's attitudes, feelings, interests, and ambitions. The person who is troubled needs a good listener to whom he can pour out all his hates, fears, likes and dislikes, and with whom he can discuss his strengths and weaknesses. In doing this he may see his problems in a new light and discover ways to do something about them.

Ability to be diagnostic and objective so that one may reach decisions without passing judgment on other persons is another skill which
the visiting teacher needs. Her job is that of learning all the facts relating to a child's problem and working with all people who are involved in improving the situation for the child so that school experience may be more meaningful and satisfying for him. She should keep her thinking and actions free of any blame or prejudice which may interfere with her ability to be objective in her approach to the problems involved. She should avoid making snap judgments on causes of problems and should collect many facts before she makes a decision about causes.

Ability to secure the confidence of the person with whom she is working is another skill the visiting teacher needs. This skill may develop as she is able to demonstrate that she respects the other person, that she has a genuine interest in him, and that she does not betray his confidence.¹

The same authority also discusses four generally accepted basic principles involved in helping people with unusual problems. It is essential that the visiting teacher understand and observe these principles in her work with both children and parents:

First, a person who is to be helped should accept the fact that he has a problem and he should want to do something about it. He should want the services of those people who are trying to help him, otherwise there is little of a lasting nature which can be accomplished. Second, in helping a person face his problem one should work with him and not for him. There should exist a feeling of mutual respect and an attitude of cooperative effort in working toward a common goal. Third, helping people does not necessarily imply making things easier for them by removing the obstacles. Working in this way often takes a longer time and is more difficult but the results are more lasting because the individual eventually learns to become more self-directing in managing his own affairs. Fourth, there is no standard

solution to a problem which an individual is facing. This is due to the fact that there may be so many different causes for the problem. For example, scientific studies show that there are more than fifty reasons why people steal. In an individual case of stealing, then, one would have to discover which of these causes applies and find the solution through correcting the particular causes.2

These basic principles should be kept in mind when one is studying the work of the visiting teacher. In reading reports of things which she does, one should remember that any therapy or assistance which she gives has been requested. Although young children do not express themselves well and their problems must be read from their behavior, it is gratifying to see how they respond and how quickly and eagerly they seize the help offered them. Sometimes parents, and teachers as well, are not aware of the problems of children, and then the problem is one of education and of developing an awareness in the adults who live with the child. Only when this awareness has come about can the visiting teacher be of the greatest service to the children.

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the persons who carry on the work of the visiting teacher are known simply as school counselors. This is explained as follows:

The counselor's special contribution lies in the fact that he represents the school and yet has a unique flexibility in considering and helping to meet individual needs. The counselor works principally through interviewing and through the use of school and community resources.

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Interviewing involves not only knowledge, understanding, and sensitivity on the part of the counselor, but also professional skill to a degree which can be attained only through training and experience. Through the interview the counselor seeks primarily to

a. Help the individual to set up the problem as it feels to him and to work on it in his own way.

b. Bring him something new, such as information he does not have, and help him to consider how he may be able to use it.

c. Help him recognize and accept elements in the situation which will not yield to his pressure, and to which he will need to adjust in so far as he is able.

A working knowledge of school and community resources is a necessary part of the counselor's equipment. This means an understanding of the philosophies on which these services are based and of ways in which cooperation can best be achieved. Such a background enables the counselor to interpret these services (medical, psychiatric, psychological, vocational, recreational, family, and child care) to individuals who may be able to use them.\(^3\)

A visiting teacher must deal with parents, teachers, child guidance clinics, psychiatrists, and other social-work agencies, as well as with the child himself. The visiting teacher uses various methods in working with persons and agencies of the community.

Working with children.—The method which the visiting teacher uses in working with children is the case work technique. This involves a thorough study of all aspects of the child's situation and circumstances, drawing tentative

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conclusions as to probable causes of trouble, and then working out with parents, teachers, and agencies in the community, solutions to the problems. She follows up the case to see whether or not the treatment is effective or whether more work is needed on the case. Some cases are short term and involve only a few interviews and minor adjustments, sometimes with cooperation of one or two community agencies. Other cases are more deep-rooted and stubborn and require work over a long period of time, with the cooperation of a psychiatrist or child guidance clinic directing the therapy. The visiting teacher may or may not do the actual therapy under the direction of the psychiatrist, but she does follow the case as long as treatment is in progress.

Table 3 indicates the work which the visiting teacher does with children.

**TABLE 3**

WORK OF THE VISITING TEACHER WITH CHILDREN FROM THIRTY-NINE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Work</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal interviews</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangible aid</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play therapy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main part of the visiting-teacher’s work is accomplished through personal interviews. In these interviews the teacher attempts to discover how the child feels about his problem and to discover the child’s point of view. In collecting the case records the teacher interviews others, including the family, teachers, and other agencies which have worked with the child. She also refers to medical and psychological records. Some systems reported that the visiting teacher herself does the testing; however, most of the school systems either already have the psychological data or have a psychologist who carries on the testing program for the schools. The visiting teacher has access to records of such tests.

In twenty of the systems replying to the questionnaire the visiting teacher gives actual assistance to students. This includes free lunches, books, car fare, and scholarships. In other systems the visiting teacher refers the needy students to the proper agency. Some systems did not mention direct aid.

Play technique is highly specialized, and few visiting teachers have the necessary training for this type of work. It is useful with young children or older ones who do not express themselves well.

The visiting teacher also works with other agencies in the community in the interest of children. Her training includes a working knowledge of community resources. In many
cities a visiting teacher is a member of a central planning council for welfare. She represents the schools and the needs of children of school age. By her close contact with these agencies, their work can be more effective for children. As an example of this effectiveness this case is cited. The children in the family were living in an immoral home. When the case was brought to the attention of the school-social worker, she referred it to the Child-Welfare Agency. As a result the children were placed in foster homes.

The visiting teacher also works with agencies in the community which provide services, such as medical and dental care, lunch programs, and clothing for indigent children. The social worker contributes to the interests of children through contact with various groups in the community. These groups in turn exert their influence upon the children.

Working with parents.—In discussing the work of the visiting teacher with parents, one bulletin states:

The visiting teacher has a responsibility for understanding and respecting the parent's position, his resources for helping his child, and his attitudes toward the child. . . . Conferences with parents should be conducted so that no blame is placed on them.4

The main work of the visiting teacher with parents is done through interviews. These interviews are conducted

either at school or in the home. The Virginia Handbook also states that these "conferences should be arranged at times and in places which are comfortable, convenient, and thoroughly conducive to informality."\(^5\)

Answers to the questionnaire revealed that the visiting teacher works with parents in the ways shown in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**

WAYS VISITING TEACHERS WORK WITH PARENTS IN THIRTY-NINE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Work</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling type interviews</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals to clinics</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals for tangible aid</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent education through group meetings</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few answers stated that in the conferences attention was given to the parents' own problems, apart from the problems with the child, if it seemed necessary while working with the child. This help was listed as therapy to parents. Some answers also elaborated by saying that the visiting teacher conducted study groups for parents and participated in organizations such as Parent-Teachers Associations. Still others stated that referrals were made to other welfare agencies where the parents might receive tangible aid. This is

\(^5\)Tbid.
further discussed under work with community agencies. One illustration was that of a family which needed guidance in handling the family budget. In this case the child was always without clothing and other necessities. The social worker referred this family to the guidance of the Family-Service Agency.

Another illustration was concerned with a different type of work with parents. A second-grade girl was immature, babyish, sucked her fingers and depended upon her teachers for assistance with almost everything she did. The social worker worked with both parents, who were divorced, to help them see how each parent was hindering the child's development by using her as a "go-between" to punish the other parent. When both parents realized what they were doing to the child, they were reunited.

Working with teachers.--The following excerpt describes the relationship between the teacher and the visiting teacher, or school counselor as she is called in Philadelphia:

The teacher's part in a guidance program is inevitable. In the teacher lies all the hope of education. . . . The school counselor is the support of the teacher at the point where individual children show need for special understanding and help. Neither can do the other's job. Together they can do much to make the school experience a positive, constructive one for all children; one in which each child has a chance to grow to the limit of his ability.6

6Everett, op. cit., p. 11.
There is additional evidence that after the teacher has tried to the best of his ability, he should refer deviates to special agencies. The special agencies in the Muncie, Indiana, schools include counselors and deans in the high schools, visiting teachers, attendance teachers, and a psychologist for all the schools, as well as school health service.  

One description of the work of the visiting teacher and the classroom teacher contributes the following:

The classroom teacher and the visiting teacher are two professional people with a common interest in the welfare of children. The classroom teacher has a continuing relationship with a group of children as she provides experiences for them which contribute to their all-round development. Through this relationship she may know children individually and in groups. The more she knows about them the more sensitive she is to the problems they have in growing into socially competent individuals. This may lead her into a wide use of specialized services available to children. The visiting teacher is one of the resource persons in the school to whom the teacher may turn when she wants help in the solution of children's problems. It is no admission of weakness on the part of a teacher that she seeks the services of a visiting teacher in working with a child, but rather a demonstration of strength. It may indicate that she recognizes the value of cooperative effort on the part of members of the school staff as they function in providing services to children.

The Michigan booklet has this to say about the relationships of the visiting teacher and the classroom teacher:

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8 Virginia State Board of Education, op. cit., p. 36.
The visiting teacher is not to be considered a supplanting threat to the classroom teacher nor, on the other hand, a person upon whom he can unload his responsibilities. Mutual understanding and common interest in the welfare of the child will bring to light how each can complement the other’s service to the satisfaction of both and to the benefit of the child. The child is the unique product of his experiences in the home, the community, and the classroom. The child cannot disengage himself from home and community influences when he appears in the classroom. His behavior, whatever the cause, may be a direct result of conditions not always observable, not even recognized as connected with the classroom. The teacher’s effort to make the school program fit the needs of the child may be unavailing if he is not aware of the condition. The visiting teacher assists in seeking the causes of the child’s behavior. He shares with the classroom teacher such findings as are pertinent to the child’s education and adjustment. The two, together with other interested individuals and groups, seek to work out a satisfactory program for the child.9

When the teacher needs help, she writes out a referral to the visiting teacher. Then the visiting teacher schedules a time for a conference when they can discuss the problem. They examine the facts which the teacher has and decide how to proceed. They work as a team, each contributing her share to the solution of the problem. The visiting teacher collects other data that have bearing on the problem. If the services of other agencies are needed, the visiting teacher acts as liaison agent. When the case is a severe one that requires the work of a child guidance clinic or a psychiatrist, the visiting teacher notifies the classroom teacher.

9Michigan State Department of Public Instruction, State Plan for Visiting Teachers, p. 9.
when there is a case conference on a child in her room so that the other teacher may attend. Thus in working with specialists on a few problems, the teacher gains insight and understanding which help her in working with all the children.

Table 5 shows the work that the visiting teacher does with the classroom teacher.

**Table 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Work</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case conference interview</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group study meetings</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy with the teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As was pointed out above, the individual case conference is usually with the visiting teacher only, but may involve others as well. In addition, some visiting teachers conduct an in-service study group for teachers to study such topics as emotional development of children, or similar subjects. Some of the responses stated that the teachers' own problems and feelings are sometimes considered, and she is given an opportunity to work through her own feelings toward the problems of her children. In this way she is able to have a better understanding of the problems being studied.
Working with psychiatrists or child guidance clinics.--

The work of the visiting teacher with child guidance clinics and psychiatrists has been previously mentioned.

The alert visiting teacher knows his own limitations. He recognizes that the child or the parents may need services which can be given more adequately by a children's center or a guidance clinic. He is not a psychiatrist or a psychologist or a psychiatric social worker. He should be sufficiently conversant with the functions of such personnel to know where to refer a child for consultation or for direct or supervised treatment. He will utilize such agencies as resources for diagnostic examinations and interpretation of behavior problems. The visiting teacher continues his active interest in the child as the representative of the school, and will, when mutually agreed, assist in interpreting the functions of the children's center to the parents and to the school.10

In working with the clinic or psychiatrist, the visiting teacher has the responsibilities shown in Table 6.

**TABLE 6**

WORK WITH CHILD GUIDANCE CLINICS OR PSYCHIATRISTS FROM THIRTY-FOUR SCHOOL SYSTEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Work</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makes a referral on the basis of careful case study to the most suitable clinic or psychiatrist</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares the case study summary for the psychiatrist</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperates by interpreting recommendations to school and home and by seeing that recommendations are followed in the school</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10Ibid., p. 12.
A case was cited concerning a child who was much disturbed by a parental home condition where he was mistreated by the father. He became truant and then resorted to stealing. After much clinical study in the psychiatric clinic he was given foster home placement. He is now attending school regularly and doing well.

Most visiting teachers are not required to have psychiatric social work training, but when they do have this training, they assist the psychiatrist by doing the case work treatment. However, since this treatment requires a person specially trained in psychiatric social work, the visiting teacher usually assists in the ways enumerated above.

Working with other social agencies in the community.—By all agencies working together there is cooperative work with children who have problems instead of scattered effort among the various agencies working with the child or family. The visiting teacher also has the responsibility of conferring frequently with the authorities of juvenile courts on cases involving school children. She presents records to the court and summaries of the work done on the case so as to assist the court in making a more equitable decision.

Some of the answers to the questionnaire merely enumerated the other social agencies in the community with which the school-social worker cooperates. From a summary of the
questionnaires, the ways of working with other agencies in the community are listed in Table 7.

TABLE 7

WORK WITH OTHER SOCIAL AGENCIES IN THE COMMUNITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Work</th>
<th>Number Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refers cases to other appropriate agencies</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares findings and works cooperatively with the agency on the case</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receives cases referred from other agencies</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts as a member of a social service index, council of social agencies, or whatever the local planning group is called</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The visiting teacher works with various community groups sponsoring summer camp programs, clubs, and other activities for children. She arranges for membership in clubs when such membership is indicated as a help in the solution of a child's problems.

What the Visiting Teacher Does for Each Type of Problem

The functions of the visiting teacher were discussed in Chapter III. In the current chapter the problems with which the visiting teacher deals were listed as behavior and personality problems, school adjustment, irregular and non-attendance, health and physical needs, home or neighborhood
problems, economic needs, delinquent behavior, social adjustment, parental neglect or guardianship, mental health, and recreation.

The functions of the School-Welfare Department are predicated on the following principles:

1. School attendance is always facilitated by understanding and techniques planned to meet children's needs rather than punitive, repressive measures.

2. The personality of a child involves health, psychological, educational, and social factors, which are best revealed by the case study method. Accurate social planning can only be effective when based on evidence from the child's whole social situation.

3. The child study technique assumes that the individuality of each child is to be respected. Moralizing and judgmental attitudes have no place in effective therapy.

4. Truancy, stealing, and other atypical behavior are seen as symptoms. Knowledge of what the personality is expressing is imperative for effective planning.

5. The reductions of fears, anxieties, and guilt feelings through re-education of child and parent attitudes, insight, encouragement, and removal of harmful environmental factors are essential to implement the child's adjustment.

In all types of cases the work is the same; the case study method is employed. In all of these problems an effort is made to locate the cause and to treat the cause rather than the symptom. Just as there are about fifty different causes for stealing, so there are many causes for any of the other problems.

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\[11\text{Milwaukee Public Schools, Department of Pupil Personnel, Scope and Functions--Guidance-Welfare-Psychological Services, unnumbered.}\]
CHAPTER V

SOME RESULTS OF A VISITING TEACHER PROGRAM

To understand better the contributions which the visiting teacher makes to the elementary school program, the writer included in the questionnaire one question asking for results realized from the work of the visiting teacher by the child, the family, and the teachers. One answer summed up the work with the following paragraph:

Progress with us is judged by several points: lessening of truancy and non-attendance in schools in which we work; lessening of the number of children who repeat; the manner of referrals coming directly from parents; referrals by parents we have worked with; children who referred friends "who have troubles"; teachers and principals who ask for increased service in schools.

To the Child

The following results were revealed in the answers to the questionnaire:

I. More interest in school with less truancy and non-attendance for illness.

II. Better adjustment by the child as revealed by

A. Closer relationships with parents and teachers.
B. More emotional stability.
C. Ability to meet life's situations.
D. Discouraged children who were able to achieve success.
E. A happier existence for certain types of children.
F. Better understanding of the child by parents.
G. Children's achievement of better social relationships.
H. Correction or alleviation of handicaps or defects.
I. Better recreational programs for some children.

Some answers are quoted which illustrate the results of the work:

Reports from the school staff and parents indicate that the child is more cooperative and apparently a happier and more successful child. In a case where the home situation is very much involved and the parents do not have the insight to take on more intensive work, the child, especially the older child, is helped to live more comfortably with himself and his frustrating experiences.

Another answer stated:

I have known children to respond quickly to a minimum amount of interest taken in them by the school-social worker; but in many cases the benefits are not at all obvious, but
appear in a vague, discouragingly slow reversion to normal adjustment.

Still another reply related:

The sensitive child, through working with a small group in the office of the visiting teacher and in the classroom, learns to give and take. Through suggestions to the teacher in planning an enriched program for a bright child, the child is challenged and overcomes his disinterest. A child who lies and steals is helped by the worker's accepting him and working through his problem with him so that the need to lie and steal is no longer present.

Some case histories were cited:

An overactive child in the second grade who could not settle down sufficiently in school to apply himself to a learning situation was helped through play interviews, through interpreting his needs to the teacher who worked with him, and through helping his parents to understand him better. He was able to make an adjustment in the classroom so that he learned to read and do other school work. Through an interpretation of the child's needs to the teacher, she was able to channel his activities into constructive work in the classroom and to look upon his difficult behavior as something that could be treated through a three-fold approach—in the classroom, in the home, and through the special help of the school-social worker. The teacher ceased punishing and started treating.
Another case cited illustrates how cooperative work with the various agencies can sometimes save children apparently doomed to a lifetime of misery:

Two brothers, aged seven and eight, were problems in the community, destroying property, stealing from stores, getting into all kinds of difficulties, besides being incorrigible in the classroom. The home visitor found that both boys were completely rejected by both parents. The mother had deserted and gone back to her own family in Columbus, and the father tied the boys to the porch when he went to work as a means of keeping them under control. Because of the father's neglect both boys were sent to the mother, but the Columbus schools could not retain them because of their behavior, and they were sent to the State Bureau of Juvenile Research for psychiatric study over a period of several months. However, this institution kept them only a short time and returned them to Cincinnati, saying the boys were unable to adjust sufficiently for study and that they should not be placed in any public school. The home visitor referred the case to the school psychiatrist for advice on school placement or exclusion. At a conference of representatives of school and social agencies the head of an orphanage suggested that he would like to try them in his institution. The boys adjusted well during the summer vacation to the warmth and understanding of the orphanage personnel, and in September they were placed in a new school where they have made a satisfactory adjustment.
To the Family

The results of visiting-teacher work to the parents, as revealed by the questionnaire, were the following:

I. Better understanding by the parents of their children's problems.

II. Parents are strengthened in their relationship with their children through learning new ways of handling problems that arise in the family.

III. A closer relationship between the school and the family so that more parents are turning to the school for help with their children.

IV. In instances where the family needs the resources of community agencies, especially recreational and social agencies, tense, conflict attitudes toward such matters are relieved or removed.

Two cases were cited which serve to illustrate the results of work with the family.

One child was being pampered by eight adults in the family to the extent that he finally refused to go to school. After meticulous study and many conferences the family was able to gain enough insight into the case that they have helped the child to develop some self-sufficiency and sense of responsibility. As a result, he is now attending school regularly and is doing many things on his own.
Another case stated that intensive work was done with a stepmother of a fourth-grade boy who found taking the home situation into which he had recently come, as almost a complete stranger, a very difficult thing. Much time was spent with the stepmother in interpreting what had happened to this boy in numerous foster homes in which he had lived since his mother's desertion when he was about a year old. The stepmother was helped to see how the boy's acting-out behavior toward her was the result of his feelings about his mother and father and the way he had been treated in foster families. The stepmother was a young woman and had never handled any children and did not know what to expect from a vigorous, aggressive, nine and one-half-year-old boy. She was helped to see how hard it was for him to look upon her discipline as something which was going to be present in his life permanently and that his reaction to this discipline was not a reaction to her personally. As a consequence of the work done with the stepmother, she could accept him better, tolerate some of his behavior, and finally form a good relationship with him.

To the Teacher

The results of a visiting-teacher program to the classroom teacher are mainly two. The many results were analyzed and found to fall into two main groups: (1) reduction of tension in the classroom and (2) continuing teacher education.
The first result is brought about when teachers are helped to understand and work with children who might otherwise present difficult problems. This better understanding on the part of the teacher, more tactful handling at home, and in some cases therapy with the child brings about better behavior on the part of the child and makes the classroom situation more pleasant for the teacher and for the child.

The long-term result of continuing teacher education is brought about by careful interpretation of case after case so that the teacher gains insight by working out her part in the treatment process. Thus she develops effectiveness in dealing with many related problems in mental hygiene areas. Teachers are helped in this way to recognize symptoms which are significant and indicate the possibility or probability of beginning delinquency. The teacher sees the value of early screening of emotionally-disturbed children.

Through this type of training the teacher's social outlook is broadened, and her thinking is projected beyond the classroom. She is able better to see the child as an individual within his environment. As a result she develops a more objective understanding and a more sympathetic attitude toward the child with behavior problems.

A result which indicates the value of the service is more referrals by teachers who have been helped. One response stated that teachers are learning where to turn for help.
Limitations of the Service

Most of the handbooks which were received outlined some limitations to the visiting-teacher work. Some of these are worth noting.

Because of the time-consuming nature of case work and the limitation in number of visiting teachers, it is obviously impossible to give service to all the emotionally and socially disturbed children in any given school. For effective work, the case load must be controlled both by the referring person and the visiting teacher. For the best use of the visiting teacher's time, the case load should not be confined entirely to cases so seriously disturbed that the visiting teacher must take entire responsibility for treatment, but it should be balanced between these and minor cases which can be handled by the teacher in consultation with the visiting teacher.

In referring cases, it would be well to keep in mind the following points:

1. The aggressive child is not necessarily the child most in need of help. The unhappy, shy, withdrawn child should not be overlooked.

2. The dull child usually does not respond to case work treatment.

3. Some children are too ill emotionally to respond and should be referred through the visiting teacher to other available community agencies.

4. Little can be done for the child or parents who do not want service or who will not cooperate.

5. Situations in which the child is not disturbed in his school relationships, but comes from an unfortunate and unhealthy home situation, do not properly come within the function of the visiting teacher. These are the responsibility of a family welfare agency, juvenile court, or other agency. Again the referral to the proper agency is made through the visiting teacher.1

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1Portland, Oregon, Department of Public Instruction, Function and Use of Visiting Teacher Departments, p. 5.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study of the work of the visiting teacher in representative school systems has shown that the visiting-teacher programs were initiated to make more effective the educational program for a number of pupils. This small percentage of the school population would not otherwise be able to profit by the educational program because of such factors as personality difficulties, poor environmental conditions in the home and community, lack of interest, and poor attendance. The visiting teacher uses interviewing and case work techniques to help these children. She makes use of community resources and cooperates with community agencies for the over-all development of the child. With the parents and teachers she holds planned conferences in which tentative plans are made for the relief of the child's difficulty in the light of the total picture of the individual child in his environment, both past and present. The work is time consuming and is not suited to every type of problem. Some of these cases she refers to more appropriate agencies.
Conclusions

1. The visiting-teacher program is based on the overall development of the child.

2. It is designed to aid those children who are unable to make the best use of the school experience without special help.

3. The emphasis is on discovering difficulty early so it can be treated before it becomes serious.

4. The service is valuable to parents because they are helped in understanding their children's problems.

5. Parents are helped to find new ways of dealing with children when they understand more about the causes of children's behavior.

6. Not all children who need help nor all parents are able to profit by the case study method.

7. Visiting-teacher work is successful only when there is understanding and cooperation on the part of the person being helped.

8. Visiting-teacher service brings the experience and help of appropriate community agencies to bear on the solution of the problems of children.

9. Visiting-teacher service makes a valuable contribution to continuing teacher education by strengthening the teacher's ability to detect significant symptoms early.
10. Through case-by-case planning for children the teacher learns to deal more effectively not only with the more severe problems but also with related mental hygiene areas.

11. More interest in school by certain children and better attendance are results.

12. Closer cooperation between the home and the school results when a realistic, practical approach is made in the adjustment of difficulties.

Recommendations

1. School systems with attendance or delinquency problems should make a study of the extent of the problems and should secure the service of a visiting teacher if the case study load would warrant such service.

2. A school system having as many as 2500 children should have a visiting teacher, since the estimated case load is based on 2 per cent of the school population.

3. School superintendents interested in practical in-service training of teachers to an awareness of the developmental problems of children should consider that as one of the benefits of a visiting-teacher program.

4. Visiting-teacher programs should be state-wide to reach all areas, since the flow of persons to correctional and mental institutions is from all areas of the state and not confined to scattered sections or cities.
5. Visiting-teacher programs should not be considered as a cure-all for all the social ills of our society, but as a realistic approach to the problem and as an effective solution for certain types of problems.
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir:

This questionnaire is being sent to selected cities and states that use school-social workers, visiting teachers, home-school visitors, visiting counselors, or persons with similar duties. The purpose of this study is to determine some of the contributions made by this type of service to the elementary school program. Any comments which you care to make in addition to the answers to the questions below will be appreciated. Use the back of the questionnaire if more space is needed. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours truly,

Frances M. Babcock
(Mrs. John T. Babcock)

Questionnaire

I. Please state briefly the general purpose of the school social work program in your system.

II. How does this service aid in preventing serious problems from developing with children?
III. List briefly the types of problems for which assistance is asked:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

IV. List briefly some of the ways the social worker works directly with the following persons or groups. Quote from case records.
1. Children:
2. Parents:
3. Teachers:
4. Child Guidance Clinics, Psychiatrists, etc.:
5. Other social agencies in the community:

V. List a few specific things she does for each type problem given under III. (Example: Attendance—1. Discovers cause of non-attendance; 2. Helps remove cause by. . . )
VI. What are some of the benefits which have resulted from this work to: (Please quote from typical case records.)

1. The child:

2. The family:

3. The teachers:
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