

Services for Young Children: Welfare Service or Social Parenthood?

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Publication details:

Working Paper No. 19
Reports and Proceedings
858232464 (ISBN)

Publication Date:

1982

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/951>

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SWRC Reports and Proceedings

No 19

March 1982

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Tania Sweeney

and

Adam Jamrozik



Social Welfare Research Centre
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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ISSN 0159 9607
ISBN 85823 246 4

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We wish to express our thanks to Barbara McNulty for
access to certain documents and to Pauline Garde for
research assistance

Typed by Geraldine McWhinney and Val Williams
Printed by the University of New South Wales Printing Unit

ABSTRACT

In the last decade, the Federal Government has become involved in supporting children's services on a scale previously unknown. During this time, the Government has significantly changed the nature of its support. The constant changes to the Children's Services Program and particularly the restructuring of the Program in recent years have created heated debate about the role of the Federal Government in this field.

At the heart of this debate are different perceptions and interpretations of children's needs and rights and who is responsible for meeting them. Because "children's welfare" is such an emotive topic, these different perspectives are often not clarified. The debate, therefore, is often confused and is reduced to arguments solely about levels of funding rather than the principles on which funding should be based and the priority which should be given to young children in the development of policy.

In this paper we attempt to identify and clarify some of the changes in, and the diversity of, the debates about children's needs, rights and responsibilities. In doing so, we seek to establish the reasons why early childhood is an important phase in human development. We then attempt to illustrate that the Federal Government has taken initiatives in the field of child welfare; that its reasons for doing so have been different from reasons for States' intervention; and that usually such initiatives have reflected political expediency rather than well founded concern about children's welfare.

Results of surveys on child care arrangements conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that child care is required by the majority of families and its widespread use gives it the characteristics of a public utility rather than a welfare service. Two-thirds of children of pre-school age are in care at some time during the week and close to 40 per cent of these experience more than one type of care. Although the highest use of care is made by families where both parents are employed, child care is used by other families as well. It is used more often by two-parent families than by one-parent families and more often by families with higher incomes than by those on lower incomes.

Increasing participation of women in the workforce and the difficulties experienced by families in rearing children in today's social and economic environment suggest that the need for child care services will continue to grow. The paper argues that there is a case for government responsibility to provide services for children so as to enhance their well-being as well as the functioning of the family unit. These goals are not so much a matter of "welfare" but one of national interest.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This publication is an attempt to bring together the various and wide-ranging strands in the ongoing debate on the issues of child care in Australia. The arguments presented in it and the conclusions reached are based on the analysis of an extensive range of documents and statistics on the current state and practices of child care arrangements in Australia. The study looks at some of the broader issues in children's services policy. It does not attempt to examine in detail the child care system in Australia or to assess the relative merits of different kinds of services. These aspects are topics for other research projects now in progress at the Social Welfare Research Centre.

Child care became the subject of public debate in the 1960s and the debate has continued since then with varied intensity and with changing directions. In recent years the debate has narrowed to the issue of responsibility for child care and to the level of funds provided for services to young children by the Commonwealth Government through its Children's Services Program; how much money is, or should be, provided; for whom; and on what criteria. However, at the core of the debate is the question of who should be responsible for the care of young children — the parents or the community.

It is evident from the debate that there is little consensus in Australian society about what are considered to be children's needs and rights, or about who is, or should be, responsible for child care. This lack of consensus, together with the society's lack of genuine concern for the understanding of children are reflected in policies and programs for children. The rhetoric in the arguments presented by governments, interest groups and lobbies does not always reflect the reality of conditions experienced by children and their parents.

The literature on the theories of childhood and child development shows that the concept of childhood has been changing throughout the history of Western civilization and has now reached a stage of uncertainty in which the opinions on children's needs and rights vary considerably and are often in conflict with one another. There is an agreement, however, that the early years of the child are crucial to the child's physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. For this reason, it is argued, it is important that the needs of young children are met if the child is to grow and develop into a healthy

and socially functioning adult. There is less agreement on the means to achieve such an outcome as this issue brings the debate into the area of philosophical and ideological differences about the relationship between the family and the state. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first years of child's life are the subject of public debate, especially with regard to responsibility for child care at that age.

Notwithstanding the differences in theory, philosophy and public opinion, there is a strong body of evidence to show that the family as it is now constituted cannot, and in some views should not, be solely responsible for the care of its children. Prominent among these views has been the opinion of the Royal Commission on Human Relationships in its report of 1977. The Commission argued that the responsibility for child care should be shared between the family and the community, and that community child care should not be regarded as "welfare" or crisis care but as a public utility to which each family and child should have a right.

The Commission thus took the view that services for young children should be universal, that is provided as normal "first line" function of modern industrial society; rather than residual, that is provided only when the primary structures of supply — the family and the market — break down (a distinction made by several writers on social policy and social welfare, e.g. Wilensky and Lebeaux 1958; Pinker 1971; Gilbert and Specht 1974; Graycar 1979).

Historically, public responsibility for child welfare in Australia has been the province of the States. However, while education and some aspects of health which have been provided universally as children's rights (with corresponding obligations of parents, guardians and State governments), child welfare has been provided on residualist principles. The State would enter the scene only as a remedial measure in cases when and where a child was deemed to have been "neglected", or as a corrective measure when the child was deemed to have been "incorrigible", "in moral danger", or had committed a breach of the law. The primary responsibility for child welfare has been regarded to be that of parents. The State has intervened only under the principles of parens patriae, or under the principles of the community interests or law and order. As a result, State responsibility for child welfare has been exercised in cases of existing or expected pathology and was applied to children who were regarded to be in need of re-socialisation rather than to all children as part of services existing in their normal socialisation process.

In practice, services provided by the States for children and families have been "services for the poor". Over nearly two centuries of Australian history these services have achieved little towards overcoming or countervailing the inequalities in society. At best, the services have been instrumental in maintaining law and order but they have also re-affirmed social and economic divisions arising from the forces of the market economy. For this reason "child welfare" has acquired deep negative connotations which the more recent efforts of the States towards a more positive orientation of services have done little to erase.

During World War II and later in the 1950s and 1960s a new element emerged in child welfare, especially in relation to the care of young children. For reasons documented and discussed in this paper the Commonwealth Government became interested and eventually involved in the care of young pre-school age children. The entry of the Commonwealth into this field was at first tentative and rather instrumentalist. The care of young children outside the family was seen as a national necessity; first, so that women could enter the workforce and thus increase and sustain the war effort; then in the 1950s to get full economic value from the immigration program; and later in the 1960s to find a new source of labour for an expanding economy.

The involvement of the Commonwealth in services for young children was tentative because the Government presented its role as one of encouragement and assistance, or supplementation, while at the same time disclaiming responsibility. It was instrumentalist because it legitimised the entry of women into the workforce, which traditionally had been regarded as being in conflict with their "primary roles" as wives and mothers. Commonwealth interest in child care was therefore a means to an end rather than an end in itself. In the 1960s, especially, two issues were attempted to be solved. First was the demand by industry for women's labour. The second was not immediately evident but perhaps more important in its significance. For by legitimizing the entry of married women into the workforce the notion of the basic wage as the minimum wage which was to be sufficient to meet the needs of the breadwinner's family could then be (and eventually was) abandoned.

Thus the reasons for the Commonwealth's involvement in services for young children were quite different from the reasons of State governments' involvement. The common factor in each of the initiatives taken was, or was perceived to be at the time, the national interest.

In the early 1970s the issue of child care as an end in itself did receive attention; from the Social Welfare Commission, from the Interim Committee for Children's Commission, and later from the Royal Commission on Human Relationships. This concern was, however, short lived and since then the direction of Commonwealth involvement has changed. Since 1976 the Children's Services Program (CSP) has continued to provide funds for pre-schools and day care services and has extended in scope into the areas of family support schemes, services for school-age children and other programs. But the Program has received gradually decreasing funds and has become residualist in nature, giving priority of access to children who are seen to have "special needs characteristics", such as children from one-parent families, from low income families, and children with disabilities.

The services provided, or rather supported, by the Commonwealth are examined in this paper in the context of the overall use of child care in Australia. The sources of information for the comparison were : the survey of child care arrangements conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in June 1980; and various reports and publications related to the Children's Services Program. (Detailed results of the analysis are given in Chapters 2 and 5).

From the analysis of the ABS Survey it is evident that child care arrangements outside the family, or more specifically (to use the definition of the ABS) by person/s other than the person primarily responsible for the child (e.g. mother), are widely prevalent in Australia. Only one-third of children under 12 years of age who are not attending school (most of these are under the age of 5 years) were found to be cared for solely by the person responsible. The remaining two-thirds were cared for in a variety of informal and formal arrangements at some time during the week.

Child care was most often used by families in which both parents were employed, and least by those in which neither parent was employed. It was used extensively by families in which only one parent was employed. It was used more by two-parent families and less by one-parent families. It was used more by families on higher incomes and less by those on lower incomes. Informal care arrangements were used more than twice as often as formal care and of the latter pre-school was used more often than other types of care, especially by families in which only one parent was employed.

One-third of children in care experienced two types of care during the week and 9 per cent experienced three or more types of care.

From the comparison of the ABS Survey results with the information related to the Children's Services Program, it appears that services which receive support from the Commonwealth (other than pre-school) provided care for only a small proportion of children in outside care. There is some indication that children from one-parent families and low-income families (which in practice often means the same families) used these services proportionately more often than other types of formal care. There is no indication of greater use of these services by children of working parents, and children of parents born in non-English speaking countries appeared to use services supported by the Commonwealth rather less than other children. It was not possible to compare the use of these services by other children with "special needs characteristics" because the ABS Survey did not collect information on these aspects of child care usage.

The study has revealed a number of unresolved issues in services for young children and the most important seem to be the following : first is a diversity of theories on children's needs, a diversity of interests and pressure groups, and a diversity of ideological, political, economic, social and religious views on whose responsibility the care of children should be; second is the division between "pre-school" services which are seen as educational and developmental and therefore universally desirable for all children, and "care" which is regarded as a substitute for "normal" parental care and therefore not desirable but a "necessary evil".

The third and perhaps the most important issue is the unresolved area of responsibility for children's services between Commonwealth and State governments. While historically the States have provided child welfare services in a residualist mode based on protection, prevention and social control, the Commonwealth has been, at best, a "reluctant actor", providing "assistance" but disclaiming responsibility. The fact that in the history of Commonwealth's involvement the "assistance" has been given under the auspices of no fewer than seven ministries and departments also suggests a response based on expediency rather than on a definite policy of commitment.

With regard to the Children's Services Program the conclusion reached from the study is that the potential of the Program is not fully realised in its present form and scope. The Program has some positive aspects, such as extension of assistance to family support schemes, support of multifunctional day care centres, services for school-age children and others. Another important positive aspect of the Program has been the involvement of

individuals and community groups in the organisation and management of child care services. Sharing of responsibility and development of self-help initiatives have thus been important "spin-off" benefits of the Program.

On the negative side the allocation of limited and decreasing funds, the discretionary nature of fund allocation, and the absence of clear responsibility by the Commonwealth for the provision of child care services give the Program an air of uncertainty and reduce its potential value. In its present form and scope the Program supplements rather than complements the residual services provided by the States and runs the risk of developing the features of "services for the poor".

At the same time, recent and current movements in the labour market, such as increasing workforce participation by women, suggest that the demand for child care services is likely to continue. The ABS Survey of 1980 indicates in that year there were close to 3 million children under 12 years of age and 40 per cent of "persons responsible" for these children were in paid employment, an increase of 41 per cent of persons responsible in paid employment since a similar survey was taken in 1969. One quarter of children under 12 years of age not attending school had both parents in paid employment.

The use of care also indicates that child care is sought for other reasons than parents' employment. It seems that child care has become a modern form of "social parenthood" that is regarded in many quarters as important for young children's emotional, intellectual and social development. There are, of course, opposing views in the community but the economic and social conditions of the contemporary "average" Australian family are such that it is now open to doubt whether the family can by itself provide a young child with adequate means for growth and development.

Historically, the involvement by the Commonwealth in services for young children has come about for reasons perceived as national interest. We consider that in the contemporary society services for young children may be, and perhaps should be, regarded as a form of investment in human capital. Viewed in this light, Commonwealth expenditure on the Children's Services Program, which currently amounts to less than one-fifth of one per cent of total Commonwealth Budget outlays, appears to be rather meagre when compared with Commonwealth assistance to other forms of investment. While we acknowledge that Government resources are scarce, expenditure on services for young children appears to be limited not only by the scarcity of funds but also by the allocation of priorities determined by what is perceived to be the national interest.

CHAPTER 2

CURRENT ISSUES IN SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Over the last decade or so the issue of services for young children, and more specifically the issue of child care, has been the subject of debate and controversy. The debate has revolved around such questions as : who is, or should be, responsible for child care ; who should provide it and in what form ; who should pay for it and how much ; and to what extent is it necessary. Irrespective of the variety of views on these issues, the results of a survey carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1980 indicate clearly that young children in Australia are cared for by a variety of arrangements and a child who is cared for solely by the "person responsible" (usually the mother) is now a minority (ABS Cat.No. 4402.0).

In this chapter we examine the issue of child care in relation to the family, the employment of women, and the extent of care arrangements for children under 12 years of age who are not attending school.

1. THE FAMILY

The difficulties of the contemporary family to provide an environment suitable for child rearing have been well documented in recent years. Changes in family structure such as rates of marriage, divorce and re-marriage, and the incidence of single parenthood ; housing conditions ; poverty ; and the increasing isolation of the family from the community have been the factors frequently mentioned (e.g. Henderson 1975 ; Rutter 1974 ; Richards 1978 ; Hanson 1979 ; and others).

On latest indications available (1980) close to 10 per cent of families with children under 12 years of age are one-parent families. Overall, there are close to 3 million children in Australia under the age of 12 years, in 1612.5 thousand family units : 179.0 thousand one-parent units and 1,433.5 thousand two-parent units.

Housing is considered to be a crucial factor in the development of family life; it is an important resource for children as it provides not only shelter but also fixes location which determines the kind of environment and services available to children. Inappropriate housing, housing of poor quality, with little or no outdoor or indoor play room, with no protection from noise and characterised by insecurity of tenure may limit the social and emotional

support possible within a family. (Family and Social Services in Australia, 1978, Vol.2 p.208; Hanson, 1979).

For many families with young children housing conditions are far from ideal. For example, the N.S.W. Planning and Environment Commission (1976) in its study Children in Flats demonstrated that there were large numbers of children living in flats and units. Studies such as Community Services Interim Report Action Study No.28 by the Council of the City of Sydney in 1974 highlighted the nature of overcrowding in terms of children's lifestyle. A significant number of inner city children shared beds with siblings, shared accommodation with other families and had no yard in which to play.

Lack of appropriate, adequate, stable housing has been related to child poverty and deprivation. Henderson (1975, p.159) found that a large percentage of one-parent families (40%) in Housing Commission accommodation were below his poverty line, even after rent rebates were taken into account. Housing problems, associated with family poverty, have been found to be characteristic of children admitted into care, because of socially based family crisis. (Hanson, 1979). A large number of such children came from families who rented public housing (17%), lived in "marginal situations" (caravans, boarding houses) and had a high degree of geographic mobility (18% of respondents had been in accommodation for less than six months). This "atypical and unstable accommodation" together with a "low status job, high unemployment rate... and family insecurity are all part of this fundamental material (and social) deprivation". (Hanson, 1979, p.52).

Caravan living and associated deprivation has also been linked to poor performance of children at pre-school. (Kenny and Cox, 1981).

Even for children not living in poor physical conditions, the social context of child rearing can be isolating for both the carer (usually the mother) and the child. It is increasingly recognized that the welfare of the child is inextricably related to the welfare of the carer. (Rossi, 1968 ; Rapoport et al, 1977).

One of the few Australian studies that has illustrated the impact of demographic, social and economic changes on the family and its child rearing ability was that conducted by Lyn Richards (1978). In her study of middle class mothers, she illustrates the child rearing experience and examines the changes in patterns of care parents (mothers) made as a result of trying

to cope with young children twenty-four hours a day. She describes the experience of some women in these terms :

For most women an important part of the problem was the disparity between their ideas of who they had been and their feelings about who they now were. They had been competent, independent, in charge of their everyday world and its demands. They were now, they felt, manifestly incompetent, and tied down to the dependent infants who could make arbitrary demands on their attention twenty-four hours a day. Not one of these women wished she had not had a child. Each made every possible effort to sort out her own conflict without taking it out on child or marriage. But almost all therefore faced the job alone, either because there was no one to help or because they were ashamed to admit that where other women apparently coped, they couldn't.
(p.291)

The implications of this isolated environment — for both parents and children — have seldom been explored. Here we can show only by inference through statistics the extent to which parents are attempting to cope with the task of child rearing by using a variety of child care arrangements.

(a) Family Units with Children under 12 Years of Age*

In June 1980 there were 1,612.5 thousand family units in Australia with children under 12 years of age (Table 1). Of these, 179 thousand (11.1%) were one-parent family units and 1,433.5 thousand (88.9%) were two-parent family units. The estimated number of children under 12 years of age in these units was close to 3 million (2,891.6 thousand). On average, a family unit had 1.79 children; 1.52 in one-parent units, and 1.83 in two-parent units. The largest family units, on average, were those with children both attending school and not attending school (2.67 children per unit), and the smallest were those only with children not attending school (1.42 children per unit). Of the 2,891.6 thousand children, 1,128.0 thousand (39%) were not attending school and 84.0 thousand of these (7.4%) came from one-parent units.

*Statistics in this chapter have been extracted mainly from a survey on child care arrangements in Australia by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in June 1980 (ABS Cat.No. 4402.0). The data refer to family units and persons responsible for children under 12 years of age, and particularly to care arrangements for children under 12 years of age who were not at school (see Appendix 1 for explanatory notes and definitions).

As can be seen from Table 2, most families (81.7%) had either one or two children; 42.7 per cent with one child, 39.0 per cent with two children. Nearly one-half of all families (47.8%) had only children attending school; 27.7 per cent had only children not attending school, and 24.5 per cent had both. This means that 842.2 thousand families, or 52.2 per cent of all families had children under 12 years of age not attending school.

Table 1 : Family Units with Children under 12 years of age, 1980
('000)

	Family Units	Children at school	Children not at school	All children
<u>One-Parent Families :</u>				
Only with Children not at school	48.9	-	56.7	56.7
Only with Children at school	105.6	153.9	-	153.9
With both	24.5	34.0	28.1	62.1
Total	179.0	188.9	84.0	272.9
% of All Units/Children	11.1	10.7	7.4	9.4
<u>Two-Parent Families :</u>				
Only with Children not at school	398.2	-	582.2	582.2
Only with Children at school	664.7	1,047.1	-	1,047.1
With both	370.5	527.6	460.6	988.2
Total	1,433.5	1,574.7	1,042.8	2,617.5
% of All Units/Children	88.9	89.3	92.5	90.5
<u>All Families :</u>				
Only with Children not at school	447.1	-	636.8	636.8
Only with Children at school	770.3	1,201.7	-	1,201.7
With both	395.1	561.9	491.3	1,053.1
Total	1,612.5	1,763.6	1,128.0	2,891.6
<u>Source :</u> Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No.4402.0, Table 5.				
<u>Note :</u> In this and subsequent tables small differences in sums and percentages are due to numbers in some groups being too small for statistical estimates. Also, in estimating the numbers of children, whenever the 1980 ABS survey indicated "three or more" children, the number was counted as <u>three</u> children, thus slightly underestimating the total number of children. An asterisk* indicates a sample too small for statistical estimates.				

Table 2 : Size of Family Units, 1980 (Children under 12 years only)

Family Units : N(000)

Size of Family Unit	Only with children at school	Only with children not at school	With both	All Family Units		
				Units	%	Children
1 child	412.7	276.2	-	685.9	42.7	688.9
2 children	283.8	151.8	194.0	629.6	39.0	1,259.2
3 children	73.8(1)	19.0(1)	148.3	241.1	15.0	723.3
4 children			44.8	44.8	2.8	179.2
5 or more children			5.7(2)	5.7(2)	0.4	28.5
All Units	770.3	447.1	395.1	1,612.5	(100)	2,891.6
% of All Units	47.8	27.7	24.5	(100)		-
Source : <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia</u> , June 1980; ABS Cat.No.4402.0, Table 5.						
(1)	3 or more children					
(2)	5 or more children					

(b) Employment Status of Parents with Children under 12 Years of Age

Table 3 shows that in 38.2 per cent of family units both parents were employed; 16.6 per cent both full-time and 21.6 per cent at least one parent part-time. There were 1,034.0 thousand children under 12 years of age in these families, or 35.8 per cent of all children under 12 years; 751.3 thousand, or 42.6 per cent of all children at school and 282.7 thousand, or 21.5 per cent of all children not at school. One-half of all children had only one parent employed and 11 per cent had neither parent employed.*

The change that has occurred during the last decade in the employment status of persons responsible for children under the age of 12 years can be ascertained from Table 4. In 1969, 28.0 per cent of persons responsible for care of a child or children were in employment but by 1980 that proportion rose to 39.6 per cent. The increase in numbers of persons responsible who were employed has increased by 60.7 per cent, but as there was also an increase in total numbers of persons responsible, the real increase in percentages was

*In the ABS Survey (Cat.No. 4402.0) "both parents" or "neither parent" also includes the parent in a one-parent family unit.

41.4 per cent. There was a similar increase in the numbers and percentages of children whose persons responsible (parents) were employed, thus indicating that the size of the family units has not changed much during that time.

In effect, by 1980, 1,612.5 thousand family units had children under 12 years of age. In 638.5 thousand of these units the person responsible for the child/children was employed. This also meant that of the 2,829.8 thousand children under the age of 12 years, persons responsible for 1,061.3 thousand children (37.5%) were employed.

Table 3 : Workforce Status of Family Units

Workforce status of the Unit	Family Units		Children at school		Children not at school		Total Children	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
Both parents employed full time	267.7	16.6	320.0	18.1	95.5	8.5	415.5	14.4
Both employed, at least one part-time	347.7	21.6	431.3	24.5	187.2	16.6	618.5	21.4
Total both parents employed full time and/ or part-time	615.4	38.2	751.3	42.6	282.7	25.1	1,034.0	35.8
One employed, the other not	780.7	48.4	782.3	44.4	689.3	61.1	1,471.6	50.9
Neither parent employed	180.0	11.2	191.8	10.9	126.9	11.3	318.7	11.0
Not determined	36.4	2.2	32.3	1.8	26.2	2.3	58.5	2.0
All Family Units	1,612.5	(100)	1,763.6	(100)	1,128.0	(100)	2,891.6	(100)

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 3.

Table 4 : Employment Status of Persons Responsible for Children under 12 Years of Age

Year/Employment Status	Persons Responsible		Children ⁽¹⁾	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
<u>May 1969 :</u>				
Employed	397.3	28.0	679.0	25.5
Not employed ⁽²⁾	1,019.7	72.0	1,980.5	74.5
Total	1,417.0	(100)	2,659.7	(100)
<u>May 1973 :</u>				
Employed	522.5	34.0	894.1	31.6
Not employed ⁽²⁾	1,013.5	66.0	1,933.8	68.4
Total	1,536.0	(100)	2,827.9	(100)
<u>May 1977 :</u>				
Employed	577.6	37.1	983.6	35.0
Not employed ⁽²⁾	977.1	62.9	1,823.8	65.0
Total	1,554.8	(100)	2,807.4	(100)
<u>June 1980 :</u>				
Employed	638.5	39.6	1,061.3	37.5
Not employed	974.0	60.4	1,768.5	62.5
Total	1,612.5	(100)	2,829.8	(100)
<u>Change 1969-1980 : (%)</u>				
Employed	+60.7	+41.4	+56.3	+47.1
Not employed	- 4.5	-16.1	-10.7	-16.1
Total	+13.9	—	+ 6.4	—
<u>Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 12.</u>				
(1) Families indicated number of children as "three or more", have been counted as having three children.				
(2) Comprises unemployed persons and those not in the workforce.				

(c) Women in the Workforce

The significance of parents' employment status in relation to children under 12 years of age can be ascertained better if the employment pattern of women (usually the 'person responsible' for child care) is considered. Over the last decade the numbers and participation rates of women in the workforce have increased considerably. From 1971 to 1981 the numbers have increased from 1,803 thousand to 2,311 thousand — an increase of 28.2 per cent — and participation rate has increased from 40.0 to 44.3 per cent. By contrast, the

number of men in the workforce has increased from 3,712.7 thousand to 4,045.3 thousand — an increase of only 9.0 per cent — and participation rate has decreased from 82.5 to 77.5 per cent (Table 5).

Women's employment has increased most in occupations requiring post-secondary qualifications. In the three occupational groups taken as total : professional, technical, etc; administrative, executive and managerial; and clerical (shown in Table 6 as Group 1) women now constitute the majority of the workforce — 51.5 per cent; and 54.4 per cent of all employed women are now employed in these three occupational groups. Numerically, employment of women has increased most in three growth areas of the labour market : community services — 260.8 thousand ; finance, property and business services — 79.5 thousand ; and wholesale and retail trade — 95.5 thousand. Of the total of 2,311 thousand women in the workforce, 1,424 thousand, or 61.6 per cent, now work in these three sectors of industry and constitute one-half (50.1%) of all the workforce (2,842 thousand) in those industries (The Labour Force Australia, August 1981; ABS Cat.No. 6203.0).

Table 5 : Changes in the Workforce 1971-1981 (August)

	1971 (a) N(000)	1981 (b) N(000)	Change 1971-81 N(000) %	
<u>Persons in employment :</u>				
Men	3,712.7	4,045.3	332.6	9.0
Women	1,803.0	2,311.0	508.0	28.2
Total	5,515.7	6,356.3	840.6	15.2
<u>Employed Full-Time :</u>				
Men	3,600.4	3,823.8	223.4	6.2
Women	1,339.2	1,484.7	145.5	10.9
Total	4,939.6	5,308.5	368.9	7.5
<u>Employed Part-Time :</u>				
Men	112.3	221.5	109.2	97.2
Women	463.8	826.3	362.5	78.2
Total	576.1	1,047.8	471.7	81.9
<u>Participation Rate : (%)</u>				
Men	82.5	77.5	- 5.0	- 6.1
Women	40.0	44.3	+ 4.3	+10.6
Total	61.0	60.7	- 0.3	- 0.5
<u>Source :</u> (a) <u>The Labour Force Australia</u> , 1978; ABS Cat.No. 6204.0				
(b) <u>The Labour Force Australia</u> , August 1981; ABS Cat.No. 6203.0.				

Table 6 : Occupations 1971-1981

Year and Occupational Groups	Men		Women		Persons	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
<u>1971 : (a)</u>						
Group 1	993.3	26.7	862.8	47.8	1,856.0	33.7
Group 2	2,719.4	73.3	940.1	52.2	3,659.7	66.4
Total	3,712.7	(100)	1,803.0	(100)	5,515.7	(100)
<u>1981 : (b)</u>						
Group 1	1,183.7	29.3	1,256.6	54.4	2,440.4	38.4
Group 2	2,861.5	70.8	1,054.3	45.6	3,916.0	61.6
Total	4,045.3	(100)	2,311.0	(100)	6,356.3	(100)
<u>Change 1971-1981 :</u>						
Group 1	190.4	19.2	393.8	45.6	584.4	31.5
Group 2	142.1	5.2	114.2	12.1	256.3	7.0
Total	332.6	9.0	518.0	28.2	840.6	15.2
<u>Source :</u>						
(a) <u>The Labour Force Australia</u> , 1978; ABS Cat.No. 6204.0						
(b) <u>The Labour Force Australia</u> , August 1981, Cat.No. 6203.0						
<u>Group 1 :</u> Professional, technical, etc; Administrative, executive, managerial; Clerical.						
<u>Group 2 :</u> Sales; Farming, fishing, timbergetting, etc; Transport and communications; Trades, process work, labouring, etc; Service, sport, recreation.						

The shift of women into occupations which require post-secondary qualifications is reflected in the educational qualifications of the workforce. As Table 7 indicates, educational qualifications of men are proportionately higher than those of women — when all ages are taken as a whole. However, in the younger age groups the situation is considerably different. The qualifications of men in the age group 20 to 24 years are comparable to those of the entire male workforce except that a proportionately higher percentage of men 20 to 24 years have completed secondary education. By comparison, educational qualifications of women in the age group 20 to 24 years are significantly higher than those of the female workforce as a whole. Women now constitute 36.1 per cent of the workforce but in the age group 15 to 24 years they constitute 44.4 per cent of the workforce. Nearly one-third (31.3%) of women in the workforce are under the age of 25 years while only

22.1 per cent of men in the workforce are in that age group. Furthermore, while constituting 44.4 per cent of the total workforce under the age of 25 years women account for 48.6 per cent of the workforce in that age group with post-secondary qualifications : 43.5 per cent with a degree or equivalent; 52.0 per cent with trade or technical qualifications (ABS Cat.No. 6235.0, 1980).

Viewed together, these statistics — the number of women in the workforce, participation rates, occupations and sectors of industry, and educational qualifications compared with age — indicate that the issue of services for young children needs to be considered in relation to the changes in the family structure and those in the labour market. The significance of these changes is discussed in Chapter 6 of this paper.

2. EXTENT AND TYPES OF CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS (1980)

(a) Child Care Arrangements by Families

In two-thirds of family units children were cared for at some time during the week by person(s) other than the person responsible for the child (Table 8). The proportion of "outside" care was higher in family units where at least one child was not at school (66.3%) than in the units where at least one child was at school (59.3%). The most frequently used form of care, or the main type of care, consisted of informal arrangements such as care by the spouse of the person responsible, by older children, by other relatives or by other persons. These arrangements were used by 46.2 per cent of family units. Formal care — pre-school or care at a (day) centre or in a Family Day Care Scheme was used by 11.4 per cent of family units, and other arrangements (including children left by themselves) accounted for 8.6 per cent of family units.

As would be expected, family units where both parents (or the parent in one-parent units) were employed, used child care arrangements most; 80.3 per cent of these families used child care, compared with 66.2 per cent for all families (Table 9). These families also used informal care much more than the other families : 60.9 per cent of them used informal care, compared with 46.1 per cent for all families. By contrast, the families where both parents were working used formal care to a lesser degree than other families except for the families where neither parent was employed.

Table 7 : Employed Persons : Educational Qualifications

Educational Qualifications	Men						Women				
	All age groups			20-24 years			All age groups			20-24 years	
	N('000)	%	N('000)	% in this age group	% of all age group		N('000)	%	N('000)	% in this age group	% of all age groups
<u>With post-secondary qualifications:</u>	1,601.1	40.5	192.7	37.7	12.0		727.8	32.7	157.8	39.9	21.7
Degree or equivalent	310.3	7.9	31.8	6.2	10.2		119.4	5.4	24.5	6.2	20.5
Trade or technical level	1,266.3	32.1	158.2	31.0	12.5		586.2	26.3	129.0	32.6	22.0
<u>Without post-secondary qualifications</u>	2,317.2	58.7	317.7	62.2	13.7		1,466.0	65.8	237.0	59.9	16.2
Attended highest secondary level	452.3	11.4	120.2	23.5	26.6		258.2	11.6	69.5	17.5	26.9
Did not attend highest sec.level	1,851.4	46.9	197.5	38.7	10.7		1,204.2	54.0	167.5	42.3	13.9
Total employed	3,950.8	(100)	510.5	(100)	12.9		2,228.7	(100)	395.7	(100)	17.8

Source : The Labour Force Educational Attainment Australia, February 1980; ABS Cat.No. 6235.0.

Table 8 : Family Units : Main Type of Care Used

No. of Family Units ('000)	F a m i l y U n i t s		F a m i l y U n i t s		All Family Units	
	With at least one child at school	at	With at least one child at school	not	Units	Units
No. of Family Units ('000)	1,165.4		842.2			1,612.5
<u>Main Type of Care Used (%)</u>						
<u>Informal Care :</u>						
Spouse of the person responsible	19.8		19.8			19.9
Older children	5.6		0.6			4.1
Other relatives	7.7		15.3			11.9
Other person	<u>10.9</u>	44.0	<u>8.1</u>	43.8	<u>10.3</u>	46.2
<u>Formal Care :</u>						
Pre-School	-		15.5			7.5
Care at centre	<u>1.3</u>	1.3	<u>6.3</u>	21.8	<u>3.9</u>	11.4
<u>Other :</u>						
By themselves	4.5		0.2			2.7
Other	9.4	13.9	0.5	0.7	5.9	8.6
Total Units using care		<u>59.3</u>		<u>66.3</u>		<u>66.2</u>
Care by person responsible only		40.3		33.7		33.8

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 8.

Table 9 : Family Workforce Status and Main Type of Care Used

Family Workforce Status	Main Type of Care Used							
	Informal		Formal		Other		Total	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
Both parents employed(N000).								
full time (267.7)	181.4	67.8	22.5	8.4	24.4	9.1	229.3	85.7
Both employed, at least								
one part-time (347.7)	193.5	55.7	36.5	10.5	24.9	7.2	265.1	76.2
Total both parents								
employed (615.4)								
full time and/or								
part-time	374.9	60.9	59.0	9.6	49.3	8.0	494.4	80.3
One employed, the other not								
(780.7)	294.8	37.8	105.7	13.5	48.7	6.2	463.9	59.4
Neither parent employed(180.0)	56.2	31.2	14.9	8.3	8.2	4.6	83.5	46.4
Not determined (36.4)	18.1	49.7	5.3	14.6	*	-	25.7	70.6
All Family Units (1,612.5)	744.0	46.1	184.8	11.5	138.7	8.6	1,067.5	66.2

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 10.

Table 10 shows the main type of care used where the "person responsible" was employed. Again, most of the children in these families who were not at school (88.4%) were in care and most of these (76.6%) were in informal care of the spouse, other relatives, or other persons.

Table 10 : Main Type of Care While Responsible Person at Work

Main Type of Care	Family Units Using Care			
	Children <u>at</u> School		Children <u>Not</u> at School	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
<u>Informal Care :</u>				
Spouse of the person responsible	95.1	31.6	40.7	24.7
Older children	42.6	14.2	*	-
Other relatives	45.1	15.0	47.9	29.1
Other person	44.6	14.8	36.2	22.0
Total informal care	227.5	75.6	126.1	76.6
<u>Formal Care :</u>				
Pre-School	*	-	15.9	9.7
Care at Centre, etc.	*	-	21.7	13.2
Total formal care	6.2	2.1	37.7	22.9
<u>Other :</u>				
By themselves	23.8	7.9	-	-
Other	43.4	14.4	*	-
Total other kinds of care	67.2	22.3	*	-
Total Family Units using care	300.9	(100)	164.6	(100)
Care by person responsible only	137.2	31.3	21.5	11.6
Total family units ⁽¹⁾	438.1	(100)	186.1	(100)
<u>Source :</u> <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia</u> , June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Tables 14 and 15.				
(1) Excludes persons who worked at home.				

However, it needs to be noted that even in the families where neither parent was employed child care was used in 46.4 per cent of families, and in families where only one parent was employed child care was used in 59.4 per cent of families. Thus while it is evident that the use of child care is related to parents' employment it is also used frequently by parents who are not employed. Therefore, parents' employment is not the only reason for using child care.

Of the families that used child care over two-thirds (69.7%) used informal arrangements as the main type of care (Table 11); 17.3 per cent used formal care and the remaining 13.0 per cent used other arrangements (these included children left by themselves). In slightly over one-third of families (35.7%) child care was used for less than 5 hours per week. Most care of that length of time was by informal or other arrangements. Most frequent length of time of formal care was between 10 and 20 hours per week. Care arrangements of 40 hours per week or more were used by 7.2 per cent of families using care. By far, most families (82.3%) used child care for up to 20 hours per week.

Table 11 : Family Units : Hours per week of Main Type of Care Used

Hours per week	Main Type of Care Used						Total N(000) %	
	Informal N(000)	%	Formal N(000)	%	Other N(000)	%		
Less than 5	272.4	36.6	19.0	10.3	89.5	64.5	380.9	35.7
5 to less than 10	178.2	24.0	40.4	21.9	29.8	21.5	248.3	23.3
10 to less than 20	143.1	19.2	93.8	50.8	12.3	8.9	249.1	23.3
20 to less than 30	52.8	7.1	9.8	5.3	*	—	65.7	6.2
30 to less than 40	32.8	4.4	11.5	6.2	*	—	46.6	4.4
40 or more	64.7	8.7	10.4	5.6	*	—	76.8	7.2
Total	744.0	(100)	184.8	(100)	138.7	(100)	1,067.5	(100)
Main Type of Care as % all Types	69.7		17.3		13.0		(100)	
Source : <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia</u> , June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 8.								

(b) Cost of Child Care

The data obtained in the ABS survey of 1980 on the cost of child care incurred by families is shown in Table 12. The information refers to the families who paid for child care directly to persons other than the spouse of the person responsible for the child or older children. As can be seen from Table 12, the

cost varied from \$1 to \$45 or more per week. We have attempted to estimate the total cost of care incurred by all families by taking an approximate mid-point amount in each range of payment and taking \$50 per week for the range "\$45 or more". On these calculations, the total cost per week incurred by families in 1980 would have been \$4,483,900. If the cost were constant throughout the year, then the total cost for the year (using 48 weeks as the year) would have been \$215,227,200.

Table 12 : Estimated Cost of Child Care

Cost per week	Family Units		Approximate mid-range cost per week	Total estimated cost per week
\$	N(000)	%	\$	\$('000)
NIL	432.0	54.0	NIL	NIL
1 to 4	179.3	22.4	3	537.9
5 to 14	95.4	11.9	10	954.0
15 to 44	81.9	10.2	30	2,457.0
45 or more	10.7	1.3	50	535.0
Total	799.3	(100)		4,483.9
<u>Source</u> : <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia</u> , June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 11.				

(c) Children under 12 Years of Age NOT at School

As shown earlier (Table 1), the ABS survey has estimated that in June 1980 there were in Australia 1,128.0 thousand children under the age of 12 years who were not attending school. Of these 706.4 thousand (62.6%) were in care at some time during the week; over two-thirds (70.2%) of these children were in various types of informal care and 28.8 per cent in formal care. One-half of children in informal care were cared for in this manner for less than 5 hours per week. In formal care, one-half were in care for between 10 and 20 hours per week (Table 13). There was a close similarity between the length (hours) of care used by family units (Table 11) and the length of care for children, indicating a high degree of uniformity between the size of family unit and usage of child care. The exception was informal care of less than 5 hours per week which was higher for children (49.6%) than for family units (36.6%), suggesting that larger families tended to use this length of care.

As would be expected, almost all children NOT at school were under 5 years of age (96.4%) and about one-half of them were under the age of 3 years (Table 14). One-parent families used child care less than two-parent families; 53.6 per cent of children not at school in these families were in care, compared with 63.0 per cent of children from two-parent families. The majority of children in care (58.8%) were in one type of care; 32.1 per cent were using two types of care and 9.1 per cent were in three or more types of care.

Table 13 : Children NOT at School : Main Type of Care and Hours of Care

Hours of Main Care per week	Informal Care		Formal Care		Total in Care	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
Less than 5	245.8	49.6	20.6	10.1	268.2	38.0
5 to less than 10	98.9	19.9	49.8	24.5	149.7	21.2
10 to less than 20	56.9	11.5	102.5	50.5	161.3	22.8
20 to less than 30	29.5	5.9	9.1	4.5	39.6	5.6
30 to less than 40	24.7	5.0	10.8	5.3	36.2	5.1
40 or more	40.1	8.1	10.2	5.0	51.3	7.3
Total	496.0	(100)	203.1	(100)	706.4 ⁽¹⁾	(100)
% of Children in Care	70.2		28.8		(100)	62.6
Care by person responsible only					421.6	37.4
All children under 12 years NOT at school					1,128.0	(100)

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 17.
(1) Includes 7,300 children in other types of care.

The proportion of children in care correlated with parents' employment status. As can be seen in Table 15, the highest proportion (86.3%) was that of the children whose both parents were employed full-time and the lowest (44.7%) was that of the children whose neither parent was employed. The ratio of informal to formal care was also higher among the children whose parents were employed : 3.25 to 1 of the children whose parents were both working full-time; 2.36 to 1 of the children whose neither parent was employed; 2.22 to 1 of the children whose one parent was working and the other not; and 2.44 to 1 of all children in care. These differences suggest that parents who were employed had found informal care arrangements more suitable to their daily routine, probably on the grounds of flexibility, availability and cost.

Table 14 : Children NOT at School : Child's Age and Number of Types of Care Used

Child's Age (Years)	Children from One-parent Families		Children from Two-parent Families		All Children in Care	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
Less than 1	4.2	9.3	94.4	14.4	98.6	14.0
1 and less than 2	7.8	17.3	119.6	18.2	127.5	18.2
2 and less than 3	8.2	18.2	125.2	19.0	133.4	19.0
3 and less than 4	10.5	23.3	130.7	19.9	141.2	20.1
4 and less than 5	11.9	26.4	164.6	25.0	176.6	25.1
5 and over	*	—	22.7	3.5	25.0	3.6
All Children in Care	45.0	(100)	657.3	(100)	702.3 ⁽¹⁾	(100)
% of all Children in Care		6.4		93.6		(100)
All Children NOT at School (000) (See Table 1)	84.0		1,042.8		1,128.0	
% in Care		53.6		63.0		62.2
Number of Types of Care Used :						
One	28.3	62.9	384.7	58.5	413.0	58.8
Two	15.0	33.3	210.3	32.0	225.3	32.1
Three or more	*	—	62.2	9.5	63.9	9.1

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 24.

(1) Excludes 425,700 children whose families used care "by themselves" or no care type at all.

Table 15 : Children NOT at School : Main Type
of Care and Family Workforce Status

<u>Children in Care</u>									
Parents' Workforce Status	Children in group N(000)	Informal Care N(000)	%	Formal Care N(000)	%	Total in Care N(000)	%	Care by person responsible only N(000)	%
Both parents employed full time	97.1	64.1	66.0	19.7	20.3	83.8	86.3	12.8	13.2
Both parents employed, at least one part-time	187.2	114.9	61.4	42.1	22.5	157.0	83.9	28.8	15.4
Total both parents employed FT and/or PT	284.3	179.0	63.0	61.8	21.7	240.8	84.7	41.6	14.6
One parent employed, the other NOT	689.4	265.5	38.5	119.2	17.3	384.7	55.8	300.7	43.6
Neither parent employed	124.3	39.0	31.4	16.5	13.3	55.5	44.7	68.0	54.7
Not determined	30.0	12.6	42.0	5.7	19.0	18.3	61.0	11.3	37.7
Total	1,128.0	496.0	44.0	203.1	18.0	699.1 ⁽¹⁾	62.0	421.6	37.4
<u>Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 19.</u>									
(1) Does not include 7,300 children in other types of care.									

**Table 16 : Parents' Country of Birth
and Use of Child Care
(for Children NOT at School)**

Parents' Country of Birth	(1) Family Units		(2) Children NOT at School		(3) Types of Care Used			
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	Informal + N(000)	%	Formal + N(000)	%
Both Parents Australian born	524.0	62.2	705.3	62.5	527.8	74.8	168.2	23.8
At least one parent born in Non-English speaking Country	177.4	21.1	235.6	20.9	144.5	61.3	44.0	18.7
No parent born in Non-English speaking Country	118.2	14.0	157.1	13.9	109.7	69.8	40.2	25.6
Not determined	21.4	2.5	26.2	2.3	19.0	72.5	6.9	26.3
Total	842.2	(100)	1,128.0	(100)	801.0	—	259.3	—
<p><u>Source</u> : <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia</u>, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Tables 4 and 22.</p> <p>+ Refers to Children in Column (2).</p> <p><u>Note</u> : The data in Columns (3) and (4) have been added for comparison purposes only. The data refer to types of care used, not to the number of children in care.</p>								

The use of care did not vary greatly among the children of Australian-born parents and those who were not Australian born. By and large, the proportion of children in care of whom at least one parent was born in a non-English speaking country was slightly lower than among the children of other groups (Table 16). The ratio between informal and formal care did not vary greatly among the groups, the use of informal care by children with at least one parent born in a non-English speaking country being only a fraction higher than among the other groups.

Table 17 shows the relationship between children in care and the income of their families. It needs to be noted that this Table (like Table 16) does not indicate the number of children using care but the number of the types of care used by children. However, it can be deduced from Table 17 that child care was used more frequently by children from higher-income families than from lower-income families. Although the number of children per family unit was almost uniform across the entire income range, the percentage ratio of the

number of the types of care used by families with a weekly income of \$300 or more to those below that income level was 1.59 to 1, in favour of the former.

Table 17: Income of Family Units Using Child Care
(Family Units with Children under 12 Years
of age NOT at School)

Family Income \$ per week	(1) Family Units		(2) Children NOT at School		(3) Types of Care Used		(4) Types of Care Used	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	Informal + N(000)	%	Formal N(000)	%
Less than 80	37.6	4.5	41.7	3.7	18.7	44.8	*	—
80 - 119	46.1	5.5	60.2	5.3	28.1	46.7	6.1	10.1
120 - 159	57.2	6.8	79.2	7.0	39.6	50.0	15.3	19.3
160 - 199	99.1	11.8	127.0	11.3	73.3	57.7	27.9	22.0
200 - 239	145.2	17.2	202.0	17.9	126.1	62.4	35.9	17.8
240 - 299	157.7	18.7	213.9	19.0	159.2	74.4	48.3	22.6
Total 0 - 299	542.9	64.5	724.0	64.2	445.0	61.5	133.5	18.4
300 or more	240.3	28.5	317.7	28.2	302.9	95.3	101.0	31.8
Not Stated	58.9	7.0	80.8	7.2	45.7	56.6	15.2	18.8
Total	842.2	(100)	1,128.0	(100)	793.6	—	249.7	—

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Tables 2 and 20.

+ % of children in Column (2).

Note : The data on the types of care used — Columns (3) and (4) — have been added only for comparison purposes : the data in these Columns refer to the types of care used, not to the number of children in care, as a child may be counted in more than one type of care.

(d) Formal and Informal Child Care Arrangements

As shown earlier (Table 13), 70.2 per cent of children in care were in informal care arrangements as the main type of care and 28.8 per cent in formal care, a ratio of 2.44 to 1 in favour of informal care.

Formal care was divided in the ABS survey into two categories : pre-school and centre care, the latter including day care, creche, kindergarten, or occasional care centre. The survey data indicate that the pattern of use in each of the two categories was different in terms of hours children spent in care, and the differences were related to the employment status of parents. These differences are shown in Tables 18 and 19, each table referring to the

type of care used and the main care used in each category.

With regard to hours (Table 18), in pre-schools over one-half of children (55.6% and 59.6% respectively) were in care for 10 to 20 hours per week and most of them (83.8% and 85.2%) were in care for 5 to 20 hours. The time children spent in centre care varied more widely; more children were cared for less than 5 hours (36.4% and 18.7%), over one-fifth (20.6%) were cared for 30 or more hours, and 12.5 per cent were cared for 40 or more hours per week. It is evident, then, that centre-based care has greater flexibility than pre-school care with regard to the time a child can be in care.

Table 18 : Use of Formal Care : Hours per week

Hours per week	Type of Care				Main Type of Care			
	Pre-School		Centre, etc.		Pre-School		Centre, etc.	
	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%	N(000)	%
Less than 5	15.4	9.1	32.9	36.4	8.9	6.3	11.7	18.7
5 to less than 10	47.6	28.2	18.1	20.0	35.9	25.6	13.9	22.2
10 to less than 20	93.8	55.6	20.5	22.7	83.8	59.6	18.7	29.9
20 to less than 30	3.7	2.2	5.6	6.2	3.7	2.6	5.4	8.6
30 to less than 40	5.8	3.4	5.4	6.0	5.7	4.1	5.1	8.1
40 or more	*	—	8.0	8.8	*	—	7.8	12.5
Total	168.7	(100)	90.5	(100)	140.5	(100)	62.5	(100)

Source : Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Table 16.

Table 19 shows comparisons of the use of types of care as the main type of care in relation to the children under 12 years not attending school, classified according to their parents' employment status. It can be seen from these data that formal centre care was the type of care most used by parents who were employed, especially by parents in full-time employment. By comparison, pre-school was used most by families where only one parent was employed. In proportion to their numbers, the least use of child care — of all types — was made by children from families where neither parent was employed.

Table 19 : Main Type of Care : Parents' Employment Status

Parents' Employment Status	Children under 12 years NOT at school					
	Children in group N(000)	%	Total %	Children in Care Informal %	Pre-school %	Centre % etc.
All parents employed: full time	97.1	8.6	12.0	12.9	5.3	19.5
All parents employed: one at least part-time	187.2	16.6	22.5	23.2	19.9	22.7
All parents employed: full time and/or PT	284.3	25.2	34.4	36.1	25.2	42.2
One parent employed, the other NOT	689.4	61.1	55.0	53.5	63.8	47.2
No parent employed	124.3	11.0	7.9	7.9	8.0	8.5
Not determined	30.0	2.7	2.6	2.5	3.1	*
Total Children	1,128.0	(100)	699.1 (100)	496.0 (100)	140.5 (100)	62.5 (100)
<u>Source</u> : <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia</u> , June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, Tables 18 and 19.						

(e) Summary of Results obtained in the 1980 ABS Survey

From the statistics provided by the 1980 ABS survey of child care arrangements in Australia, the following points can be made and considered for their relevance to the issues discussed in this paper.

- (1) In 1980 there were 1,612.5 thousand of family units in Australia which together had close to 3 million children under the age of 12 years. Of these, 842.2 thousand family units (73.4 thousand one-parent and 768.8 two-parent units) together had 1,128.0 thousand, or 39 per cent, of all children under 12 years of age who were not attending school. Most of these children were under 5 years of age.
- (2) One quarter of children under 12 years not attending school had both parents (or parent, in one-parent families) employed.

- (3) Two-thirds of children under the age of 12 years not attending school were cared for at sometime during the week by person(s) other than the person primarily responsible for the child (e.g. mother). Thus a pre-school-aged child who was cared for exclusively by the person responsible was in a minority.
- (4) By far the most common type of care used was an informal care arrangement. Often (20.7% of all children and 33.0% of children cared by person(s) other than the person responsible) the main type of care was provided by the spouse of the person responsible for the child. Overall, 44 per cent of all children not at school were in informal care arrangement and 18 per cent in formal care arrangements, a ratio between the two of 2.44 to 1.
- (5) The greatest use of care was made by parents who were employed, and in proportion to the numbers of children they used centre-based care most. However, child care was used by parents irrespective of their employment status. In pre-schools most use of child care was made by families where one parent was not employed.
- (6) The estimated cost of care, paid directly by families, was \$4.5 million per week, or \$215 million per year (calculated on the basis of 48 weeks).
- (7) Over 40 per cent of children in care experienced more than one type of care during the week.
- (8) The use of care did not vary greatly in relation to parents' ethnicity. Overall, families where at least one parent was born in non-English-speaking country used child care arrangements least.
- (9) The use of care, both formal and informal, was related to the family income : the higher the income of the family unit, the greater was the use of care.

CHAPTER 3

THE BASES FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES : NEEDS, RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES

While services for children have become an important public issue in contemporary industrial societies, concern about children, their needs and rights and responsibility for them is not new. In this chapter we give an historical overview of changing perceptions on childhood so that contemporary issues may be considered in a wider context of societal evolution and change.

Discussions relating to children and children's services are based on perceptions of the role and status of children in society, the understanding of children, and values and attitudes held toward them. The ways the community and governments respond to children are often based on implicit assumptions inherent in different perspectives about human nature, its perfectibility and the degree to which it is controlled by internal and external forces. These assumptions have also shaped the way societies have related to children. Philosophers, psychologists and educationalists have all contributed to the "nature-nurture" debate. Different points of view and assumptions about the nature of man have shaped theories about the nature and role of children in society and what was considered to be the most appropriate method of child rearing. For example, acceptance of the idea that environment had an impact on the nature of a human being led to the notion that human nature could be controlled, modified, "improved". This meant that new interpretations of human need for an ideal environment conducive to producing competent human beings and ideal citizens could be considered.

Essentially, debates about children's welfare have revolved around three issues : children's needs, children's rights, and who is to be responsible for ensuring their needs and rights are met. Over time there have been significant changes in the nature of each of these debates. This chapter illustrates the nature, diversity and changes of these debates before considering some of the specific theories of children's needs which have been influential in determining the provisions made for children.

1. CHANGING CONCEPTS OF CHILDHOOD

Perceptions of childhood and children's needs have varied with the social definitions of childhood created by different cultures in various periods of history. Economic and social conditions, industrial and political factors, religious attitudes and social reforms have all played a role in shaping these

definitions. (This is well documented by Aries 1962; Ritchie and Koller 1964; Pinchbeck and Hewitt 1969; de Mause 1974; Tizard 1976; and Hoyles 1979).

In primitive and early civilizations children were not seen to have needs and rights of their own; rather, they were valued only as potential contributors to society. In mediaeval Europe children were treated as miniature adults and were seen to have the same weaknesses and be subject to the same pressures as adults. It was not until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that children began to be seen as innocent and in need of protection and nurture. It was not only economic, social, cultural and religious factors that had shaped perceptions on childhood. Philosophers, educationalists, and, later, psychologists also influenced those perceptions. Among those who contributed "enlightened" ideas about childhood were René Descartes (1596-1650) and John Locke (1632-1704). While Descartes believed that ideas were innate, Locke reaffirmed Aristotle's view that infants' minds were blank and ideas were formulated and shaped by experience and observation. Concerned with the kind of experiences that moulded children, Locke supported the notion that education should be adjusted to fit the child's individual personality. Later Rousseau's (1712-1778) view that education could and should foster 'natural', individual goodness in a non-directive way, gained widespread support in Europe. Children, he believed, should be protected from negative aspects of society in order for them to make appropriate choices about what they should learn. Later, other theorists such as Darwin (1809-1882), Freud (1856-1939), Binet (1857-1911), Watson (1878-1958) and Gesell (1928;1954) contributed directly or indirectly to the debate about the perfectibility of humans and the relative importance of heredity and environment on the development of intelligence. This debate was diligently pursued in the twentieth century, particularly by American psychologists. Many of the American theories relating to children and child rearing were to be very much part of a culture where people saw themselves as 'masters of their own destiny', with children's activities capable of being systematically moulded to enable the development of ideal citizens.

In practice, most of these ideas applied only to the middle classes. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, children of the working classes were expected to provide for themselves. In Britain, it was not until the later half of the nineteenth century that society began to rethink the role of children and their needs. Law reforms limited child labour and the introduction of compulsory schooling for children five years and over helped change ideas regarding both the position of women as well as children in society. By the end of the nineteenth century, there was an increasing segregation of roles for

men, women and children. With a declining need for women in the workforce, women were confined to the realms of housework and childrearing, with children being segregated from non-domestic activities and from the world of men (Tizard et al, 1976, p.67). Segregation was achieved by excluding from infant schools children under five years of age, and nursery schools (that is crèches) were considered to be a "practical necessity", only for children of employed working class mothers. Children of middle class families remained at home with mother or a nanny.

During the twentieth century Western societies have become child oriented (or even some would claim child dominated) in their efforts to protect young children, who are now perceived as dependent, incompetent and essentially passive (Chisholm, 1976, p.8).

2. CHANGING CONCEPT OF CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Changing perceptions on childhood have led to changing and diverse concepts of children's needs. Even in today's western societies, while high value may be placed upon children for their emotional value to parents and their resource potential (Arnold, 1975), there is still no consensus as to what really constitutes their needs, how they should be met and by whom.

It is not the purpose of this paper to trace in detail the various controversies on the differences in education theory, developmental psychology theory and so on. Rather, the purpose is to illustrate that differences do exist and that for social reasons, certain theories and related strategies may enjoy popularity at particular times and influence policies and services for children.

In the ongoing debate on children's needs there is no disagreement that children, like all human beings, have basic needs for food, clothing and warmth, shelter, safety and security. However, there has been less agreement on what constitutes adequate or minimum standards in the provision for meeting those needs. Some have tended to see children's needs as similar to those of adults; others have argued that children have particular kinds of needs. Others, again (e.g. Maslow, 1954) have argued that humans have needs over and above basic physiological and biological needs — needs for association with other humans, needs for self-esteem (self-confidence, independence, freedom) and needs for self-realisation, for fulfilling own potentialities.

There is now a broad agreement in the literature that children's needs vary according to a child's individual characteristics and capacities, but that there are basic needs of all children that must be met if health, growth and development of individual potential is to be assured. Much emphasis is given to the child's health, psychological and social development and education, and there is a recognition that meeting those needs in infancy and early childhood is crucial. Comparatively less attention is given to the impact of wider environmental factors such as housing and general socio-economic conditions on a child's development.

Children's needs consist of a number of dimensions — health, socialization, educational and psychological development. These dimensions of need, well-being or 'welfare' cannot be seen in isolation from one another. Child welfare policies and programs and bureaucratic structures however are usually oriented to one dimension. Often there are no mechanisms available to integrate or co-ordinate different policies and programs relating to young children.

The outline below provides a very brief sketch of some of the changes and diversity in debates within each 'need' dimension.

(a) Health Needs

Issues in child health have changed dramatically in the course of the twentieth century. With improved standards of living and technological and medical advances, infant mortality and infectious diseases of childhood are no longer concerns for most children. (Particular groups of children such as Aborigines, working class children and children from ethnic minorities suffer more health problems than other children). The major 'health' problems facing children in western society are now problems associated with affluence and our style of living and include accidents, developmental difficulties, congenital defects, and behaviour and nutritional problems (Hetzel and Vimpani 1980, p.138). Much of the health literature is concerned with health rights (that is, the right of access to a service) or health needs, relating to existing problems such as the 'need' to further reduce mortality rates, accident rates and protect children from disease.

(b) Developmental Needs

Many different perspectives on developmental needs are found in twentieth century psychology — for example :

- (1) The neurobiological approach — focuses on the way in which the brain functions.
- (2) The ethological/ecological approach — examines development in natural settings. This has included the study of animals as well as humans and seeks to provide an understanding of how species adapt to their environment.
- (3) The behavioural approach — studies observable behaviour and how behaviour is shaped by using stimulus response theory and a system of rewards and punishments.
- (4) The cognitive approach — focuses on trying to understand the mental processes involved in perception, imagery, problem-solving, remembering, and thinking.
- (5) The Psychoanalytic approach — explores the ways in which an individual's behaviour is determined by instincts which are usually unconscious.
- (6) The Humanist approach — sees man as capable of controlling and shaping his own life, with the goals of growth and self-actualization being the driving or motivating forces.

These various schools of thought have had varying support and impact on perceptions of children's needs throughout the course of the twentieth century. (Biehler, 1976). Specialised fields of child study have developed, relating to motivation and learning, socialisation, perception, the role of play etc.

The psychological theories that are most important to policy development are those that relate to the 'nature-nurture' debate. If children's behaviour, intelligence, attitudes etc. cannot be changed or improved upon, then there is little purpose in providing child welfare programs.

At the beginning of the 1900s following Darwin's work on evolution, interest developed in the measurement of intelligence and human capacities. (G. Stanley Hall; Binet & Simon). Later, Freud's work (1910) fostered considerable interest in the nature and impact of experiences during the early childhood period. Some later psychologists, such as Jung, Adler, Fromm and Horney have modified Freud's theory by placing less emphasis on Freud's "internal" libidinal forces and paying more attention to social forces and the effects of environmental factors on the individual. (Sarason, 1966, pp.55-62).

In America the 1920s and 1930s have been described as an 'era of behaviourism' where 'child psychologists stress objectivity, observe overt behaviour and consider environmental experiences to be of much greater importance than inherited factors'. (Biehler, 1976, p.124). Experiments were conducted on children, using the principles of conditioning.

The work of Piaget who began studying children in 1920, (1952a, 1952b; 1969) made a substantial impact on 'understanding' and interpretation of the process of child growth. "In Piaget's view, intelligence had to be thought of in terms of biological adaptation, with intellectual operations being the means by which man adapts to his environment". (Cleverley & Phillips, 1976, p.75). For Piaget, child growth was a continuous process characterized by three major developmental periods of cognition — sensorimotor activity, preparation and organisation of concrete operations and formal operations. Piaget believed that children could only learn when they were 'ready' in terms of their stage of development. He was an advocate of self directed learning, where children learn through exploration of their environment. Piaget's work is important in that the concept of 'readiness' for learning influenced ideas about the age at which children would benefit from services.

In the next decade, Gesell's theories on maturation lent support to the notion of the importance of early childhood as a stage in development and cast doubt on Watson's earlier rejection of innate characteristics. Gesell also suggested that intellectual growth occurs rapidly at first and then slows down considerably. Early childhood was therefore a vital stage in human development.

During this period, the first experiments were undertaken to determine the effect on intelligence of children's attendance at nursery school (Wellman, Sheels & Skodak). The findings of these projects were vital in maintaining community support for such services.

The end of World War II saw a renewed interest in psychoanalytic theory, after Spitz (1945) and others examined the effect of institutional living on young children. Following the publication in the 1950s of the work of Bowlby (1951) and Harlow (1958; 1962), interest in the 'value' of maternal care and the problems caused by maternal deprivation grew considerably. Researchers (Sears & Maccoby & Levin, 1957; Newson & Newson, 1963) analysed and assessed child rearing techniques and the role mothers played in child's development and behaviour. Attention came to be focussed on the role of the family in child development, rather than the role of other individuals and services.

Interest in deficiencies in child rearing techniques and settings was re-kindled during the 1960s. This period saw renewed concern about poverty and disadvantage and researchers interested in children focussed on the long-term impact of the environment on development (Butler & Kellmer Pringle 1966; Davie, Butler & Goldstein 1972) and on finding ways of manipulating the environment in order to provide children with improved opportunities for learning.

The work of some American developmental psychologists during the 1960s (Hunt, 1961; Bloom 1964) and later the 1970s (Bruner 1974; White, 1974) has had worldwide impact on the way in which Western societies have perceived the need to intervene to improve conditions and opportunities for young children. This research, more than most, forced governments to reconsider the nature of their child welfare policies. For this reason, the research is considered here at some length.

Hunt and Bloom focussed on the 'nature/nurture' argument; that is, they argued that environment had a crucial effect on the way individuals developed and that its significance had never been fully appreciated. Hunt (1961) had a major influence on the way human intelligence was perceived. He did not support the concept of fixed intelligence and predetermined development, but rather emphasised the quality of human experience arising out of environmental conditions at particular stages of growth as being vital for the development of intelligence and "given" that intelligence developed rapidly in very young children, this was a crucial stage in the developmental process.

Kenniston (1971) suggests that these stages of development are artificial and socially created :

Some societies may 'create' stages of life that do not exist in other societies; some societies may 'stop' human development in some sectors far earlier than other societies 'choose' to do so. If, therefore, a given stage of life or developmental change is not recognised in a given society, we should seriously entertain the possibility that it simply does not occur in that society. (p.154).

Hunt later applied his ideas to the concept of what might be considered as compensatory pre-school education. He was concerned with the

possible components of an enrichment programme for the culturally disadvantaged. He believed that while the effects of poverty would result in retardation in the

first and second years of a child's life, it would be desirable to provide enrichment at about three years of age. An enrichment programme, he believed, would provide the child with a wide range of experience that would enable him to build up a repertoire of 'models of action and of motor language'. He thought that the kind of approach developed by Montessori would satisfy the aims sought. (Ashby, 1972, p.34).

Bloom (1964) had a significant impact in suggesting that environmental factors played a major role in shaping human personality, development and achievement. He believed that 50 per cent of intelligence is developed by the age of four years and a further 30 per cent by the age of eight years. He suggested that the effects of environment were greatest during these rapid growth periods. As such acceleration was general throughout the early years of life, the effects of the early environment tended to have a major and lasting impact upon the child. (Ashby, 1972, p.34).

While the significance of the environment in development or its long lasting and irreversible effects have been questioned (Rutter, 1974), these and similar theories have been taken up by those concerned with early childhood policies and programs.

Much of the present innovation in pre-school education has been motivated by a desire to raise to the highest level the intellectual functioning of the young child, and to move away from the traditional emphasis of the pre-school on social and emotional development. Moreover much activity has been directed at compensating children, chiefly those from lower social and economic backgrounds, for the effects of being disadvantaged. Pre-school, for many people, has come to mean the provision for such children of special opportunities, designed particularly to enhance cognitive abilities. (Ashby, 1972, pp.34-35).

The theories of Hunt (1961) and Bloom (1964) influenced the ideas behind the American Head Start Program started in 1965 which aimed, among other things, to improve school performance of disadvantaged children. This program, in turn, has had world wide influence. Australia was no exception.

Bloom and Hunt were publishing their findings at a time of 'rediscovery of poverty' and renewed humanitarian concern for equality of opportunity. Thus the 'climate' was right for their theories to receive attention. However some saw even these 'compensatory' programs as anti-family and indeed support for the Head Start program soon waned. Early research indicated that the effects of this program were short lived. The publication of these findings precipitated pre-school education's fall from favour in the mid-late 1970's.

This apparent "failure" of Head Start sparked interest in the idea that perhaps researchers should be concerned with the environmental impact on children under three years of age, that is, that intervention to improve childhood experiences should begin earlier. White et al (1973; 1978) for instance, was supported by Head Start to "study the kinds of child-rearing techniques used by mothers of especially competent pre-school infants". (Biehler, 1976, p.121).

Bruner (1971) too, in discussing the needs of families in society to create competent infants, children and ultimately adults, was concerned with the poor quality of care in nursery schools and kindergartens. Commenting on the value of Head Start as a compensatory program, Bruner (1971, p.23) stated "Probably we cannot change the plight of the poor without changing the society that has permitted such poverty to exist during a time of affluence".

Recent publications by the OECD, such as those produced as a result of their 1980 Intergovernmental Conference on Policies for Children, reflect the new concern for children under three and stress the need for communities and governments to reconsider their responses to the requirements of this age group. To date, however, response has been slow. Moreover despite recent results that the Head Start program has had a number of longer term gains, pre-school education has not recaptured the same level of enthusiastic support in the current economic climate of recession.

(c) Psychological Needs

In the area of psychological and developmental needs of children, the work of Bowlby (1951), and Spitz (1945) on maternal deprivation has had a strong influence upon society's views on children, on mother-child relationships and on society's responsibilities toward the young. To discuss whether Bowlby's findings have been quoted correctly or not misses the point that certain interpretations (i.e. maternal employment means maternal deprivation for children) have had a significant influence on the development of policies which restricted provision of day care services for children in the post World War II period. This was a time when women were encouraged to withdraw from the workforce to render jobs vacant for men returning from war and Spitz and Bowlby helped provide the rationale for policies such as the closure of day nurseries.

It is now thought that continuity of patterns of care are important in early development. Some research has concluded that continuity can be achieved only by constant maternal care. Other research indicates that it is the continuity

of care that is important to psychological stability and development of the capacity for appropriate and enduring relationships with people.

Bowlby's work (1951, 1953) on maternal deprivation has influenced not only perceptions about children's needs, but also debates about children's rights and debates about who should be responsible for meeting those needs and rights.

It is important to remember that Bowlby distinguished between partial and complete deprivation. Partial deprivation referred both to inadequate mothering by the biological mother and/or removal from her care for any period of time. Complete deprivation referred to circumstances, often found in institutions, where a child had no constant caring figure. Either way, Bowlby did in fact advocate the idea of "the absolute need of infants and toddlers for the continuous care of their mothers". (Bowlby, 1953). He did however offer detailed advice about 'substitute' care.

... we must recognize that leaving any child of under three years of age is a major operation only to be undertaken for good and sufficient reasons, and, when undertaken, to be planned with great care. On no account should a child be placed with people he doesn't know, and for this reason relatives and neighbours are likely to be chosen (p.18).

Regardless of the interpretation or misinterpretations of Bowlby's work, it is significant that this work appeared at a time when large numbers of women were no longer wanted in the labour force and hence social and economic circumstances facilitated his work coming to prominence. His theories also reinforced the "individual fault" orientation in welfare programs, with mothers or parents being seen as the major or sole cause of deprived, unhappy and "wayward" children. This thinking is reflected in many official statements of welfare agencies. For example, a 1962* report compiled by the Child Welfare and Social Welfare Department of New South Wales makes reference to Bowlby's monograph "Maternal Care and Mental Health" by saying :

The child needing the Department's care and attention ... is not the well adjusted child from a good home with security, love and affection, but rather the deprived child, the child in trouble, the unhappy child.

... When the mother and father pull together and their children become important to them, there will be a happy, wholesome home. (Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare, 1962, p.22).

*Estimated year of publication as the document is not dated.

The 'need' for continuous care by the mother is a viewpoint at one end of a continuum of opinions about psychological/social needs of children. At the other end is the view that children from birth on, need a variety of opportunities to socialise with adults and children, otherwise they risk being "undersocialised". A strategy consistent with this view may be the provision of formal day care made available to all children who want it. However similar strategies may have rationales relating to ideas about how society should function rather than relating to needs of children. Somewhere in the middle of this continuum is the view that children do need stable relationships with their parents, but where parents are unable to provide continuous and/or appropriate care for some reason, then a stable "quality" substitute care should be available.

The gradual return of women to the workforce after World War II and their need for day care contrasted sharply with the ideas put forward by Bowlby and his supporters. Controversy sparked a number of research projects concerned with the effects on children of their mothers working, with the nature and quality of substitute care and whether there were developmental and psychological differences between children who were cared for by their mothers and children cared for by others. Many who have supported child-rearing theories like that of Bowlby's, have failed to see, firstly, that the intense mother-child relationships advocated were not always possible or desirable and secondly, that the values and assumptions on which the theories had been based were inextricably related to the predominant values of an industrialized western society.

Accordingly, very little research has focussed on how children's needs are fulfilled by remaining at home with their mother. Even today, we know little about what happens to children during the day and what kinds of experiences and interactions they have with their mother and others. This became a matter for government and community attention only when welfare and health workers became concerned with the problem of child abuse and the social as well as family factors which might contribute to its incidence.

In summary, despite the fact that there is substantial and recent evidence to indicate that children are not intellectually or emotionally/psychologically deprived when their mothers work, provided good substitute care is available (Rutter, 1972) and despite the fact that large numbers of mothers with pre-school children in Australia are employed full or part-time, the provision of day care is often regarded in the community and by government as a form of

intervention or relief measure only to be taken as a "last resort". The concerns about bonding and maternal deprivation are reflected in parliamentary and community debates. They form part of the thinking behind child care licensing regulations and are part of the justification for lack of services to children under three.

(d) Social Needs

While most theorists agree that young children have needs for relationships with both adults and other children, there is disagreement about what form this should take. Some argue that opportunities for socialising should simply complement home life after the child is three or four, while others argue that it is an essential component of the child's development from birth and opportunities for socialising with a range of people should be provided from an early age. The relationships of children with grandparents, other relatives, friends, neighbours, community are important here, as it can be argued that young children alone at home with mother experience considerable social isolation. Cox (1979, p.37) has argued that children who are the entire responsibility of one parent (usually mother) are "under-socialised and are in real danger of suffering damage and maladaptation". Over-child centred child rearing practices may result in a child who is socially deprived rather than maternally deprived.

One consequence of closed child rearing practices may be that children become "highly individualistic adults whose demands to satisfy their needs make for competitive, aggressive beings well suited for a self-interested capitalist economy" (p.39). Cox has claimed that this method of child rearing may be appropriate to the kind of society we have, but, she questions whether this is the kind of society and the type of citizens we want.

Implicit in many child welfare policies and programs is the notion that an overriding need is for a child to be cared for exclusively by its biological mother. It is assumed that the need for socializing with other children can be accommodated within or around the home environment, without special provisions being made to enable this to occur.

(e) Education Needs

Within the discipline of education, there have been different interpretations of the concept of 'education' and different views about how those concepts ought to be applied to young children. The debates have been inextricably tied to concepts about children's development and ultimately who ought to

intervene in or facilitate that development.

Ashby (1972) in a critical analysis of pre-school theories in particular, has reviewed the changes which have taken place in regard to thinking about the educational needs of young children. As we have seen, Rousseau, Robert Owen (who opened the first nursery school in Scotland in 1816) and the Swiss educator Pestalozzi (1745-1827) were concerned with the interests, abilities and sensitivity of young children.

However, it was Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) who developed a specific theory of education about the young child. "The Froebelian ideas imported ... included a belief in the inevitability of the unfolding of a child's nature given the suitable stable environment (and) a value judgement that everything should be done to facilitate 'the flowering of childhood in children'". (Staines, 1971, p.60 cited by Spearitt, 1979, p.11). The Froebelian ideas made their impact in Europe during the mid-1800's at a time when the middle classes were becoming concerned about (i) the need to have their own (male) children educated to prepare them for the new jobs created by the industrial revolution and (ii) the unrest created by widespread poverty, including the exploitation of children's labour and the increasing problem of abandoned, neglected and 'wayward' children.

Ashby (1972, p.2) argued that it was not so much Froebel's theory that was important, but his inspirations and "the perspective with which he viewed the young child". This perspective became increasingly consistent with the social and economic concerns (need for fewer children and women in the labour force) of the time, as the industrial revolution progressed.

By the 1880's there was some dissatisfaction with the rigid implementation of Froebel's ideas. In America, the private "progressive" nursery and kindergarten movement was established in 1888. The ideas on which it was based "won support from the psychologist G. Stanley Hall and the philosopher John Dewey. Out of the work of this group developed what has since been called the progressive education movement". (Greenblatt, 1977, p.29).

The 1890's in America saw a conflict between the "reform Darwinists" or "liberal" sociologists who supported education being used as an instrument for social reform and the conservative Darwinists such as William Graham Sumner who saw widespread public education as leading to a diminution of parental responsibility.

Later, Montessori developed her concept of pre-school education -- after working with impoverished children in Rome, using methods which had been successful with sub-normal children. Central to her view were the concepts of self-activity and freedom which she believed should be displayed in the education of the young child.

The Montessorian method of education, after falling from favour for some time, has undergone a revival in some countries, including USA because of the renewed interest in disadvantaged children which accompanied a revival of interest in poverty, the relevance of the method to Piagetian theory and "the appeal of discovery learning as advocated by Bruner and others" (Commonwealth Department of Education 1981, p.35).

Despite the impact or use of these theories, many of the assumptions and purposes underlying pre-school education have never been clarified. Ashby (1976) has stated that education provided in the pre-school may have one or all of the following purposes :

- (1) to provide avenues for relevant child and parent learning
- (2) to create a bridge by which the child may move from home to school
- (3) to promote mental and physical health of the child
- (4) to provide educational experiences aimed at fostering various abilities, skills and attitudes related to the child's subsequent educational progress (pp.137-139).

Following the early results of the Head Start evaluations, it was considered that the only value of pre-school was to provide opportunities for children to mix with their peers. Policymakers who still support this view regard pre-school as a very expensive way of providing such opportunities for young children.

Much of the developmental and early childhood intervention research remains inconclusive and inconsistent. It is clear that there is (and has been over time) a great diversity of viewpoints about what constitutes a particular need and how it should be met. However, it is now usually accepted that the determinants of a child's development are threefold : the child's innate characteristics; the social, physical, psychological environment; and the phase of the child's development in which a particular stimulus or experience

occurs. The needs of the child are thus related to "continuity of experience ... appropriateness of care and stimulation to his needs (quantity and quality of care) ... and timing. The child's needs vary according to his stage of development, his individuality, and his previous experiences". (Chandler et al, 1968, p.29).

3. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

When one talks about rights of the child, one is going further than discussing biological, social needs etc. The "rights of a child" debate places children in a societal context and discusses relative roles and responsibilities as to who should care for and protect them. These were formally stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and were re-emphasised in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and supported by national and international conferences during 1979, the Year of the Child. (None of these declarations has been incorporated either into our Australian Constitution or enforced in statutes by state legislatures).

Beyond the very broad statements incorporated in these Declarations, there is no consensus about what actually constitutes children's rights or even what a "child" is. Richard Chisholm (1980, p.225) points out the contradictions in law

Women can get married at 16 years of age, men at 18;
they can both vote at 18; they can leave school at
15. If they are involved in a custody dispute between
their parents, the court should normally follow their
wishes if they are over 14. Children at 12 must consent
to their own adoptions, but they acquire the dubious
privilege of being able to commit crimes at the age of 10
in some states, 8 or 7 in others.

McBain (1980) of the British National Children's Bureau has stated that lobby groups in Britain concerned about the rights of the child, while approaching the issue from different viewpoints, would have some common ground "... that children should have a right to have their views heard and taken into account, and to be represented where decisions about their futures are to be taken" (p.5). In a number of states in Australia, changes to child welfare legislation have been proposed. It has been clear in related discussions, particularly in NSW that the consensus referred to by McBain does not exist (see Association of Child Caring Agencies 1980; 1981).

In order to deal with and about children's rights, Barbara Chisholm (1976) suggests that society needs first to recognise children as being equal in "value" to older members of society.

Many of the debates about children's rights have expanded and include not only issues of custody, wardship and so on, but also matters concerning rights to child care services. These arguments have usually been framed in terms of children's rights of access to a pre-school program in which they can develop their maximum potential (The "needs" argument).

Another argument is that children have a right to these services, not necessarily because of their "need" but because the rearing of children is or should be a community and/or government responsibility; that it should not or cannot be left solely to parents or the mother. Many who hold this belief consider that the provision of child care services is a pre-requisite to the achievement of women's rights.

The issues of children's needs and rights are complex ones. Not only is there the matter of what constitutes needs and rights, but also there are the questions of whose needs and rights come first, how they can or should be balanced, can rights be forfeited, which needs and rights are most important (Goodnow & Burns, 1980), who makes such decisions, who is or should be responsible for considering children's needs and rights? The problem in policy is that :

the state is attempting to answer these questions, and even to respond differently yet equitably to the varied cultural and ethnic groups within society. The answers are difficult to comprehend when the interests of the various actors — the family, children and the state — are at odds and power distributed unevenly between them. (Brous et al, 1980, pp.35-36).

4. THE RESPONSIBILITY DEBATES

Related to the ongoing debate about children's needs and rights are the problems encountered in determining what should be the relationship between children, their parents (particularly mothers), the society and the state. The uncertainty caused by changes in these debates are issues at the very heart of discussions about provisions of services for pre-school children.

The absence of clear, explicit government obligation for services to children of pre-school age is linked to debates about who should be responsible for children. Such views may be located at different points along a continuum, with the notion that the family should be totally responsible at one end, and the concept that child rearing should be a totally shared concern at the other, with numerous positions in between.

Steiner (1981) noted that those who hold "progressive" views about children may not necessarily hold "progressive" views about family (and women's) responsibility for rearing them.

Some who think that children's cognitive development is important do not also link it to day care for children and equal employment opportunity for women. Some who take firm traditionalist positions deploring the unwillingness of middle-class women to accept the housewife role also urge public investment in early cognitive development. Some others view family and early childhood matters solely as a categorical question — "services must be provided (for) children in deprived areas", ... or as an income maintenance problem that pre-supposes the single-parent family to be the family policy issue (pp.183-184).

The different positions along this continuum might include :

- (a) children being seen as the total responsibility of their biological family
- (b) services being seen as a "necessary evil"
- (c) services being seen as "prevention" for "families at risk"
- (d) services being seen as a complement to family care
- (e) various feminist perspectives, which see children's services as a means of women sharing parental child care tasks or which see these services as a means of challenging and changing 'traditional' family structures.

(a) Children are the Total Responsibility of their Biological Family

Proponents of this view regard the biological family as the only right and appropriate group to care for the child. The provision of any substitute care services and sometimes cash benefits are seen as a threat to family life, in that responsibility is seen to be taken away from parents.

One proponent of this view has been Jerome Kagan (1970 quoted by Norman 1978, p.20) an American child development psychologist who stated "the family must be recognised as responsible for the child. It is dangerous to give that responsibility to any person or agency". (Kagan later changed his mind and accepted that 'good quality' substitute parent arrangements did not disadvantage children).

One of the most notable Australian advocates of the "threat to the family" view is Clair Isbister, who has argued strongly for full family responsibility for children. She has stated that in today's "high technology" society, the provision of government services for children denies parents the obligations and opportunity to take full responsibility for the care of their child. (Isbister, 1981a). Isbister goes further to argue that families (women) who remain at home with their young children (and therefore show responsibility toward them) are actively discriminated against in policy. In her view, for example, maternity leave allows mothers of infants to return to work, thus abandoning their children (Isbister, 1981b).

(b) Services as a Necessary "Evil"

Another position, which still regards the family as having major responsibility for child care, sees services as a "necessary evil" for children whose parents cannot or will not care for them in a way society regards as appropriate. In recent years the impact of this view can be seen in relation to the provision of both day care and pre-school services. It is commonly believed that day care services should be provided only for "children in need", whose mothers must work (in peacetime) or when there are special national circumstances, such as war when numbers of women are required for the workforce. In the United States of America, in particular, the Federal Government (under Nixon) viewed day care as a tool of social reform. Where day care places were available, mothers receiving benefits were forced to accept places and "to accept job training or full-time jobs as a condition of welfare". (Boles, 1980, p.351). Pre-school has often been seen as a tool for remedial education, or socialising agent for children disadvantaged because of their home environment, when parents could not provide resources in a way they or society considered appropriate.

(c) Services as "Prevention" for "Families at Risk"

Services may be seen as a means of supporting families at risk, in order to prevent children going into residential care or being subject to abuse.

Ruderman (1967) in supporting the view that it is not the extent of government or community involvement in day care that is essentially important, but rather how day care is perceived, has stated that often little systematic distinction is made "between normal and abnormal needs for supplementary child care". A typical view of day care is described as follows :

... The formal facility — the day care centres — is almost always discussed in terms of social or individual pathology. It is described as a service to help hold the disintegrating family together, to provide security and attention to the child who might otherwise not have them, to help the mother "accept her role", and to teach her to adjust to "the problem". Typically, day care is discussed along with foster family care and institution placement : it is a service to troubled and inadequate families, a result of parental failure. (pp.15-16).

Ruderman has claimed that often in child care policy, "a distinction in parental competence and responsibility is introduced, to the disadvantage, obviously, of the day care center". (p.20). Such an attitude toward day care is based on two assumptions. Firstly, that maternal employment is "undesirable and abnormal" and secondly, that in-home care is better than out-of-home group care. Ruderman considers these assumptions can be traced to the early studies of maternal deprivation resulting from institutionalization of infants and the equating of this form of care with day/group care.

(d) Services as a Complement to Family Care

This view sees no conflict between maternal and substitute care but rather sees that alternative care can provide relief to nuclear or single parent families in a society not altogether conducive to 'easy' child rearing.

Schor and Moen (1979) state that to regard alternative care as a supplement rather than a substitute for maternal (or in fact "parental") care, is a "modern view". They state (and support Rossi's 1977 view) that "a considerable argument can be made for such a development as moderating the 'hothouse' aspect of the mother and child bond and shifting back towards a more natural (i.e. less confined and intense) way of life for both women and children". (p.17).

(e) Feminist Perspectives

These embody a range of attitudes. In some child care services may be seen

as a means of sharing parents' child care responsibilities allowing them the opportunity to achieve equality by furthering their education and/or entering the paid workforce. Some emphasise a redefinition of male and female roles to share the care of children (Russell, 1980). Others again (Cox, 1979; Curthoys, 1976) advocate communal systems of child rearing for both the benefit of the child and its mother. Some are critical of the feminist movement for their lack of attention to child care issues :

... one of the main barriers to many women's acceptance of feminist ideas is their feeling that in practice their children must come first, and the notion that caring for young children is not a fit occupation for men is extraordinarily deepseated in both men and women. The childcare issue, then, is the structural base of the feminist revolution in the same way as the common ownership of the means of production is of the socialist revolution or the abolition of state power of the anarchist revolution. (Curthoys, 1976, p.3).

(f) Assumptions Underlying the Responsibility Debates

Assumptions behind particular attitudes to the question of shared responsibility for children can better be understood by referring to models such as those developed by Steinfels (1973) and Shostak (1974) for use in analysing the relationship between attitudes to day care and the predominant objectives of a particular society. Though both of these writers discuss day care, their models are useful in analysing attitudes to other forms of children's services. In developing Steinfels (1973) model, Shostak (1974) identified five perspectives on day care. While the different perspectives are "ideal" positions, the model does service as a tool in helping to analyse and understand the range of possible perspectives on day care and reasons for conflict or at least lack of consensus.

1. Conservative View — an anti-day care view, which sees such services as a threat to "the family".
2. Patchwork, Liberal View — a position which considers that these services should be made available only to those families who can no longer function adequately.
3. Realisation, Liberal View — day care is seen as supporting families, by acknowledging the existence of large numbers of working women, recognising the need for societal responsibility for child care and responding by providing the best educational environment in order to enhance children's development.

4. Radical View — here there is a concern for both "character moulding and parallel-institution building ... children ... will be changed by their co-operative, non-authoritarian experience. As they learn to share and be tolerant, they are expected to grow up to change the society, whatever its initial ethos". (p.69).
5. Visionary View — challenges the notion of the family and envisages a society where "children belong to everyone and will be cared for by everyone". (p.71). Within this latter perspective Shostak identified opponents (Firestone, 1971) and proponents (Figes, 1970) of day care.

Similarly, Boles (1980) in examining the politics of child care, considered the diversity of goals implicit or explicit in the arguments of proponents and opponents of day care services. She listed eight separate though not always compatible goals of advocates for increased services. These included arguments that they will benefit the child, benefit the mother, allow mothers to participate in the labour force, force welfare recipients to participate in the labour force, promote basic social change, change family structure, redefine child care as a societal responsibility and create jobs. Opponents argue that day care services are costly, not a government responsibility, they will threaten family life and 'traditional values' and that they are not wanted by working class women whose job opportunities and income are limited anyway.

The wide variety of conflicting views makes not only for lack of consensus in the community, but lack of consensus and the existence of ambivalence and lack of direction in child care policy. As Bettye M. Caldwell has stated, society

does not know whether it should serve the child, the parent, or the family. It cannot make up its mind whether it is a service for families with social pathology or for all families, whether it should be limited to children from economically underprivileged families, or be offered to all children, whether it wants to change children or preserve cultural styles from one generation to the next. (Caldwell, 1971 cited by Shostak, 1974, p.73).

Many of the responsibility debates are really concerned with what should happen rather than what does happen in either the home or substitute care environment. Along with this, there are certain assumptions made about what outcomes can automatically be expected from certain forms of care.

While a great deal of research has been undertaken to find out what happens to children in day care centres and what the long term psychological and developmental effects might be, (see Norman, 1978), little research has been done on what happens to children reared solely at home with mother and what the long term effects of that might be both on the child and the mother.

Studies of the social context of childhood in today's Western society have emerged only in the last twenty years but more particularly in the last decade. Contrasting earlier studies of American childhood with her own more recent studies, Boocock (1975) has stated :

... By contrast with the children of the nineteen-fifties who encountered a number of adults during the normal course of a day and whose diaries reported a myriad of youth-oriented but adult-directed activities (such as scouting, church activities, and family outings), many of the children of the nineteen-seventies report spending most of the time they are not in school alone or with other children, mainly in relatively un-organized activities such as watching television, eating snacks, and "fooling around". (p.421).

For younger children, opportunities may not exist within the family or the neighbourhood for developing friendships with other children. Children may live in families with one or no siblings, live in an area where neighbours may be working and where there may be few other young children with whom to play. The assumption that care provided only by the mother at home is necessarily the best care, cannot be assumed to always hold true.

CHAPTER 4

CHILDREN'S SERVICES : AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENTS TO 1975

1. PUBLIC RESPONSE TO RESPONSIBILITY ISSUES

An uneasy tension often exists between parents, society and the state not only about what constitutes needs and rights of children and parents (Goodnow and Burns, 1980), but also about what resources are required to meet their needs, how the state or society should provide, if at all, and what constitutes responsibility, to parents, children and the community.

(a) The State

The interaction between the family and the state in respect of children may or may not be on a voluntary basis. Historically, most interactions enshrined in legislation have been those of an involuntary nature — where the state has decided that children were neglected or delinquent and required removal from the care of their parents. (The exception is adoption where children are voluntarily given to the state for the purposes of finding substitute parents).

In Australia public responsibility for children's services has rested with the States. Intervention or provision on behalf of children has usually been seen in terms of their relationship to the family, family circumstances, responsibility and autonomy issues rather than as individuals who are entitled to certain minimal provisions in their own right, regardless of family circumstances. The State would step in to care for children who were deemed to be neglected, "delinquent" or whose parents were considered "wayward" or inappropriate caregivers. Intervention was justified not so much in terms of children's needs per se, but in terms of the need to provide appropriate care and training in order to produce "good citizens". Intervention was usually as a last resort, that is, to actually remove a child from its family rather than adopt strategies to help keep families together or ensure "proper" development of children.

It is not within the scope of this paper to examine the history of child welfare in Australia. It is sufficient to point out that child welfare services provided by the States have been, in their essence, "welfare services for the poor". As documented by such writers as Tierney (1972) and others, child welfare services have done little to alter the socio-economic divisions, or class structure, of the Australian society. On the contrary, these services

have played an important role in maintaining these divisions. Based on the notions of "protection", "prevention" or "the best interest of the child", the measures used have perpetuated a perspective on child welfare which is focussed almost entirely on the issue of "government versus the family". It is for this reason that child welfare services provided by the States have retained a negative connotation of stigma which they have been unable to shake off, and "social control" rather than "social welfare" has remained their mark, notwithstanding legislative and attitudinal changes of recent years.

Tierney (pp.11-12) has attributed the residualist nature of services for children to three forms of "social provisions : the penal system, the poor law and the system of private philanthropy and organised charity".

Although some progress has been achieved in child welfare, services for children provided by the States have remained primarily residential providing full substitute care rather than care as a right. The residual nature of care has caused child welfare services to be a class based system of service provision. Whether the service attempts to compensate for a familial or social deficit, it is still a service designed to meet the needs of the 'deprived' usually synonymous with "poor" (see Jenkins, 1975).

Australian governments have in some areas provided universal access to services for children, namely in the areas of health and education for children over five or six years of age, use of which is compulsory in the latter but not the former.

High infant and maternal mortality rates encouraged state intervention in the health care of expectant mothers and infants. The first antenatal clinic in the world was established in Australia in 1910 (Lewis, 1979, p.35). The early 1900s saw state health provision for children; in 1907 school screening was commenced and in 1914 the first Baby Health Centre in New South Wales was established. Later, the first Child Guidance Clinic (1936) and the first Child Health Centre (1958) opened (Harrington, 1981). While there are problems associated with the provision of such services (for example, matters of poor distribution, quality etc.), the principle that such services should be universally provided for children is unquestioned.

Similarly, state provision of free, secular and compulsory education (first established in Victoria in 1872) has become accepted public policy for older children. Educational and developmental services for children under five have

not received such acceptance and support. The development of pre-school and day care services in Australia, as in Britain and the United States, has largely been left to the voluntary sector. Other than provisions relating to family law, there is no legal obligation for the state to provide services specifically for children of pre-school age. What does exist are only regulations outside of parliamentary acts, controlling operation of existing services such as pre-school kindergartens and day care centres.

(b) Development of Pre-School and Day Care Services

(i) Pre Schools

Services provided for young children reflect conservative rather than "progressive" philosophies. In the early days of the development of kindergarten (pre-school) and day care services, the rationale for the establishment of the service related to "reform" and "rescue". These services were seen as necessary only when families were unable to fulfil their proper care or socialisation functions. In some ways services provided by the voluntary sector (including church groups) might be regarded as preventive.

The use of the pre-school as a tool for the social reform of working class children, began in Australia in the depression years of the 1890's. Implicit in the social reform approach to pre-school services was the idea that parents could not socialize children in a way that society regarded as desirable and therefore the task of parenthood had to be shared.

The kindergarten movement in Australia, grew out of a concern for the plight of inner-city "slum" children. Two main groups acted on that concern. The first consisted of educators who believed that the kindergarten could be used as a tool for urban and social reform and whose main concern was with the education function of kindergartens. The second consisted of "upper class female philanthropists" who established and supported free kindergartens in inner-city areas and whose major concern was the inculcation of middle class values and orderliness into the lives of "former street urchins", i.e. the children of the working class (Spearitt, 1979, pp.10-12). These differing emphases, education versus 'redemption' resulted from time to time in clashes within "the movement", which had become formalised into state kindergarten unions early this century. Despite conflicts, there was agreement that the socialisation of working class children and parents was a major aim, which could be achieved by teaching the children industriousness, orderliness, cleanliness etc. and by teaching their parents methods to promote the

children's physical and emotional health. Children attended the kindergartens daily between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. and had to be at least three years old to be accepted.

While the number of kindergartens in Australia grew from thirty-two in 1910 to seventy-one in 1927, with enrolments doubling from 1800 to 3600 in the same period, the World War II and early post-war years saw a rapid increase in numbers. Spearitt has speculated that the growing interest in pre-school by the middle classes was a major reason for this change. (Spearitt, 1979, p.23). This together with other factors, such as the need for child minding (see below) and the exclusion of middle class children from pre-school in wartime if their mothers were not employed in essential industries, led to many middle class groups establishing their own pre-schools. In some States, for example Victoria, this was done with State government assistance. By 1966, pre-school enrolments totalled 58,787 children with 32,857 of these being in Victoria. (Fitzgerald, 1968, p.3).

Historically the voluntary sector has taken responsibility for the provision of pre-school but wider sharing of the responsibility through State and Federal governments' acceptance and support has been a major factor in determining the capacity of groups to establish and operate services and to provide access to a wider range of children. In this way, in some States and Territories where governments have been supportive (namely Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory), there are substantial numbers of pre-schools and they are less likely to be regarded as a residual welfare service.

Certain social, cultural and political changes have taken place to alter the residualist nature of pre-school/kindergarten. As noted above, the major change came after World War II when pre-schools gradually became accepted by the middle class as a valuable means of facilitating the development of their own children. A more complex set of factors contributed to the change, including the desire of more middle class women to work (at least part-time), lack of domestic help and hence a need to find assistance with the previously home-based task of child rearing, and the probability that many of the pre-school teachers (who later became mothers) were themselves middle class and regarded highly the value of a pre-school education for all children.

Through the 1950's and 1960's there was increasing recognition of the value of kindergartens for children of any socio-economic group (Pendred, 1964, p.391), and growing interest by middle and upper middle class parents

(Whitbread, 1972, p.71). Services gradually spread to the suburbs and some country towns, as the middle class established services for their own children. These pre-school kindergartens differed from the earlier free kindergartens which relied in the main 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.

(ii) Day Care Services

Day nurseries or creches developed a little later than the free kindergartens, with the first Sydney Day Nursery creche being 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 accommodated by the six hour program of the kindergartens.

These working class mothers could not afford domestic help and care and often could not make informal care arrangements. The aim of the Sydney Day Nursery Association 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. (Sydney Day Nurseries Association, 1905-1906, p.5), cited by Kelly, 1979, p.6).

Priority of access was (and still is) given to children of single parent households. Care was provided for children aged between fifteen days and three years (subsequently increased to school entrance age) between the hours 7 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. (First Annual Report of the Sydney Day Nursery Association, cited by Kelly, 1979). The service hours were more attuned to the needs of working (working class) women and the services provided by trained nurses and volunteer helpers related more to the children's physical well-being than to their social, moral and emotional development. The aim was to keep families together and to prevent children from being neglected or "at risk" of being placed in residential institutions.

The "welfare" label attached to day care has largely persisted. With the exception of temporary facilities provided during World War II to provide for the day care needs of children of mothers working in essential industries,

day care was not available on a major scale until the 1970s. Organisations such as that of the Sydney Day Nurseries were the main providers of care for what was regarded as disadvantaged working class children, whose mothers (often lone parents) were in paid employment.

While working class women have long been involved in paid employment, it was not until after World War II period that women from the middle class entered the workforce in large numbers.

The percentage of married women working outside the home grew from 9 per cent in 1947 to 14 per cent in 1954 and in 1976 reached 41 per cent. Draper (1980) claims that the factors which have led to the apparently permanent workforce participation of women include the rearing of "smaller families, more access to education for women, and control over and predictability of pregnancy. More importantly, market forces have set the stage for the entry of women into the workforce. An expanding consumer market needs money to be spent, both to generate profits and to provide jobs. Whole sections of industry ... run on a predominantly female labour force". (pp.8-9).

One major factor in encouraging women to enter or remain in the workforce was the equal pay decision for female teachers granted in 1968 and later extended to other occupations. Further, the granting of maternity leave first to public servants and later to some workers in private industry has also had an effect on encouraging permanent involvement of women in the labour force.

Coinciding with the entry of women into the labour market came the development of the women's movement, which agitated for government provision of day care as a means of women achieving equality of opportunity.

A new pressure for the development of children's services began with the resurgence of an active women's movement in Australia in the late 1960's. Women's Electoral Lobby was formed in early 1972 and it, together with the more radical elements of the women's liberation movement, began to press the view that child care was not just an educational service or a workplace facility. Rather it was a fundamental social requirement which was necessary if any serious challenge was to be made to the current unequal sexual division of labour. Feminist organizations argued that the idealisation of intense and exclusive mother-child relations was oppressive to both women and children. They argued that child care could be undertaken outside the family and that it need not necessarily be done by other women — men could share this work both inside and outside the home. (Brennan, forthcoming).

2. THE ENTRY OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT

(a) Initiatives Prior to and Including World War II

The first Commonwealth Government response to the needs of young children occurred in the 1930s in response to the concern expressed by the National Health and Medical Research Foundation about "increasing stress that the depression precipitated on the physical as well as moral well-being of inner-city children" (Spearitt, 1979, p.21). Assistance was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health which set up demonstration centres (known as Lady Gowrie Centres) in inner city areas of each capital city. Their purpose was to provide for the 'care, instruction, and physical growth and nutrition' of children aged two to six years.

The next initiative came during World War II when it was considered necessary to recruit women into essential industries and support services. One of the major problems in encouraging women with young children to work was the lack of child care. The Research Group of the Left Book Club of Victoria in a 1943 publication Australian Women at War pointed out the gross inadequacies of Commonwealth Government support for child care compared with Britain and the United States of America. In Britain, for example, day nurseries were being opened at the rate of 100 a month and by November 1942, the Ministry of Health had opened 1000 and 500 were nearing completion, with 40,000 children already being cared for. The publication criticised the lack of assistance in Australia and pointed out the possible lack of adequate care, which could include "neglect, under-nourishment, vagrancy, truancy and delinquency" (p.64).

Early in 1943, the Commonwealth Government responded to pressure brought to bear by the Australian Association of Pre-School Child Development and Federal Labour Women's Council, and made a grant of 5000 pounds to the State Kindergarten Unions. This grant, which was made for one year only, "could be used either to subsidise students, assist with defraying training college expenses or in other ways maintain the present work of the Unions", in a time of difficult war circumstances (Left Book Club of Victoria 1943, p.66). A little later, the Victorian, New South Wales and Western Australian State governments added their contributions.

The Commonwealth, through its Department of Health gave further financial support to organisations (the State Kindergarten Unions, the Creche Association of Victoria, the Sydney Day Nurseries' Association Training School and the Adelaide Creche) for the purpose of covering "any additional expense to which

these bodies might be put by expanding their premises and services to cope with the children of women working, or about to work, in essential industries". (Left Book Club of Victoria, 1943, p.67).

The Research Group of the Left Book Club of Victoria and the Council for Women in War Work advocated the maintenance of shared responsibility for children, by providing them with nursery schools which would give them the opportunities to enhance their development and permit at the same time women to have a few hours "rest and recreation". However, this did not eventuate and most creches were closed after the war, the reasons being, firstly, that women in the workforce were replaced by men returning to civilian life and secondly, that Commonwealth Government subsidies for creches had been temporary and were not extended.

Although these services were short term war-time measures their provision was significant in a number of respects :

- (i) it indicated that public sharing of child care could be rationalized/justified and could exist on a scale previously unknown.
- (ii) participation in the workforce in World War II raised women's expectations about their future workforce role. Although there was a decline in their participation after the war, it has continued to rise steadily during the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's. Along with this change came a demand for publicly provided day care.
- (iii) it represented the first initiative from government in day care and then at a Federal level, demonstrating that it had a role in child care provision, albeit a role 'necessitated' by national military/economic emergencies.

(b) The Post-War Period

During the post-war period, a growing demand for children's services was becoming increasingly apparent and commercially operated centres became more numerous. These centres did not receive any government support and full operating costs had to be recouped from fees paid by parents. This effectively excluded those on low incomes from utilizing commercial services.

The trend in the development and location of non-commercial services was towards more articulate, affluent and middle class user groups and away from less articulate, low income groups. The major drawback in this development was the failure to recognise that provision of services of acceptable standards was a desirable goal for the whole community — in terms of education, development and socialization of young children and in terms of freeing parents, particularly mothers, of the sole responsibility for child care to enable them to undertake other pursuits for their personal development and/or to contribute to their family's wellbeing, as well as to contribute to national productivity.

In the territories for which the Commonwealth government was responsible — the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory, Papua and New Guinea and the defence establishment at Jervis Bay — the government did provide funds to subsidise services. (Department of Territories Annual Reports, 1953-55 to 1966-67). Services were also provided for the children of immigrants housed by Commonwealth Hostels Limited during the post-war immigration boom. It is difficult to disentangle the justification for the levels of funding from the somewhat stolid language of departmental reports. For the Northern Territory and Papua and New Guinea, a clearly compensatory education approach was adopted with the aim of increasing educational achievement of native-born children by provision of a year's pre-school education before school enrolment. Although initially administered by the Education Branch of the Northern Territory Administration, aboriginal pre-schools were transferred to the Welfare Branch of the Administration in 1955 "in recognition of the Social Welfare content of the work" (The Northern Territory Annual Report for 1955-56, p.30). It appears, therefore, that these services were seen by the Commonwealth as welfare rather than education issue.

For ACT children, the aims were less clearly articulated. Ostensibly, there was acknowledgement of the value of pre-school education for all children, but aspirations for Canberra as Australia's model city also ensured planned provision of a wide range of services for pre-school children which subsequently became the envy of the States. As for the migrant hostel services, the aim was to teach the children English as well as to free both parents for work to enable families to establish themselves more quickly and function independently in the community. What parents did for child care after that was up to them.

The States, to varying degrees, also offered subsidies to the existing kindergartens and nurseries throughout the years and each State's level of support

significantly influenced the rates of growth of pre-school services, e.g. much faster rates of growth in Victoria; much slower in New South Wales.

Expansion of child care services was not related solely to matters of funding. A range of social, political, cultural, demographic and economic factors all brought their effects to bear — positively and negatively — on service provision.

In the post-war years, there was pressure to return war time jobs formerly occupied by women to men, their "rightful occupants". Women were encouraged, indeed expected, to return to their more traditional duties of housekeeper, child-bearer and child-minder. Emphasis was once more placed on the family to assume responsibility for the care of young children. This resulted in active opposition to the spread of child care centres, as epitomized by statements like "the training of infants up to the age of five years should be left entirely to the home and the family".

There was also some community concern about the provision of pre-school education. The Catholic attitude to pre-school education tolerated pre-schools in "the thickly populated industrial districts of cities" for children of "those parents who need help and direction in bringing up their children", whilst advocating alternative methods of support, e.g. state support for large families, to obviate the financial need for women to work. "This danger to the State should be met by the State in such a way as to enable parents, and mothers in particular, to bring up their children within the family". (Beovich, 1939, p.105).

The Kindergarten Unions, through their national organization, the Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development (AAPSCD) (formed in 1938) had the potential to effectively lobby for government funding. One of its aims was to present a stronger case for support from public funds (Cunningham et al, 1939, p.180), but there is little evidence to suggest this was a major area of its activity. It concentrated more on standard of infant school design and teacher training, i.e. recognition that "a kindly spirit or a philanthropic attitude is no substitute for a proper professional training". (Cunningham and Pratt, 1940, p.17). The exclusion, or rather the belated inclusion of the day care organizations in 1948 did little to overcome the traditional divisions between pre-school and day care which hampered development of a vigorous child lobby. (Spearitt, 1979, p.27).

The Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development changed its name to the Australian Pre-School Association (APA) in 1954 (and in 1980 again changed to the Australian Early Childhood Association) and has attempted to amalgamate a range of pre-school bodies into a national organization capable of more effective lobbying. It also advanced the case for professionalisation of pre-school teacher training so that the federal government provided scholarships for pre-school teacher trainees from 1966 and capital assistance to pre-school training colleges from 1968.

(c) The Late 1960s

By the late 1960s children's services in Australia showed the following characteristics :

- (i) a clear division between the philosophies and services of pre-school/kindergarten and day care.
- (ii) a long history of voluntary sector involvement in services, particularly pre-school. This brought a number of problems, including selective rather than universal provision, access limited to either the very poor or the upper middle class in the case of pre-schools, and inability to plan location of services.
- (iii) inequalities between pre-school provision in the States, due to variations in the extent of voluntary sector and government support of services.

At the same time social, economic and political pressures were developing having the effect of 'encouraging' action at the federal level.

- (1) The 'rediscovery' of poverty and concern about inequality lent force to the compensatory education movement of which pre-school was a part. These concerns were emerging overseas. In America, Head Start, a compensatory pre-school education program, was created, while in Britain the Plowden Committee into Primary Education foresaw substantial expansion of pre-school facilities. These overseas initiatives were often quoted in parliamentary debates during the late 1960s as examples of social policy that Australia should follow.

The inequalities in pre-school provision between the States and particularly between the States and the ACT (where the federal

government financed pre-school) led to the call for federal government initiatives.

- (2) The significant increases of women in the workforce in the time of economic boom led to both women and industry demanding federal support of day care. The States traditionally had not supported day care to the same degree (if at all) as they supported pre-schools.
- (3) The rise of the women's movement had the effect of children's services being called for as a means of freeing women from total child care responsibility and allowing them opportunities to participate in the workforce.

Increasing federal participation in education which started with the Menzies' government's assistance to university education was expanded to schools via the science laboratories scheme during the 1963 federal election campaign. This latter move was significant in that it established the principle of Commonwealth provision of aid to all schools through the states grants power of Section 96 of the Constitution. (Smart, 1974, p.106). Further, it opened the way for a variety of pressure groups to use this 1963 precedent to further their own educational causes at a time when there was growing public concern and awareness about education as a national as well as state issue (Fitzgerald, 1968).

Among the lobby groups, was the vocal Australian Teachers Federation. At their 48th annual conference in Brisbane in 1968, the Federation passed a resolution that the federal government establish an inquiry into the "needs of Australian education at pre-school, primary, secondary and technical education levels" (cited by Gibson, C.P.D. (H of R), 9 May 1968, p.1274).

Later, the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Education in South Australia (1971) Education in South Australia 1969-1970 recommended a substantial increase in government financial support for pre-school education as well as the establishment of a Pre-school Committee responsible to the State Minister of Education, to be given the task of deciding funding priorities.

3. THE LATE 1960s - FORMULATION OF THE BASIS OF POLICY

It was during the sixties that children's services started to appear on the political agenda, though initially this was restricted to pre-school education.

The Australian Labor Party Platform Constitution and Rules in 1965 (p.11) and 1967 (p.13) advocated appropriate action for "provision of improved facilities for the training of kindergarten teachers". The emphasis moved from teachers to children in 1969 :

Government responsibility for education includes the obligation to ensure that a pre-school education is available for every child.

The Commonwealth to establish an Australian Pre-school Commission to define and examine regularly the aims of pre-school education and to recommend grants which the Commonwealth should make to the States to ensure that pre-school centres are located, staffed and equipped on the basis of needs and priorities (p.12).

The demands of the women's movement, encouraged by survey results indicating a need for day care, strengthened during the late 1960s and early 1970s and this led to the inclusion of a further sentence in the 1971 ALP platform : "Where the need exists, child care centres should be provided in conjunction with pre-school centres" (p.11). While this sentence may appear something of an after-thought, it was in fact an important victory for Labor women, an acknowledgement that a need for day care existed and that a future Labor federal government would have a role in meeting that need.

Apart from the pressures described earlier, there was a particular reason for the change and elaboration of Labor policy. Whitlam who became leader of the party in 1967 was committed to the idea of achieving equality of opportunity for all Australians through the means of education. The social goals of the Labor Party (re-affirmed in 1972) included the promotion of equality, the encouragement of people to participate in decision-making processes and of the creation of a system which would "liberate the talents and uplift the horizons of the Australian people". (Whitlam, 1977, p.267). For Whitlam pre-school played a strategic role in overcoming social and educational inequalities, caused by divisions of class and wealth. It was a time when the Labor Party, influenced by Whitlam and an influx into the party of university graduates rather than trade union officials as before, developed a "comprehensive and radical scheme of educational reform". (Fitzgerald 1975, p.205). It was a time of concern about poverty and the recognition of the need for individuals to become more powerful in the sense of having a say in how to determine the course of their lives. The concepts of community participation and community development were features of many proposed programs. Labor's policy was to provide universal pre-school, so that every child would have the opportunity

to attend a pre-school centre one year prior to formal school entry. At that time Labor policy did not give much attention to other services, such as day care. However, what was important about Labor's policy was that it helped (along with pre-school lobby groups and individuals) spark substantial debate from 1968 on about the needs of children for services (albeit pre-school services) and about what government commitment should be in terms of direct service provision/support, if anything.

After the referendum of 1967 Commonwealth support for pre-schools was extended to include Aboriginal children living in the States. Prior to this, the Commonwealth had funded pre-schools in ACT (beginning in 1945) and Jervis Bay. (The federal government had also supported Aboriginal pre-schools since 1949. The 1967 referendum gave the Commonwealth wider powers in relation to Aboriginal matters and made possible support of Aboriginal pre-schools in the States). The States Grants (Aboriginal Advancement) Bill 1968, provided for the Commonwealth Government to make available \$3 million for the period 1968-69 to 1970-71 to enable them to improve their involvement in Aboriginal education, including pre-school education. In the States Grants (Aboriginal Advancement) Bill, 1970, it appeared that provision was made for some significant support (capital, establishment and recurrent assistance, via organisations such as Save the Children's Fund) for pre-schoolers with some Aboriginal enrolments. Once the Commonwealth had made some financial pre-school support available to one group of disadvantaged children outside the territories (namely Aborigines), the issue about the value of pre-school for disadvantaged children had become a major concern. It was argued then that the other disadvantaged groups should receive a similar support :

It is a sad fact of life about pre-school education in Australia that kindergartens are situated in the suburbs where the most affluent people live and the culturally deprived children are exactly those children — I am referring not only to Aborigines — who have the least opportunity of receiving a pre-school education.
(Cross, C.P.D., (H or R), 22 October, 1970 p.2687).

The same argument was later pursued by Beazley, Opposition spokesman on Education, who emphasised that isolated (that is country) and "poor" children could also be regarded as disadvantaged. He argued that the special Commonwealth assistance given to an Aborigine was "not because he is black but because in Australia being an Aborigine means also ipso facto that he comes from a poor home. Therefore, on this reasoning, there are good grounds for assisting any poor child, not merely Aboriginal poor children".

Beazley included children of widows, deserted wives and families receiving assistance from Departments of Child Welfare in his category of "disadvantaged". (Beazley, C.P.D. (H or R), 17 August, 1972, p.384).

The Liberal Party, the then government, first intimated in November 1967, that it was considering entering the pre-school education field, "a new area of education which had not been considered previously at the federal level" (Prime Minister Holt, later cited by Barnard, C.P.D. (H or R) 9 May 1968, p.1262) during Prime Minister Holt's Senate election campaign speech :

I know my colleague, the Minister for Education and Science (Sen. Gorton) would like to help children of pre-school age who are put at a disadvantage because of a bad home environment.

Parliamentary debates, from both sides of the House, centred on a compensatory education approach, the basis of the American Head Start Program and the concern of the Plowden Committee in the United Kingdom. These debates foreshadowed a basic difference in the stated policies of the two major political parties in relation to pre-school kindergarten, the Liberal Party adopting a selective approach and the Labor Party, a universal one.

The Labor opposition urged the introduction of services for special groups such as children of migrant and Aboriginal families and isolated children, but ultimately

beyond these preferential objectives the essential aim should be the provision of pre-schooling for all those children whose parents want them to have it. (Barnard, C.P.D. (H or R), 24 October 1968, p.2326).

At this stage, debates very much centred upon the perceived needs of children, and only isolated references appeared regarding the needs of women :

This involves assessing not only the children's needs but also the needs of working mothers and those mothers who stay at home to look after the home, as well as the mothers who would be out working and preserving their pre-marital professional skills if only there were more pre-schools and kindergartens. (Everingham, C.P.D., (H or R), 24 October 1968, p.2333).

However, despite the various pressures placed upon it, the government in the mid-late 1960s decided not to fund pre-school services directly, but rather

provide support to encourage the training of pre-school teachers. It did this in two ways :

- (i) by the inclusion of pre-school teachers training scholarships in the general Commonwealth teacher scholarships scheme (1966).
- (ii) by the provision of capital assistance over three years, in the first instance, to the pre-school training colleges in order to increase their capacity within the Commonwealth advanced education scholarships scheme. Also, provision was made for awards to be given to those wishing to undertake approval pre-school teacher training courses at such colleges and the total number of scholarships was increased from 500 to 1500 to help make this possible.

Though these steps might be seen as federal initiatives in the pre-school area, relating to teachers not to children, there was no attempt to ensure the spread of services or to increase access to more disadvantaged children. There was no provision for increasing the services or changing the existing enrolment pattern, seen to benefit privileged families.

One of the major reasons for this indirect and in part temporary support was the government's concern that pre-school could develop into an extensive commitment in the field of education (as pre-school was perceived), for education was seen to be a State responsibility, even though the Commonwealth had supported tertiary education since the Menzies Government's 1959 decision to establish a Commonwealth Universities Commission. (Spearitt, 1979, p.28).

The fear of the consequences of crossing Commonwealth-State boundaries in terms of responsibilities was a real one, with Commonwealth and State relationships later becoming a major factor in affecting the Commonwealth's ability to implement its policies.

During the early 1970s, pre-school lobby groups such as the Pre-school Action Campaign formed in Sydney in 1971, were emerging. This campaign, "had a distinctively new character, for its title included the word 'Action' which had been missing, in a politically effective form at least, from the older pre-school bodies". (Spearitt, 1974a, p.33). This does not imply that it adopted a party political stance — it did not — but it was plainly political

in the sense that it adopted tactics and strategies (lodging petitions, organising letter writing to politicians, conducting media campaigns) aimed to promote awareness of pre-school needs both in the community and in government.

Over fifteen thousand letters were sent to the NSW Premier and the Federal Minister for Education and Science protesting about lack of pre-school facilities and funding in NSW (Sun-Herald, August 8, 1971). The Day Nursery Association and the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour and National Service supported the Pre-school Action Campaign's call for an inquiry into the availability of pre-school. Other demands of the action campaign, later incorporated into government policy were :

- (1) Increased salary subsidy for trained teachers. (A major reason for the campaign must have been the effect of an industrial award in 1970 to grant salary increases to pre-school teachers (Fitzgerald & Crosher, 1971, p.41), forcing parent-run centres into financial hardship).
- (2) State (NSW) Government capital grants to improve existing centres and build new centres.
- (3) Higher subsidies for kindergarten training colleges to allow them to reduce fees.
- (4) More Government scholarships to the Colleges.
- (5) Introduction of bridging courses for partly trained teachers and refresher courses for graduates.
- (6) Government acceptance of the top-priority of pre-school education.

Day Care

By the late 1960's direct and indirect pressures focussed on the need to be concerned about the care arrangements made for children of working mothers. The need for day care for these children was highlighted by the following trends and activities :

- (1) During the 1960's the participation of women in the workforce increased substantially, from 29 per cent of married women in 1966 to 33 per cent by 1971. Women in the child-bearing age group, 20-34 years, were becoming a significant and apparently, a permanent part, of the workforce.

- (2) The need to free women from child care and household duties to enable them to participate in the workforce in a time of economic boom when their labour was essential to economic development became a concern of industry. A number of groups, including the Victorian Chamber of Manufactures (1970) lobbied for government provision of day care.
- (3) The activity of a number of individuals such as Joan Fry, Head of the Sydney Kindergarten Teacher's College, encouraged the government to investigate the need for quality day care for children of working mothers. (There had been substantial growth in the commercial day care sector, as little else other than private/informal child care was available).

As previously noted, State governments, on the whole, did not have policies of ensuring the widespread provision of day care : Hence, the pressures tended to be directed at the federal level. These pressures encouraged the government to undertake two major child care surveys. The first was undertaken by the then Bureau of Census and Statistics. Its Child Care Survey, 1969 clearly indicated that a large proportion of children under six years who were the responsibility of persons in the labour force were cared for at the homes of relatives or others, not in the child's home. Approximately 21,000 children or 7.8 per cent of the total 271,000 surveyed were cared for at a nursery, creche, or child care centre. Secondly, the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour and National Service published a series of Women in the Workforce booklets, including Report No.7 on "Child Care Centres" in January 1970. The Bureau defined child care as full day care for children of pre-school age, i.e. sessional care such as that provided by pre-schools was excluded as inadequate for the needs of working women. Its studies confirmed the lack of access to formal child care centres, with only 14,000 attending 555 centres, two thirds of which were located in Sydney and Melbourne. Only 40 of these centres received any government (state or local) support. While services in country areas were scarce, services in city areas were still inadequate. Almost without exception, the centres receiving subsidy catered for children from families with special needs, e.g. one-parent families, substantial economic needs, etc. The "needs" basis of state and local subsidies was well entrenched in funding policies.

Employers and business started to add their voice to those of other groups agitating for extension of services, arguing that work-based services would contribute to increased job satisfaction and reduced absenteeism related to

child care problems. However, it seemed that industries were not prepared to set up work-based services themselves. Their arguments were subsequently repeated and used by government as part of the justification for the Child Care Act of 1972.

The industry and business groups which were involved in lobbying at this stage included the Business and Professional Women's Association of Sydney and the Victorian Chamber of Manufactures (1970; 1974). The Victorian Employers' Federation expressed concern that married women, on the birth of their first child, would be lost to industry for at least five years and therefore industry had a "monetary as well as a national interest in helping provide adequate day-care facilities". (The Financial Review, 14th October 1969, Editorial).

Opposition to work-based child care centres or almost any form of day care came from organisations such as the Child Psychiatry Section of the Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (1971) and the NSW Association for Mental Health. The latter group concluded in their report Pre-school Centres in Industry (1971) :

Since it is clear that 'child minding' is inappropriate for the total development of the human infant, and since the trend for increasing numbers of married women to join the workforce is not showing any signs of reversing, the Federal Government should seriously consider urgent and tangible action to encourage mothers to stay at home to look after their own pre-school children. (p.41).

This group argued that day care would jeopardize the mental health of future generations. Their call for payment of allowances for mothers remaining at home to care for young children at least to the age of three replicated the argument put forward by the Democratic Labor Party years earlier.

Three areas of child welfare controversy were beginning to emerge in the early 1970s. relating to the care of infant children, pre-school children (3-5 years) and latch-key children. During this period, various women's groups were becoming vocal in their demand for day care and before and after school care. Such groups included Women's Electoral Lobby, the Union of Australian Women, Labor Women and Media Women's Action Group. When the results of the various surveys were made available, particularly those conducted by the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics and the Women's Bureau, the care of young children of working mothers was openly identified as a "problem"

and a legitimate area of government concern. The survey results gave these interested lobby groups the 'ammunition' they needed to 'force' a Government commitment at the federal level.

This commitment was given by Prime Minister Gorton at the opening of the Senate election campaign on 16th October 1970. Economic factors, the demand for female labour and the lobbying referred to above had at last had their effect. The Commonwealth's plan was to develop a network of child care centres, which aimed to contribute "to employee morale, reduce absenteeism among female employees and indirectly help productivity". The proposal was seen to be "an important advance in social policy which will be of considerable help to working mothers, their young children, employers and the community at large" (Fitzgerald & Crosher, 1971). The Government was anxious to point out that its proposal was certainly not designed "to encourage women to enter the work-force". (Lynch, C.P.D. (H of R), 2 April 1971, p.1419).

During this period, the media supported the groups demanding day care, including the women's groups. Their criticism of the lack of government action had been intense. The Australian Financial Review had published two major articles by Yvonne Preston (14 and 15 October, 1969). These examined the different State government financial support for pre-school and day care. It was highly critical of the Federal Government's conflicting policies and discriminatory practices :

... At present the system actively encourages a decrease in the number of full-time mothers, but actively discriminates against the development of something which can adequately take their place. (14 October, 1969).

Later, the media urged the implementation of the government's 1969 election pledge to set up a nationwide system of pre-school centres for the children of working mothers. (The Bulletin, 6 May 1972).

In the early stages of the development of the 'Gortongarten' proposal, the Government was clearly in two minds as to which portfolio day care should be assigned. Whilst its involvement in day care was consistent with its economic objective (of providing labour for the economic boom), there was also a concern about the welfare of latch-key children who were considered to be potential delinquents. (This "social welfare" content in children's services had been verbalised in policy statements made in respect of provisions made by the

Commonwealth for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory). Apparently, the dilemma could not be resolved and initially, the "Gortongarten" proposal was allotted as a matter for joint consideration to the Minister for Labour and National Service (Mr. Lynch) and the Minister for Social Services (Mr. Wentworth). Labour and National Service won out. The implementation of the proposal was postponed for two years, due to Government cutbacks as part of its anti-inflationary campaign.

It was not until just prior to the 1972 Federal elections that the Liberal Government announced its intention to provide financial assistance to help establish and operate non-profit child care centres, providing subsidies to allow centres to reduce fees for low income and special need families. Capital grants would be unmatched. Estimated cost of the scheme was to be \$5 million in the first year and \$23 million over three full years. In the second reading of the Child Care Bill, the Government estimated that 50 new centres would be provided, catering for an additional 3000 children. This would represent a 20 per cent increase in child care places and it was the Government's intention to "at least" maintain that growth rate in subsequent years. (Lynch, C.P.D. (H or R), 10 October 1972, p.2290). This represented a definite commitment to a certain level of service provision. The Child Care Act 1972 was passed in October 1972 to allow for implementation of these proposals.

It was evident that the Liberal Government of the late 1960's regarded their support for day care as a last resort — for children whose mothers needed to work, and for whom alternate child care could not be found. Its intervention corresponded principally with its own (or industry's economic goals — the need to increase the numbers of women in the workforce in a time of economic boom and, to a lesser extent, with its latent social goals — the need to create good citizens, reduce the possibility and incidence of delinquency etc. The problem of 'latch-key' children became a topical social problem and adequate, or quality day care was seen to be a solution. Despite the Government's introduction of the Child Care Act, 1972, to allow for support of day care, its residualist notion of welfare prevailed. When the Liberal party was to regain office in 1975, in different economic circumstances where women's labour was not needed, its attitude to the provision of day care, was to be considerably changed.

4. THE "WHITLAM" ERA — CHILD CARE POLICY 1973-1975

The Whitlam era was characterised by competing claims and clashes of groups with vested interests in particular forms of child care, namely pre-school and day care. This in itself created uncertainty about what form government child care policy should take. The uncertainty was increased by a downward turn in the economy and by early poor results from the Head Start evaluation. This coincided with International Women's Year in 1975 which focussed on the needs of women, including the issue of equality of opportunity in the workforce. The problems of competing claims and indecision were exacerbated by the Opposition's blocking of bills in the Senate, which frustrated attempts to quickly set in motion the new pre-school program and which diverted the government's attention from policies and programs to concern about political survival.

When the Whitlam Government took office, it brought with it raised community expectations arising from its 1972 election platform of broad social reform. Part of the strategy to achieve equality was its education policy, particularly that relating to pre-school "the area of greatest inequality in education". (Whitlam, 1977, p.275). The Party, or Whitlam in particular, regarded pre-school education as the greatest single aid in removing or modifying the inequalities of background, environment, family income, family nationality (in the case of migrant children) or race (in the case of Aborigines). The pre-school policy, at that point, constituted a compensatory approach to pre-school, or in Whitlam's words "the issue is not only education. It is part of the fundamental issue of equality" (Whitlam, 1977, p.275).

To give substance to Labor party commitment, Whitlam pledged \$40 million annually for about six years so that every Australian child could have access to one year of pre-school, not only in Canberra, "where the Commonwealth cannot escape responsibility", but also in the States where an average of only 20 per cent of children (3 per cent of children in New South Wales) attended pre-schools.

The Labor Party's attitude to day care differed from the child-oriented approach to pre-school education in that it was oriented towards working parents and under-privileged families. In fact, it was not till 1973 that the child care policy was substantially developed. It was at this point that the provision of day care was seen in terms of freeing women "to participate more fully in society". (The Australian Labor Party Platform), Constitution and Rules, 30th National Conference, 1973, p.15). The choice for women between motherhood as a sole career or combining it with participation in the

paid workforce was seen to be dependent upon the availability of proper child care facilities, payments for which were to be tax deductible. (Whitlam 1977, pp.275-6). During 1973, child care became very much part of the parliamentary discussion on a range of "women's issues" — sales tax on contraceptives, maternity leave for Commonwealth public servants. Women's issues increasingly became the subject of debate during the years leading up to International Women's Year. However, the 1973 Child Care Policy (as opposed to the Pre-school policy) still reflected the idea that children in day care were from "unfortunate" family circumstances. It was considered that day care centres should provide "counselling and education services for the parents in child care. These services would not be provided by professional workers" (p.15). This kind of "social work" approach did not characterise attitudes to pre-school.

It is however understandable that day care was seen at this time in residual welfare terms. The little formal day care that existed at that time, because of its scarcity, gave priority to children from families "in need". In a survey of applications to Sydney Day Nursery centres in a four week period in March/April 1971, it was found that "financial hardships and insecurity facing these families in the early child rearing years provide the major motivating force for the mothers to seek full time employment and thus require reliable child care facilities". (Szumer, 1973, p.7).

It was also noticed that there had been an increasing demand for places for children under two years, with this group representing 55 per cent of all (416) applications. Only 8 per cent or 34 children were able to be enrolled immediately with 78 per cent or 324 being placed on the waiting list. Surveys such as this and that of Faire (1974) which indicated that some migrant groups were sending their children to their original homeland to be cared for, may have contributed to the perpetuation of the 'welfare' nature of day care.

However, it was the need for pre-school centres that was to be the focus of the Pre-schools Commission established by the Labor Government in 1973. This commission, first promised in 1971, was to be responsible for the administration of the pre-school "program of national enrichment and national equality" as well as being concerned with developing child care facilities "in conjunction with pre-school centres, beginning in areas

where the need is most acute". (Whitlam 1977, pp.275-6). This policy, later developed into an "integrated services policy", was based on the assumption that "in the past there had been unnecessary duplication of resources in keeping child care and pre-school education separate — hence the need to combine these services wherever possible" (Commonwealth Department of Education, 1981, pp.275-6). There was a multitude of reasons for such a policy, including the fact that it appears that some parliamentarians could not distinguish between pre-school and day care, while others (including some, in the Labor Party) did not see day care as a major problem deserving equal attention with pre-school. Later, when Labor policy was expanded to include day care, integrated centres were seen to be cheaper means of providing services. Whatever the reasons for the development of this area of policy, integrated services were not achieved, partly because of the entrenched educational ideas inherent in pre-school.

Once in power the Labor Government's Minister for Education moved quickly to announce in February 1973 the establishment of an Interim Committee of the Pre-schools Commission chaired by Joan Fry to review pre-school education and child care in Australia and to recommend grants for the establishment and operation of pre-school and child-minding centres. The Education Department had replaced Labour and National Service as the department responsible for implementation of the Child Care Act of 1972, a move seen as indicating the area of government emphasis in its overall children's services policies, i.e. education before child (day) care. In the view of the women's movement, the needs of women were not given major consideration. (Game and Pringle 1977).

The terms of reference of the Pre-School Committee (pending its establishment under statute as the Australian Pre-Schools Commission) required the Committee to make recommendations to the Minister for Education as to the measures which the Australian Government should adopt to ensure that in the States, Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

- (i) the objective to be achieved over a period of approximately six years that all children were given opportunity to undertake a year of pre-school education;
- (ii) child care centres for children below school age were established to meet the needs of working parents and under-privileged families. (Australian Pre-Schools Committee, 1973, p.ii).

While the terms of reference appeared to be evenly weighted between pre-school and child care, women's lobby groups claimed that the recommendations of the Committee presented in November 1973 in its report, The Care and Education of Young Children, (the Fry Report) were not. The Report recommended that sessional pre-school should be made available to 70 per cent of children and child care to 10 per cent. "Sessional" meant three half-day sessions a week, "with some extended services for children in special need" (Fry Report, 1973, p.6). Many groups felt that this was insufficient provision for the children of over 100,000 women who would have worked had suitable child care arrangements been available (Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics 1969) or for the women already working whose children needed full day care.

This brought to the fore once more the long standing division between the pre-school and child care lobbies. The child care lobby, which consisted mainly of women's groups such as, Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL), the Women's Media Campaign, the Women's Liberation Movement, and Labor Women saw the appointment of Joan Fry as a conservative step. Her background was with the Sydney Nursery School Teachers' College, i.e., a tradition which viewed child care as "a rather unfortunate necessity — and certainly not as a right for all children and parents" (Brennan, forthcoming) — an attitude displayed by the Commonwealth Department of Education (undated - estimated date 1974).

Child care provides a service to families; child care programmes do not replace the rights and responsibilities of the parent there is no ideal substitute for home and family life for the young child (p.4).

Even though the Fry Report recommendations clearly appeared to favour the aims of the pre-school lobby, they too were displeased at the appointment of Fry to chair the Australian Pre-Schools Committee. From their perspective, her background aligned her with day care services, which included full day care for children under three years of age, a target population in which pre-school educators had little interest.

The report's recommendations, however, did appear to favour the provision of pre-school services and accurately reflected the Labor Government's early emphasis in overcoming inequality. It also reflected the professional background in education of the nine members of the Committee.

Subsequent moves by women's groups attempted to have the educational developmental emphasis reduced and the wider issues in the child care debate included

on the political agenda. Their action culminated in an attempt led by WEL, Labor Women and Elizabeth Reid, the Prime Minister's Advisor on Women's Affairs, at the ALP's Annual Conference in 1973 to have responsibility for child care matters transferred from the Education portfolio to Social Security "on the grounds that Social Security would be more concerned with the total welfare of children and their parents (especially working mothers)". (Spearitt 1979, p.30). They were unsuccessful in this move, described by Beazley as a "gross indecency" perpetrated behind his back "on the grounds that a lot of women want it". (Game and Pringle, 1977, p.57; Sydney Morning Herald 17.7.73). Despite Beazley's opposition, they were successful in persuading the government to change its child care policy to one which aimed at a comprehensive and planned provision of services throughout the country on a priority needs basis. This contrasted with the earlier emphasis of the previous government's Child Care Act of 1972 which meant that funding would go only to services instigated by local groups i.e., the submission model of funding, rather than planned introduction of services. They were also successful in having the importance of child care recognised as fundamental to women's rights. In policy, at least, this was a significant victory.

Thus, the changes in nature of the debate, which had existed prior to preparation of the Fry Report, now became strikingly evident before the report appeared at the end of 1973, although its terms of reference remained the same, despite the policy change. The women's lobby was successful in its demand that the Social Welfare Commission (SWC) examine the Fry Report in the light of changed Labor policy, platform and priorities, and prepare alternative proposals for budget planning. The SWC report, Project Care (July, 1974) criticised the Fry Report for placing too great an emphasis on pre-schools which were to integrate additional services such as day care into their centres. This disregarded the antipathy of pre-school service providers to day care which mitigated against such integration. A further criticism related to the stress in the Fry Report on formal training of centre directors or principals and staff which meant that the rate of expansion of services would, of necessity, be severely limited by the availability of trained personnel, i.e., quality rather than quantity.

Project Care challenged several of the Fry Report assumptions. The SWC team adhered to the principles of regional planning, community development, citizen participation and administration at local government level, while the members of the Australian Pre-school Association, authors of the Fry Report, supported existing state government bureaucratic structure and state-wide pre-school

organisations as the main administrative bodies. In other words, they continued to support the administrative system which had thus far failed to overcome inequality of access. The SWC team argued that a simple extension or expansion of the same services alone was not the answer. In fact, they argued, it could lead to even greater gaps between the educational 'haves' and 'have nots', and therefore they favoured introduction of a range of more appropriate services aimed at wider yet specific target groups. WEL had criticised the Fry Report as recommending "day care for the poor and pre-school education for all the rest" (WEL, 1974 cited by Matthews & Fitzgerald, 1975); the SWC Report recommended a mix of services including greater emphasis on centre based care in each local government area based on the needs defined by local residents and support staff and managed by them.

Local government was to be the means of implementing this policy. Commonwealth funds (both capital and recurrent assistance) were to be allocated to local government areas, which were ranked according to a needs rating, on a 0-4 year old per capita basis — the greater the need, the higher the per capita rate on a five point scale. Local government was then to disburse the funds according to locally decided priorities. This system would by-pass the States who had previously played the major role in decisions relating to service provision and allocation of funds, a move they subsequently fought in the High Court.

Project Care raised a number of significant issues :

- (1) The need for a national family policy was mooted. The authors considered that their recommendations relating only to child care needs "must be regarded as partial and fragmentary. A child care policy must be set in a broader context; one which takes account of housing, income maintenance, health, legal protection and education policies for the community as a whole". (p.13).
- (2) A child care policy they considered should be wide ranging, and relate not only to pre-school and day care provisions but should consider the changing needs of "all families with children too young for pre-school education and not requiring day care". (p.14). The authors noted several submissions which had expressed the opinion that "the period between the time the infant welfare services cease to be pertinent and the period when the child may enter a pre-school programme has been overlooked by policy makers". (p.18).

- (3) They acknowledged the existence of private home-based child minding and commercial centre based care and sought to suggest ways of improving the quality of care in these situations.
- (4) They explored in some depth the values and issues associated with providing different types of care. They considered for example, the pro and anti day care debate, advocating awareness of "the ultimate cost of the possible damage to children left in inadequate care because parents can neither get access to, nor afford, adequate care" (p.38).
- (5) In supporting a wider range of services, they, unlike the Fry Report, recommended that work based child care be eligible for funding, under certain conditions.

The Priorities Review Staff (PRS) was also asked to examine the Fry Report as well as the SWC's Project Care and did so in a paper Early Childhood Services. The PRS largely supported the SWC's recommendations, but were sceptical of local government's ability to administer the scheme. It favoured the SWC's determining priority areas of greatest need and involving the community in decision-making, both of which complemented the Labor Government's commitment to social reform.

In order to encourage submissions for funds, the PRS Report supported the Project Care proposal of employing Childhood Services Field Officers acting as catalysts who would help local groups (possibly including local government) initiate submissions. (This was the approach finally adopted).

The PRS report did not elaborate on reasons for its concern about funding arrangements. One can only deduce that the reason was their concern that rather significant changes were needed at the Federal level first in order to fulfil a new set of funding priorities. They suggested that "the detailed aspects of the program (be) left open for public discussion for a period of four months". (pp.5-6).

Two further matters regarding the PRS recommendations are worthy of note. First, the report stressed the importance of considering the child care program in a "broader context that recognised relationships with other aspects of Governmental policy such as child endowment, tax reform and so on" (p.7). It would appear that what was being suggested was a broader and more comprehensive policy approach to the needs of families with children, than

usually pursued. Second, a major criticism of the report (in hindsight) must be that not enough account was taken of the deficiencies and difficulties as well as the differences in State roles and administrative structure in relation to child care. The Priorities Review Report stated, that as an alternative to using local government administration, what was needed was,

... an approach ... at the state and community level that recognises different degrees of competence of local government, community groups, and state authorities and is able to develop an administrative structure within each state appropriate to the quality and type of organisations now in existence or likely to be set up in the future". (p.14).

Both the Priorities Review Staff and the Social Welfare Commission recommended the establishment of a Children's Bureau to replace the Australian Pre-school's Committee. The SWC recommended that the Bureau should be responsible to the Minister for Social Security, while the PRS recommended attaching it to a department with no vested interests in children's services. The dilemma was ultimately 'resolved' by placing a new body, the Interim Committee for the Children's Commission, under the control of Mr. Bowen, Special Minister of State and Minister assisting the Prime Minister in matters of child care.

When Labor was confronted with the 1974 federal election, a major promise related to early childhood care and education. The 1974 Labor Election platform reflected the new 1973 policy and the tentative proposals of the SWC which had not at that stage been presented to Parliament. Because of intense lobbying by women's groups, the government had become sensitive about day care, occasional and emergency care and work based care. Minister for Social Security (Bill Hayden), in a Policy Speech on 1 May, 1974 announced that Labor would introduce a major care and education program for all pre-school children, not just 4-year-olds, and estimated to cost \$130 m. in the first year. By 1980, all Australian children were to have access "to local centres designed to take care of their educational, health, psychological and other needs". The initiatives would include the removal of an anomaly in the Income Tax Act which impeded companies claiming child care provision as a tax deductibility.

If child care had attained political prominence prior to the election, it lost it soon afterwards. The economic situation meant the bringing down of a mini-budget in which Treasurer Crean announced a reduction in funding for children's services from \$130 million to \$34 million for a scaled down program. This was

subsequently increased, after intense lobbying to \$75 million for the full scale program. The drop from prominence is explicable in that the Labor Cabinet "fielded not one batter in the cause of the disadvantaged small child" (Preston, National Times, 29 July-3 August, 1974). Responsibility had by this time been transferred to Mr. Bowen, Special Minister of State and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister in child care matters. This was considered an uncontentious ministry, 'without vested interests in any specialised aspect of the program'. (PRS Report, 1974, p.2).

On 19 September 1974 the Minister announced the establishment of the Interim Committee for Children's Commission as an immediate step pending the introduction of legislation for the establishment of the Children's Commission itself. The future Commission was to be "charged with the implementation of an imaginative innovative and comprehensive program of diversified and integrated services ..." (Bowen, Ministerial Statement tabled in the House of Representatives, 19 September 1974; Australian Government Digest, 1 October-31 December, 1974, p.1249).

The Interim Committee, established on 29 October 1974, was to take over the responsibility for projects previously funded under the Child Care Act and the Interim Pre-School and Child Care Program not later than 1 January 1975. The terms of reference for the Interim Committee closely followed the recommendations of Project Care, except for those relating to local government. Instead, a proposal was made to the States to establish State-level committees, representing Government bodies, local authorities, voluntary organisations, consumer groups and the Interim Committee. The national allocation of funds was to be on a State basis according to certain criteria aimed to reduce inequalities in service provision within each State and among the States. The State level committees were to make recommendations for funding according to these criteria. By December 1974 three States — South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania — had established State-level committees. (Bowen, Ministerial Statement, 5 December 1974, Australian Government Digest, 1 October-31 December 1974, pp.1274-1276).

The reliance on State-level committees to initiate services was to become a barrier to a speedy development of the Program because the response from the committees differed widely. Also, the Commonwealth overestimated its influence over the State governments in the development of child care facilities, the Commonwealth program was to encourage expansion of existing services, flexibility, and innovative services but State regulations and State

departmental "requirements" frequently operated against such approach.

During the course of 1975, it became evident that the government was again trying to restrain child care expenditure, particularly capital expenditure. The government's statements about capital commitments and government ownership reflected a change in policy, away from Beazley's earlier statements (C.P.D. (H or R) 17 August 1972, p.384) about government initiated and developed centres to community controlled services of a non-capital nature. For example, Bowen's statements such as "... the Australian government is anxious to keep out of the real estate business" and "... there is a greater emphasis in the projects for this year on capital intensive programs than we would like to see in future ..." (Ministerial statement, 11 April 1975, p.53; Australian Government Weekly Digest, 7 April 1975 to 13 April 1975).

During the second reading debate on the Children's Commission Bill, the Opposition presented its major criticisms of the new body. The Opposition argued that the Bill :

- (i) failed to present a comprehensive philosophy on the national approach to child care and education;
- (ii) consequently, the Bill failed to consider the needs of children at home with their mothers;
- (iii) the government failed to take account of the total range of policies which affected families' social and economic conditions;
- (iv) the procedure of distinguishing between child (day) care and pre-school led to a "narrowing of public awareness and national concern";
- (v) program budgeting on a three yearly basis should have been introduced to allow for proper planning and orderly expenditure of funds. (Wilson, C.P.D. (H of R) 13 May 1975, p.2610).

The major criticism was that direct funding would by-pass the States and would not take account of their wishes and priorities and ignore the existing child care structures. (Consultative Committees were to achieve this function). Senator Guilfoyle reiterated the concern of the Victorian Government in the Senate debate. There was significant and lengthy debate about by-passing the States with the Opposition trying to force an amendment which would necessitate the use of section 96 of the Constitution. This debate has proved to be most

significant in that it foreshadowed the approach the Liberal Government would take in pursuing in child care (as well as in other fields) its new federalism policy. Wilson stated that :

on coming to government, we will review the whole method whereby the Australian Government delivers its child care and pre-school education program ... we will devise a mechanism to provide for a more meaningful involvement of the people concerned at all levels and all forms of government. (C.P.D. (H of R), 29 May 1975, p.3077).

Despite these objections, the Bill was not opposed. The Act received assent on 11 June 1975 but was not proclaimed before the change of government took place in November 1975.

It was during the debates on the Bill that a new Liberal policy appeared. They proposed a 'Children's Bureau' not to administer programs or control funds, but to 'monitor community trends, assist in evaluating the effectiveness of on-going programs, conduct multi-discipline research, disseminate information to and from the community and provide advisory services to parents and community groups'. (Wilson, C.P.D. (H of R), 13 May 1975, p.2162). The administration of any program would remain with the relevant federal departments.

This proposal did not appear in the Liberal election policy speech of 1975. While the Liberal Party supported the need for pre-school and child care, it did not detail the precise nature of its commitment. The one commitment that was made was that 'spending on essential education, health and welfare programs will be protected against inflation. At the same time, a great many improvements in administrative efficiency can and will be made' (Fraser, Policy Speech, 27 November 1975, p.4).

CHAPTER 5

THE "FRASER" ERA — CHILD CARE POLICY 1976-1982

Upon coming to office, the Liberal-Country Party government made three major changes to the federal child care program. Essentially child care was to be regarded as "welfare" and the changes which took place were consistent with the government's approach to welfare services. Child care was one of the first "welfare" areas to suffer cuts, termed "savings" achieved by slowing down previously approved capital projects and "curtailing further development of the program this [1975-76] financial year through the approval of only a limited number of urgent Child Care services in the highest priority needs areas" (Prime Minister's Press Statement, 4 February, 1976). The second major change was to transfer responsibility for the Childhood Services Program, as it was then called, from the Prime Minister's Department and the Interim Committee for the Children's Commission to the Office of Child Care attached to the Department of Social Security. This indicated that child care was again viewed as "welfare". The third change was to alter the nature and shape of the program, as well as containing its growth and, over time, reducing the funding of certain forms of services which were seen to be inconsistent with the government's ideological perspective or economic goals.

The stated and emphasised principles of the policy are : first, the primary responsibility for children's welfare and child care belongs to parents; and, second, the public responsibility for child and family welfare rests with the States. In line with these principles the Commonwealth policy on children's services has been 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.

1. THE "NEEDS" POLICY

The new government policy was to be selective in defining which children had the need for services. "Need" was seen in terms of providing child care in order that families could be economically and socially independent. Prime Minister Fraser explained the new policy by saying :

... we would want [to] see that a greater part of Commonwealth funds goes to providing genuine child care for those in need — for single parent families who wish to be independent; who want to work and cannot work because they cannot get adequate child care facilities. (C.P.D. (H of R) 3 June, 1976, p.2919).

The Prime Minister also defined the 'child care problem' in terms of distribution of funds, claiming that funds had not been spent in areas of need :

... There is also some indication that the funds spent so far have not been spent in areas of need but in some of the more affluent areas of Australian cities. That being so, it does not indicate the sort of priorities we would want to pursue if the options were completely open to us. (C.P.D. (H of R) 3 June, 1976, p.2919).

The notion of "need" in child care policy reflects basic expectations of who should be responsible for children. Children's services are seen, at worst, as a threat to the family, in the sense that families who can avail themselves of a child care service may abdicate their responsibility and, at best, as a "necessary evil" as a means of family support.

Our prime aim is however to help children within the bounds of their families wherever possible. However much we may discuss Government activity in child care, it is after all the parents who are responsible for their children ... it is not up to Governments, or voluntary bodies to try to take over ... it is merely up to them to ease the burden. (Coleman, 1976b, p.10).

The approach of the present government to child care policy has therefore been very much a residualist one with the government only supporting services "as a last resort". Children's services are seen as a means of keeping families together, if they are at risk of breaking down and/or freeing mothers of poor families to work, so those families can become economically independent.

Senator Guilfoyle (1979 a) reiterated this in a speech at the International Council on Social Welfare :

The Children's Services Program is also seen by the Government as playing an essential role in the support of low-income families. As a result, the focus of this program has been changed by the Government. While the commitment to pre-schools has been maintained, the Commonwealth is now aiming for a flexible network of services for more disadvantaged children. Particular types of services funded include day care, emergency, outside school hours and vacation care. (p.8).

Although there was recognition of a need for a range of care services, policies were to focus on economically disadvantaged families. This policy position was confirmed in a recent statement by the present Minister for Social Security, Senator Chaney :

... the Commonwealth's policy was to give priority to people in particular financial need. We believe that the assistance available through the Children's Services Program, which can be used to reduce fees for the users of services, should be channelled as a first priority to those in greatest economic need. (Press Statement, 28 September, 1981).

The fact that other families than those in economic need may not have the means or may not be in circumstances which enable them to provide experiences and opportunities of benefit to their child is not reflected in this statement. Nor is there any discussion about the potential of all children or the needs of special children, such as gifted children.

The concerns of the late 1960s and early 1970s about children's services as a tool in overcoming inequality or maximising individual potential are no longer discussed in policy. Nor is there articulated interest in the importance of early childhood, a position forcefully advocated by UNESCO(1980). Nor is concern expressed about the quality of care children are receiving in informal and often illegal child minding arrangements. It has been stated clearly that the present government is not aiming toward "universal, free of charge, provision of services". (Coleman, 1980a,p.3).

The Government policies to provide for children of families most in need "is in accord with the Government's attitude to all assistance programs which it funds for individuals or groups". (Coleman, 1978, p.11). The categories of "needy" include :

- (a) children of low-income families
- (b) handicapped children
- (c) geographically isolated
- (d) Aboriginal
- (e) migrants
- (f) children considered 'at risk' or likely to be admitted to residential care
- (g) children of single working parents
- (h) children from districts with inadequate level of community resources and services.

While services for these selected groups may have priority in policy, a more limited group of children are eligible for individual subsidies which allow them to attend services. In terms of the Child Care Act 1972, Section 12, 'special need' children eligible for subsidy include :

- (a) a child other than a child who normally resides with both parents in the same household;
- (b) a child either of whose parents commenced to reside permanently in Australia for the first time within three years before the date of the application for the enrolment of the child at the child care centre concerned;
- (c) a child either of whose parents is a contributor in respect of whom section 82S of the National Health Act 1953-1971 applies or is a person in respect of whom a determination under section 82U of that Act is in force; or
- (d) a child either of whose parents is sick or incapacitated; ('parent', in relation to a child who has a step-parent, foster-parent or adoptive parent, includes that step-parent, foster-parent or adoptive parent, but does not include the corresponding natural parent).

The rationale for deciding on certain categories rather than others has never been made explicit; the only rationale offered relates to children whose families are in financial need and wish to become economically stable by working. The lack of clarity of the term "needs" has been acknowledged by the Office of Child Care but is regarded as an advantage in permitting flexibility in policy :

... there is no specific definition of need within the Children's Services Program. This is not necessarily a defect, as the Government does not wish to be locked into a rigid definition which could well exclude many because of lack of flexibility. (Coleman, 1978, p.15).

During the early years of the Office of Child Care (1976-1978), some acknowledgement was given to an unmet need for day care, created by the increasing participation of women in the workforce and "a strong employer preference for married women". (Coleman, 1978, p.14). Such a situation had highlighted deficiencies in child care services in 1972 and had apparently continued until 1978, when there was seen to be a "significant unmet need for good quality, low cost, supervised day care for the child 0 - 6. There is also a significant demand for vacation and outside school hours care". (Coleman, 1978, p.7).

This list of children "in need" has remained basically unchanged since 1976 with the exception of (h) which is now excluded from Ministerial or departmental speeches. The "need" appears to be related mainly to the individual child, rather than to the environment beyond the child's family. The objectives of providing services for children other than those whose families are economically disadvantaged are presumably based on certain assumptions which have not been spelt out. For example, what is the object of giving priority of access to migrant children? Is the purpose to help them assimilate, to teach them English or a combination of these and other reasons? Why are single working parents a "needy" category. Is it assumed that they do not have access to a care network? This may be so for some, but it also applies to many two-parent families.

Services for these selected groups have not been funded on a "universal" basis, that is to say, for example, not all services for migrant children have been supported. While this may not be important of itself, what is important is that the criteria on which decisions relating to funding of services within or between categories of "disadvantaged" or "in need" have never been made explicit.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

(a) The Office of Child Care

Appropriations for the Children's Services Program remained with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet until June 1977, when the program became the responsibility of the Minister for Social Security. The Office of Child Care was established within that department to administer the program. The move reflected the government's concern that it should be able to directly control the policy and program. (Fraser, C.P.D. (H of R) 31 March, 1977, p.792).

The role of the Office of Child Care was to provide policy advice to the government on issues relating to children and their families and to administer the Children's Services Program. In addition to being a policy advisory and financing body, the Office of Child Care was to "survey needs, identify gaps and design a program which will accurately reflect childhood and family needs". (Coleman, 1976b, p.42).

A Federal-State Government Consultative Committee was ultimately established to recommend to the Minister for Social Security projects in accord with

state priorities and federal policy. There was no community representation on these committees. As the program expanded to incorporate new services, new Commonwealth-State committees were formed for particular services, funded on a via-the-state basis, for example, vacation care. Community representatives were members of these committees.

(b) Commonwealth - State Relationships

By contrast with the previous Labor Government which had accepted a major funding responsibility for the existing and prospective pre-school and day care centres it constructed, the new government took the position that it should only "assist" with funding and supplement the activities of State Government and voluntary agencies.

Marie Coleman, Director of the Office of Child Care, explained the government's policy which, she said, was entirely consistent with that of the Liberal Government of the late 1960s and early 1970s :

It is not the Commonwealth's aim to take over the basic responsibilities of the State Government in children's services. The Commonwealth is merely aiming to contribute to such services giving priority to areas of need. (Coleman, 1976 b, p.42).

This policy was reiterated by the Minister for Social Security, Senator Guilfoyle in an Open Letter dated 2 August, 1976 where she stated :

... it should be made clear that it is not the Commonwealth's aim to take over the basic responsibilities of the State Governments in children's services. Rather, the Commonwealth's aim is to contribute to such services, but particularly to high priority services for groups and communities with special needs. It is interesting to note that from State Budget papers, it would appear that State Governments appropriated \$45 million on children's services from their own resources last year compared to the \$64 million spent by the Commonwealth.

The policy of "assistance" is confirmed in a later, but undated Information Paper by the Office of Child Care, which states that the program "complements the activities of State Governments and co-operative planning and funding arrangements exist between Federal and State Governments". (p.1).

By 1981, Federal-State relationships had become a major concern in children's services policy :

The Commonwealth's main policy concern in the area of children's services has been to supplement the activities of the States for particular groups of children, and for particular services which it sees to be of national importance. The Commonwealth sees its role as a stimulus to innovative approaches to the provisions of services for children and their families. (Coleman, 1981a, p.5).

The present Government has in developing its policy been aware of two matters. The first relates to its own established role of providing cash benefits (Family Allowances, previously Child Endowment) for children. This, rather than provision of services, is considered its major responsibility. Secondly, it was conscious of the long history of the State Government involvement in children's services (namely substitute care), but more recently their involvement and responsibility for licensing and registration of services such as pre-schools and day care centres. Coleman (1978) summarises these concerns :

Briefly, the Commonwealth Government has responsibility for the payment of cash benefits to families and individuals. The States have responsibility for matters to do with the care and protection of children (and others). There is a difference between power to legislate, and a mandatory responsibility to provide services. Many services for children are, in fact, provided by non-government organisations, especially in the day care field. The Commonwealth's primary emphasis of activity in respect of young children lies in the payment of benefits (Department of Social Security) and the financing of children's services (Office of Child Care).

The States, however, are responsible for the licensing and registration of many services for young children. Commonwealth and State policies must take account of each other in respect of services. One cannot proceed effectively without regard for the other. (p.23).

However, the provision and funding of services is not as simple as it would appear. Commonwealth-State relationships and different legislative responsibilities have complicated the development of children's services.

Some State Governments (particularly Victoria) have been unhappy about the Commonwealth initiating children's services policies and programs. While at

times some States had been reluctant to co-operate (for example, in the setting up of consultative committees under the Children's Commission proposal, at other times they have been lobbyists for the provision of new services (for example, the Family Support Scheme).

The lack of co-ordination between the Commonwealth and the States has proved on many occasions a hindrance to the development of the Children's Services Program and partly accounts for some of the underexpenditure of the program, particularly the capital component. The effects of this problem, already identified early in the program's life by Beazley (C.P.D. (H of R) 1 August, 1974, p.942) severely hampered the program. This difficulty was acknowledged by Senator Guilfoyle in her statement to the Estimates Committee in 1977 when she said :

... approvals that had been given throughout the year and in years prior to last year had not called on the grants that had been approved. In particular, State governments had not called on funds that had been approved for them for services and other organisations in the community had not availed themselves of the funds last year. That was the reason for the amount that had not been used of the funds that were available last year. (Guilfoyle, Senate Estimates Committee D, 15 September, 1977).

Despite the wide-ranging provision of services under the Children's Services Program, the only existing legislation under which the Commonwealth Government operates in children's services is the Child Care Act 1972, where "child care" is defined as "the care of pre-school aged children at a time or times during the day when they are not being cared for in their own homes or in the homes of other persons". Child care (day care) centres are funded direct to organisations under the provision of this Act, with other services being funded under the provisions of the appropriate Act. These other services can be funded under one of the following arrangements :

- (1) under block grant arrangements with State Governments (for example, pre-schools) ;
- (2) under ministerially determined guidelines (for example, family day care schemes and neighbourhood children's centres) ;
- (3) under individual Ministerial determinations, (for example, Lady Gowrie Centres).

The provisions of the Child Care Act, 1972 designed for the establishment and operation of large day care centres, are not appropriate for the range of services now funded. Moreover, the Act allowed only funding of services direct to non-profit organisations, and excluded funding of State Governments. Despite repeated promises for the repeal of the Child Care Act 1972 and the introduction of more comprehensive legislation and some action toward achieving this (namely, consultation with State Premiers on draft legislation), the proposed Children's Services Bill has not been introduced into Parliament.

(c) Role of Voluntary Sector

The previous policy of relying on community groups to establish and operate services has been maintained by the present government and is expected to continue in order to help community groups help their own members. (Coleman, 1980a, p.3).

However, the government has stated that its involvement could have the dangerous effect of distorting the nature of service provision by the government sector :

If it becomes obvious that certain types of project or activity in the voluntary sector are in some way 'approved' by government, in that they are more likely to attract a share of the available funding, then it is likely that such projects or activities will proliferate at the expense of others and one of the most important functions of the voluntary sector — of reflecting the priorities and preferences of communities — will be distorted and community initiative will be narrowed. (Chaney, 1981, p.4).

Another feature of the Children's Services Program in recent times had been that of evaluation, consolidation and review. The purposes of these activities may be related to the assessment of achievement of policy aims or may be concerned with accountability matters or financing arrangements or perhaps all of these. Whatever the reasons, there have been several effects :

- (1) new funding formulae for existing services have not been developed until evaluation results are available. (In the case of Family Day Care, an evaluation, promised in 1977, still has not been completed and the funding formulae have not been revised) ;

- (2) some 'new' forms of service (for example, toy libraries) could not be funded until results of pilot studies were available. In some cases this has taken several years).
- (3) total program funds have been contained until some data is available about distribution of and access to services, with few new services being supported.

3. RESTRUCTURING OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRAM, 1976 - 1982

The policy announced in 1976 has resulted in a significant restructuring of the Children's Services Program. Changes have been effected in two main ways : a reduction of the growth of funding commitment over time ; and, concurrently, a reorientation of the nature of the program, away from mainstream services such as pre-school and day care to other forms of family support services.

The analysis of funding under the Program (see Section 4 of this chapter) shows that the following restructuring has taken place :

- (a) reduction of funds to pre-schools;
- (b) containment of total funds in money terms and decline in real terms, and decline in capital expenditure;
- (c) diversification of projects.

(a) Change in Commitment to Pre-Schools

As stated in the previous section, the Commonwealth accepted the major financial responsibility for the development and operation of pre-schools from the beginning of January 1974. Recurrent assistance to existing pre-schools was generally calculated on the basis of the difference between State government grants and award salaries of approved staff employed in the centres. For pre-schools constructed with capital funds from Federal Government sources, that government would provide one hundred per cent of salaries of approved staff. (Coleman, 1976a). Other recurrent assistance was available for 'special need' children (handicapped, isolated) and for pre-school advisors. Moreover, the capital commitment to pre-schools was substantial (see Table 20).

The Liberal/Country Party, when previously in office during the late 1960s and early 1970s, had consistently maintained that pre-school education was, except for special groups, an education matter and therefore a responsibility of the States. The only exception to this stance was contained in the policy speech of McMahon, then Prime Minister, in the election campaign of 1972, announcing several new measures planned to be introduced in particular areas of education. The plan was to provide \$25 million a year over the following three financial years for capital and recurrent expenditure to assist the States in their efforts to expand pre-school education. (Speech notes, 1972).

The pre-school policy of the Fraser Government was explained in 1976, when the Office of Child Care was established. The Prime Minister said (May 1976, cited by Coleman, 1978) :

Over the past three years pre-school education has had a considerable boost through the provisions of substantial Commonwealth funds. Approximately 75% of Commonwealth expenditure on children's services has gone to pre-schools in the States.

Many children from needy families, however, have been not only without the advantage of pre-school education but too often without the benefits of basic adequate care. It is essential to concentrate the Government's resources in areas of greatest need, and the Commonwealth wishes to give greater emphasis to child care for children of needy families in the development of the Children's Services Program (p.15).

Although this policy change was announced, the precise nature of what was meant by 'care' was not explained. During the early years of Fraser government three changes were made to pre-school funding. First, a decision to cease capital funding for new projects was made in 1976 and funds for previously approved projects were paid out during June 1978. (Guilfoyle, 1977). No funds for capital have been available since that time. Second, as from January 1976, the basis of recurrent funding was reduced to seventy-five per cent of agreed staff salaries, including advisors. Third, as from January 1977, pre-schools received recurrent funding via a Commonwealth block grant to the States. The recurrent funding in 1978-79 was substantially less than that of the previous year and has been held constant until 1980-81, when it was reduced further. The effects of these changes have been to stop the creation of new pre-schools (except in the A.C.T. where centres are funded from Commonwealth Department of Education funds) and to force existing pre-schools to find other sources of recurrent assistance (parents, state or

local government or other sponsors).

(b) Containment of Funds

The second strategy adopted has been to contain in money terms and reduce in real terms the total commitment to the Children's Services Program, beginning in early 1976 :

As announced yesterday, savings of about \$9 million in the Childhood Services Program will be achieved in 1975/76. This will be possible as a result of the slowing down of some already approved capital projects and by curtailing further development of the program this financial year through the approval of only a limited number of urgent Child Care Services in the highest priority needs area. (emphasis added) (Prime Minister's Press Statement, 4 February 1976, "Departmental Spending").

Most services funded under the program have not received increases in recurrent funding to keep pace with inflation. The base rate of operational grant for Family Day Care, for example, has remained the same since it was fixed in 1977. Another aspect of the containment of funds has been the decline in capital funds (Table 21). In addition, there have been few approvals for funding of new services since December 1980 and as at September 1981. Approximately five hundred applicants were advised in September 1981 that there would be "no funds available for them and their applications will be regarded as having lapsed". (Coleman, Senate Estimates Committee, 25 September, 1981).

(c) Reduction of Recurrent Expenditure

Allocations to the Children's Services Program have been reduced in those areas where cost increases in recurrent expenditure were 'automatic' that is, built into the funding formula, as is the case with funding of centre-based long day care centres. Neighbourhood Children's Centres and Family Day Care schemes have been favoured above the establishment of long day care centres (See Sweeney, 1981, p.5). The establishment and operating costs of the former services are cheaper than those of the latter. Figures available indicate that this change in policy has been implemented. Family Day Care has several advantages to government :

- (i) the funding formula is such that the level of funding for a scheme can be held relatively constant and there are no facilities for cost adjustments;

- (ii) there is no capital commitment, except for a small equipment grant;
- (iii) the government does not contribute to the carer's wage, except in so far as subsidising special need children;
- (iv) the scheme is flexible and can be contracted or expanded according to workforce needs and age distribution of the population.

(d) Diversification of the Children's Services Program

In the early 1970s, there were two major components to the funding — pre-school and centre-based day care. Since 1976, there has been some shift in policy from providing "basic adequate care", to assisting new, innovative approaches to children's services "especially where costs are low and where use of existing facilities is maximised" (Coleman, 1980b, p.2; See also Coleman, 1980a, p.6). The Children's Services Program has provided funds for a very wide range of services and for a much wider target group, i.e. not only for pre-school children (birth up to the age of school entry) but also for teenage youth and families 'in need'. The following services are now, or have been funded, from the program since 1976 :

- Neighbourhood Children's Centres
- Children's Services Development Officers
- Vacation Care
- Before and After School Hours Care
- Work-Based and Work-Related Child Care
- Occasional Care
- Family Support Scheme
- Child Care in Women's Refuges
- Youth Services Scheme
- Aboriginal Children's Services (1978-79)
- (funded since then from general allocation).

Other services such as Welfare Rights Officers, Community Information Centres and specific services for target groups, for example, handicapped children, children 'at risk' are also funded but detailed data on these "components" are not immediately available.

The government has explained the need for such diversification of the program in terms of it (the government) "playing an essential role in the support of the disadvantaged". (Guilfoyle 1979b, p.19). In this way, it is stated, the program can be flexible enough to meet a variety of needs of older children (up to 18 years of age) and their families.

Diversification in conjunction with containment of total funds and in fact reduction in real terms, has meant that funds have been transferred from the existing programs to these other services.

4. COMMONWEALTH EXPENDITURE ON THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRAM

The Children's Services Program (CSP) of the Commonwealth Government came into operation in March 1973. The first full year of its operation was the financial year 1973-74 but full allocation of funds to the Program was not made until the following year (1974-75).

In terms of the allocation of funds by the Commonwealth Government, the period of growth in the Children's Services Program occurred in the space of two years, from the inception of the Program in 1973-74 to 1975-76. Since that year the Program has undergone a gradual modification and diversification towards a wider range of services. In the allocation of funds over this period five distinct trends are evident.

First, there has been a gradual shift of funds from pre-schools to other components of the Program. Second, expenditure of capital nature has been reduced, with a corresponding increase in recurrent expenditure. Third, the component of "other than pre-school" services has been diversified into new programs. Fourth, overall expenditure, at constant prices, has been reduced. Fifth, expenditure as a proportion of the total Government expenditure and as a proportion of its expenditure on Social Security and welfare has been reduced.

The first trend can be seen from the data in Table 20. In 1974-75 expenditure on pre-school contributed 81.97 per cent of the total allocation to the Program. Since then it has gradually declined to 41.31 per cent (estimated) of the total allocation for 1981-82.

The peak year for capital expenditure was 1974-75 when 47 per cent of the total expenditure was allocated (Table 21). Since then capital expenditure has decreased and the decrease has been particularly substantial since

1978-79. In 1979-80 capital expenditure contributed only 8.5 per cent of the total expenditure allocated to the Program.

Table 22 shows the effect of the diversification in the non pre-school component of the Program into new areas of activity. In 1976-77 the estimated expenditure on centre-based day care constituted 77.8 per cent of the "other services" component, with a further 6.8 per cent allocated to family day care schemes. By 1980-81 the day care and family day care component amounted to 65.8 per cent of the "other services" : 43.7 per cent allocated to day care also included allocations to multifunctional centres; and family day care accounted for 22.1 per cent. The next largest allocation was to family support services— 10.4 per cent of the non-pre-school allocations.

In constant 1973-74 prices the total allocation to the Children's Services Program has been reduced from \$47,818 million in the peak year of 1975-76 to \$33,229 (estimated) in 1981-82 (Table 23), an effective decrease of 30.5 per cent on the 1975-76 figure. However, because of the shift of funds in the Program from pre-schools to other services, the allocation to the "other services" component has increased from 1975-76 to 1981-82 by \$6.839 million, or 54 per cent on the 1975-76 figure. By contrast, the allocation to pre-schools in that time has decreased by \$21.427 million, or 61 per cent on 1975-76 figure.

Finally, in order to place the Commonwealth expenditure on the Children's Services Program in a wider perspective, it needs to be noted that the expenditure on the Program constitutes only a minute proportion of the total Commonwealth expenditure. Since the inception of the Program in 1973-74 the highest allocation of funds occurred in 1975-76 when the allocated amount of \$63.970 million constituted 0.293 per cent of the total Commonwealth expenditure of \$21,861 million for that year (Table 24). Since then the funds allocated to the CSP have gradually decreased, both in constant prices and as a proportion of the total Budget expenditure. The estimated expenditure of \$80.10 million on the CSP for 1981-82 constitutes only 0.196 per cent, or less than one-fifth of one per cent of \$40,862 million. As a proportion of the total Commonwealth expenditure, the allocation of funds to the CSP for 1981-82 constitutes a decrease of 33.1 per cent since 1975-76.

The allocation of funds to the CSP, as a proportion of Commonwealth expenditure on social security and welfare has also decreased in that time. As can

be ascertained from Table 24, the allocation to social security and welfare, as a proportion of the total Commonwealth expenditure has remained steady (with only marginal variation) since 1977-78, at 27.8 per cent. However, allocation to the CSP, as a proportion of expenditure on social security and welfare (of which it is a part) has decreased from 1.272 per cent in 1975-76 to the estimated 0.705 per cent in 1981-82, or a 44.6 per cent decrease on the 1975-76 figure.

It needs to be noted that various changes have occurred in the Children's Services Program since its inception and especially since 1975-76, such as extension of support into the areas of family support, services for school-age children and youth under the age of 18 years. Support given to these services and/or their effectiveness is beyond the scope of the analysis in this paper. Whatever the merit of these programs might be, it is interesting to note that the diversification of activities in the CSP has occurred in the years, not of increasing budget allocations, not only of a steady, constant allocation of funds, but with a gradually decreasing budget.

Table 20 : Expenditure Trend Under the Children's Services Program by Major Components, 1973-74 to 1981-82 (\$ Millions)

Year	Expend. on Pre-Schools	Expend. on other Services	Total Expend.	% Pre-School of Total	% Other Services of Total
1973-74	6.479	2.495	8.974	72.20	27.80
1974-75	37.077	8.153	45.230	81.97	18.03
1975-76	47.029	16.941	63.970	73.52	26.48
1976-77	49.018	18.068	67.086	73.07	26.93
1977-78	45.994	25.203	71.197	64.60	35.40
1978-79	32.750	31.086	63.836	51.30	48.70
1979-80	33.090	36.136	69.226	47.80	52.20
1980-81	31.183	42.851	74.034	42.12	57.88
1981-82(a)	33.090	47.010	80.100	41.31	58.69

Source : Department of Social Security, Annual Report, 1980-81, p.142.
(a) Budget estimate, 1981-82.

Table 21 : Recurrent, Capital and Total Expenditure Under
the Children's Services Program, 1973-74 to
1981-82
(\$ Millions)

YEAR	EXPENDITURE	% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE
	<u>RECURRENT</u>	
1973-74	5.423	60.4
1974-75	23.852	52.7
1975-76	41.611	65.0
1976-77	48.428	72.2
1977-78	57.213	80.4
1978-79	57.617	90.3
1979-80	63.341	91.5
1980-81 (est)	69.113	93.4
1981-82 (est)	78.954	98.6
	<u>CAPITAL</u>	
1973-74	3.551	39.6
1974-75	21.378	47.3
1975-76	22.359	35.0
1976-77	18.658	27.8
1977-78	13.984	19.6
1978-79	6.219	9.7
1979-80	5.885	8.5
1980-81 (est)	4.921	6.6
1981-82 (est)	1.146	1.4
	<u>TOTAL</u>	
1973-74	8.974	100.0
1974-75	45.230	"
1975-76	63.970	"
1976-77	67.086	"
1977-78	71.197	"
1978-79	63.836	"
1979-80	69.226	"
1980-81	74.034	"
1981-82 (a)	80.100	"
 <u>Source</u> : Coleman, 1981 b.		
(a) Budget estimate, 1981-82.		

Table 22 : Expenditure and Estimates for Services other than Pre-Schools by Service Type.
1975-76, 1976-77, 1980-81
(\$ Millions)

SERVICE TYPE	Expenditure 1975-76 (i)		Estimate 1976-77 (i)		Estimate 1980-81 (ii)		Estimate 1980-81 (iii)	
		%		%	(a)	%		%
Day Care	12.779	76.0	17.859	77.8	16.600	45.9	—	—
Day Care and multi-functional services	—	—	—	—	—	—	18.717	43.7
Family Day Care	.565	3.4	1.570	6.8	7.120	19.7	9.458	22.1
Outside school hours care	.427	2.5	.495	2.2	1.570	4.3	1.467	3.4
Vacation Care	.406	2.4	.630	2.7	1.353	3.7	.915	2.1
Multi-Care services	1.885	11.2	1.403	6.1	—	—	—	—
Family Support Services (includes projects in addition to Family Support Scheme)	—	—	—	—	3.930	10.9	4.477	10.4
Adolescent Services	—	—	—	—	1.000	2.8	—	—
Services for Disabled Children	—	—	—	—	.965	2.7	1.556	3.6
Services for Migrant Children	—	—	—	—	.490	1.6	—	—
Services for Aboriginal Children	—	—	—	—	.925	2.6	—	—
Child Care in Women's Refuges	—	—	—	—	—	—	.924	2.2
Youth Services Scheme	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.007	2.4
Other projects	—	—	.986	4.3	—	—	—	—
Other(Grants to organisations such as Community Child Care and for research, pilot projects, etc.)	.757	4.5	—	—	2.177	6.0	—	—
Field staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.169	2.7
Research & Evaluation	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.080	2.5
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.081	4.9
T O T A L S	16.819	(100)	22.934	(100)	36.130	(100)	42.851	(100)
Sources : (i) Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 3 December 1976, p.3279. (ii) Guilfoyle, 1980 ; (iii) Coleman, 1981b.								
(a) Day Care data includes allocations for services providing for migrant children, Aboriginal children and disabled children, work-based child care and day care for children of families in stress.								

Table 23 : Expenditure Trend Under the Children's Services Program, by Major Components, in Actual and Constant (1973-74) Prices(a), 1973-74 to 1981-82 (\$ Millions)

YEAR	PRE-SCHOOL		OTHER		TOTAL	
	Expenditure	Constant 1973-74 Prices	Expenditure	Constant 1973-74 Prices	Expenditure	Constant 1973-74 Prices
1973-74	6.479	6.479	2.495	2.495	8.974	8.974
1974-75	37.077	32.409	8.153	7.127	45.230	39.536
1975-76	47.029	35.154	16.941	12.663	63.970	47.818
1976-77	49.018	32.622	18.068	12.025	67.086	44.647
1977-78	45.994	26.983	25.203	14.786	71.197	41.769
1978-79	32.750	17.810	31.086	16.905	63.836	34.714
1979-80	33.090	16.533	36.136	18.055	69.226	34.587
1980-81	31.183	14.076	42.851	19.344	74.034	33.420
1981-82 (b)	33.090	13.727	47.010	19.502	80.100	33.229

Source : Table 98, Department of Social Security, Annual Report, 1980-81,

(a) The deflator used was the Consumer Price Index.

(b) Budget estimates, 1981-82.

Table 24 : Commonwealth Budget Outlays 1974-75 to 1981-82 (estimated) (Total Outlays, Social Security and Welfare, Children's Services Program)

YEAR	(1) Total Budget Outlays:	(2) Social Security and Welfare		(3) Children's Services Program		
	\$M	\$M	% of (1) Total Outlay	\$M	% of (1)	% of (2)
1973-74	12,229	2,487	20.3	8.974	0.073	0.361
1974-75	17,839	3,712	20.8	45,230	0.254	1.218
1975-76	21,861	5,030	23.0	63.970	0.293	1.272
1976-77	24,123	6,367	26.4	67.086	0.278	1.054
1977-78	26,738	7,425	27.8	71,197	0.266	0.959
1978-79	29,012	8,095	27.9	63,836	0.220	0.789
1979-80	31,660	8,783	27.7	69.226	0.219	0.792
1980-81	36,274	9,917	27.3	74.034	0.204	0.747
1981-82 (est) (a)	40,862	11,357	27.8	80.100	0.196	0.705

Source : (1) and (2) Budget Statements 1981-82, Paper No.1, p.287 ;
(3) Department of Social Security, Annual Report 1980-81, p.142.

(a) Budget Statements, 1981-82, Paper No.1, pp.73 and 101.

5. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRAM IN OPERATION

In this section the operation of the Children's Services Program is examined in the context of the overall extent and use of child care services in Australia. The statistics are the latest available at this time (February 1982); they refer in most cases to 1979, 1980 and 1981, that is approximately to the same period as the survey on child care arrangements in Australia conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1980) which was examined in Chapter 2.

(a) Services Supported through the Children's Services Program

The components of the Program, as at June 1981, and the estimated allocation of funds are shown in Table 25. As can be ascertained from that Table, the largest proportion of allocated funds for the year 1980-81 was the block grant to the States for pre-schools (42.1% of funds). The second largest was the allocation of funds to day care centres etc. and to family day care schemes (38.1% of all funds). Family Support Services came third with 6.0% of funds.

It should be noted that the Table lists projects within each identified component. It also lists persons whose salary is paid through the CSP as "projects". Two other aspects of the Table need to be noted. First, the data refer to projects receiving support, or approved to receive support through the CSP; it is not known therefore how many projects were actually supported financially by the CSP. Second, the Table does not give any information on the number of children using the services supported by the CSP.

(b) Who Uses the Services Supported by the Children's Services Program?

From the available data it is difficult to state with certainty how many families and/or their children use the services supported by the Commonwealth funds provided under the CSP. The ABS survey of child care arrangements of June 1980 distinguished between informal and formal care arrangements but did not specify the auspices under which formal care services were provided. It can only be assumed that the category "formal care" included both the services supported by the funds from the CSP as well as those provided from other sources and commercially operated child care services.

In April 1979, the Office of Child Care carried out a sample survey of services supported by the CSP and then analysed the results obtained from 108 returns : 30 returns from family day care schemes (FDCs) and 78 from day care centres (DCs). The results of the survey giving the attendance pattern are

shown in Table 26. The table contains the actual data from the survey of April 1979, as published (Coleman 1981 b). As can be ascertained from the data, both types of care (FDCs and DCs) provided more than regular type of care. Apart from occasional and emergency care many of them provided also before and after school care. In FDCs before and after school care was provided in 27 of the 30 schemes analysed (90%), and in DCs 18 out of the 78 surveyed (23%) provided before school care and 10 (12.8%) provided after school care.

The average number of hours attended per child per week was 26 in FDCs and 19 in DCs, and for children in regular care the hours were 31 and 19, respectively. Both types of care were used for children under 2 years of age, their proportion of all children attending being 22% and 20% respectively.

Table 25 : Projects Supported through Children's Services Program (Estimated number of projects receiving (or approved to receive) Children's Services Program Support.

SERVICE TYPE	Projects & Services as at 30 June 1981(1)	Estimated Expenditure for 1980-81 (2)	
		\$M	% of total
Day Care centres, neighbourhood centres and other child care services	598	18.717	25.3
Family Day care schemes	172	9.458	12.8
Outside school hours care	228	1.467	2.0
Children's Services workers	58	1.169	1.6
Research and evaluation	13	1.080	1.5
Playgroup support	17	not identified	
Services for disabled children	69	1.556	2.1
Family Support Services Schemes	173)	
Family Support Services (not funded through Scheme)	61) 4.477	6.0
Youth Services Scheme	71) 1.007	1.4
Youth Services (not funded through scheme)	8)	
Miscellaneous	54	2.081	2.8
Vacation care	Not included in DSS Annual Rep.	0.915	1.2
Child Care in Women's Refuges	Not identified	0.924	1.2
Sub Total ...	1,522	42,851	57.9
Pre-Schools (paid through block grant to the States)	4,183	31.183	42.1
Total ...	5,705	74.034	(100)

Source : (1) Department of Social Security, Annual Report 1980-81, p.58.
(2) M. Coleman, Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning, August 1981.

Table 26 : Child Care Services Supported by CSP :
Services Provided and Pattern of Attendance, April 1979

No. of Services in Sample	Family Day Care Schemes (N=30)					Day Care Centres (N=78)					
Service and/or attendance characteristics	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)a	(5)a	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)b	(5)b	(6)
Type of care provided	30	22	13	27	30	58	42	17	18	10	78
Average No. of children attending per week	69	7	3	26	99	55	30	4	13	41	73
Full-time child equivalent (based on 40 hours per week)	55	2	4	8	65	36	4	1	3	3	34
Average hours attended per child per week	31	10	43	11	26	26	5	10	8	4	19
Average daily attendance	54	3	2	23	77	39	8	1	10	17	43
% of children under 2 yrs of age	29	35	28	0	22	20	25	30	0	0	20
Minimum No. of hours provided to any child during survey week	1	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Maximum No. of hours provided to any child during survey week	168	45	168	48	168	53	49	46	30	15	53
<p>Source : M. Coleman, <u>Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning</u>, August, 1981.</p> <p>(1) Regular ; (2) Occasional ; (3) Everyday ; (4)a Before & After School ; (4)b Before School ; (5)a. Total ; (5)b. After School ; (6) Total.</p>											

Table 27 : Estimates of Children's Attendance in Day Centres and Family Day Care Schemes Funded (or Approved for Funding) by the Children's Services Program, 1980

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Attendance Characteristics (Average per week)	Mean Wages— OCC Survey, 1979 FDC DC		Estimated Services at October, 1980 FDC=158 DC=518 Total Attendance		Estimated Total Attendance (3)+(4)
Children attending per week	99	73	15,642	37,814	53,456
Full-time equivalent(40 h.p.w)	65	34	10,270	17,612	27,882
Daily attendance	77	43	12,166	22,274	34,440
Children in regular care	69	55	10,902	28,490	39,392
Source : M. Coleman, <u>Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning</u> , August 1981, Table 1.2.1.					

Table 28 : Children in Care with Special Characteristics in Regular Care, 1980.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Children in Regular Care— Average p.w. FDC=69 DC=55		Estimated Services at October, 1980 FDC=158 DC=518		Total Children (3)+(4)
	%	%	N	N	N
With <u>only one</u> special characteristic (other than both parents working)	11	13	1,199	3,704	4,903
With <u>2 or more</u> (including both parents working)	28	33	3,053	9,402	12,455
With <u>at least one</u> (other than both parents working)	39	46	4,252	13,105	17,357
Whose <u>only</u> characteristic is both parents working	57	32	6,214	9,117	15,331
With <u>any</u> special characteristic	95	78	10,357	22,222	32,579
Source : M. Coleman, <u>Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning</u> , August 1981, Table 1.3.1.					

On the assumption that the attendance patterns in the surveyed centres and schemes were representative of all centres and schemes supported by the Commonwealth we have extrapolated the attendance data to the estimated number of day care centres and family day care schemes as at October 1980. At that time there were 518 such child care services and 158 family day care schemes in operation (Coleman 1981 a, p.15). The results of these calculations are shown in Table 27. It would appear at that time a total of 53,456 children would have attended per week, filling in 27,882 full-time equivalent places, a ratio of 1.92 to 1. Average daily attendance was 34,440 children, or close to two-thirds (64.4%) of total and the number of children in regular care was 39,392 or 73.7 per cent of all children attending.

Estimated attendance of children with special characteristics is shown in Table 28. The percentages in column (1) and (2) are taken from the survey of April 1979 and the numbers in columns (3), (4) and (5) have been extrapolated in the same way as the attendance numbers in Table 27. We do not know whether the percentages of children with special need characteristics refer to regular, occasional, emergency or before-and-after school attendance, but from the information available to us it seems that most of them would have been in regular attendance. For this reason we have related the percentages to the numbers of children in regular attendance. It would appear from these calculations that the highest numbers of children with special need characteristics attending centres or schemes were children whose both parents were working. This was particularly the case with family day care schemes where 57 per cent had those characteristics.

In Table 29 a further extrapolation of data has been made, translating the percentages of children with special needs characteristics who attended family day care schemes and day care centres (from Coleman 1981 b) into attendance numbers. The base for calculating the estimated numbers of these children were the estimated numbers of children in regular care as shown in Table 27. It needs to be noted that the special needs characteristics are not mutually exclusive as a child might have had more than one such characteristic.

Table 29 : Estimated Attendance of Children with Special Needs Characteristics

Estimated No. of Children in regular attendance (per week)	FDC's 10,902		DC's 28,490		TOTAL 39,392	
Special Needs Characteristics :	%	N	%	N	N	%
Children who —						
.were isolated	0.3	33	0.3	85	118	0.3
.had a sick or incapacitated parent	4.0	436	3.0	855	1,291	3.3
.had 2 parents both unemployed	1.0	109	1.0	285	394	1.0
.had a lone male parent	4.0	436	1.0	285	721	1.8)
.had a lone female parent	22.0	2,398	20.0	5,698	8,096	20.6)
.came from a family whose main language was not English	4.0	436	6.0	1,709	2,145	5.4
.were handicapped	2.0	218	2.0	570	788	2.0
.were Aboriginal	1.0	109	1.0	285	394	1.0
.received a fee rebate (for low income)	25.0	273	37.0	10,541	10,814	27.5
.had both parents in paid employment*	57.0	6,214	32.0	9,117	15,331	38.9
Source : M. Coleman, <u>Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning</u> , August 1981, Table 1.4.1.						
* The percentage of children in this category was shown in Table 1.4.1 as 65% and 46% respectively. However, in the same publication, Table 1.3.1 (the source of information for Table 28 in this paper) the percentages shown were 57% and 32% respectively. For reasons of consistency, the latter percentages have been used in this Table.						

From these estimates, it appears that the most common single characteristic was a child whose both parents were in paid employment (38.9% of all children), the second most common characteristic was a child receiving a fee rebate (27.5%) indicating a child from a low-income family. The third was a child from a one-parent family (22.4%). The other special needs characteristics were rather of a low magnitude.

(c) Services Supported by C.S.P. and other Child Care Provisions

Subject to the previously expressed caution about the tentative nature of the estimates shown in Tables 27, 28 and 29, we have attempted to compare these data with the data obtained from the ABS Survey of June 1980, so as to obtain some indication of the part the Children's Services Program plays in

the overall provision and use of child care services in Australia. The results of these comparisons are shown in Tables 30 and 31. These results must be regarded only as approximations, as the basis for each of the two sources of data was different. Also, the CSP data refer to a survey carried out in April 1979 and the ABS Survey took place in June 1980, although it may be assumed that the pattern of use of child care would not have changed much in that period.

The comparisons in Tables 30 and 31 have been made in relation to only four characteristics of children in care : all children under 12 years of age not attending school ; children whose both parents were employed ; children whose at least one parent was born in a non-English speaking country ; and children of one-parent families. Other comparisons were not possible because of the irreconcilable bases of data, or absence of corresponding data in one of the surveys.

It can be easily ascertained from Table 30 that the numbers of children attending day care centres and family day care schemes supported by CSP constitute a very small proportion of children under 12 years of age not attending school in each of the four groups of children. The highest proportion is shown to be of the children from one-parent families (10.5%) and the lowest from immigrant families of non-English speaking parent or parents (0.9%).

The role of the CSP in the overall provision of child care can be seen more clearly from Table 31. On our calculations, children attending regularly day care centres and family day care schemes supported by the CSP accounted for 63 per cent of all children using formal care other than pre-schools. At the same time, children attending the CSP supported services (other than pre-schools) whose both parents were employed constituted 58.1 per cent of all children in formal care other than pre-schools. Children of immigrant parents (non-English speaking) constituted only 13.1 per cent of all children in that group using formal care other than pre-schools.

The ABS Survey of 1980 did not give information on the use of formal/informal care by children from one-parent families. However, from the available data it appears that children from one-parent families— as a group of children with special needs characteristics— were using the CSP supported services more than any group of children with other special needs characteristics. The percentage of children who received a fee rebate (27.5%), suggest that children from low-income families were the other group that might be using

CSP supported services. However, because of the lack of appropriate data it is not feasible to make a comparison with the data from the ABS Survey. It is likely that a proportion of children in CSP supported services who received fee rebates came from one-parent families.

Table 30 : Children under 12 years of Age Not at School :
Patterns of Care

	N	%
1. <u>Children under 12 years, not at school</u>	1,128,000	100.0
Main type of care — informal	496,000	44.0
— formal	203,100	18.0
— pre-school	140,500	12.5
— centre, etc.	62,500	5.5
In Centres, etc. supported by CSP - average regular care (est.)	39,392	3.5
2. <u>Children whose both parents employed</u>	284,300	100.0
Main type of care — informal	179,000	63.0
— formal	61,800	21.7
— pre-school	35,400	12.5
— centre, etc.	26,400	9.3
In Centres, etc. supported by CSP - regular care (est.)	15,331	5.4
3. <u>Children whose at least one parent was born in non-English-speaking country</u>	235,600	100.0
Types of care used — informal	144,500	61.3
— formal	44,000	18.7
— pre-school	27,600	11.7
— centre, etc.	16,400	7.0
In Centres, etc. supported by CSP - regular care (est.)*	2,145	0.9
4. <u>Children of one-parent families</u>	84,000	100.0
Types of care used (informal and formal)	45,000	53.6
In Centres, etc. supported by CSP - regular care (est.)	8,817	10.5

Source : (1) Child Care Arrangements, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0
(2) M. Coleman, Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning, August 1981.

* Children from families whose main language was not English.

Table 31 : Children under 12 years of Age Not at School in Regular Care in Child Care Centres and Family Day Care Schemes

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)			
Children under 12 years NOT attending school	Children in group N	Children in formal & informal care N	Children in formal Centre etc. Care (other than pre-school) N	Children in DC's & FDC's supported by CSP (in regular care) N	%		
					of (1)	of (2)	of (3)
All Children	1,128,000	699,100	62,500	39,392	3.5	5.6	63.0
Children whose both parent employed	284,300	240,800	26,400	15,331	5.4	6.4	58.1
Children whose at least one parent was born in non-English speaking country	235,600	188,500	16,400	2,145	0.9	1.1	13.1
Children from one-parent families	84,000	45,000	Not known	8,817	10.5	19.6	Not known
<p><u>Source :</u> <u>Child Care Arrangements Australia, June 1980; ABS Cat.No. 4402.0</u> <u>M. Coleman, Children's Services Program : Funding and Planning, August 1981.</u></p>							

The policy of the CSP also states that priority of access to services supported by the CSP be given to children with certain special "needs" characteristics. These have been listed earlier (p.87). From the limited available data it is difficult to see with certainty whether the aim of the Commonwealth Government to give priority of access to child care for children with special needs characteristics is reflected in practice. Our tentative estimates seem to indicate that apart from children of one-parent families and children of low-income families (who often may be the same children), children with the other special needs characteristics do not appear to figure prominently among the children using the CSP supported services. Availability of more comprehensive information on the use of these services would give a better indication whether the stated aim of Government policy was, or was not being achieved.

CHAPTER 6

THE UNRESOLVED ISSUES IN SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

This paper has been written for the purpose of providing an overview of the issues currently under debate in relation to early childhood and, more particularly, in relation to the care of young children.

It will be evident from the foregoing description and analysis that the development of services for young children, especially pre-school and care facilities, has taken place, and continues to take place, in the context of a diversity of theories, a diversity of interests, a diversity of lobby and pressure groups, and a diversity of ideological, political, economic and social perspectives, even religious perspectives and beliefs.

Unavoidably, theories, interests and perspectives have been competing with one another and often are found to be in conflict. In such a situation, development of a cohesive, coherent and consistent policy and services is difficult, especially so as theories and interests change with time. Not the least problem is the absence of a clear responsibility by governments for the provision of services for young children. Yet, there is now sufficient evidence which suggests that the care of young children cannot, and perhaps should not, be carried out solely by the institution which society traditionally expects to carry out this task — the family.

This chapter sets out to demonstrate, albeit briefly, some of the reasons why the issue of services for young children remains an issue for the community and its government, or governments, to solve, if not for some noble humane reasons, then for reasons of the society's future.

(a) Debate on Children's Needs and Rights

Numerous studies of children and their development have contributed to our knowledge of children and their needs. However, many of the theories of child development are idealistic or, indeed, utopian because they tend to ignore the socio-economic realities of life.

For this reason, however scientifically valid such theories might be, they become moral precepts, advocating what ought to be the case and giving little weight to what is the case, or what feasibly could be the case. The child under study tends to be seen, if not in a vacuum, then in a kind of laboratory in

which the control of all variables affecting the child's development has been assured, and the means necessary to meet the child's needs have been taken for granted. There are also fundamental differences underlying the theories of child development, stemming from the differences in assumptions about the nature of man and the conditions of social life. These have been discussed in Chapter 3.

However, one issue in the theories of child development stands out clearly. It is an agreement that the early years of the child are crucial to the child's future development. This being so, it is appropriate to ask whether the assumptions currently held in society about the "best" way of caring for young children are valid. For example, can the family, as currently constructed, ensure the kind of care for the young child the society expects from it? Has the family the necessary personal and material or even temporal resources to carry out this task? What kind, if any, of exposure of the child to a wider community is necessary to ensure an adequate basis for the child's development?

There is also a broad agreement among the theorists and researchers on child development that while the primary parent-child relationship in the child's early years is important, the institution in which the child spends his or her early years — the family — cannot, and in some views should not, meet the child's needs satisfactorily by itself. In the more conservative views the society has to step in at times and intervene for the sake of the child's health or safety; if necessary using the power of the law of the state. In more progressive views the responsibility for the nurture and care of the child should be shared between parents and society and the child should be exposed to a wider social environment early, not as a matter of necessity but as a desirable or even essential condition for the child's growth and personal as well as social development.

Thus in the conservative views societal intervention for the purpose of securing young children's needs is substantiated on the grounds of existing or expected pathology in the family. The intervention then takes place in the name of protection and/or prevention. The society's role is residual for the intervention takes place only if the family is seen not to be carrying out its responsibility for the care of the child in a manner society expects from it. In the progressive views the child's needs are translated into rights and hence become legitimate claims on society. Any services that are provided for children by the society are universal, although more attention might be

given to some children in the form of positive discrimination or compensation so as to secure an equity in the access to services.

(b) Theories in Application

In practice, the diverse views on children's needs and rights and on parental or societal responsibilities often merge. For example, most contemporary societies have accepted children's rights to education as from the age of five, six, or in some countries seven years. The responsibility for fulfilling these rights has also become a mandatory responsibility of parents and the state.

For younger children the theories of children's needs have been translated into the institution of kindergarten or more recently into programs of "play groups". These programs have been accepted as "developmental" and therefore desirable for all children, although (as is the case in Australia) it is not mandatory upon the State to provide them and upon parents to ensure that their children receive these services.

Provision of "child care" has been and continues to be perceived as a substitute for the "real thing", as a rather regrettable necessity. Hence because kindergarten has been accepted as a developmental form of care (or education) it has also been accepted as a universal need or right, supplementing parental roles and introducing the child to a wider social environment. By contrast, "care" remains a "necessary evil" and continues to be perceived in a residualist perspective, often with a stigma such a perspective carries with it for the recipient.

The division of views between "pre-school" and "care" may have some validity and in practice different expectations are held of each. However, whether the division should continue may be open to doubt. Nevertheless the division between the two types of service continues, although the reasons for it may be financial, traditional and political. The division was questioned by the short-lived Interim Committee for the Children's Commission which at the time stated that services for young children were to be provided as a

recognition of the fact that the care and development of children are inextricably related, especially in the early years, and that no rigid distinction should be made between educating children and caring for them. (L. Bowen, Ministerial Statement 19.9.74, The Children's Commission, AGPS, Canberra, 1975).

And the Royal Commission on Human Relationships (1977) re-emphasised that view by saying in its report,

we believe that child care services should be available for all parents to supplement the care they can provide for their own children. These services should not be seen as a welfare service, nor as a crisis service, but as a right to serve the needs of the child and parents, just as education is available to the school-age child. (Final Report V.4 p.37).

These views, in the Australian context, are now history and they were only views — never a policy. The services for young children continue to be provided in the divided form : Pre-schools are "education"; other forms of care are "welfare". Pre-schools when they are provided are seen as desirable but also necessary for other reasons, e.g. parents' needs; other care services are provided mainly because they are seen to be necessary. Thus while pre-schools are seen as a desirable goal in itself, other forms of care are seen in instrumentalist perspective, as a necessary means to achieve another end.

There is also very little said today about children's rights; rather, more is said about children's needs, however these needs may be defined and determined. Consequently, it is not fashionable to speak of universal services, as such services are regarded as wasteful and something the community cannot afford, especially in times of economic scarcity. Resources, however, are always scarce, but more often than not "scarcity" means a set of priorities in which a particular service implies a low rank.

(c) Child Care Services : Welfare or Social Parenthood?

Irrespective of theories, opinions, government policies or moral exhortations, it is evident from empirical data that child care by other persons than the "person responsible" is now prevalent — it is not an exception but the norm. There are at least two reasons why this is, and is likely to continue to be the case : participation of women in the workforce and the situation of the family.

(i) Women in the Workforce

As the statistics in Tables 5 and 6 indicate, the number of women in the workforce has increased considerably over the last decade. A closer examination of the trends in the labour market also indicates that while the

majority of women work in lower-level occupations and many of them in part-time jobs there has been a significant shift of women into higher level occupations and a comparatively lesser increase in lower-level (semi-skilled and unskilled) occupations. Furthermore, the age composition and educational qualifications of women in respective age groups (Table 7) suggest that the trend towards greater participation of women in higher level occupations is likely to continue.

These trends in the labour market have considerable implications for the issues of child care. It is evident that women are becoming a more significant work-force, both in numbers and skills, and therefore less dispensable than in the past. It may be expected, therefore, that the demand for child care will grow and it will grow more among younger and better educated women. Child care (provided women continue to bear children) is then likely to have to be accepted by the society as a necessary "production cost" because on the cost/benefit scale this may be more cost efficient than any attempts to keep women away from the labour market.

(ii) Child Care and the Family

While the issue of child care has been related to a large extent to the increasing participation of women in the workforce, a more appropriate perspective for considering the issue would now be to relate child care to parents in employment. A one-income family has been in decline for several years, first, because women want to work and, second, because many of them have to work. For the majority of families with dependent children two incomes are a necessity because one income cannot make the family unit economically viable. Once the notion of the basic wage had been abandoned the structure of rewards in the labour market and the needs of families with dependent children have become disparate. There can no longer be any illusion or pretence that one income at the level of the average male weekly wage or below it is now sufficient to ensure a satisfactory standard of living for a family with dependent children. Currently (1982) the average male weekly wage is in the vicinity of \$300 but in order to manage repayments of a loan on mortgage for an ordinary family home, the family needs an income of at least \$500 a week, plus a substantial amount of money for the deposit.

It is evident from the ABS Survey of 1980 that working parents were using child care arrangements most. But the families in which only one parent was in employment also used child care arrangements, both formal and informal, although

their children in formal care were mostly in pre-schools. Thus parents' employment was not the only reason for children being in care. We cannot comment on what these reasons might have been because we have not yet reached this stage of our research.

One of the results of the ABS Survey that stands out was the relationship between the family income and the use of child care. The families on higher incomes were using child care to a much higher degree, both formal and informal, than those on lower incomes. Correspondingly, families in which neither parent was employed showed the lowest use of child care and it may be assumed that the cost of child care might have been a factor in their case, as well as the availability of parents' time. The information we have examined on the use of child care in care centres and family day care schemes supported by the Children's Services Program suggests that the proportion of children from low income families might be higher in those centres and schemes than in the overall use of formal care. However, considering the fact that services supported by the CSP account for only a fraction of the total cost of child care the equalising factor is probably insignificant. The cost of child care is borne mainly by the parents themselves.

The overall pattern of usage of child care suggests that child care arrangements have the characteristics of a public utility rather than "welfare" and perhaps it would be more appropriate to consider child care in that light. There are many reasons why the contemporary family seeks outside child care arrangements : single parenthood, geographical location, economic conditions, or parents' employment. It may have to be accepted that the contemporary family can no longer carry the full responsibility for its children as it no longer can take full responsibility for its aged.

Demographic factors and urban change have contributed to the increasing isolation of many nuclear families and have affected the context of child rearing.

In addition to changes in family structure, increasing urbanization and particular patterns of urban spread in Australia's cities have added to the "family isolation". What are the likely consequences of these trends for young children?

It is appropriate to quote here the observation made by the Royal Commission on Human Relationships with reference to child care :

The first years of life are now recognised as vital in establishing a basis for physical, educational and intellectual well-being. Children need nurture at home but they also need social contact outside the home. Young children are not best served, even in ideal circumstances, by a total dependence on the mother, particularly if the father's work precludes him spending much time with the child.

It is clear to us that there are in Australia hundreds of thousands of women who, whether they work or not, have not rejected their children and their mother role, but who feel they need help in meeting their responsibilities for children under school age. In our present society the family has been isolated to such an extent, we believe it is essential that the community should share in the nurture of young children by offering child care services (p.36).

In taking this view the Royal Commission has inferred that the fear expressed in some quarters from time to time about parents' abrogating their responsibility towards children if the society shared this responsibility by providing child care services was unfounded. It is an important observation for except in modern industrialised societies "social parenthood" has been practised in most societies throughout history and was an important link between the family and the community. The difficulties that many families with dependent children now experience, and the extent of informal child care arrangements made by parents suggest that the concept of child care services as a form of social parenthood rather than "welfare" may be worthy of consideration.

(d) The Role of the Commonwealth in the Provision of Children's Services

The question that arises in relation to the Commonwealth Government's involvement in services for children is whether that involvement has introduced a new element, new perspective on child welfare, or whether it runs a danger of falling into a residualist mode and thus becoming a "service for the poor" as States' services have been? If it is the case, as it has been repeatedly asserted, that the responsibility for child (and family) welfare is the responsibility of the States, why has the Commonwealth become directly involved in those services, especially in relation to services for young children of pre-school age?

In Table 32 we have listed the times at which the Commonwealth has entered the field of services for young children; the branch of the Government which accepted the responsibility or took the initiative; the precipitating factor or event for the action; the sources of demand for the action; and the outcome of the events. It can be easily ascertained from these data that the

reasons for Commonwealth entry into the field of services for young children have been substantially different from those of State governments. During World War II the reason was to enable married women to enter the workforce in essential industries. It was a similar reason during the 1960s. In the late 1960s and early 1970s children's rights became the focus of attention and the rights of women was an added and reinforcing factor. The changes introduced in 1976 were again substantiated by the Government's view on the economy and national priorities and by its philosophy on family and children's services.

The common factor in major Commonwealth responses and/or initiatives has been national interest, perceived according to circumstances : in terms of national security (World War II), biological survival (the element of "populate or perish" in the immigration program in the 1950s), or economic production (the element of "produce or perish" in encouraging women to enter the workforce in the 1960s). For example, the plans for child care centres announced during the Senate election campaign of 1970 were to contribute "to employee morale, reduce absenteeism among female employees and indirectly help productivity".

Thus, historically, the reasons for Commonwealth involvement in services for young children have been essentially different from the reasons of the States. The reasons have been similar to those for Commonwealth involvement in such areas of activity as : management of the economy, defence, communications; and, in the social sphere, income maintenance and care of the aged, invalid pensioners, widows and supporting parents, and family laws.

In all these areas the Commonwealth has a clearly defined responsibility and the power to act. Correspondingly, the recipients of services have legitimate claims on the Commonwealth, their status and their criteria of entitlement to service being defined by age, legal status, physical condition, or field of activity in the economy. Commonwealth involvement in the services for children, by contrast, appears to be the "odd man out", and even the Child Care Act 1972 is more a "statement of intent" rather than a document conferring clearly defined rights and responsibilities on the respective parties. At best, the Commonwealth has been a "reluctant actor", prepared to act when national interest called for action but at the same time disclaiming the responsibility to act. As the list in Table 32 indicates, most of the Commonwealth responses came about after demands for action had come from various sections of the community or pressure groups. The shifts of responsibility through numerous ministries and departments also suggest that actions

TABLE 32 : COMMONWEALTH INVOLVEMENT IN SERVICES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

YEAR	AUSPICES/RESPONSIBILITY /INITIATIVE	REASON FOR INVOLVEMENT/ PRECIPITATING FACTOR	DEMANDS/PRESSURES FROM :	RESULT/ACTION
1930s	Department of Health	Health of Young Children in Inner Cities	The National Health and Medical Research Council reports on "increasing stress that the de- pression (of the 1930s) precipitated on the physical as well as the moral well-being of inner city children"	Establishment of and assistance to Lady Gowrie Centres in all States
1943	Department of Health	National Security : National military and economic emergency requiring women to enter essential industries	Australian Association of Pre-School Child Develop- ment; Federal Labor Women's Council	Grants to State Kinder- garten Unions; Creche Association of Victoria; Sydney Day Nurseries and other organizations
1940s- 1960s	Department of Interior	Commonwealth responsi- bility for pre-schools in its own territories: ACT, NT, Papua NG, Jervis Bay	Introduction of services similar to those already provided by some States	Grants to pre-schools in own territories with large Aboriginal enrolment
1950s	Department of Interior	National economic and population needs	Outcome of the migration program	Pre-schools/child care for children of immigrants housed in Commonwealth Hostels

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TABLE 32 continued ...

YEAR	AUSPICES/RESPONSIBILITY /INITIATIVE	REASON FOR INVOLVEMENT/ PRECIPITATING FACTOR	DEMANDS/PRESSURES FROM :	RESULT/ACTION
1960s	Department of Labour & National Service	Needs of economy Demand for female labour in industry Concern for disadvantaged children Perceived inequities between states in pro- vision of pre-school (mainly by Opposition in Parliament)	NSW Professional and Business Women's Associa- tion; industry groups, e.g. Victorian Chamber of Manufactures; pre-school lobby groups, e.g. Australian Teachers' Federation	Establishment of Women's Bureau in Department of Labour and National Service Conduct of two child-care surveys Grants to pre-school Teachers Colleges, increase in scholarships for pre- school training Grants to pre-schools (in States) with large Aborig- inal enrolment
1970-72	Department of Labour and National Service; Prime Minister	Political : especially Senate Campaign of 1970; Needs of economy Recognition of lack of day care services as result of findings of child care surveys	Pre-school lobbies Pre-School Action Cam- paign in NSW Women's groups lobbying for day care	Promise of financial support to increase number of day care centres Child Care Act 1972
1973	Department of Education	Increase of women in workforce Concern for dis- advantaged children	Competing demands of pre- school and day care lobby groups	Establishment of Interim Committee of Australian Pre-schools Commission Grants to pre-schools as well as day care Fry Report presented November, 1973

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TABLE 32 continued ...

YEAR	AUSPICES/RESPONSIBILITY /INITIATIVE	REASON FOR INVOLVEMENT/ PRECIPITATING FACTOR	DEMANDS/PRESSURES FROM :	RESULT/ACTION
1974-75	Special Minister of State and Minister Assisting Prime Minister in Child Care matters/Interim Committee for Children's Commission	To reconcile competing demands of lobby groups	As for 1973 — Women's groups demanded more support for day care Groups included WEL, Labor Women	January 1974 — Interim Pre-school and Child Care Program Social Welfare Commission report <u>Project Care</u> , July 1974 Priorities Review Staff Report, <u>Early Childhood Services</u> , 1974 September 1974 — Interim Committee of Children's Commission legislation presented never proclaimed; broadened child care program
1976	Department of Social Security Office of Child Care	Changes in economy Unemployment Recognition of family needs, poverty, disadvantaged	Sections of population especially business and industry, demanding curtailment of public expenditure on health, education and welfare. Pressures for return of women to "home and family" so that unemployment can be reduced	Abolition of Interim Committee of Children's Commission Gradual decrease in funds for broadened Children's Services Program together with cutbacks for particular services, e.g. pre-school; discretionary allocation of funds; introduction of a number of pilot projects, family support services

would have been taken not so much as a matter of policy but rather as political expediency. As a result, services for young children provided by the Commonwealth have had a mark of instrumentalism, being provided as a means to an end rather than as a value in itself. It seems they have been provided to serve the war effort, to meet the demands of industry, or the demands of particular interest groups, or to ensure the survival of the party in power. The children themselves, as it were, have been rather incidental in this process.

(e) The Children's Services Program : the Reality and the Potential

The Children's Services Program, having been introduced through an Act of Parliament (Child Care Act 1972) which was more a statement of intent rather than legislation that would place clear responsibility on the Commonwealth, has undergone considerable changes since its inception. After a brief period during which action took place towards providing services for young children with a degree of universality the Program has acquired a residual character. Although the range of services supported by the CSP has been extended, the "needs" principle gives the Program a characteristic of preventative services or compensatory services rather than developmental services. Also, the discretionary character of the allocation process makes the parents and their children into supplicants rather than legitimate claimants.

The effect of the "needs" principle is that the Commonwealth supplements rather than complements the residual character of services provided for children and families by the States. Thus, apart from creating certain problems of Commonwealth/States relations about the question "which branch of government is responsible?", the Program runs a danger of achieving little in overcoming inequalities of access to services existing in the community.

Certainly, there are children and families who are more in need of services than others and they should have priority of access to services. But such services, if they are to attain the stated objectives, cannot be effective if they are provided with the stigma of residualism. Compensatory services, or services provided on the principle of positive discrimination, are essential but to achieve the objective of normalisation the services need to be provided within the framework of universally provided services as, for example, is the case with compensatory educational programs for children with specific learning difficulties which are conducted within the overall school system. If there is no common universal base, residual services predictably maintain the existing social divisions and even lead to social

divisions. The "need" criteria always run a danger of conferring the stigma of failure on the recipient, especially so when the selectivity is determined by the provider — to receive the service, the recipient must admit, implicitly or explicitly, economic, social or personal inadequacy.

The somewhat limited data available about the CSP seem to indicate that despite the policy of providing services on the basis of "need" relatively little success has been achieved to fulfill these aims. Many of the difficulties would, no doubt, stem from such factors as geographical distribution of the population, different rates of participation of women (and men) in the workforce, physical access to services and the cost of services. But other problems seem to stem from the CSP itself : the lack of legitimate entitlement to service as a right, the discretionary decision-making, the submission system of fund allocation and the disclaimer of responsibility by the Commonwealth — all these factors would have contributed to a degree of disparity between the stated aims and the reality. Last but not least would be the limited and decreasing funds provided at the time when the demand for child care services is quite high.

In any such situation the predictable outcome will be that certain people will benefit more from the services than others; they will be those who are better equipped to "cope" with the system. Any service or program of services which provide resources (e.g. money) on selective criteria (e.g. needs criteria) will tend to favour those individuals or groups who are better able to "fit in" their needs into the definition of the providers. Any such program also becomes subject to lobbying and to various political pressures and influences. This certainly has been the feature of the Children's Services Program.

One of the issues raised with regard to the CSP has been that it was being used by parents who were, or should be, financially capable of meeting the full cost of child care. In other words, it has been suggested that instead of serving the "poor" the Program has served the "middle class". This may have been the case, but many of the current social policy and social welfare issues have become "middle class" issues; e.g. employment and unemployment of women, services and pensions for the aged, education, and child care. It has to be accepted that a majority of Australians would now fit into the "middle class" category. Hence, it also has to be expected that social issues will emerge in relation to that sector of the population. The "average" Australian income earner is the one who contributes the bulk of

government revenue and in return expects to receive certain benefits from the government.

This situation, however, leads to the problem of exclusion of those well below the "average" who have difficulties in having their claims heard, and for this reason their claims tend to be neglected. The reconciliation of claims made by the majority and the disadvantaged minority has become one of the most important issues in social policy, in social welfare alternatives, and, in this case, in the policy and services for young children.

It is evident from the history of the Children's Services Program that the Commonwealth has endeavoured to reach some kind of reconciliation among the competing claims for its support to child care services. It seems, however, that this endeavour has been only mildly successful.

Notwithstanding its shortcomings, the Children's Services Program has certain positive aspects whose value lies in the achievements to date but even more in their potential. First, the Program has utilised considerable human resources in the community — the time and energy of the people who participate in the organisation and management of services supported by the Program. Apart from significant cost savings these voluntary contributions must make, participation in management and associated activities has provided opportunities for people to become involved in the affairs of their communities, to learn new skills and thus develop greater capacity for self-help.

The second positive aspect has been the extension of support into new areas such as family support schemes, vacation care for school-age children, services for young teenage children, and others. It needs to be noted, however, that the extension of support into new areas has been done with a limited budget allocation, and in real value terms with a shrinking budget. Thus the extended support has been given at the cost of reducing allocations to some of the existing services. Such reductions would have created difficulties in maintaining the quality of services already supported previously.

The uncertainty about the future of the Program must be regarded as a factor limiting the Program's potential. For while the Government has asserted its commitment to the CSP, it has also repeatedly emphasised its role of assistance but not its responsibility. Such a situation creates uncertainty in the minds of the people who voluntarily contribute their time and energy to the day-to-

day management of services. A program which is, or is believed to be, "under threat" does not produce good conditions and atmosphere for encouraging voluntary effort and self-help. Uncertainty creates disappointment, loss of enthusiasm and eventual withdrawal of voluntary effort.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, current indicators are that the demand for child care services is likely to grow. How can these services be provided will therefore continue to be an issue that the government will have to face. It is beyond the scope of this discussion paper to explore the options; it is sufficient to state that, so far, the issue of services for young children appears to have been considered in a rather narrow framework of a choice between family care or a substitute care. When the latter is considered arguments are raised as to "who is responsible?". In such a perspective children become objects of instrumentalist transaction. What is needed, it seems, is a wider perspective which would include the whole socio-economic environment in which services for young children would be determined on the criteria : first, what kind of environment does the child need for an adequate development to become a socially well functioning adult; and, second, how such an environment can best be provided.

The care of young children needs to be seen as a national issue, although the areas of responsibility need to be sorted out between the Commonwealth and the States. The Commonwealth has accepted the responsibility with regard to the aged, the workforce, income maintenance, health, and family law. For some reason, the Commonwealth has been rather reluctant to accept a similar responsibility for services to young children. Yet services for young children warrant attention as much as, or more than, services for other population groups because the well-being of children must be seen as the investment in the future. This being so, their well-being has a value in itself but also a value of national interest.

In such a perspective the current expenditure on services for young children — expenditure as an investment in human capital — appears to be rather meagre. One has to accept the limited availability of funds, but the scarcity of resources is also a question of allocating priorities. One-fifth of one per cent of Commonwealth expenditure cannot be regarded as high expenditure, by any comparative measure.

Since the inception of the CSP in 1973-74 until and including the estimated expenditure for 1981-82 the Commonwealth will have spent \$543.653 million on

the Program : \$315.710 million on grants to pre-schools and \$227.943 million on day care and all other services. By comparison the estimated Commonwealth revenue foregone through investment allowances to business and industry alone was \$499 million in 1979-80 and \$411 million for 1980-81. (Budget Papers, 1981-82; Paper No.1, p.245). Thus in eight years of the CSP Commonwealth expenditure on children's services will have been only fractionally higher than the revenue foregone on investment allowances to business and industry in any one year. If both kinds of expenditure are to be regarded as "investment" then the support for the investment in human capital falls into insignificance in comparison with the support given by the Commonwealth for the investment in machines.

APPENDIX 1 : Definitions used in Child Care Arrangements,
 Australia, June 1980,
 ABS Cat. No. 4402.0 (Excerpts)

5. The person responsible for children under twelve years of age was taken to be the mother if she normally resided at that private dwelling. If the mother was not normally resident at that private dwelling then the information was sought from the person who was mainly responsible for the children under twelve years of age.

6. A family unit for the purposes of this survey is defined as a unit containing children under twelve years of age and a person responsible for those children (together with that person's spouse and older children resident in the dwelling). Throughout this publication, spouse refers to the spouse of the person responsible for the children within a family unit and family type refers to one parent or two parent families.

7. Parents for the purposes of this survey are defined as the person responsible for children under twelve years of age, and that person's spouse, if any.

8. Child care relates to all arrangements made for children under twelve years of age for all times Monday to Friday of the week before interview when the children were not in the care of the person responsible.

(a) Formal care relates to arrangements made for the care of children at a pre-school or at a centre such as a creche, playgroup, kindergarten or occasional care centre.

(b) Informal care includes any care arrangement where children were cared for by the spouse of the person responsible, older children (that is, children aged 12 to 17 years in that dwelling), or other relative of the person responsible for the children, or by another person.

9. Main type of care is the designated care arrangement (other than care by the person responsible) utilising the most number of hours.

10. Cost of care is money paid directly for care other than care by either spouse or older children.

11. Income group refers to the range applicable to the combined gross weekly income of the person responsible for the children and that person's spouse (if any).

12. Definitions of labour force categories used in this statement are the same as those used in the labour force survey. More details can be found in the publication The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0).

(a) Employed persons comprise all those aged 15 years and over who, during the survey week :

- (i) worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm (including employees, employers and self-employed persons); or
- (ii) worked for 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or on a farm (i.e. unpaid family helpers); or were
- (iii) employees who had a job but were not at work and were :
on paid leave; on leave without pay for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week; stood down without pay because of bad weather or plant breakdown at their place of employment for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week; on strike or locked out; on workers' compensation and expected to be returning to their job; or receiving wages or salary while undertaking full-time study; or
- (iv) were employers or self-employed persons who had a job, business or farm, but were not at work.

(b) Unemployed persons are those aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the survey week, and

- (i) had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the survey week and :
 - were available for work in the survey week, or would have been available except for temporary illness (i.e. lasting for less than four weeks to the end of the survey week); or
 - were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the survey week and would have started in the survey week if the job had been available then;

or (ii) were waiting to be called back to a full-time or part-time job from which they had been stood down without pay for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week (including the whole of the survey week) for reasons other than bad weather or plant breakdown.

- (c) The labour force comprises all persons who, during the survey week, were employed or unemployed, as defined above.
- (d) Persons not in the labour force are those who, during the survey week, were not in the categories 'employed' or 'unemployed', as defined above. They include persons who were keeping house (unpaid), attending an educational institution (school, university, etc.), retired, voluntarily inactive, permanently unable to work, inmates of institutions, trainee teachers, members of contemplative religious orders, and persons whose only activity during the survey week was jury service or unpaid voluntary work for a charitable organisation.

13. Family labour force status consists of four categories :

- (a) All parents employed full-time;
- (b) All parents employed, at least one part-time;
- (c) One parent employed the other not;
- (d) All parents not employed.

14. Parents' country of birth has been classified as either :

- (a) Australia;
- (b) a mainly English speaking country;
- (c) a Non-English speaking country.

The following categories have been used to classify a family unit in respect of the parents' country of birth; 'All parents Australian born'; 'At least one parent born in a non-English speaking (NES) country'; 'No parents born in a non-English speaking country' (e.g. an Australian born husband and his New Zealand born wife). These classifications include both single parent and two parent families.

APPENDIX 2 : Description of Services funded under the
Children's Services Program (Source : Coleman, 1978)

Full Day Care

(i) Centre Based :

This involves the regular care and development of children during working hours, and may include extended day care for children of shift workers, or others requiring extended care for their children.

Centre-based day care services may be situated either in buildings designed specifically as child care centres or in houses or other renovated buildings. They can cater for up to 60 children. Where possible pre-school education programs are available to children of appropriate age who are involved in centre-based full day care services.

(ii) Home Based :

Day care may also be provided in private homes through Family Day Care Schemes. In these schemes, Commonwealth assistance is provided to meet the costs of co-ordinating personnel, and to operate a special need subsidy. Personnel employed in the co-ordinating unit provide support on a regular basis to people who look after a small number of children (usually a maximum of 4) in their own homes during the day.

The co-ordinator puts parents wanting their children cared for in contact with suitable care givers to whom support and advice is provided. Family Day Care is a flexible system through which a range of services can be provided, e.g. full day, occasional, emergency and outside school hours care. Many young children are better suited to the intimacy of a family setting and some parents prefer this type of care.

Pre-School Education

Recurrent assistance towards the cost of pre-school education is paid in the form of block grants to the States.

Although it is now up to the States to allocate recurrent assistance to pre-schools, this is done on the basis of certain broad conditions determined by the Commonwealth Government. Those are aimed at providing access to pre-school services for children in most need, and at maximising the use of existing

resources in the form of pre-school buildings.

Pre-schools being funded with Commonwealth money are expected :

- to diversify the use made of their buildings so that a wider range of children's services can be based on the pre-schools;
- to link in with other related community services such as health and welfare services;
- to give maximum support to the provision of services for children in socio-economic need, and with other particular needs.

Pre-school centres are those centres where pre-school aged children attend on a sessional basis and which operate only during term-time. A "session" refers to a half-day (2½ to 3 hours) program or an extended program (up to 5 or 6 hours) for children between 3 and 5 years of age. Generally the number of children in a group is between 20 and 30.

Other Pre-School Education Services

These are services providing primarily a pre-school education program other than in normal pre-school centres, for example mobile pre-schools or where there are separately approved grants specifically for pre-school education programs in other than pre-school centres.

Outside School Hours Programs

This includes all services for school aged children in the morning before school starts, or in the afternoon or evening after school finishes. In some cases pre-school aged siblings may attend.

Vacation Care Programs

This includes services provided specifically for children during school holidays.

Multifunctional Services

These services meet a variety of needs in a way where no one functional component of the service is clearly primary in relation to other functional components. Such services include two or more of the above service functions and/or other service functions classified under "miscellaneous".

Such services are organised into the one integrated system not necessarily limited to one facility. Multi-purpose but loosely integrated services based on the one facility are also included in this category.

Field Staff

This includes personnel employed to facilitate community use of the Children's Service Program, persons employed to co-ordinate use of child care facilities, and persons retained to advise parents and others on the care and education of young children. Included are advisers, visiting teachers and child care co-ordinators. It also includes welfare and specialised consultant staff, such as interpreters, medical, dental, psychological and special education personnel where these are funded separately and not as part of a broader welfare provision.

Training

This includes courses on child care matters, in-service training, and assistance to enable persons to attend such courses including assistance towards cost of staff to relieve or replace persons attending training courses.

Research and Evaluation

This includes those projects or services specifically approved for research or evaluation purposes and those projects that contain a predominant research or evaluation component.

Playgroups

Playgroups operate from existing community based accommodation and do not employ trained staff. Parents, particularly mothers, supervise their children at play.

Family Support Services

These are services designed to ensure the continuity of the family unit especially where the children are classed as "at risk". They include home-maker services, parent counselling and education assistance, temporary foster home arrangements and other measures specifically provided to meet emergencies.

Handicapped Children

Services provided to cater specifically for handicapped children where these are not provided as part of another service whose prime function is classified herein.

Children in Institutions

Projects providing specifically for children in residential institutions or shelters, such as women's refuges; children may be alone or with one parent.

Special Access Projects

Projects designed to improve access of children to care or care related services both non-profit and commercial.

Special Purpose Grants to Commercial Child Care Centres

Projects designed for the upgrading of the quality of care in commercial child care centres.

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