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by

Adam Jamrozik, Sarah Drury and Tania Sweeney



Social Welfare Research Centre

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FOREWORD

This report gives an overview of the developments in policies and services in child and family welfare in Australia over the past two decades. The data for the study have been drawn from the annual reports of welfare departments of three States (New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania), and from other documents such as Commonwealth Government departments, Australian Bureau of Statistics, and earlier studies in that field of welfare.

The aim of the report was to examine Commonwealth and States initiatives in child and family welfare; to ascertain the extent and direction of these initiatives; and to identify the outcomes the interaction of these initiatives might have had on what could appropriately be called a Child and Family Welfare System in Australia. Although legally child welfare remains in the States' sphere, the entry of the Commonwealth into the field of early childhood services and subsequently into other related areas such as family support services schemes, must have been significant factors in the changes that have taken place in the States' sphere. Furthermore, the Commonwealth is the main provider of income support for dependent families as well as a provider of funds for services in other areas of child and family welfare, such as health and education. For this reason, although the main source of data in this study has come from State welfare departments, the field of child and family welfare is conceptually perceived as a system of services and provisions encompassing both the Commonwealth and the States.

The report has been written in seven chapters.

Chapter 1 outlines the background of the study, giving an outline of the earlier studies at the Social Welfare Research Centre, which have led to certain findings and hypotheses. These findings and hypotheses provided the rationale for this and further studies in child and family welfare which are now in progress at the Centre.

Chapter 2 provides a societal context of the study, giving an outline of the changes that have occurred in the Australian society since the 1960s. The chapter contains descriptive and statistical data on the changes in the labour market, the growth and 'entrenchment' of unemployment, and the increase in the dependence on the state (in this case, the Commonwealth) for income support.

Chapter 3 gives a descriptive overview of the developments in welfare departments of the three States included in the study: Department of Youth and Community Services in New South Wales; Department for Community Welfare in South Australia; and Department for Community Welfare in Tasmania. The chapter also identifies some of the Commonwealth initiatives relevant to the developments in the three States. The descriptive account is supported by

statistical data on States' expenditures and allocations to child and family welfare services.

Child welfare services are examined in greater detail in Chapter 4. The examination includes statistics on children under guardianship, on young offenders, and brief data on reported incidence of child abuse and of children 'at risk' - a problem which has emerged with an increased intensity over the recent years.

The developments in the provision of early childhood services are dealt with in Chapter 5. The chapter describes the Commonwealth initiatives in this field and the responses of the States. It points out that 'child care' has a long history in Australia and prior to the entry of the Commonwealth into the field, it had been the responsibility of the States and of non-government welfare organisations.

Chapter 6 examines the provision of services which come into the category of 'family support', such as emergency financial assistance, budgeting advice services, crisis care, and homemakers' services. A section of the chapter examines specifically the Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) introduced by the Commonwealth in the late 1970s and briefly discusses the effects of this initiative.

Chapter 7 sums up the results of the study, pointing out the limitations of the scope of the report and of the quality of data used in the analysis. It attempts to identify the changes in the perceptions on the issues in child and family welfare over the period covered by the study as well as some problematic areas in the changing role of State welfare departments. In conclusion, the chapter argues for the necessity of viewing child and family welfare services as a system in which both the Commonwealth and the States have a role to play, and then suggests a conceptual framework which should facilitate such a perspective.

CHAPTER 1

THE CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE SYSTEM

The background of this report

This report is the first in the current stage of the research programme in child and family welfare at the Social Welfare Research Centre. It gives an overview of the developments in policies and services in child and family welfare that have taken place over recent years in Australia, using as a source of data the developments in three States: New South Wales, South Australia, and Tasmania. These developments are examined in relation to the Commonwealth Government initiatives in social security, and especially in children's services, family support and youth services. In a broader framework, the developments are examined in the context of changes that have occurred in the Australian society in such areas as family structure, income distribution, and employment.

The current research at the SWRC in this area of welfare constitutes the third stage of an ongoing research programme which began in early 1980. In the first stage, the focus of the research was on the welfare of young children, and the result of that research was published in a report with the title **Services for Young Children: Welfare Service or Social Parenthood?** (Sweeney and Jamrozik, 1982; SWRC R & P No.19). In that report we examined the data on the use of services for young children, such as formal and informal child care, pre-schools, etc., and we presented these data in the context of the history of child care and child welfare services in Australia. In particular, we traced the history of the Commonwealth Government's involvement in early childhood services, the changes in the nature of that involvement, and the manifest reasons for and aims of that involvement. It became apparent from our analysis that the reasons for and aims of the Commonwealth policy stated at the time were not reflected in the use of services. Briefly, the main discrepancy seemed to be between the officially stated policy of giving priority of access to services to families and children 'in need'; and the widespread use of services and care arrangements of formal and informal kind by families as a 'normal' practice in the course of everyday functioning of the family unit. Those findings led us to examine available data on the use of child care services from other research reports and then to conduct an empirical study in five suburbs of the Sydney metropolitan area of a sample of children's services and families using them. Our purpose was to determine: the extent of usage; parents' experience of using child care over a period of time; the value parents saw in child care services for themselves and for their children; and the changes parents saw as desirable in the provision of services. We also obtained statistical and impressionistic data from the providers of services on their experience in providing services; in the establishment of services, and in the day-to-day

administration. The findings of that study were published in 1984 as **Perspectives in Child Care: Experiences of Parents and Service Providers** (Sweeney and Jamrozik, 1984, SWRC R & P No.44).

The main findings of the second-stage research may be summed up as follows:

- (1) It was evident that children's services were used widely and for a variety of reasons; they were used as part of **normal** functioning of the family; parents regarded them as very important for the child's development; and the services constituted a significant family support.
- (2) As family support, the services not only seemed to enhance the functioning of the family unit but had a considerable potential for preventing certain 'crisis' situations which may have necessitated State intervention of legal nature, such as State wardship, institutionalisation, etc. This 'preventive' role of children's services was evident from the reasons parents gave for using services, as well as from the referrals of children to these services by medical practitioners, child psychologists and social welfare workers. We came across instances where child care services were used to prevent a crisis in a family as well as instances where they were used **as an alternative** to residential care when a crisis had occurred.
- (3) Children's services employed material and human resources provided by both Commonwealth and State governments. They also utilised considerable resources provided by the community itself, eg. parents' committees, parents' assistance in managements, fees, etc.

The analysis of the variety of reasons that parents gave for using child care services indicated that the services were used to meet three broad categories of need: child's needs; parents' (usually mother's) needs; and the needs of the family unit.

Child care services thus seemed to perform a supportive function, supplementary function, and substitutive function, that is, the kind of functions that have been regarded for some time as essential ingredients of child welfare and family welfare services.

However, we also had to note that in common perceptions as well as in professional orientations of social welfare practitioners, 'child care' and 'child welfare' were being regarded as two distinctly different kinds of services, provided for different reasons and serving different purposes, or needs. Furthermore, the distinction had been carried through into different spheres of political responsibility; 'child care' being regarded as the responsibility of the Commonwealth government while the responsibility for 'child welfare' remained with the States.

It seemed, then, that in common perceptions as well as in some aspects of policy two systems of child welfare were now in operation: one, which was

seen as **positive** and necessary, indeed essential, for normal family functioning and child development, and was almost universally used as a public utility rather than as a welfare service; and the second, which was seen in a **negative** perspective of the traditional 'welfare', and used as a preventive or protective intervention in selective cases. Yet, at the operational level, the distinction between the two systems was not always clear. Furthermore, it was evident from some of the changes that had taken place in State child welfare departments that efforts had been made for some time, and continued to be made, to extricate those departments from their 'traditional mould' so as to enable them to play a positive role in enhancing the functioning of the family unit and child development. In some State departments new forms of care had been introduced, such as temporary foster care, or referrals of children 'at risk' to child care centres or family day care schemes. Some of these changes have been identified by Jan Carter (**Protection to Prevention: Child Welfare Policies**, SWRC R & P No.29, 1983) and were further discussed in **Child Welfare: Current Issues and Future Directions** (J. Jarrah, ed., 1984, SWRC R & P No.34).

These observations led us to raise the question: when we consider the roles and functions performed by child care and child welfare services, are we looking at **Two Systems or One?** (Sweeney, 1984). If the two different systems performed the same, or at least very similar, range of functions and were meeting the same kind of needs, why, then, were these needs perceived, and responded to, differently? Considering the fact that the needs **were** perceived and responded to differently, was it perhaps the case that these differences were influenced, or determined, by some societal factors such as the position of users (parents and children) in the socio-economic stratification or class structure? Why, for example, was there a different perception of a child in a child care centre, and a child in foster care, in a 'family home' or in another kind of home or 'institution', **if all these services were performing the function of substitute care?** Then, at the policy level, on what basis were the lines drawn between the Commonwealth government's responsibility and the responsibility of the States?

It is these sorts of questions that have led us to the current stage of research into the Family and Child Welfare System; for it became increasingly apparent that the recurringly separate issues of 'child care' and 'child welfare' were, in fact, manifestations of various aspects of family and child welfare policy and could be perceived to constitute different parts of one child and family welfare system.

Child and family welfare: whose responsibility?

Historically, the responsibility for child and family welfare in Australia has been (and, constitutionally, still is) placed in the province of the States. That responsibility was seen as primarily a responsibility for **child welfare**, or, more specifically, **child protection**, either in cases where

the family was 'absent' or where it was seen to be either incapable or unwilling to care for the child in the manner deemed to be acceptable to the community.

In practice, child welfare services were concerned with the welfare of children from poor families. The activities of State welfare authorities were, typically, involved in the provision of services for children from working-class families, or other low-status families such as Aboriginal families, who were seen as not having the 'right' attitudes to child rearing or were not providing the right conditions or environment for the child, eg., suitable housing, adequate instruction, cleanliness, health, etc. Child welfare services had the mark of 'the State versus the family' argument, typified by removal of children from their natural families and placing them in a situation where they might be re-socialised. In this way, it was believed that the development of children who would then grow up and join the labour force (in the working classes) rather than be dependent on the State would be achieved.

By and large, these attitudes in child welfare remained substantially unchanged until the 1960s. Since then, according to official sources and research literature (e.g. Carter, 1983), changes have taken place, the main features being a greater attention given to the child's natural family and a change of focus from 'child protection' to 'prevention'.

Changes in child and family welfare services have occurred in all States, and, in most States, at all levels of service provision; legislation, administration, and service delivery. As part of these changes most States have held extensive enquiries into the system of service provision. There have also been changes in manifest policies and attitudes, accompanied by changes in terminology. Such terms as 'prevention', 'family support' 'care', and 'the community' became the operative words of welfare agencies. These changes were accompanied by claims of successful reduction of dependence on State services. For example, the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services reported,

The word 'community' is now used extensively and appears far more in departmental literature than previously. This is only to be expected, as the emphasis in all social fields is to develop the community, to give it supportive and therapeutic strengths, so that people and families cannot only grow in it, but find in it remedies and rehabilitation. Most new developments in this Department during the past year have been directed towards this universal trend. The results have been less children in care as wards, less in training schools, less on probation, and apparently less before the courts. (NSW Annual Report 1976:25)

Specific measures that have taken place since the 1960s have been in the following areas:

- (1) Changes in legislation - numerous changes in South Australia; new Act in New South Wales (not yet fully implemented); a new legislation to be introduced in Tasmania.
- (2) Changes in administration - decentralisation, regionalization, specialization.
- (3) Changes in names - from Child Welfare to Community Welfare; to Youth and Community Services.
- (4) Changes in practice and in methods of operation; diversification into new areas of service; including greater reliance on non-government welfare agencies and community organisations, supported by State funds.
- (5) Increased professionalisation at all levels - in policy formulation, administration, and service delivery.
- (6) Expressed changes in policy and goal orientation - from 'child welfare' to 'family welfare' and 'community welfare'.

Two features of these changes have become evident: an apparent (or real) shift from Child Welfare - with the focus on the child - to Family Welfare or Community Welfare; and the notion of 'promoting' welfare; a concept which first appeared in the South Australian Social Welfare Act 1965. Later, in the South Australian Community Welfare Act 1972 an attempt was made to define the concept of community welfare by stating aims and objectives of the Act. Other States have since expressed the same, or similar, commitments and have enshrined these commitments in legislation. The provision of welfare in the community has been substantiated on the belief that 'the welfare of the family is the basis of community welfare', and has given rise to a range of services which go under the name of 'family support'. The concept of child welfare has thus been extended into family welfare and community welfare. The trend towards 'community welfare' extended into wider areas and became the 'in' concept of the 1970s. It became manifest in the growth of various community organisations, or 'self-help' groups, but mainly in the growth of non-government welfare organisations at local, State and national levels (see Milligan et al., 1984, SWRC R & P No.51). Many of these became active in the field of child and family welfare, and most have sought (and received) government support, either from the Commonwealth or the States, or from both.

An integral part - and in some areas a very significant part - of these changes has been played by the Commonwealth government. The Commonwealth entry into the field of early childhood services, the short-lived Interim Committee for the Children's Commission, the Social Welfare Commission and its Australian Assistance Plan, were the notable events of the early 1970s. While most of these initiatives were later abolished after the change of

government in 1975, they undoubtedly left a lasting mark on policies and services provided by the States, the non-government sector and in some areas by the organised self-help community groups. Moreover, the initiatives introduced by the Whitlam government became a stimulus for changing attitudes in the community to certain issues, and for greater awareness of, as well as greater demands for, family and child welfare services.

Subsequent initiatives of the Commonwealth government further widened the scope of services into such 'special need' areas as handicapped children, homeless adults and youth, women's refuges and the Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) introduced as an experimental pilot programme in 1978. In the sphere of income support, the introduction of Supporting Mother's Benefit in 1974, later extended to become Supporting Parent Benefit in 1978, shifted States' responsibilities in that area to the Commonwealth, although the process began already in 1968 through the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act under which the Commonwealth began to reimburse the States a proportion of their expenditure on 'relief' payments to single mothers and deserted wives.

Many programmes of State welfare departments now entail Commonwealth Government involvement. The outstanding example (and the best known) is the Children's Services Program, administered by the Office of Child Care. The program also includes a range of activities, such as the Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS), Youth Services Scheme, Handicapped Children's Program and many others.

What have been the effects of Commonwealth entry into these fields? As will be seen later in this report (Chapter 6), in certain areas, eg. in income maintenance, the effects on State governments' expenditure is clearly evident. (eg. the effect of the introduction of Supporting Mother's [now Parents'] Benefits in 1974).

Other effects are less easily ascertained; they need to be considered in the overall context of increasing dependence on the state for income as well as other services. If, for example, we consider Early Childhood Services, in 1982 the Commonwealth supported 1460 projects throughout Australia, plus indirectly via the States 4,306 pre-schools. By 1984, the number of projects rose to 1622, excluding pre-schools. (Since then, the block grants to the States pre-schools have been withdrawn).

According to the data from the Department of Social Security (Annual Report, 1981-82) in 1982, there were 244,828 children attending childcare centres and family day care schemes (including pre-schools) and 26,640 people were employed in providing these services in Australia (excluding Queensland). It needs to be noted, however, that from 1977 to 1982 Commonwealth expenditure on Early Childhood Services had decreased (in constant 1980-81 prices).

The expenditure was increased substantially in the first and second budgets of the incoming Labor government in 1983 and 1984, but then reduced again in

the 'mini-budget' of May, 1985. Nevertheless, the Commonwealth allocation to the Children's Services Program amounts to about a quarter of the total expenditure of the State welfare departments in all six States.

All these changes have taken place at the same time as the economy shifted from growth to recession and in certain sectors of industry, and in some States, to a significant decline. This change, too, resulted in growing demands on the Commonwealth and the States for income support and other services. Changes in the society itself, e.g. in the structure of the family, and in the attitudes towards the family and towards children and youth as well as the aged, became another factor in the growing demand on public expenditure.

Aims and methods of study

The aim of the current stage of our research programme is to examine the Family and Child Welfare System in Australia as a system in operation: at the levels of policy, administration, and service delivery. By viewing the three levels of the system in interaction we aim to discover how policies are translated and applied in practice; what determines that one rather than another service is provided; who are the recipients of one or another sort of service; and what are the effects on the recipient population. Because the delivery of family and child welfare services is States' responsibility, the focus of research is primarily aimed at State welfare departments, but we have also included the non-government sector as well as the role of the Commonwealth government, to examine the extent of interaction among the three sectors.

In the first instance, we have selected three States for this study: New South Wales, South Australia, and Tasmania. The reason for this selection (apart from the constraints of our resources) is that these States, while retaining considerable similarities in resource allocation and organisational structure of their welfare departments, are different from one another in the size of their population, and, apparently, have taken somewhat different approaches to family and child welfare. Ideally, we would have liked to include all States and Territories in one report, as we are aware that changes have taken place in their child and family welfare services as well. This will have to be the task for a later stage of our research programme.

In this report we examine the provision of services in the three States from 1966 to 1982, with the aim of identifying any significant changes that have occurred in the operation of their welfare departments over that period. The year 1966 has been selected as a benchmark for three reasons: statistical continuity and consistency of certain data (e.g. Time Series surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics); the first Commonwealth initiatives towards provision of child care services; and the

changes in the labour market which became apparent in the 1960s, especially the entry of married women into the labour force.

The aim of this research programme is not to evaluate the merits or the demerits of a particular legislation or of specific measures and methods of intervention. The key issues addressed are the role of the state in the provision of child and family welfare, the characteristics of children and their families who become the objects of intervention, the reasons for intervention, and the effects the intervention has on children and families.

By 'state' we include the whole system of child and family welfare, which includes the Commonwealth government, the State governments, the non-government welfare sector, the local government, and other community organisations which may be involved in the provision of welfare services.

In this report, the focus is on the State welfare departments, that is, State instrumentalities which have the statutory responsibility for the provision of child and family welfare services. In the Commonwealth/State division of responsibility, the Commonwealth is responsible for the provision of income support and the States are responsible for the provision of non-material personal services. The Commonwealth thus provides the means for survival while the States provide services aimed to facilitate and/or control, where necessary, the social functioning of the 'dependent' population. In certain circumstances this task may be carried out under the sanction of the law.

However, in practice the division between the two spheres of responsibility is not always clear-cut. What seems to be the case is that many individuals and families receiving Commonwealth pensions or benefits are also recipients of State welfare services, and many of them also receive services from the non-government agencies. This suggests that the provision of income support from the Commonwealth is, in many cases, insufficient to ensure independence from the necessity of other forms of intervention.

The main sources of data for this report have been the Annual Reports of the welfare departments in the three States, from 1966 to 1982. It may be argued that public documents such as annual reports of government agencies have a special purpose and may not be an appropriate source of data for research. However, the reports are official public accounts of what the public institutions do and how they discharge their statutory responsibilities. They are the means for allowing public accountability, they are tabled in State parliaments as a mandatory requirement. The reports thus purport to inform the parliament, the government and the public on what activities the public funds have been spent and for what purpose. More importantly, State welfare departments are human service organisations with specific powers, including coercive powers, and the objects of their activities are the human beings - the citizens. It may be expected, therefore, that the reports of these departments provide adequate information on their activities. By and large, we have found this to be the case, but we have also identified some limitations of data. These are discussed and

commented upon in the relevant sections of this report and especially in Chapter 7.

By using the annual reports of State welfare departments as the main source of data, this report examines the provision of child and family welfare services through the eyes of policy makers and service providers and relates their views and interpretations to the statistics also provided by them, and to the other research data. Implicit in this study are therefore such questions as: how are the policies translated into practice; who are the recipients of services; what apparent purpose and effect do the services achieve; and how do these activities fit into the whole social welfare scene in Australia.

Complete analysis of all activities engaged in by State welfare departments would be beyond the scope of one report. We have therefore restricted the content of this overview to the main areas of departmental activities, i.e.,

- (1) child welfare, including State guardianship, care and control of young offenders, early childhood services, and child protection activities, and
- (2) family support services, including personal services and material assistance.

Other areas, such as assistance to non-government organisations and community groups receive in this report only marginal attention. A detailed examination of these areas would have added substantially to the volume of the report, which is already rather long. We have also excluded such areas as adoption services and maintenance matters (the latter being handled by the South Australian Department for Community Welfare but not by the welfare authorities in the other two States). Other areas which may be regarded as 'peripheral' to the activities of State welfare departments, such as care of the aged and services to ethnic minorities, have also been excluded from the analysis.

Services to youth, early childhood services, and the role of non-government organisations in child and family welfare are the subjects of forthcoming reports in our child and family research programme and they will appear in due course, in 1986 and 1987. The role of non-government agencies is currently subject of a field study, because we consider them to be an important part of the system.

This report attempts to compare the developments in three States but it must be noted that exact comparisons are not possible because the range of activities of the three departments is not the same. For example, the Department for Community Welfare in South Australia is the agency responsible for the management of maintenance payments and is also responsible for the management of a large home for the aged. The New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services has been involved in the provision of early

childhood services to a greater extent than the departments in the other two States. The Tasmanian Department for Community Welfare operates a homemaker service. The divisions of responsibilities among State departments and statutory bodies differ from one State to another, and what may be provided under the rubric of 'welfare' in one State may be 'education' or 'mental health' in another State. However, the 'core' responsibilities of State welfare departments are the same: protection of children 'in need of care' or of children 'at risk'; and control of young offenders; 'family support' and 'community development' form the second major area of activity, although what is included in that area may vary from one State to another and within a State from one year to another.

It is also necessary to note that changes in the field of child and family welfare continue to the present day and are likely to do so in the future. Thus the period 1966 to 1982 presents only a stage in that evolution process, although an important stage because the extent of changes in that period has been substantial. In attempting to identify some of these changes we aim to point out their significance for the service providers, for the effects on the recipients and for the society as a whole, and then draw out some of the implications for social policy and allocation of resources by the States as well as the Commonwealth.

This report presents an overview of the period 1966 to 1982. In subsequent reports we will present the results of empirical field studies which are now in progress and which aim to generate data on the actual processes at the level of service delivery. By drawing on a range of sources of data and applying appropriate methods of research and analysis to each source (see Table 1.1) we aim to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the child and family welfare as a system in operation.

**TABLE 1.1: THE CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE SYSTEM
METHOD OF RESEARCH**

Level of Action and of Analysis	Sources of Data	Nature of Data	Method of Analysis
1. Political Initiatives & Legislation	Acts of Parliament; Policy statements; other related documents (e.g. Annual Reports)	Descriptive and some quantified; e.g. allocation of funds	Content analysis; identification of action and purpose
2. Administrative	Annual Reports; other related documents; e.g. reports of ad hoc committees, etc.	Descriptive and quantified; e.g. allocation and/ or re-allocation of funds or personnel; organisational restructuring	Identification of action; analysis of statistics
3. Operational	Official documents; research reports; internal documents at State and local level; empirical surveys of service providers and service recipients	Descriptive, statistical or impressionistic; group or indiv- idual decisions; case studies	Analysis of action to determine significance; analysis of perceptions and attitudes; analysis of outcomes; analysis of statistics.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE

The developments in welfare activities of the States over the 17 years examined in this report need to be seen not only in relation to the Commonwealth role in social security and social welfare but also in the context of the changes that have taken place in the demographic and socio-economic structure in Australia over that period. These changes have been of considerable magnitude in many areas: in the growth of population; in the structure of families; in the labour market; in the distribution of income and wealth; and in the growing dependence on the state for income maintenance and income support.

In the period of 17 years (1966-1982) examined in this report, the population of Australia increased by 31 per cent, from 11.6 million to 15.2 million. According to the survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1982, approximately 90 per cent of total population lived in family units of some kind. The ABS recorded 4,070.5 thousand families at the time: 87.7 per cent of these were two-parent families; 6.9 per cent were one-parent families; and 5.4 per cent were other types of families (Table 2.1). Of all these families, 2,171.8 thousand were families with dependent children: 89.9 per cent were two-parent families, and 10.1 per cent were one-parent families. The number of dependent children was 4,258.9 thousand, or 28.8 per cent of the total population (ABS, 1984, Cat.No.4408.0).

In the labour market, significant changes have taken place, such as the entry of married women into the workforce in growing numbers, a shift in employment from primary and secondary industries to tertiary service industries, and growth of employment in the public sector. The fastest-growing field of employment has been in the part of the public sector classified by the ABS as 'community services', which includes the fields of health, education, welfare and related activities. Corresponding to these changes, there has been a growth of employment in professional, sub-professional and technical occupations, and a decline of employment in trades, process work, and manual occupations generally, in relative and in certain areas in absolute numbers. (Table 2.2).

In the mid-1970s, unemployment began to increase at a rapid rate, and by 1982 (August) it reached 458.4 thousand, or 6.7 per cent of the labour force. Then, over the next year, it rose to over 10 per cent, and in August 1983 it was 9.9 per cent. Since then, it decreased to 8.6 per cent by August 1984 (Table 2.3). But those numbers do not tell the full story. The distribution of unemployment is not even throughout the labour force, and the rates differ for various age groups and occupations (Tables 2.4 and 2.5). The highest numbers and rates of unemployment are among the manual occupations, while professional and technical occupations are less affected.

The second factor has been the increase in the average duration of unemployment per person. In 1966, the average duration was 3.0 weeks and by 1974 it reached 6.5 weeks; it then rose to 12.7 weeks in one year, and continued to rise to 32.8 weeks in 1982 and to 45.5 weeks in 1984 (Table 2.3 and Figure 2.1). What is more significant is that the older the unemployed person the longer the period of unemployment: in 1984, the average duration for young people 15-19 years was 28.9 weeks, for people 20-24 years it was 45.9 weeks (61.4 weeks for men; 50.4 weeks for women). The averages, of course, do not reveal the extremes, and there are now many people who have been unemployed for over two years.

This means that an increasing number of people are being excluded from paid employment and, consequently, they have to rely for income support on the state. As shown in Table 2.6, from 1974 to 1984, the numbers of persons over 16 years receiving unemployment benefits rose from 32,009 to 584,506 (as at 30 June), or 18.26 times. This increase was due not only to the increase in the unemployment alone but was compounded by the growing rigidity of unemployment, evident in the increased average duration of unemployment per person. The result has been that while in 1966 only one unemployed person in four was in receipt of unemployment benefits, by 1984 the numbers of the recorded unemployed and those receiving unemployment benefits reached almost a parity (Table 2.3). Of relevance to child and family welfare it needs to be noted that in 1984, 26.8 per cent of the persons in receipt of unemployment benefits received the benefits at a married rate thus indicating that their spouse was either unemployed, or was earning a minimum income, and 18.7 per cent of beneficiaries had dependent children.

The compound effect of the changes in the labour market, and changes in the family structure (and ageing population as well) may be seen in the growing number of people receiving pensions or benefits from the Commonwealth Government. In the space of ten years, from 1974 to 1984 those numbers had almost doubled (Table 2.6). While the age pensions still accounted for a major proportion, the largest proportional increases have been in the numbers of recipients of unemployment benefits, and supporting parents benefits. The total numbers of pensioners and beneficiaries increased by 87 per cent but the numbers of recipients of unemployment benefits increased 18.26 times and those of supporting parent benefits increased 5.84 times. Over the same period, population of Australia increased by only 13 per cent and population of 16 years and over by 17 per cent. As a result, while in 1974 14.9 per cent of population 16 years and over were in receipt of pensions or benefits, by 1984 that proportion rose to 23.7 per cent. Furthermore, in 1984, pensioners and beneficiaries had among them an estimated 700,000 dependent children.

This means that 16 per cent of all dependent children were those of pensioners or beneficiaries, and 265,934, or 38 per cent of those children were from one-parent families receiving supporting parent benefits.

Additionally, in June 1984, 26,531 families on low **earned** incomes received family income supplement (FIS) which was introduced in May 1983, and the number of dependent children in these families was 74,000. Almost all these families (93.5%) were two-parent families. It is believed, however, that the number of families applying for family income supplement is considerably lower than the number of families that would be entitled to receive it had they put in their claims.

Viewed in the aggregate, the data indicate that in Australia today there is a growing number of individuals and families who have become dependent for their livelihood on income maintenance provisions from the Commonwealth government as their main source of income. However, income maintenance is only one resource that individuals and families need for their survival and a modicum of social functioning. How, then, are the other needs met and who provides the services and resources to meet these needs is the issue for social policy that needs to be addressed.

In the division of responsibility for social welfare and social security between the Commonwealth and the States, the Commonwealth is responsible for cash benefits while the States provide non-material services, e.g. health, education and welfare. However, that division is not clear-cut, and it is even less clear in the area of child and family welfare. The Commonwealth provides funds directly to various non-government welfare organisations and community groups which provide child care, family support services and relief assistance in cash or material such as food, clothing, or shelter. Some services delivered or administered by the States are also either fully or partly financed by the Commonwealth. This assistance is rendered in addition to the funds paid to the States under the Commonwealth/States reimbursement agreement.

As will be seen later in this report, the main concern of the States' welfare authorities is still with child welfare, but an increasing amount of resources over the past 17 years (examined here) has been allocated to services which aim to provide support for families. Most of these services are non-material, such as advice, counselling and information, but provision of emergency relief in cash or kind is also frequent. On all accounts, it appears that approximately 90 per cent of people who receive such assistance come from the people who are in receipt of Commonwealth pensions and benefits.

What the States do in the area of child and family welfare is therefore of direct relevance to the Commonwealth social welfare policy, as it is increasingly evident that the 'target population' of both is to a large extent **the same population**, that is, the individuals and especially the families at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, or, in another perspective, an 'underclass' of people in an otherwise affluent society.

Table 2.1: Australian Families, 1982

Family Composition	N('000)	%
All Families	4,070.5	(100.0)
<u>Two-Parent Families</u>	3,571.7	87.7
Without children	1,317.0	32.4
With children	2,254.7	55.4
With dependent children only	1,579.1	38.8
With dependent and non-dependent children	313.5	7.7
All two-parent families with dependent children	1,892.6	46.5
 <u>One-Parent Families</u>	 279.2	 6.9
With dependent children only	218.9	5.4
With dependent and non-dependent children	43.1	1.1
With children ⁽¹⁾ and other relatives	17.1	0.4
 <u>Other Families</u>	 219.5	 5.4
 All Families with dependent children	 2,171.8	 53.4
 Estimated resident population	 14,794.8	 (100.0)
Persons living in non-family settings	1,529.2	10.3
Persons living in family settings	13,265.6	<u>89.7</u>
 Dependent children	 4,258.9	 (100.0)
Dependent children in two-parent families	3,786.2	88.9
" " in one-parent families	472.7	11.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1984) Australian Families, 1982:
Cat. No. 4408.0

(1) Of which at least one is dependent child

Table 2.2: Changes in Employment between 1966 and 1984

Industry/Occupation	Persons Employed				Change 1966-84	
	N('000)	%	N('000)	%	N('000)	%
<u>Industries</u>						
Community services	486.0	10.1	1138.4	17.6	+ 652.4	+ 134.2
Finance, property & business services	294.4	6.1	619.3	9.6	+ 324.9	+ 110.4
Public service, communications, gas, electricity and water services	366.9	7.6	601.2	9.3	+ 234.3	+ 63.9
Mining	58.0	1.2	93.2	1.4	+ 35.2	+ 60.7
Recreation, personal & other services	287.0	5.9	420.0	6.5	+ 133.0	+ 46.3
Transport & storage	270.0	5.6	354.1	5.5	+ 84.1	+ 31.1
Wholesale & retail trade	993.5	20.6	1271.4	19.7	+ 279.9	+ 28.0
Construction	406.0	8.4	423.2	6.5	+ 17.2	+ 4.2
Agriculture & related industries	429.6	8.9	400.2	6.2	- 29.4	- 6.8
Manufacturing	1232.5	25.6	1141.4	17.7	- 91.1	- 7.4
All industries	4823.9	(100.0)	6462.3	(100.0)	+1638.4	+ 34.0
<u>Occupations</u>						
Professional, technical, etc.	472.8	9.8	1015.7	15.7	+ 542.9	+ 114.9
Service, sport, recreation	395.7	8.2	650.1	10.1	+ 254.4	+ 64.3
Clerical	729.0	15.1	1169.2	18.1	+ 440.2	+ 60.4
Sales	397.7	8.2	579.0	9.0	+ 181.3	+ 45.6
Administrative, executive, managerial	330.1	6.8	442.4	6.8	+ 112.3	+ 34.0
Transport & communications	302.5	6.3	324.2	5.0	+ 22.0	+ 7.3
Miners, trades, process work, etc.	1731.3	35.9	1836.4	28.4	+ 105.1	+ 6.1
Farmers, fishermen, timbergetters, etc.	464.8	9.6	445.5	6.9	- 19.3	- 4.2
All occupations	4823.9	(100.0)	6462.3	(100.0)	+1638.4	+ 34.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, The Labour Force, Australia, 1978; Cat. No.6204.0
The Labour Force, Australia, August 1984; Cat. No.6203.0

Table 2.3: The Labour Force, Unemployment, and Unemployment
Benefits Paid, Australia, 1966-1984

Year	The Labour Force					Unemployment Benefits paid as at 30 June	Ratio of Unemployed/ unemployment benefits paid
	Labour Force N('000)	Employed N('000)	Unemployed N('000)	%	Mean duration weeks		
1966	4902.2	4823.6	78.6	1.6	3.0	19.5	4.03
67	5019.6	4932.8	86.8	1.7	3.0	24.0	3.62
68	5136.6	5055.5	81.1	1.6	8.9	21.3	3.81
69	5261.8	5182.9	78.9	1.5	7.4	15.9	4.96
70	5473.8	5395.6	78.2	1.4	7.3	13.0	6.02
71	5608.3	5515.6	92.7	1.7	6.6	19.4	4.78
72	5753.9	5609.9	144.0	2.5	9.7	41.6	3.46
73	5888.7	5782.9	105.8	1.8	9.3	37.9	2.79
74	5996.1	5885.2	140.9	2.4	6.5	32.0	4.40
75	6119.7	5841.3	278.4	4.6	12.7	160.7	1.73
76	6190.6	5897.9	292.7	4.7	17.5	188.4	1.55
77	6354.8	5995.5	359.3	5.7	20.9	250.3	1.44
78	6365.3	5969.6	395.7	6.2	26.2	286.1	1.38
79	6415.3	6041.5	373.8	5.8	28.4	312.0	1.20
80	6639.0	6246.7	392.3	5.9	32.1	311.2	1.26
81	6733.4	6356.3	377.1	5.6	35.1	314.5	1.20
82	6806.0	6347.5	458.5	6.7	32.8	390.7	1.17
83	6916.7	6232.6	684.1	9.9	41.5	635.0	1.08
84	7066.9	6462.3	604.6	8.6	45.5	584.5	1.03
Change Ratio 1984-66	1.44	1.34	7.69	5.38	15.17	29.98	-

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, The Labour Force, Australia, August,
Catalogue Nos. 6203.0 and 6204.0 (various years)
Department of Social Security, Annual Report 1983-84.

Table 2.4: Unemployment, August 1984

Industry/Occupation	Unemployed Persons					
	Men		Women		Persons	
	N('000)	Rate %	N('000)	Rate %	N('000)	Rate %
<u>Persons who had worked full-time for two weeks in the last two years, in: Industries</u>						
Community services	9.5	2.3	15.7	2.1	25.1	2.2
Finance, property & business services	11.0	3.3	6.4	2.1	17.4	2.7
Public service/other industries	20.7	4.4	7.1	4.4	27.9	3.9
Mining	*	*	*	*	*	*
Recreation, personal & other services	19.1	8.9	14.3	6.0	33.4	7.4
Transport & storage	13.4	4.3	*	*	15.2	4.1
Wholesale & retail trade	48.9	6.3	26.8	4.6	75.7	5.6
Construction	40.0	9.5	*	*	41.5	8.9
Agriculture & related industries	19.3	6.0	*	*	21.6	5.1
Manufacturing	66.1	7.2	15.7	5.1	81.8	6.7
<u>Occupations</u>						
Professional, technical, etc.	9.6	1.7	9.9	2.1	19.5	1.9
Service, sport, recreation	20.0	7.5	18.8	4.4	38.8	5.6
Clerical	8.4	2.5	26.2	3.0	34.5	2.9
Sales	15.5	5.5	16.3	4.9	31.8	5.2
Managerial, security, admin. & others	8.0	2.1	*	*	10.1	2.2
Transport & communications	17.8	5.9	*	*	19.6	5.7
Miners, trade, process work, m.e.c.	144.0	8.2	14.6	6.4	158.6	7.9
Farmers, fishermen, timbergetters, etc.	24.7	6.6	*	*	26.8	5.7
All previously employed as above	248.0	5.8	91.8	3.6	339.8	5.0
Looking for first job	47.5	-	46.0	-	93.5	-
Other	84.3	-	80.9	-	165.2	-
Stood down	*	-	*	-	6.1	-
All unemployed	381.5	8.7	223.1	8.3	604.6	8.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, The Labour Force, Australia, August, 1984
Cat. No. 6203.0

Note: Unemployment rate = unemployed persons as % of persons employed & persons seeking work

* Frequency too small for statistical inference

Table 2.5: Unemployment Rates and Duration of Unemployment

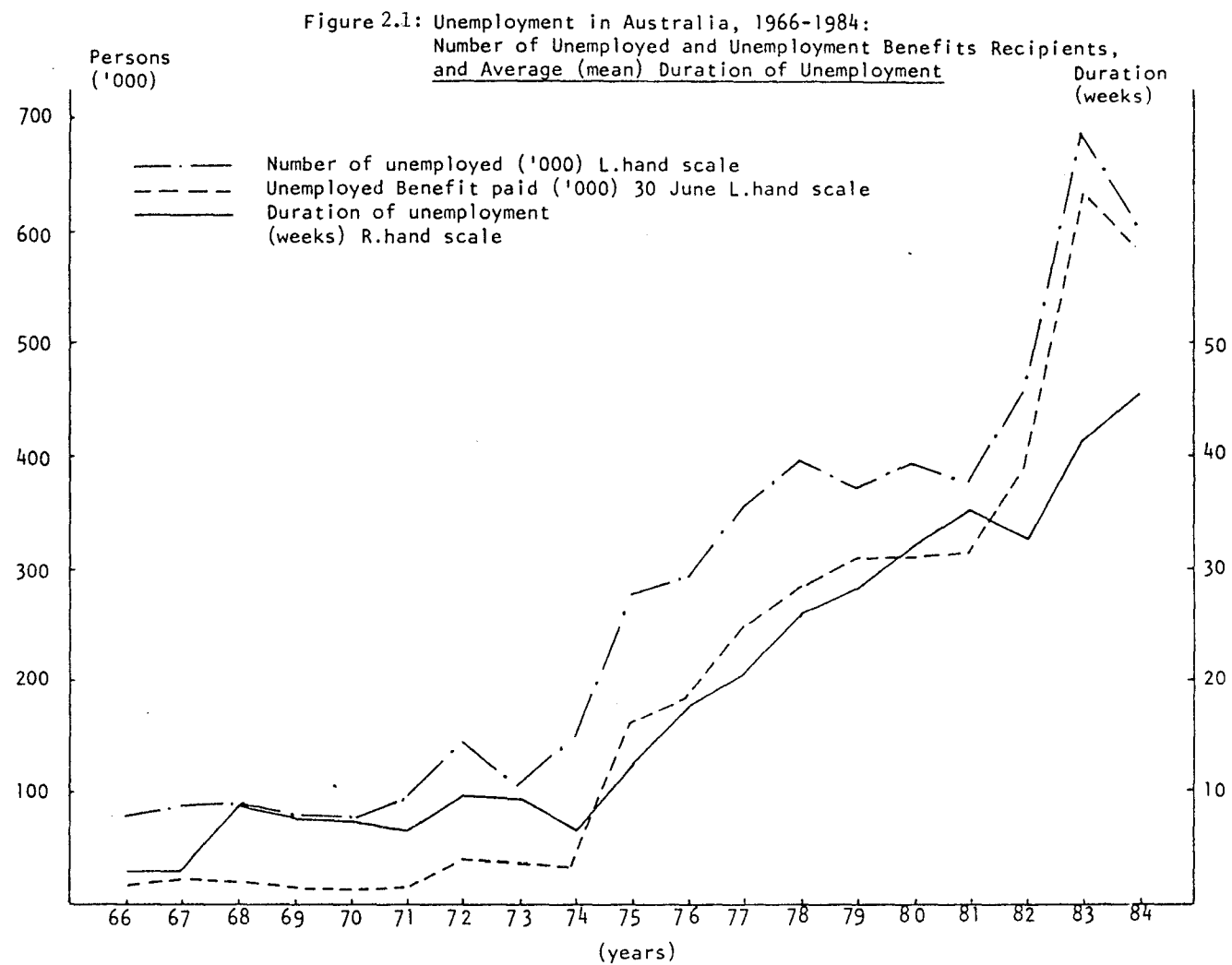
Australia, August 1984.

Age group (years)	<u>Unemployment rate (per cent)</u>					
	Males		Females		Persons	
15 - 19	22.1		19.7		21.0	
20 - 24	14.3		10.3		12.5	
25 - 34	7.6		7.0		7.4	
35 - 44	5.0		5.6		5.3	
45 - 54	5.7		4.6		5.3	
55 - 59	5.4		*		4.9	
60 - 64	8.1		*		6.6	
All unemployed	8.7		8.3		8.6	
	<u>Duration of Unemployment (weeks)</u>					
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
15 - 19	28.6	17.1	29.2	17.1	28.9	17.1
20 - 24	45.5	26.1	46.4	22.0	45.9	26.0
25 - 34	49.6	26.1	35.5	16.0	44.7	24.0
35 - 54	61.4	39.2	50.4	26.1	57.4	33.2
All unemployed (a)	48.6	27.0	40.1	21.0	45.5	26.0

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, The Labour Force, Australia, August 1984
Cat. No.6203.0

(a) Includes persons aged 55 years and over (not shown separately)

* Frequency too small for statistical influence.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: The Labour Force, Australia, 1978; Cat.No. 6204.0
The Labour Force, Australia, August 1984; Cat.No.6203.0
 Department of Social Security: Annual Report 1983-1984

Table 2.6: Recipients of Pensions and Benefits, Australia: 1974-1984

(as at 30 June)

Category of Pensioner/ Beneficiary	1974		1984		Increase Ratio 1974 - 1984
	N	%	N	%	
<u>Pensioners/Beneficiaries with Dependent Children</u>					
Class A Widows' Pension	64,084	4.5	81,176	3.0	1.27
Supporting Parent Benefit	26,286	1.8	153,589	5.7	5.84
	90,370	6.3	234,765	8.8	2.60
<u>Pensioners/Beneficiaries who may, or may not, have Dependent Children</u>					
Unemployment Benefits	32,009	2.2	584,506	21.9	18.26
Sickness Benefits	22,036	1.5	62,400	2.3	2.83
Special Benefits	5,244	0.4	18,293	0.7	3.49
Invalid Pensions	182,640	12.7	307,847 ⁽¹⁾	11.5	1.69
	241,929	16.9	973,046	36.4	4.02
Age Pensions	1,049,124	73.2	1,382,690 ⁽¹⁾	51.7	1.32
Class B Widows' Pension	51,137	3.6	81,755	3.1	1.60
Class C Widows' Pension	89	0.0	114	0.0	1.28
	1,100,350	76.8	1,464,559	54.8	1.33
All Pensions/Benefits	1,432,649	(100.0)	2,672,370	(100.0)	1.87
Estimated Population ('000)	13,722.6		15,543.6		1.13
Pensioners/Beneficiaries as %		10.4		17.2	
Est. Population 16 years + ('000)	9,644.6		11,267.7		1.17
Pensioners/Beneficiaries as %		14.9		23.7	

Source: Department of Social Security

(a) Annual Report 1983-1984

(b) Ten Year Statistical Survey 1974 to 1984

(a) includes wives' pensions

CHAPTER 3

CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE IN THREE STATES; NEW SOUTH WALES, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AND TASMANIA

In this chapter we present a brief overview of the government departments responsible for child and family welfare in the three States which have been selected, in the first instance, for our study of child and family welfare in Australia. In this overview we note certain innovations and changes that mark significant steps in the evolutionary process, and then compare the resources the departments have used in various areas of activity. We then provide a comparative chronology of events in the three States together with certain initiatives taken by the Commonwealth government in child and family welfare. Closer examination of activities in the areas of child welfare, family support, and community work is presented in subsequent chapters.

The evolution of policy and services and the extension of services to new areas of activity have not proceeded at the same pace or in the same manner in each State but there are many common elements and factors among them. To a large extent, the evolution of services has followed a similar pattern, from a rather narrow concern with child protection and the control of young offenders in the earlier years, to the concern with 'the family' and later with 'the community'. However, the primary statutory responsibility of the departments concerned has remained in the field of child welfare which is rendered in the name of 'protection' or 'prevention'; the latter being now emphasized as the preferred form of intervention (Carter, 1983). In practice, the distinction between the two terms is not clear, as the purpose and methods of intervention cannot be separated into neat, clear-cut categories. The common link, and the underlying philosophy of intervention, has become the term 'care', although many activities and methods of intervention may have, and in a broad societal sense have, the purpose of social control.

The commitment to the maintenance of the family unit and the belief that the welfare of that unit forms the basis of community well-being is frequently stated and has been enshrined in the child welfare legislation in most States. For example, the aim of the New South Wales Youth and Community Services Act 1973 was seen

...to promote the welfare of the family as the basis of community well-being and to mitigate the effects of disruption of family relationship where disruption occurs. (Annual Report 1977:9)*

* In the following pages the abbreviation 'AR' is given for Annual Report.

Similarly, the aim of the Community Welfare Act in South Australia has been stated in the same, although rather broader, definition.

...to promote the welfare of the community generally and individuals, families and groups within the community; and to promote the dignity of the individual and the welfare of the family as the basis of the welfare of the community. (Community Welfare Act, 1972-1981:10(1))

And the philosophy of the Tasmanian Department for Community Welfare has expressed the same purpose, i.e.,

The primary objective of the Department is to enable individuals and families who require help to function in society to the best of their ability, and to preserve, strengthen and where possible restore the family unit. (AR 1982:7)

Thus 'the family', 'the community' and 'care' have become the operative terms of State welfare departments; the fourth term frequently stated, especially in relation to community work, is 'development'. What these terms really mean in practice, that is, how they are actually translated and applied to individual cases of intervention may be only inferred from the official annual reports of the departments concerned. However, they do project a certain image of welfare with positive characteristics and serving 'the whole community'. Whether the departments actually perform such a wide role may be a debatable point and subject to varied interpretation. As will be seen later in this report, the spectrum of services might have widened but the main areas of departmental activities and concerns still revolve around the residual functions of care, assistance, and control of individuals and families in the lower socio-economic groups.

The work of the three government departments examined here also needs to be seen in relation to the size of the population that comes within the scope of their responsibilities. In 1982, the population of New South Wales was four times the size of the population in South Australia and over twelve times of that in Tasmania. From 1966 to 1982 the population in the three States had grown at a lower rate than the population in Australia as a whole (30.9%). Of the three States, the highest rate of growth (25.2%) was recorded in New South Wales, and the lowest in Tasmania (15.7%). South Australia recorded a growth of 21.3 per cent (Table 3.1).

Children's population 0-17 years, that is the age group which falls into the definition of 'a child' in State welfare legislations in most States (0-16 in Tasmania) had grown over the same period by only 11.4 per cent in Australia and the numbers in that age group have been decreasing, in fact, since the peak year in 1975. Again, the rate of growth in New South Wales between 1966 and 1982 was only 7.9 per cent, and in the other two States children's population actually declined; by 3.4 per cent in South Australia and by 7.4

per cent in Tasmania. In New South Wales the decrease in children's population began since 1974, in South Australia since 1972, and in Tasmania since 1971.

In comparing the evolution of welfare services areas, a range of factors apart from the size of population needs to be taken into consideration. For example, the economic factors referred to in the previous chapter would have similar effects in all States but there also would be differences because the economies of the three States are not the same. The economic recession of the 1970s, for example, affected South Australia more severely because its economy depended much on the automobile and white goods industries, and Tasmania has always experienced specific economic difficulties because of its size and relative isolation. At the same time, these two States, and especially Tasmania, have had the advantage of receiving a larger proportion of Commonwealth funds (in relation to their populations) under the Commonwealth/States taxation reimbursement formula than New South Wales. These differences are reflected in the State budgets and, to a certain extent, also in the expenditure levels of welfare departments in each State.

NEW SOUTH WALES: DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The 17 year period (1966-1982) was a period of expansion for the Department, in the numbers of people employed, the size of its expenditure, and the range of its activities. The Department went under the name of Child Welfare until 1971 when it changed to Child Welfare and Social Welfare, and then to Youth and Community Services (YACS) in 1974, following the passage of the Youth and Community Services Act, 1973. With that change, the Department took on wider responsibilities, including the concept of 'community welfare'.

The prime purpose of the 1973 Act was 'to provide for the implementation of Government policies on community services in a more integrated way than had previously been possible.' The Act also provided a 'charter' for the Minister and the Department which stated that the objectives of the Department were

to promote, protect, develop, maintain and improve the well-being of the people of New South Wales to the maximum extent possible having regard to the needs of and resources available to the State... (AR 1974:11)

Among the actions taken in that year (1974) was the provision of subsidies to local government authorities to employ social workers and welfare officers, appointment of a 'community worker' in a developing housing area, and establishment of special social work service to schools, the latter two initiatives being introduced as pilot projects (AR 1974: 16,24).

The change of 1974 was foreshadowed by the attention given to the care of intellectually handicapped people in the new Part IX of the Child Welfare Act in 1967, by the inclusion of Aboriginal Welfare in the Department's responsibilities in 1969, and by the acceptance of the Department 'as an appropriate point from which various welfare and related services may be co-ordinated' (AR 1971:14). This expansion of activities necessitated administrative re-organisation which took place from 1970 to 1975, characterized by decentralisation of authority and some regrouping of functions. The new structure was expected to facilitate decision making, to ensure more effective service and greater flexibility for coping with expanding community needs (AR 1972:9).

By 1975, the Department had evolved from one providing various welfare services to children and families in difficulties to one whose charter also provided for,

the provision of liaison, consultative, developmental and advisory services in the field of youth and community welfare, and for the promotion of Aboriginal advancement;

the development and promotion of early childhood services; and the provision of grants to organisations providing social welfare services (AR 1974:11).

The need to respond effectively to the needs of those in receipt of Department services prompted a steady development of staff training at all levels of the Department. The policy of staff recruitment to 'child welfare' roles changed over this period. In 1966 emphasis was on recruitment of staff from within the Department for the Child Welfare Officers training courses. In 1975 the Director reported that,

In the areas of field staff there was increased emphasis on intake of graduates and diplomates in the course in line with Department and Public Service Board policy of professionalisation of the field (AR 1975:15).

Another area of activity that received attention was research. Already in 1967 the Director expressed the need for expanding the research section of the Department so that additional programmes of research and evaluation would 'operate concurrently with work already under way and provide the basis on which modifications and new services can be planned more effectively and realistically' (AR 1967:9).

The feature of all these developments since the passage of the Youth and Community Services Act, 1973, was a sustained movement towards community services. The pilot projects, first introduced in 1974, later became permanent features of departmental activities, on an increased scale. Community development officers, social planners and consultants on various

programmes were employed in increasing numbers, either directly by the Department or by local government bodies which received funds from the Department for that purpose. These activities brought the Department into closer contact with other government bodies, non-government welfare agencies and community groups. A significant outcome of these activities was not only a change in the Department's character but also a wider role played by local government authorities in the social welfare scene.

However, while the expansion and diversification of activities was being introduced, the major part of staff work and departmental expenditure continued to be devoted to the welfare of children who became State Wards and were in residential care and to the young offenders committed to training institutions or placed on probation.

What follows below is a brief overview of the changes in various areas of departmental activities.

Dependent children

The preferred form of care for children removed from their natural families continued to be foster care. However, as foster care was not always available for all children under the Minister's guardianship, the Department provided residential care.

A significant feature in the residential care of dependent children was the decrease in the size of residential units, in an effort to replicate the family situation. The most appropriate living situation was seen to be a cottage managed by a married couple who gave their full attention to the care of a small number of children (AR 1969:19). An innovation introduced in 1974 was a 'Family Group Home'. This concept was based on 'the acceptance of the premise that family life offers the best opportunities of meeting a child's physical, emotional and social needs' (AR 1974:40). The small cottage unit and a family group home also enabled the placement of siblings together. Previously, the age-and-sex-segregated large establishments meant that brothers and sisters placed in residential care were often separated.

A similar trend to smaller residential facilities developed in the non-government child welfare sector. Involvement of non-government and private organisations in providing residential care for children was actively supported by the Department. The Child Welfare (Amendment) Act, 1966 (Part VIII) provided for licensing of non-government facilities, thus enabling the Department to control the standard of care. Section 27 of the same Act allowed for the provision of financial assistance to residents in such establishments who were not supported by parents or relatives. The same section also provided for continuation of allowances to State wards who attended approved educational courses past their school leaving age. Furthermore, in line with the endeavour to 'normalize' the lives of children

in residential care, participation in community activities and attendance at local community schools was encouraged. In more recent years, attention was given to State wards who needed help with the transition to employment and independence.

Regular reviews of children placed in care do not appear to have been formalized until 1976, but the Department has always stated as its goal to restore the children to the care of their natural parents whenever this was possible. Among the duties of District Officers was the task 'to establish and maintain contact with the natural parents in an effort to assist in their rehabilitation to the point where restoration of their children may be seriously considered' (AR 1973:29).

Despite these statements and intentions, most children placed under State guardianship were placed in substitute care. By the late 1970s, however, the policies and practices had changed towards an emphasis on keeping as many children as possible at home with their parents. This is reflected in changing departmental procedures and in such measures as the Alternate Care Programme introduced in 1979, or the use of temporary foster care. In 1981, the Department reported that 301 State wards were restored to their parents in that year. This was seen as the effect of 'increased counselling, support and financial assistance to the natural parents of wards'. Together, these measures increased the number of restorations as well as a reduction in the number of children coming into 'permanent' care (AR 1981:8).

Young offenders

In 1967, the Department announced a transition from the 'training' approach to a 'treatment' approach in the rehabilitation of delinquent children and young people. The training approach was seen to be characterized by imposition of discipline aimed to make the offender adopt certain habits by a system of reward and punishment. The treatment approach was to utilize individual psychological counselling and group work aimed to alter the young person's attitudes to 'society, authority, himself and other people' (AR 1967:18).

New training programmes in residential institutions introduced in 1973 encouraged the involvement of parents and were heralded as a significant innovation in the training activities. One such facility, 'Tallimba', was

seen as a,

therapeutic community to provide an intensive programme of relatively short duration ... The conventional historical structure common to the organization of most institutions has been considerably reduced and, instead, Tallimba community functions with a higher degree of democracy, communalism and confrontation (AR 1974:52).

As in the residential care for dependent children, training facilities were developed to provide small groups as the living units, even when large numbers of children were accommodated on one site (these facilities are now referred to as 'campus homes'). Overall, shorter training periods for young offenders were introduced over the period (AR 1975:47). Some institutions were closed down or restructured and new ones opened, usually of a smaller size and with special training programmes. Attendance centres and youth projects centres were also established as an option falling between probation and training in a residential facility. The centres aimed to provide community-based programmes which allowed the young offenders to remain in their own localities. Community Youth Centres established in 1976 were an extension of that idea, providing another alternative to a training school.

Changes in community attitudes, increased use of official police 'cautions' and a wider choice in alternatives to institutionalization were reported to have decreased the committals to training establishments between 1971-72 and 1980-81 by 45 per cent (AR 1981:26). A change appears to have also occurred during the 1970s in the legal classification of young offenders. In the earlier years very few young offenders would be classified as State Wards but in more recent years the practice of classifying young offenders committed to training institutions as State Wards appears to have increased.

Intellectually handicapped children and young people

The responsibility for care of intellectually handicapped children was acquired by the Department through Part IX of the Child Welfare Act, introduced in 1967. The new legislation authorized the Minister for Child Welfare to provide accommodation and training of intellectually handicapped children under his guardianship. It also allowed for the guardianship to be extended beyond the child's age of 18 years thus providing for the care of such persons throughout the whole of adult life if this became necessary. The legislation provided for,

regular review of persons placed under guardianship for reason of intellectual handicap (AR 1967:9).

In response to the legislation the Department established hostels for intellectually handicapped young persons of working age. The hostels were placed in community settings so as to facilitate interaction with the community. Field officers provided supervision, and financial assistance was given to agencies providing services to handicapped persons through the Intellectually Handicapped Assistance Fund. This assistance has continued after the Commonwealth government introduced the Handicapped Children's (Assistance) Act, 1970.

The establishment of the Handicapped Persons Bureau in 1978 has substantially influenced the Department's residential care policies. There are now many such facilities available providing permanent care or respite care for use by parents or foster parents of handicapped children.

Early childhood services

The Department's involvement in early childhood services, other than its licensing function, developed early in the 1970s. Assistance became available for the establishment of non-profit pre-school centres, especially for children of single parents, immigrants, Aboriginal people, and other groups perceived to be 'under-privileged'. Subsidies were made available toward the cost of staff needed to meet licensing requirements, and grants were made to organisations involved in the training of pre-school teachers.

Increased involvement in this area of child welfare led to the establishment of Early Childhood Division within the Department in 1974. It was also at that time that funds were made available from the Commonwealth government for non-profit community-based day-care facilities. Later, Commonwealth funds became available for family day care schemes, vacation care, and after-school care, and the Department was responsible for the administration of some of these grants.

The field of early childhood services is examined more fully later on in this report (Chapter 5). Here, it is appropriate to note that the involvement of the Department in early childhood services (if judged by the allocation of funds - see Table 3.3a) has been evidently higher than the involvement of the Child Welfare departments in the other two States examined in this report. This does not necessarily indicate a higher commitment of the State funds, but rather the differences in administrative arrangements among the States. For example, in some States, other departments (e.g. education, health) have been involved in providing early childhood services.

Community services

Changes in specific programmes need to be seen in the context of the overall change that has taken place in the Department. The major developments since 1966 have been in the changing role of the Department in its relationship with 'the community'. This change has resulted in a more open character of its residential care facilities, in the development of alternatives to training institutions, and in a greater role assigned to non-government welfare organisations. The impetus for these changes came from the Youth and Community Services Act, 1973, the subsequent establishment of the Community Liaison Bureau, and the influx of professionally trained staff (mainly social workers). The move to 'community-based alternatives' was facilitated by the creation of Community Services Fund (originally a minor Social Services Fund), which became the source of funds for innovative services in the community, financed and supported by the Department.

Another notable event was the establishment of the Family and Children's Services Agency (FACSA) in 1977. The agency has functioned as a Ministerial advisory unit, and has played a significant role in the development of children's services in the State; it has conducted and sponsored research, and it has also been instrumental in the establishment of the NSW Children's Services Fund through which many services have been assisted.

The developments in New South Wales, as in the other States, have taken place at the same time as the Commonwealth government became increasingly involved in family and children's services. As will be seen later in this report, that involvement now extends beyond the provision of income support through pensions and benefits. While the Commonwealth provides few services directly, it has certainly been a source of funds as well as a stimulus for a range of services provided by the States and by the non-government welfare sector.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE

The South Australian Department for Community Welfare has undergone more changes than any comparable department in the other States. Until 1965, the Department was known as Department of Children's Welfare and Public Relief and was administered by a statutory Board of the same name. The Department came under a direct responsibility of the Minister for Social Welfare in 1965, under the new Social Welfare Act 1926-1965, which was proclaimed on 27 January, 1966. The Chairman of the previous Board became Director of Social Welfare and head of the Department. The Act also established a Social Welfare Advisory Council, consisting of the Director and five other members appointed by the Minister.

Apart from the responsibilities under the Social Welfare Act, the Department also had responsibilities under a number of other Acts, viz.,

Adoptions of Children Act, 1925-1965

Children's Protection Act, 1936-1965

Education Act, 1915-1965

Juvenile Courts Act, 1941-1965

Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement)

Act, 1922-1955

Offenders Probation Act, 1913-1963

Commonwealth Immigration (Guardianship of Children Act, 1946-1952

Commonwealth Marriage Act, 1961

Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act, 1959-1965

The functions of the Department, at the time, were stated as follows:

to provide necessities for the destitute, both children and adults, to care for children who are neglected, to guide and befriend children who are or may become delinquent, and to train those who are placed in departmental homes and institutions. Briefly, it is the responsibility of the Department to provide social assistance to children and adults who are in need.
(AR 1966:6)

In 1970, the Department was amalgamated with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and was renamed Department of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs. In that year, a new Director was also appointed. After a wide range of consultations with various welfare organisations, the philosophy of the Department was formulated, based on the main principle which said,

The resources of the Department should be used to promote the well-being of the total community, and to assist individuals, families and groups of persons to achieve to their fullest potential in society. (AR 1971:4)

From 1970 to 1972, extensive changes took place in the organisational structure of the Department, resulting in greater regionalisation and decentralisation of services, in changing methods of service delivery, and in the formation of various consultative bodies and advisory committees. Many

of these changes were eventually incorporated in the new Community Welfare Act which came into force in 1972. The Department was also renamed into Department for Community Welfare. Incorporated into the new Act were principles and objectives of the Department based on a new philosophy which (as officially stated) demanded that,

the provision of welfare services in the community should be readily available and easily accessible and must be in a form which will not perpetuate a dependence on the services provided. To prevent this a new emphasis must be placed on preventive services. This is leading to the development of community treatment services and supportive and supplementary family services and is taking the Department into new areas where little has been done before. (AR 1972:3)

The new Act provided for the decentralisation of Department's services and for the broadening of its activities. Some decentralisation had already occurred in the 1960s, and the process had accelerated in the early 1970s. Among the facilities that were to be developed were the Community Welfare Centres which were to provide local information and referral services, facilities for use by community (welfare) groups, a base for community development activities, and a local centre for providing the statutory services of the Department. The aim of placing statutory services in the midst of these other community activities was to change the negative image of 'welfare' in the community.

Community consultation and participation were to be fostered by local Community Welfare Consultative Councils consisting of local and State government representatives, the Department District Officer, and members of the local community. The Councils were later restructured in 1975 to co-ordinate with the Australian Assistance Plan introduced in 1974 by the Commonwealth Government. In 1979, the responsibility for the Councils was transferred to a new Department of Community Development.

A Community Welfare Grants Scheme was also established in 1972. Initially grants were made to organisations involved in youth activities but the grants were later expanded to include a wide range of welfare organisations.

Organisational changes continued throughout the 1970s. The extent of these was most evident in the regionalisation of services and in the establishment of new offices across the State. In 1966, departmental services were provided from the Head Office in Adelaide and four District Offices: two in the outer metropolitan areas and two in country centres. In 1982, the services were decentralised into six regions, and were provided through 30 District Offices and Community Welfare Centres, and 15 Branch Offices or Visiting Offices.

The scope of the Department's activities also broadened considerably over that period. In addition to its work with children and families 'at risk'

or 'destitute', the Department developed services for other specific groups: the disabled, the aged, the Aboriginal people, women, and ethnic minorities. There was also a desire to provide 'integrated' services through co-operation with other Government departments and non-government organisations, such as integrated health and welfare services and school-based community centres. A 'Community Residential Care' system was introduced in 1979, and a programme of 'Community Aides' was developed as a commitment to volunteerism and an expression of community development.

Among the features of the thrust towards the 'community' was the introduction in 1975 of contractual arrangements with a number of non-governmental organisations providing residential care for children or young people; and the 'Intensive Neighbourhood Care' (INC) in 1978-79 to provide an alternative to institutional placement of young offenders on remand or after appearance in court.

The main activities of the Department, however, remained focussed on the children and families 'at risk'. The concern at the breakdown of the family unit has been frequently expressed in its reports, and a range of services aimed at preventing or lessening the likelihood of breakdowns have been developed: crisis care, budgeting advice, emergency assistance, and many forms of 'family counselling and support'.

The services of the Department thus appear to have been developed in two directions. On the one hand, the services aimed to serve the whole community, and were based on the belief that 'for too long the association of need with poverty has deterred many people from seeking help' (AR 1975:3). On the other hand, it is evident that the majority of people whom the Department served have been (as always before) the children and families who experienced difficulties related to low income, inadequate housing, and, increasingly, unemployment.

The following sections provide a brief summary of changes in the various areas of departmental activity, and detailed analysis of specific areas is given in the subsequent chapters.

Neglected children and children 'at risk'

The feature of the Department's work in the area of child neglect has been a significant reduction in the numbers of children admitted into State guardianship since the early 1970s, and a greater use of short-term measures such as temporary guardianship and other 'non legal' methods such as temporary foster care provided by non-government organisations supported by the Department.

The prevalent form of substitute care for children under guardianship has been foster care. This has been a long-established practice in South

Australia, and a high proportion of children under State care and control have always been cared for in this manner. Foster care has not been without problems, which included breakdowns of placements and difficulties in placing children with special needs, such as disabled children or, in the earlier years, Aboriginal children. Later, with the policy of restoration of children to their natural families foster care often became a short-term care, and the introduction of temporary foster care was a next step in that direction.

Residential care used to be provided in large institutions but since 1968 the Department had adopted a policy of providing smaller units of 'cottage' or 'family' homes. By 1975 all large congregate homes had been closed or converted into cottage homes. In the same year an agreement was made with 16 non-government organisations for the provision of specialised residential care. These organisations have been receiving grants for employing social workers and subsidies for each child in care. The services of departmental psychologists and other professionals have also been available to these organisations. From the mid-1970s, the reports of child abuse became the matter of increasing departmental concern. Since then, crisis care services and child protection measures have become important aspects of the Department's activities.

Young offenders

The issue of young offenders has always been in the forefront of public interest in South Australia, and in this area of child welfare more changes have taken place in that State than in any other State in Australia (Jamrozik, 1973, 1976). In the 17 years reviewed here there were three distinct periods, each initiated by a new Act: the Juvenile Courts Act 1965; the Juvenile Courts Act 1971; and the Children's Protection and Young Offenders Act 1979. Each Act introduced changes in the judicial system and methods of dealing with young offenders as well as in the methods of correction, training or treatment.

In the earlier years, young offenders would either be released on bonds of good behaviour with or without supervision, or be committed to the Department's care and control as State wards. The committal could be to a training institution or to a supervision in the community. The 1971 Act raised the lower age of legal responsibility from 8 to 10 years and introduced the non-judicial system of Juvenile Aid Panels for children from 10 to 16 years. The Act of 1979 empowered the Panels (re-named Children's Aid Panels) to deal with young offenders up to the age of 18 years (except for offences under the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, and serious offences such as homicide) and introduced the system of Screening Panels as the first step in the process of dealing with reported offences.

In the treatment of young offenders one of the innovative methods introduced in 1978 was the Intensive Neighbourhood Care (INC), mentioned earlier. Youth Training Centres became another form of treatment. The feature of these and other methods has been the emphasis on short-term intensive intervention, resulting in large 'turnover' of young people **through** the system of services but relatively fewer numbers in the system at any given time (see Chapter 4, pp.65-66).

Handicapped children

Children with disabilities have been cared for by the mainstream services of the Department. One training institution has catered for the special needs of intellectually handicapped boys since the late 1960s, particularly of young boys who had been involved in offences. In 1979 community units were opened at the institution to assist the transition of boys to independent living. Since then, an outreach service has been developed to assist intellectually handicapped teenagers and their families, and cottage homes have been provided for those handicapped children who could not be placed elsewhere.

Early childhood services

Until the early 1970s the Department's role in early childhood services was restricted to licensing of creches and day care centres which were not licensed by local government authority. After the introduction of the Community Welfare Act 1972, the Department became responsible for licensing of all child care facilities except those operated by the Education Department and the Kindergarten Union. The most intensive involvement of the Department has been in family day care. Unlike the arrangements in the other States where most family day care schemes have been operated under the auspices of local government, non-government welfare organisations or community groups, most family day care schemes in South Australia have been managed by the Department of Community Welfare.

Services to young people

Services specifically designed to assist young people began to take shape in the 1960s, with the appointment of an Organiser of Youth Welfare Activities in 1966-67. The main function of the Organiser was to develop after-school activities and thus reduce the rate of growing youth delinquency reported at the time. Later, the Community Welfare Grants Fund established in 1972-73 was initially used to assist financially recreational groups and youth

leadership training. During the 1970s youth services were diversified and established at regional and local levels. Among the innovations introduced were 'Job Hunters Clubs', to provide assistance and support for unemployed young people; and youth shelters, to provide accommodation and certain activities for homeless young persons. Another service developed in the later 1970s was the 'key worker' scheme, provided in schools and designed to assist young persons experiencing behavioural problems.

Family support and community services

Family support services were developed during the 1970s; in the first instance, with the aim of preventing children from entering residential care. The impetus for the development of these services came from the Community Welfare Act 1972 and, later, from the Commonwealth initiatives such as the Social Welfare Commission, the Australian Assistance Plan, and, later again, from the Office of Child Care and the Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS). Most services in the 'family support' category have offered non-material support in the form of counselling, budget advice, and crisis intervention. The Family Assistance Scheme introduced in 1974 has provided emergency financial assistance. The funds available from the scheme have been used by the Departmental Community Welfare workers for specific purposes, such as food orders, or relocation expenses.

A feature of the Department's community work has been the use of community aides and volunteers. These persons receive training in family support and community work: they are registered with the Department, which provides the necessary insurance cover and gives them access to the departmental resources. They are also reimbursed for incidental expenses incurred in their work.

As mentioned earlier, the Department has provided Community Welfare Grants, allocated from a fund established in 1972-73.

TASMANIA: DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE

The Department for Community Welfare (until 1982, Department of Social Welfare) has been responsible for the administration of the Child Welfare Act 1960 and for a number of other Acts, e.g. Adoption of Children Act 1968, Domestic Assistance Services Act 1947, Child Protection Act 1974, as well as some relevant Commonwealth legislation such as Family Law and Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act (Annual Report, 1981:6).

Over the period under study (1966-1982) the Department went through a process of change in its organisational structure as well as in its philosophy and

goals. Most of these changes occurred from the mid-1970s and came to fruition in the early 1980s. The 'new' philosophy and objectives were outlined in the Annual Report for the year 1980-81. In that report it was stated,

Over the last decade there has been throughout Australia a strong movement away from social welfare as a residual service, that is merely picking up social problems as they arise out of social and economic systems, to a community welfare model with State social welfare departments taking initiatives in facilitating co-ordination between human service agencies, and establishing community participation and social planning mechanisms. This 'moving out' by social welfare should do much to remove some of the stigma attached to social welfare services and ensure appropriate social impact into government policy planning (AR 1981:5).

At the same time, it was acknowledged in the same report that there was still an ever-increasing demand for 'traditional' services, and 'the impetus towards community welfare has been impeded by present financial constraints as well as uncertainty as to the impact of Commonwealth policy'. The broad objectives of the Department were defined to be,

...To enable individuals and families who require help to function in society to the best of their ability, and to preserve, strengthen and where possible restore the family unit, by counselling, advising and assisting families and individuals in need, and by identifying and developing community support. Individuals needing help should be treated with dignity and respect, and the attitude of staff should be one of caring and acceptance (AR 1981:6).

These objectives were to be achieved by legislative changes, by regionalisation and decentralisation of the organisational structure, and by the adoption of a three-level welfare strategy in service delivery. The three levels were seen to be inter-related and to consist of Primary Assistance (Remedial and Rehabilitative), Secondary Assistance (Preventive) and Tertiary Assistance (Developmental Perspectives) (AR 1982:7-8).

Primary Assistance is seen as consisting of 'services to children and families after a crisis has occurred'. At this level of assistance the services often require to provide a substitute of the family for the child, such as residential care, custody and control, legal supervision, welfare counselling, referral and information.

Secondary Assistance means 'services to children and families to prevent a crisis'. Such services are to be offered for a limited period until normal functioning of the family is resumed. The aim of

these services is to prevent the need for primary assistance, and services may take the form of providing assistance through a family assistance scheme, food orders, temporary admission of child(ren) into care, home-help services, homemaker services, and child care subsidies. Services may be also provided indirectly through grants to organisations which offer emergency relief and welfare counselling.

Tertiary Assistance is to be provided through the Department's services 'directed towards social enhancement and development of families and individuals and the provision of broad community welfare services which link persons in need of care with available social facilities and resources'. Examples of such services are the Neighbourhood Houses and Child Care programmes.

The scope of the departmental work and the range of services offered have certainly widened over the years, although, as indicated by the three-level strategy of service delivery, the priority has remained with 'primary assistance', that is, remedial work with children and families 'after a crisis has occurred'. In 1966, and for most of the period examined here, the work of the Department of Social Welfare (as it was then called) was organized in two divisions: The Relief Division and the Child Welfare Division. The Relief Division was 'concerned with financial and other assistance for persons in necessitous circumstances', and the Child Welfare Division was,

concerned with measures to safeguard the welfare of children generally, to provide for children who are placed in guardianship or custody of the Director and to control and re-educate children who have come under notice of Children's Court because of delinquency (AR 1966:2).

In practice, there was a considerable overlap between the work of the two divisions, especially at the level of service delivery, as Child Welfare Officers performed tasks related to both the relief and the child welfare functions.

By 1980 the Department was concerned with a wider community, with policies and programmes for disabled people, Aboriginal affairs, multicultural affairs, women's shelters, and services to youth, particularly in the face of unemployment. It was also actively involved in Early Childhood Services. All of these groups did not come under the administrative umbrella of the Department in 1966 and had been gradually included over a period of years, especially in the period of development since the mid 1970s.

Some sources of change in the Department have been:

- a departmental initiative in 1977 to introduce a Wardship Review process which led to regular planning and reviewing of the placement and progress of State Wards
- the Social Policy Planning Unit which was established in 1973-74 under the Commonwealth Government Australian Assistance Plan. It filled a recognised need for continuing research and evaluation of the Department's programmes.
- the availability of Commonwealth funding for Early Childhood Services which prompted a more active involvement by the Department in this area. Commonwealth funding also assisted the Department in providing other services, in conjunction with grants to organisations.

Two reports commissioned by the Government of Tasmania and released in 1980-81 were expected to have considerable impact on the organisation of the Department and on the provision of social welfare and child care services. The report of the Review of Child Care Services (1980) was implemented in 1981 and resulted in some re-organisation of the departmental structure. The report on Child Welfare Act and State Social Welfare Services (1981) recommended that the Child Welfare Act be replaced by a Community Welfare Services Act. The new Act was to broaden the activities of the Department and give a legislative basis for a number of activities which were already introduced in practice. The legislation was to be prefaced by a statement of philosophy and principles which were to form the basis for the Act. (The Bill for the new Act was expected to be introduced in Parliament in the spring session of 1984, but is now expected to be introduced later in 1985).

Among the factors that hampered the development of services was the lack of opportunities for social work education in Tasmania, and the centralized administration of the Department. As stated in the report for 1973, 'Social work in this Department continued to be seriously handicapped by the lack of any tertiary course for the training of social workers in the state' (AR 1973:5). This need was eventually met by the College of Advanced Education in 1974; prior to this a number of post graduate scholarships were granted for study at Flinders University in Adelaide.

Staff training was seen to be an important issue, considering the growing range of responsibilities of Child Welfare Officers and the geographic isolation experienced by many workers in the field. The Department also utilized a number of volunteers in child welfare work. In response to these needs, the professionalisation of staff was accompanied by an increase in emphasis on staff training within the Department.

Structurally, the Department remained highly centralized for most of the period under review in this report. In view of the nature of settlement in Tasmania this obviously had deleterious effects on service provision

throughout the State, with delays caused by the necessity to refer matters to a centralized administration.

A number of District and Sub-District offices had opened by 1975, but a more effective plan for regionalisation was not put into effect until 1981. As well as the elimination of delays in decisions, the Department saw other advantages in a regionalised structure, such as ability for clients to relate more readily to a 'localised' service, better support to field workers and more integrated local service delivery between the Department and other authorities, which the Department now sought to adopt in line with the community welfare model.

Most of the changes took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but many of these had been 'in the making' for some years and were formally adopted later. It thus appears that experimentation and innovation at the level of administration and service delivery preceded formal restructuring of the departmental administration and proposals for legislative changes.

As an overall trend, the feature of the period was a widening of the scope of departmental activity, from a comparatively narrow concern with care and control of 'neglected' or 'delinquent' children, to a diversification of activities towards more work with families and with specific groups such as youth, handicapped, early childhood, women's refugees, etc. As part of that process there was a growing involvement of the non-governmental sector and various community groups. There was also an increasing direct and indirect involvement of the Commonwealth Government, as many initiatives were implemented with the assistance of funds from the Commonwealth.

The Child Welfare Act 1960 remained substantially the main legislative basis for departmental operation throughout the period. There was no major piece of legislation introduced or passed, although the ministerial responsibility was extended by adding the portfolio of Child Care to that of Social Welfare (later renamed Community Welfare). However, various pieces of Commonwealth legislation affected the activities of the Department.

The formal regionalisation of departmental organisational structure did not occur until 1982. However, the groundwork for regionalisation had been laid since mid-1970s with the opening of a number of area offices. Similarly, it appears that the methods of service delivery remained substantially unchanged until the mid-1970s but from then on the policies and methods changed, manifest in such developments as a decreasing emphasis on residential care; decrease in the numbers of children declared and/or admitted as State wards; diversification of services for special groups such as youth, the handicapped, the Aborigines; increase in 'preventive' work with children and families; and beginning of 'developmental' work in the community.

Children and young people

Traditionally, the role of the Department with respect to the welfare of children and young people was divided into the 'care' of children who were estranged from their natural family and the 're-education' of those who came to the attention of the Department because of criminal or 'anti-social' behaviour. However, the Tasmanian Child Welfare Act, 1960, blurred the distinction between those children who were victims of neglect and juvenile 'offenders'. This had occurred because,

At the time when that Act was drafted it was perceived that 'delinquency' by children was a product of poor or neglected home circumstances, and that in consequence, the orders and facilities available to the courts in dealing with young offenders should not be distinguished from those used to promote the well being of children found to be 'neglected' (AR 1981:8).

Consequently, neglected children and delinquent children placed in residential care would often be housed in the same departmental 'training' institutions which basically had a training role for delinquent and disturbed children. Care for the children who were not delinquent or disturbed was also provided in approved non-government children's homes, foster homes, some minimal hostel accommodation for State wards commencing employment, and receiving homes which provided temporary care. The Department provided financial assistance to those facilities.

Reliance on care provided by non-departmental facilities had certain implications for the control by the Department over the quality of care provided. The Child Welfare Advisory Council surveyed both State controlled and private facilities for the care of wards in 1975 and expressed concern about the 'deplorable lack of family contact with children in some institutions and in some instances the separation of siblings within institutions and foster homes' (AR 1975:5). As a result of this 'discovery' a Wardship Committee was established in October 1977 'for the purpose of advising the Director on the status and placement of wards, not subject to any systematic review previously' (AR 1980:22). From then on, all children under State wardship were to be reviewed every two years. Before the Committee was established individual children had been subject of review only when they warranted specific attention. The Committee was thus a positive step towards eliminating a situation of being 'lost' in care. The Committee focused on 'family identity' of children and on the assessment of existing placement and status of wards. It was intended that the reviews would entail the participation of a number of people, including the child or the young person concerned. Implicit in that approach was the questioning of the need for a child or young person to continue in wardship.

By 1981, there was a reduction in the numbers of children in Approved Children's Homes, and the homes were becoming involved in the provision of

shorter periods of care and in a more active re-establishment of parent/child relationships (AR 1981:16). During 1981-82 two of the eleven Approved Homes closed down.

The favoured form of placement for children under guardianship has been foster care. Foster homes have consistently catered for a large proportion of wards and received financial support from the Department, and there were no significant changes in foster care policy over the period. In 1982 it was reported that foster care had increasingly been applied to short term care for 'special categories' of children. A review of the foster care programme was also being undertaken to address issues of 'permanency planning, delegation of guardianship and contract care' (1982:22).

Until 1976 the Department offered limited 'hostel' type accommodation for older male wards requiring support as they commenced employment. One of these hostels was set aside for a community treatment facility and the other was absorbed into the receiving home complex in 1978-79. Receiving homes were conducted by married couples who received payment for each child in residence. These homes provided temporary accommodation while places for more permanent placement were being worked out or when only temporary care was needed. In 1981 the receiving homes were re-named 'Family Homes', and by 1982 there were 18 such homes 'strategically placed throughout the State' (AR 1982:23), providing accommodation for State wards as well as for other children who needed short-term placement in residential care.

The training function for delinquent or disturbed children was based almost entirely on institutional care until the mid 1970s. Two institutions catered for boys and one for girls. Where practical, children in these institutions attended local schools and were involved in local community activities. Older wards received training in specific skills; farming and trade skills for the boys, domestic training for the girls.

This institutional base for training and rehabilitation remained unchanged until the formation of the Social Policy Planning Unit in 1974, although the inadequacy of the institutional facilities available was brought to light in 1970-73. During this period, due to pressure placed upon institutional accommodation and the conflicting aims of long term and short term placements in the same institution, plans were initiated for a central remand and assessment centre to cater for the special needs of short term placement which had aggravated accommodation pressures at existing institutions. However, subsequently the need for such facilities was apparently reconsidered with the changing philosophy towards community-based care, and the centre was not built.

The move to community-based treatment facilities was made by establishing a Community Youth Centre in one region of the State and a Regional Resource Centre in another. One training institution for girls was closed and the other two re-modelled; one accommodating younger boys and girls and catering for boys with intellectual disabilities. Much of the care for

intellectually handicapped children, especially girls, is now provided by non-government organisations which receive financial grants from the Department.

Other services

As mentioned earlier, by 1982 the Department provided, or was involved in, a range of services going beyond the legislative framework of the Child Welfare Act 1960. Some of those services were aimed at children and families 'in need'; others were aimed at specific population groups, such as youth, the handicapped, Aborigines, etc. The extent of departmental involvement may be grouped into three categories, e.g.

Direct services	e.g. Homemaker services Home-Help Services Direct Financial Assistance
Administration, Liaison, and/or Supervision, involving other Government Services, and involving State and/or Commonwealth Governments	e.g. Handicapped Persons' Services Aboriginal Affairs Women's Refuges Neighbourhood Houses Family Support Services Scheme Youth Services
Grants to Organisations	e.g. Sundry Services Grants Special Services Grants

The provision of these services is examined in Chapter 6 of this report. The Department's involvement in early childhood services is examined in Chapter 5.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES: HOW DO THE THREE STATES COMPARE?

From the foregoing brief overview, it is evident that in the 17 years from 1966 to 1982 the Welfare Departments in all three States had extended their activities into new areas of service provision. These changes could not have occurred without any increases in the allocation of resources. It needs to be noted, however, that over the same period all governments - Commonwealth and States - increased their budgets in real terms to meet the demand for increasing public services, as well as to meet the rising costs of operations.

In the Commonwealth sphere the largest increases in expenditure have been in the field of social security, due to the growing numbers of people receiving income support through various forms of pensions or benefits. The extent of this growth has been discussed earlier in this report, in Chapter 2, and welfare expenditure incurred by the States needs to be seen in the overall context of social security and welfare expenditure incurred by both the Commonwealth and the States.

Each of the three States examined here has also increased its budget between 1966 and 1982, in real terms. A comparison of the levels of expenditure between those two years is given in Table 3.2. In that Table, expenditure by the welfare departments has been related to the total expenditure of the respective State governments, and both State and welfare expenditures have been related to the size of the population, thus giving the details of expenditure per capita. To arrive at a comparable measure, the expenditure has been calculated in constant 1980-81 prices (1980-81=100), using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as the basis for conversion from actual expenditure at current prices. The details of expenditure for each year from 1965-66 to 1981-82 in current and constant 1980-81 prices are given in Table 1 and Table 2 in the Appendix.

Departmental expenditure

As may be ascertained from Table 3.2, all three States had increased their expenditures in real terms above the rate of population growth, with New South Wales showing the highest rate of increase and South Australia the lowest. However, State expenditure per head of population in 1981-82 was still the lowest in New South Wales, as it was in 1965-66, and the highest was in Tasmania. The expenditure of the NSW Department of Youth and Community Services also increased faster than in the other two States, both in real terms and as percentage of the total State budget, but still remaining the lowest per capita. Nevertheless, the differences in per capita expenditure among the three departments had narrowed considerably between 1965-66 and 1981-82.

The movements of State and welfare departments' expenditures over the 17 years are shown in Figures 3.1 and 3.2. Figure 3.1 shows that State expenditures per capita had risen steadily over the 17 years, with some fluctuations, except for South Australia where expenditure decreased sharply in 1976-77. Expenditure per capita by the Department for Community Welfare in that State also shows a decrease since 1977-78, while in the other two States it shows a steady rise.

As a percentage of State budgets (Figure 3.2), there was a sharp increase in the departmental expenditure in New South Wales in 1969-70 and in 1970-71 in South Australia. These rises had evidently occurred when the respective departments (YACS and DCW) became responsible for Aboriginal Welfare. There

was another sharp rise in South Australia in 1972-73 when the Community Welfare Act 1972 and the reconstruction of the Department took place.

Notwithstanding the overall increases in Welfare departments' expenditure, it needs to be noted that Welfare departments in all three States (and presumably in the other States of Australia) account for a minor proportion of States' budgets, ranging from 1.20 per cent in Tasmania to 1.87 per cent in New South Wales (in 1981-82). Furthermore, it appears that the proportion began to diminish since 1980-81 in both New South Wales and South Australia, while in Tasmania it maintained a gradual increase (except for a fall in 1980-81) but still remaining at approximately two-thirds level of the other two States.

Allocations within Departments

Comparisons of the allocation of resources within the departments are difficult to make with any great precision because each department presents its account in a different form. South Australia adopted programme budgeting in 1980-81 but the presentation of the aggregate account is condensed in the Annual Reports both in terms of itemization of expenditure and terminology, which makes a reconciliation of programme expenditure with the aggregate account rather difficult. Tasmania lists all salaries and overheads under 'general administration'; while from the accounts in New South Wales it is impossible to disaggregate the large expenditure in the Community Fund from which funds are allocated to grants to the non-government sector.

Subject to these qualifications, it appears from the accounts for 1981-82 that the largest item of expenditure in each of the three departments is related to the welfare of children who are either State wards, under another form of guardianship, or under departmental control as young offenders (Tables 3.3a, b, and c). New South Wales appears to have a higher proportion of expenditure incurred in providing residential care (25%), with South Australia in the second place (22%) if both the government and non-government residential care are counted. However, expenditure on residential care in New South Wales is probably higher, if the expenditure on the maintenance of children in non-government establishments (under Section 27 of the Child Welfare Act) is included. It is difficult to arrive at the cost of residential care in Tasmania because of the way the accounts are presented in the annual reports. As a very broad estimate, it appears that in 1981-82 approximately one-third of all expenditure of the three departments would have been incurred in providing residential care for children. Furthermore, if South Australia is an indication, a major proportion of that one-third would be taken up by residential care of young offenders (18% of total expenditure of the South Australian Department for Community Welfare in 1981-82).

The States and the Commonwealth

The involvement of the Commonwealth government in family and child welfare tends to be equated with, or seen to be limited to, the assistance provided for early childhood services through the Children's Services Program of the Office of Child Care. This view is, however, a gross over-simplification, as the relationship between the Commonwealth and the States in that area of welfare is far more complex. While it is perhaps possible to identify which government finances or is responsible for a particular service, the scene is quite different if the evolution of services is perceived as an interplay of initiatives and responses in each sphere of government over a period of some years.

As a brief overview of that evolutionary process, various initiatives and events related to family and child welfare from 1966 to 1982 are presented in chronological order in Table 3.4. The list of events is certainly not exhaustive but it is evident from the data in that Table that significant changes in the States' sphere began to take place in the 1960s (and later in Tasmania) but in the early 1970s, and especially during the three years of Labor government in Canberra, an important stimulus for innovation and change came from the Commonwealth. Ever since then, many programmes developed by the States have been assisted by the Commonwealth. Furthermore, the perception of issues in family and child welfare had changed, especially the perception of the role of 'the community', whatever the interpretation of the word 'community' might be in various quarters, and irrespective of how the meaning of the term might change over time.

The significance of Commonwealth initiatives is not easily ascertained from the reports of State welfare departments, as these reports tend to present the issues and performances from the States' perspective. However, some initiatives stand out as being of particular significance, such as the work of the Social Welfare Commission and of the Interim Committee for Children's Commission in the early 1970s. For example, the Director of the New South Wales Department of Youth and Community Services commented in 1976 on the significance of the Australian Assistance Plan in the following terms:

The Australian Assistance Plan has given an organized impetus to community work throughout the State and even in those areas where it is relatively inactive its very existence has created some new thinking in relation to what a community should and could do (AR 1976:26).

Table 3.1: Population Change, 1966-1982

Australia, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania.

Population Change	Australia	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
<u>Total Population</u>				
Total Population, 1966	11,599,498	4,237,901	1,094,984	371,436
" " 1982	15,178,409	5,307,948	1,328,738	429,752
Increase 1966-1982	+ 3,578,911	+1,070,047	+ 233,754	+ 58,316
" " (%)	+ 30.9	+ 25.2	+ 21.3	+ 15.7
<u>Children's Population 0-17yrs*</u>				
Population in 1966	4,043,007	1,417,151	390,132	134,529
" " 1982	4,502,464	1,529,495	376,759	124,564
Increase/decrease 1966-1982	+ 459,457	112,344	- 13,373	- 9,965
" " (%)	+ 11.4	+ 7.9	- 3.4	- 7.4
Highest population	4,575,531	1,569,058	412,880	138,504
Year highest pop. reached	1975	1974	1972	1971

Source: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics (1973) Estimated Age Distribution of the Population: Australia, States and Territories, 1966 to 1971; Ref. No. 4.15

Australian Bureau of Statistics (1982) Estimated Resident Population by Sex and Age: States and Territories of Australia, June 1971 to June 1981; Cat. No. 3201.0

* Population covered by Child Welfare legislation: 0-16 years in Tasmania.

Table 3.2: State Expenditure and Expenditure of State Welfare Departments:

1966-1982

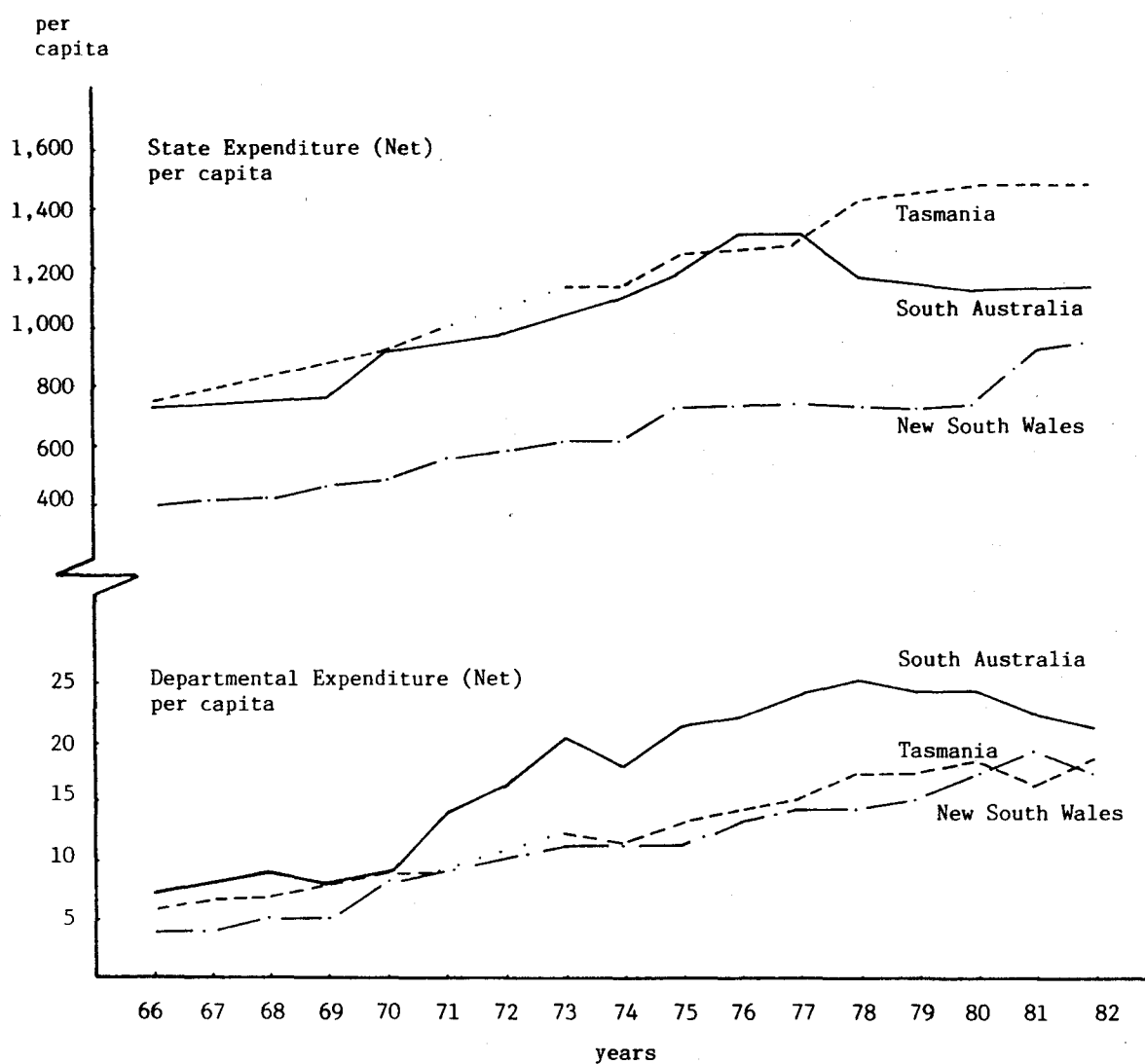
(at Constant 1980-81 Prices)				
State	Item	1965-66	1981-82	Change Ratio 1966-82
NSW	Population	4,237,901	5,307,948	1.25
	<u>Total State Expenditure (\$'000)</u>	\$1,715,601	\$4,803,924	2.80
	Expenditure per Capita (\$)	404.82	905.04	2.24
	<u>Department (YACS) Expenditure (\$'000)</u>	16,592	89,860	5.42
	Dept. Expenditure as % of State Exp.	0.97	1.87	1.93
	Dept. Expenditure per Capita (\$)	3.92	16.93	4.32
S.A.	Population	1,094,984	1,328,733	1.21
	<u>Total State Expenditure (\$'000)</u>	801,480	1,560,156	1.95
	Expenditure per Capita	731.96	1,174.16	1.60
	<u>Department (DCW) Expenditure (\$'000)</u>	7,882	28,100	3.56
	Dept. Expenditure as % of State Exp.	0.98	1.80	1.84
	Dept. Expenditure per Capita (\$)	7.20	21.15	2.94
Tas.	Population	371,436	429,752	1.16
	<u>Total State Expenditure (\$'000)</u>	281,530	630,011	2.24
	Expenditure per Capita (\$)	757.95	1,465.99	1.93
	<u>Department (DCW) Expenditure (\$'000)</u>	2,325	7,574	3.26
	Dept. Expenditure as % of State Exp.	0.83	1.20	1.45
	Dept. Expenditure per Capita (\$)	6.26	17.63	2.82

Source: State Budget Papers and Departmental Annual Reports

Note: (1) "Per Capita" mean per head of State population
 (2) Department's expenditure is net of any reimbursement from Commonwealth and other sources.

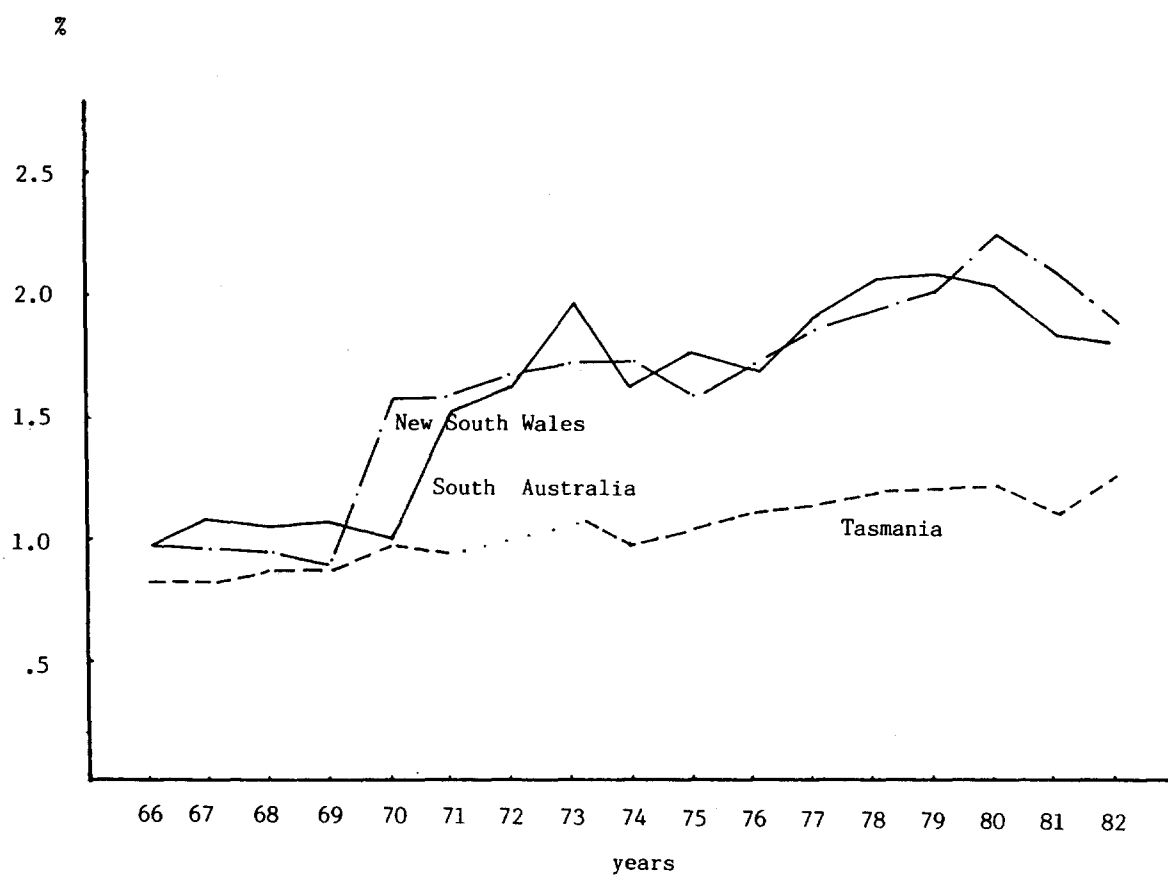
CPI: 1980-81 = 100; 1966 = 30.4; 1982 = 110.4

Figure 3.1: State and Departmental Expenditure Per Capita, 1966-82
(at constant 1980-81 prices)



Note: See Table 2 in the Appendix for statistical data.

Figure 3.2: Departmental Expenditure as % of State Expenditure, 1966-82



Note: See Table 1 in the Appendix for statistical data

Table 3.3a: Department of Youth and Community Services, NSW,
Allocation of Expenditure, 1981-82 (Current Prices)

Field of Activity	Expenditure		
Children	\$'000		%
Maintenance of Children, Section 23 of C.W. Act	3,520.6		
Special Clothing & other requirements for Wards	681.9		
Maintenance of Children in Shelters, transfers etc.	1,225.2		
" " " , Section 27A, C.W. Act	2,449.0		
Expenses related to Family Group Homes	394.3		
Development of Family and Children's Services	<u>439.8</u>	8,710.8	8.8
<u>Grants, Subsidies and Contributions</u>			
Children's Services Fund-Contribution -	19,250.0		
<u>Less:</u> Commonwealth payments	<u>7,130</u>	12,120.0	
Day Nurseries - Grant	<u>420.0</u>	12,540.0	12.6
Community Development	4,300.0		
Assistance to the Handicapped	1,750.0		
Women's and Youth Refuges	2,815.0		
Homeless Persons	600.0		
State Youth Grants Fund - Contribution	649.4		
Vacation Care programmes - Grants	457.0		
Special Projects	460.0		
Disaster Welfare	40.0		
Community Education activities	73.9		
International Year of Disabled (Non-recurring)	<u>250.0</u>	11,325.3	11.4
Home Help Service of NSW - Subsidy	8,255.0		
<u>Less:</u> Commonwealth Contribution	<u>4,127.5</u>	4,127.5	4.2
Cash and other assistance	<u>8,827.5</u>	8,827.5	8.9
Head Office and General Div. Salaries, etc.	12,934.1	13.1	
Residential Care Division, Salaries, etc.	25,302.0	25.5	
Field Division, Salaries, etc.	<u>17,699.9</u>	<u>17.8</u>	
Total Expenditure	101,467.1	102.3	
<u>Less:</u> Revenue collected (less C'wealth Contributions)	<u>2,261.9</u>	<u>- 2.3</u>	
Total Expenditure (Net)	<u>\$ 99,205.2</u>	<u>(100.0)</u>	

Source: Department of Youth and Community Services, Annual Report, 1981-82.

Table 3.3b: Department for Community Welfare, South Australia
Allocation of Expenditure, 1981 - 82 (Current Prices)

Field of Activity	Expenditure	
	\$'000	%
<u>Children and Youth</u>		
<u>Youth Offenders and Children "at Risk"</u>		
Services to Aid Panels and Courts	420.0	
Residential Care (Secure = 3,999.5; Non-Secure = 1,653.0)	5,652.5	
Supervision in Community, Youth Projects, Schools	2,987.0	9,059.5 29.2
<u>Other Children Services</u>		
Handicapped Children	865.0	
Child Care Services	856.7	
Child protection	578.0	
Foster Care and Emergency Foster Care	3,339.0	
Residential Care (Govt - 270.0; Non-Govt = 1,007.0)	1,277.0	
Youth Services	264.0	
Adoptions	192.0	7,371.7 23.8
<u>Family and Individual Support</u>		
Counselling, Health Care, Budget Advice, Legal Advice	2,502.3	
Women's Refuges	759.0	
Crisis Care Service	455.0	
Emergency Financial Aid	1,286.0	
Adviser on Women's Welfare	44.0	5,046.3 16.3
<u>Services for the Aged</u>		3,371.0 10.9
<u>Services for the Aborigines</u>		1,026.0 3.3
<u>Adviser on Ethnic Minorities</u>		44.0 0.1
<u>Other:</u> Disaster Control, Volunteers, Publicity, Research		154.0 0.5
<u>Professional and Administration:</u>		
Support Services	2,517.0	
General Admin	1,683.0	
Other	921.5	5,121.5 16.5
Interest on Capital funds, etc.		1,903.0 6.1
Grants to Welfare & Other Organisations		1,100.0 3.5
		34,197.0 110.2
<u>Less Receipts:</u> Commonwealth Payments	1,581.0	
Other	1,594.0	3,175.0 - 10.2
Net Expenditure		\$31,022.0 (100.0)

Source: Department for Community Welfare, Annual Report 1981-82

Table 3.3c: Department for Community Welfare, Tasmania
Allocation of Expenditure, 1981-82 (Current Prices)

<u>Field of Activity</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
		\$'000	%
<u>Child Welfare</u>			
Maintenance of boarded-out children	908.8		
Incidental Expenses: Family Group Homes	117.9		
" " : Institutions	173.8		
Regional Centres : Incidental expenses	34.1		
: Child care subsidies	<u>9.5</u>		
	1,244.1		
<u>Less: Repayments</u>	<u>33.6</u>	1,210.5	14.5
<u>Relief Assistance</u> (less repayments)		1,188.9	14.2
<u>Grants</u>			
Neighbourhood Centres	69.1		
Sundry Social Services Grants	360.0		
Women's Refuges	412.5		
Youth Services	88.2		
<u>Less: Commonwealth Contributions</u> <u>63.6</u>	24.6		
Handicapped Persons	393.6		
Child Care	<u>97.5</u>		
	1,357.3		
<u>Less: Other Commonwealth payments</u>	1.0	1,356.3	16.2
<u>Administration and General</u>			
Salaries	4,090.0		
Other Expenditure	<u>519.1</u>	4,609.2	
<u>Less: Repayments</u>	<u>2.6</u>	<u>4,606.6</u>	<u>55.1</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>\$ 8,362.3</u>	<u>(100.0)</u>

Source: Department for Community Welfare, Annual Report 1981-82

Table 3.4: Chronology of Initiatives and Events in Child and Family Welfare: 1966-1982

Year	Commonwealth	New South Wales (YACS)	South Australia (DCW)	Tasmania (DCW)
1965-66		Amendment of Child Welfare Act 1939; providing for licensing and control of non-government residential care for children; provision for assistance without declaring children State Wards (Section 27).	Proclamation of Social Welfare Act 1926-65, establishing Department of Social Welfare; Social Welfare Advisory Council (SWAC) established under the Act.	
1966-67		Amendment to Child Welfare Act; new Part IX provides for care of intellectually handicapped children and young persons.	Appointment of Organiser of Youth Welfare Activities	
1967-68	Commonwealth States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act, providing for reimbursement of 50% of expenditure incurred by State in relief payments	Gradual decentralisation of administration and service delivery; new District Offices established.	Gradual decentralisation of administration and service delivery; new District Offices established	
1968-69	First full year of operation of the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act.	Aborigines Act 1969; Department (YACS) takes over responsibility for Aboriginal welfare.	Staff Training Officer appointed	
1969-70	Handicapped Children's (Assistance) Act	New Director appointed; Review of Department's administration.	Research Officer appointed; SWAC releases 2 reports; Community Facilities for Youth; Legislation concerning Juvenile Offenders	

Table 3.4 cont.

Year	Commonwealth	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
1970-71		Name changed to Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare	Amalgamation of Department with Department of Aboriginal Affairs departmental re-organisation; new Director appointed	A scheme of secondment of staff for full-time study in social work.
1971-72	Child Care Act 1972 passed.	Two Consultative Councils appointed: on Pre-Schools and Education; and on Handicapped Persons	Community Welfare Act 1972 proclaimed; name changed to Department for Community Welfare; Regionalization of administration and services.	
1972-73	Change of Government. Social Welfare Commission (SWC) established.	Re-organisation of Department; Asst. Director (Community Services) appointed; New sections: Licensing and Regulatory Functions; and Community Liaison. Youth Advisory Council (est. 1967) transferred to Minister of Youth and Community Services	Community Development Branch established; Juvenile Aid Panels established; a number of Consultative and Advisory Commissions established.	
1973-74	Benefits for Orphans introduced; Children's Services Program; Supporting Mother's Benefit Australian Assistance Plan launched by SWC.	Youth and Community Services Act 1973: Department re-named accordingly; Family Group Homes introduced for State Wards; Early Childhood Division established; Grants to local government bodies for welfare services.	Introduction of Volunteer Community Aides; Remission of Local Government rates and taxes scheme introduced (for pensioners and low-income families - subject to means test).	Social Policy Planning Unit established with Commonwealth grant from SWC under AAP. School of Social Work established in Tasmania. Staff seconded for full-time study.

Table 3.4 cont.

Year	Commonwealth	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
1974-75	Children's Services Programme introduced by the Interim Committee for Children's Commission	Councils for Social Development established under the AAP; Child Welfare Legislation Review Committee appointed; Ethnic Affairs Bureau established. Concern about reports of child abuse; a District Officer appointed to specialized duties; services introduced in new housing estates; services to schools.	Councils for Social Development established under the AAP; Funds from Nat. Hospitals and Health Services Commission for employment of social workers in Health Centres; Funds from Interim Committee for Children's Commission for after-school activities; Unit for Social Planning set up with funds from SWC, Consultant for Family Day Care appointed; FDC schemes established with funds from Children's Services Program.	Councils for Social Development established under the AAP; Commonwealth Funds for Family Day Care Schemes; Homemaker's Service established by Department.
1975-76	Change of Government; Office of Child Care set up in Department of Social Security; Social Welfare Commission and Interim Committee for Children's Commission abolished; Australian Assistance Plan abolished.	Child Welfare Legislation Review Committee completes report; "Community" becomes the operative word in Dept. Work; Impact of AAP noted; 2 social workers added to work in area of child abuse; Pilot project for Community Support services set up - funds from Commonwealth CSP.	Established: Budget Advice service; Crisis Care service Community Care project aimed at diverting children from residential care (funds from CSP); Home maker's service set up (funds from AAP); Established: Emergency Foster Care; Youth Services, Youth Consultant, Volunteer's Job Hunters' Clubs; Greater use of non-government service in residential care noted.	Childhood Services Programme started: 1 social worker & 4 officers appointed; Submission to Commonwealth for funds; for child care; and for a scheme diverting children from institutional care.

Table 3.4 cont.

Year	Commonwealth	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
1976-77	Funding for Social Policy Planning Units in State departments withdrawn.	Home Help service set up (previously Housekeeper Emergency Service); Child Life Protection Unit established; Family and Children's Services Agency (FACSA) established as an advisory body to the Minister.	Family therapy service established (for families where residential care for child is imminent (funds from Office of Child Care); Women's Shelter Committee established; Shelters for young people approved; Amendment to Community Welfare Act - provision for compulsory reporting of non-accidental injury to children; five multi-disciplinary panels set up. Royal Commission in Juvenile Courts system.	New Director appointed. State portfolio of Child Care added to the Ministry of Social Welfare; Position of Executive Officer (Child Care) established; Emergency care further developed; Commonwealth funding for Aboriginal services.
1977-78	Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) introduced in all States - funds from CSP: Supporting Mother's Benefit extended to sole parents of either sex - now Supporting Parent Benefit (SPB).	FSSS introduced Child Welfare (Amendment) Act 1977 proclaimed - provides for compulsory reporting of suspected child abuse; Child Life Protection Unit set up; Liaison with Housing Commission re housing for the aged.	FSSS introduced 26 Community Welfare Councils noted (500 + persons involved)	FSSS introduced. Social Policy Planning Unit re-established with State funds; Commonwealth withdraws funds for Childhood Services Branch; State provides some funds for development of Early Childhood Services.

Table 3.4 cont

Year	Commonwealth	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
1978-79	International Year of the Child (IYC) - allocation of special funds to all States; Discussion between Commonwealth and States re 100% reimbursement of payments under States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act; Commonwealth/States agreement on funding Women's refuges: Operational costs 25/75 Capital costs 50/50.	Increased notifications of child abuse - 1801 since the establishment of the Child Life Protection Unit in 1977; Participation in the Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme.	Introduction of Intensive Neighbourhood Care (INC) for young offenders; Regional Youth Project set up; Adviser on Women and Welfare appointed.	State introduced Family Assistance Scheme to replace Commonwealth funded Preventive Payment scheme; Committee to review. Child Welfare Legislation established.
1979-80	Youth Services Program introduced as 3-year pilot scheme - 50/50 cost sharing with States.	A Corporate Plan announced for the Department: Start of Alternate Care Programme (incl. temporary foster care); Youth Worker Training Scheme; Worker Co-operatives scheme.	Children's Protection and Young Offenders Act proclaimed; Screening panels for young offenders introduced; Family Research Unit established.	"Weroona" institution for girls closed - re-opened as "Lucinda" Day Centre; State grant for Child Care services increased to \$60,000.

Table 3.4 cont.

Year	Commonwealth	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
1980-81	Commonwealth takes over payments of Supporting Parent Benefit from the date of claim.	Community Welfare Bill tabled in Parliament; Planning and Research Unit established; Special Information services established.	Introduction of programme budgeting; Provision for intensive supervision of young offenders by "mentor"; community services in lieu of default of fine introduced; service for ethnic minorities introduced; rehousing assistance scheme introduced.	Report of Review of Child Care Services; Report of Review of Child Welfare Legislation; Report on Needs of the Handicapped Person; Trainee Liaison Officer on Aboriginal Affairs appointed; Youth Unemployment service established; Approval of assistance to Neighbourhood Houses; Interim Advisory Committee on Family and Child Welfare appointed; Child Care Unit re-integrated with Family and Children's Services Branch; Statement on Department's philosophy.
1981-82	Family Support Services Scheme extended for further 3 years.	Community Welfare Act passed - to be implemented in 1983.	Ethnic Adviser appointed; social workers in Health Care now funded by the State; "Key worker" scheme set up in schools; Department becomes responsible for Senior Citizens Centres and Aged Services other than Health Services.	Regionalization of Administration and services: TASYOUTH established (previously Youth Unemployment Service); Statement on Department's Welfare Strategy: Funds allocated to Neighbourhood Houses, Childhood services.

CHAPTER 4

CHILD WELFARE

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the range of activities now performed by State welfare departments is wide and diverse, but their main concern has remained with child welfare. This concern has remained central to their activities and is evident in the legislation, in the allocation of resources, and in the detailed statistics provided by the departments in their annual reports. The concern with child welfare extends beyond the 'direct' services focused on children. Other activities, such as those in the category of 'family support' are, as it were, instrumental, for the same purpose, as they are aimed to enable a family to care for its child or children so as to prevent the necessity for State intervention of legal nature. Similarly, financial assistance given to non-government organisations is often given to those organisations which provide child welfare services.

State intervention under that concept of child welfare may take various forms and varied degrees of intensity. In terms of its **function**, intervention may be supportive of the family, it may supplement family care, or it may substitute family care by other forms of care. In terms of its **purpose**, intervention may take place to provide protection for the child, to prevent potential harm, or to re-socialise the child through corrective training and control. In **practice and method**, intervention may take the form of counselling the child and the family and supervising their activities, or it may separate the child from the family and place the child in substitute care, such as foster care, care in a family group home, or care in an institution. In **legal terms**, intervention may mean restrictions placed on the child's liberty and on parents' rights over the child, or a substitution of parents' rights by State guardianship.

State guardianship of a child is the highest (or the most extreme) form of intervention, imposed on a child under the concept of **parens patriae**, or State parenthood, the State taking the role of **loco parentis**. In recent years this form of intervention has been regarded as 'intervention of the last resort', and it is not practised as often as it used to be. The terminology invoked to define this action has also been changing. Historically, a child under State guardianship would be known in legal as well as in common terminology as a 'State Ward', although in South Australia the term 'State Child' or 'Child under the control of the Minister' was introduced in 1965, when the then Department of Child Welfare and Public Relief, administered until then by a Statutory Board, was brought under a direct responsibility of a Minister, with the passing of the Social Welfare Act, 1965. The term 'Ward of the State' is still used in some States, but the prevailing usage now appears to be 'child under guardianship'. As a

result, the extent of control, legal and/or administrative, over these children and their families is not always easy to determine.

State guardianship was in the past always imposed through a judicial commitment. However, provisions now exist in State legislations for admission of children into guardianship by administrative means, either on the initiative of the authorities or of the child's parents. This practice is used for temporary guardianship, usually for a period not exceeding three months. South Australia has now introduced also partial guardianship under which the State acquires some measure of control over the child but the rights of parents are not entirely abrogated.

Trends in the use of guardianship

The reasons for using State guardianship in child welfare may be varied but, essentially, they fall into two categories: when a child has been found guilty of an offence; or when the child's welfare is considered to be 'at risk'. The majority of children placed under guardianship are usually those considered to be 'at risk', but this is not always the case in all States, and in some States the majority may be the children who have committed offences. The practice of committing young offenders to State guardianship has varied over the years with the changing perceptions of the causes of children's law-breaking behaviour and, consequently, with changing legislation in child, or juvenile jurisdiction, and changing methods of administering penalties and practices of correction or treatment. For example, from the analysis of data in the reports from New South Wales it appears that until the mid-1970s that State was using State guardianship in cases of child's neglect, uncontrolled behaviour, or 'moral danger' (usually applied to young girls) but rarely for children who had been found guilty of an offence under the Crimes Act. Since then, the practice appears to have changed and the majority of children placed under the guardianship in that State are now the children found guilty of an offence. In South Australia, the practice has varied over the years with each change of legislation: in 1965, 1972, and 1979.

Thus, the fluctuations in the numbers of children committed or admitted into State guardianship do not necessarily indicate changes in children's or parents' behaviour. Rather, they illustrate changes in the perceptions, attitudes, and methods of intervention of the authorities. While all legislation concerning child welfare may have explicit references to the 'paramount interest of the child' as a basis for judicial and administrative decisions, the meaning of what may constitute that interest is subject to varied and changing interpretations of legislators, judges and magistrates, and welfare administrators and welfare workers. Current numbers of children under guardianship, differences among the States, and changes over the years need to be seen and interpreted with these qualifications.

The numbers of children currently under guardianship and the number of those being placed under guardianship each year need therefore to be seen and interpreted in that light. According to WELSTAT data for June 1981 (ABS, 1982; Cat. No.4405.0) 16,994 children in Australia were under State guardianship at that time (Table 4.1). The rates per 1,000 children of relevant age (0-17 years in most States) varied from as low as 1.2 in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) to 6.3 in Western Australia and 6.0 in Queensland. The high rates in these two States probably reflect the high proportion of Aboriginal children under guardianship. Apart from the ACT, New South Wales had the lowest rate of all States, at 2.7 per 1,000 children of 0-17 years. The average rate for all States and Territories was 3.8 per 1000.

Current rates for children under guardianship are among the lowest for some years. During the period examined here, the rates in all three States were higher in 1966 than in 1982; they kept rising until the early 1970s (until the mid-1970s in Tasmania), and then began to fall. The most pronounced variations have been in South Australia where in the earlier years the rates were the highest of the three States but by 1982 they approached those in New South Wales where the rates have been the lowest throughout the 17 years (Table 4.2, Figure 4.1, and Table 3 in Appendix). Again, these data need to be qualified as they do not include children under temporary guardianship in South Australia (introduced in 1972-1973) and probably those under temporary guardianship in the other States as well. In New South Wales, other forms of guardianship have also been introduced recently. As a general trend, however, the use of State guardianship has been on a decline for some years. This does not necessarily mean that the numbers of children who become subject to some form of State intervention and care or control have declined. As will be shown later in this chapter, 'non-legal' forms of intervention have now become more prevalent, but the overall numbers of children in the 'system of care' have not been reduced. In fact, the numbers appear to have increased.

Location of children under guardianship

The majority of children under guardianship in Australia remain in the community. In 1981 (as at 30 June), approximately two-thirds of the children under guardianship were so placed, and one-half of them were placed in foster care. Close to a quarter of all children remained with their parents or relatives. Of the three States included in this study, New South Wales shows the highest proportion of children under guardianship placed in residential care, due mainly to relatively high numbers of children in corrective institutions - 11.1 per cent of all children under guardianship, as against the national average of 5.3 per cent and 4.1 per cent in Tasmania (Table 4.3). The lowest proportion of children in residential care was in South Australia (17.1%), well below the national average of 30.3 per cent, with Tasmania being slightly below the national average. New South Wales

also shows the lowest proportion of children under guardianship remaining with their parents - 8.0 per cent, compared with 23.5 per cent for national average.

The comparison of data for the three States indicates that the use of residential care for children under guardianship has diminished in line with the decrease of all children under guardianship, but the proportions of children in residential care and those remaining in the community have varied little except in Tasmania where the proportion of children in residential care has fallen significantly, especially from 1981 to 1982 (Table 4.4).

What has changed over the period is the nature of residential care. Unlike in earlier years when large institutions for children were common, the prevalent type of residential establishment is now a 'home' or a 'hostel' accommodating not more than ten children, and frequently not more than five. Larger establishments rarely accommodate more than 30 children. Of the 229 departmental residential care establishments for children recorded in Australia in 1981 (ABS, 1982; Cat.No.4405.0), 26 establishments accommodated more than 30 children and only five of these had 100 or more children in residence (3 in NSW and 2 in Victoria). Larger establishments are usually corrective institutions for young offenders, now referred to as 'training centres'. Most other establishments are known as 'homes' or 'family group homes', although some of them are clustered in one place around central administrative and catering facilities and go under the name of 'campus homes'. A practice has now grown to 'contract out' residential care to non-government organisations (usually church bodies) and children placed in those establishments are now considered to be 'in the community'.

The most prevalent type of placement of children under guardianship has been foster care. In South Australia and Tasmania the numbers of children in foster care remained almost the same over the whole period, while in New South Wales the numbers in foster care decreased since the early 1970s but foster care still remained the prevalent type of placement, accommodating one-half of all children under guardianship in 1982.

On the whole, the general trend in child welfare provided by the States has been towards fewer children under guardianship and, consequently, fewer children in residential care; towards smaller size residential establishments, as an endeavour to provide a 'home-like atmosphere'; more of residential care provided by non-government organisations; and maintaining foster care as the prevalent type of placement. It needs to be noted, however, that a large majority of children under guardianship is still placed in **substitute care**, that is, children under guardianship become separated from their natural parents and their families.

The legal definitions of guardianship have also changed, and a child under guardianship does not necessarily mean the same as a child who is a State ward. New categories of guardianship have been introduced which provide the State with power and control over the child but the legal status of the child

is not completely changed. The State, or more precisely the Minister of the State, becomes legally the 'guardian' of the child but not necessarily the 'parent substitute' as was (and is) the case with complete State wardship. Through such innovations (and others mentioned below) the range of measures now in use in child welfare by the States has widened, enabling the authorities to intervene into the lives of children and their families in various ways, without necessarily involving the powers of a judicial process. Not the least part in that process of intervention is now played by the non-government welfare agencies which provide a range of services in child and family welfare, through a variety of legal, semi-legal and administrative arrangements, in conjunction with, or relative autonomy from, State welfare departments.

Children 'at risk' of maltreatment or abuse

From the mid-1970s there has been a growing concern in all States about the incidence of child maltreatment, or child abuse, and this has led to another category of children, referred to as 'children at risk'. All three States examined here have introduced new legislative provisions or modified existing provisions for mandatory notifications of children reported, or suspected, to be at risk. This area of child welfare now brings in increasing numbers of children (and their families) into the network of the State welfare system. New South Wales and South Australia have begun to publish statistics on reported cases of children at risk in the annual reports; Tasmania gives only descriptive information without statistical data.

All accounts indicate that the concern with children at risk of maltreatment or abuse (including sexual abuse) has now become a major concern of State welfare departments. Provisions for mandatory reporting of suspected or confirmed cases of child abuse have been introduced and now compel most professions and occupations involved with children to report such cases, e.g. teachers, nurses, employees of child and community welfare agencies, as well as medical practitioners, dentists, and police officers (S.A. AR 1977:27). Investigative and assessment procedures have been established, giving rise to new professional specialisations such as Child Protection Workers, Child Protection Consultants, and multi-disciplinary assessment panels. We have not analysed the data on child abuse as we consider that this issue calls for a thorough investigation which would go well beyond the issues we have set out to address in this report. However, it is relevant to note here that statistics of reported cases of child abuse have shown a staggering increase over a relatively short period of time. For example, in South Australia, 149 'confirmed' cases were reported in 1977-78; by 1981-82 the number had risen to 527, since then, the numbers have continued to increase, and a similar situation is being reported from the other States.

Two aspects of this 'new' problem in child welfare need to be mentioned here. First, the reports of State welfare departments have expressed at times the

necessity for caution in interpreting the significance of the increases in the reported cases of child abuse. For example, in reporting an increase in the number of cases for 1977-78, the report from South Australia also stated,

This does not necessarily imply an increase in the underlying rate of child abuse; it may simply reflect the fact that increasingly the resources and expertise of the [assessment] panels have become known (AR 1977-78:23).

The second aspect concerns the actions taken by the authorities aimed to raise the awareness in the community to the problem of child abuse, apart from widening the provisions for mandatory reporting of suspected cases, information and educational programmes for parents, teachers, and children have also been implemented for that purpose. As reported in the New South Wales report for 1981-82,

A multi-media campaign was launched to heighten community awareness of the problems parents face in caring for their children and to promote the concept of community responsibility in the prevention of child abuse (AR, 1981-82:9).

The growing concern with the problem of child abuse is thus a situation in which the concepts of 'protection', 'prevention' and 'promotion' of child welfare became closely interrelated. At this stage, it is rather difficult to say whether the problem of child abuse has always been as widespread as now appears to be, or whether it signifies a change in the perceptions of, and attitudes to, child and family welfare. However, it is apparent that a 'child at risk' has now become a broad category in welfare terminology and probably includes children who previously might have been referred to as 'neglected' or in 'need of care'.

South Australia: a model of innovation and change

South Australia may be used as a good example of the changes discussed here, as since 1972, South Australia has been regarded as a model of innovation and change in child and family welfare. The Community Welfare Act, 1972, was the first Act in that field which included the aims and objectives of the Act as well as the principles on which those aims and objectives were based. Since then, the Department for Community Welfare has been in a process of almost continuous re-organisation, and methods of intervention in child welfare (as in other areas) have been diversified to a larger extent than in any other State. Further legislative changes also took place in 1978-79.

Among the innovative features introduced in 1972 was the introduction of Juvenile Aid Panels as a means of 'diversion' of young offenders from the judicial system. This measure meant that children in the age group 10 - 15

years who were alleged to have committed an offence would not be brought (in the first instance) before the Court (except for serious offences, such as homicide) but before a Panel consisting of a police officer and a welfare officer of the DCW. On admitting the offence and accepting certain conditions imposed by the Panel, the child would not be subject to any further proceedings, provided the conditions were fulfilled. Later, with the passing of the Children's Protection and Young Offenders Act, 1979, the panels were re-named Children's Aid Panels and they were enabled to deal with young offenders from 10 to 17 years (except for serious offences and offences against Road traffic and Motor Vehicles Act). As a further step in the process of diversion, South Australia also introduced in 1979 Screening Panels whose function is to decide whether proceedings should be taken by the Panel or by the Court, or not be taken at all. A more recent innovation has been a further step of 'Police Caution' aimed to eliminate the necessity to proceed further in certain cases.

The only issue considered here is the question: does the system of diversion introduced in South Australia reduce the number of children coming into the State system of welfare? The comparison of data on appearances of children in Courts in the three States (Table 4.5) suggests that this is not the case. In New South Wales and Tasmania the numbers increased between 1971 and 1976, and then decreased by 1981 and showed some increase in 1982. In South Australia, a similar trend is evident in appearances before Courts, but the numbers of children appearing before Panels show an increase until 1981, and a small decrease in 1982, producing a total result not much different from those in the other two States.

A further indication of the effects of the Panel system may be seen in the data on the numbers of children appearing in Courts who had previously appeared before the Panels. In the report for 1981-82, the data show that of all children who had appeared before the Panels since 1972 only 17 per cent had subsequently appeared in Courts. However, this statement does not seem to take sufficiently into account the time dimension in relation to the age of children and their subsequent appearances before the Courts.

As shown in Table 4.6, in 1976, 21.1 per cent of children who appeared in Courts during that year had previously appeared before the Panels, but by 1982 that proportion had risen to 67.2 per cent. Furthermore, in the age group 16 years and over, the percentages were almost the same for 1976 and for 1982 but those of the children who had appeared before the Panels more than once had risen from 21.9 per cent to 51.9 per cent. Thus, it seems, the effect of the Panel system may be one of **delay** in Court proceedings rather than one of **diversion from** Court proceedings.

These observations do not mean to imply any comment about the relative merit of a judicial or non-judicial system of dealing with young offenders, as this issue does not come within the scope of this study. The main concern of the study is the child and family welfare system in operation and the role that the States perform in that system. South Australia is of particular

interest in relation to this issue because of the innovation and change that have taken place in that State in a relatively short period of time. It needs to be noted that in that process the operation of the system has become increasingly complex, as is evident in the procedures developed in the juvenile justice system and in those dealing with cases of child neglect and with cases of children at risk (Figures 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4).

Children in the 'system of care'

The developments mentioned above mean that the decrease in the numbers of children under guardianship does not necessarily mean that the overall number of children in the State system of child welfare has diminished. In order to determine the extent of State measures which come into the rubric of child welfare, it is necessary first to consider the range and variety of various legal, semi-legal or administrative categories under which a child may become an object of intervention and acquire certain 'status' in the system. The second consideration needs to be given to the time dimension in the intervention process. The first consideration thus relates to what may be called **the stock** of children in and out of the system; the second relates to **the flow** of children in and out of the system.

In relation to the first aspect, the introduction of various legislative provisions has enabled the States to intervene in a child's and his/her family life without imposing the legal measures of wardship or guardianship. How extensive these measures are it is difficult to ascertain from the annual reports of State welfare departments, because the data in the reports are either lacking, or are provided in a descriptive manner. There is also a varied degree of discontinuity of data from one year to another. The precise statistics in the reports are usually confined to the children who fall into clear legal categories, but even there it is not always easy to ascertain the numbers in certain categories or to arrive at precise comparisons between one State and another or between one year and another in the same State.

For many years, the two main legal categories of children in State welfare systems have been children under guardianship and children released from courts on good behaviour bonds with supervision by departmental officers. Other categories, such as children under voluntary or preventive supervision constituted the third group of children 'in the system' but the attention given to this area of activity varied from one State to another; in some States it would receive relatively high priority, in other States it would receive attention provided the resources allowed the authorities to do it. Consistent statistics on preventive supervision (giving number of families involved as at 30 June of each year) have been published by the Tasmanian Department for Community Welfare. South Australia used to publish these statistics but discontinued to do this early in the 1970s, and no data can be found in the reports from New South Wales.

The lack of consistent data presents difficulties in ascertaining both the numbers of children 'in the system' at any given time and the **flow** of children in and through the system. For example, a significant number of children in State welfare systems are the children 'on probation with supervision', that is, children who had appeared in Court for offences against the law and were subsequently released into the community on certain conditions, such as to be of good behaviour and be supervised by the officers of welfare departments. The reports from South Australia have maintained consistent data on these children, indicating for each year the numbers of children so committed, the numbers released, and the numbers remaining on probation at the end of each financial year. The Tasmanian reports give only the numbers of children on probation at the end of each year, and the reports from New South Wales give only the numbers of children released on probation but without stating whether they were to be supervised or not.

A greater consistency of data among the States would give a clearer indication of what the States are doing in family and child welfare, whether they are doing the same or different things, and what changes have occurred in various areas of their activities over time. It may be assumed that detailed statistics are published on those activities that the departments consider to be important. If such an assumption is valid, then it is apparent that despite the widening scope of State services which are defined as 'family support', or 'community development', the essential part of State departments' responsibilities has remained in the field of 'traditional' child welfare, that is, with the legal forms of intervention in cases of child neglect and young offenders, and with the need for substitute care arising from intervention in these areas.

Despite these deficiencies, indications may be drawn from the reports that over the period of 16 years examined here both **the stock** (children in the system) and **the flow** (children coming into the system) have increased. Secondly, there are also indications that the flow has increased more than the stock, and this has been due to the changing issues in child and family welfare and to the changing methods of intervention which now are more likely to be short-term methods, evident in such practices as temporary guardianship, shorter periods of probation, various methods of review, and methods of 'diversion' from the judicial form of intervention in cases of child neglect, child at risk, and especially in cases of child offenders (Table 4.7).

The data from the South Australian Department for Community Welfare indicate that the feature of innovation and change in child welfare system has been a growing complexity of the system's operation. It may be assumed that the procedures in the other States have also developed towards increasing complexity. There is certainly some evidence, mentioned earlier in this chapter, of an increasing **flow** of children **through** the system, at a rate faster than in the earlier years, without necessarily increasing the numbers of children **in the system** at any given time. What is more difficult to ascertain is the extent to which the children who come into the system in one

year are the same children who come in at another time. It is also difficult to ascertain (except by inference from certain comments in the reports) the demographic and socio-economic group characteristics of children and families who come into the system, or come into the system more frequently than others.

The observations made earlier in regard to the Children's Aid Panels in South Australia indicate that, in that aspect of child welfare at least, there may be some elements of a 'revolving door' in the system's operation. This issue is raised later in this report in relation to other aspects of child and family welfare, for in considering policy implications it would be important to know how large is the population that comes within the sphere of States' activities under the umbrella of child and family welfare.

TABLE 4.1: CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP, AUSTRALIA, JUNE 1981

State/Territory	Children under Guardianship		
	Persons		Rate per 1000 pop ⁽¹⁾
	N	%	
New South Wales	4073	24.0	2.7
Victoria ⁽²⁾	4138	24.3	3.5
Queensland	4215	24.8	6.0
South Australia	1186	7.0	3.1
Western Australia	2549	15.0	6.3
Tasmania	582	3.4	4.4
Northern Territory	154	0.9	3.0
Australian Capital Territory	97	0.6	1.2
Australia	16994	(100.0)	3.8

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Persons under Guardianship and Children in Substitute Care, Australia, June 1981; Cat.No.4405.0.

(1) Rate per 1000 of relevant population (0-17 years in most States).

(2) Data for Victoria based on estimates.

Table 4.2 Children under Guardianship, 1966 - 1982
(as at 30 June)

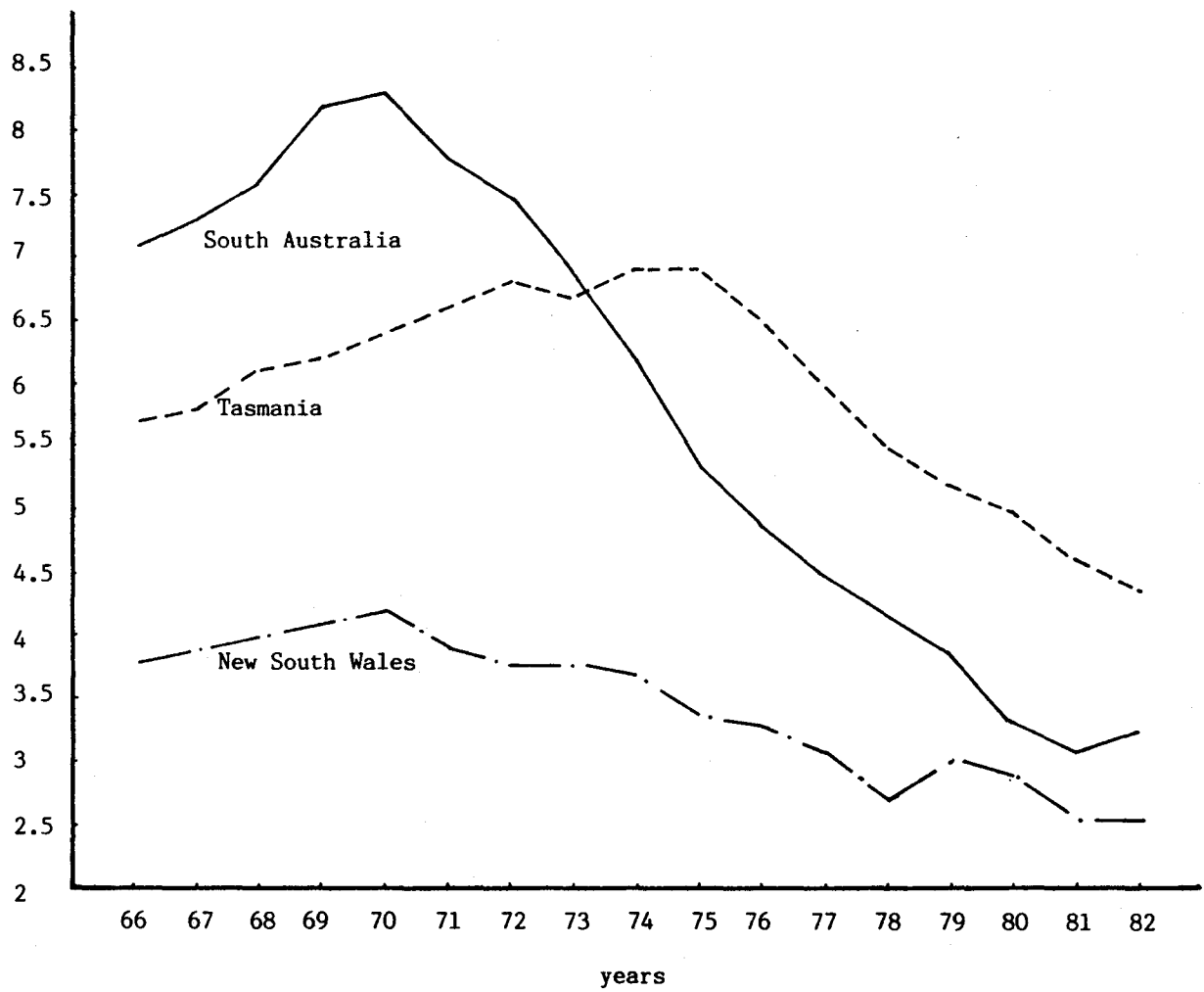
State/Year	Population 0 - 17 years*	Under Guardianship	Rate per 1000
<u>New South Wales</u>			
1966	1,417,151	5,412	3.82
1971	1,537,982	6,020	3.91
1976	1,556,784	5,127	3.30
1981	1,530,333	4,073	2.66
1982	1,529,495	4,076	2.66
<u>South Australia</u>			
1966	390,132	2,769	7.10
1971	412,112	3,206	7.78
1976	407,792	2,013	4.94
1981	374,365	1,186	3.17
1982	376,759	1,208	3.21
<u>Tasmania</u>			
1966	134,529	771	5.73
1971	138,504	920	6.64
1976	133,816	866	6.47
1981	125,753	583	4.64
1982	124,564	549	4.41

Source: Annual Reports of State Departments

* Tasmania, 0-16 years

Figure 4.1

Number of children under guardianship 1966-1982 per 1,000 of 0-17 population
(0-16 Tasmania)



Source: Annual Reports of State Welfare Departments

Table 4.3 Location of Children under Guardianship, June 1981

Type of Placement	New South Wales		South Australia		Tasmania		Australia	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>In Residential Care</u>								
Establishment for Handicapped Children	228	5.2	41	3.5	16	2.7	410	2.4
Establishment for other Children:								
Family Group Homes	93	2.1	19	1.6	75	12.9	1250	7.2
Campus Homes	174	4.0	-	-	31	5.3	794	4.6
Juvenile Hostels	61	1.4	10	0.8	-	-	309	1.8
Corrective Institutions	482	11.1	59	5.0	24	4.1	921	5.3
Other Homes for Children	232	5.3	66	5.6	10	1.7	1033	6.0
Hospitals and Nursing Homes	100	2.3	3	0.3	5	0.9	293	1.7
Boarding Schools	45	1.0	-	-	-	-	143	0.8
Prisons	16	0.4	5	0.4	1	0.2	44	0.3
Res. Adult Care Establishments	40	0.9	-	-	-	-	54	0.3
Total in Residential Care	1471	33.8	203	17.1	162	27.8	5251	30.3
<u>In the Community</u>								
Foster Care	2190	50.4	599	50.5	228	39.1	6018	34.7
With Parents or Relatives	348	8.0	281	23.7	164	28.1	4075	23.5
Other Adult Care	108	2.5	87	7.3	10	1.7	1195	6.9
Living Independently	217	5.0	5	0.4	15	2.6	529	3.0
Total in the Community	2863	65.8	972	82.0	417	71.5	11817	68.1
Unauthorised Placement Unknown	15	0.3	11	0.9	4	0.7	285	1.6
All Children under Guardianship	4349 ⁽¹⁾	(100.0)	1186	(100.0)	583	(100.0)	17353 ⁽²⁾	(100.0)

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1982) Persons under Guardianship and Children in Substitute Care, Australia, June 1981: Cat. No. 4405

(1) includes 276 adults under guardianship

(2) " 359 " " "

Table 4.4 Location of Children under Guardianship: 1966-1982 (as at 30 June)

State/Type of Placement	1966		1971		1976		1981		1982	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>New South Wales</u>										
Training Centres	61	1.1	112	1.9	86	1.7	470	11.5	449	11.0
Est. for handicapped children	-	-	-	-	-	-	190	4.7	199	4.9
Other homes for children	860	15.9	955	15.9	983	19.2	232	5.7	272	6.7
Family Group Homes, hostels other	128	2.4	131	2.2	148	2.9	475	11.7	396	9.7
Sub total: residential care	1049	19.4	1198	19.9	1217	23.7	1367	33.6	1316	32.3
Foster Care	4074	75.3	4568	75.9	3597	70.2	2175	53.4	2069	50.8
With parents or relatives	193	3.5	181	3.0	209	4.1	316	7.8	362	8.9
Other *	96	1.8	73	1.2	104	2.0	215	5.3	329	8.1
Sub-total: Community	4363	80.6	4822	80.1	3910	76.3	2706	66.4	2760	67.7
Total under Guardianship	5412	(100.0)	6020	(100.0)	5127	(100.0)	4073	(100.0)	4076	(100.0)
<u>South Australia</u>										
Training Centres	194	7.0	210	6.5	89	4.4	59	5.0	57	4.7
Est. for handicapped children	-	-	29	0.9	22	1.1	41	3.5	48	4.0
Group homes, hostels	338	12.2	266	8.3	136	6.8	37	3.1	40	3.3
Other homes	-	-	34	1.1	-	-	66	5.6	63	5.2
Sub-total: residential care	532	19.2	539	16.8	247	12.3	203	17.1	208	17.2
Foster care	511	18.5	728	22.7	627	31.1	586	49.4	604	50.0
With parents or relatives	1723	62.3	1578	49.2	887	44.1	281	23.7	272	22.5
Other *			361 ⁽¹⁾	11.3	252	12.5	116	9.8	124	10.3
Sub total: Community	2237	80.8	2667	83.2	1766	87.7	983	82.9	1000	82.8
Total under Guardianship	2769	(100.0)	3206	(100.0)	2013	(100.0)	1186	(100.0)	1208	(100.0)
<u>Tasmania</u>										
Approved Childrens' homes	190	24.6	204	22.2	159	18.4	89	15.3	56	10.2
Family Group Homes	26	3.4	25	2.7	24	2.8	34	5.8	27	4.9
Dept. Institutions	56	7.3	76	8.3	52	6.0	33	5.7	26	4.7
Sub-total: residential care	272	35.3	305	33.2	235	27.1	156	26.8	109	19.9
Foster care	261	33.8	313	34.0	311	35.9	228	39.1	241	43.9
With parents or relatives	139	18.0	163	17.7	232	26.8	164	28.1	129	23.5
Other *	99	12.9	139	15.1	88	10.2	35	6.0	70	12.7
Sub-total: Community	499	64.7	615	66.8	631	72.9	427	73.2	440	80
Total under Guardianship	771	(100.)	920	(100.0)	866	(100.0)		(100.0)	549	(100.0)

Source: Annual Reports of State Welfare Departments

* Includes unauthorised absences and unknown locations.

Table 4.5 Children in Courts and Reasons for Appearance: 1966-1982

State/Reason for Appearance	1966		1971 ⁽¹⁾		1976		1981		1982	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>New South Wales</u>										
(Final Appearances)										
Offences under Crimes Act	6269	41.7	7721	36.8	8024	37.1	9396	52.7	10391	55.0
" " Other Acts	5238	34.9	9777	46.6	10592	48.9	6475	36.3	6560	34.7
Under Child Welfare Act	3515	23.3	3488	16.6	3029	14.0	1959	11.0	1935	10.3
All Appearances	15022	(100)	20986	(100)	21645	(100)	17830	(100)	18886	(100)
<u>Tasmania</u>										
(Children found guilty of Offences)										
Group I: Serious Offences	801	63.7	1021	57.4	1453	45.7	983	50.5	1038	44.8
" II: Minor Offences	383	30.5	655	36.9	1572	49.5	889	45.7	1238	53.4
Complaints under C.W. Act	73	5.8	101	5.7	152	4.8	75	3.8	41	1.8
All Children	1257	(100)	1777	(100)	3177	(100)	1947	(100)	2317	(100)
<u>South Australia</u>										
Appearances before Panels	-		2032	34.6	3605	43.2	5632	61.8	5516	61.3
" " Courts	-		3840	65.4	4740	56.8	3477	38.2	3480	38.7
All Appearances	-		5872	(100)	8345	(100)	9109	(100)	8996	(100)

Source: Annual Reports of State Departments

(1) 1973 for South Australia: the first year Juvenile (later Children's) Aid Panels were introduced

Note: Data for New South Wales and South Australia refer to appearances while those for Tasmania refer to individuals appearing in Court. The two sets of data are not necessarily the same, as a child may appear in Court more than once during the year.

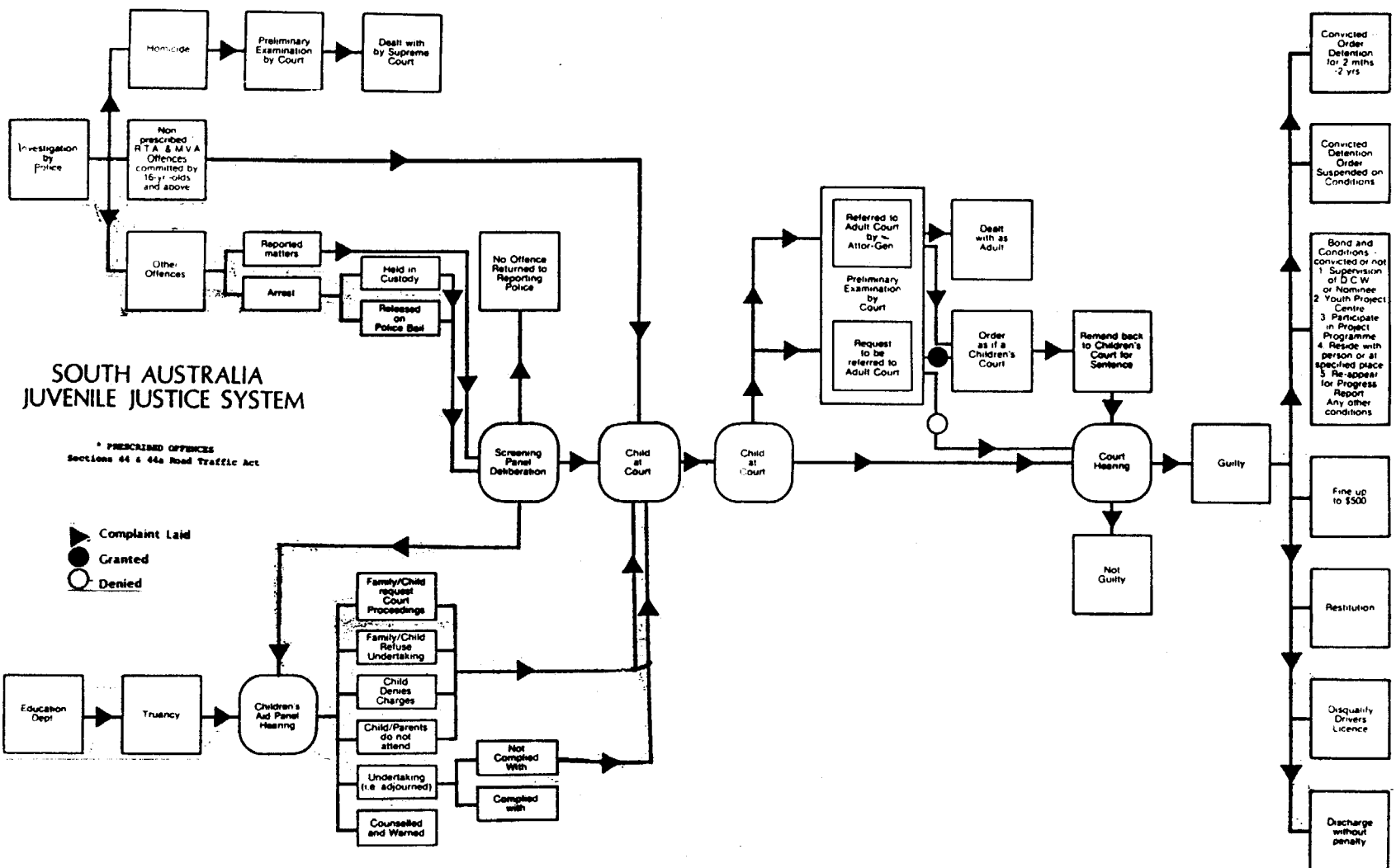
Table 4.6: Appearances of Children before Panels and Courts:
South Australia, 1973-1982

Appearances before Panels/Courts	1973		1976		1982	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Appearances before Panels	2032	34.6	3605	43.2	5516	61.3
" " Courts	3840	65.4	4740	56.8	3480	38.7
All appearances	5872	(100.0)	8345	(100.0)	8996	(100.0)
Appearances before Courts	3840	(100.0)	4740	(100.0)	3480	(100.0)
Previously before Panels: 10-15 years	98	2.6	432	9.1	1023	29.4
" " " 16 years & over	-	-	570	12.0	1317	37.8
All previously before Panels	98	2.6	1002	21.1	2340	67.2
Previously before Panels: 10-15 years	98	(100.0)	432	(100.0)	1023	(100.0)
Once	89	90.8	266	61.6	474	46.3
Twice	9	9.2	137	31.7	347	33.9
Three times	-	-	24	5.6	101	9.9
Four or more times	-	-	5	1.1	101	9.9
Previously before Panels: 16 years & over	-	-	570	(100.0)	1317	(100.0)
Once	-	-	445	78.1	634	48.1
Twice	-	-	102	17.9	421	32.0
Three times	-	-	16	2.8	164	12.5
Four or more times	-	-	7	1.2	98	7.4

Source: Annual Reports of the Department for Community Welfare

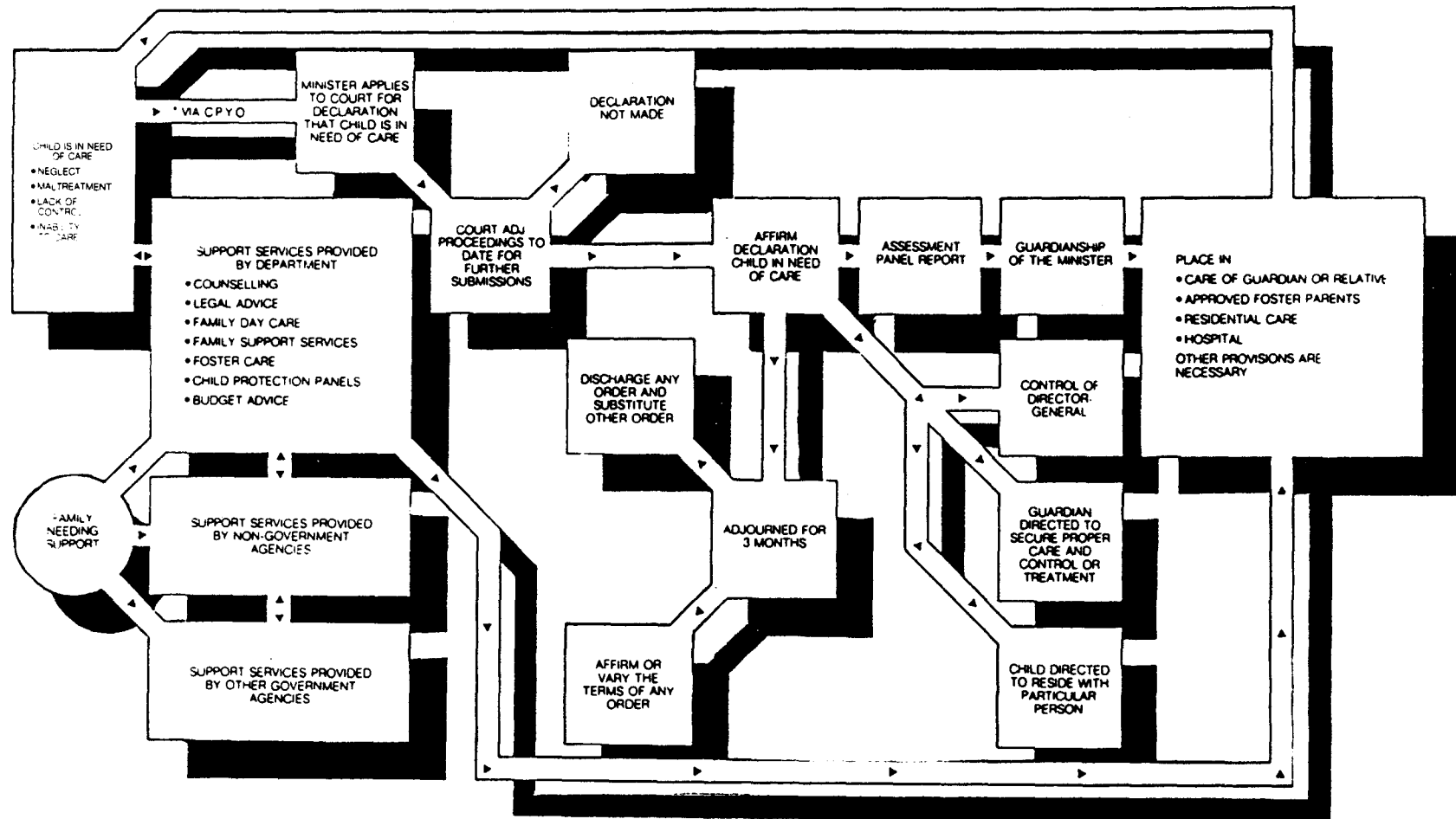
Note: "Previously appeared before Panels" means appeared since 1972-73, that is since the introduction of Children's Aid Panels.

Figure 4.2: Procedures in the Juvenile Justice System, South Australia, 1981



Source: Annual Report of the Department for Community Welfare, South Australia, 1980-81

Figure 4.3: Procedures in Cases of "Child in Need of Care"
South Australia, 1982



*VIA CHILDREN'S PROTECTION AND YOUNG OFFENDERS' ACT

(Source: Annual Report of the Department for Community Welfare, 1982)

South Australia, 1982

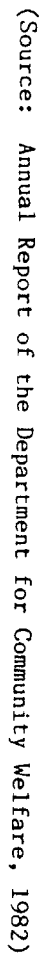


Table 4.7: The "Flow" of Children into the System of Welfare: 1966-1982

State/Admissions/Numbers at 30 June	1966	1971	1976	1981	1982
<u>New South Wales</u>					
Committed/admitted into guardianship	1221	780	445	1727	1724
Released from Courts on probation	4666	6181	5407	3471	3183
Notifications of children "at risk" ⁽¹⁾	N/K	N/K	N/K	1153	1971
	5887	6961	5852	6351	6878
<u>South Australia</u>					
Committed into guardianship	677	606	245	195	163
Admitted into temporary guardianship ⁽²⁾	-	-	209	173	150
On probation with supervision	559	799	761	929	942
Notification of children "at risk" ⁽³⁾	N/K	N/K	N/K	354	427
	1236	1405	1215	1651	1682
<u>Tasmania</u> (as at 30 June) ⁽⁴⁾					
Under guardianship	771	920	866	583	549
On probation with supervision	270	398	501	284	322
On preventive supervision	98	126	337	367	320
	1139	1444	1704	1234	1191

Source: Annual Reports of State Welfare Departments

- (1) Notifications first systematically recorded in 1977-78
- (2) First introduced in 1972-78
- (3) Data first appeared in Annual Report for 1976-77
- (4) Because of absence of data on intake in all 3 categories, the numbers in each category as at 30 June are given for comparison purposes. Reports from Tasmanian DCW do not give statistics on 'children at risk' as these matters are handled by a separate Child Protection Board responsible to a different Minister (the Attorney-General).

CHAPTER 5

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES: CHILD CARE AND CHILD WELFARE

The prevailing view in Australia is that child welfare and child care are two distinct services, each performing a different function and serving a different purpose or meeting a different need. Furthermore, the responsibility for the provision of each service is seen to lie in a different political sphere. Historically and constitutionally, child welfare has remained the responsibility of the States, while the provision of child care services is seen to be the responsibility of the Commonwealth. In practice, however, the division between these two services is not clear-cut, either in the functions the two services perform, or in the spheres of political responsibility. The elements of support, supplementation, and substitution of child care by the family can be found in both services, and the interaction between the Commonwealth and the States in the provision of child care is greater than in any other area of child and family welfare.

In current definitions, child care refers to care of a child under the age of 12 years at some time during a week by someone other than the person responsible, in the past taken to be the mother but now defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as either the mother or the father. Any reference to child care usually excludes any long term substitute care or short term (however defined) 'institutional' care such as residential care, foster care or family group home care.

Child care can include both formal and informal services. Informal care includes care by a spouse, sibling, relatives, neighbours and other individuals who care for children under private arrangements, such as a privately employed carer or nanny. Formal care refers to licensed care in a centre or private home. It includes day care, pre-school, occasional care, neighbourhood children's centres, multi-purpose centres, family day care, vacation care, before and after school care or out-of-hours care. These services may be commercially or privately based or community based (that is, government-funded). Some services are provided directly by the government, although this varies by State.

We have examined early childhood services extensively and have reported the results in two previous reports (Sweeney and Jamrozik, 1982, 1984). It was through this examination that we came to consider whether early childhood services constituted a separate system of services, distinct from 'child welfare', or whether it was more appropriate to view these services as one part of a system of services for children and families, which included 'child care', 'child welfare' and 'family support' (Jamrozik, 1983; Sweeney, 1984, 1985). Evidence indicates that the common factor in all three categories of service is the purpose these services perform, namely, they provide

assistance to parents and families in child rearing. This common factor may be discovered in the evolution of services, in policy statements, and especially in the conditions under which the services are provided and/or used. It is therefore appropriate to consider the reasons why 'child care' and 'child welfare' are perceived as two distinct services, each performing a different function, and each remaining in a different sphere of political responsibility.

Evolution of services

In Australia, the origins of early childhood services pre-date the Federation. Pre-schools (kindergarten) were established in the late 1890s and creches or day nurseries in the early 1900s. They were established by individuals and groups within the community and not by government. Commonwealth and State government involvement was to come decades later.

The kindergarten movement grew out of a concern held by educationalists and reformers for the plight of inner city 'slum' children. On the one hand, educators believed that kindergartens could be used as a tool for social and urban reform and their main concern was with the educational function of kindergartens. On the other hand, 'upper class female philanthropists' established and supported free kindergartens in inner city areas with the purpose of inculcating middle class values and orderliness into the lives of 'former street urchins', that is the children of the working class (Spearitt, 1979:10-12). These differing emphases-education versus 'redemption'-resulted in clashes from time to time within the movement, which early this century became organised into kindergarten unions. Despite conflicts, there was agreement that the socialization of the working class children and parents was a major aim, which could be achieved by teaching children industriousness, orderliness, cleanliness etc., and by teaching their parents methods to promote the children's physical and emotional health. Children attended the centres from 9 am to 3 pm each day and had to be at least three years old.

The number of pre-schools grew gradually until World War II and the post-war era which saw a rapid increase in these services. Spearitt (1979:23) attributes this growth to the increase in interest by the middle class. This, together with other factors, such as the need for child minding, the exclusion of middle class children from pre-schools in wartime if their mothers were not employed in essential industries, led to many middle class groups establishing their own services. In some States (for example, Victoria) this was done with government assistance.

This growing interest by the middle and upper classes, together with an increasing recognition of the value of pre-school education for all children regardless of class, contributed, among other factors, to the acceptance of the service during the 1950s and 1960s, and to the almost total removal of

the stigma of a welfare label. Pre-schools were established in the suburbs and country towns and differed from the earlier free pre-schools/ kindergartens which had relied on philanthropic support and whose board members resided in areas away from the centres' locales. They had boards comprised of local parents which marked the tentative beginnings of the trend towards community based child care and away from a constituency of welfare or low income families.

Day nurseries or creches developed along somewhat different lines and principles. The first Sydney Day Nursery creche was opened in Woolloomooloo in 1905. The aim of the day nurseries was to provide care and supervision for the children of mothers who were working outside the home and whose care needs could not be met within the six hour programme provided by the kindergartens. These working class mothers could not afford domestic help and often could not make informal arrangements. The aim of the Sydney Day Nursery Association (Sydney Day Nurseries Association, 1905-1906: cited by Kelly, 1979) was,

...not to relieve these mothers of their responsibility but to ease their overwhelming burden of care and anxiety, to enable them to keep their home and family together, and to supply to their little ones the wholesome and loving care of which they are deprived and which is so necessary to their well-being. (1979:6)

Priority of access was given to lone mothers. Care was originally provided between the hours of 7 am to 6.30pm for children two-weeks to three-year old and later extended to school entrance age. Care was provided by trained nurses and volunteer helpers and thus related more to the children's physical needs rather than their social, moral and emotional development. The aim was clearly to keep families together and to prevent children from being neglected or at risk of being placed in residential care institutions.

Apart from temporary facilities provided during World War II, government-sponsored day care was not available on any major scale until the 1970s. After the war most of the day care that was established was provided by the private/commercial sector.

The Commonwealth Children's Services Program

The Commonwealth Government entered formally the field of early childhood services in 1972 through the passing of the Child Care Act. Before then, Commonwealth involvement in child care services had been very limited. In the late 1930s, the Commonwealth government established Lady Gowrie Child Care Centres in all States, with the purpose of providing 'model' child health and education programmes. These centres were the Commonwealth

government's response to continued reports by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) on the physical and moral ill-health of inner city children who were suffering the impact of the economic depression. Later, during World War II, the Commonwealth provided assistance to existing organisations, such as Kindergarten Unions, for the provision of care for children of women engaged in essential war industries. Many of these child care centres closed after the war ended.

During the period 1940-1960, grants were made to pre-schools in Commonwealth Territories. Pre-schools in some States were already receiving assistance from State governments. In the 1950s, pre-schools were established for children of immigrants in Commonwealth hostels. This provided care for the child while the parent looked for employment and also helped the child to learn English. In the late 1960s, Commonwealth provided scholarships for trainee pre-school teachers and capital funds for pre-school teacher training colleges.

A number of social and economic trends in the 1960s led to the demands for greater Commonwealth government involvement in child care services: a growing demand for women's labour in commerce and industry; a rapid increase of married women entering the labour force; and the growth of calls from women's movement for equal opportunity in the workforce.

These factors taken together meant that there were demands for government provision of funding of child care facilities that were open for longer hours (long day care). However, it was not until 1972 that the Commonwealth government passed the Child Care Act which allowed for financial assistance to be given to establish and operate centres and to provide fee subsidies for low income and special need families.

With a change of government in late 1972 came a change in child care policy. That (Labor) government, with a policy of social and economic reform, saw pre-school education as a major tool for overcoming inequality. It therefore introduced a policy of access to pre-school for all children and day care for those in need. The residualist nature of day care thus remained. The disputes between the pre-school and day care lobbies of the time are now well recorded (Spearitt, 1979; Sweeney & Jamrozik, 1982; Brennan, 1982). The final outcome was significant funding to pre-schools over the period 1973-1975 and a somewhat smaller allocation to day care. In 1974-75 pre-schools absorbed 82 per cent of the child care budget.

By the time the government decided to support day care more fully, there was yet another change of government which, for reasons of economic recession, decided to reduce capital expenditure. The overall effect of those events was that few day care services were established (relative to pre-schools) before a cut in expenditure had occurred. Although the trend towards more expenditure for child care than for pre-schools took place during the later 1970s, the total expenditure on early childhood services was gradually reduced, in real terms, until 1982 (Table 5.1).

Upon coming to office, the Liberal-Country Party Government made a number of changes to the Commonwealth child care programme, all of which reflected the view that child care was to be regarded as welfare in a narrow sense. Responsibility for the programme was transferred from the Department of the Prime Minister to that of Social Security and over time the shape of the programme itself was radically changed to reduce the funding to certain forms of services which the government saw as being inconsistent with its ideological perspective or economic goals.

The stated and emphasized principles of policy were: first, the primary responsibility for children's welfare and care belonged to parents; and second, the public responsibility for child and family welfare rested with the States. In line with these principles the Commonwealth policy on children's services was to supplement the activities of the States, and to support certain services which in the government's view and scale of priorities were meeting certain areas of need.

'Need' was selective and seen in terms of providing child care in order that families could be socially and economically independent. The government's intention was not to assume parental responsibility in any way. By contrast with the late 1960s and early 1970s children's services were no longer seen as a tool for overcoming inequality or maximizing individual potential.

Children in need were seen to fall into one of the following categories, but not all services for these children were funded nor did all children in these categories have access to them:

- . children of low income families
- . handicapped children
- . geographically isolated children
- . Aboriginal children
- . migrants' children
- . children at risk or children likely to be admitted to residential care
- . children of single working parents
- . children from districts with inadequate level of community resources and services (this category was later deleted from 'needs' lists).

Despite this 'needs' policy these children had limited access to and use of services, for a variety of reasons:

- . outbacks to all services, especially where capital was involved;
- . removal of fee subsidy for low income families when the Medibank legislation to which it was tied, was repealed;
- . provision of services on a submission basis, relying on the ability of community groups to prepare a competent submission for funding of child care;
- . extremely complex administrative procedures for setting up a service so that even if a group received funds they may not always have been spent.

Apart from the 'need' policy another major feature of this era was a renewed emphasis on Commonwealth-State relationships and the historical and important role of the States in child care (albeit long term or full time substitute care). The Commonwealth saw its role as only assisting the States but not 'taking over' the States' responsibility.

At the same time, in contrast to the narrow definition of 'need' for child care services, the range of projects introduced during 1976-1982 was considerably widened. In the early 1970s then there were two major areas of services: pre-schools and centre based day care. The Liberal-Country Party Government of 1976 developed a range of services under the Children's Services Program. These services were to be not only for pre-school children but also for youth and families 'in need'. The programme was seen as essential in supporting low income families (Guilfoyle, 1979); its aim was not to relieve parents of their responsibility but to 'ease their burden' (Coleman, 1976:10). It was during this period (1976-1982) that services such as the Alternatives to Residential Care, Family Support Services Scheme, Youth Services Programme and child care in women's refuges were initiated.

By 1982, a wide range of 1460 projects were supported by the Commonwealth government through the Children's Services Program (Table 5.2) and an estimated 244,828 children were attending child care and pre-schools (Table 5.3).

After another change of government in 1983, there was a significant injection of Commonwealth and State funds into day care services in 1983-84, resulting in a considerable increase in the numbers of centres established. The present government came to office in 1983 with a universal child care policy (that is, child care was seen to be a right for every child) that was to be implemented by establishing multi-purpose centres which would meet a variety of needs for care, that is, any one centre would provide for short, long and occasional care. During the course of 1983-1984, however, the policy changed so that the centres now established are referred to as long day care

centres. Since the 1984 budget several hundred such centres licensed for 40 places have been established. Since then, Commonwealth funds for pre-schools have been withdrawn (May 1985) and the levels of subsidies for some income groups of users have been reduced. Further changes were announced in November 1985, entailing changes in the levels and forms of Commonwealth assistance and in the priorities of access (Minister's Press Release, 6-11-85).

As a result of the frequent changes in the Commonwealth governments' policies on early childhood services, and particularly of the diversification of services during 1976-1982, there now exists an array of services, with different names and labels, and different administrative and funding arrangements with Commonwealth and/or State governments.

New South Wales

The involvement of the NSW Department of Youth and Community Services (YACS) in early childhood services has been substantial. The responsibility for licensing and supervision of kindergartens and day nurseries was first vested in the Department in 1955 (AR, 1973:44). In 1966, 512 kindergartens and day nurseries were licensed, and by 1971 the number increased to 721 establishments either licensed or operating with a permit. In that year, subsidies for operating expenditure paid by the Department to pre-schools amounted to \$791,181, and capital subsidies were also introduced for voluntary organisations providing child care. It was also in that year that the term 'child care centre' came officially into usage; 78 such centres were in operation at the end of June in that year, and 224 applications to establish centres were under consideration.

One of the requirements for obtaining a license was that a suitable pre-school programme was provided at the centre. (AR 1971:41-42)

A survey conducted by the Department a year later recorded 729 child care establishments in the State, with 21,328 places and an actual enrolment of 32,382 children. Of these, 20,341 children were enrolled in non-profit establishments. According to the calculations in the survey, one child in 13 in the 4 years-and-under age group (7.7%) was enrolled, and in the age group 3 to 4 years the enrolments amounted to 17.9 per cent (AR 1973:44).

The availability of Commonwealth funds contributed to the growth of services. In fact, in 1974, the State was not able to use all the funds made available

by the Commonwealth, because, as the report for that year notes,

the unrealistic conditions and deadlines imposed on the expenditure of these funds resulted in this State not having the opportunity to fully capitalize on the Commonwealth offer within the specified time, except in relation to the payment of recurrent funds. (AR 1974:7)

The Department established Early Childhood Division in 1974, and Pre-School Advisers were appointed to District Officers throughout the State. The first family day care schemes were also established. Subsidies were significantly increased in 1976-77 by the introduction of 20 per cent of subsidies for staff salaries in child care centres.

By 1982, early childhood services were provided under various auspices. All family day care schemes (56 in 1982), except one funded by the State, were funded by the Commonwealth, and were sponsored by local government, church organisations, or community groups. Long day care, occasional care, neighbourhood children's centres, and multi-purpose children's centres were receiving funds from the Commonwealth and the State (through YACS). Some pre-schools were under the control of YACS and others were operated by the Department of Education. Funds for these came from a block Commonwealth grant and from the State. There was also a significant private sector in operation. As may be ascertained from the data in Table 3.3a, the Department of Youth and Community Services expended approximately \$13 million of State funds and grants and subsidies to early childhood services, or 13 per cent of its net expenditure for that year. This amount (presumably) did not include the salaries and overheads of child care advisers and other related personnel.

South Australia

The arrangements and responsibilities for children's services in South Australia have varied over the years. In 1966, there were 85 'lying-in' houses licensed, and 92 child-minding centres (daily creches) were known to the Department. The centres were licensed either by local government authorities or by the Department. All centres were 'visited from time to time in the interest of the children' (AR 1966:9). The numbers of these centres had grown to 119 by 1970.

All child care centres, except those operated by the Kindergarten Union or the Education Department became subject to licensing by the Department under the provisions of the Community Welfare Act, 1972. In 1973, an Advisory Committee was appointed and new licensing regulations became operative in that year. In 1975, the Department appointed a consultant to take the responsibility for the family day care (FDC) programme funded by the Federal

government. In that year family day care programmes were operating in 11 districts, with 477 caregivers providing care for 854 children (June figures). Two other consultants were responsible for the supervision of child care centres. Each child care centre also had an advisory panel consisting of a Community Welfare Worker (DCW), an officer from the Education Department and another from the Local Board of Health. Liaison was also maintained with other bodies: the Kindergarten Union of S.A., Education Department, Public Health Department, and Mothers' and Babies' Health Association. The report for 1975-76 states that 'a wide range of services to children and their families' was provided: pre-schools, day care, child/parent resource centres, and play groups. After-school activities were also conducted by the Department in two localities.

In 1982, the Department was responsible for 'providing assistance and administering Commonwealth and State funds to 34 child care services'. These included child care in women's shelters, child care centres and play groups, and family day care schemes.

The most intensive involvement by the DCW has been in family day care. The report for 1981-82 states that in South Australia 'family day care operates through a variety of funding arrangements'. In that year, 13 programmes were receiving funding from the Commonwealth government and were managed by the Department through district offices. One programme was receiving funding from both the State and the Commonwealth, and had a management committee comprising government and non-government representatives. Another programme was entirely funded by the State government. At four district offices programmes were operated by Community Welfare Workers, without any allocation of funds. Priority to the service was given to 'families on low incomes, sole parents, disabled parents and children, migrants, refugees, Aboriginal families and children who are considered at risk'. There was an average 1269 full-time equivalent children in family day care for that year, and 1147 approved care givers. Of the children attending, 45 per cent were on subsidised care and the same percentage came from one-parent families. The Department employed co-ordinators located in district offices, whose function was to recruit, assess, support and counsel care-givers. The co-ordinators also prepared orientation sessions and training programmes for care-givers, parents and volunteers (AR, 1982:20-22).

Since then, after a commissioned inquiry into children's services, South Australia has established a Department for Children's Services. This department is to be responsible for the provision of all services for young children (except private ones) including those previously operated by the Kindergarten Union. The Minister responsible for the new department is also the Minister for Education.

Tasmania

Prior to the Commonwealth entry into the field of early childhood services in 1972, formal child care in Tasmania was provided by nurseries licensed by the Department (then, Department of Social Welfare) under the provisions of Child Welfare Act, 1960. According to the Annual Report for 1966, 21 such nurseries were licensed in that year. With the introduction of the Commonwealth Children's Services Program, child care services expanded as they did in other States, and so did the involvement of the Department in providing licensing, co-ordination, and advisory services.

The first appointment of a social worker to supervise the child care programme was made by the Department in 1975. In 1977, the position of Executive Officer (Child Care) was created and later a Child Care Unit was established. At about the same time, a portfolio of Child Care was added to the Minister of Social Welfare. The Child Care Unit had the responsibility for the administration of day care centres and family day care schemes and operated with a certain degree of autonomy from the Department. Apart from the licensing function, the Executive Officer and her staff of Child Care Advisors played a role in the development and operation of child care services throughout the State by providing advice and information to centres and schemes, conducting orientation programmes for care-givers, participating in State and national conferences, and assisting community initiatives in child care.

During 1980-81, after a review commissioned by the State Government (Jamrozik, 1980), the Child Care Unit was integrated into the Family and Children's Services Branch of the Department. Child Care Advisors were placed in the Department's District Offices and in performing their function became 'resource persons while retaining the concept of a special service' (AR, 1982:24). Their responsibilities are wide-ranging and include 'licensing and supervision of facilities where a fee is charged to provide substitute care for children younger than seven years', which means the assessment of applicants for licences, maintenance of support service to licensees, and keeping records of holders of licences. The Advisors aim to foster community management of locally based children's services through training programmes and meetings, provision of resource materials, and access to the Department's toy and equipment library. Their tasks extend into

the promotion of strong links with other departments involved in early childhood programmes; assistance with the management of early childhood services by providing information on sources of funding and by advising on staff selection; the provision of financial assistance to parents in meeting fee and transport costs of child care in certain circumstances; acting as a referral agency not only for families who require specialized advice and support for their children and who are seeking suitable substitute care but also for early childhood services

which may benefit from liaison with other community or government agencies, or knowledge of alternative methods of meeting child care needs. (AR 1982:23)

The Annual Report (1982) states that 'the over-riding aim is to encourage and develop a range of services to meet the needs of families who require substitute care or short-term over-night care for their children'. (AR, 1982:23)

The Department developed funding guidelines for distribution of State grants to child care organisations. During 1981-82, grants of \$97,485 were made to 32 centres and schemes, and preferences were given to high need areas, such as those which were geographically isolated and catering for socio-economically deprived communities. These priorities were similar to those used in the determination of the overall grants programme of the Department. (AR, 1982:40)

The Department does not directly manage any child care facilities. Day Care centres are sponsored by local government, church organisations, and community groups. Family day care schemes are sponsored by local government authorities. Formal child care provided by private enterprise is practically non-existent in Tasmania. Pre-schools are conducted by the Education Department and, until recently, were assisted by a block grant from the Commonwealth, as was the case in the other States.

The 'uncertain' status of early childhood services

Early childhood services present a case of 'uncertainty' in child and family welfare system. The uncertainty revolves around questions concerning the function, usage, and responsibility for the provision of services. The evolution of early childhood services indicates that from the outset there was a division between 'care', which was provided as substitute care in institutions where care was seen not to be adequately provided by the child's family; and 'education' which was seen to enhance the child's early development. That division has persisted until the present day, although in practice the division is not always clear-cut; it is more real in the auspices under which the service is provided than in the nature of service itself. However, through the recent changes in Commonwealth/State funding arrangements, the division is again likely to be accentuated.

The provision of services for young children pre-dates the entry of the Commonwealth into this field, but there is little doubt that the acceptance of some responsibility by the Commonwealth in the early 1970s provided an important stimulus for the growth of services. Although the Commonwealth government has maintained the attitude of 'assisting' rather than accepting

responsibility, the provision of early childhood services is seen by the community and by State governments to be in the Commonwealth sphere.

Commonwealth's reasons for supporting early childhood services have been changing over the years with each change of the party in power and even in the policy of the same party. In the definition of Child Care Act 1972, the emphasis was on substitute care; the focus changed during the Labor party government in 1973 to pre-school education and then to services with the characteristics of both. The Liberal-Country Party coalition government changed the focus again to substitute care, with emphasis on priority of access to 'special needs' children. Correspondingly, the character of services kept changing from 'welfare' orientation to 'education' and from selective need to universal need and again to selective need.

Recently the block grants previously made to the States for pre-schools have been withdrawn, thus again establishing a division between 'care' and 'education'. Furthermore, priority of access to child care has been given to children of families where both parents were employed (or for single parents in employment), giving the 'care' service clearly the characteristics of substitute care.

The States' involvement in early childhood services has also been variable. All States have retained the power and responsibility for discussing child care services, thus retaining control over their operations. In some States pre-schools have been provided mainly through the State school system (e.g. in Tasmania); in others, through non-government bodies supported by the State (e.g. the Kindergarten Union in South Australia); in others, again, through a variety of auspices (as in New South Wales). Day Care centres are operated and/or sponsored by a similar variety of organisations and community groups. Family day care schemes present a similar scenario, except in South Australia where most of the schemes are directly controlled by the State Department for Community Welfare.

The common factor in all services for young children, whether formal or informal, private or public, provided for 'special need' or as a 'universal need', or as 'care' or 'education' is their character as **substitute care**, although they may be equally regarded as **supplementary care** or **complementary care**. This suggests that classification of children's services into supportive, supplementary, or substitutive categories does not mean that all these are 'discrete' mutually exclusive categories. What is important to note is that these functions are perceived and accepted by users without connotations of stigma or presumptions of pathology or malfunctioning of parents or families. On the contrary, child care services are regarded by many as an essential family support as well as being of benefit to the child. It is also known that these services are often used by welfare officers of State welfare departments as a first method of intervention, aimed to prevent the necessity for 'stronger' measures that might be necessary to implement, such as legal guardianship and/or separation of the child from his or her family.

All available data indicate that early childhood services are used by families as part of 'normal' family functioning rather than as a necessity in 'abnormal' situations, and the majority of users are middle-class families, especially those where both parents are in employment (Sweeney and Jamrozik, 1984). Why the differences are still maintained between 'child care' and 'child welfare' thus remains one of the unresolved issues in family and child welfare policy.

Table 5.1: TOTAL COMMONWEALTH EXPENDITURE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30	ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS (\$'000)			TOTAL AT CONSTANT 1980-81 PRICES
	PRE SCHOOLS	OTHER CARE	TOTAL	
1974	6,479	2,495	8,974	19,216
1975	37,077	8,153	45,230	82,991
1976	47,029	16,941	63,970	104,016
1977	49,018	18,068	67,086	95,700
1978	45,994	25,203	71,197	92,825
1979	32,750	31,086	63,836	76,911
1980	33,090	36,136	69,226	75,740
1981	31,183	42,851	74,034	74,034
1982	33,005	47,355	80,360	72,790

Source: Department of Social Security, Annual Reports.

Table 5.2 Commonwealth Children's Services Program, 1981-1982

Projects/Allocation of funds	Australia	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
Estimated No. of projects supported by the Children's Services Program in 1982 (30 June)				
Day Care & Neighbourhood Centres	512	147	41	25
Family Day Care Schemes	171	59	15	8
Outside School Hours Care	226	65	19	10
Child Care in Women's Refuges	82	29	10	4
Misc. Child Care	5	1	1	-
Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS)	139	24	11	14
Other Family Support Services	67	12	7	1
Youth Services Scheme & Other Services	80	21	7	6
Services for Disabled Children	68	20	7	3
Other Services (play group, research etc)	110	20	7	4
All Projects	1,460	398	125	75
Pre-Schools	4,306	861	404	190
Total	5,766	1,259	529	265
<u>Allocation of Funds (\$'000)</u>				
Pre-Schools	33,005	7,130	3,730	1,410
Other Care	47,355	15,081	3,938	1,869
Total	80,360	22,211	7,668	3,279

Source: Department of Social Security, Annual Report 1981-82

Table 5.3 Summary of Characteristics of Pre-School and Child Care Services:
Australia, 1981-82 (except Queensland)

Item/Category	Australia	New South Wales	South Australia	Tasmania
<u>Number of Centres/Carers</u>				
Pre-School/combined pre-school and child care centres	3,550	839	403	201
Occassional Care/Child care centres	1,046	346	67	63
Family-based individual carers	199	51	-	41
Family day care scheme carers*	5,576	1,919	811	295
Total	10,371	3,155	1,281	600
Family day care schemes	145	57	19	8
Primary contact staff	21,594	6,179	2,578	1,108
Other staff	5,046	1,206	486	161
Total staff	26,640	7,385	3,064	1,269
Total children	244,828	81,962	29,547	10,272

Source: Department of Social Security, Annual Report 1981-82

* This total was obtained by subtracting the numbers of "Family-based individual carers" from "Family-based individual carers and family day care caregivers" in the Report.

CHAPTER 6

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

The term 'family support services' covers a wide range of services provided by State welfare departments and may be subject to various interpretations. As stated earlier (Chapter 3), all three States included in this overview have an expressed commitment 'to promote the welfare of the family as the basis of community well-being', and on this principle all services the welfare departments in those States provide may be feasibly included in the 'family support' category. However, certain services and activities are more clearly aimed at maintaining the family unit rather than at ensuring primarily the well-being of children, although even some of these are provided as 'preventive' measures to lessen the likelihood of a necessity for such actions as substitute care for children. For this reason, it is not possible to draw clear boundaries between 'family support' activities and 'child welfare' or 'child care' activities as any such division would be arbitrary.

The commitment to the support of the family unit is strongly expressed in departments' reports and substantiated by the services provided under the rubric of 'family support'. The services fall broadly into two categories: **personal services** such as counselling, advice and information; and **material support**, such as assistance in cash, clothing, food orders, etc. A third category of services that may be included is '**crisis care**', which may entail both personal and material forms of intervention, either at a point of family crisis or emergency, or after a crisis had occurred.

Over the period examined here, substantial changes and developments have taken place in the area of 'family support' services, not only in the nature and extent of services provided but also in the division of responsibilities between the States and the Commonwealth. Prior to 1968, the States (and non-government charitable organisations) were solely responsible for providing 'relief assistance' to persons and families in necessitous circumstances and to others deemed to be 'destitute'. Assistance was also rendered by the States, subject to means tests, to deserted wives and to women whose husbands were imprisoned or incapacitated and thus unable to support the family. This assistance was paid for a period of six months, which was the qualifying period for such persons' entitlement to Commonwealth widow's pension. From 1968, the Commonwealth began to reimburse the States for part (at the time 50%) of the cost so incurred, under the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act, 1968. A further stage in the Commonwealth's acceptance of responsibility for income maintenance was the introduction of Supporting Mother's Benefit in 1974, later extended to Supporting Parent's Benefit in 1978, but still subject to a six months qualifying period. In 1980, the Commonwealth took over the payment of Supporting Parent's Benefit during the first six months of a claim, thus terminating the reimbursements

to the States under the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act. (The Act was eventually repealed in June, 1982).

These changes do not mean, however, that all income support to individuals and families is now provided solely by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth responsibility in that area has certainly increased (see Chapter 2) but the States still provide material support in cash and kind, although most of their support is in the form of personal, non-material services. In fact, the field of 'family support' services has now become extremely complex, involving the Commonwealth, the States, and a significant part of the non-government welfare sector. Furthermore, while all States are involved in that field of welfare, the extent and nature of States involvement are not uniform. It needs to be noted, however, that these comparisons may reflect some differences among the respective departments but they do not necessarily reflect the differences among the States. As stated earlier in the report (Chapter 3), the range of activities performed by welfare departments is not the same in each State, and family support services may be provided under other auspices, such as health. Furthermore, the division of responsibility between State services and non-government welfare sector also varies from one State to another.

New South Wales

The definition of family support services by the New South Wales Department (YACS) is wide and it includes 'preventive' non-material services such as counselling of parents whose children are already in care as well as assistance in cash or kind. The Annual Report for 1981-82 states:

Family casework services include supportive counselling for families 'at risk' and socially isolated families; early intervention in neglect or child abuse cases; and continuing work with the families of children in the care of the Minister or in some form of temporary care. Services aim to support children and their families and to resolve problems leading to neglect, abuse or family breakdown ... (and further) ... Social welfare services, such as an emergency financial assistance, are an important adjunct to the Department's casework services. Such ancillary supports help to prevent family breakdown where families are under stress due to financial problems. (AR 1982:23)

Services listed in the report for 1981-82 that especially meet these criteria are: family casework services, individual and family support services, Home Care Service of New South Wales, emergency assistance, and women's refuges. It is difficult to determine from the report the exact nature of the personal (non-material) services but it may be assumed that they consist of advice-

giving, information, and various methods which come under the term of 'counselling'. It appears, however, that the professional intervention methods used by the Department's District Officers tend to be of short-term nature, and the families who are seen to be in need of long-term intervention are referred to non-government welfare agencies. The 1981-82 report states that the 'agencies providing these services receive a large number of referrals from District Officers who come into contact with families with long-term problems while dealing with crisis situations such as financial breakdown or a child's uncontrolled behaviour' (AR 1982:23). Among the long-term problems mentioned are 'lone parenthood, mental illness, alcoholism, children's school attendance problems, and children in care'. The agencies which provide services to families receive grants from the Department from its Community Services Fund. In 1981-82, funds allocated to non-government welfare agencies providing family support services amounted to \$281,077.

Emergency assistance rendered by the Department in 1981-82 amounted to \$8,827,543, and over one-half of that amount was paid out in cash or in food orders (Table 6.1a). The other major items were spectacles (16.8% of the total) and clothing (15.3%). The report does not give the number of individuals or families provided with emergency assistance but notes that 'single parents were among the main beneficiaries of social welfare assistance from the Department during the year' (AR 1982:25).

During the year, the Department made grants of \$1,700,000 (estimated from a total of \$2,815,000 paid to women's and youth refuges), and paid out \$2,499,036 in allowances for children placed in foster care by non-government agencies, the allowances being paid under the Section 27A of the Child Welfare Act.

South Australia

Family support services provided by the Department for Community Welfare are extensive and wide-ranging; they include general counselling, social work in health care, budgeting advice, legal advice on maintenance matters, crisis care, and emergency financial aid.

General counselling is defined as 'individual counselling, help to cope with daily problems and support to people in need through community and group activities. Where appropriate, referral is made to specific services of the Department, to non-government organisations or to other departments' (AR 1982:13).

The Department has placed social workers in hospitals and clinics with the aim of providing service to people 'with problems which have psychological or social aspects', and making services available 'for people who otherwise would be deprived of social work assistance' (AR 1982:13).

The budgeting service is available 'for people wanting guidance on domestic financial matters', and in 1982 was provided by two full-time co-ordinators and 59 part-time budget advisers. In 1981-82, the service was used directly by 2,130 new clients and information was also provided to people over the telephone.

Legal advice on maintenance matters is a free service 'to separated wives and husbands and to those thinking about separation', and assisting people in their negotiations about maintenance matters. In South Australia, the Department (DCW) is responsible for recording the receipt and disbursement of maintenance matters.

The crisis care service is provided in the metropolitan area of Adelaide on a 24 hour basis, seven days a week. The service provides counselling, advice and referral over the telephone in emergency situations, and house visits are made when necessary. The service operates in liaison with the Police Department and with other government departments and non-government agencies. During 1981-82, the crisis care unit received 35,000 requests for assistance over the telephone and members of the unit made 2,000 visits in crisis situation. According to the 1981-82 Annual Report, the most frequent reason for assistance was domestic violence, and other reasons included situations of parent-child conflict, depression-suicide, sexual assault, child care and management, emergency accommodation, and financial assistance (AR 1982:49).

Emergency financial aid given in 1981-82 amounted to \$1,286,000 and was received by 27,236 applicants (Table 6.1b). In most cases (82.8%) the assistance was for food. Nearly 90 per cent of applicants were in receipt of Commonwealth pensions or benefits and the most frequent reason for emergency aid applications was unemployment (58.1% of all applications).

Grants made to women's refuges during 1981-82 amounted to \$759,000, paid to 12 refuges.

The Department also administers a scheme of concessions for payments of local council rates and taxes (such concessions are administered in other States by other departments). These concessions are available mainly to pensioners but are also given to people experiencing financial hardship. In 1981-82, the total value of concessions was \$14,955,000, made to 74,250 pensioners and 13,170 people in hardship. The Annual Report for 1981-82 notes that applications from people in hardship had increased over the previous year by 45 per cent. Transport concession cards are also issued by the Department, for people who are unemployed or in receipt of Commonwealth sickness benefit or special benefit (AR 1982:19).

Tasmania

The family support services provided by the Tasmanian Department for Community Welfare share many characteristics with those provided by the other two States, but they also have certain distinct features which are less evident or are absent in the other States. The statutory responsibilities of the Department under the Child Welfare Act, 1960, have remained, essentially, in the areas of child neglect and youth offences, but throughout the period examined here the Department has emphasized its commitment to family support through such measures as material assistance, domestic help in situations of emergency and 'preventive supervision'.

Already in 1966, preventive supervision was defined as 'working with a family to restore a deteriorating situation of neglect, or incipient delinquency, to an acceptable standard of child care and behaviour' (AR 1966:3). In the Annual Report for 1981-82 preventive supervision was defined as a means 'to assist people in this voluntary way, seeking to provide knowledge, skills and practical assistance which can enable people to manage their lives more effectively' (AR 1982:13).

In 1982, family support services included material assistance through emergency relief and family assistance programmes, and assistance of practical nature rendered through the homemaker service and house-help service.

The homemaker service, which in the other States is provided mainly by non-government agencies, is provided in Tasmania by the Department. The service is 'semi-autonomous' in that while the homemakers are employed by the Department (on a part-time basis, usually three days a week), they work with a degree of autonomy and discretion and have no legal obligation to report on their work to the Department. The homemakers are accountable to co-ordinators of the service, appointed by the Department in each of the three regions of the State. Their function is 'educational' consisting of practical assistance with child care, home management, budgeting, and providing information and advice on the use of community resources, recreation, and dealing with government agencies. The homemakers' assistance is offered to families experiencing difficulties in functioning and the acceptance of service is voluntary.

Financial assistance takes the form of cash payments and food orders. Cash payments are also used for specific purposes, such as advance rentals and bond guarantees, debt settlement, essential repairs to household appliances, furniture removals, and funeral expenses. A feature of assistance and a major item of expenditure is a heating allowance for pensioners. Another feature is assistance provided to families experiencing multiple births. This assistance is provided jointly with the Department of Health and covers home-help and visits by nurses.

In 1981-82, the expenditure of the Department on material assistance amounted to \$1,188,928, and in addition the Department provided grants of \$54,300 to non-government agencies for emergency relief. Grants to women's refugees amounted to \$413,500 (Table 6.1a). In total, this expenditure accounted for 19.8 per cent of the Department's net expenditure for that year.

The Commonwealth Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS)

The Families Support Services Scheme (FSSS) was introduced in 1978. The stimulus for the introduction of the Scheme came from the report of the Family Services Committee (formed by the Social Welfare Commission) under the title **Family and Social Services in Australia**, submitted to the Minister for Social Security in 1977 (AGPS, 1978). One of the conclusions of the report was that 'there was an increasing need for policies and programmes which would assist families in their child rearing functions'. On that conclusion, the Committee recommended that,

services should be funded which were designed to prevent family breakdown or were of a developmental nature and which took account of the variety of family structures and functions.
(Office of Child Care, 1984:2)

The Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) was approved by the Minister for Social Security in January 1978, as a three-year pilot scheme. It was to be managed jointly by the Commonwealth and State governments. Funds were to be made available to local government and non-government agencies.

The Scheme had two broad aims:

- (1) To encourage and assist the development of a range of services designed to support families in their responsibilities in the rearing and development of children; and
- (2) The Scheme was to be evaluated in each State and the information derived from individual State pilots was to provide the basis for policy advice to the Minister for Social Security concerning future Commonwealth involvement in this and similar programmes.
(Office of Child Care, 1984:3)

The Scheme was thus aimed to provide services to the type of families which were traditionally the target of intervention by State welfare authorities. However, the services that were to be funded under the Scheme were not expected to duplicate the activities of State governments but rather to 'provide a stimulus to innovative thinking' for the States and the non-government agencies. For this reason, the aim was to fund only those

services 'which would support and complement existing family welfare services' (OCC, 1984:4).

In terms of service provision, three types or three levels of service were envisaged:

- (1) the provision of basic material needs, such as food, money, clothing, accommodation, furniture;
- (2) family and personal well-being and development, through counselling, home help service, child care and social development; and
- (3) community organisation, action and development, through the provision of information, community education, advocacy, volunteer service, and co-ordination.

The funds for the FSSS were allocated from the Children's Services Program, and the Office of Child Care (OCC) issued guidelines for funding. In all States the FSSS was administered by State departments of community welfare, and steering committees were set up to monitor and evaluate the programme. The types of service that could obtain funding were: housing referrals; emergency accommodation, financial counselling, homemaker assistance; family and child counselling; comprehensive family life education; single parent family development; telephone counselling; and resettlement services. Specifically excluded from funding were services which required major capital expenditure; services which came within the scope of other Commonwealth funding programmes or State government programmes; those already receiving funds or eligible to receive funds under arrangements of the Children's Services Program; and research projects per se (OCC, 1984:78).

Funds allocated to the Scheme amounted to \$8,730,000. The implementation of the pilot programme did not proceed at the same rate in all States, and it became evident that the programme would not be completed in the three years as was originally intended. In 1980, the Commonwealth government decided to extend the programme, with the commencement date of January 1982, and with additional funds of \$10 million for a three-year period.

The new conditions and guidelines were related to the types of service that would be funded and were an attempt to give more focus to the Scheme and to reduce duplication of services that were already provided or assisted by other Commonwealth or State authorities. Under the new conditions, projects funded in the pilot scheme and terminating before January 1982, were to continue at existing funding levels until that date; projects with a termination date after January 1982, were to be subsumed under the extended scheme, if they were considered to be worthwhile and effective; new projects were to be funded if they offered counselling, information and advice, or practical advice and/or assistance.

New services were not to be funded if they offered housing referral, emergency accommodation and/or cash relief. The exclusion of new projects concerned with housing and/or cash assistance was to

prevent additional Commonwealth commitment to housing type projects pending the results of negotiations relating to the Crisis Accommodation Program, and to ensure there was no overlap with agencies providing emergency relief and supported by the Commonwealth under the grant-in aid program for community welfare agencies administered by the then Social Welfare Division of DSS (OCC, 1984:72).

Under the pilot programme 182 projects were funded in all States and Territories. This number was reduced to 111 projects in the extended programme (Table 6.2). In the pilot phase, the largest category of projects was in the area of emergency accommodation and housing, with family aide/homemaker/housekeeper group being a close second. In the extended phase, the latter became the largest category, by far - 37 projects out of 111 funded.

From the type of services funded under the Scheme in the extended phase of the FSSS programme, it is evident that the emphasis was on families which experienced difficulties in functioning either because of personal inadequacies of parents or because of social environment, or both. The evaluators of the first phase identified the most common problems the families experienced to be in child management, low esteem of family members, social isolation, loneliness, lack of home management skills, and financial difficulties (OCC, 1984:25).

Projects considered to be the most successful were those aimed to improve parents' management skills, such as homemakers and family aides, that is, 'non-professional' personal assistance services. There was thus a recognition by the evaluators that many problems experienced by families were of 'practical' nature related to everyday tasks a family was expected to carry out. At the same time there was also a recognition that most problems encountered by the families were related to the low socio-economic status of those families. Housing problems and financial difficulties were two problems frequently encountered, and the main groups of 'families in need' were single-parent families, families where both parents were working, immigrant families, families in remote or isolated circumstances, families with a handicapped member, and low income families.

**Family support and child welfare:
the Commonwealth/States interaction**

The Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) was introduced as a result of growing evidence that the family unit was becoming increasingly vulnerable as a social institution and less capable of fulfilling one of its main functions, that of child rearing. The Scheme was to be a means for identifying the causes of this vulnerability and for seeking new methods of intervention which would strengthen the families' capacity to carry out their child rearing tasks. It was an experimental 'preventive' scheme, aimed to demonstrate that by improving the 'management skills' of parents the necessity for other more drastic methods of intervention which might entail substitutive care of children would be lessened.

The funds allocated to the Scheme came from the Children's Services Program, and this may be regarded as a 'first admission' by the Commonwealth that child care, child welfare and family support were not separate issues but so many parts and methods of intervention in child and family welfare. However, the Scheme was directed not at all families but at those families which traditionally constituted the 'clientele' of State welfare authorities and non-government welfare organisations. These 'families in need' had one common characteristic - their low socio-economic status, or poverty.

We have noted earlier in this report that innovation and change in child and family welfare services had to be seen in the context of demographic, social and economic changes in the society. In Chapter 2 we presented some data which show that over a period of 10 years, from 1974 to 1984, the population receiving income support from the Commonwealth had nearly doubled (a rise of 87%), and the largest increases had occurred in two groups of population; the unemployed and the supporting parents. In 1974 these two groups accounted for 4 per cent of all pensioners and beneficiaries; in 1984 they accounted for 27.6 per cent. **The increase of the dependence on the state for income support has thus come mainly from families with children.**

The data from the State welfare authorities indicate that to a large extent the families which receive income support from the Commonwealth are the same families which seek assistance from, or/and come under the attention of, State welfare authorities. Most services provided by the States under the rubric of 'family support' are personal services of non-tangible nature, purported to increase the capacity of those families to manage better their day-to-day functions, especially the task of child rearing. However, emergency assistance is also provided by the States but that service is 'discretionary' in that it is provided on the criteria of demonstrated 'need', usually of a crisis nature, and not as income support over a longer term.

Thus, while the responsibility for child and family welfare is regarded to be the provision of the States, the responsibility for meeting the basic needs of dependent children and families - income support - is in the Commonwealth

sphere. The activities of the States demonstrate however that income support alone (as currently provided) is not sufficient to maintain those families even at a minimum level of functioning without encountering frequent periods of crisis.

Financial assistance provided by the States in the form of cash or material goods (e.g. food vouchers) has been minimal in comparison with the Commonwealth outlays on pensions and benefits. However, there are indications that the level of demand for financial assistance from the States (and presumably from non-government organisations) is related to the level of pensions and benefits paid by the Commonwealth. For example, as shown in Figures 6.1 and 6.2, the introduction of Supporting Mother's Benefits in 1974 appears to be reflected in a decrease of payments by the States in that year. From then on, however, the payments by the States kept rising until 1980 when the Commonwealth took over payments to Supporting Parents from the inception of a claim for benefit.

On all accounts, the demand for everyday relief has increased greatly since 1982, and the issue of 'who is responsible' for that assistance has again come on the Commonwealth/States agenda. This is yet another demonstration that the 'traditional' division of responsibility for child and family welfare between the Commonwealth and the States is increasingly more difficult to sustain.

Table 6.1a: Material Assistance by State Welfare Departments:

New South Wales and Tasmania: 1981-82

Type of Assistance	Expenditure (Current Prices)	
	\$	%
<u>New South Wales (YACS)</u>		
Cash and Food Orders	4,812,942	54.5
Spectacles	1,485,487	16.8
Surgical Aids*	963,012	10.9
Transport	213,547	2.4
Clothing	1,352,555	15.3
Total Value of Assistance	\$ 8,827,543	(100.0)

* This assistance was transferred to Health Commission on 1.1.82
In addition, \$2,449,036 paid in allowances for children in
private foster care placed by non-government agencies (Section
27A of the Child Welfare Act); and \$1,700,000 (estimated)
paid to Women's Refugees.

<u>Tasmania (DCW)</u>		
Family Assistance*	62,539	5.2
Food Orders*	89,139	7.5
Clothing	2,557	0.2
Home-help Service	15,302	1.3
Heating Allowance	526,489	44.1
Spectacles	285,503	23.9
Furniture Removals	56,994	4.8
Funeral Expenses	70,635	5.9
Transport	3,565	0.3
Multiple Births	66,982	5.6
Refugees	240	0.0
Other	13,991	1.2
Total Value of Assistance	\$ 1,193,936	(100.0)

Amounts repaid = \$5,008; Net expenditure = \$1,188,928

* Families Assistance was given to 689 families and Food Orders
to 2627 families; together these families had 8,739 children
(2.64 per family).

In addition, \$54,300 paid in grants to non-government organisat-
ions providing emergency relief; and to Women's Refugees
\$412,500.

Source: Annual Reports (NSW, YACS: Tasmania, DCW) for 1981-82.

Table 6.1b: Emergency Assistance by the Department for Community Welfare, 1981-82
South Australia

Type of Assistance	Applications Granted	
	N	%
Food	22,563	82.8
Transport	1,744	6.4
Accommodation	1,017	3.7
Utilities	782	2.9
Miscellaneous	484	1.8
Medicine	335	1.2
Clothing	311	1.1
	<u>27,236</u>	<u>(100.0)</u>
<u>Source of Applicants' Income</u>		
Unemployment	15,815	58.1
Pensions	7,296	26.8
Wages	1,481	5.4
Miscellaneous	1,344	4.9
Sickness, Special Benefits	1,199	4.4
Tertiary Ed. Allowance (TEAS)	101	0.4
	<u>27,236</u>	<u>(100.0)</u>
Total Value of Assistance = \$1,286,000		
Payments to Women's Refugees \$ 759,000		

Source: Department for Community Welfare, Annual Report 1981-82

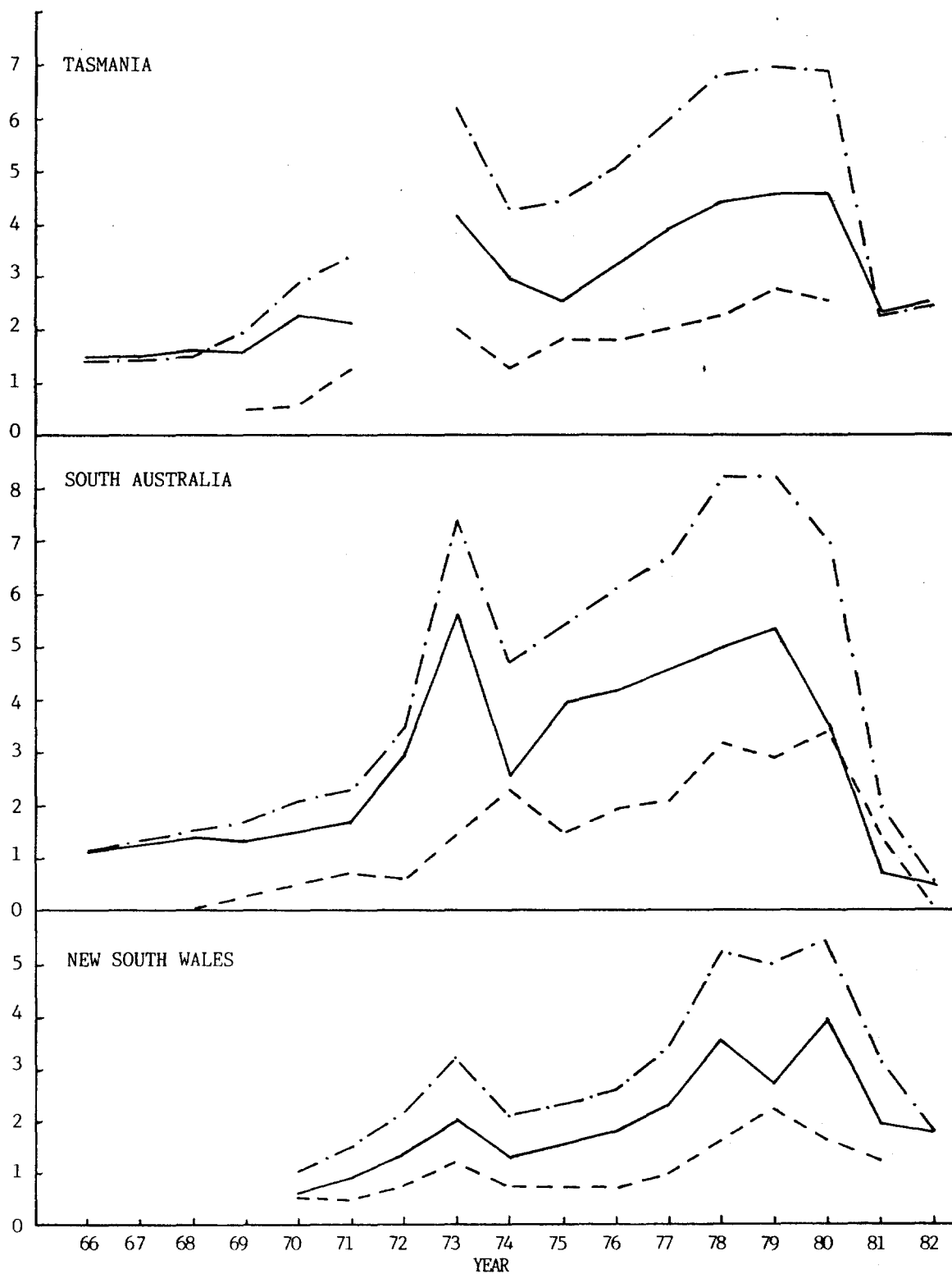
Table 6.2: Family Support Services Scheme:
Allocation of Funds and Projects Funded

Type of Project Funded	Pilot Scheme 1978-1981				Extended Scheme Australia as from 1982
	Australia	N.S.W. and A.C.T.	S.A.	Tas.	
Family Aide/Home maker/Housekeeper	43	11	5	1	37
Emergency Accommodation/Housing	46	6	--	2	14
Community Dev./Self Help/Family Services	26	10	4	4	21
Family Counselling	12	-	1	1	5
Financial Counselling	12	2	-	-	9
Family Centres	10	5	-	-	7
Parent Education/Development/Support	11	3	4	2	6
Handicare/Handicapped Services	4	3	-	1	2
Migrant Services	4	2	1	-	2
Volunteer Training	4	-	-	4	2
Alternative Care for Children	3	3	-	-	2
Child Abuse Counselling	3	-	-	-	2
Youth Services	2	-	-	1	1
Foster Care / Aboriginal	1	-	1	-	-
Coordination of services	1	-	-	-	1
Total Projects Funded	182	45	16	16	111
<u>Funds allocated (\$'000)</u>					
- in Direct Scheme	8,730	2,250	1,200	450	-
- in Extended Scheme	-	2,700	1,300	630	10,000
No. of Projects in Extended Scheme	-	26	10	14	111

Source: Office of Child Care (1984), National Overview of the Family Support Services Scheme.

Figure 6.1: Emergency Assistance per Head of Population, 1966-1982
State Gross Expenditure, Commonwealth Reimbursement, and State Net

\$ per Capita

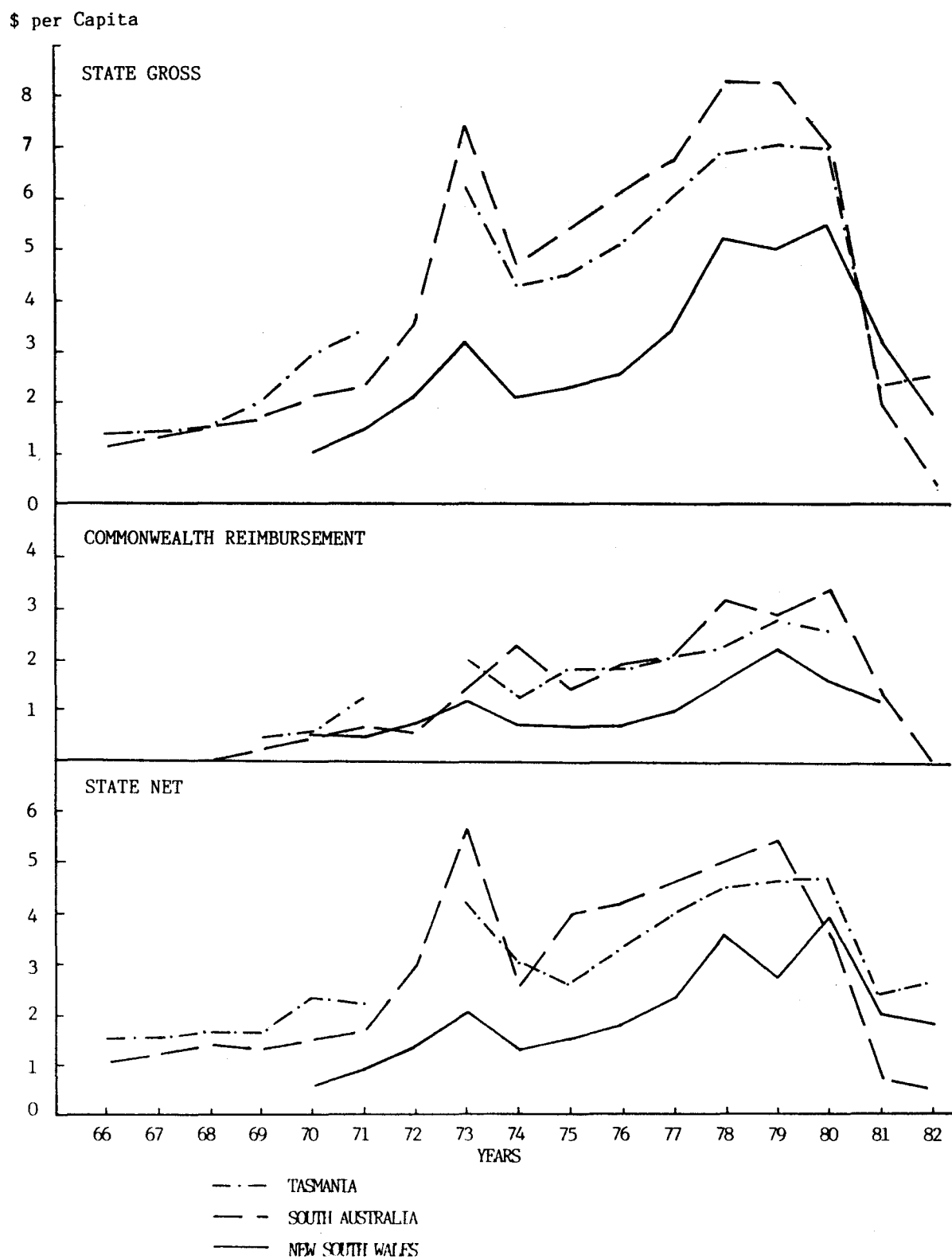


--- State Gross
 -.- Commonwealth Reimbursement
 — State Net

Note:

1. Tasmania: data not available for 1971-72
2. New South Wales: Data prior to 1969-70 not compatible

Figure 6.2: Emergency Assistance per Head of Population, 1966-1982
Comparisons of Three States (NSW, SA, Tas)



CHAPTER 7

THE EMERGING CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE SYSTEM

The scope and limitations of this report

In this report we have set out to provide an overview of the changes that have taken place in the child and family welfare system in Australia, over a period of 17 years, from 1966 to 1982. During this period significant changes have occurred (or appear to have occurred) in the legislation governing child and family welfare services as well as in the organisation of services and service delivery in most States. Changes have occurred also in the Commonwealth sphere, evident in the widening of Commonwealth activities into such areas as early childhood services and various family support initiatives. All these changes have taken place at the time when the dependence on the state for income support has grown at an unprecedented rate (see Chapter 2).

We have outlined the reasons for this study in Chapter 1. As noted there, our earlier studies led us to the formulation of a hypothesis that such services as child care, child welfare, and family support, which ostensibly constituted separate fields and distinct purposes, even to the extent that the responsibilities for their provision were located in different government spheres, were in fact parts of one system of child and family welfare. We have sought therefore to search for some reasons why these distinctions continued to be maintained, and what might be the effects of these distinctions on the recipients of services.

In attempting to overview the developments in child and family welfare over the past two decades, we have endeavoured to identify certain innovations and changes in the policies and practices of State welfare departments, which could be regarded as 'signposts' of some significance. This task has proved to be of considerable magnitude, and a thorough analysis could not be compressed into one report. For this reason, we have provided a descriptive account of developments and documented this by statistical data wherever these were available or appropriate.

Examination of changes in three States may be regarded as rather limited, as changes in child and family welfare system have also occurred in the other States. However, as we have mentioned earlier (Chapter 1), our purpose was not to evaluate what this or the other State might have done in that area of welfare but rather to use the data from three States as an indication of changes in child and family welfare system as a whole. For this reason, we have given attention to the role of the Commonwealth so as to see how the Commonwealth/State division of responsibility affect the operation of the System.

In contrast to the Commonwealth government's role which is seen essentially as that of a 'provider', the State welfare departments have traditionally performed a rather residual service, their main functions being child protection, care of dependent children, and control of young offenders. However, over the period examined in this report the departments have extended their activities into many 'new' fields, often with the assistance from the Commonwealth, or as a result of Commonwealth initiatives. They have also endeavoured to acquire a 'positive' image and orientation by offering services to which less stigma was attached and by 'promoting' welfare in the community. The notion of 'prevention' has ostensibly replaced the previous focus on 'protection'. Whether the distinction is easily achievable in practice may be a debatable point, as many activities carried out in child and family welfare have the elements of both.

It needs to be noted that some activities engaged in by State welfare departments with the aim of providing assistance to families have been introduced with the belief that such assistance might lessen the need for other forms of intervention such as the necessity of committing children to State guardianship or other forms of substitute care. Thus the aims of 'assistance', 'prevention', 'protection', or 'care' are often found in one activity or in a range of related activities. Another aim, or function, that may be identified in State welfare activities is that of social control. It was beyond the scope of this report to examine these issues in depth, but the data generated in this study have become useful guidelines for the next stage of our research programme which is now in progress. In that stage we aim to examine empirically, at the level of service delivery, the functions performed by the child and family welfare services (both government and non-government) in the support of children and families and in the maintenance of social order.

Furthermore, it also needs to be noted, with emphasis, that changes in the child and family welfare system continue to occur and are likely to do so in future. The years 1966 and 1982 have thus been arbitrary cut-off points for our analysis. However, we think that by tracing the evolution of the child and family welfare system over an extended period of 17 years the issues encountered today might be more easily understood and acted upon accordingly.

The value and limitations of data

The information provided in official documents such as the annual reports of State welfare departments may be expected to give a comprehensive picture of what services these departments provide, what issues and problems they address, the purpose of their activities, and the outcomes of their actions. It should also provide a picture, or profile, of the population served, its characteristics, the reasons for their demanding and/or receiving the services, or the reasons why the services may be imposed upon them.

To a certain extent the reports provide this information with reference to the first aspect (i.e., what the organisations do) and to a lesser extent with regard to the latter aspect (i.e. the characteristics of the population served). The common feature of official reports from social welfare agencies (both government and non-government) is the presentation of social issues as problems of individuals or families, and the recipients of services are usually defined in normative terms such as 'families in need' or 'disadvantaged', or 'children at risk'. The group characteristics of the recipients are presented in terms of demographic data such as 'young people', 'single parents', or 'the aged'. This is to be expected, as such categorization is now commonly accepted in social welfare literature; the taken-for-granted assumption being that these social groups are the 'disadvantaged' groups. However, this is a debatable point because it can be demonstrated that not all young people, or single parents, or the aged, are 'disadvantaged' or 'people in need'. The basic social divisions are not the divisions of age or marital status but the divisions of socio-economic nature such as income and wealth, and the related divisions of occupation, consumption patterns, and life styles generally.

The absence of data on socio-economic group characteristics of the population served gives an impression that State welfare departments serve all strata of the population. This may be true with regard to some 'peripheral' services these agencies might provide, but rather unlikely in the areas of their main activities and statutory obligations. No doubt, there are people from most social strata who, at times, might call for departmental assistance, thus giving credence to the statement that,

The services of the Department are requested by people from many strata of society. Most people have times in their lives during which they are in need or they experience crises personally in their families. (SA, AR 1982:1)

However, people who come to a welfare agency for budgeting advice or emergency relief assistance are unlikely to be those on high incomes. This is acknowledged in the reports with reference to emergency assistance by the statements that approximately 90 per cent of applicants are recipients of pensions or benefits from the Commonwealth (SA, AR 1982:50). The low socio-economic status of the recipients of budgeting advice services is also acknowledged, although in a rather 'indirect' way, suggesting that that service is used by wider sections of the population.

Although most clients live in rented accommodation, it is significant to note that almost one-third are people who are buying (or already own) their own home. For many of them, high mortgage commitments are proving to be a heavy burden. (SA, AR 1979:13)

What is not known from the reports is the socio-economic group characteristics of the people who receive other, non-material services, especially the services entailing measures of social control, such as children 'at risk' or young offenders. The prevalence of low socio-economic status among them is only inferred or mentioned occasionally in general terms. Hence it is difficult to ascertain from the reports the extent of common causative links, or common causes, in the financial problems of families and the 'behavioural' problems such as child neglect or youth offences. For example, it cannot be ascertained to what extent the children who appear in courts and subsequently come under the umbrella of departments' social control measures are the children of the families who experienced financial difficulties.

There are three major limitations in the data presented in the departmental reports. First, as mentioned earlier, it cannot be ascertained (except by inference) how large is the overlap between the population served by State welfare departments and the population receiving similar services from other State departments or from non-government welfare sector. It is fairly evident, however, that the majority of the people who apply for material emergency assistance are receiving income support from the Commonwealth government.

Second, it cannot be ascertained to what extent is there an overlap among the people who receive one or another service from the same department. For example, to what extent are the people who seek budgeting advice the same people who receive attention from the crisis care service, or the same people whose children come under guardianship for being 'at risk' or for committing offences. In other words, it is not possible to ascertain to what extent are the problems brought to, or sought out by, the agency the problems of **intensity** or problems of **spread** across the population. As shown in the data in Table 7.1, there were thousands of individual children, adults and families who received services from the South Australian Department for Community Welfare in 1981-82 but this does not indicate the extent of any 'double-counting' or 'multiple-counting'.

Third, considering the wide range of services the State welfare departments now provide, there is little indication in the reports of the similarities or differences in group characteristics of the population receiving one rather than another type of service. For example, do the children who are in the substitute care in 'family homes' come from the families of the same, or different, socio-economic status as the children who are in the substitute care in 'family day care' or in a 'child care centre'?

These issues are of importance because of their relevance for social welfare policy. If, for example, it is true that the vast majority of the people who need attention from the State welfare agencies come from the population who receive pensions or benefits from the Commonwealth, this would mean that the social functioning of the people who depend on income support from the state (in this case, the Commonwealth) is very vulnerable, the vulnerability

extending well beyond the problems of physical survival. Furthermore, it would also mean that the cost of dependence on the state is much higher than the Commonwealth outlays on pensions and benefits.

Under the present Commonwealth/States division of responsibilities the Commonwealth is responsible for income support of dependent population while the States provide mainly non-material services, although, as demonstrated throughout this report, that division is not clear-cut. There is considerable evidence that, in certain areas, at least, both the Commonwealth and the States serve the same population. By and large, the recipients of services are of low socio-economic status, or 'the poor'. A question thus arises whether the services provided by the State welfare agencies (and by many non-government welfare agencies as well) alleviate poverty in a real sense, or whether the function they perform is to **assist people to live in poverty and accept their dependent position in society**. The data on the means and methods of service delivery suggest that the latter is more likely to be the case.

The widening of activities by State welfare departments has brought them into contact with wider sections of the population. However, it cannot be ascertained from the reports whether the 'new' activities, especially those of supporting or developmental nature, are directed equally at all recipients of services, or whether the recipients of these services are different in their demographic or social class characteristics from those who receive services which entail varied measures of social control.

Perceptions of issues, problems, and departmental roles

Over the years examined in this report State welfare departments have attempted to change their orientation from the narrow concern with child protection and control of young offenders, to a broader concern with family welfare and community welfare. Furthermore, the acceptance of the notion of 'promoting' welfare in the community has led to a range of activities defined as 'preventative' or 'developmental'. It needs to be noted, however, that notwithstanding the 'assisting', 'preventative', or 'developmental' functions the State welfare departments might perform, they are, as they have always been, the statutory agencies of social control. Thus, in effect, the **departments perform a dual function**, and a question may be asked whether the range of activities performed represent a change of roles, or whether the function of social control has remained the main function and what has changed is mainly the methods and the rhetoric of social control.

It would be expected that the authorities would perceive the nature of the problems they dealt with in a way which would reflect their societal role. If that role has changed, then it would be expected that the perception of issues would have also changed. In attempting to ascertain whether the proclaimed change in orientation has been reflected in changing perceptions

of issues and problems dealt with, we have looked for indications of such change in the annual reports. Three kinds of perceptions we considered to be of relevance: the perception of the **nature of the problems** dealt with; the perception of the **causes of the problems**; and the perception of the **role the departments performed**.

In general, the perceptions identified in various statements indicate the following characteristics and trends:

1. Over the years, there has been a growing acknowledgement of external causes of people's problems in social functioning, but this acknowledgement appears to have been rather 'reluctant', being related mainly to certain areas of departmental activity, such as emergency assistance or budgeting advice. There has been less frequent acknowledgement of external causes in the areas which entail social control activities, such as child welfare and control of young offenders. The problems in these areas have continued to be explained in terms of individual characteristics of parents, children, or young people.
2. The perceptions and judgements of the population served have become less moralistic over time, but have retained the connotations of inferring 'incompetence', or 'inadequacy'. The arguments that 'people need help' itself often implies inadequacy of the people who receive services. This is reflected in the prevalent response in the non-tangible form of 'counselling'. There is little indication of what the 'counselling' really involves, but it is evident that people seem to need this form of service in all sorts of situations.
3. As to the perception of departmental role, there appear to be some differences among the three States included in this report. While the shift from child protection to prevention and family support and community welfare is emphasized in all three States, the allocation of resources (both human and material) to various areas of activity has differed among the States. New South Wales appears to have given strong emphasis towards supporting the non-government welfare sector and community groups; Tasmania has also followed this trend but has introduced some family support services directly (e.g. the homemakers' programme); South Australia appears to have retained a 'therapeutic' orientation in many of its community welfare programmes.

As a general trend, there has been some shift in the perceptions of the problems dealt with and their causes but the shift has not been very clear. There are indications of some 'oscillation' in the perceptions between the acknowledgement of external causes of people's problem (e.g. unemployment) and the search for causes in people's individual characteristics. Secondly, the shift towards the 'community' is evident in some areas but that shift seems to be more pronounced in the **methods of intervention** rather than in the **objectives of intervention**. There is also some indication that the State

welfare departments might be now servicing two social groups: the 'traditional' group which is the object social control activities; and a 'new' group which is the object of 'developmental' work.

The following excerpts from the annual reports give some indications of the diversity of perceptions as well as of some changes in perceptions over the years.

In the 1960s, the causes of people's problems in social functioning were seen clearly in individual inadequacies, although there was some awareness of external pressures affecting people's ability to cope with life's exigencies and with the care of their children. For example, the Director of the New South Wales Department commented in 1966:

In commenting on family breakdown such as expressed in the Child Welfare Act under such headings as 'incompetent' or 'improper guardianship', I should point out that many families are personally inadequate in face of the stresses of present-day society. Regrettably in any society there will always be some parents who are wantonly neglectful and careless of the well-being of their children. (NSW, AR 1966:8)

In the same year, the report from South Australia also stressed that the cause of the problems experienced by children was to be found in the inadequacy of parents:

...many of the children committed to the Department come from homes where there are serious difficulties. One or both parents may be neurotic, mentally unstable, of low intelligence or addicted to alcohol. Other factors include severe marital problems, *de facto* relationships and low moral standards. These problems may exist even where parents appear to be socially acceptable... (SA, AR 1966:7)

Similarly, the report from Tasmania noted people's inadequacy, but this was seen in social functioning rather than in personal characteristics:

Many of the recipients [of State financial assistance] are what may be termed 'socially inadequate persons' with poor employment records, and often dependent on seasonal work. (Tas, AR 1968:2)

The same report noted a rising frequency of instability in family life and saw an adverse effect of this on the social behaviour of children:

Further evidence of this apparent malaise in family life can probably be found in the marked increase during the past two years in the numbers of children reported during the year for delinquency, which have now reached record proportions.
(Tas, AR 1968:3)

At the same time, other comments in the reports indicate an awareness of external causes of socio-economic nature and their effect on people's functioning. For example, in commenting on the problems experienced by the families and children who came under the Department's notice, the report from South Australia for 1966 notes:

These included the placement of children during family emergencies, problems of parent/child relationships, budgeting and financial difficulties, substandard or inadequate housing, assistance with family members who are mentally disabled, and strained marital relationships. (SA, AR 1966:8)

From the mid-1970s there has been an increasing awareness of the deteriorating economic conditions, especially unemployment, and the effect of these on the growing demand for financial emergency assistance:

In most areas there was an increase in requests for social welfare assistance, in most cases as a result of unemployment.
(NSW, AR 1976:28)

The unusually high level of unemployment throughout the community during the year has placed many families under added stress and has resulted in an increased demand for Departmental assistance.
(SA, AR 1977:9)

[Apart from the unemployed] as well many low income families continue to experience difficulty in meeting the cost of essential items of food, accommodation and power... The dramatic increase in food orders is an indication of rising levels of poverty in the society... (Tas, AR 1982:28-29)

The shift in the perceptions of the role the Departments were seen to perform is evident in all three States but especially in South Australia. In 1966 the functions of the Department were seen,

to provide necessities for the destitute both children and adults, to care for children who are neglected, to guide and befriend children who are or may become delinquent, and to train those who are placed in departmental homes and institutions. Briefly, it is the responsibility of the Department to provide social assistance to children and adults who are in need. (SA, AR 1966:6)

With the introduction of the Community Welfare Act 1972 came the notion of the Department's role to serve 'the whole community' and this was substantiated on the belief that people's problems were widespread and not necessarily caused by poverty or low socio-economic status:

Deprived people in the community cover a wide range of social situations, and the emotionally deprived has as great a need as the economically deprived. (SA, 1972:3)

It is becoming more widely accepted that this Department is here to provide a service for all who need help. It is not only the poor who need help. For too long the association of need with poverty has deterred many people from seeking help... (SA, AR 1975:3)

The 'therapeutic' orientation of the Department is evident in the methods adopted in assisting young people to find employment. Commenting on the operation of the 'Job Hunters Clubs' for young people, the report for 1976 states:

Activities are arranged to help relationships rather than to concentrate specifically on imparting knowledge. It may take up to three months regular contact for some of the long-term unemployed young people to reach a stage where they are ready to systematically seek work. (SA, AR 1976:25)

The efforts to change the 'image' and direction in New South Wales is presented as a shift from 'social control' to 'prevention' and 'assistance':

In recent years there has been a recognition by the community of the fact that the Department strives to keep families together rather than just 'pick up the pieces' after family breakdown. The District Officer is sought after and trusted to an extent not envisaged 10 to 15 years ago. It is a far cry today from the time when the Department's field staff was viewed with suspicion and apprehension. (NSW, AR 1973:15)

In Tasmania, the change in the Department's orientation is exemplified by its 'welfare strategy' (see Chapter 3), which is implemented by the introduction of such services as homemakers who work with families in difficulties on a 'practical' level:

The erosion by inflation on the income levels of pensioners and low wage earners causes many families to fall further below the poverty line. Therefore, more of the Homemaker's time has been spent helping families with debt counselling, budgeting and material aid, and contact with families is of a longer duration. (Tas, AR 1982:29)

In this overview of State welfare authorities' changing perceptions on the nature of problems they deal with, it is evident that while external structural causes of problems are acknowledged the explanations are also sought in the population experiencing the problems. It needs to be noted here that, at individual level, people's problems of social functioning cannot be fully explained by 'external' causes of social structure. Individual differences, capabilities, attitudes, etc., are certainly the relevant variables as well. However, individual differences occur within broader categories of population, and certain problems demonstrably occur with greater frequency among certain socio-economic groups, or social classes. To that extent, the problems are beyond the individuals' control, although the capacity to respond to externally-caused problems might differ from one individual to another within the same social group. This issue is well illustrated by the observation in one report from South Australia in relation to child neglect.

It is difficult to isolate single factors which precipitate children becoming neglected. Most of these children come from multi-problem families where difficulties have accumulated to such an extent that the parents no longer have the ability to fulfill their obligations of monitoring appropriate standards of care for their children. Nevertheless, some general factors are characteristic of these families, such as inadequate income and inability to budget adequately, inability to provide adequate food, clothing and accommodation, ill-health including mental illness, desertion by either or both parents, and physical ill-treatment of children. (SA, AR 1971:8)

Has the role of State welfare departments changed?

The statements quoted in the previous section of this chapter indicate that the perceptions of issues which are of concern to State welfare departments and are seen to be in their sphere of responsibility have changed over the recent years. It would follow, then, that the role these departments perform in the overall system of service provision in child and family welfare would have also changed. Where have these changes occurred, and are there any identifiable trends and directions?

For reasons stated earlier, the limitations of this report allow for some answers regarding legislation, organisational aspects, the range of activities, and some methods of service delivery. In all these areas some changes appear to have occurred but the significance of these changes, if measured in terms of their effects, is difficult to ascertain, and any conclusions can be arrived at only with appropriate qualifications.

Changes in **legislation** appear to have had three related aims: to change the role and the public image of the departments, from 'social control' agencies to agencies of 'community welfare'; to widen the activities into 'new' areas, such as child care, family support, care of the aged; and to improve the effectiveness of service provision by administrative re-organisation, professionalisation of personnel, and greater involvement of non-government welfare organisations and community groups.

However, the 'core' legislation has remained essentially the same, thus indicating that irrespective of the wider range of activities the departments might engage in under the concept of 'promoting' welfare in the community, **protection and care of dependent children is the central responsibility**, which is to be discharged with the sanction of the law, if necessary. As a result, State welfare departments have attempted to acquire a **universal** role while retaining their **residual** role which is, essentially, one of social control. It may be expected, therefore, that this dual role presents

certain dilemmas and conflicts in decision-making when applied to individual cases at the level of service delivery.

The **widening of the range of activity** has led to increased professional specialisation among the departmental personnel. Whereas in the earlier years the core personnel consisted mainly of child welfare workers, there are now child care consultants and advisers, child protection workers, social workers, family counsellors, budgeting advisers, crisis care workers, psychologists, family therapists, and a host of others. While it is unavoidable that in a broad field such as child and family welfare some specialisations may be necessary, there are also outcomes which do not necessarily improve the effectiveness of services. Considering the fact that State welfare departments provide mainly non-material personal services, the growth of professional specialisation predictably leads to differences in the perceptions and interpretations of people's needs and problems, to boundary conflicts, and to increasing complexity of procedures and bureaucratisation.

At the other end of service delivery, people's needs do not readily fall into neat categories that fit easily into professional perspectives and definitions.

At the level of **service delivery**, the data indicate (Chapter 4) that in the area of **child welfare** the use of legal sanctions in committing children to State guardianship has diminished. There are fewer children now than in earlier years committed to formal/legal State guardianship and fewer under State guardianship **at any one time**. There are also fewer children in traditional residential care, and the nature of residential care has changed, the large institutions having given way to small residential units with 'home atmosphere'.

This does not mean that the numbers of children who **come into** the system of State care, or are **in** the system, or **pass through** the system, have diminished. On the contrary, the numbers appear to have increased. This is evident in the increasing use of 'temporary' foster care, alternate care, and other forms of substitute care used but without legal sanctions of State guardianship. The statistics in the annual reports on all these forms of substitute care are either imprecise, inconsistent, or unavailable, and for this reason it is difficult to ascertain any exact numbers of children in the system of State care. Furthermore, it is not possible to ascertain the degree to which the children who come, for example, into temporary form of care at one time are the same children who come into temporary care at another time.

In one area which we have identified - the system of Children's Aid Panels in South Australia - the data indicate that this method of 'diversion' of young offenders from the courts has some elements of 'revolving door', as over the few years in which the Panels have been in operation the number of young people who appeared before the Panels more than once and/or eventually came

before the courts had grown rapidly. It is possible that a similar situation might exist in the other areas of child welfare. Some evidence of this comes again from South Australia where the numbers of young people in training institutions (referred to as 'secure' care) has diminished considerably but the numbers of admissions and discharges has remained high, indicating a high rate of 'turnover' but short terms of commitment.

Another relevant factor is the growth of non-government agencies which provide child and family welfare services, either autonomously or 'on behalf' of State welfare authorities. The 'contracting out' system seems to suggest that these agencies act as an extension of the State welfare system, and while providing 'care' they also act as agents of social control.

In addition to children in substitute care admitted, or committed, as 'welfare cases', there are now many children in substitute care under the name of 'child care'. While in the prevalent perspectives 'child care' is seen to be different from 'child welfare' there are many common features in both. First, both forms of care constitute substitute care or supplementary care; and, second, both are forms of acknowledgement that in some situations a family needs assistance in its task of child rearing (Sweeney, 1985). In fact, the provision of 'child care' may thus be regarded a positive form of State intervention in child welfare at a **primary level** of prevention. Furthermore, being assisted financially by the state, it represents a **partial socialisation of the cost of child rearing**. It is relevant here to consider whether access to this form of assistance is equally distributed across the socio-economic strata, and if not, what are the factors which determine differences in access.

Child and family welfare and spheres of responsibility

The widening of the scope of the range of activities engaged in by State welfare departments, and the significant role of the Commonwealth government in those activities played either directly (as in the provision of child care) or indirectly (as in the various initiatives and forms of assistance) needs to be seen in the overall context of growing dependence of individuals and families on the state. That dependence does not necessarily have to be seen in negative terms, as many forms of State intervention have an **enabling function**, rather than a **constraining function** or a **controlling function**.

To be sure, dependence on the state, be this for income support or for other forms of assistance, is to a varied extent **residual**, as it tends to signify some inadequacy of the recipient, or of the socio-economic structural arrangements, or of both. As indicated earlier, in the perceptions of State welfare authorities the need for child and family welfare services used to be seen more in the inadequacies of the recipients rather than in the external societal arrangements but in more recent years the latter have been receiving greater though somewhat vacillating acknowledgement. However, the services

of the State welfare departments and the methods of service delivery are used to 'correct' the recipients' behaviour mainly by non-material support and in certain cases by legal sanctions. Thus there appears to be some lack of congruence between the expressed perception of causes and methods of intervention.

At the same time some of the 'new' activities have clearly **enabling** characteristics, performing also a **preventative** function. In some of these activities (as, for example, in child care, family support services) the Commonwealth government has played a significant role. Furthermore, the role of the Commonwealth in child and family welfare extends beyond the assistance to States' welfare activities and beyond the provision of **direct** income support through pensions and benefits. Tax concessions, health and education services also play an important **enabling function** in the system of welfare.

The whole system of child and family welfare may thus be perceived as a **system of three-level intervention**, ranging from the primary level of **universal** provision through the secondary level of **selective** provision to permanently or temporarily dependent children and families, to the tertiary level of **highly selective** or **residual** services which are rendered with negative connotations and often with a varied degree of coercion (Table 7.2). This conceptual framework suggests that because the forms of intervention at the primary level have an enabling function, children and families who do not receive full advantage of services at that level are more likely to be the recipients at secondary and tertiary levels of intervention. Thus from the point of view of service provision the less adequate the intervention, and/or the less universal at the primary level, the more demand there is at the secondary and tertiary levels.

It needs to be noted here that State welfare departments have limited resources for intervention at the primary level, although other State services such as education and health are provided at that level. However, the main role at that level rests with the Commonwealth sphere. It is for this reason that the issues of child and family welfare need to be seen not as separate issues for the Commonwealth and the States, each serving primarily different strata of population, but as issues in which both spheres of government have a complementary role to play.

Table 7.1: Population in Contact with the Department for Community Welfare,
South Australia, 1981-82

Children:

2941 places in child care centres licensed by the Department
 1269 full-time equivalent children in family day care schemes
 1652 in foster care (668 under guardianship; 984 under other arrangements)
 1945 used temporary foster care during the year
 146 in non-government homes (as at 30 June, 1982)
 1208 under guardianship (as at 30 June, 1982)
 163 placed under guardianship during the year
 427 confirmed suspected cases of children "at risk" of maltreatment
 5516 appeared before Children's Aid Panels
 3480 appeared before Courts
 942 placed on bonds with supervision
 645 were on bonds with supervision (as at 30 June, 1982)
 265 were placed in Intensive Neighbourhood Care (INC)
 195 were doing community work in default of payment of a fine
 1188 were referred for assessment by social workers
 644 were assessed by psychologists
 744 were placed on remand during the year
 1103 admitted to youth training centres during the year

Adults and Families

2000 family crisis situations attended
 35000 telephone calls for assistance received
 27236 persons received emergency financial assistance
 2130 new clients received budgeting advice
 4215 family maintenance cases handled
 74250 pensioners received concessions on rates and taxes
 13120 other persons received concessions on rates and taxes
 107263 transport concession cards issued
 1700 persons attended recreation camps for "disadvantaged" groups

Source: Department for Community Welfare, Annual Report 1981-1982

Table 7.2: The Child and Family Welfare System

A Model of Three-Level Intervention

Characteristic Variables	Levels of Intervention		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1. Provision of Service and/or Intervention	Universal	Selective	Highly Selective, or Residual
2. Mode of Service/ Intervention	Tax Concessions	Unemployment Benefits	Emergency Assistance,
(a) Material/Financial (examples)	Family Allowances Dependent Spouse Rebate Other Allowances and Pensions w/out Means Test	Supporting Parent Benefits Family Income Supplement Public Housing Free Health Benefits	Relief, (cash, food clothing, etc.)
(b) Non-Material/ Personal Services (examples)	Health Education Pre-Schools Child Care	Temporary Foster Care Alternate Care Counselling, Advice, Information	Youth Refuges Women's Refuges Foster Care Homes, Institution Training Centres
3. Provided by	Mainly Commonwealth (income); Other Services by Commonwealth or States	Commonwealth, States, Non-govt. Sector	Mainly States and Non-govt. Sector
4. Dominant Purpose	Support, Development	Support, Assistance	Assistance, Social Control
5. Functional Purpose			
(a) for Recipients	Support, Supplement, Socialisation	Supplement Substitution	Substitution, Control, Re-socialisation
(b) for Society	Social, Economic Facilitating Functioning	Social Maintenance, Social Prevention	Social Defence, Protection, Control
6. Rationale for Provision (perceptions)	Normal, Universal Need	Selective, 'Abnormal', Temporary Need	Malfunctions, Pathology 'Abnormal' Need
7. Entitlement/Claim	By Right	By Need	By Need or Coercion
8. Decision to Use by	Individuals, Families	Parents, State, Non-govt. Agencies	State, Non-govt. Agencies
9. Participation	Voluntary	Compelled by Need, Moral Coercion	Compelled by Need, Legal Sanction/ Coercion
10. Recipients/ Beneficiaries	All Strata but Mainly Middle Classes	Mainly Low Income Strata, Working Class	Mainly the 'Underclass'

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**APPENDIX TABLE 1: DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE (NET) AS PROPORTION OF STATE GOVERNMENT BUDGET -
AT CURRENT AND CONSTANT PRICES - (\$M)**

YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE	CPI (1980- 81=100)	NEW SOUTH WALES						SOUTH AUSTRALIA						TASMANIA					
		AT CURRENT PRICES		AT CONSTANT PRICES		YACS AS % OF		AT CURRENT PRICES		AT CONSTANT PRICES		DCW AS % OF		AT CURRENT PRICES		AT CONSTANT PRICES		DCW AS % OF	
		STATE	YACS	STATE	YACS	STATE		STATE	DCW	STATE	DCW	STATE		STATE	DCW	STATE	DCW	STATE	
1966	30.4	521.5	5.04	1718.6	16.59	0.97		243.7	2.40	801.5	7.88	0.98		85.6	0.71	281.5	2.33	0.83	
1967	31.2	570.7	5.41	1829.3	17.33	0.95		258.7	2.78	829.2	8.92	1.08		93.2	0.78	298.9	2.49	0.83	
1968	32.2	608.5	5.75	1889.8	17.84	0.94		277.4	2.92	861.5	9.07	1.05		102.4	0.88	318.1	2.72	0.86	
1969	33.0	674.5	6.00	2044.1	18.19	0.89		297.9	3.17	902.7	9.60	1.06		111.5	0.99	338.0	2.99	0.86	
1970	34.1	767.6	11.95	2250.9	35.05	1.56		355.6	3.54	1042.8	10.39	1.00		121.0	1.16	354.9	3.40	0.96	
1971	35.7	902.2	14.39	2527.2	40.30	1.59		386.8	5.97	1083.6	16.71	1.54		138.2	1.30	387.1	3.65	0.94	
1972	38.1	1059.6	17.58	2781.1	46.14	1.66		456.3	7.55	1197.7	19.81	1.65		NOT AVAILABLE					
1973	41.3	1228.4	21.28	2974.4	51.52	1.73		524.8	10.31	1270.6	24.96	1.96		186.0	1.98	450.4	4.80	1.07	
1974	46.7	1401.0	24.25	3000.0	51.93	1.73		645.4	10.40	1381.9	22.26	1.61		210.0	2.09	449.9	4.47	0.99	
1975	54.5	1908.3	30.22	3501.5	55.45	1.58		820.6	14.42	1505.7	26.46	1.76		282.1	2.87	517.6	5.26	1.02	
1976	61.5	2253.7	38.79	3664.5	63.08	1.72		1034.7	17.45	1682.4	28.37	1.69		317.6	3.49	516.5	5.68	1.10	
1977	70.1	2558.7	47.54	3650.0	67.82	1.86		1183.2	21.33	1687.4	30.43	1.80		395.0	4.45	563.5	6.35	1.13	
1978	76.7	2838.5	55.15	3700.8	71.90	1.94		1192.1	24.41	1554.2	31.82	2.05		450.7	5.35	587.6	6.98	1.19	
1979	83.0	3054.9	61.54	3680.6	74.14	2.01		1258.3	26.29	1516.0	31.67	2.09		497.1	5.98	598.9	7.21	1.20	
1980	91.4	3632.5	81.43	3974.3	89.10	2.24		1384.6	28.14	1514.9	30.79	2.03		563.9	6.78	617.0	7.41	1.20	
1981	100.0	4685.2	97.36	4685.2	97.36	2.08		1554.9	28.64	1554.8	28.64	1.84		627.4	6.91	627.4	6.91	1.10	
1982	110.4	5303.5	99.21	4803.9	89.86	1.87		1722.4	31.02	1560.2	28.10	1.80		695.5	8.36	630.0	7.57	1.20	

Source: Year Books, State Budget Papers, and Annual Reports of
State Welfare Departments.

APPENDIX TABLE 2: DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE(NET) TOTAL AND PER CAPITA
(AT CONSTANT 1980-81 PRICES)

YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE	NEW SOUTH WALES			SOUTH AUSTRALIA			TASMANIA		
	POPULATION ('000)	YACS NET EXPENDITURE TOTAL\$ ('000)	PER CAPITA \$	POPULATION ('000)	DCW NET EXPENDITURE TOTAL\$ ('000)	PER CAPITA \$	POPULATION ('000)	DCW NET EXPENDITURE TOTAL\$ ('000)	PER CAPITA \$
1966	4,237.9	16,592	3.92	1,095.0	7,882	7.20	371.4	2,325	6.26
1967	4,295.2	17,327	4.03	1,109.8	8,923	8.04	375.2	2,493	6.64
1968	4,359.3	17,842	4.09	1,121.8	9,065	8.08	379.6	2,723	7.26
1969	4,441.2	18,185	4.09	1,139.3	9,600	8.43	384.9	2,991	7.77
1970	4,522.3	35,047	7.75	1,158.0	10,390	8.97	387.7	3,402	8.77
1971	4,601.2	40,297	8.76	1,173.7	16,709	14.24	390.4	3,647	9.34
1972	4,795.1	46,136	9.62	1,214.6	19,811	16.31	400.3	NOT AVAILABLE	
1973	4,841.9	51,518	10.64	1,228.5	24,964	20.32	403.1	4,802	11.91
1974	4,894.1	51,931	10.61	1,241.5	22,261	17.93	406.2	4,472	11.01
1975	4,932.0	55,453	11.24	1,265.3	26,462	20.91	410.1	5,262	12.83
1976	4,959.6	63,075	12.72	1,274.1	28,372	22.27	412.3	5,676	13.77
1977	5,003.2	67,817	13.55	1,286.6	30,434	23.65	413.9	6,353	15.35
1978	5,049.8	71,900	14.24	1,297.8	31,823	24.52	416.4	6,975	16.75
1979	5,103.3	74,142	14.58	1,301.8	31,669	24.33	418.7	7,206	17.21
1980	5,165.2	89,095	17.25	1,308.7	30,786	23.53	423.5	7,414	17.51
1981	5,237.1	97,357	18.59	1,319.3	28,639	21.71	427.3	6,908	16.17
1982	5,307.9	89,860	16.93	1,328.7	28,100	21.15	429.8	7,574	17.63

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics and Annual Reports of
State Departments

APPENDIX TABLE 3: CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: 1966-1982 (as at 30 June)

YEAR ENDING JUNE 30	NSW - DEPT. YOUTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES			S.A. - DEPT. FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE			TAS. - DEPT. FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE		
	CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP	POPULATION 0-17 YEARS	NUMBER PER 1000 POP	CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP	POPULATION 0-17 YEARS	NUMBER PER 1000 POP	CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP	POPULATION 0-16 YEARS	NUMBER PER 1000 POP
1966	5,412	1,417,151	3.82	2,769	390,132	7.10	771	134,529	5.73
1967	5,622	1,438,210	3.91	2,875	393,610	7.3	784	135,210	5.80
1968	5,874	1,452,910	4.04	3,010	393,690	7.65	827	135,730	6.09
1969	6,088	1,478,381	4.12	3,267	393,254	8.25	847	136,844	6.19
1970	6,289	1,503,693	4.18	3,330	400,477	8.32	880	137,125	6.42
1971	6,020	1,537,982	3.91	3,206	412,112	7.78	920	138,504	6.64
1972	5,949	1,557,924	3.82	3,111	412,880	7.53	937	138,056	6.79
1973	5,903	1,565,827	3.77	2,868	412,415	6.95	927	137,081	6.76
1974	5,776	1,569,058	3.60	2,545	410,904	6.19	939	136,355	6.89
1975	5,377	1,567,257	3.43	2,234	412,225	5.41	936	135,691	6.90
1976	5,127	1,556,784	3.30	2,013	407,792	4.94	866	133,816	6.47
1977	4,746	1,551,394	3.06	1,819	403,901	4.5	793	131,838	6.02
1978	4,304	1,544,638	2.79	1,690	399,056	4.23	721	129,917	5.55
1979	4,725	1,535,746	3.08	1,561	391,001	3.99	674	128,246	5.26
1980	4,449	1,530,232	2.91	1,281	386,081	3.32	636	126,696	5.02
1981	4,073	1,530,333	2.66	1,186	374,365	3.17	583	125,753	4.64
1982	4,076	1,529,495	2.66	1,208	376,759	3.21	549	124,564	4.41

Source: Annual Reports of State Departments

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