

# "MGA BATA SA TAHANAN": AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF A CHILD-CARE STRATEGY

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The strategy of replacing institutional care for children with family placement has been undertaken by the Kaisahang Buhay Foundation with several child-welfare institutions. It emphasizes the family as the primary instrument in developing the child. Instead of focusing on the child alone, the strategy provides/extends basic socio-economic and psychological services to the whole family.

The study evaluates the effects of such a strategy, in contrast to institutionalized child-care. Essentially, there are two comparison groups – the returnees and the retainees. The study focused on the change processes involved in the implementation of the strategy, on one hand, and changes in the socio-economic and interpersonal relationships of the family, on the other.

The results of the evaluative study showed that the KBF Home-care project is effective. The families generally agreed that they benefitted not only from the financial assistance that was extended but also from the other family services that were delivered to them. As against institutional care, the cost-effective benefits of the project are favorable. The study concluded that institutional care still has some merits in terms of having a supportive role in the spectrum of family child welfare services for certain deprived families.

There are some factors, too, that impeded the application of the KBF approach. The main factor is that the KBF financial subsidy has been found to be very inadequate by the families.

The study also gives recommendations for both the institutional care and the home-care approaches. There must be an upgrading of the quality of institutional care and there must be a further strengthening of home and family care to provide the suitable atmosphere for child-growth and development.

## INTRODUCTION

### *General History of the Project*

The Kaisahang Buhay Foundation (KBF)

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was founded in 1976, and is the successor to Holt International Children's Services, Philippines. Holt Philippines was established in 1975 to initiate a limited program in family and child welfare services.

The goal of the KBF is the further development of the Filipino family as the basic source of nurture, protection and service to children. Its primary objective is development of existing family and child

welfare agencies in the non-government sector. Its secondary objective is to provide leadership development, training, planning, resource coordination, publication, public information and implementation of direct services which demonstrate innovative approaches to strengthen family and child welfare programs.

Kaisahang Buhay Foundation has concentrated most of its efforts on partnership demonstration projects with orphanages which have emphasized family placement for children. These have been projects which have helped families keep their children out of, or accept returnees from, institutions and foster family care and adoption programs.

The "Mga Bata sa Tahanan" Project is a partnership project with Hospicio de San Jose, Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc. and the Boystown, in order to meet their basic needs or to finance income-generating projects. Financial help is given according to the social worker's assessment of the needs of the family and the members' potentials for improvement. A family subsidy plan is usually made by the social worker and the requesting client. The plan would show the client's proposal for an income-generating activity. Meanwhile, family services include counselling, family-life seminars, referrals and other supportive services to the family.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

### *The KBF Framework*

KBF's contention is that the family maintains the basic and significant influence in the development of each child, not only by providing the essentials of food, shelter, clothing, and protection, but also in terms of love, sympathetic understanding and the feeling of "belonging" which are the primary requisites for the development of a child's sense of emotional security. The universal base of KBF's philosophy is that each individual needs the wholeness of a home that is his

own, and that each one needs the continuity of parent-child-grandparent family life as a base from which to grow and function as a complete person. Man belongs in a family; and, in a sense, he and his family belong to each other.<sup>1</sup>

The KBF method rests on the belief that children have the fundamental right to the security and nurturing experience of strong family life. Thus, they should not be separated from their family. Neither should they be without one. This home-based parental care emphasized family placement through retention, return to the parental home, foster family care, or adoption. Thus, all KBF programs and activities reflect the Foundation's respect and support for the sacredness of family life in which both the child and the family can find new fulfillment through a unique and very special sharing experience.<sup>2</sup>

### *Objectives*

The findings described in this paper are part of a study which evaluated the KBF's "Mga Bata sa Tahanan Project." Included in the present report are observations on the effectiveness of using the KBF method of providing home-based parental care vis-a-vis institutional placement of children, as well as the sociopsychological and economic processes involved in implementing such a method.

More specifically, this paper focuses on the following objectives:

1. To describe the effects of financial assistance on the employment, income, and family relationships of recipients,
2. To examine the effects of institutionalization on the children's psychological characteristics, and

<sup>1</sup>Kaisahang Buhay Foundation Declaration of Principles, December 10, 1976 (Manila, Philippines) and Fact Sheet, March, 1979.

<sup>2</sup>Kaisahang Buhay Foundation Brochures/Leaflets.

3. To obtain the perceptions and opinions of parents about institutionalization and behavior changes in their children brought about by child-care intervention.

*Variables and Hypotheses*

The independent variables for this study are (1) Family Subsidy, and (2) Family Services. Family Subsidy refers to the amount of money given to the family to meet basic needs or to finance income-generating projects while Family Services include counselling, referrals, family life seminars, and other similar functions.

The intervening variables include the use of subsidies and services by the family, the levels of development of the implementing agency, and the levels of coordination between KBF and the agency.

The dependent variables include occupational changes and the levels of income. Substantive effects of these impacts would involve:

- a) changes in family relationships,
- b) changes in child's behaviour and family

relationships, and

- c) changes in child's attitudes toward self and others.

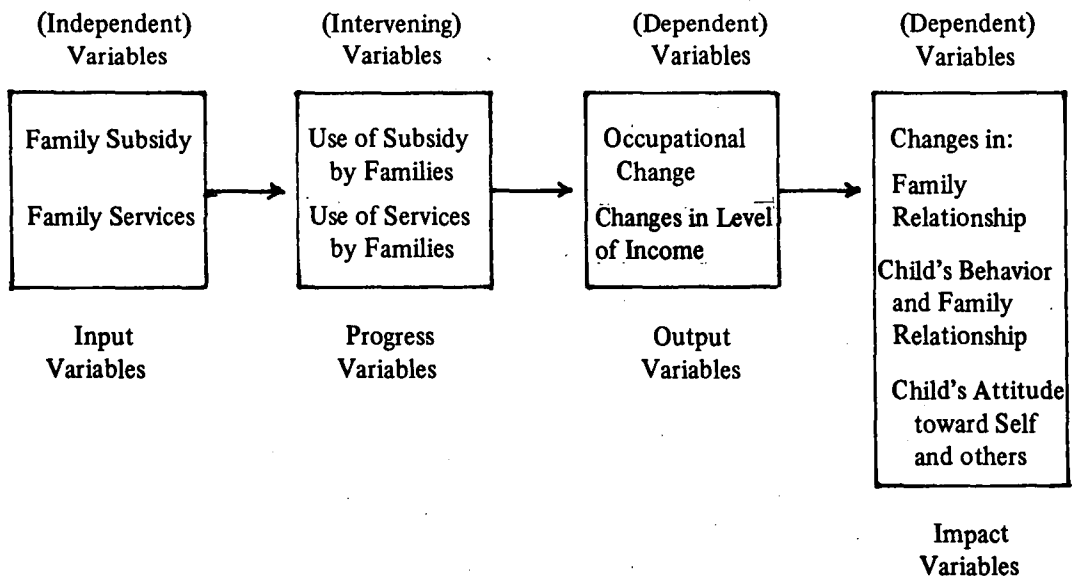
Generally, it may be postulated that the manner the subsidies and services are used by the family and delivered by the agency determines the kind of impact on the family and the child.

Specifically, the following hypotheses may be drawn:

- 1) The grant of family subsidy leads to changes in the occupation and in the levels of income, and eventually brings about changes in family relationships, in child behavior and in child's attitudes towards self and others.
- 2) The delivery of family services support changes experienced in occupation and levels of income, and eventually leads to changes in child's behavior, family relationships and child's attitude.

To illustrate further the interplay of these variables, the following paradigm may be presented:

Figure 1: *Relationship Diagram between KBF Inputs and Anticipated Changes*



### Methodology

The following research methods were employed in the study:

1. A review of existing literature, case histories, annual reports, financial statements and other pertinent data that were available in the three institutions.
2. Field visits to the three institutions and the respondents' homes, interviews with children and their parents, interviews with key informants and field observations by the project staff.
3. Administration of the Philippine Children's Apperception Test (PCAT).

### Research Sample

The target respondents of this study were

children from the three institutions: Hospicio de San Jose (HSJ), Boystown Complex and Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc. (CCCHI). The respondents characterize two groups: child returnees and child retainees. Retainees are home-based or without institutional experience and returnees are those who experienced institutional life.

With a universe of 372 respondents across institutions, attempts were made to obtain matched subjects' from each of the retainees and returnees. Variables considered were the subjects' age, sex, parents' education and child's age at entry. Of the 372, 109 children could roughly be matched as potential respondents in the study. The returnees comprised 45% of the sample while the retainees comprised 55% (See Table 1).

Table 1: *Sample of Returnees & Retainees*

	<i>Hospicio de San Jose</i>	<i>Cebu Children's Community Homes</i>	<i>Boystown Complex</i>	<i>Total</i>
1) Returnees	31	3	15	49
2) Retainees	39	10	11	60
3) Sample taken	70	13	26	109
4) Children reached (universe)	309	37	26	372

It was originally planned to include all the children clients of CCCHI and Boystown, and 30% from those of Hospicio de San Jose. The sampling method intended for Hospicio de San Jose was to get an equal number of children for each group. This should have been represented by 92 children. However, the same problem as with CCCHI was encountered – the families could no longer be located because they were no longer in contact with the institution. This factor limited the original design of a matched sample based on age and sex of the children.

Twenty nine children were selected for the PCAT from the total sample of 109. A sample of 10 children for the case studies were selected from the PCAT sample.

### Data Analysis

The responses of the sample were analyzed separately showing frequency/percentage distribution. The *T-test* and *Chi-square*, where applicable, were employed to show significant differences between retainees and returnees before and after the project services.

*Limitations in Analysis*

1. The three institutions showed different time periods for implementing the KBF methodology as follows: the Boystown Complex, in 1979; Hospicio de San Jose, 1977-79; Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc., 1978-79. Consequently, a follow-up of cases proved difficult to reconstruct. Records on Year I and Year II recipients were not available, thus affecting the sampling and the documentation sources.
2. The distribution of age and sex in the sample population could not meet the PCAT test requirement of 8-16 years of age. Thus, the sample for psychological testing was depleted.
3. The lack of adequate documentation sources on children and family recipients of KBF services limited available information.
4. The three institutions differed in their operational definitions of the two categories of clients. These are as follows (Table 2):

Table 2: *Differences in Operational Definition of Returned and Retained Children*

INSTITUTIONS	RETURNED	RETAINED
Boystown	Those who had zero to a maximum of 2 weeks of institutional experience	Those who had experienced institutional living for one to 9 years and were returned to their families.
Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc.	Those who had zero to less than 6 months of institutional experience.	Those who lived in the institution for 6 months or more and then returned to their families.
Hospicio de San Jose	Those who stayed within the institution from zero to less than 3 months and who are less than 16 years old.	Those who stayed within the institution for 3 months or more and were returned to their families. Children who were more than 14 years old could be included, provided they had been in the institution's care for less than 2 years. These children were returned to their families.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

*The Family As An Institution*

Aristotle called the family a natural society. Juan M. Verdaguer repeated this idea and described the family further as the first vital nucleus of society because it possesses distinctive marks that will never change and which belong to man's nature. He pointed out that this idea of the family being the basic cell of a healthy society needs to be drummed more into the people's mind because of the threats to its role as the basic social cell. The family's two roles are as follows: "It is, first of all, the means to produce the men of tomorrow, the common ground where the generations of yesterday and today rear the hope for the future; but much more than this, it is also the haven of security, stability and social well-being." Thus, he presents his challenge to "parents throughout the world to take a firm stand and show that the family is essential. Man's nature has not changed . . . his yearnings for love and happiness is as strong as ever."<sup>3</sup>

The family and its ways of coping within a modern industrial society has been the subject of many political-economic and sociological studies. The diagnoses given varies, from a viewpoint as drastic as reducing it to the source of the state's manpower without making it the unit primarily responsible for children's upbringing to one which points to the resiliency of the family to face the changing social, moral and economic environment.

Reports from Europe note that the *nuclear family* is legally the basic unit for procreation, the rearing of the children, computation of taxation and social security obligations and benefits. The Latin America Report speaks of the family as "the principal

agent for the transmission of the cultural values and patterns of the people." Constitutions of several countries contain provisions for the State to protect the family. Even in the Nordic countries where notable changing roles within the family occur and where a greater number of married women work outside the home, it is still asserted that the nuclear family remains the accepted basic unit of society (International Council on Social Welfare, 1979).

The article "The Filipino Child in the Family" (Carandang, 1979) holds that the Filipino family maintains the basic and significant influence in the development of the child. Erik Erikson in his theory on the stages of development shows that basic trust is established in the child as soon as he is born. This provides a rudimentary sense of age identity wherein the child is, or is not, able to establish within himself inner certainty and outer predictability (Carandang, 1979).

No other institution as yet can equal the family in developing the child. The family is naturally the first social unit the child is exposed to. As such, the child's experiences in his own family become the foundation of his own patterns of behavior. The molding of the character of the child starts at home (Parent Educ. Congress, 1979).

Therefore, strengthening the family and the home is the best method to promote and maintain child welfare, because the family can provide the essence of continuity and stability that other child-rearing institutions cannot provide with as much assurance.

A study by Del Rosario and cited in Licuanan (1979) was oriented towards identifying the most dominant influencing factors in four areas of child care: physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. The results pointed out that maternal values and beliefs, as well as family members, were the most dominant sources of influence on a Filipino mother's child rearing practices. Since

<sup>3</sup> Juan M. Verdaguer, *An Approach to the International Year of the Child* (Laguna, Philippines, 1979), pp. 2-5.

fathers have strong authority at home but are relatively uninvolved in child care, Licuanan recommends that the participation of fathers in child welfare programs be solicited so as to increase their actual participation in child care.

In the study of Sonya I. Rhodes (1979), it was concluded that the high normative value ascribed to familial rearing of the young has biased research efforts pertaining to child care and development. She further holds that no sufficient evidence exists to support the assumption that one-to-one care provided in the home is the only healthy way to rear children into adulthood. According to her, "research and current assessment of the effects of substitute child care emphasize that the crucial variable is not who but what type and quality of care is available and provided."<sup>4</sup>

A recent assessment of researches on child development presents the conclusion that child care need not be undertaken by the natural (sanguinal) or foster family as long as the basic elements necessary for normal child growth are present (Reading, 1979).

#### *Institutional Versus Home-Based Care*

Under normal circumstances, child development occurs within the context of the child's natural home and family. In the absence of the parents, child care may be undertaken by surrogates such as foster parents or welfare agencies and institutions. In the first, foster parents may adopt a child who is integrated into the former's home and family. In the case of institutionalization, children are committed into dormitory-like residences where they are managed and cared for as one large group. There are, of course, variations to this basic approach in

order to approximate individualized interaction with the children.

Institutionalization is often presumed to have adverse effects on the child's separation from a "normal family life" and the separation from or the absence of the parents. However, this popular notion has been contested.

The effects of institutional care for children have been studied extensively in countries like the United States and Western Europe and there has been considerable agreement that institutionalized children typically suffer from emotional and intellectual handicaps.

Children who have undergone long-term substitute care from an early age, as compared with home-cared children of similar socio-economic background, show a higher incidence of emotional disturbances and emotional backwardness (Dinnage, 1967).

Further, institutionalized children have been shown to have lower IQ scores, lower Developmental Quotient scores, poor verbal skills, and language development, below average reading and arithmetic attainment, slower rate of progress over a school year, poorer employment record, delinquency record, and in projective tests manifest emotional impoverishment, neurotic and aggressive tendencies. These findings have been culled from studies in the United States, Great Britain, Israel, France, and Germany (Dinnage, 1967).

Prolonged institutionalization during the early years seem to make a child more vulnerable to stress in later life. Moreover, he had no personal sense of identity since he is "unable to integrate a coherent picture of his past and future." (Dinnage, 1967)

Based on Dinnage's review of researches, there seems to be a lot of evidence for the adverse effects of institutionalization and little that contradicts it. Nevertheless, the so-called

<sup>4</sup>Sonya I. Rhodes, "Trends in Child Development Research Important to Day Care Policy," *Social Service Review*, June 1979 (Chicago: The University of Chicago), p. 292.

negative institutionalization effects have actually been questioned. Flint (1966) observed that institutionalized children seemed to vary in development largely as a function of their natural temperaments. Thus, she refrains from attributing observed differences to the experience of institutionalization.

The much vaunted adverse effects of institutionalization appear weak and ambiguous when viewed from a strict methodological and scientific standpoint. For example, the observed emotional handicaps of children may have been due to genetic and maturational factors and may have been acquired prior to institutionalization. Dinnage herself (1967) asserts that "it may even be argued that no valid comparison can or should be drawn between the child on care and the average (cared by the family); that the criterion is a false one and that more realistic standards of comparison would represent the actual alternatives open to children who do come into care."<sup>5</sup> She also noted the apparent resilience of some children, which indicated their capacity to respond to psychological treatment and rehabilitation. It was anticipated that some of them could gradually learn to trust adults and other children and form normal relationships with them. Eventually these children may be able to adjust to the community:

Flint also cites findings which showed that when the care of institutionalized children becomes a serious administrative problem in one institution, the children could not successfully go from the institution to a foster home. She points out the fact that the longer the children remain in an institution, the more remote from normal living they become (Flint, 1966).

Since child caring institutions have been founded to take over the functions of a home,

similarities and differences between the two are then worth studying. Alton Broten gave a description of a good home which can be very useful in planning to simulate it for children who do not really have the chance to belong to one. He also gave a description on how institutionalized children are different because of their concept that they do not have the same rights that children in their own homes enjoy. Because of the reasons that brought them to the institution, they are not sure how secure their futures will be. Conflict in loyalties to their known relatives and to the staff play a strong role in their lives (Brotten, 1962).

#### *Family Development*

The methods of child protection have also been among the favorite topics of those concerned with welfare services. As of 1925, Paul H. Douglas, in an article "The Family Allowance System as a Protector of Children" (The Annals, 1975), proposed that the most effective way in which society can protect children is by providing their parents with sufficient income to enable them to raise their children. The very low income earners cannot be expected to feed, clothe and rear their children in an adequate fashion. He cited that even the necessary knowledge of child hygiene is a costly affair beyond the reach of the mothers of the poor. If a family of average intelligence can be given sufficient financial support, then it will learn to take care of its children. He noted that even if child-caring agencies exert all their efforts, they cannot remove more than a small fraction of the injury which children suffer from the poverty of their homes.

Kenneth Keniston (1977) reiterates a similar idea by identifying the pressures which bear on the minority groups in America (including the poor, the black and the parents of the handicapped). A substantial documentation is given of the environmental and economic odds which these families face. It is estimated that about a quarter of all

<sup>5</sup> Rosemary Dinnage and Pringle, M.L., *Residential Child Care: Facts and Falacies* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1967), p. 17.



American children born into families with financial strains suffer basic deprivation. A study of the flow of American economics supports this contention. As Keniston says, such data are deeply disturbing for an affluent nation. Need we say more about the non-affluent nations?

On an international scale, the U.N. General Assembly of 1965 came up with a resolution that "families, children and youth are not only beneficiaries of economic and social development programs but a vital source of such programs . . . investments in families is therefore essentials for long-term economic and social development."<sup>6</sup> With this, family development programs must be designed to give families, individually and collectively, the opportunity to participate as healthy, educated, contributing citizens of a community. Therefore, an essential function of social welfare is the development of human resources by assisting families to improve their lives as they contribute to the general development of human resources.

This family development model assumes a preventive mode rather than the previously accepted medical-pathological approach. It provides for unanticipated social problems and minimizes the need for curative and remedial services. It treats families holistically and offers aid for preventing the disruption of family life because of various negative influences. In this way, the preventive mode is able to strengthen the unity and integrity of the family members within the context of the community's economic and social life. It becomes essential that family development programs build on, utilize and strengthen traditional spiritual and cultural institutions in the community. In line with the given program, the following biological, social and spiritual needs must be met:

#### 1. Adequate nutrition

2. Protection vs. disease; a favorable health environment
3. Personal security
4. Opportunity for social and economic participation
5. Opportunity for meaningful work
6. Opportunity for participation in activities which contribute to community cohesion and enhance inter-familial communication
7. Opportunity for access to education
8. Provision for social mobility and flexibility
9. Opportunity for intellectual development and education
10. Opportunity to retain and develop cultural traditions
11. Opportunity to fulfill spiritual needs
12. Opportunity to participate in and enjoy visual and performing arts<sup>7</sup>

Many institutions in the community contribute to the satisfaction of these needs. The family can then be dealt with in the context of its ecology, and social welfare both in policy and practice will go beyond the mere repairing of damage done to children and families. Specific features of family life such as illness, alienation, access to labor force, and the like, are not to be read as isolated categorical variables of the environment, but as features of the community with which the family members interact for their survival.

In Dr. Jose Fabella's report in 1920 about the Philippines, he described the Filipino home and noted that: "The family finances determine to a certain extent the kind of home and its location. Poverty can result in unhealthy living conditions and malnutrition; it can limit the family's opportunity for improvement. Lack of play space and suitable play materials lessen the child's opportunities for learning . . . hard work, poor living conditions may wear out the parents' physical

<sup>6</sup>International Council on Social Welfare, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 102, 192-193.

and emotional resources and thus reduce the capacity to give affection and care that the children need."<sup>8</sup>

At present, as our country moves toward a semi-industrial society, the poor families continue to be described in a similar way. A recent study said the same things regarding the effect of poverty in child development (Naval, 1979). Poverty deprives the family of the minimum adequate sensory, social and emotional stimuli necessary for the development of a normal individual.

What conclusions may be derived from these studies? If society were to protect children in an effective way, parents should be provided opportunities to earn sufficiently so that they can bring up their children properly. Families must be assisted to be economically self-sufficient and self-sustaining to assure physical health, nutrition and suitable living conditions. These would result in a greater chance for the poor child to be psychologically and socially adjusted.

### *Concept of Children*

The new wave of development thinking recognizes that the value of man should be paramount. In this context, the evaluation of the developmental aspects of welfare and their contribution to self-reliance plays a very important role. It is now theoretically recognized that adequate standards of well-being are not only a precondition and continuing requirement of societies but also a basic human right. This calls for human involvement, education, and individual community participation in social and economic development.

The same trend applies to meeting the needs of children. The utilitarian concept of children as future members of the labor force and as economic assets is now being replaced by humanistic and national development

objectives for children. This emphasizes the right of the child to develop the particular human potentialities available to him during the childhood years . . . Thus, novel strategies have been considered, one of which seeks to dramatically improve the "reach" of family welfare programs. Steps have been taken to improve the organizational means of meeting children's needs and to make use of the linkages between various social services for children. Innovative approaches and "starter" activities which help prepare a country's base for expanding services for children have also been considered.

It is therefore essential to recognize that the problems of children cannot be solved in isolation from services that benefit their family and community. On the basis of this wholistic thrust, UNICEF has developed a program approach called "basic services for children." The essential aspect of the basic services approach is the mobilization of the interest and the involvement of people at the community level. Another essential element is the link between the worker and the community resources, especially on the "technical" side where supervision, training and advice are provided. Administrative and logistical supports are likewise important.

Investment in child welfare cannot be justified solely on the ground of their social utility. "We need to give greater recognition to the intrinsic value of childhood in its own right, to the great importance of nurturing the imagination and the spirit of children, providing them with opportunities needed to realize their full potential."<sup>9</sup>

## RESULTS

### A. INSTITUTIONAL PROFILES

#### *Administrative Machinery*

Boystown Complex consists of several

<sup>8</sup> Fabella, Jose, a report on Child Welfare Work in the Phil. Islands. Public Welfare Board's report on the Phil. Islands, 1920.

<sup>9</sup> International Council on Social Welfare, *Op. Cit.*, p. 221.

offices providing various services. Despite its organizational differentiation, however, the KBF social worker received more supervision on the project from the chief of the institution than from her immediate supervisor. Implementation of the project included a regular monthly staff meeting where official and verbal reports were culled and evaluated.

Meanwhile, the Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc. could be characterized as a free-flow system where the tasks and processes were clearly delineated. Active involvement in actual operation, however, could have been further facilitated if the organizational set-up included operative positions and not too many inactive offices. In this way, there wouldn't have been any overload or additional work for each social worker, as was existing.

At Hospicio de San Jose, the workers were not burdened by unrelated tasks like typing and bookkeeping. They were able to use their time directly for the clients. Case conferences and monthly consultation meetings were conducted regularly while weekly coordination with the KBF Director was expedited to discuss progress of KBF services. A more personalized approach to the program was observed in this institution.

#### *Child-Care Facility*

In Boystown, 22-23 male wards of mixed ages (7-16) stayed in cottages approximating a homelife atmosphere where the cottage parent served as the father or mother. They were provided with double-deck beds, beddings, clothes, food and educational supplies. Female wards stayed at the dormitory-type Girls' Home run by the nuns and were likewise provided the same facilities as the boys. Situated inside the Complex were a school providing free education, a vocational center for out-of-school youth, an infirmary, a chapel with a regular chaplain and a gym for sports and recreation. Other facilities that generated income to partially sustain the Complex's

operation were a bakeshop and a poultry farm.

The children served by CCCHI were housed in a temporary shelter — an old school building. Thus the movement of its residents was not controlled, making it possible for the children to engage in and improve their relationship with their peers and the community. However, they engaged in less meaningful activities.

Hospicio de San Jose provided not only dormitories for the children (according to sex and age group) but also space for the elderly and mental retardates. It had a nursery, a nuns' house and administrative offices. Located within its compound were also a school, a church, a small store, playground, auditorium, handicrafts and display center and a store. The children had enough space to play in, and activities to occupy their free time. A schedule posted in their dorm's living room also added to the discipline of the children. Besides these, the children went on excursions and field trips and were often entertained by guest performers.

#### *Cost Effective Ratio*

A comparative study of the three institutions across relative time periods of KBF project implementation indicate that, except for Year II in CCCHI, the cost effective ratio is in favor of the home-based approach. In Boystown, it is P3.16:P1.00; in CCCHI, it is P2.11:P1.00 for Year I and P.94:P1.00 for Year II; and in Hospicio de San Jose, it is P17.70:P1.00 for Year I, P31.15:P1.00 for Year II and P97.23:P1.00 for Year III. In simple terms, this means that while one peso was spent for the KBF project, a much bigger amount was spent through institutionalization.

### ASSESSMENT OF CHILD-CARE SERVICE

#### A. Profile of Respondents

There were not too many differences

between parents of returned and retained children. Among the differences are the following:

- 1) Parents of retained children had higher incomes than the parents of returned children; 2) Mothers of retainees were relatively younger than fathers; 3) Fathers of retained children were better educated than the mothers.

Generally, the mothers were service workers (domestic helpers or laundry woman) and the fathers were production workers.

With the exception of Cebu Children's

Community Homes, Inc., the majority of the children who received KBF services were girls. This is expected since Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc. is primarily an institution for boys while the two other institutions cater to the needs of both boys and girls.

A majority of the children across the three institutions had adequate education. With their ages ranging from 9-15 years old, they were either in the elementary grades or in the high school levels. Table 3 illustrates the findings.

Table 3. *Profile of Children*

Average Characteristics	Returnees			Retainees		
	BT (n=15)	CCCHI (n=3)	HSJ (n=13)	BT (n=11)	CCCHI (n=10)	HSJ (n=33)
Age of Child	13	15	15	9	9	12
Sibling Position	3rd/4th	3rd	3rd	3rd/4th	3th/7th	3
Education	Elem. Graduate	Elem.	Elem.	Elem.	Elem.	Elem. Grad./H.S.
Sex	Girls	Boys	Girls	Girls	Boys	Girls

[The data appearing in this table are drawn on the basis of what were common (average and majority) in these institutions.]

The following discussion provides a number of insights about parents and children receiving child-care services.

### B. Need for Child-Care Services

Parents sought the help of the institution primarily because of economic inability to provide for the basic needs of their children, including that of education. The institution is perceived as a place where food, shelter, education and clothing are provided to children. Other reasons why parents wanted their children to stay in the institution were: 1) to keep the child away from bad company and vices; and 2) to have the children cared for while one parent was sick or absent.

When asked about their perception of the roles of the family in the rearing of children, the parents felt that all aspects of child development are the responsibilities of the family.

### C. Institutionaization

Having a child in the institution elicited varied reactions from the parents.

Parents felt relieved of their responsibilities, knowing that the institutions provided education, discipline and care for their children. As a result of diminished responsibilities, they had more time to concentrate on their work and their duties

toward their other children. Some parents, however, did not view their children's institutionalization positively, and kept on worrying about their offspring. They did not feel that their responsibilities had lightened. Instead, these parents felt that they had to seek other means to get their children back home.

Parents gave positive assessments of the conditions prevailing in the institutions. Their assessments were made on the basis of what the institutions had provided their children – food, clothing, education and shelter.

#### D. KBF Services

KBF services availed of by the respondents included loans, food, supplies, educational benefits and medical assistance.

In the three institutions, KBF services were considered helpful by the respondents. The

financial subsidies granted to several families were utilized for income-generating activities, for meeting the daily basic needs of the families or for the children's education. However, the KBF loans were not yet totally refunded or paid back by its beneficiaries at the time of the study.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES

#### A. Family Income

There were relative increases in the respondents' monthly income after the delivery of KBF financial subsidies for income-generating activities. The highest increase was registered at CCCHI, with 84.2% increase in family incomes while the lowest was 28.6%, also for CCCHI. The families of returnees enjoyed higher increases (57.0%) than those of the retainees (33.4%), and Boystown recipients showed a 10.0% decrease in income (Table 4):

Table 4. *Monthly Family Income*

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Returnee's Income</i>			<i>Retainees Income</i>		
	<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>	<i>%</i>
Boystown	P273.08	P530.00	48.5	P350.00	P318.18	10.0
Cebu Children's Community Home, Inc.	P 50.00	P316.67	84.2	P250.00	P350.00	28.6
Hospicio de San Jose	P181.00	P294.00	38.4	P353.00	P571.00	38.2
Total	P504.08	P1,140.67	57.0	P953.00	P1,239.18	33.4

Changes in the levels of income across the three institutions were tested for significance. The T-test was used to find out whether a significant difference exists between the mean of average income before and after the KBF project. It was found out that the levels of income of families of both returnees and retainees significantly changed before and after KBF. The average monthly incomes of retainees and returnees were P311 and P222, respectively, before the project provided financial support. After KBF, the families of

retainees increased their income to an average of P450 monthly, while that of returnees rose to P408.

The KBF project also resulted in changes in the occupation of mothers. Before KBF, the most common occupation of mothers of the children in care was services. After obtaining financial subsidy from KBF, there was a great increase in the number of mothers engaged in vending. The number of unemployed mothers of returnees and retainees decreased from about 40% to only 18% in the sample (See Table 5).

Table 5. *Occupations of Mothers Before and After KBF Subsidies*

	<i>Before KBF</i>		<i>After KBF</i>	
	<i>Returnee</i> <i>N</i> (%)	<i>Retainee</i> <i>N</i> (%)	<i>Returnee</i> <i>N</i> (%)	<i>Retainee</i> <i>N</i> (%)
Professional and Technical Workers				1 ( 1.7)
Service Workers	14 ( 28.6)	16 ( 26.7)	13 ( 26.5)	8 ( 23.3)
Vendors	8 ( 16.3)	14 ( 23.3)	22 ( 4.9)	26 ( 43.3)
Production Workers	5 ( 10.2)	4 ( 6.7)	2 ( 4.1)	9 ( 15.0)
Farmers and related workers				4 ( 6.7)
None	18 ( 36.7)	25 ( 41.6)	9 ( 18.4)	11 ( 18.3)
DK/NA	4 ( 8.2)	1 ( 1.7)	3 ( 6.1)	1 ( 1.7)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49 (100.0)</b>	<b>60 (100.0)</b>	<b>49 (100.0)</b>	<b>60 (100.0)</b>

### *Work Status*

Changes in the work status of parents of KBF beneficiaries, i.e. whether they were employed or unemployed before and after KBF were also tested. Results from chi-square tests showed that the degree of difference is greatest for changes in work status of mothers of retainees followed by mothers of returnees. Changes in work status of fathers of both returnees and retainees were not proven to be significant. The percentages, however, will show that there was a decrease in unemployment after KBF services.

### *Family Relationships*

The chi-square was also used to test significant changes in family relationships. Changes were noted in the relationships between husbands and wives, such that less disagreements between parents were reported after obtaining KBF assistance. Other aspects of family relationships, like sharing of basic resources (food and clothing), harmony between siblings, respect for parents and

siblings, and doing things together, were not significantly associated with the project's intervention strategies. Nonetheless, more favorable than unfavorable shifts in these various relationships were reported.

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Using a post-test only design, returnees and retainees in the three (3) named institutions were studied in terms of the following aspects of psychological development:

### A. Physical Behavior

1. Weight
2. Height
3. Illness

### B. Cognitive/Intellectual Development

1. IQ
2. Level and rate of cognitive development
3. Level and rate of moral development
4. Age-appropriate intellectual skills

Table 6. *Changes in Work Status of Parents of Children in Care*

	<i>Before KBF</i>		<i>After KBF</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>(%)</i>
<i>Work Status of Fathers of Returnees</i>				
Unemployed	4	( 8.2)	4	( 8.2)
Employed	12	(24.5)	13	(26.5)
Total	16	(32.7)	17	(34.7)
DK/NA	33	(67.3)	32	(65.3)
<i>Work Status of Fathers of Retainees</i>				
Unemployed	2	( 3.3)	7	(11.7)
Employed	26	(43.3)	22	(36.7)
Total	28	(46.6)	29	(48.4)
DK/NA	32	(53.4)	31	(51.6)
<i>Work Status of Mothers of Returnees<sup>b</sup></i>				
Unemployed	18	(36.7)	9	(18.4)
Employed	27	(55.1)	37	(75.5)
Total	45	(91.8)	(93.9)	(93.9)
DK/NA	4	( 8.2)	3	( 6.1)
<i>Work Status of Mothers of Retainees<sup>a</sup></i>				
Unemployed	25	(41.7)	11	(18.3)
Employed	34	(56.7)	48	(80.0)
Total	59	(98.4)	59	(98.3)
DK/NA	1	( 1.6)	1	( 1.7)

<sup>a</sup>Chi-square significant at  $p = .05$

<sup>b</sup>Chi-square significant at  $p = .05$

### C. Socio-psychological Traits

1. Motives: achievement, affiliation, aggression
2. Relationships with parents, peers, and others

The comparisons of children on these traits and behaviors were undertaken with the use of the Philippine Children's Apperception Test (PCAT).

From the total sample, the PCAT sample was narrowed down to thirty (30) respondents

for two main reasons: a) given the individualized administration of the PCAT, a small sample was deemed sufficient for the purpose of the study, and b) the lower limit of small sampling is  $N=30$  and should enable differences between the returnees and retainees to surface, if any. In the final analysis, however, one respondent was dropped since his PCAT could hardly be scored due to very insufficient responses. Hence, a total of 14 returnees and 15 retainees coming from three different institutions were included in the study (Table 7).

Table 7. *Distribution of the Respondents to the PCAT*

	<i>Returnees</i>	<i>Retainees</i>
Boystown	5	5
Cebu Children's Community Home Inc.	4	6
Hospicio de San Jose	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
TOTAL (N=29)	14	15

Among the children are 17 males and 12 females, simply pooled into young and old groups. The young group consisted of children between 8-11 years old, and the old group of children were 12 years and over.

#### A. The Instrument

In comparing returnees and retainees, a projective test was used to draw data from the children. An informal interview with the children's parents by means of a behavioral checklist obtained observations about the children's behavior before and after institutionalization.

The Philippine Children's Apperception Test (PCAT) is a local projective test constructed by Dr. Alfredo V. Lagmay of the University of the Philippines Department of Psychology. There are 13 picture cards in the PCAT and one blank card.

Description of the picture cards are as follows:

#### *For Boys*

##### Card Numbers

- 1B Lone boy standing and looking toward the distance
- 2B Two boys, almost same height, standing
- 3B Boy seated with playing children in distant background
- 4B Two boys, one taller than the other, standing

#### *For Girls*

- 1G Lone girl, seated

- 2G Two girls, almost the same height, standing
- 3G Girl seated, with playing children in distant background
- 4G Two girls, one taller than the other, standing

#### *For both boys and girls:*

- 5 Girl and boy standing
- 6 Dining table scene with parents and child
- 7 Child in bed with doctor standing beside her and parents seated in background
- 8 Sala scene, three adults and child
- 9 Child with mess on floor, mother standing, father seated in background
- 10 Pregnant woman with child beside her
- 11 Child facing woman whose arms are akimbo
- 12 Child with adult male holding slipper (spanking scene)
- 13 Child in bed, in a dark room

As yet, there are no validated psychometric devices for assessing children's personality in the Philippines. The PCAT, however, has been developed locally and appears to be the only available local personality test for children which may serve the purpose of the present study.

To complement and validate psychometric data, a behavioral checklist and interviews were administered to the children's parents.



### B. Procedure for Test Administration

The PCAT was administered individually to the children by each of three trained research assistants. Administration was patterned after Lagmay's procedures. The children were asked to tell a story about the picture with the instruction, "May ipapakita ako sa iyong mga litrato. Magkuwento ka o gumawa ka ng kwento tungkol dito." (I will show you some pictures. Tell a story about each of these).

There was no time limit in the children's story telling. All instructions were in Pilipino.

### C. Analysis of Data

Each of the stories was scored on 14 categories of responses patterned after Murray's Thematic Apperception Test. The scorers were two professional psychologists, and their inter-scorer reliability had been previously established to be high.

Scores for each of the two groups, returnees and retainees, were tabulated and classified. Categories with high frequencies were noted and incorporated in the formulation of "impressions." Thus, trends in response between the groups were taken largely as cues or leads rather than as unequivocal evidence of genuine differences.

Statistical descriptions were limited to percentages, and tests of significant difference were not performed because of limited sample size. Comparisons between returnees and retainees were done per institution rather than across institutions. As previously pointed out, some overlap in criterion for classifying the respondents was noted and this could render the findings ambiguous.

### D. On Children's Thematic Responses

Both returnees and retainees gave apperceptive responses to the PCAT. Except for the blank card, all 13 picture cards evoked apperceptive responses ranging from 54.1-92% for returnees and 53-100% for retainees. This finding parallels those of Lagmay's (1965) and Ventura's (1976) studies.

There were also a number of descriptive

responses: 7.1-35% for returnees and 6.6-20% for retainees. However, no enumerative responses were obtained.

In addition, it was also observed that: a) female respondents tended to give fewer enumerative and descriptive responses than the males and b) older male returnees tended to give fewer enumerative and descriptive responses than either females or young male returnees. These seem to suggest the role of age and sex in projective responding among Filipinos.

### E. On the Socio-Psychological Aspects of the Apperceptive Responses

Apperceptive responses were further scored and analyzed. Contrary to the "adverse effects" theory of institutionalization, there appear to be no dramatic differences between the returnees and retainees on most of the scoring categories. Nevertheless, since there were incipient indications of such differences, these were noted down. Weak as the data are in attesting to the existence of differences, these were deemed as potentially good starting points in subsequent investigations of a similar nature. These are discussed as follows:

#### 1. On Heroes and Story Themes

Both returnees and retainees seem to be able to identify with child figures as evidenced by their choice of heroes in their stories.

Some apparent differences are noticeable in the general trend of the story themes. On one hand, returnees generally gave stories that appear to revolve around wanting to escape, either from conflict, parental figures, authority figures or an aggressive environment. On the other hand, retainees gave stories that tend to cluster around two themes: achievement through study, and parental behavior — including parental restrictiveness, inadequacy, neglect, abuse and control of child's behavior.

Both groups gave stories on ostracism or rejection by others due to lower

socio-economic status. However, this need not be construed as a desire to escape from the institution as it may not be the only source of psychological confinement. It is possible that the respective homes of these children may be perceived to be just as confining as the institution, considering the poverty of their families' situations.

## 2. *On Needs and Presses*

*Needs* refer to the storyteller's perceived needs of the heroes in his story while *presses* refer to the factors perceived to be impinging upon and affecting the hero.

Retainees manifested fewer and weaker needs and presses than returnees. This is evidenced by a lack of scores among retainees in various categories in which the returnees exhibited a variety of scorable responses for needs and presses.

Both retainees and returnees showed the need for affiliation and aggression. However, these motives seem stronger for the returnees, as observed from their repetitions in stories across cards. Also, the returnees showed some evidence of needs for dominance, nurturance and succorance. These motives, it will be noted, necessitates the presence of another person to be satisfied. The results seem indicative of the returnees' need to help and to be helped, as well as to influence others.

The perceived presses from the environment for the returnees are affiliation and nurturance, dominance, rejection, indifference, lack and illness. For the retainees, affiliation, illness, neglect and lack were noted as presses.

Notice that the returnees perceived a greater variety of presses, particularly involving "negative others" who were seen as indifferent, rejecting or dominant and aggressive. In the case of the retainees, parental neglect seemed to be a salient press.

The greater variety of needs and presses perceived by the returnees may be indicative

of the possibility that they have greater unsatisfied interpersonal needs, since the institution usually entails a "one-to-many" type of relation between the residential care workers and the big group of children. By the same token, residential care workers may also be one reason for perceiving "others" in the external environment as indifferent, rejecting, dominant or aggressive. What this may suggest is that the manner of treatment of the institutionalized children by the residential worker and/or interaction with their peers are so perceived and felt by the children.

In contrast, the retainees, being in the home, presumably enjoy one-to-one relations or interaction with parents and siblings and, therefore, would theoretically have a greater opportunity to satisfy interpersonal needs. Ironically, however, the retainees seem to be affected by parental neglect.

## 3. *On Emotions and Conflicts*

In general, the children's responses could hardly be scored for emotions. This may be due to the PCAT's weaknesses in evoking such responses, lack of probing from the researchers, or inability of the respondents to express emotions adequately in the stories. In any case, returnees' stories seem to reflect more emotional responses than those of the retainees. The recurrent feelings expressed by returnees were those of sadness and anger.

Retainees hardly expressed any salient conflicts while the returnees were concerned with conflicts between the following motives: affiliation vs. isolation, and dominance vs. submission. The first type of conflict may be interpreted as one between wanting to escape and to find a person(s) or place to belong to. The second one suggests the submissive role children play within the institution and their desire to escape from the dominance of others.

## 4. *On Self-Image*

Both returnees and retainees appear to have essentially similar perceptions of the heroes in

their stories. The prevalent positive traits of the heroes are: friendly, loved, and cared for. The negative descriptions include lonely, sad, oppressed, rejected and inadequate. The latter also seems to be associated with perceived low socio-economic status of the hero as compared to other figures in the stories. To the extent that these descriptions are projective of the storyteller's self-image, then this may be taken as indicative of the lower-class Filipino child's perception of himself. The traits ascribed to the heroes may be considered as the child respondent's self-imaging.

Hardly any difference between the returnees and retainees could be discerned on the projected adjustment mechanisms, outcomes of the stories, and relationships with significant others (i.e., mother, father, peers, authority figures). It was observed, however, that positive outcomes tend to be more prevalent in the stories. This may suggest some amount of optimism in the children's outlook.

##### 5. Parents' Perceived Behavioral Changes

Twenty-six (26) parent-respondents accomplished the behavioral checklist. In contrast to the psychometric findings, parents' observations of returnee children indicate some evidence of changes. There were no similarly perceived changes among the retainees. Perceived changes were generally most prominent among the returnees of Hospicio de San Jose (HSJ) and the Boystown Complex (BTC).

Returnees from Hospicio de San Jose were perceived to be less fearful, (3/5) less attention-getting (3/5), less assertive (3/5), less domineering (3/5), less quarrelsome (3/5), more friendly (3/5), more responsible (3/5), more generous (3/5), more cooperative (3/5), more industrious (3/5), and more respectful (3/5) than before the in-care experience. Orderliness was particularly attributed to the institution.

Boystown returnees were perceived to be

less shy (4/5) and less temperamental (3/5), having initiative (3/5), more cooperative (3/5) and more orderly (3/5). Being less shy, having initiative and being more cooperative were attributed largely to training obtained in the Institution.

In general, there was evidence of parental belief that the institution had made an impact on their children's behavior. This perception of behavioral changes before and after institutionalization was especially evident in the case of Hospicio de San Jose. In contrast, hardly any changes were noted among children from the Cebu Children's Community Homes, Inc. This finding might be suggestive of "differential treatment or management" of children among institutions. Apparently, socialization of children in Hospicio de San Jose and Boystown was effective in improving the child's social skills and behavior.

##### 7. Summary of Psychological Findings

In sum, the general profile that emerges are as follows:

First, the returnee is seen to be a friendly but sad and angry child, who feels a sense of confinement from which he wants to get out. This involves some form of conflict because while the child wants to get away from others, he also desires to interact with them to fulfill some other needs. He seems to mind dominant figures and yet submits to them.

Second, the retainee is also a friendly child, but has less interpersonal needs and conflicts. He is oriented towards achieving through studies and is contending mainly with pressures related to parental inadequacy, abuse or neglect.

Using rigorous quantitative standards, the impression that emerges is that there are no apparent significant differences on most, if not in all, scoring categories. The absence of observed differences between returnees and retainees on the psychological variables may be interpreted in a number of ways. *First*, the

institutions included in the study were able to provide a "home-like" climate or environment. In effect, they became adequate substitutes for the home. Or, it is also possible that the home and institution are both psychologically impoverished and still alike. If this was so, a case of no apparent differences between returnees and retainees would also have been obtained.

Parents' behavioral observations indicated that the institution has effected some favorable changes in their children's social behavior — being more cooperative, more generous, more orderly and the like. The fact that the same trends were not observed among the retainees before and after the KBF subsidy suggests that, aside from financial or material support, other non-material factors may have been present in the institution which led to the observed behavioral changes.

*Second*, the psychometric method may have been insensitive to detecting differences between the children. Further probing may have elicited more data and more differentiated responses could have been obtained.

*Third*, the institutionalized children, even prior to institutionalization, may have been a comparatively strong group emotionally so that they were able to withstand "institutional treatment." Consequently, their native temperament enabled them to subvert the "traumatic" effects of being institutionalized, if there was any at all. Again, it will be noted that the behavioral data suggests positive effects of institutionalization, contrary to the hypothesized "depressing" effects of institutionalization in most other countries. Thus, this hypothesis is weakened and there is not enough evidence of trauma among institutionalized children.

### SUMMARY

The study revealed the following major findings across the three institutions:

1. The over-all cost effective benefits of the

KBF approach is favorable.

2. There are positive changes in the aspects of income, work and employment status of families using the KBF approach.

3. Psychological impact of institutionalization showed no significant difference between returnees' and retainees' general behavioral characteristics.

4. Financial subsidies for income-producing projects to families under certain deprived socio-economic conditions showed the use of the subsidies for meeting basic needs.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *On Methodology of Evaluation*

Since individual differences tend to be masked in psychometric analysis, case studies of the development of children from each of the two groups may be conducted to supplement and strengthen the findings in this phase of the study. In other words, follow-up of "equated" individual cases, possibly across an extended time period may be pursued in order to ascertain the relative effects of institutionalization on socio-psychological development.<sup>10</sup>

Also, large-scale programs such as these must upon inception have a short or long-term design for evaluation of program impact. Consequently, instruments and observations on the factors of concern can be made immediately. Even intake interviews could then be utilized as a source of data for evaluation. Early evaluation planning would then enable evaluator-researchers to optimize the use of such intake interviews as a technique for data gathering.

Moreover, monitoring children's developmental progress can be charted across

<sup>10</sup>Ten case studies of individual families were done by the authors, along the lines of these suggestions, and are included in the complete evaluation report.

time and these data can, in turn, be used to assess the care worker's performance on the job.

#### *On Social Intervention for Children's Welfare*

The ambiguity of the findings makes it difficult to formulate clearcut recommendations. However, from the standpoint of intervention, two things may be looked into: first, home-care children were apparently concerned with their parents' inadequacy, weaknesses or neglect, since their parents seemed unable to care and provide properly for them because of poverty. Welfare intervention in this case will have to consist of assisting parents in earning a livelihood sufficient to sustain their families or to provide a program where parents could, at a specified period of time, commit their children to institutions until they could sufficiently support them.

Second, the conduct of residential care with the children may be improved and revitalized to be able to effect significant behavioral changes in the children. Depending on the findings in this area, reforms may be instituted in the residential workers' manner of treatment and peer interaction.

It may be recalled that, of the three institutions, the least meaningful activities for the children were observed in CCHI. Apparently, a greater structuring of the children's activities led to better perceptions of the relationships between them and the residential worker, and to more positive behavioral changes.

#### *On Policy Implications*

Because of the equivocal findings on the comparisons of retainees and returnees, it can be said that programs of institutionalization and home-care have their respective merits.

Institutions may present a comparatively better place to live in, considering the nature of the homes and families of children who are likely to enter institutions. At least there, the

children are sure of their meals and health care, and of satisfying their other basic needs. In a sense, they are guaranteed some amount of attention and care, no matter the quality.

What can be done, therefore, is not to completely abolish institutionalization but to upgrade its quality.

On the other hand, home and family care may be given a boost to provide a suitable atmosphere for child growth and development. This means assisting and educating parents in the total care of the children. Alongside educational assistance, opportunities and incentives must be given to provide sufficient income for the family's livelihood. This aspect obviously necessitates the various government and private agencies' intervention.

Thus, although institutional care may have its own merits, home care of children, in the final analysis, may provide a more wholistic environment for child development.

In this light, it is recommended that the KBF Project should continue to serve the needs of children and their families. Empirical data showed that the families which were being assisted experienced positive changes in the aspects of income, work and employment status. Furthermore, to serve children right in their own homes was found to be more cost-effective than raising them inside the institution. This means that if the children were served right in the institution, then, the cost of providing basic services would rather be higher.

However, for the project to continue providing better services, improvements must be made in the administrative capability of the institutions, and in offering services which enhance its wholistic philosophy of child care.

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