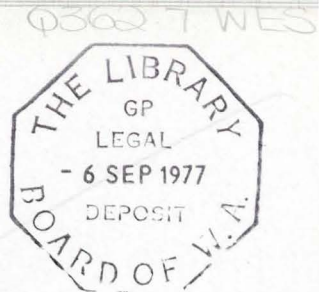




ANNUAL REPORT 1976

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**Western
Australia
1975-76**

**Department
For
Community Welfare**

**Annual
Report**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED
JUNE 30, 1976**

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

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The Hon.

N. E. Baxter, M.L.C.

MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE

Sir,

In accordance with Section 11 of the Community Welfare Act, 1972, I hereby submit a report on the work of the Department for Community Welfare for the year ended 30th June, 1976.

K. A. Maine,

DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY WELFARE

ADMINISTRATION

Administration Staff

Administration Staff

Administration Staff

Administration Staff

Administration Staff

Administration Staff

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Administration Staff

Administration Staff

Appreciation

The thanks of the Department go to all Governmental and semi-Governmental bodies, religious and community organisations and individuals who, by their active participation or by their friendly support, have contributed in any way to the welfare of those for whom the Department has responsibility in the State of Western Australia.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter, M.L.C.

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Introduction

This report of the Department's operations for the past year gives indication of the changing emphasis in the delivery of welfare services. It is expected that the extent of this change will increase in the years ahead as the community seeks services of a new kind more in keeping with the needs of the times and the evolving face of Australian family life.

Welfare programmes in 1976 bear very little resemblance to those of a decade ago. This is only rarely due to the disappearance of any of the social and individual problems that beset the community in those times. Most of those ills remain and in some instances attention to them has suffered as the resources of welfare departments and voluntary organisations are switched to new priorities that result from political initiatives, industrial, economic and social development and the availability or scarcity of the necessary corrective elements.

This report makes mention of many new, exciting and worthwhile initiatives that have been taken over the past year. All of them are the outcome of our attempts to develop more specific types of programmes to meet the needs of individuals and groups. In some instances the new programmes are funded from special grants from the Commonwealth or State Government, but in too many instances we have been required to divert finance, manpower and the interest of management from areas that are already under-provided. This entails risks. Regrettably we have found ourselves forced to take calculated risks with children's well-being as our overstrained field services fall behind in our statutory responsibilities. This deficiency is more evident in the matter of maintaining regular home visits to children whose welfare may be in jeopardy. This decline in services must be remedied as soon as possible so that officers are not expected to form judgements in unreasonable conditions and where a mistake could result in great distress or the death of a child.

Because of the need for many senior officers to involve themselves in planning for maximum utilization of the new funding opportunities available over the last year it must have appeared at times that the endeavours of all those staff engaged in the better known traditional day to day work of the Department was being overlooked. Any such impression is false as I am only too well aware that the Department must operate as a large collective of persons each with their own skills and abilities, and only

misfortune, opportunity or focused public attention may seem to make one appear more important than the other.

This report provides me with the opportunity of expressing my high regard for all staff in all areas of our work for the way they have persisted in the slow process of bringing to life some of the spirit and intentions contained in the Community Welfare Act. Towards the end of the current year we have concentrated increased attention on ways of bringing about some acceleration in the programmes to re-house Aboriginal reserve dwellers in the south western part of the State.

The conditions experienced by many families who have no better alternative should never have been tolerated for so long. A special submission has been prepared for consideration by the Commonwealth government enabling the rapid rehousing of the people effected and the closure of further reserves. If the application for those funds is successful the State should devote the highest priority to further endeavours to eradicate or greatly upgrade the remaining substandard reserves elsewhere in the State.

In March of this year the head office services of the Department moved to new premises in St. George's Terrace. This move was overdue as the previous location was not convenient to the public, our branches were scattered in several buildings and there was overcrowding. The new building, called "Community House" has overcome most of our problems with consequent improvement to staff morale. Most noticeable is the attention now given to the provision of roomy and cheerful public waiting areas.

In the detail of this report that follows the reader will learn of the very wide range of the Department's services and gain some impression of the way community changes are affecting the way welfare departments operate. The sections of the report have been written by the senior officers responsible for the particular areas of our practice. I have endeavoured to limit any alterations to the texts they have submitted to matters of editing and size only, so that their points of view, concerns and ideas are not lost. The document is consequently more interesting than is usual for annual reports. I believe the public knows too little about what is happening in welfare and that we should concentrate more attention in the future on raising the level of public knowledge and understanding. This needs to be done particularly at the political level. The public should have as much cause to realise that their money is as well spent on welfare as it is on schools or hospitals.

K. A. MAINE,
Director.

Welfare Services

Metropolitan Field Services

GENERAL

The Department's welfare services in the metropolitan region are made available through seven divisional offices. These are located at Perth, Belmont, Midland, Mt. Hawthorn, Balga, Victoria Park and Fremantle. In the latter two areas sub-offices have been established at Gosnells, Rockingham and Mandurah. This is in keeping with the desire to provide services at locations which are readily accessible to those members of the community who have need of them.

Growth in the outer suburban areas may demand further decentralisation and location of services in developing communities particularly the north western suburbs and the hills area.

SERVICES

Each division provides services covering a wide range of departmental activities. These include services to children and families where there is the danger of neglect, destitution or maltreatment of children, services in the area of youth behavioural problems; supportive services to families who are in need of economic, social and/or psychological help; and to local community groups and organisations which promote welfare.

The wide range of circumstances and clients to whom assistance may be provided creates problems of priority and liaison with other agencies in the health, education, housing and police areas. One of the most pressing and continuing problems for Divisional Supervisors is to limit the demand for service to a level which is reasonably commensurate with the resources at their disposal.

CHILD CARE

Usually, this begins with a complaint alleging child neglect, or a referral from schools or other agencies. Field staff enquire into the circumstances and, whether the child is subsequently committed to the care of the Department or not, they ensure that any action necessary to protect and provide for the welfare of children is taken. This is done in a sensitive yet effective way so that the policy of providing support to the natural family is maintained. Where children must be removed from their parents the Department seeks to place them so far as is possible, in a substitute family situation. In the long term the aim is to be able to reunite the child with his family. Foster parents are vitally important to this policy and contribute increasingly to the well-being of these children. Divisional staff involve foster parents as members of the welfare team and often meet in groups to provide mutual support and education in the ways of helping with problem children and their natural parents.

YOUTH BEHAVIOUR

Information is given to Childrens Courts on the circumstances and family background of each child

who appears before the Court. Supervision of every child where any subsequent order makes this necessary is also provided. Field staff work with children who have, as a consequence of an offence, been made wards, placed on probation or referred from the Juvenile Suspended Action Panel.

Group work emerges as a useful treatment medium additional to other programmes offered. Each Metropolitan Division is maintaining "peer" group activities and, in the process are themselves perfecting various techniques. Small groups which sometimes involve several children who have offended together are led by a trained welfare worker and the aim of this programme is to develop the children's capacity to make constructive and responsible decisions about the use of their leisure time. Out of the cumulative experience so far gathered the S.O.F.T.L.Y. (Social Options for Teenage youth Like You) programme has evolved. Plans are now in hand to evaluate its effectiveness.

Youth camps are another feature of trends in working with behaviourally disturbed children and most divisions promote their use.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Many families in the community face a complex array of problems and cannot be helped totally by the Community Welfare Department. Services provided by the housing, health and education authorities or by voluntary service agencies are often needed. As a consequence, Divisions maintain continuous liaison with these bodies.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Department continues to press for the strengthening of neighbourhood based groups and to expand and extend the network of voluntary help available to people in local communities.

Two full time community Social Workers had previously been appointed at Balga and Fremantle Division. This year a third officer was appointed to Victoria Park. Working as integral members of these locally based teams, they are kept in close touch with those groups of people who are in the greatest need. Together with other members of the teams who provide personal services to the children and families who seek help, the Community Development Social Worker helps to widen and balance the overall service at the local level.

As part of this community development programme an amount of \$8 450 was granted to 19 groups the metropolitan region this year. These small grants, timely made, have enabled a much larger number of people to work in a voluntary way and to develop worthwhile new services to even larger groups of people in their own communities.

The Western Australian Institute of Technology has located a Student Unit in Community Development at the Fremantle Division. It has continued to provide training and field experience to students who have been engaged in a number of projects principally concerned with youth, resident groups and tenants' associations.

Divisions

BALGA

Balga Division is serving an ever expanding population with a constant movement of new families into the area. Along with the role of service to individuals and families, emphasis is increasingly placed on trying to deal with problems on a community basis. The Division is helping the development of new services and facilities and has liaised with other Departments and agencies to ensure that a comprehensive network of welfare services is available to the local community. For example, legal aid services have been established by an officer of the Commonwealth Legal Aid Office who attends weekly at the Balga office. Other activities include the initiation of creative play activities for pre-school children living in large residential flat complexes; an expanded youth programme with offenders involving the use of trained leaders with small groups and camping exercises during the school holidays.

BELMONT

This Division services a population of about 80 000 people and covers principally the Shires of Belmont and Kalamunda and some areas of Canning. A close working relationship with the Shire of Belmont has continued and they have now appointed a Social Welfare Officer.

When the Divisional Office was shifted, the old premises in Laurie Street were converted into a Homemaker Centre and playgroup for children of single parents. Sewing classes are also conducted there. Together with Perth and Victoria Park Divisions Belmont has co-operated in developing new techniques in the selection of foster parents.

FREMANTLE

This is the largest Metropolitan Division, which includes areas from twelve Town and Shire Councils and serves some 180 000 people. There is great ethnic variety as well as urban and country settlements within the total area covered. There is a constant need to manage the skills and resources of the team of Divisional staff to meet developing and changing needs of the community. While the continuing need for personal services to individuals and families places great demands on the Division, the services of a Community Development Social Worker enables programmes at the community level to be developed. So far results of work at the "grass-roots" level in community organisation and in developing self-help groups is very encouraging. In this sphere assistance was given in conjunction with the local Shire, to voluntary groups in designing and conducting a survey of community needs in the Rockingham area. A mothers' co-operative group and the Kwinana Community Development Council have now been formed. Youth leadership programmes in the Fremantle area have continued and with a grant from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, a specific programme aimed at involving Aboriginal youth was developed. "Out of School Activities" for children have been promoted and camping programmes over school holidays have been organised. Despite this, demands from the Children's Courts for service have run at a high level.

VICTORIA PARK

Victoria Park is developing into one of the busiest Divisions in the Metropolitan area. This year new initiatives were developed in three major areas. The appointment of a Community Development Social Worker to the staff has enabled support to be given to local communities in areas which hitherto received minimal attention. The officer has concentrated his efforts on several new communities, all areas of significant social need.

Secondly, in conjunction with Belmont and Perth Divisions, methods of recruiting and selecting foster parents are being developed, and results so far are encouraging.

The third area is in the field of youth activities. Concentrating on the newer suburbs in the Gosnells area with large juvenile populations, staff have organised "peer group" leadership programmes and camping activities during the holidays.

MIDLAND

Midland is a well established centre for the eastern region. Local social development organisations are well developed, although, as in most communities there are gaps in the resources which committees provide. During the year a number of agencies in the health, education and welfare areas moved to establish offices in the Lockridge and Midland areas. The Division has continued to provide strong support and liaison with these resources; has established a Homemaker Centre in Lockridge and assisted in Out of School Care programmes in Midvale, Koon-gamia and Parkerville. In association with the Midland District Counselling Service, the Division is embarking on the development of a short course designed to improve communication in marriage. The Department's Student Teaching Unit is situated in the Divisional Office. The unit offers both case-work and community development field experience to students from the University of W.A. and Western Australian Institute of Technology.

PERTH

The Divisional Office serves a diverse and varied population from Cottesloe to Bayswater. Most of the normal work of the Department is undertaken but special attention has been given to areas of concern which are peculiar to the centre of the metropolitan region.

The office has established a co-operative liaison with many of the allied welfare organisations whose control offices are located in Perth. Work with Aboriginal organisations (e.g. the Aboriginal Advancement Council and the New Era Aboriginal Fellowship) has continued. An application for federal funding enabled the setting up of a Special Aboriginal Project attached to the Division. It is presently concerned with homeless Aborigines in the Metropolitan region.

MT. HAWTHORN

The Division serves a population of nearly 150 000. The north-west corridor in the Shire of Wanneroo is the area of major growth in population. Generally, the increased demands for personal services have

impeded efforts to provide adequate preventive work. However, the Division has been able to provide assistance in funding and in guidance on staff training for the Duncraig Counselling Service, the foundation of the Innaloo Aboriginal Social Club with associated playgroups and sewing groups, a voluntary help scheme in Doubleview and the organisation of the Stirling Community Groups projects.

Mt. Hawthorn continued to actively promote a youth leadership programme.

SUMMARY

In the last four years there has been no significant increase in the numbers of field staff available to service the metropolitan area. Despite this, demands for service have risen at around 5 per cent to 10 per cent per annum. The Field Divisions have reacted to this by raising the threshold at which they will respond to a problem, by referring matters to other agencies and not fully carrying out statutory commitments.

Contemporary welfare services are at a disadvantage in dealing with the problem of appropriate staff levels. The simple rules of assessing staff needs in accordance with "caseload" no longer apply as methods of helping clients move to a more preventive and community based orientation.

In a very real sense, welfare staff are entering into a relationship with whole communities and are frequently avoiding actions such as committal of children by providing help to their parents. In this situation it is increasingly difficult to assess just what should constitute a normal work load. Much depends on the level of service which the community expects.

In spite of the problems, trends are encouraging. For instance, the development of the S.O.F.T.L.Y. programme—a method of working with delinquent children—indicates that the potential for programme development is being realised by an increasingly skilled staff.

Country Field Services

During the last 12 months the northern half of the State has experienced a period of continued high activity. New initiatives have occurred in the community development area and a strong emphasis has been placed on the establishment of residential child care facilities to service the needs of the region.

The Department's activity in a wide range of community development issues has demonstrated our view that such programmes can serve as a preventive function. The provision of supports and services in the community can substantially reduce the needs and stresses on individuals and families and avoid them emerging as welfare cases.

Increases in the Aboriginal population in the north have not been balanced with increased housing. This poses grave concern for the Department as insufficient housing expands the number of families who must live on reserves. The wide ranging depriv-

ation associated with this life style retards the overall social development and adjustment of this group. A major investment of resources by the respective housing authorities is seen by the Department as essential to ameliorate this situation.

Frequent staff changes within these northern areas continue as a major problem for the Department. The development of a consistent service and a high standard of performance requires staffing stability and staff knowledge based on experience.

A concerted effort nevertheless has been made by the Department towards delegation of decision making authority to the respective Divisions. This initiative is in line with overall departmental plans to further expand its system of localized administration in the future.

Kimberley Division

The Divisional Office for Kimberley Division is located in Derby and there are District Offices at Broome, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Wyndham and Kununurra. Recent developments in the Kimberley have indicated new initiatives adopted by the Department towards the social problems of an isolated area.

As the Department gradually becomes more consolidated in this area, greater attention is being paid to the wider charter laid down in the Community Welfare Act. The statutory child care responsibilities of the Child Welfare Act and expertise on child management and behaviour problems is an ongoing service to the community.

The Aboriginal population in the Kimberleys represents approximately 45 per cent of the State Aboriginal population. As these Aboriginal groups are now starting to progress in community development, it is natural that demands on this Department's services by the Aboriginal groups are significant. However, it is stressed that the departmental services in the Kimberleys are aimed at the total population.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development work amongst Aboriginal groups is perhaps exemplified most at Fitzroy Crossing and Derby where there has been a development and progress in the growth of incorporated Aboriginal communities as well as consolidation of already existing associations.

The communities in Fitzroy Crossing are the Kadjina, Wunkajunka, Bayulu, Junjuwa, Kurnangki and Gidja. Four of these communities are incorporated and the other two will shortly achieve this status. The projects being undertaken by these groups are contract mustering, horse-breaking, vehicle maintenance, market gardening, community grocery stores, contract wood-carting, bakery/butcher shop and the town rubbish contract. The office at Fitzroy Crossing is managed on community development lines rather than on a routine case work basis and a multi-disciplinary team approach is being used. Officers are providing assistance to the groups so that they may formulate their own decisions and undertake projects on a community self-help basis.

Noonkanbah Station has been acquired by the Aboriginal Lands Trust and it will be leased by one of the community groups. Widespread community land moves arise out of progress in social development.

The progress made by communities has received full support and backing from the local people, including pastoralists. Two leading pastoralists have accepted an invitation by the communities to act as honorary economic advisers. There are now six Homemakers working within their own communities on child care, camp hygiene, co-ordinating the school lunch programme and encouraging school attendance.

The model for these communities to continue their self-development has now been established and the progress being achieved should continue in the future. In Derby an officer has been liaising with the Barula Association, an incorporated group consisting mainly of Walmatjari speaking people living on the Derby Reserve. This group is endeavouring to improve its standard of living on a community basis.

Kalumburu Mission is considering handing over its facilities to an Aboriginal Council in 1977. The Wyndham office has been involved in the preparatory work for this to occur. They are also involved in supporting the settlement of Aboriginal people at Oombulgurri. This community continues to stabilise itself with the help of the Institute of Cultural Affairs and the social problems in Wyndham have been greatly reduced as a consequence.

CHILD CARE

The Minister for Community Welfare formally opened Catherine House in Broome on December 19, 1975. The need for a short term child care facility was stressed mainly through the efforts of Sister Michael. A committee was formed to represent the citizens of Broome to manage a child care facility. Negotiations between the Department and the committee led to the establishment of Catherine House as a

contract Group Home. There is a formal agreement between both parties setting out the Department's financial and social support for the child care aspect and the responsibilities of the committee, which includes promoting community involvement.

The Department has instituted a new child care programme at Fitzroy Crossing. The three Group Homes managed by Aboriginal house parents under a representative Aboriginal committee, have been established to replace the dormitory-style hostel. The Group Homes which cater for up to eight children each, endeavour to duplicate normal family living which is much more desirable than dormitories. The Aboriginal committee controls the management of the Group Homes and determines in which Group Home a child should be placed depending on tribal kinship. A Clinical Psychologist is co-ordinating the programme for the first six months to ensure a smooth transition.

WELFARE AIDES

Funding has been received from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to engage twelve Aboriginal Welfare Aides on a continuing basis.

Recruitment commenced last September and all twelve positions have been filled. A Social Worker based in Wyndham acted as full-time co-ordinator, responsible for recruitment and training for a period of six months.

This recent recruitment has doubled the size of full-time staff and already has had a beneficial effect upon the type and quality of welfare service offered to the community.

In addition the employment of local Aboriginal people provides the Department with stronger links to a large proportion of the indigenous population and consequently aids in the identification of the Department as a transactive helping agency rather than simply a Government Department enforcing statutory requirements.



**ABORIGINAL WELFARE AIDES EMPLOYED IN THE
KIMBERLEY REGION**

RESERVES

As in other areas of the State the accommodation on Reserves is not acceptable for permanent housing. Problems of child care, health and social degradation result from the present poor standards. The Department is supplying emergency accommodation in the form of tents that are funded by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. The Aboriginal people purchase the tents at a reduced amount to temporarily overcome this serious problem. Urgent consideration and finance is required for either upgrading or providing alternative housing, in place of reserves.

GENERAL

A Departmental Psychologist is now located in Kununurra. This is part of the general programme of upgrading welfare services in the Kimberley and is funded by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Psychologist has been involved in considerable travelling throughout the Kimberley which has enabled him to be involved in extensive preventive and diagnostic work.

There has been several experiments in work-programmes for child offenders at Kununurra where a considerable amount of delinquency is experienced.

The "Bililuna Incident" considerably involved our Halls Creek staff in the escorting of offending juveniles and liaison work with Papunya Settlement in the Northern Territory. In addition staff acted as intermediaries with Aboriginal Legal Services in the various court cases.

Pilbara Division

This year an office at Karratha was opened. There are now seven district offices within the Division. The others are at Port Hedland, Roebourne, Onslow, Paraburdoo, Newman and Marble Bar.

Within these areas there is considerable social contrast between the old and the new. Karratha, Paraburdoo and Newman are examples of the modern mining towns of the 1970's, while Roebourne, Onslow and Marble Bar illustrate the older pastoral oriented north west towns. Port Hedland is a unique combination of both style of town and as such provides the most visible contrast between the two life styles.

In Port Hedland the Department's staff are involved in the resettlement of Aboriginal people displaced from surrounding pastoral properties and the stabilisation of the towns growing mining and service communities.

The rapid population growth of Port Hedland has severely strained the established community resources and Departmental Officers were actively involved with existing community groups during the year.

The pensioner population of Port Hedland's Twelve Mile Reserve, have become a unified and purposeful group. During the coming year it is likely that they will assume full management of the land on which the Reserve stands.

The Homemakers attached to the Port Hedland office have been particularly active and have done much to improve conditions on the town's Three Mile Reserve and towards the successful movement

of some Aboriginal families from the Reserve situation to town housing. Availability of sufficient conventional housing for both Aboriginal as well as European families continues to be an acute problem.

Plans to convert the house on the old Port Hedland Native Hospital site to an emergency care Group Home are well advanced and the centre should be functioning early in the coming year.

The demand on the Department's local resources created by Cyclone Joan highlighted the need for a total disaster plan to be adopted by the Department. Such a plan is now being formed and it is hoped that at least part of the plan will be tested in a simulated disaster exercise to be held in Port Hedland in October 1976.

The standard of Aboriginal tenancy in town housing is improving. As a result of a seminar jointly organised by this Department and the State Housing Commission—which included local tenants—many modifications and improvements are being carried out to the Roebourne housing. A further meeting is to be held to evaluate the results of the action taken, and to take such further action as may seem necessary.

Delinquency in Roebourne continues to be a pressing problem. A community based programme aimed at Roebourne's juvenile delinquency problem has been formulated by local staff and if funding is made available implementation of the programme should begin early in 1977.

The Department's Community Centre in Roebourne has been extensively upgraded and should soon be operating as a youth centre. This centre will provide the only organised recreational outlet for the youth of Roebourne.

Yaandina Babies and Children Centre, a community committee managed facility has operated at almost full capacity over the past year and has proved to be a great aid to both Departmental Officers and the Roebourne community. Where possible Yaandina is used as a preventive measure which avoids committing children unnecessarily. The Division's sincere appreciation is extended to the Yaandina Board and the Sisters for their work.

A programme has been developed at Onslow where Aboriginal youth are placed in training situations on surrounding pastoral properties. This programme has already significantly reduced the frequency of offences by some juveniles. It is hoped that this programme will be extended to other centres during the coming year.

School holiday placements for Aboriginal children from Onslow in the mining towns of Pannawonica and Paraburdoo have been very successful and should aid in promoting interaction between the communities.

The Marble Bar Office has successfully run a number of holiday camps for Marble Bar children over the last year. These camps have involved visits to the nearby mining communities of Goldsworthy and Shay Gap and have done much to improve relationships between these communities.

Emergency accommodation in the form of tents has been provided to the Aboriginal people camped at Nullagine and the Department is involved in moves to provide a more permanent situation for the people of Nullagine.

Newman, Paraburdoo and Karratha have provided a growing number of adoption applicants, and this has become an important part of the Department's work in these towns.

Day care and play groups are emerging as major issues in the mining towns and departmental officers are playing a major role in the development and maintenance of such facilities.

There is a growing demand in the mining towns for family and individual counselling, and departmental officers are making every effort to meet this need.

Office and staff accommodation is still a problem in Newman and Paraburdoo, with the officer having to work from his residence. Hopefully some action will be taken to rectify this situation in the coming year.

It is increasingly obvious to all concerned that our officers, being independent of the mining company in these towns, are an essential part of the resources of an isolated mining community. The Department's work in these towns has done much to improve our image in the total Pilbara region.

The Division has benefited by the appointment of a Regional Administrator to the Pilbara area who has taken considerable interest in the Department's activities. A good working relationship has developed between the Administrator and departmental staff and should aid greatly in the co-ordination of welfare activities.

A project funded by the Children's Commission instigated by residents of Karratha, and developed by this Department has now commenced. This project, aimed at evaluating a particular service delivery model for isolated communities, could set the future pattern of service delivery to isolated communities all over Australia.

During 1975/76 the Pilbara staff have continued to develop a strong identification with the region in which they are working. This has led to a commitment by staff which has been sensed by the community, and allowed a working relationship beneficial to all to emerge.

With the future prospect of departmental regionalization, it is believed that the Department will merge further with the Pilbara communities, with the result that Pilbara needs will be met by Pilbara resources whether they be statutory or voluntary.

Murchison Division

This Division has been very fortunate to have maintained its staff stability and our experienced and competent officers have continued to provide a variety of services to their communities. As can be seen by the following district reports, the emphasis has been on community involvement and family welfare. The Homemaker Service continues to be a valuable support to the field officers.

A wide variety of activities have been funded in the last twelve months from the Community Welfare vote. We have funded a cross section of groups such as homeless men, voluntary community welfare organisations, a teenage dance, holiday camps for children, youth clubs, after school activities and isolated school children (with such things as school uniforms, school lunches and holiday camps.)

In the field of child welfare, the community is facing a growing problem with juvenile offences and we have been building up our activities in the area of preventive work with youth groups to try and counter this. Developing more effective treatment techniques for these children must also be a continuing aim.

In the field of Aboriginal welfare, lack of employment opportunities and housing continue to cause depression and difficulties among these communities and frustration among the staff. The re-introduction of Employment Development Schemes would help in developing individual pride and independence. These qualities are receding among those people currently dependent upon Social Security benefits.

GERALDTON DISTRICT

Apart from their normal on-going casework responsibilities, the Geraldton field staff have all been directly involved in various community and group activities in the area.

The Holiday Camp for isolated Aboriginal children of the Division was again a great success. It catered for thirty-two children from places as far apart as Wiluna and Carnarvon and a further thirty local children took part in day activities.

The Geraldton Voluntary Community Group has continued to be forceful in community affairs and stimulated the development of a number of social welfare innovations. After extensive lobbying at the State and Federal level, they remained unsuccessful in attempts to obtain a salaried Marriage Guidance Officer in the region. Subsequently, one of our own staff has been the motivating force in establishing a group of local voluntary counsellors. A weekend training seminar, in conjunction with the Marriage Guidance Council, was conducted recently in Geraldton to try and overcome the lack of people with counselling skills in the area.

Since the establishment of a Community Education Centre in the town it has been possible for staff to become involved in several social welfare oriented training programmes during their evenings and weekends. These include such topics as Human Sexuality, Child Development, Women in Society and Marriage Counselling.

The Geraldton Homemakers continue to go from strength to strength. Towards the end of the financial year, they were granted the use of a State Housing Commission house as a training centre. This is now the venue of the Yanay-Yanma Club, a group of clients who are running their own activities in such areas as sewing, cooking, pottery, knitting, crochet, hobbytex, cane work, painting and other crafts. This Club has recently been associated with the establishment of a similar, smaller group in Northampton. The Club is working in conjunction with Aboriginal Adult Education, who have provided them with equipment.

MOUNT MAGNET

Staffing in Mt. Magnet has been a problem throughout the year and extensive use of the Relieving Officer and support from Meekatharra staff has been necessary to maintain a service in the area. The

town has suffered a major economic and social setback with the closure of the Hill 50 Gold Mine and the demand for departmental services has now become quite limited.

The future role of the Department in the town is now under review.

CARNARVON

During the year the three field officers in Carnarvon have continued to cope with their large area. Administration in the district has been greatly facilitated by the establishment of a Sub-office in Exmouth, manned part time by a Welfare Assistant, and the obtaining of new offices at Carnarvon.

Much work has been directed at Aboriginal youth in the Carnarvon area by the field staff and homemakers. With the help of Commonwealth funds, a local Aboriginal Rock Group has been formed and has provided music at many local functions. A Dance Group of girls ranging in age from five to sixteen years, has also been formed.

The Project Rooms at the High School are being used one night a week as a Teenage Coffee Shop and this is proving very popular. It is intended to expand the programme and move into the proposed Shire Youth Centre.

It is pleasing to see that the local Aboriginal community is expanding its self help activities. They recently held the official opening of their Garage/Workshop Complex and they hope to build a recreation hall on adjacent land in the near future. On the Reserve they are building a prototype rammed-brick cottage. If sufficient interest is shown, this could form the basis of the establishment of a self-help village in the town.

MULLEWA

Within the Mullewa district the staff comprises two District Officers, four Homemakers and a Welfare Assistant.

The following are some of the programmes which have been achieved over the past twelve months.

After protracted negotiations with the State Housing Commission, approval was given to commence a self-help home painting programme for seven families, on a trial basis. This scheme was followed with interest by the State Housing Commission, and due to its success they have agreed to a further expansion of the project in Mullewa. The current programme is to be used as a yardstick and example for other projects of this nature within the Murchison.

The painting project promoted discussion among the Aboriginal groups and approaches were made by tenants with requests to upgrade the Reserve. The six tenants concerned readily agreed to undertake the project on a self-help basis and are currently engaged in painting their own dwellings; erecting fences around them and are also involved in developing a central grassed area within the Reserve. When all current projects are completed, it is intended to fence an area adjacent to their own dwellings and grow their own vegetables. It is apparent that the Reserve will need to be retained for some considerable years due to the lack of conventional housing within the townsite. In addition, being situated on the edge of the station country, the Mullewa Reserve is used regularly by transient and casual Aboriginal workers.

The Department has assisted in the provision of finance for a number of After School projects. Following initial impetus provided by the Mullewa field staff, a Youth Club was established which involves school age children in supervised activities after school and during holidays. The success of the Youth Club which presently runs twice a week has surpassed all expectations. There is an average daily attendance of forty children. Initially \$250 was granted by the Children's Commission and a further \$250 was donated by local businessmen, to establish the Club.

The Morawa Youth Activity Council received financial assistance from the Department and is expected to be successful in its activities which include a Drop in Coffee Shop, Skate Board Club and dancing tuition.

The Mullewa "Drop in Coffee Shop" is operating successfully with teenagers maintaining responsibility in ensuring that the premises are kept clean and tidy.

Homemakers in Mullewa have endeavoured to promote and encourage adult activities. A Weight Watchers Club has been established through their efforts. This Club and its sponsors are helping to raise funds to purchase a new ambulance for the local hospital. Its twelve active members are made up of both Europeans and Aborigines.

Where Homemakers assistance is being used, generally the standard of houses is being maintained at a high level. Most have floor coverings and wallpaper and externally there has been a general improvement in the standards of lawns and gardens. A Homemakers Thrift Shop, which sells second hand clothing and furniture, is run by Aborigines and it is hoped will soon become self sufficient.

During the last year with a concerted effort by Homemakers and the Community Health Sisters, a general improvement of health and hygiene of clients has been noticed.

It is disappointing that only a further two homes for Aborigines were built in Mullewa over the past year, this being five less than the original allocation. Overcrowding in town housing continues to remain a problem. One major area of concern is the location of the Aboriginal homes in the Mullewa townsite. There is a group of sixteen homes in the Dalgety Street area of which thirteen are occupied by Aboriginal tenants. It has become clear that such concentration of Aboriginal tenants does tend to affect overall standards. State Housing Commission now appreciate the need to reallocate some of these homes to European tenants as they become vacant.

MEEKATHARRA

Aboriginal children's attendances at the town's kindergarten have fluctuated considerably. Efforts to produce greater parental responsibility has had limited success, but it is hoped attendances may improve when the local Aboriginal group take possession of their own bus. It is encouraging to note the continued work of the same part Aboriginal girl as assistant at the kindergarten.

Lack of employment and its related problems is the greatest cause for concern in the town, particularly in regard to the young people unemployed due to a cut back in station employment.

A shortage of housing and the difficulties of many tenants to meet their tenancy agreement requirements still remains a problem in Meekatharra. The tenancy problems are mainly the result of lack of consideration for each other and the over-indulgence in alcohol.

The Reserve population basically comprises an older group who, with one or two exceptions, wish to remain on the Reserve. A Homemaker has been allocated to the Reserve and together with help from the Community Health staff an improvement is noticeable in the cleanliness of the houses and the surrounding area. The Homemaker has reactivated interest in the garden area and this will have a variety of benefits to the Reserve occupants.

The Department assists the Youth and Social Club which is providing constructive sporting and social activities for the young people. There is no doubt that regular visits from a trained recreation officer would be of great benefit.

Aboriginal Legal Service now visits regularly with the Magistrate on his monthly circuit. The willingness of the visiting solicitors to see and advise people, other than those in Court, is a great help in an isolated area.

WILUNA

Poor attendances at Wiluna school, partly due to the poor condition of the community bus, and the resulting lack of transport is cause for concern to the Department. One bright note at the school, however, is the improvement in the children's appearance since the morning shower and school uniform project became operative. With the Department's assistance in developing projects, the children's general physical appearance and health has improved, particularly with the continuance of the school lunch programme and supply of milk, biscuits and fruit at morning recess. There is no doubt that many of the children come to school without breakfast, consequently this assistance becomes more important. It is pleasing that mothers have assisted with the washing of clothes and preparation of lunches.

Department of Aboriginal Affairs has purchased the former Seventh Day Adventist Mission. Hopefully progress will be seen as the former Mission is developed as a village site.

The Desert Gold project is a significant sign of progress and the continued employment of a small trainable workforce is encouraging. These workers have proven that the Aboriginal people can absorb and then utilise knowledge and practical skills, which are the basis for expanded activities later.

Sewing classes which were started earlier this year are proving extremely popular with the Aboriginal women. If more volunteers were available, some useful children's activities could be organised at the same time.

Thanks to the local Police, football teams have been trained and as soon as boots and guernseys are received it is hoped to arrange matches with Meekatharra and other towns.

The heavy drinking by a large section of the population continues to be a real problem. Hopefully the injection of more Department of Aboriginal Affairs staff and the practical development and training of the Ngangganawili Community councillors will help to overcome this problem.

The problem of children left unattended because parents work on stations or are otherwise away from Wiluna, is a cause for concern since the closure of the Mission. The need for some type of hostel or boarding accommodation is becoming an increasingly important consideration.

Southern Country Regions

Introduction

Detailed below is a summary from the three Southern Country Divisions, these being Goldfields Division, Central Division and Southern Division. The reports reflect the variety of services the Department is now providing in country regions.

The majority of these services is a culmination of four years' work since the Department for Community Welfare was established. By observation on recent visits to the regions it is apparent that the Department for Community Welfare is gradually providing the services expected of it in a comprehensive and professional manner. The services provided are a result of thoughtful and well developed planning and the most acutely felt needs of local communities are being seen as priorities by the District Staff.

It is not possible to include in an Annual Report details of the host of projects in which our field staff are involved. The Department has become involved with the local communities and use the community as a base through which our services can be provided.

One of the most outstanding achievements in the southern country regions has been the very careful and conscious development and co-ordination of community groups in numerous country towns. These bodies are now moving from strength to strength and the Department can increasingly withdraw to a less prominent supportive role.

The most pleasing of all developments is the improvement in standards of service rather than the variety and nature of services provided. Most noticeable has been the raising of standards of case planning and case management. There is now much closer examination of the standards of child care in particular missions, group homes and foster homes.

The continued development of Case Conferences at the divisional level is having a marked impact in the practicality of the conference plans, and there is no doubt the standard of supervision of wards in our care has improved as a result.

No annual Report could adequately indicate the commitment and enthusiasm required of staff to achieve all that has been achieved over the last four years. Staff have done a great deal more than what was expected of them and it is acknowledged that at times this has been at great personal inconvenience. Without the enthusiasm and dedication of the Department's field staff very few of the very significant achievements would have been obtained.

Central Division

ADMINISTRATION

Central Division, known in other contexts as Central Agricultural Region, is comprised of the Moora, Northam, Kellerberrin, Merredin and Narrogin Districts. It includes a number of major communities of more or less equal importance which require the location of evenly distributed staff and services. Unlike other country divisions the bulk of the population is not located around any particular major industrial or commercial centre, such as Port Hedland in the Pilbara or Geraldton in the Murchison, and the townships tend to be self-contained and independent, each of the other. For this reason it has been difficult to decide upon any particular centre as being a logical place for the Divisional Headquarters and for administrative convenience, and for reasons of economy, the Division's Social Work Supervisor and support staff have been located at Head Office, Perth being geographically central to all of the major communities in the Division.

As it has not been possible to locate the Divisional Headquarters in a situation where there is direct access to the bulk of the Division's staff and clientele, a plan has been implemented to provide back-up services from Perth itself. During the year under review a Divisional Assistant was engaged and this appointment replaced a scheme whereby an officer of this capacity was shared with another section. The Divisional Assistant's duties include maintaining centralized records and clerical controls for the Division and also to provide administrative support services for those officers located in the field.

A further innovation has been the appointment of a Social Worker who is attached to the Divisional Headquarters and who is engaged on a roving commission basis to oversee case management and provide case-work consultation to field officers. An important aspect of the Divisional Social Worker's function, in conjunction with that of the Clinical Psychologist which the Central Division shares with Midland (Metropolitan) Division, is to maintain a linking service for those cases in transit from one location to another, or from district to institution. Too often, it has been found that communications and important actions have a temporary breakdown in transitional situations. The Social Work Supervisor cannot maintain an adequate oversight of these matters as well as remain in supervisory contact with twelve permanent officers and twenty-six part-time workers who are operating in widely separated geographic localities. Due to the staff changes which inevitably occur in country districts from time to time it is important to have at least one officer other than the Supervisor who has some continuity of contact with certain cases in any given locality and who is up-to-date with current social issues so that any incoming officer can be given an adequate introduction to the work area.

The above appointments represent no more than re-organisations in the Division's system of work management. District staff in the field have continued to maintain the essential day-to-day contact with clients. To make this contact more efficient and convenient to the public in the Eastern section of the Division, approval was obtained to establish a District Office at Merredin which is a major commercial centre. Merredin and the surrounding

towns were previously serviced from Kellerberrin but this was found to be uneconomical as the majority of clients for the area were located in Merredin itself, which meant that one of the Kellerberrin officers spent a great deal of his time driving to and from that town. An officer took up residence in Merredin early in 1976 and by the end of the financial year action was well in hand to secure office accommodation. The new Merredin district embraces the Shire areas of Yilgarn, Narnabreen, Bruce Rock, Merredin, Nungarin, Mukinbudin and Westonia.

CHILDREN'S COURTS

There was no apparent increase in the numbers of children appearing before Children's Courts within the Moora, Northam and Merredin Districts and Kellerberrin. Narrogin District Officers have reported a reduction in numbers. This was the result of our officers, other authorities and members of the community placing more emphasis on the treatment of juvenile problems within the community. There were also indications that our field officers were gaining the confidence of parents and that people were seeking our services before a crisis point was reached.

A Juvenile Suspended Action Panel was established at Merredin, giving senior Police Officers and our staff an alternative course of action to Court proceedings in dealing with juvenile offenders. Another Juvenile Panel operates at Northam.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

A very successful camp was organised and supervised by our officer at Moora for a group of Aboriginal youths, including Ward and non-Ward offenders during the May school holidays—a period during which idle youths are prone to group with peers and create mischief.

The boys concerned expressed great appreciation of this camp, which was located at the old Mogumber Mission site, and there were indications that much more extensive work can be done along these lines.

The officer at Kellerberrin, in conjunction with local service bodies, arranged for twenty children to attend a long weekend camp at Point Walter. Officers from all districts assisted the Country Womens Associations to send selected girls to a residential course at Busselton and were active in arranging for various children to attend holiday camps and educational excursions.

All officers were involved in liaison work with the various educational authorities to give children in disadvantaged circumstances a chance to attain higher education.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Officers of Central Division continued to advocate the Department's policy of encouraging voluntary bodies within the communities. Our contacts with community groups have increased the number of preventive referrals, therefore workloads appear likely to increase.

Other developments in the Division include:—

Group discussions involving adoptive parents at Merredin, organised by the local officer and a representative from the Department's Adoption Centre.

The Moora Officer initiated the Moora Community Advancement Group, comprised of responsible local citizens, to examine local problems and review local resources. A mutually beneficial seminar between representatives of this group and similar groups throughout Western Australia was arranged at Bunbury.

The Department made a grant to the Merredin One-Nite Shelter organisation—a local voluntary body which has organised emergency accommodation for temporarily disadvantaged people.

HOMEMAKER SERVICE

The Department's Homemaker Training Centre at Clarke Street, Moora, had by the end of the financial year become fully operational and successful activities at the centres at Goomalling, Northam, Narrogin, Williams, Pingelly, Kellerberrin, Tammin and Quairading were continued.

ABORIGINAL RESERVES

The number of houses on the Quairading Reserve was reduced from four to two during the year, while the position at Williams remained stable. At Moora, Northam and Pingelly, however, the position appears to have deteriorated, largely because of a reduction in the State Housing Commission's Aboriginal housing programmes. At the end of the year the Department was examining alternatives for Reserve type housing.

The housing shortage, and the unemployment of unskilled Aboriginals and youths is the major problem of the Division.

Goldfields Division

The Department for Community Welfare in the Goldfields Division provides services to a group of very different communities with varied needs. The staff in the Goldfields deal with social problems and family breakdowns in an established urban centre such as Kalgoorlie-Boulder and also newly developing mining towns. They provide services to isolated Aboriginal communities in the central reserves and also to isolated families scattered along the Trans Australia Railway Line.

LAVERTON

There are now two permanent field officers in Laverton accommodated in the new office complex. The field officers in Laverton continue to provide community services such as youth activity, a pre-kindergarten centre and a soup kitchen. Services are also provided to Aboriginal communities at Mt. Margaret and Cosmo Newberry. The homemakers employed in Laverton continue to be an important part of our service to the community.

WARBURTON

This community is undergoing changes. A significant number of Aborigines moved to separate communities at Giles, Wingellina, Blackstone and Jamieson. The Department's role at Warburton has been reviewed and a District Officer will be employed on a contract basis in the near future.

The Nyalkubai Kitchen Centre plays a major role in enhancing the health and nutrition of the school children and pre-school children at Warburton. Aboriginal staff are involved in the food preparation. A shower block for the use of the school children is attached to this centre.

LEONORA

The population in this town has significantly decreased over recent years. Consequently, demands for the services of the Department for Community Welfare have been reduced. The Minister has approved the closing of the Leonora office and an arrangement has been made to service Leonora from Laverton.

The Department's Nabberu Hostel at Leonora provides accommodation to twenty Aboriginal primary school children whose parents are employed on isolated stations.

ESPERANCE

The field officers in Esperance are involved in the community development in the town. During the past year a community liaison group and several community services have been established in Esperance. The local homemakers support a single parents club and are also involved in supportive work with families in the area.

Norseman is serviced two days per week by field officers from Esperance and during the past year a homemaker and welfare assistant have also been employed in the town. The Norseman Mission accommodates eighty Aboriginal children, including about fifty wards of this Department, in a series of cottage homes including one established in the town.

KAMBALDA

The population of Kambalda has increased rapidly in the past ten years to approximately 6 000 residents. The Department opened a sub-office in Kambalda this year which is opened three days a week and is serviced from Kalgoorlie. The field staff enjoy the co-operation of local community organisations and Government instrumentalities. There is an increasing demand for the Department's services in Kambalda and it is envisaged that a full-time officer will be needed there in the near future.

KALGOORLIE – BOULDER

During the past year the Department's field officers have been increasingly involved with community developments in this area. They have been assisting a community liaison group and helped establish such community services as a soup kitchen and an out of school child care centre.

The homemaker service to both Aboriginal and European families is an important part of our service in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder District. During the past year the Department has leased a home in Boulder which is used as a social centre for both Aboriginal and European women. A play group for pre-school children is attached to this centre. The homemakers in this area have also been active in organising several social events.

The Department has three hostels in Kalgoorlie for high school children, working girls and working boys. During the past year the lack of employment opportunities for young people in this town has been noticed because of the difficulty in finding employment for the youths staying in the hostels. Both the Working Girls and Working Boys Hostels provide short term accommodation for children who have run away from home, or are en route to their home or other destinations. The needs of other children in this district are met by approximately forty foster homes and by Kurrawang Mission which is run on a cottage basis and provides a family type environment for a number of our wards in their care.

At the end of 1975 discussions between Departmental officers and local Aborigines established a need for short term accommodation in the area. Following these discussions the buildings on the Kalgoorlie Reserve were renovated by an Aboriginal self-help organisation. Presently the Reserve caters for only one permanent family and provides temporary accommodation for a number of transient Aborigines who are passing through the town.

The Department provides a limited service to the Aboriginal community at Cundeelee. This community has recently become incorporated but during recent months a continuing drought has necessitated the provision of water on emergency basis to this community.

Field officers in the past year have become increasingly involved in providing services to approximately 140 families who are living in isolated communities along the Trans Australia Railway. The Department participated in a social and health survey of the Trans Line families with four other Government Departments.

Field officers have continued to be active in the area of youth work. A "drop in" youth centre has been open for most of the year.

The Department has financially assisted local organisations through the Community Welfare Assistance Vote and these grants have been particularly beneficial in the area of provision of emergency accommodation.

Southern Division

During the past year Southern Division has continued to focus on identifying community needs, publicising service through involvement with local communities and co-ordination of welfare services within the Region.

Each aspect of the Department's work and the staff's involvement in a variety of projects has been dictated by the individual identity of the districts within the Division and enhanced by our field staff's location within the communities they serve. The general approach has been to recognise the diverse needs arising from individual districts and to respond to these needs rather than imposing ideas on the communities.

The Division has been fortunate in maintaining a blend of experienced and professional staff without the major disruption which occurs when staff transfers are effected.

Apart from the Department's statutory obligations, projects have been implemented throughout the Division which provide improved quality of service as follows.

BUNBURY

The Divisional Office at Bunbury has now been re-located in premises which more adequately provides for client confidentiality. The previous premises will be occupied by a number of voluntary agencies operating a Community Resources Centre.

During the year Bunbury staff have been involved with a number of community based groups, encouraging these groups in their efforts to develop programmes to meet their own needs. The Bunbury Voluntary Group was assisted to host a seminar involving groups throughout Western Australia, to encourage the voluntary movement in their efforts to develop programmes relevant to their needs.

A Peer Group Leader has been appointed to Bunbury as part of the programme for youth. At present this staff member is contacting youth involved or on the periphery of delinquent activities, with the intention of providing them with realistic outlets for their energy.

The Homemaker Centre at Bunbury provides social and domestic training for a number of clients and the success of this Centre has resulted in the Department investigating the provision of the same resource at Brunswick Junction.

COLLIE

This office has continued to focus on activities which mutually serve European and Aboriginal clientele.

The Homemaker Centre caters for approximately a 50/50 European and Aboriginal group. This approach has assisted understanding of each group's special needs and perspectives. Successful integrated social occasions such as a Community Dance and Fashion Parade at the Miniers' Institute at Collie are examples of responsible community integration in a country town.

The lease of the Congregational Church Hall has provided further opportunities to develop programmes, such as a soup kitchen, sale of clothing and furniture, group meetings, dances and music lessons. The Annual Christmas Party for children catered for over two hundred children.

The major project at Collie, in liaison with the State Housing Commission, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Collie Shire and Member of Parliament, is the rehousing of approximately twenty Aborigines camping on the outskirts of town. Currently the State Housing Commission are at the stage of providing models for this group to assess as appropriate for their needs. The housing scheme when complete will be serviced by a housekeeper service, trained to assist the elderly and invalid pensioners who will be accommodated.

MANJIMUP

This office serves a population which live in relatively isolated and small mill towns. Recognition has been given to the circumstances of the people living in mill town communities by encouraging and assisting

the development of play groups. These groups have enhanced social participation and some have now formed the base for Community Action Groups. The Department has been instrumental in obtaining funds via the Children's Commission, for a teacher to assist these groups. Also funds have been made available from the Australian Assistance Plan for a bus which will be used by these groups as a mobile library and resources centre.

The employment of a Peer Group Leader at Nannup has enabled the youth of that town to commence a Youth Club which has considerable support from the community and could be a model for other mill town communities.

Provision of a Group Home at Bridgetown has ensured that children within the South West can be cared for in a familiar environment close to relatives and friends with as little disruption in their development as possible.

KATANNING

A major facility in the form of a Working Boys Hostel has been completed. At present the facility also has potential to care for working boys and girls not yet ready for community placement. It is intended that the Hostel will develop programmes and community links which will ensure that the children accommodated at the Hostel have a smooth transition from the Hostel into community placements.

During the year a research session was held with Aboriginal clientele to evaluate the Homemaker service at Katanning. The results are not yet fully available, but a number of items suggested by clients have been implemented successfully. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of clients using the service and the Homemaker Centre. Undoubtedly one of the benefits has been a far better understanding of the service provided, and consequently an increased use by clients.

The Katanning holiday scheme initiated last year has continued with outstanding success. Through this scheme a number of children have kept in touch with their holiday placement parents and are building close and happy relationships, as well as experiencing country and farm life styles which contrast markedly with their normal Metropolitan experiences.

GNOWANGERUP

This district has three of the remaining four Aboriginal Reserves within the Division. Continual emphasis is being placed on phasing these Reserves out and two of them could be cleared quickly if the State Housing programme was speeded up.

Aboriginal needs generally continue to be promoted via the Homemaker service and this past year two Aboriginal Homemakers were appointed at Gnowangerup and Tambellup. Projects include a Meals on Wheels service for invalid and aged pensioners, children's activities at Tambellup and Gnowangerup as well as social and domestic training opportunities provided at the existing Homemaker Centres.

The Gnowangerup Youth Club has been recommended with limited success. Activities are mainly centred around the Club itself but it is hoped to expand to outside activities with the youth themselves determining projects via a management committee.

A "day camp" was held over a one week period during January involving eighteen girls and ten boys. The camp is held in conjunction with the Girl Guides Association, and shows potential for further development.

Kindergarten, pre-kindergarten and play groups have continued to operate successfully at Jerramungup, Tambellup and Gnowangerup with a new group commencing at Borden during the year.

ALBANY

Due to the new and enhanced on-going activities by the District Office the services being offered in the town have become more prominent. This appears to be the result of a cohesive staff effort. All staff have made an extra effort which has resulted in new and effective resolutions to "people problems" in the district area.

Play Activity Centres are now involving scores of previously isolated children. Departmentally operated Holiday Activity Programmes now cater for upward of 250 children and new play group activity programmes have been initiated in Denmark and Tingledeale.

Albany Officers have provided leadership and inspiration to the Albany and Denmark Community Forums. One result has been the implementation of Citizens Advice Bureau services and education classes for migrants in parts of the district. Youth and separated women's discussion and therapy groups have been established and are beginning to alleviate social disfunctioning in many troubled families.

While innovation has been a major focus, the District Office has participated in a large range of community "problem-solving efforts" and enjoys a reputation of concerned and responsible community involvement.

Future planning for this Division centres around supporting the programmes currently in operation with emphasis being placed on local community participation in these programmes.

Abolition of residential Aboriginal Reserves remains as a priority because other social policies cannot be fully effective whilst people do not have the basic accommodation necessities.

Special Services

Social Policy Planning Unit and Community Planning Consultant

Proposed funding for the Unit did not reach the expected level during 1975 and as a result it was not possible to employ the supporting staff originally intended. In the course of the year the functions of the Social Policy Planning Unit and the Community Planning Consultant were merged and both units co-operated on several joint projects. The unit also provided some funds for research into an institutional programme and continued support for the study of Aboriginal housing.

In addition to the preparation of submissions and comments on policy issues at the request of senior administration the unit undertook a number of specific projects. The most important of these included the formation of a committee to study the future functioning of the Children's Court and Juvenile Panel, the review of a training programme for Aboriginal group workers in institutions and study of the administrative structure of specialised services in the Department. Considerable effort has been expended in looking at data systems and calculation of statistics but the completion of this will depend on funds and staff being available for a major project at a future date. The Unit was also called upon to assist field staff with surveys and to provide consultation in the development of planning techniques for field divisions. Current projects include the development of a proposal for subsidising day care and the preparation of a submission to the Parliamentary Committee investigating alcohol problems in Aboriginal communities.

The Community Planning Consultant has continued to provide consultation to field staff on the development and implementation of community projects and the promotion of liaison with other agencies and community groups.

The Consultant has been active in the development of a major study of social indicators in the Murchison Division and was required to advise Administration on the implications of the Australian Assistance Plan for the Department. The Consultant has also chaired the departmental committee on Regionalization, conducted research in the feasibility of regionalizing the Department's services and has developed proposals for implementing this project.

Both the Community Planning Consultant and the Social Policy Planning Consultant have been active in the Department's on-going training programmes for field staff.

Child Placement Service

In the first half of this year particular emphasis has been placed on practical activities aimed at improving the Department's involvement with foster parents. Highlighted amongst these has been the development of a foster parent newsletter. The idea for this originated with one of the Department's foster parent groups whose members felt that communication to all foster parents was urgently needed.

Child Placement Service sent a questionnaire out to foster parents asking for their views on the proposed newsletter. The reply was an overwhelming endorsement for the plan and many families sent their initial contributions with their reply.

The first issues of the newsletter have been produced by a committee of foster parents, with the Department wishing to take a back-up role to provide financial support and particular comments and articles advising on departmental policy and professional advice on issues which often arise in foster care.

It is proposed to produce bi-monthly newsletters, however, this will depend on the flow of contributions from foster parents.

Another noteworthy activity, developed during the past year, has been the development of group meetings for the assessment of foster parents. This

method has emerged as a result of growing concern as to the validity of traditional interview techniques for selection. The pressure placed on the Field Officer in this one-to-one situation where personal opinions seem to be the main criteria, has been a problem. Where an officer felt that a family was not suited to foster care, he or she was in the invidious position of trying to explain this to the family in objective terms. Too often families were accepted rather than the officer having to deal with the stresses of refusal. This only delayed the problem, as often no child was ever placed into these particular foster homes. The new method involves a number of officers joining together with a group of foster parent applicants. They meet in a series of evening discussion groups where they learn about the Department's attitudes to fostering and policies surrounding this. In turn, through their discussions and other activities such as role playing and video taping sessions, the officers can jointly assess each family's likely suitability.

The first experience with this group method was conducted by three Divisions, Perth, Belmont and Victoria Park, with back-up support from the Child Placement Service. Subsequent sessions have been conducted on a regular basis by Victoria Park Division and their experience is serving as a guide to encourage other Divisions to develop in this direction.

Foster parent groups have not been particularly active during the last year. A new group has developed at Victoria Park and promises to progress very successfully. Numerous enquiries have been received from foster parents interested in meeting with other families and it is likely that a lot more emphasis will occur during the forthcoming year.

Research has once again been the central concern of the Child Placement Section. The Section's Clinical Psychologist has been involved in a major research project to examine why the rate of foster placement break-down is as high as it is. This has involved detailed analysis of the communication patterns between some foster parents and their foster child. We believe that if this can identify communication patterns which are operating in successful families, then it can help us to guide families who are experiencing difficulties with fostering. This experiment involved video taping families in their own homes as they go about their daily routine and subsequently analysing their discussions and other activities in detail. The results of this experiment will be available this coming year.

Aboriginal foster care has for sometime been a matter of particular concern to the Department. During the last year funds were made available from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs for the appointment of a Research Consultant to study the Department's placement practices with Aboriginal children and to identify problem areas and possible solutions. The research commenced at the beginning of 1976 and is continuing. Some initial results from these are now available and a graph which illustrates the relative priority the Department attaches to different placement types—e.g. foster care, child care, residential care, etc., for both Aboriginal and European wards, is demonstrated below. Impressions emerging from the study so far, indicate that contrary to our earlier impression, Aboriginal children may not have a very different experience as wards in terms of placement type and placement break-downs than do their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

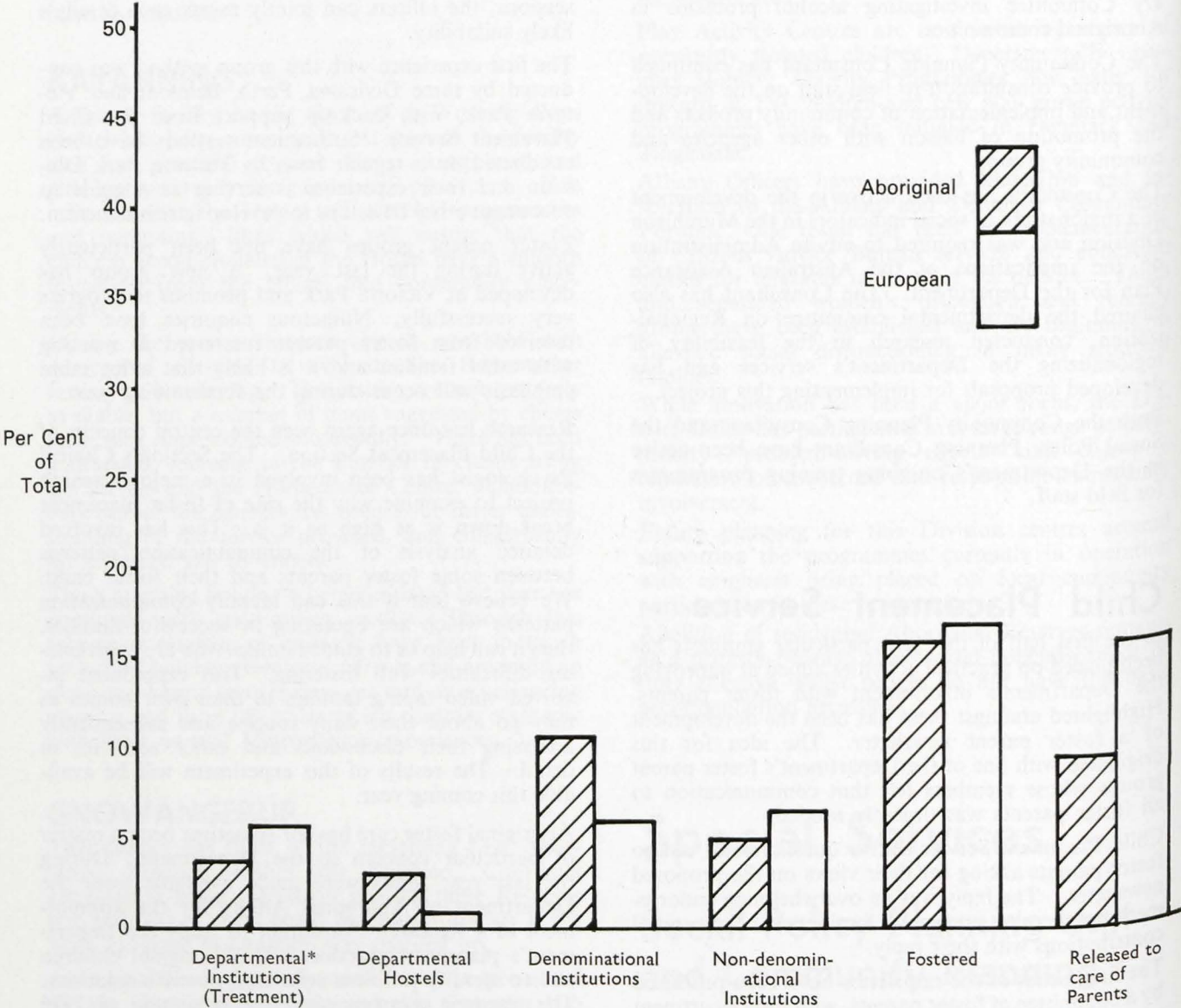
The extension of the Child Placement Service to country divisions has continued to be quite limited. The appointment of a further Social Worker to this Section to relieve this situation is an urgent priority for the forthcoming year.

Examination of departmental policies has continued as a main activity of this section. In particular, awareness has grown in regard to the limitations of children being fostered for indefinite periods. Research and studies show that children who have not been returned to their own family after two years

of substitute care, have very limited prospects for family reunion. Most often this is caused through a family giving up thought of having their child back and losing contact with the child. For these children a more permanent arrangement than foster care is necessary to ensure their security. This Section is exploring alternatives such as adoption, foster parent guardianship and foster placement contracts as possible avenues to consolidate a child placed with his foster family where the chances of return to his natural family are slight.

DEPARTMENTAL PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN UNDER CARE AS AT FEBRUARY 1976

Aboriginal and European children placed by the Department when they have been committed to the care of the Department. (Shown as percentage of total placements.)



NOTE:—Figures are based on a 15% sample survey of movements during February 1976.
* Excludes children moved to assessment, reception and remand institutions.

Early Childhood Services

There has been a rapid expansion of this unit during 1975/76, both in the number of professional staff employed and the range of advice and developmental work undertaken by them.

The unit has an establishment for one Supervisor, two Senior Day Care Officers, six Day Care Officers, one Clerical Officer and one Typist. So far, this establishment has not been filled. Currently only six Day Care Officers and an Acting Supervisor are

employed. The Advisers have experience and qualifications in child care, education, pre-school education and social work. This multi-disciplinary team has provided an enriching and stimulating approach to a wide range of opportunities presenting in the area of Early Childhood Services.

The unit has responsibility in the following areas:—

1. Supervision and Licensing:
The unit carries out the statutory provisions of the Child Welfare Act and the Day Care Regulations concerning the Licensing of Day Care and Family Care Centres and the maintenance of standards as laid down by the regulations. The volume of this work has continued to increase because with more Advisers working in the field, supervision has been greatly enhanced and more Day Care and Family Care Centres have opened.
2. Advisory Service:
Day Care Officers visit all Centres regularly to advise and share knowledge concerning the general running of Centres, attempting at all times to emphasise the meeting of the individual needs of children within a group situation. The unit receives an increasing number of enquiries from parents and agencies concerning the placement of children in day care, and gives appropriate information. This area of work requires development to ensure that the parents seeking care for their children know of all that is available and that the Department in turn has more detailed knowledge of any requirements in the areas of full day, part-time, or occasional child care.
3. Education:
Staff who are sensitive to the physical, emotional and educational needs of the children at their particular stage of development are vital to any day care programme. The Department works towards increasing the numbers of trained staff and enriching the knowledge of those working in day care in the following ways:—
 - (a) The Department continues to offer twenty scholarships annually to students of the Child Care Certificate Course who intend to work in day care.
 - (b) In conjunction with the Technical Education Division the unit runs the Child Care Attendant Course, a part-time course to increase the skills of those working in Day Care and Family Care.

- (c) The unit has established a “Resource Centre” with a display of equipment and library of books and films which is to be available to any groups concerned with the care of pre-school children.

4. Development and Integration:

So far the unit has mainly been concerned with development; that is, helping local authorities with the establishment of Federal funded centres in areas of need. The figures below indicate those centres completed or under construction during the year 1975/76.

The number of Family Care Centres has increased. Future effort must be directed towards the development of family care in new areas and country centres particularly in the North.

It is recognised that Early Childhood Services, to be effective, must be integrated at the local level, and this integration must involve those seeking, as well as those giving child care services. To achieve this, close co-operation is needed with other agencies such as the Pre-School Board, Education Department, and Child Health Services. Co-operation between central agencies can lead to co-ordination at the local level by working with Shires and other local groups. It is envisaged that the full development of the Early Childhood Services Unit will contribute to this integration of services.

COMMENT

There no longer appears to be a shortage of Day Care facilities for those who can afford to pay. In 1976, many privately run centres have had vacancies. There also seems to be less demand on the funded centres for placements, but it is a concern that people’s choice of day care is dictated by availability and cost rather than its suitability for the individual child. This problem is one which the Unit must act upon during the coming year.

The availability of trained staff to work in Day Care Centres has improved especially in the funded centres. The reason there are insufficient trained staff working in privately run centres, is not now so much due to trained staff being unavailable as to the ever-rising cost structure of providing quality day care, which discourages the employment of trained and senior staff.

STATISTICS

As at June 30, 1976.

	Metropolitan Area		Country Areas		Total	
	Centres	Children	Centres	Children	Centres	Children
Day Care Centres	77	2 219	11	264	88	2 483
Occasional Care Centres	9	247	4	75	13	322
Family Care Centres	135	567	17	69	152	636
Total	221	3 033	32	408	253	3 441

These figures include:—

	Metro-politan	Country	Total
Government Subsidised Centres:			
Day Care Centres	8	2	10
Occasional Care Centres	3	1	4
Non-Profit Centres (not subsidised):			
Day Care Centres	2	4	6
Occasional Care Centres	4	1	5
	17	8	25

In addition there are six Government subsidised Centres under construction.

Youth Activity Services

One of the means that the Department uses in providing service to disadvantaged persons or groups in the community is activity oriented programmes. Day activities, residential camps, group activities, including working with "street corner groups", have all been utilized by the Department to involve young people and family groups, with whom the Department has contact, in experiences that develop their leisure time interests and increase their community awareness.

The Department is grateful for the financial assistance provided by the Commonwealth Government's Office of Child Care during the year. This assistance has enabled the Department to appoint a Children's Programme Co-ordinator whose responsibility includes the co-ordination of day activities conducted by the Department through the three school holiday periods. Essentially the activities relieve working single parents with the problem of caring for their children during these periods. During the year 3 230 children were involved in day activities conducted by the Department in Balga, Bullsbrook, Kewdale, Nollamara, North Beach and Willagee, as well as Albany, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Moora, Mullewa and Port Hedland.

During the year increased use was made of the residential camping programmes. These camps provide opportunity for the participants to become involved in activities of their own choice. The camp leaders foster participant decision making and attempt to make each day one in which the camper can achieve personal satisfaction and enjoyment. The Department encourages the camp participant to make maximum use of our resources, facilities and equipment and to develop skills relating to knowledge, use and accessibility of community resources. Another important benefit of these camping programmes is that they provide an opportunity to develop an awareness, by the camper, of the feelings and opinions of others. The children involved in these camps have in some cases exhibited behavioural problems, or alternatively, are children who, for various reasons, are not able to enjoy holiday activities organised and offered by community agencies. During the year 970 children participated in residential camps organised by the Department at Point Walter, Bicton and Port Kennedy Beach Camp (Warnbro), together with other sites such as Jurien Bay, Esperance, Bickley and similar areas in the North West.

In the latter part of the year the first stages of development of the Department's Port Kennedy Beach Camp was completed. The following facilities and services have been provided:—

- Hall serving as the camp's central focal point for recreation and meals.
- Well appointed kitchen forming part of main hall, including large cool room and freezer space.
- Disco room attached to central hall facility, designed for use by the campers.
- Ablution block, including male and female amenities and laundry facilities. All supplied with hot water.
- Power house providing electric power to two separate circuits.
- Caretaker's residence and workshop facilities.
- Craft and Hobbies shed.
- Ground development, including concrete paths designed for use as a skate board track, grassed areas and a security fence.

This Camp is especially popular with out-going teenage children. It is located 500 m from a popular surfing beach. The programme conducted includes surfing, beach sports, archery, canoeing, creative craft, video filming, indoor and outdoor games, fishing and skate board riding. The disco room enables the campers, who identify with the "disc-jockey scene", to project their choice of music through the amplifying system (which incorporates a paging microphone, recording and cuing device) and is well used by the campers.

Throughout the year the Department continued to appoint young adults to work with groups of teenage children in their own community. The members of these groups include children on probation and others who, it is thought, will respond to a programme designed to assist them to learn about the options available and the social skills required to use these options. Some of the programmes have adhered to a set of principles constituting the "S.O.F.T.L.Y." programme (Social Options For Teenagers Like You). Other programmes have followed the principles of the Youth Classes for probationers where the child is required, as part of his probation agreement, to attend a series of activities. In both cases the participant is involved in the design and implementation of the programme.

Liaison with other community groups continues and the Department was actively represented at Community Recreation Council meetings and different functions. In many cases the Department was able to refer children in its care to activities organised by community agencies.

We are happy to report the continued development and extension of youth activity programmes. The participants have been totally involved. Their range of experience in relation to use of leisure time and development of social skills has increased by these involvements.

As with other areas of the Department's work, future direction of effort by the Youth Activity Services will be to initiate and encourage local community action so that the needs evident in their community can be met.

Homemaker Service

The down-turn in funds available to the State Housing Commission's building programme has resulted in the need for Homemakers to shift the emphasis from preparation for moves into conventional housing, to activities and involvement of persons in the wider community.

The change in emphasis from a teaching to a support service with a social development orientation has given impetus to group activities. Groups allow people to come together for a sharing and resource learning experience which allows a growth of independence and community participation. People who may otherwise feel isolated or inadequate have found group activities to be satisfying and rewarding.

New Homemaker or Community Group Centres have been opened at Kununurra, Derby, Halls Creek, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Moora, Narrogin and Lockridge. The centres are client-oriented and every endeavour is made to allow the group members to experience freedom and independence in the centres' activities. Pre-pre-school groups have developed at some group centres to fill the needs of mothers and their children.

In March this year, the Medina Aboriginal Cultural Group farewelled the Homemakers who had assisted the group to develop to a stage where they could gradually withdraw. This completed a successful joint venture for the Homemakers and the group members, and one which was mutually satisfying.

Training programmes during the past twelve months have reflected the change in emphasis from individual teaching and support to one of group work and social awareness. Training is both on-the-job and on a regular divisional basis in work-shop situations.

During the year there has been a concerted effort to discover and employ suitable men to work as Homemakers. They work towards encouraging the male members of a family to participate in the over-all family programmes and aims. To date, there are six male Homemakers. As Homemakers work on a part-time basis, it is difficult to attract men other than those who are self-employed or retired. The male Homemakers' activities vary in each division or centre, however, they keep to the forefront the teaching and support role that the Homemaker Service offers. It is hoped that numbers of male Homemakers will increase in the coming year.

The exciting innovation for 1975/76 has been the introduction of the concept of Aboriginal Community Homemakers. The idea began and was first put into effect at Fitzroy Crossing, where there are now four Community Homemakers, and the anticipated appointment of another four Community Homemakers. Aboriginal Communities are assisting in the selection of men and women from their own group to show the way and work as role models for group members. There are also Community Homemakers with the Barula Community in Derby, and it is hoped that soon the Mirrima Council at Kununurra will have its own Homemaker.

The Homemaker Service has been closely associated with a total Community Child Care programme at Fitzroy Crossing, and the Community Homemakers are an important component in this aspect of the community development plans for the Fitzroy Valley.

Child Life Protection Unit

WORK BY THE UNIT

During the year there was an increase in the number of notifications of possible child abuse to children under six years of age—145 compared with 100 received the previous year. This rise is not attributed to an increase in the incidence of child abuse, but rather to a greater awareness by many people about the family stresses leading to possible child abuse and a willingness to identify the syndrome.

Of the 145 notifications, protective action was instituted in the Children's Court in respect of 17 children. Total protective action taken is as follows:—

Committed in the Children's Court to Wardship of the Department (usually until 6 years of age)	17
Committal application by the parents to the Minister	5
Ministerial Committal extended for a further period	3
Placed on probation for 2 years	1
Total	26

Of the seventeen children committed to the Children's Court, eight suffered fractures, none of which proved permanently damaging.

Of the five children whose committal was requested by their parents for a period, only one had suffered injury.

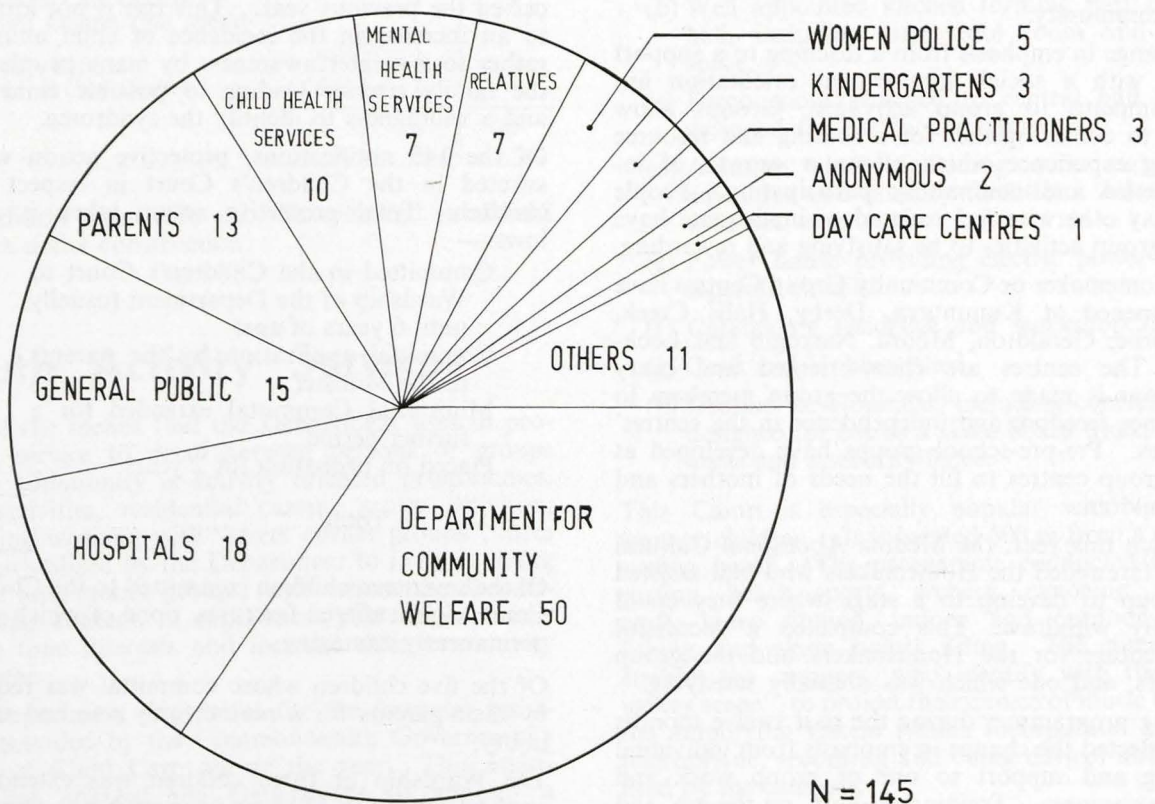
The Wardship of three children was extended on application to the Minister because it was considered that the home environment was not yet such that all risk to the child had been eliminated.

In most of the notifications visited there was no evidence of any severe abuse at the time. There was found however either indications of a strong risk to the child or other stresses in the family's situation that were greatly affecting the parenting capacity of one or both parents. In only 10 per cent of the cases was it thought that there was no need for any intervention in the family circumstances.

In addition to investigating the above 145 notifications, the Unit was responsible for the supervision, management and treatment of approximately 60 Wards and their families as a result of protective action taken in previous years. Three Wards received minor re-injuries while returned to their parent's care—immediate and successful action was taken in these cases to prevent a repetition. In general the trend towards less serious injury, first observed last year, has continued. Together with the high level of co-operation and communication undertaken with a growing number of community agencies involved in early childhood services, these figures represent a heavy load of work for the staff of the Unit. Unless serious injury to children under 6 years is not being reported to the Unit by some sources we can assume the incidence and severity of child abuse in this State is not increasing.

To illustrate the kind of service provided by the Unit, a breakdown has been made of the services offered to the 145 notified families of younger children. Some families received counselling and support in several areas—others in only one or two. In

DISTRIBUTION OF SOURCES OF NOTIFICATION
OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE TO CHILD LIFE
PROTECTION UNIT. 1/7/75 - 30/6/76



some cases, temporary separation of the child and family was seen as desirable. This was mostly for a period of a few weeks or months only and occurred not only with some of the children who were made Wards but also at the request of some parents where counselling was directed towards prevention of abuse. The significance of poor marital relationships, the extreme need for information and guidance regarding both child development and child handling, and the importance attached by the Unit to good communication and liaison with other agencies, are all features of the past year's work, and are shown by the figures hereunder.

- Counselling in child development in 36 cases.
- Counselling in child management in 57 cases.
- Marital counselling in 33 cases.
- Practical and/or financial support in 42 cases.
- Need for a warm caring relationship for one or both parents in 34 cases.
- Temporary separation of family and child in 23 cases.
- Psychological consultation and/or counselling in 37 cases. (See below).
- Co-ordination and communication with other agencies in 63 cases.

These figures give some indication of the needs of the families concerned.

The basic innovative work of the Unit involves intensive work with the child and his caretakers in the context of the abusive pattern or incident, usually

in the child's home. In the three-way team, of Social Worker, Psychologist and non-professional lay worker such as a Welfare Assistance or Homemaker, emphasis is given to the client family's particular needs, and to the utilisation of particular skills and personalities of each member of the team.

Apart from the assessment skills traditionally required from psychologists to monitor and advise on progress of Wards, the emphasis on preventive work in child abuse has demanded a more flexible use of psychological skills, allowing the free flow of consultation, and the integration and exchange of skills and experience throughout the team. The heightening and strengthening of skills promotes staff confidence and development and allows for a self-monitoring approach by the team that is essential to effective child protection.

STAFFING OF THE UNIT

The Unit continues to maintain a high level of professional experience in its staff and seeks wherever possible to provide in-service training and experience for other departmental staff for short periods. The difficulty in satisfactorily filling a newly created position of Senior Social Worker has resulted this year in some curtailment of planned group projects and specialised foster parent recruitment and training.

The appointment of a Clerical Co-ordinator to the Unit in 1975 has resulted in a marked improvement

in the Unit's recording system, its response to outside agencies, and in the general morale of the Unit. Particular mention must be made of the work of the three Homemakers and two Welfare Assistants attached to the Unit. Under social work supervision, personal and caring quality of the Unit's work has been largely maintained by them, and recognition is due for the deep interest and commitment they have shown to their work and for the personal qualities they bring to it. Without them the Unit would not be able to function as effectively on such a broad preventive front as it does.

OLDER CHILDREN

Separate figures are not kept but an estimate has been made that in the metropolitan area, possibly 75 to 125 cases of ill-treatment to children between 6 and 15 years are reported to the Department per annum. These cases are handled by the local Divisional Office concerned.

FUTURE PLANS

Future development is likely to be affected by availability of staff and by the development of the Parents' Help Centre as a community based resource that also assists parents to gain knowledge and skills in child handling. The Unit's staff will continue their wide programme of public education to integrate their specialised knowledge and experience into the general field of early childhood care and resources in this State. Unit staff will attend an international Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect in Geneva in September 1976 and will present a paper on the Unit's work.

Amendments to the Child Welfare Act to help provide more flexibility in protective services are at present being prepared for consideration by the government. Among these is the suggested provision of a forty eight hour period during which an injured child may be retained in hospital while investigations are made. While the Children's Court has at present powers to commit a child to wardship for a period of time (with the legal guardianship of the child being vested in the Director for Community Welfare) it is suggested that the Court also be empowered to place a child under supervision of the Department for a period with the parents remaining the legal guardians.

In all other respects the relevant legislation in this State is seen as satisfactory, having regard to the fact that the community in general is aware of child abuse and seems to have demonstrated some confidence in the services that have been provided to protect the child and help the parents. The question of compulsory reporting or notification of suspected cases received a good deal of attention at the recent National Conference. (See below). An informal vote of 65 per cent of delegates voted for some form of mandatory reporting. West Australian experience however has tended to show that if an effective preventive and protective service is provided and is widely publicised, the community will act by using the service responsibly.

CONFERENCE ON THE BATTERED CHILD

Eighteen months culmination of hard work and planning resulted in the holding of the First Australian National Conference on The Battered Child in Perth in August, 1975.

The conference evolved initially from a resolution by the Directors of Social Welfare in the various States to examine their services for the battered child and his family. However many requests were received to widen the scope of the Conference and the range of participants. Appreciating the concern that lay behind this pressure, changes were gradually made in the format, finally focussing it on inter-professional co-operation and communication.

A conference Planning Committee comprising many distinguished members of the legal, medical, social work professions and the law enforcement professions plus community representatives was set up. The many comments of appreciation and the high level of interest and participation shown by the 300 delegates indicated that it had been a timely and valuable sharing of ideas and knowledge. It has resulted in a closer examination nationally of existing services of the battered child and his family, and also in efforts to propose new systems of management and to look at existing legislation.

Over 540 copies of the proceedings have so far been sold and distributed at a cost of \$9.00 per copy. Additional copies are still available from the Department.

FIRST AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE BATTERED CHILD IN PERTH HELD IN AUGUST 1975

Professor C. H. Kempe at opening of Conference.

(Professor of Pediatrics and Microbiology,
University of Colorado, Medical Centre, Denver
Chief Guest Speaker)



Part of the audience at the opening



Parents' Help Centre

The Centre offers help to the parents of pre-school children at risk of physical injury and its aim is the prevention of child abuse. The Centre is based on a secondary prevention model aimed at preventing a relatively mild behaviour from becoming prolonged and severe.

Basic to the Centre is its philosophy of encouraging and providing the opportunity for positive social relationships and helping parents to increase their self esteem, frustration tolerance, and to reduce their feelings of personal and family isolation. The way in which this is done is by providing the kinds of support usually offered by the extended family (especially acceptance and privacy), which many parents do not have, to help them through crisis periods. It operates in an informal accepting atmosphere giving parents the opportunity to discuss their circumstances with a trained Parent Helper (or a Social Worker or Psychologist if they wish).

Initially the Centre was continuously open from 1 p.m. Friday until 1 p.m. on Monday. However, as it was found that most initial contacts were between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. weekdays, the staffing arrangements were altered to meet this demand. The Centre is now open from Thursday and Friday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., through to Monday at 1 p.m. The continuous telephone service has been retained. During crisis situations, if parents feel it necessary, there is accommodation for them and their children to live in for a maximum of 48 hours over weekends. On residential weekends the Centre is staffed overnight.

The Centre opened on 9 January 1976 at 15 Glendower Street, North Perth, which overlooks Hyde Park. The building is indistinguishable from the surrounding suburban houses and the three (ground level) flats are furnished like other suburban homes.

Funding is jointly by the Department and the Children's Commission. The Department provides the operating and establishment costs and the Children's Commission meets the staff costs.

The staff consists of three full-time departmental officers (social work supervisor, psychologist and typist) and 26 part-time Parent Helpers. The Parent Helpers are men and women aged between 27 and 66 years, who have children of their own. They were selected on the basis of their personal qualities of acceptance, understanding and non-judgmental attitude toward parents using the Centre.

During the first six months of operations a total of 312 contacts were made by parents with the Centre. Of these, 247 were appropriate and 65 inappropriate. Many families have either telephoned or been into the Centre several times. Of the total of 127 initial contacts, 80 were appropriate and 47 inappropriate. In the first 24 weeks five families have been in residence over a weekend, during a crisis period.

The 247 appropriate contacts with parents covered a wide range of problems associated with at-risk family situations. However several common themes of parental difficulties have emerged, including personal problems, social isolation, child management techniques and unrealistic age-level expectations.

The centre offers help to parents in several ways. This may be by telephone discussion (only), or if parents choose, coming into the Centre to talk over their situation with a Parent Helper over a number of mutually arranged meetings.

The increasing number of contacts suggest that the Centre's intention of reducing the risk of physical harm to children and helping parents to learn to establish and accept the use of improved child handling and social techniques, so as to make life more enjoyable for themselves and their children, is being achieved.

Publicity for the Centre has been given through local press, radio and television, as well as from statutory and voluntary welfare organisations. A poster has been widely distributed and has been responsible for attracting many families to the Centre.

As the Centre has become more widely known it has been increasingly used by the community, reflecting the need for its services. It is likely that this trend will continue.

Drug Abuse Unit

This Unit, now in its fourth year of operation, is staffed by one Social Worker. Until March 1976, juvenile drug cases arising in Children's Courts were handled by the Drug Unit located in Head Office. Pre-sentence investigations, social histories and counselling, if required, were administered by the Social Worker in the Drug Unit. In the interim period between the previous Social Worker's resignation and the appointment of the present Social Worker all drug cases were handled by the local Divisional Office in which the juvenile resided. This arrangement was done experimentally and has proven successful. Benefits attached to this arrangement are that Divisional Staff gain experience in dealing with juvenile drug offenders and learn to view drug taking as possibly only one dimension within the case context.

Because it is felt that we must develop skills to deal with drug abuse at the local level it is the primary responsibility of the Unit to gather information and knowledge and disseminate it to Field Staff. It is an aim of the Unit to clear up and expose some of the myths and misinformation circulating about drugs and to develop sound knowledge about the extent and nature of drugs used and abused by young people in Western Australia and ways to deal with them. As part of the overall approach of this Unit close liaison with all agencies and individuals working in the same field will be encouraged both in Western Australia and the Eastern States.

Psychological Services

Psychologists in the W.A. Department for Community Welfare work as team members in a variety of settings.

Following are some examples of their roles taken from several settings.

McCALL CENTRE

McCall Centre has two psychologists as Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent.

As a treatment centre which extends its work into the community the scope for psychological approaches is virtually unlimited.

Within the Centre children are seen in individual and group treatment. The Psychologist also plans individual treatment programmes, to operate in the milieu so that at any one time a planned, directed effort is being made with each child. Group Workers and teachers feed back details of children's behaviour assisting the Psychologist in modifying and revising treatment programmes.

On discharge, treatment programmes are constructed for each child to facilitate his re-entry into the community. Children in need of continuing individual psychological treatment return to McCall on a regular sessional basis after discharge.

During the child's stay at McCall and on discharge the Psychologists work closely with other professional staff, in particular the Social Workers. Approaches here include parent and family counselling and parent's groups. Involvement also extends into the training and support of foster parents.

Treatment approaches depend to a large extent on the assessment made of a child and in this vein the Psychologists conduct regular assessments of psychological and educational functioning.

As McCall Centre follows up its children for a minimum period of two years after discharge there is a unique opportunity to assess the overall effectiveness of the Centre's efforts. These results provide valuable guidelines for the future.

CHILD PLACEMENT SERVICE

The role of Child Placement Service is to co-ordinate all current foster resources and upgrade general foster care practices where desirable. The work for the psychologist in the service falls roughly into three main areas.

- (a) to maintain an effective reference library of the current trends in foster care and research overseas and to appraise their applicability to local circumstances.
- (b) to implement applied research into specific problem areas that require changes.
- (c) to participate in foster casework with field divisions.

The main research project during this year has been to examine why the foster placement breakdown rate is so high. This has involved a detailed analysis of the communication problems between foster parents and foster child in a number of foster families. The primary aim was to establish which are the effective modes of communication for parents to adopt with foster children. The knowledge gained from these observations will then be used to develop more effective methods of selecting, training and assisting foster parents to give more adequate care to our foster children.

DIVISIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

The psychologists placed in the Field Divisions work closely with a team of social workers, welfare officers and homemakers. The case work is varied and includes behavioural contracting with families, devising behaviour programmes for difficult children, assessment for case conferences, liaison with guidance officers in schools acting as consultants for voluntary child care agencies, family therapy, supervision of psychology students, counselling and special projects.

At the Victoria Park Division the Psychologist has been involved in foster assessment and recruitment. Divisional staff are currently running a group assessment procedure for foster parents and it is hoped to evaluate this model of operating after three or four groups have been run.

Staff at the Victoria Park Office work closely as a team and both the Psychologist and the officers have found it valuable to work together on cases because both have differing emphases and expertise. Some clients are referred directly to the Psychologist and these tend to be preventive cases, where the family has had little contact with the Welfare, but is seeking help with a difficult child.

The Victoria Park Psychologist also participates in the family counselling unit based at Bridgewater. The Unit works primarily with intact families and is therefore, another way of **preventing** breakdown and more serious family and marital crises.

Preventive work must be one of the main aims of a Divisional Psychologist and it is important that psychologists and all field staff be accessible to clients, **before** recurrent institutionalisation is the only solution.

Adoptions

CRITERIA OF ELIGIBILITY

One of the major developments in the sphere of Adoption in 1975 was the necessity to introduce new criteria in relation to the eligibility for approval and assessment to adopt a child.

Because of the continual drop in the number of babies being made available for adoption the following criteria were introduced:—

1. Husband and wife must both be under 35 years of age for a first child or under 40 years of age for a second child.
2. Couples must have been married for at least two years at the time of the application and have medical evidence that they are infertile or that it is inadvisable to have children.
3. Couples in their twenties who do not claim infertility or inadvisability must have been married 5 years before being assessed and no child will be placed until they have been married for 7 years.
4. Couples from 30 to 34 years who do not claim infertility, or inadvisability, must have been married for 2 years before being assessed, and no child will be placed until they have been married for 4 years.
5. Couples must have been resident or domiciled in Australia for 3 years before a child is placed.
6. Couples must be resident or domiciled in Western Australia for assessment and placement and must remain so until the Adoption Order is filed. (Exceptions will be made with regard to leaving the State permanently, prior to an Order being granted, only where circumstances warrant it.)
7. Applicants must be Australian Citizens or else prove their residence and domicile as per 5 and 6 above.
8. Applicants may adopt one child if they already have one, either natural or adopted, or two if they have none. Applicants will not be approved for two female children, or another female child if they already have one.
9. Applicants will be bound by any changes in criteria which are introduced within one calendar year of their date of application (e.g. reduction of maximum age limit.)

From the figures available at present it would appear that there has been a significant decrease in the number of applications as the result of the imposition of our criteria since October 1975. Nevertheless, the day may not be far off, when we have to make the decision whether some applicants may have no children at all and some applicants may have two, or whether all applicants within certain criteria should have one only. Whatever we do decide it will be essential to keep our books open, even with these restrictions, than to close them temporarily as this could cause blackmarketing in babies and would also be unfair to those whose legitimate place in the queue would never be verifiable once we reopened our doors.

FIRST AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE ON ADOPTION

(Held from 15 to 20 February 1976 at the University of New South Wales).

This Conference was chaired by Miss Kath Lancaster, Principal Adoption Officer of the Royal Women's Hospital and organised by her with the co-operation of a National Committee representative of Private and State-Welfare Adoption and Medical agencies. The delegates represented a wide cross section of the social work, legal and medical and para-medical professions, parent groups and private individuals, including adoptive parents and adopted children.

The Conference made several important recommendations including the formation of a national steering committee on adoption with the responsibility of drawing up standards of adoption practice in Australia.

The Senior Supervisor, Adoptions, attended the Conference on behalf of this Department.

Following on the Conference a public meeting convened by Miss B. Grant, Matron of Ngal-a, Perth, who also attended the Conference, was held, at which some of the delegates reported back on their impressions.

INTER-COUNTRY ADOPTION

1. Approval of Applicants and Arrangements to bring Foreign Children into this State:

In Western Australia the Department for Community Welfare is the only licenced adoption agency. The Adoptions Centre of the Department is solely responsible for the assessment of applicants wishing to adopt foreign children. The Director of the Department is the guardian of all children not previously adopted, who are brought into this State for adoption. He is also the guardian of all children whose adoption has been found by the courts to be invalid according to Australian law. These measures for the control of foreign adoptions are designed to protect both the child and the applicants since there are many complex legal, medical and social issues involved. Therefore no arrangements should be made for travel to a foreign country or to bring in a foreign child without the full knowledge and approval of the Department.

2. Parent-Support Groups:

The Department welcomes the existence of local parent-support groups which are interested in promoting social contact between adopting parents and their foreign adopted children. The Department also recognises the right of such groups to function as consumer groups and express their needs in order to influence departmental policy. In particular the Department expresses appreciation of the friendly co-operation of ASIA(C) in matters of joint interest.

3. The Department considers that the most satisfactory form of control of foreign adoptions is achieved through the establishment of adoption "contracts" or agreements directly negotiated between State Welfare Departments and foreign State Welfare Departments rather than private agencies. Within Australia, State Departments and private agencies in other States may benefit considerably from the groundwork of such contracts made by one State with a foreign country and should share information. State Departments should attempt each to send a representative to visit different specified foreign countries personally and then share information.
4. The Department will only approve applications to adopt a child of specific age, sex and nationality from those countries with which we have an agreement with a licensed professional adoption agency in that country.
5. The Department takes the view that it is highly desirable for both applicants to travel to the foreign country concerned to be approved and have their child placed in their care. However, we are aware that this is a costly procedure which is not always possible. Therefore the Department will encourage applicants to travel abroad for this purpose but will not make it mandatory for them to do so, except where the laws of the foreign country concerned require this.
6. At present the Department has direct arrangements with two foreign countries, namely Sri Lanka and the Philippines. In both cases applicants must be approved by this Department in the first instance to adopt a child of specific age, and sex. The home study and supporting documentation is then forwarded to the agency concerned. That agency will then notify the Department of their tentative acceptance, or alternatively their rejection of the applicants. At this point the adoption procedures for the two countries diverge as follows:—

Sri Lanka

It is a requirement of Sri Lankan law that the adoption order shall be applied for and granted in a Sri Lankan court and that in the case of the adoption of a female child the adopting mother must be present.

In the case of the adoption of a male child either the adopting mother or the adopting father must be present. The Sri Lankan Welfare Department and this Department strongly encourage both applicants to go but if this is considered quite impossible then both Departments consider that it is preferable that the mother should go whether the child to be adopted is a male or a female.

On arrival applicants will complete their interviews for approval and, if found satisfactory, then a specific child will be offered to them and placed in their care. Applicants will not be allowed to "shop around" in institutions for a child. After a period during which a relationship is established the adoption order will be sought in the Children's Court. The length of time taken to complete all procedures from the date of arrival is approximately 3 weeks. This type of adoption is known as a residential adoption. Sri Lankan adoptions are not recognised as valid in Australia and it is necessary for the child to be adopted by both parents according to Australian law in order to protect its legal status here.

Philippines

After the applicants have been accepted by the Filipino authorities on the basis of the home study and documentation a suitable child is selected for them and full details of the child are sent to this Department for discussion with the applicants. If the applicants consider the child acceptable they are encouraged to travel to the Philippines to have the child placed with them for the purpose of adoption. The child is not legally adopted by them at that stage. If they are unable to travel to the Philippines then the child may be brought out by a licenced officer of either Department whose fare would have to be met by the applicant.

The child would remain under supervision of the Department for about a year until an adoption order was sought in the Family Court. If granted the order would be registered in the Philippines. This type of adoption is known as a non-residential adoption. Such adoptions are often loosely, and mistakenly termed "proxy adoptions". Proxy adoptions are those where a child is legally adopted on behalf of the adoptive parents by a third party. Adoptions of this type are invalid and totally discouraged in this country since the child is legally bound to parents who have never seen it.

MEDICAL PANEL

The Department's Adoptions Centre has an Honorary Adoptions Consultative Medical Panel which is unique in Australia. This panel, now in its second year, has improved the standard of assessment in relation to medical problems of both applicants and children and has therefore improved placement procedure.

Genetic Counselling Clinic

This Clinic, which is attached to King Edward Memorial Hospital, has been set up to document inherited disorders and counsel the public. It has a specific function in regard to adoption to inform the Adoptions Centre of any major genetic risk to the child so that adoptive parents may be fully informed. In addition, the natural parents of the child are informed of any genetic risk involved in this or any further pregnancies.

The clinic has proved invaluable to the Adoptions Centre. Over the past three years since its establishment, some 20 cases of significant genetic risk have been isolated and properly handled.

RESEARCH INTO THE COST OF RAISING CHILDREN

This study was conducted by Dr. Peter van den Doel of the Western Australian Institute of Technology at the request of the Department. Very few studies on the cost of raising children have been carried out and the present one is probably the first in Australia. The following table gives the average expenditure by age and sex and also child's number in the family.

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE ON CHILDREN LESS CHILD ENDOWMENT AND EDUCATION ALLOWANCES (Cost of Energy and Water included)

				Average Weekly Expenditure \$
Boys aged	0- 2	....	....	16.69
Boys aged	3- 5	....	....	18.53

Boys aged	6- 8	....	....	23.71
Boys aged	9-12	....	....	25.98
Boys aged	13-15	....	....	33.13
Boys aged	16-17	....	....	39.72
Girls aged	0- 2	....	....	16.48
Girls aged	3- 5	....	....	21.45
Girls aged	6- 8	....	....	25.17
Girls aged	9-12	....	....	29.37
Girls aged	13-15	....	....	32.92
Girls aged	16-17	....	....	34.24

By Child's Number in Family

Child No. 1	....	....	....	28.82
Child No. 2	....	....	....	21.22
Child No. 3	....	....	....	19.60
Child No. 4	....	....	....	17.22
Child No. 5	....	....	....	9.96
Child No. 6	....	....	....	3.19

NOTE:—The last figure should be interpreted with caution as it applies to one child only.

ADOPTION STATISTICS FOR THE YEARS ENDING 30.6.75 AND 30.6.76

DEPARTMENTAL ADOPTIONS

								Male		Female		Total	
								1975	1976	1975	1976	1975	1976
NUPTIAL													
Relationship to adoptive Parent:													
Natural Parent	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	19	1	18	3	37
Related	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Unrelated	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	4	6	3	7	7	13
								6	25	4	25	10	50

EX-NUPTIAL													
Relationship to adoptive Parent:													
Natural Parent	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	24	1	18	3	42
Related	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	....	1	....	3	....
Unrelated	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	173	144	137	128	310	272
								177	168	139	146	316	314

AGE OF CHILDREN AT ADOPTION													
Under 1 year	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	13	21	12	16	25	37
1 year	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	106	83	77	69	183	152
2- 5	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	56	61	45	59	101	120
6-12	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	9	24	4	25	13	49
13-15	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	2	3	2	4	4
16-20	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	2
21 and over	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
								185	192	141	172	326	364

NON-DEPARTMENTAL ADOPTIONS

NUPTIAL

Relationship to adoptive Parent:													
Natural Parent	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	39	25	23	42	62	67
Related	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	....	2	....	4
Unrelated	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	2	....
								40	27	24	44	64	71

EX-NUPTIAL													
Relationship to adoptive Parent:													
Natural Parent	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	23	28	19	22	42	50
Related	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	7	2	7	....	14	2
Unrelated	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	44	23	38	21	82	44
								74	53	64	43	138	96

AGE OF CHILDREN AT ADOPTION													
Under 1 year	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	23	16	24	13	47	29
1- 2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	25	12	19	11	44	23
3- 5	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	23	21	16	19	39	40
6-12	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	35	27	24	34	59	61
13-15	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	8	3	2	8	10	11
16 and over	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	3	2	3	3
								114	80	88	87	202	167

THE TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF DEPARTMENTAL AND NON-DEPARTMENTAL APPLICANTS AND PLACEMENTS FROM JULY 1972 TO JUNE 1976

APPLICANTS

					Departmental	%	Non-Departmental	%	Total	%
1972-73	....	....	....	....	524	71	219	29	743	100
1973-74	....	....	....	....	441	65	241	35	682	100
1974-75	....	....	....	....	420	63	252	37	672	100
1975-76	....	....	....	....	302	80	76	20	378	100

PLACEMENTS

1972-73	....	....	....	....	342	79	91	21	433	100
1973-74	....	....	....	....	242	80	60	20	302	100
1974-75	....	....	....	....	209	80	53	20	262	100
1975-76	....	....	....	....	177	86	29	14	206	100

TOTAL ASSESSMENT OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY DEPARTMENTAL AND NON-DEPARTMENTAL

The following table represents the total number of placements in both fields to the total number of applicants in both fields in each year:—

1972-73—433 placements	=	58·27
743 applicants		
1973-74—302 placements	=	44·28
682 applicants		
1974-75—262 placements	=	38·98
672 applicants		
1975-76—206 placements	=	54·50
378 applicants		

From this table it can be seen that there is an increase in the proportion of placements to applicants to the extent that present supply is 54·50 per cent of demand looking at the figures from the viewpoint of the number of applicants who have applied during the year, within the present framework of limiting criteria, and the number of babies placed during the year.

This represents a considerable improvement from the previous 1974/75 year when supply was only 39 per cent of demand.

As previously stated the above calculation is made by comparing the numbers of actual applications received and placements made during the period 1/7/1975 to 30/6/1976 only. A more realistic picture can therefore be achieved by comparing the total number of applicants still awaiting placement at 30th June 1976 (i.e. both those who applied in prior years and those who applied during the year 75/76) and the number of babies placed during the year.

The following figures are descriptive of the “real” situation.

APPLICANTS

The total number of approved applicants as at 30th June 1976 and still awaiting placement is:—

Departmental	Non-Departmental	
141	104	= 245

The total number of applicants awaiting assessment (including those at present undergoing assessment) as at 30th June 1976 is:—

Departmental	Non-Departmental	
537	86	= 623
Total applicants waiting		= 868

PLACEMENTS

The total number of babies placed during 1975/76 = 206

It can be seen that even if the number of babies available remains constant the relative percentage of supply to demand would be approximately 24 per cent in the forthcoming 12 months. It is likely however that the number of babies available will continue to decline. Consideration will therefore need to be given to the possibility of further restricting the criteria or allowing a further increase in the waiting period of the applicants to result.

ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS

During the year the Adoptions Centre recorded a total number of 386 written and telephone enquiries from prospective adopting couples, this resulted in some 302 applications being accepted.

APPROVALS

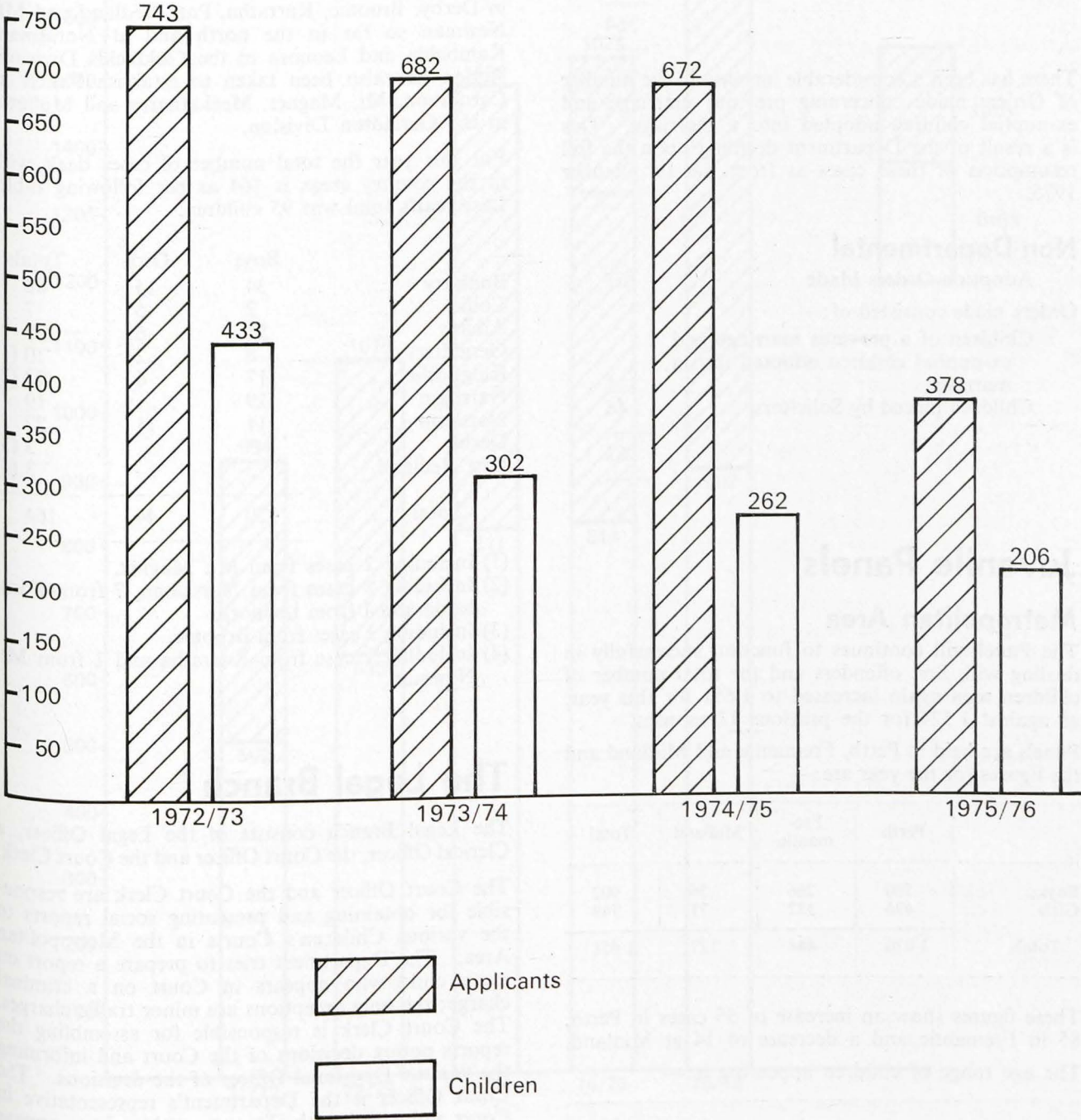
In the 12 months up to 30th June 1976, 202 applicants were approved after assessment by the Field Staff. These applicants applied prior to 1st July 1975.

APPLICATIONS FILED AND ORDERS MADE

Departmental

Adoption Orders filed	=	430
Adoption Orders made	=	364

COMPARISON OF APPLICANTS FOR ADOPTION AND CHILDREN PLACED



Due to the Family Law Court taking over the making of Adoption Orders from the Supreme Court towards the end of the year there were numbers of papers which had been filed during 1975-76 and for which Orders were subsequently made shortly after 30th June 1976.

Orders made consisted of:—

Children of a previous marriage and ex-nuptial children adopted into a marriage	79
Children placed by the Adoptions Centre (Generally these children were placed prior to 1975-76)	285
	364

There has been a considerable increase in the number of Orders made concerning previous marriage and ex-nuptial children adopted into a marriage. This is a result of the Department deciding upon the full resumption of these cases as from the 1st October 1975.

Non-Departmental

Adoption Orders Made	167
Orders made consisted of:—	
Children of a previous marriage and ex-nuptial children adopted into a marriage	121
Children placed by Solicitors	46
	167

Juvenile Panels

Metropolitan Area

The Panel still continues to function successfully in dealing with first offenders and the total number of children seen again increased to 1 651 for this year, as against 1 524 for the previous 12 months.

Panels are held in Perth, Fremantle and Midland and the figures for the year are:—

	Perth	Fre-mantle	Midland	Total
Boys.....	580	266	56	902
Girls	496	182	71	749
Totals	1 076	448	127	1 651

These figures show an increase of 55 cases in Perth, 85 in Fremantle and a decrease of 14 at Midland. The age range of children appearing is:—

Age	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Boys	1	24	34	53	73	154	201	204	158
Girls .....	.....	.....	6	12	35	115	238	213	130

Once again the trend shown is for the girls to commence to offend at an older age than the boys, but to exceed them in the 13 and 14 year age groups.

Since the upper age limit was increased to take in the 15 year old first offenders in 1971, there has been a total of 6 677 children dealt with by the Panel. Of these 778 have re-offenced and appeared before the Children's Court, which is 11.6 per cent of the total. Of the offenders 604 were boys and only 174 girls.

Country Area

Considerable progress has been made during the year with the extension of the Panel System to the northern part of the State and to the smaller country towns in the Goldfields area. Panel cases have been seen in Derby, Broome, Karratha, Port Hedland and Mt. Newman so far in the north and at Norseman, Kambalda and Leonora in the Goldfields Division. Action has also been taken to establish Panels at Carnarvon, Mt. Magnet, Meekatharra and Mullewa in the Geraldton Division.

For this year the total number of cases dealt with in the country areas is 164 as per following table. Last year's total was 95 children.

	Boys	Girls	Totals
Bunbury	34	14	48
Collie	2	5	7
Albany	23	6	29
Geraldton	8	2	10 (1)
Kalgoorlie	17	6	23 (2)
Narrogin	19	.....	19
Northam	11	11	22
Derby	3	.....	3 (3)
Port Hedland	3	.....	3 (4)
Total	120	44	164

- (1) Including 2 cases from Mt. Magnet.
- (2) Including 5 cases from Norseman, 7 from Kambalda and 1 from Leonora.
- (3) Including 2 cases from Broome.
- (4) Including 1 case from Karratha and 1 from Mt. Newman.

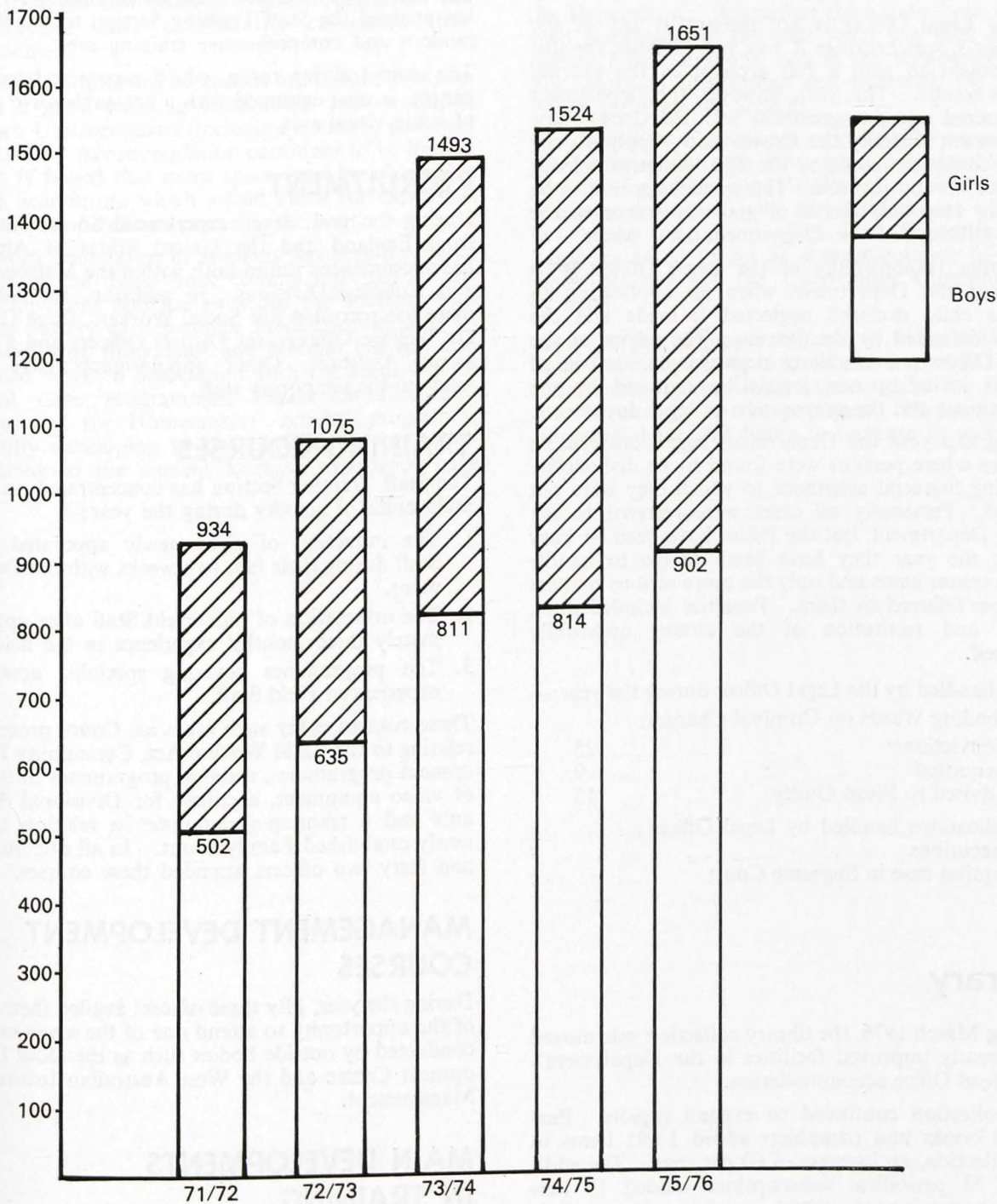
The Legal Branch

The Legal Branch consists of the Legal Officer, a Clerical Officer, the Court Officer and the Court Clerk.

The Court Officer and the Court Clerk are responsible for obtaining and presenting social reports to the various Children's Courts in the Metropolitan Area. The Department tries to prepare a report on every child who appears in Court on a criminal charge; the only exceptions are minor traffic charges. The Court Clerk is responsible for assembling the reports noting decisions of the Court and informing the various Divisional Offices of the decisions. The Court Officer is the Department's representative in Court and exercises the Department's right to appear and be heard. He also advises members of the public at Court. He has an office in the Children's Court in Perth and also appears in the Fremantle Children's Court and Rockingham.

The Legal Officer is responsible for defending wards of the Department who deny committing an offence and who have no access to Counsel. Aboriginal children are represented by the Aboriginal Legal

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN APPEARING BEFORE THE JUVENILE PANELS IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS.



Service which provides assistance to all Aboriginal children who appear in the Court. The Department arranges representation for juveniles who appear in the Supreme and District Courts with the help of the Law Society under the Legal Aid Scheme. Counsel who were briefed on behalf of wards included Mr. D. McLeod, Mr. G. Wells, Mr. V. Tubic, Mr. J. Eller.

In all these cases, the Legal Officer arranges for a report to be provided to the Superior Court, by the appropriate Divisional Officer.

As the Legal Officer is not present at any of the Superior Court hearings it was very difficult for this Department to gain a full account of the hearing and its results. This year, however, the Department has entered into an agreement with the Crown Law Department whereby the Crown Law supply a copy of the comments made by the Trial Judge in passing sentence on any juvenile. This system appears to be working very well and is of great assistance to the Legal Officer and the Department as a whole.

A further responsibility of the Legal Officer is to represent the Department when an application to have a child declared neglected is made and the case is defended by the parents. The advice of the Legal Officer is available to departmental staff in all matters including new legislation required by the Department and the preparation of legal documents.

During this year the Department began prosecuting in cases where persons were found to be dishonestly receiving financial assistance to which they were not entitled. Previously all cases were referred to the Police Department, but the Police have been so busy during the year they have been unable to handle all the minor cases and only the more serious matters are now referred to them. Penalties included fines, bonds and restitution of the money unlawfully obtained.

Cases handled by the Legal Officer during the year:—

Defending Wards on Criminal Charges:

Convictions	....	....	....	....	25
Acquitted	....	....	....	....	9
Advised to Plead Guilty	....	....	....	....	15

Applications handled by Legal Officer	....	....	....	....	8
Prosecutions	....	....	....	....	9
Adoption case in Supreme Court	....	....	....	....	1

Library

During March 1976, the library collection was moved into greatly improved facilities in the Department's new Head Office accommodation.

The collection continued to expand rapidly. Purchased books and pamphlets added 1 895 items to the collection, an increase of 60 per cent. The additional 53 periodical subscriptions, added 15 new titles, increasing the total number of periodical titles to 63.

Prior to the appointment of the Librarian and a Clerk-Typist in early March, 1976 library duties were performed by a part-time library officer from Administration.

Library services to departmental officers expanded significantly with the distribution of the Accessions List, Current Awareness List and Periodical Con-

tents List on a regular monthly basis. Loans of books, reports, periodicals and miscellaneous pamphlets increased by 42 per cent.

Library staff assisted various students from schools and tertiary institutions in the use of the collection.

Staff Selection and Training

The move from Claver House to Community House has enabled the Staff Training Section to establish a modern and comprehensive training area.

The main training room, which accommodates fifty people, is now equipped with a comprehensive range of audio visual aids.

RECRUITMENT

During the year, seven experienced Social Workers from England and the United States of America have commenced duties both within the Metropolitan and Country Divisions. In addition, the Department has recruited five Social Workers, three Graduate Welfare Officers, six District Officers and a Divisional Assistant. Other appointments have been made to the temporary staff.

TRAINING COURSES

The Staff Training Section has concentrated on three main areas of activity during the year:—

1. The induction of eight newly appointed Field Staff during their first two weeks with the Department.
2. The orientation of nine Field Staff after approximately three months' experience in the field.
3. Ten programmes covering specialist areas for experienced Field Staff.

These courses cover such areas as, Court procedures relating to the Child Welfare Act, Community Development programmes, training programmes in the use of video equipment, a course for Divisional Assistants and a training programme in relation to the newly established Family Court. In all one hundred and forty two officers attended these courses.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT COURSES

During the year, fifty three officers availed themselves of the opportunity to attend one of the seven courses conducted by outside bodies such as the Doig Development Centre and the West Australian Institute of Management.

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN TRAINING

During the year the Department has attempted wherever possible, to improve the skills of Field Staff in the use of audio visual equipment as well as utilising this equipment in training courses. As a result, a number of programmes have now been submitted by Field Staff for the use of audio visual equipment in the training of Homemakers, Foster Parents, Community Development Workers and Youth Workers.

Student Unit

The Student Unit has continued for the year 1975/76 to play a major role in contributing to the Department's participation in the field of Social Work education. A total of twelve Social Work students have been placed in the unit in three groups of four, for an average period of ten weeks each. Both W.A.I.T. and the University have made use of this facility, two thirds of the students this year having come from the University of Western Australia. All the students have satisfactorily completed their placements.

The Unit continues to be located at Midland Division where a good working relationship has developed between Unit personnel (including students) and field work staff. Accommodation continues to be limited and it is hoped that extra space may be obtainable in the near future which would allow for expansion in numbers of students placed in the Unit.

The work undertaken by students has been a selected sample of the usual work coming into any of the Field Divisions and has provided the students with a wide variety of experience mainly in the area of casework with individuals and families but has also included work in association with the local Out of School Care programmes, Parkerville Children's Home, and the Homemakers' activity programme currently developing in the Lockridge area. Contributions to the student learning experience have

also been made by departmental staff in administration and specialist departmental sections. This year more emphasis has been given to students in the Unit learning from being in a group situation in terms of greater interchange of knowledge and participation in specific group experiences in conjunction with the Supervisor.

The Unit Supervisor has continued to act in a liaison role between the Department and the educational institutions and has been involved in arranging student placements with individual Supervisors in the Department. Altogether there have been twelve such placements in the past year; five with Metropolitan Field Divisions, two in the Kimberley Division, three at institutions and two with the Social Policy and Planning Section.

The four Unit Supervisors employed by agencies in the Metropolitan area have spent considerable time contributing to the organisation of a short series of seminars concerned with the development of skills in student supervision. The Unit Supervisor also has been asked to act as a representative for field-work practice on the Curriculum Committee at W.A.I.T.

As the largest employer of Social Workers in Western Australia it is pleasing to know that a total of twenty-four students gained some experience of the Department's functions in the past year. Hopefully there is potential for this figure to increase in succeeding years.

Institutional Services

Institutions

The Institutional Services are important for the development of some children and families. There is however an awareness of the damaging effect of any institutional facility unless it is used sparingly with precision and always as part of a community setting. From the following reports it becomes evident that the institutions are not encapsulated additives for a child's treatment but are increasingly a part of a community based service.

The emphasis in child care is upon family cohesion and when institutional placement must occur, stress is placed on family treatment and involvement. The aim is to return the child to home as soon as possible. To achieve this goal, institutional services continue to be flexible and experimental.

Temporary Care and Assessment

Where circumstances necessitate the placement of children away from their present home, every effort is made to provide care without institutional placement. When this is not possible, or where a comprehensive assessment of the child and the situation is required, temporary placement in an institution is necessary.

The assessment procedures involve an appraisal of the child's adjustment in such settings as the family, the school, the community and in employment where relevant. Within the institutions, medical, psychological, educational and behavioural assessments are carried out so as to provide a comprehensive picture of the child and his potential strengths and weaknesses.

The information gathered from various sources is then used to plan the child's future placement with due regard for the needs of the child, the family and the availability of community resources. Where necessary, treatment plans are formulated to deal with areas of difficulty indicated during assessment and if possible they are put into practice while the child is still in the institution.

Those who require a more specialised treatment programme may be transferred to a treatment centre. However, the majority of children return to placements in the community where they are supervised by the Department's social workers and welfare officers.

Bridgewater

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Bridgewater is an open cottage centre set on a 5 hectare site which is designed to harmonise with the suburb of Applecross. The nine cottages can accommodate up to 107 boys and girls.

FUNCTION

Short term emergency care and assessment of boys and girls from 3 to 18 years in a setting planned to replicate suburban home living.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

(1) ADMISSIONS DURING YEAR

		Caucasian	Asian and other races	Aboriginal	Total
Boys	....	173	4	56	233
Girls	....	224	8	60	292
					525

(2) SCHOOL-EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION

			%
Pre-school	....	....	17
Primary school	....	....	36
High school	....	....	29
Working age	....	....	18

(3) LENGTH OF STAY

Less than 3 months	....	....	464
More than 3 months	....	....	61

(4) PLACEMENT FOLLOWING CONFERENCE

			%
Home or relatives	....	....	40
Foster placement (including group homes)	....	....	36
Treatment institutions	....	....	12
Other (private board, hostels, unplaced etc.)	....	....	12

Population characteristics have not changed significantly. Fewer children are remaining for long periods; the placement of high school and working-age children remains a problem. Although hostel placement was recommended for 20 children, only 2 placements were made.

The admission of pre-school children has centred around those requiring protracted case-work; destitution and crisis is rare for this group.

ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT PROGRAMMES

Treatment programmes have been curtailed during the current year owing to shortage of professional staff. There has been a general movement towards teamwork between cottage staff and field officers, particularly in the area of private preventive admissions. While this development shows some promise, there is a need for more expertise following the model demonstrated by the officers of the Child Life Protection Unit. Bridgewater has been closely concerned with this unit and our research into the diagnostic characteristics of abused children was presented to the 1975 Battered-Child Congress.

DEVELOPMENTS—CURRENT AND PROPOSED

Facilities for recreation and schooling are still not available. The increasingly long stay of teenage children adds to both of these problems.

The analysis of characteristics of children admitted has been partly processed. Trends of significance are the high admission rate from newly-developed areas, e.g. the outer areas of Balga and mining settlements in the Pilbara and the high percentage of single admissions as opposed to family groups. In 1969 the year of opening, 50 per cent of the children admitted came in groups of 4 or more; in 1975-76 this figure has fallen to 10 per cent.

The three year research on absconding is nearing completion and will be ready for comment in 1976.

Mt. Lawley Reception Home

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

3 Walcott Street, Mt. Lawley.

“Mt. Lawley” is an “open” institution, accommodating 44 children in a large suburban house with additions and modifications, set in about two and a half acres of lawns, trees and gardens. Adjoining the northern boundary is a large park which is used for recreational and sporting activities.

FUNCTION

Assessment and short term care is provided for up to 22 boys and 22 girls between the ages of seven and eighteen years for whom a security institution is considered detrimental or unnecessary.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

(1) ADMISSIONS DURING YEAR

	Aboriginal	Caucasian	Total
Boys	122	174	296
Girls	91	112	203
	213	286	499

(2) SCHOOL—EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION

	%
Primary School	13
Secondary School	70
Employment	17

(3) LENGTH OF STAY

Less than one week	138
One week to one month	212
One month to three months	125
More than three months	24

(4) REASONS FOR ADMISSION

Temporary care only	75
Awaiting other placement	163
Court Action (charge, application, remand or default)	79
Assessment	171
Other	11

(5) PLACEMENT ON DISCHARGE

Parents or relative	163
Private board or foster parent	79
Institution or hostel	244
Other	13

The mean age of the children was 14 years and 3 months with 68 per cent of them being between 12½ years and 16 years when admitted. The trend shows last year, when an increased number of girls were admitted, has this year been reversed, with a decrease of some 6 per cent. In all, 43 less children were admitted than during the previous year, though there was an increase in their length of stay, resulting in overcrowding in the boys’ section for a third of the year. There was a 7 per cent decrease in the number of children being returned to a parent or relative, with a corresponding increase in those being placed in an institution or hostel.

PROGRAMME

There was a further increase in the number of children receiving full assessment, though the number requiring assessment in only specific areas decreased. With the programme being completely orientated to the assessment of children, considerable importance was placed on their interaction with the community both directly and indirectly. Consequently, there was considerable involvement with interviews, employment, outings, picnics, swimming, social activities and visits. Camps were held for a total of seven weeks during school holidays, during which time assessment and the movements of children continued without delay.

CURRENT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS

The special School attached to this Centre, with only one trained teacher, has been grossly overcrowded, necessitating one member of the staff from this Centre being fully employed conducting social skills classes and, in the third term of 1975, a further member of staff conducting pre-vocational classes for the older children. The educational psychologist employed by this Department spent very limited time in assisting in the assessment of the children’s achievements, capabilities and potential within the school system.

Though difficulty was experienced in obtaining employment for appropriate children, a high level of liaison has been maintained with employers and potential employers. With one staff member fully employed in this area and with maintaining contact with Field Officers, employment was found for 46 boys and 18 girls.

Longmore

Adie Road, Bentley.

Longmore is a facility of the Department for Community Welfare, designed for maximum security. Extensions are now being completed and will become the Remand Section. This will provide accommodation for 22 cases, 14 boys and 8 girls. The original section will continue to be the Department's main assessment centre caring for 36 boys and 24 girls. Being closely linked, the two centres allow transfer of cases from one section to the other for assessment as well as for medical care.

Both sections comprise of offices for administration and assessment, single room activities, areas for day and evening manual work, physical training and entertainment. Schooling facilities are provided in the Assessment Centre.

FUNCTION

Longmore is the Department's main assessment centre for teenage offenders between 13 and 18 years of age, who require at least temporarily a maximum security setting. Longmore holds children who are due to appear in court, remanded for pre-sentence reports, or service default for non payment of fines.

(1) ADMISSIONS DURING YEAR

	Aboriginal	Caucasian	Total
Boys	375	853	1 228
Girls	122	206	328
	497	1 059	1 556

Additional

POPULATION RESIDENCE LOCATION

		%
Metropolitan	1 193	76.7
Kimberley	7	.5
Pilbara	25	1.6
Murchison	43	2.8
Central	85	5.4
Southern	64	4.1
Goldfields	66	4.2
Interstate	73	4.7

(2) SCHOOL-EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION

	%
Primary School	27.9
School	13.0
Employed	59.1
Unemployed	

(3) LENGTH OF STAY

Less than one week	984
One week to one month	341
One month to three months	227
More than three months	4
Total	1 556

(4) REASON FOR ADMISSION

	%
Court Action	70.6
Serve Default	5.8
Remand	6.0
Assessment (directed by court)	11.3
Breakdown of previous plan	1.6
Missing person for other Inst.	1.5
Inst. requesting temp. hold	.9
Divisions requesting temp. hold	1.8
Medical reasons	.2
Others	.3
Assessment—Conference:	
Total	383

(5) PLACEMENT ON DISCHARGE

	%
Home	56.0
Relatives	3.7
Foster parents	.8
Private board	4.4
Hostels	3.9
Riverbank	3.9
Nyandi	2.4
M.L.R.H.	4.7
Bridgewater	1.0
Hillston	13.5
Other Institutions	3.9
Prison	1.6
Others	.2

Inferences from Data

The total number of admissions to Longmore was below that of the previous year, but the difference is not significant statistically. In giving consideration to the total number of admission of Aboriginal and Caucasian children, we find a slight increase in the Aboriginal population, but even a more significant number of Caucasian girls were admitted during the year.

The majority of children were admitted from the Metro area. Slight increases were noticed in the Murchison, Central, Southern and Goldfield areas. The number of admissions from inter state shows a drop of 11 cases. The number of offending school children has increased by 3.4 per cent. Those in employment show a decrease of 1.9 per cent, while that of unemployed, decreased by 1.5 per cent.

The length of stay at Longmore decreased, except for those detained between one and three months however, it is noticeable that four cases exceeded three months because of court remands and difficulties in returning them to their home state.

Reasons for Admission

Apart from those admitted through court action and serving defaults, there is a noticeable slight decline in all other areas of admission.

Placement on Discharge

More children were discharged home this year, and the increase in number of children sent to institutions is minimal.

Research Programmes

With the Longmore programme we do not wish to suppress the behaviour of children, rather we try to maintain a standard of behaviour that is relevant to the outside community. A behavioural management programme has been introduced with a view to establishing positive attitudes in children towards learning new social skills. Packages of such skills are in the process of being developed and Group Workers are acquiring new techniques in the handling of these programmes.

Treatment Institutions

Where the assessment carried out indicates that institutional resources are needed, responsibility for the management of the child is transferred to the recommended institution's staff. The child experiences are then planned to bear similarity and relevance to the experiences that he or she can expect to encounter in life so maximising chances of learning appropriate behaviour. Treatment methods are well removed from the "traditional" institutional training methods, with modern programmes being based upon research reported in professional literature and carried out in Departmental institutions.

The view taken of treatment is that, before a child can live in a responsible and independent manner, a number of periods may be spent in the institution's buildings—security or open sections. These periods may include daily school attendance or work away from the institution. The different periods spent at the institution are regarded as part of a continuing progress of treatment, interspersed with further treatment while living in the community. This further treatment is carried out by, or under the supervision of, institution staff. Increasingly, the child participates in planning his or her own programme and is given more responsibility for carrying it out. The institutions which are established for juvenile offenders do not emphasise the "offending" aspect of the child's behaviour as much as in the past. They are being seen as treatment centres where problem behaviour that does not necessarily include offences can be changed. Nevertheless, because of the Department's mandate to reduce the likelihood of offending in juveniles, offenders form the majority of the admissions to treatment centres for adolescents.

Hillston

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Stoneville Road, Stoneville.
Hillston is an open treatment institution situated in a semi-rural area 25 miles from Perth. Facilities on the 367 acre property include a school, a mixed

farm and trade workshops. These provide for general education and training a wide range of rural and urban occupations as well as a variety of leisure and sporting activities.

There is accommodation for 79 boys; 60 in the main section of the institution which have provisions for security, 12 in separate accommodation which provides for a greater degree of individual responsibility and 7 in a cottage on the property in an open "group home" atmosphere.

FUNCTION

Treatment and training of boys between the ages of eleven and eighteen years who have been committed to the care of the Department and who, as the result of a Case Conference, are placed at the institution. A smaller section of the population is serving default for the non-payment of fines.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS FOR 12 MONTHS ENDING 30th JUNE 1976

During the year 1st July 1975 to 30th June 1976 there was no significant change in the total number of boys admitted from the previous year. Although 31 less Case Conference admission events took place this was balanced by the admission of 34 more defaulters than during the previous year.

The breakdown is as follows:—

Caseload at 30th June 1976 residential and on trial leave 283			
New Case Conference admissions (49			
Caucasian; 50 Aboriginal)			99
Preventative re-admissions			84
Breakdown re-admissions (73 actual cases			117
Defaulters (23 Caucasian; 40 Aboriginals)			63
TOTAL			363

Average age—15 years 8 months
Average length of stay—72.7 days

Although the average age and length of stay are almost identical to last year's figures, there has occurred a greater variance in the ages of boys admitted within the range of 10–18 years with 104 admissions being 14 years and under and 158 being over 16 years. The average length of stay also varies according to age groups with the younger age group averaging 88.5 days and boys over school age 57 days.

TREATMENT PROGRAMMES

The three teacher school has operated to capacity throughout the year and the need for remedial educational programmes, at individual levels, to enable boys of school age to progress to a stage where they can return to normal school programmes, has been most evident. The longer average length of stay for boys of school age is significant in this regard.

All boys, regardless of age, are tested on admission to Hillston to determine any inadequacies in social skills which may be detrimental to their survival in society and planned programmes are undertaken to remedy any individual deficiencies.

Work training in the area of farm and trade training skills is available and is undertaken as part of the ongoing development of the property. A construction programme, as part of a plan to extend and improve training facilities at Hillston, continues to progress.

A programme of work release from Hillston has continued throughout the year and in spite of limited employment opportunities 98 boys, representing an average of 9.5 boys per week, participated and obviously benefitted by the social interaction in a working situation whilst still obtaining support in a residential setting and actually experiencing money handling, budgeting and banking.

Emphasis continues to be placed on community involvement in treatment programmes and involve-

ment in community activities and the use of various resources available in the district continues.

A reward system understandable to the diverse inmate population which in effect means a boy can earn privileges proportionate to his effort and attitude continues to apply as a means of behaviour modification.

Hillston and the residential care it provides is still considered to be only the incipient phase of a developing programme which progresses to trial leave from the institution, with after-care support, in the community. Indicative of this would be that although the residential population throughout the year has been approximately 65 an average of 200 boys have additionally been attached to the institution on trial leave.

PARTICIPATING IN CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME AT HILLSTON



WARRAMIA

Hillston staff and boys continue to be involved with the development of the Department's property at Badgingarra and boys have continued to be detached from Hillston to participate in this programme. Produce from this property and Hillston's farm to the market value of \$32 925 was used in the Hillston and other metropolitan institutions' kitchens throughout the year.

DEVELOPMENTS

The early opening of McDonald House in the metropolitan area will provide a further valuable acquisition to Hillston and provide for treatment in a community setting for socially inadequate boys unable to function in ordinary living situations. Previously such cases have, by necessity, spent extended periods within the institution which has only served to develop dependency on institutional living and make their process of adjustment to society increasingly difficult.

During the year, in conjunction with the Community Services Training College, an in service training programme was conducted for some staff members. It is hoped arrangements can be made for this type of programme to be continued.

Koorana

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Allen Court, Bentley.

Koorana is a day attendance centre for children whose behaviour is such that they cannot profit from normal school attendance. It is non residential; children are transported daily from where they live. Most live with their own families.

Treatment procedures limit the number of children who attend full time to about twenty. Further children attend for sessional treatment, and Koorana

staff work with other children and their teachers in the settings of their own schools and pre-school settings, or in conjunction with staff in other treatment agencies.

The centre was opened in 1974. It has a number of teaching or treatment areas and grounds that are used for specific or general play activities. Facilities within the local community are used when required. Staff include teachers, group workers, a clinical psychologist, a social worker and an occupational therapist.

FUNCTION

The population is limited to children of primary school age and grade placement, with sessional treatment for some younger children. Treatment includes work with families of referred children, and with other persons connected with the child.

The major referring problem is that the child's behaviour is such that he is unable to progress as well as his ability would allow in a normal school setting. Other relevant issues may be that his behaviour is excessively interfering with the progress of other children in his class, and that his formal learning is much below what could be expected. Koorana does not accept children unless the local school, working with other staff of the Education Department has been unable to improve the child's level of functioning. Before a referred child attends Koorana, the staff of Koorana further investigates the possibility of maintaining the child's attendance at his own school by working with him, his family and his teachers in that setting.

Koorana staff also act as consultants to other agencies and to families where the prime concern is not the behaviour of a child in his school setting. These concerns include many that are usually referred to educational and social welfare agencies. Additionally, Koorana staff assist in training courses in teaching, psychology, social work, occupational therapy, physical education and child care. The centre is used as a practicum placement for students in several of these disciplines.

Wardship is not necessary for referral to Koorana. Admissions are determined on the need of the individual case seen in the light of alternatives available, with some slight weighting given to wardship.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Referrals July 1975—June 1976:

Boys	....	....	....	....	50
Girls	....	....	....	....	10
					—
					60
					—

Accepted for treatment:—

Full-time attendance at Koorana	11
Sessional attendance at Koorana	11
Some treatment responsibility accepted but carried out in local school and at home	27
	—
	49
	—

All children enrolled at Koorana were referred primarily for problem behaviour within the school setting. In all cases the children were also significantly retarded educationally and their behaviour outside the

school setting caused concern. Seventy three per cent of the children referred to Koorana had been earlier referred to another specialist treatment agency—mainly psychiatric or neurological. Few had been committed to wardship.

In almost every case, considerable intervention in family operations is necessary. This factor, rather than the actual behaviour of the referred child, largely determines which children are accepted for full-time attendance at Koorana. Though the children are referred because of behaviour in a school setting, in every case there were serious behavioural problems present before the child started school.

ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT PROGRAMMES

Assessment and treatment programmes must be exploratory and innovative. Methods used are a combination of those derived from other settings, and those developed over the past couple of years at Koorana. Treatment must necessarily be experimental, the results being used to refine treatment and teaching techniques.

Assessment includes educational, physical and psychological testing to supplement that available from the referring, and other agencies. The most important type of assessment though, is that done through general and specific behavioural observations of the child in his own school setting. This assists in making the decision to accept for full-time, part-time or sessional treatment at Koorana, or for treatment within his own school or kindergarten setting working with his own class teacher. A social work assessment contributes to this decision.

Treatment programmes are devised according to the needs of the individual case, and the contribution of the different professional personnel varies with each case. Various theoretical and practical approaches are being investigated, but it is unlikely that Koorana will make a full commitment to any one therapeutic approach. The most frequently used treatment approach is a behavioural one.

Because Koorana's obligation is seen as initiating change in a child's level of functioning to a stage where full-time attendance at the local school is possible, the means of maintaining the change will need to be ones that can be transferred to the setting of the local school. Though the children have been referred primarily for reasons of behaviour, in most cases there has been a serious retardation in formal learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Remedial teaching is essential for most children.

DEVELOPMENTS— CURRENT AND PROPOSED

Koorana is still at an early stage of development, so that all approaches require further refinement and modification.

Maintaining the child's improved level of functioning at that new level when he returns to a normal school is a crucial issue, regarded as the criterion by which Koorana's intervention must be judged. Detailed weekly reports are received from the new school indicating performance in specified areas. This continuing contact allows Koorana to offer further

assistance to the new school. It is accepted that many of the children will require particular assistance for some time after returning to a normal school. Results to date, however, have been better than anticipated.

The relatively high proportion of children (63 per cent) who have been maintained in their own schools at an improved level of functioning after initial referral to Koorana is the most pleasing aspect of the year's work. All of these children were referred as being "impossible" to work with in a normal school. The strengths shown by some parents in working in co-operation with Koorana staff towards changing their children's behaviour has encouraged efforts to develop further techniques in this field. This is seen as being a particularly productive way of working, as techniques developed may be used by other staff of this Department, obviating the need for the child to attend a special centre. Teachers in normal classes who have worked in consultation with Koorana staff for changes in a referred child, develop extra skills. These remain in that teacher's repertoire of professional skills for use with other children whose behaviour prevents normal educational progress.

McCall Centre

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2 Curtain Avenue, Mosman Park.

McCall Centre is an "open" facility comprising accommodation for twenty children, treatment and activity rooms, classrooms, offices and playing areas.

FUNCTION

McCall centre is a long term residential treatment unit for children with behavioural and emotional problems between the ages of five and twelve years. As part of the Department's preventative work effort, the Centre's essential aim is to assist children in overcoming their problems while they are still young.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

New admissions:—

Boys	....	....	....	....	8
Girls	....	....	....	....	2
					<hr/> 10 <hr/>

Average age on admission—10 years

Sixty-five children so far have been admitted, and the most commonly found problem behaviours are:— aggressiveness (35 children), stealing (34), destructiveness (28), poor school behaviour and performance (25), attention seeking (19), temper tantrums (19), lying (15) and absconding (14).

McCALL CENTRE PLAY AREA



TREATMENT PROGRAMMES

Programmes are devised according to the needs of the individual child and the potentialities seen in that child and family. They encompass the applications of behaviour modification techniques, play therapy, group therapy, occupational therapy, re-

medial education, speech therapy, and a wide range of other activities. Various theoretical and practical approaches are attempted, without commitment to any one therapeutic framework. The focus is on the child and his problems.

Parents are involved in the programme as much as possible, and in particular they are given the opport-

unity to learn the special skills necessary to manage their children. If necessary, parents can come to the Centre for intensive work, and be accommodated in the specially designed Parent Unit. Every endeavour is made to return the child as quickly as possible to the community.

RESULTS

It is considered that treatment is successful if the child's behaviour is modified while at the Centre, and during the two-year follow up, problem behaviour does not re-occur and the child makes a satisfactory adjustment.

So far 25 children have been discharged for over two years, and of those 20 (80 per cent) have met the criteria of success, while 5 (20 per cent) have not, in that they had to be admitted to other treatment centres.

It is hoped that with additional professional staff we might be able to improve on those figures.

FOSTER PARENT TRAINING

Some children cannot be returned to their parents even though their behaviour has improved sufficiently to permit return to the community. What is required at this stage is placement in an environment as close as possible to a healthy family situation.

Secure and competent foster families meet this requirement but are a scarce commodity, particularly given that they are expected to contend with the additional burden of still quite difficult behaviour problems when they accept a child from the McCall Centre. To assist with this situation, a training scheme has been developed to help interested foster parents. Applicants for the training course are carefully screened and must agree to five-day a week attendance for the mother over a four week period. The father is also expected to attend on a given number of evenings for instruction and other training. During the programme the parents are taught both the theory and practice of dealing with children. Often they have the opportunity to observe the development of techniques used in treating the actual child they will later foster. The process of moving the child from the centre to the new home is a gradual one made in several stages.

The training course at McCall Centre has been in operation for two years and feedback from parents who have had children placed with them to date is very encouraging.

Foster parents who take children from the Centre receive a training allowance as well as an additional fostering allowance in recognition of their completion of the course. Close follow-up with foster families is conducted and they return to the Centre monthly to review progress. Every effort is made to impart to foster parents the notion that they are partners in the work at the McCall Centre, taking over from the institution when it has played its initial part.

The foster training course effectively assists in preparing the foster parents for their role and ensures that the child's treatment is extended and consolidated after he leaves McCall Centre. It also means that children can move to better prepared homes sooner. Three such courses are conducted every year. Recruitment of foster parents has been a

continuous problem, in that on the average we have had three families per course, while we needed eight families each time. This means that when a child is ready for discharge, there is nowhere for him/her to go, and therefore, the length of stay at McCall Centre is prolonged unnecessarily. Perhaps television advertising might be more effective than newspaper advertising in recruiting more foster parents.

DEVELOPMENTS—KINDERGARTEN

It has become evident that some children younger than five years and their families need the treatment facilities offered by McCall Centre. With this in mind and the Department's continued emphasis on prevention a kindergarten was constructed this financial year, and it should commence operations in a few months time. The kindergarten will enable us to admit children as young as three years of age. The children could either be residents at the centre or attend on a daily basis depending on the family situation.

Nyandi

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

3 Allen Court, Bentley.

Nyandi is a treatment and research centre for adolescent girls.

It offers four distinct treatment settings:

- (a) A twenty bed maximum security unit provides opportunities for intensive training of the most difficult adolescents who come into Nyandi care.
- (b) An open residential cottage is located adjacent to the maximum security unit and caters for up to ten girls in a family-type living unit.
- (c) Community based treatment is conducted by after-care staff working from Nyandi. Presently the after-care service is working with a caseload of approximately 170 girls and is assisted by homemaker personnel.
- (d) Watson Lodge is an eight bed training hostel in Aberdeen Street, Perth.

FUNCTION

To provide training and socialization of adolescent girls who, in the majority, have committed a number of offences. However a number of dependent but not delinquent girls are being referred to Nyandi care for brief social training.

Of the fifty-six new referrals in 1975/76 a significant 40 per cent were initially placed in settings other than maximum security.

THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMMES

All programmes are individually oriented but based on two broad assumptions:

- (a) The girls lack the necessary social and vocational skills to successfully cope in society.
- (b) They lack the motivation to exhibit the appropriate skills they do possess and apparently choose a delinquent life style.

The therapeutic programme for the first group is therefore a teaching one.

The girls are assessed and then taught the various social and vocational skills in which they demonstrate a deficiency. There are nineteen social skills defined and taught at present. Examples include following instructions, accepting correction, accepting compliments and giving appropriate social greetings. Each of these skills is broken down into a number of component parts to facilitate quicker and easier teaching.

There is a total of thirty-three vocational skills at present. These include such skills as postal services, nutrition, money change, budgeting and public transport. All girls are assessed on their ability in each of these skills and this assessment together with her previous performance in the community and likely future needs are used to set treatment goals.

Once the targets or goals have been established, the girls are taught the relevant skills largely by means of programmed teaching kits.

These kits allow a variety of staff such as vocational officers, after-care officers, homemakers and teaching parents to teach skills in a number of settings. The girls progress in learning the required skills is then re-assessed objectively. Upon attaining a satisfactory level in these skills, or if the girls are already proficient, the therapeutic problem becomes one of motivating them to illustrate the desired behaviour.

Within the institutional or maximum security settings of Nyandi the basis of the motivational system is the contingent use of the relationship established between staff and girls, i.e. social approval and disapproval. This is bolstered by the use of a behaviourally oriented points system based on token economy principles.

Similar principles are applied to girls placed in the normal community through the process of "contracting". That is, social and material rewards are used contingently upon the girl's behaviour. For example, if a girl attends a certain number of job interviews during a week she may receive pocket money, items of clothing which she has pre-selected, outings, or some other form of reward. Once the desirable behaviour has been established the use of the therapist controlled social and material rewards are phased out and the girl eventually maintained by the ordinary social system which operates for all persons in the community.

Nyandi continues its strong orientation towards evaluating programme effectiveness and conducting relevant research. These areas are regarded as vital components in the delivery of an effective treatment programme. Arising from this a number of papers have been written by Nyandi staff and in the last year three papers have been published in professional journals.

Riverbank

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Riverbank Boys' Treatment Centre at Hamersley Road, Caversham is built to accommodate up to 43 adolescent male offenders within its maximum security environment.

FUNCTION

Riverbank treats adolescent, male offenders aged between thirteen and eighteen years. It provides external maximum security boundaries as a protection to the community and within this secure boundary it allows for a replica of a normal community. Riverbank has its own factory areas (producing items for charitable organisations), its own remedial and social skills classes and various recreation areas for outdoor sport, indoor games, music and television. A boy's behaviour at work, school or play within Riverbank is shaped by the use of a token economy (points) system—with predictable fines for misbehaviour but a real emphasis on rewarding appropriate pro-social behaviour. Application of the "points" system by staff is not mechanistic or an end in itself but rather a starting point to produce behaviour that becomes self-reinforcing. "Points" alone are never given but are always accompanied by verbal and social reinforcement from staff. In this way boys are gradually "weaned" from "points", and a purely materialistic outlook, and prepared for return to the outside, real community.

The entire experience within Riverbank is designed to prepare a boy for Trial Leave under strict after-care supervision. A boy is expected to comply with conditions of Trial Leave or he may be recalled for a further short period of training. The re-admission figures below include 17 boys recalled from After-Care for a period of re-training and to prevent offending.

Total Admission Events—244.

New Admission—56 (28 Caucasian, 28 Aboriginal)

Re-admission events—188 (for 91 boys)

Length of stay—56.2 days (average).

These figures almost equate with the 1974/75 returns if allowance is made for an increased number of preventative re-admissions (over 50 per cent increase since 1974/75). One significant change in the new admission rate is the increase in the proportion of Aboriginal new admissions. Since last year—an increase from 14.75 per cent to 50 per cent. The average length of stay has increased slightly but not significantly to 56.2 days.

TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training programme, emphasising individual choice between acceptable alternatives e.g. to play soccer or basketball, trains boys in personal decision making. Demands on the factory areas have increased to the extent that boys are required to work solidly in order to match such demands. This provides excellent formation in work habits.

There has been a redevelopment of social skills taught in the classrooms. Telecom provides regular assistance in teaching boys how to use a telephone. Skills and knowledge acquisition classes have been redesigned especially in areas of employment choices job interviews, sex education and use/abuse of alcohol. Much of the material has been redesigned to better suit a population which has left school prematurely.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Local community involvement has continued with regular dances, visits by pupils from local high schools

barbecues, socials and visiting sports teams. This involvement is crucial if Riverbank is to succeed in its attempts to mimic the values and attitudes of the wider community.

Riverbank, because of its maximum security status, constantly tends to become a closed environment and it requires the efforts of all staff to attract local community involvement.

DEVELOPMENT

Riverbank's research aimed at developing a typology of offenders and predictors for After-Care supervision is still continuing but, to-date, has not produced definite results. Meanwhile the trend to manage more boys in the community at less cost (in terms of re-offending) has continued.

Riverbank's Hostel, accommodating up to 12 boys at "Fourteen" Francis Street, Perth, has been developed into a specific purpose hostel. A Community Based Treatment Programme is now conducted from "Fourteen". The purpose of this programme is to provide an alternative to Riverbank's walls for boys who need specific correction in living habits, work or school, but who could be adversely affected by too long an association with more delinquent boys. This innovation, although recent, is already producing results. The more difficult, repeat-offender boy who used to be placed at "Fourteen" upon discharge from Riverbank is now placed under After-Care's constant supervision at specially selected boarding placements. This practice tends to break up delinquent peer associations and it is anticipated that improved results will be obtained with this type of boy. Prior to discharge, most boys are permitted to accompany staff on camping trips, and to canoe or mini-bike camps. All involved insist that this pre-discharge experience contributes to an increased regard and respect for each other.

Education and Employment Hostels

A new country hostel was opened in Katanning in February this year. It is called St. Rita's Hostel, the building formerly being a convent by that name. It can accommodate fourteen working boys and girls and it will meet a need in the southern part of the State.

The care of Aboriginal primary and secondary students continues to be a major focus of hostel work. The care of these children must always be something more than merely looking after their physical needs. They need an enriched environment, in which they may have the same opportunities as most children living in their own homes. Out of school activities are planned along these lines. Parental involvement is encouraged.

Existing country hostels are:—

Boulder, "Nindeebai"—Secondary School
 Boulder—Employment (boys only)
 Cue, "Kyarra"—Primary School
 Derby, "Amy Bethell"—Primary and Secondary
 Geraldton—Employment (boys only)
 Halls Creek, "Charles Perkins"—Primary School
 Kalgoorlie—Employment (girls only)

Katanning—Employment (boys and girls)
 Leonora, "Nabberu"—Primary School
 Marble Bar, "Oolanyah"—Primary School
 Onslow, "Gilliamia"—Primary School
 Port Hedland, "Moorgunyah"—Primary School
 Roebourne, "Weerianna"—Primary School
 Yalgoo, "Warrambo"—Primary School

"Moorgunya" and "Gilliamia" were upgraded during the 75/76 financial year.

Metropolitan Hostels

There are twelve (12) Metropolitan Hostels caring for students and one (1) catering for working boys.

Most students are Aboriginals from country areas where education and employment opportunities are limited. Hostels are managed either by this Department or by private agencies. A large proportion of these children have lacked opportunities, or have been deprived of social experiences which are required in order to help them cope in today's complex western society. Thus, because socialization is basically a learning process, contact and interaction whilst living in a hostel situation with broader community resources, has been encouraged. Special discussions were initiated enabling them to gain a knowledge of themselves which in turn helped them to become more proficient in the utilization of already acquired skills.

Discussions have also been held with hostel parents relating to how to recognise and evaluate changes in the behaviour of children, these have proved helpful to them in their day to day management.

Existing metropolitan hostels are:—

Applecross	....	Primary School
Ardross	....	Secondary School
Bedford Park	....	Secondary School, Business College (girls)
Bentley	....	Secondary School
Greenmount	....	"Innaminka" Secondary School (boys)
Hamilton Hill	....	Secondary School (girls)
Kewdale	....	Secondary School
Medina	....	Secondary School (boys)
Mt. Lawley	....	"Cooinda" Secondary School, employment (girls)
Mt. Lawley	....	"Katakutu" Employment (boys)
Mt. Yokine	....	Primary and Secondary School (boys)
Mt. Yokine	....	Secondary School (girls)
Subiaco	....	"Myera" Secondary School (girls) Employment (girls)

Catering Service

The Department's Catering Service has continued to expand during the year.

Departmental Institutions, Hostels and associated facilities involved with catering requirements are located throughout the State, from Wyndham in the North to Katanning in the South and inland to Warburton.

This section continues to offer help and an advisory service to church and private run homes and missions, many of whom avail themselves of this assistance.

New standardised menus are constantly and carefully being compiled for balance and nutritional value, which involves a full component breakdown of all food elements, and are approved by a qualified dietician before being implemented in any of our establishments. Emphasis is placed on the needs of the individual, amendments when necessary being made to suit specific needs. These include age, ethnic and cultural requirements, physical disabilities and malfunctions.

Due to the lack of qualified food service administrative staff, standardised cycle menus have to be used. When additional staff are allocated to this section it will be possible to stop the use of these cycle menus and enable this section to introduce more specialised menus to suit the individual needs of the food services, and follow market trends more closely, resulting in a more economical and efficient Departmental Food Service.

Other areas of involvement include the training of Aborigines in the basics of food service procedures in our Country Hostels.

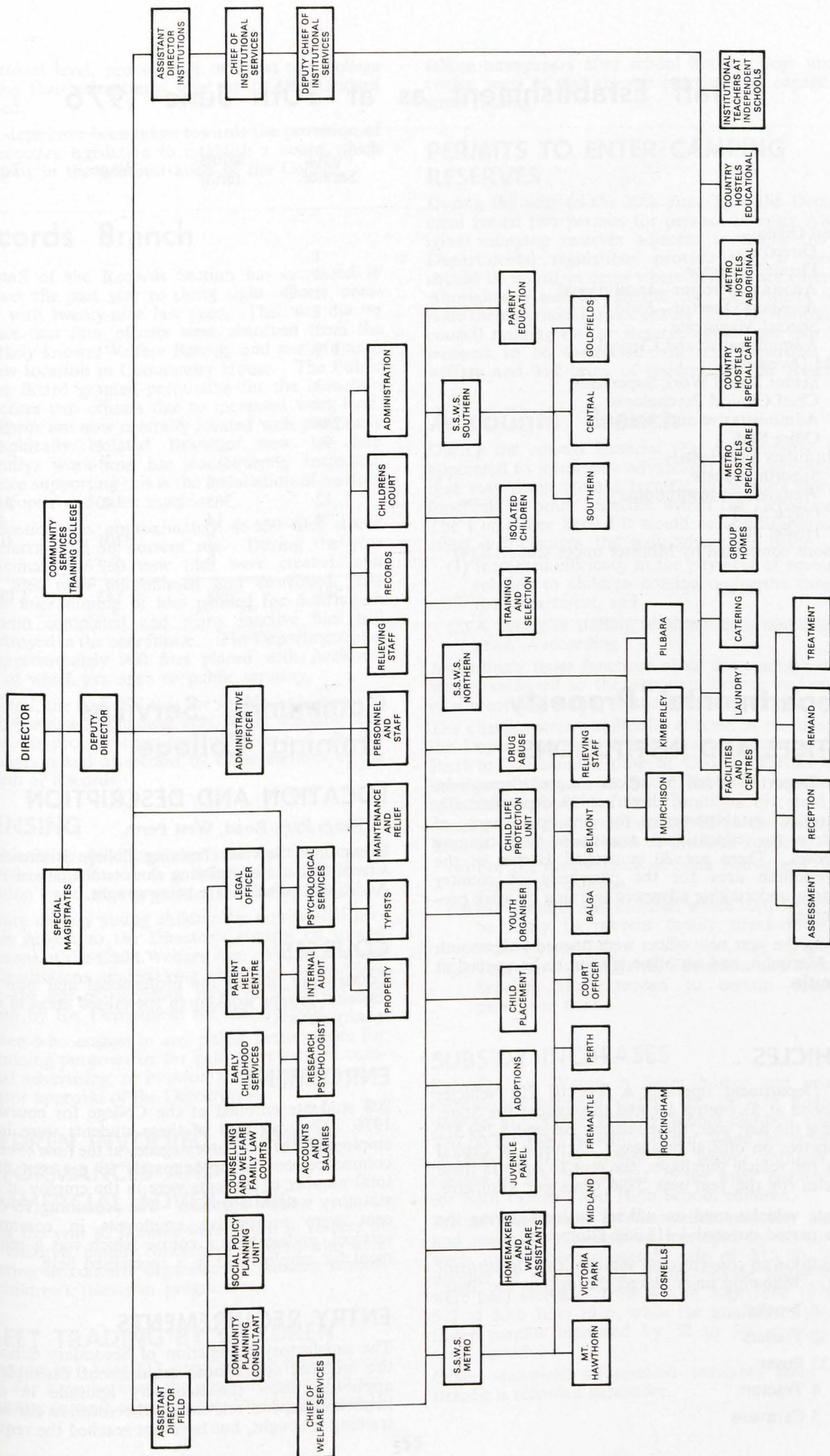
Many camps are held throughout the year, particularly in school holiday periods. In this area assistance is given to the camp leaders with supplies, menus and general catering needs.

We are still involved with food manufacturing companies in creating special fortified food products as well as new packaging, which we hope will help to curtail the enormous transport costs involved in distributing food over such a large State.

Through negotiation with transporting companies, we have been able to cut the delivery time for perishable foods to hostels in the North from 16 days to 5 days.

Continuing liaison is maintained by the catering superintendent with dieticians and food technologists throughout Australia keeping abreast with modern trends associated with diet and the food industry and new methods of supervising and administering food programmes.

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE ORGANISATION CHART AS AT 30/6/76



Staff Establishment as at 30th June 1976

	Public Service	Minis- terial	Wages	Total
Head Office—				
Director	1	....	....	1
Deputy Director....	1	....	....	1
Assistant Director—Institutional	1	....	....	1
Assistant Director—Field	1	....	....	1
Special Magistrate	1	....	....	1
Administrative and Clerical	179	....	1	180
Field Divisions—				
Senior Social Work Supervisor	3	....	....	3
Chief Clinical Psychologist	1	....	....	1
Administrative and Welfare	246	....	....	246
Office Staff	91	....	1	92
Institutions and Hostels—				
Superintendents ....	....	8	....	8
Welfare and Institutional	12	363	40	415
Office Staff	4	14	....	18
Hostel Staff ....	....	7	101	108
Persons contracted by Minister under section 8 (4) ....	....	6	....	6
Totals	541	398	143	1 082

Departmental Property OFFICES AND INSTITUTIONS

This Department has 53 offices situated throughout the State; in addition, there are 29 departmentally controlled establishments for the placement of children for educational assessment and training purposes. There are 20 controlled Homes in the metropolitan area for the placement of country children undertaking advanced learning or work programmes.

During the year new offices were opened at Exmouth and Merredin, and an office is soon to be opened at Karratha.

VEHICLES

The Department operates a fleet of 128 vehicles stationed at 53 centres located throughout the State. During the past year, these vehicles covered 3 259 372 kilometres on official business. Exclusive of capital costs for vehicle purchases, the cost to operate these vehicles for the year was 5.96 cents per kilometre.

Private vehicles used on official business during the same period covered 1 418 389 kilometres.

In addition to conventional vehicles, the Department has the following units placed throughout the State.

- 6 Trucks
- 32 Trailers
- 35 Buses
- 4 Tractors
- 5 Caravans

Community Services Training College

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

16 Kings Park Road, West Perth.

Community Services Training College is situated in a small two-storey building close to the city of Perth. Additional premises are being sought.

COURSES

Courses are offered for professional and non professional groups working in specialised areas of community service.

ENROLMENT

208 students enrolled at the College for courses in 1976. 17.5 per cent of these students were in the employment of a statutory agency at the time of course commencement. Approximately 33 per cent of the total number of students were in the employ of non-statutory welfare agencies. The remaining 55.5 per cent were prospective employees in community services, undertaking a course which was a requirement for employment in a specialised field.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The satisfactory completion of Secondary School is the minimal educational requirement desirable. If applicants show the necessary aptitude in other important aspects relevant to the vocation for which training is sought, but have not reached the required

educational level, provision is made at the College to bring their educational level up to the standard required.

Early steps have been taken towards the provision of the necessary legislation to establish a board which will assist in the administration of the College.

Records Branch

The staff of the Records Section has increased in size over the past year to thirty eight officers, compared with twenty-nine last year. This was due to the fact that four officers were absorbed from the previously known Welfare Branch, and partly due to the new location in Community House. The Public Service Board granted permission for the induction of another two officers due to increased work-load. As records are now centrally located with previously geographically isolated Branches now in close proximity, work-flow has consequently increased. Evidence supporting this is the installation of another photo-copier and telex machine.

The Section has approximately 46 650 files stored for referral and in current use. During the year approximately 6 950 new files were created, and 8 050 files were microfilmed and destroyed. Extensive microfilming of files pending for destruction has been completed and many inactive files will be destroyed in the near future. The Department also has approximately 900 files placed with Archives, some of which are open to public scrutiny.

In general, the staff feel that the section has improved due to the new mechanical aids, better working conditions, improved communication and a greater appreciation and awareness by other sections of the function of Records.

LICENSING

The Licensing functions exercised by the Department were introduced as a safeguard to "child exploitation" and as a protection for infant life.

The care of very young children by non-related persons is subject to the Director's control by special provisions of the Child Welfare Act. Foster mothers and Institutions undertaking the care of children under the age of six years, must be approved and licensed by the Department for this purpose.

Children who engage in any public performance for entertaining purposes or for gain or reward in commercial advertising, or in street trading, must receive the prior approval of the Department.

CHILDREN INVOLVED IN PUBLIC PERFORMANCES AND IN COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

During the year 62 licenses were issued in respect of 4 102 children, mainly concerning children who were appearing in concerts organised by dancing schools and children's television programmes.

STREET TRADING BY CHILDREN

During the past year 113 street trading licenses were issued for boys between the ages of twelve and sixteen years; in most cases this was for the purposes of

selling newspapers after school hours. Boys under twelve years of age are not permitted to engage in street trading.

PERMITS TO ENTER CAMPING RESERVES

During the year to the 30th June 1976 the Department issued two permits for persons to enter Aboriginal camping reserves adjacent to major towns. Departmental regulations provide that a permit should be issued in cases where persons are entering Aboriginal Reserves. Before the Department will issue these permits it must ensure that the Aboriginal council residing on the Reserve agrees and that the business to be conducted will not jeopardize the welfare and well-being of residents on the Reserve.

Accounts Branch

During the current financial year a committee was appointed to investigate advantages or disadvantages that may result from a transfer of Welfare Branch functions to other branches within the Department. The Committee agreed it would be advantageous to effect such changes, the main advantages being:—

- (1) Increased efficiency in the payment of accounts relating to children coming under the care of the Department, and
- (2) A saving in staffing resulting from non duplication of recording.

Accordingly those functions of an accounting nature were transferred to the Accounts Branch and those of a recording nature to the Records Section.

The changes were unofficially effected at the time of the Department's move from Claver House in West Perth to Community House, St. George's Terrace, and subsequently approved by the Public Service Board to be effected on 1st July 1976.

Among those functions transferred to the Accounts Branch was the provision of financial support.

- (a) For the maintenance of State Wards and other dependent children.
- (b) For families and children where support would be likely to prevent family break-down or neglect.
- (c) To ensure that Health, Education and Welfare Services are extended to certain destitute persons in need.

SUBSIDY INCREASES

Subsidies for Wards in foster homes and private institutions increased during the 1975/76 financial year to \$17.00 for Primary School children and to \$20.00 for High School children, while the rates for children in group homes and scatter cottages increased to \$18.75 and \$21.25 per week respectively for both Primary and High School children.

Private foster rates for non-wards privately placed and requiring subsidisation increased by \$5.00 per week to the current weekly rate of \$15.00. The number of children for whom private foster rates were paid increased from 446 at 30th June 1975 to 523 at 30th June 1976, while the number of private foster parents increased by 52 to 360 during the same period.

Other statistical information available from this Branch is recorded hereunder.

MISSION GRANTS IN AID 1975/76

Mission	Details	Amount Paid
		\$
Norseman Training Centre	Upgrading of facilities	18 000.00
La Grange	Housing—Completion of Long House	1 658.03
U.A.M. Derby	Finalization of Previous year's grant—Amy Bethal	8 428.14
Parkerville	Construction of two new cottages	60 000.00
Balgo	Ablution Block Construction	27 500.00
Yaandina	Building Alterations and Electrical goods	5 693.32
U.A.M. Fitzroy	Electrical Upgrading Power House and Plant	1 179.94
		\$122 459.43

Financial Statements WRITE OFFS

Uncollectable debts written off with the approval of the Hon. Minister over the past three years are as follows:—

	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
	\$	\$	\$
Wards Wages			235
Maintenance of Wards	3 674		3 043
Maintenance of Aboriginal Wards			
Recoverable Financial Assistance	31 662	25 576	84 169
	35 336	25 576	87 447

RECEIPTS IN SUSPENSE

Total receipts for the year compared with the previous year are as follows:—

	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
	\$	\$	\$
	319 809	286 283	258 030

SAVINGS BANK FUNDS—WARDS

Deductions from wages by employers for Wards under the terms of Service Agreements received for banking purposes:—

	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
	\$	\$	\$
Receipts	14	23	Now included in
Balance as at 30th June	381	403	Remittances for banking purposes

REMITTANCES RECEIVED FOR BANKING PURPOSES

	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
	\$	\$	\$
Receipts	12 983	1 885	6 825
Balance as at 30th June	31 986	30 333	87 809

REMITTANCES RECEIVED AND HELD IN TRUST ACCOUNT AT TREASURY

	1975/76
	\$
Receipts	42 092
Balance as at June 30th	20 107

Commonwealth Government Financial Grants 1975/76

DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

1. Capital

	\$
Hostel Upgrading	311 165
Derby Hostel	30 000
Wyndham Transient Hostel	29 000
Warburton Ranges	15 000
Fitzroy Crossing	12 577
Hamilton Hill Hostel	500

2. Recurrent & Specific Purposes

Project Social Work Unit Perth Area	18 000
Emergency Accommodation	30 000
Homemaker Services	275 000
Supervisor Hostels	5 200
Kimberley Region—	
Psychological Services	4 196
Field Management	23 072
Welfare Aides	61 600
Support Staff	2 000
Urban Aboriginal Research	9 910
Buses for Hostels	7 290

3. Employment

Group Worker Aides	50 000
Trainee Welfare Assistants	3 000
	\$887 510

STATEMENT OF RECEIPT AND PAYMENTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 1976

		Ward Expenditure				Departmental Institutions						
1974/75	Particulars	1975/76	General Admin.	Field Operations	Private Institutions	Boarded Out	Non Ward Inc. Migrant	Reserves	Financial Assistance	Assessment	Treatment	Hostels
\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
7 855 918	Salaries and Wages	10 392 793	1 770 597	3 729 465	...	...	...	...	...	1 860 631	2 012 159	1 019 941
215 067	Administration	261 110	261 110	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
38 456	Printing	50 249	25 124	25 125	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
835 523	Field Expenses	1 014 697	...	922 141	...	...	92 556	...	...	...	...	...
1 071 621	Community Welfare Assistance	680 417	31 567	251 848	...	...	...	...	397 002	...	...	...
2 406 790	Maintenance of Children	2 710 424	...	...	463 294	1 611 072	636 058	...	...	...	...	...
145 175	Adoption of Children	53 991	...	...	...	...	53 991	...	...	...	...	...
1 589 972	Financial Assistance to Indigent Persons	2 097 858	...	...	...	...	...	...	2 097 858	...	...	...
156 406	Unemployment Relief	131 000	...	...	...	...	...	...	131 000	...	...	...
1 016 210	Institutions	1 298 082	...	12 810	...	...	...	...	...	252 222	304 330	728 720
394 434	Residential Reserves	321 651	...	...	...	...	...	321 651	...	...	...	...
15 725 572	Total Payments	19 012 272	2 088 398	4 941 389	463 294	1 611 072	782 605	321 651	2 625 860	2 112 853	2 316 489	1 748 661
	Against which Receipts were:—											
	1. State:											
54 262	Maintenance of Children	52 425	...	...	...	52 425	...	...	...	...	...	...
243 103	Recoverable Assistance (Welfare and Asst. Act)	240 805	...	...	...	...	...	...	240 805	...	...	...
406 501	Other Revenue	400 471	57 326	27 613	...	...	14 869	8 535	17 085	2 625	7 581	264 837
	2. Commonwealth:											
...	Social Welfare Commission	32 000	32 000	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
37 719	Children's Commission	134 925	...	120 875	...	...	...	...	14 050	...	...	...
249 594	Dept. of Abor. Affairs	779 601	22 718	475 229	...	...	...	64 114	...	...	29 462	188 078
991 179	Total Receipts	1 640 227	112 044	623 717	...	52 425	14 869	72 649	271 940	2 625	37 043	452 915
14 734 393	NET EXPENDITURE	17 372 045	1 976 354	4 317 672	463 294	1 558 647	767 736	249 002	2 353 920	2 110 228	2 279 446	1 295 746

CHILDRENS COMMISSION

1. Capital

Single Unit Kindergarten—McCall Centre	20 500
Childrens Camp—Port Kennedy	18 468

2. Recurrent & Specific Purpose

Childrens Playtime Co-ordinator	5 923
Parent Help Centre	34 190
Early Childhood Services	58 544
Holiday Camps	7 221
National Seminar on Child Abuse	5 367
Training Allowance for Sub-Professional Staff for Child Care Centres	14 050
Provision for Two Catalysts (Community Development Officers)	20 000
Parent Education and Assistance	35 400
Pilbara Isolated Communities	20 000
Balga Childrens Activities	2 400
	\$242 063

SOCIAL WELFARE COMMISSION

Social Policy Planning Unit	\$32 000
Grand Total	\$1 161 573

Children's Courts

(METROPOLITAN)

Courts are established at Perth, Fremantle, Midland and Rockingham.

Following the resignation of Special Magistrate Mr. G. R. J. Hitchin, J.P. in October 1975, a further six Special Magistrates were appointed to the Bench of the Children's Courts pending amendments to the Child Welfare Act and the appointment of Special Magistrates on a full-time basis. Mr. W. Fellowes, J.P. continued to sit as required.

The Special Magistrates appointed were:—

- Mrs. D. Dettman, J.P.—(formerly a member of the Children's Court)
- Mr. C. R. Wright-Webster—(retired Public Servant, Probation and Parole)
- Dr. P. R. Edmonds—(retired Paediatrician)
- Mr. J. Wisbey—(Barrister)
- Mr. R. Viol—(Barrister)
- Mr. D. Fogarty—(Public Servant—Chairman of Juvenile Suspended Action Panel)

In March 1976 Dr. Edmonds' appointment was terminated when he undertook an extensive overseas trip.

The following lady members attended Children's Courts during the 1975/1976 year.

- Mrs. D. Dettman (Prior to appointment as Special Magistrate)
- Mrs. D. Trotman
- Mrs. L. Smith
- Mrs. K. Rigg
- Mrs. D. Levinson

- Mrs. M. Hansen
- Mrs. G. Yarran
- Mrs. E. M. Christie
- Mrs. J. Van Noort
- Mrs. J. Hampton

CHARGES AND APPLICATIONS

	1974/75	1975/76
Perth	9 382	9 099
Fremantle	2 550	2 812
Midland	1 790	1 700
Rockingham	973	794
	14 695	14 405

The following table shows financial collections at Perth Children's Court for comparison.

	Revenue	Trust	Total
	\$	\$	\$
1968/69	37 080	11 163	48 243
1974/75	83 895	26 306	110 201
1975/76	85 867	25 101	110 968

Collections on Traffic Court Fines 1975/76 were reduced due to Traffic Infringement Notices then commencing to be issued by the Road Traffic Authority for minor offences. Children's Court appearances only being necessary when the juvenile either:—

- (a) Ignored the Infringement Notice.
- (b) Pleaded not guilty.
- (c) The offence incurred an automatic cancellation of M.D.L.
- (d) The charge was of a serious nature.

Scale showing types of offences in Perth Children's Court only 1975/76.

Type of Offence	1974/75	1975/76
Traffic	3 227	2 556
Breaking and Entering	2 037	2 055
Stealing and Receiving	1 220	1 527
Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle	926	996
Disorderly Conduct	212	229
False Name	119	124
Liquor Act Offences	110	68
Drug Offences	*	62
Drinking Driving Offences	*	137
Other	1 531	1 345
Total	9 382	9 099

* No separate statistics kept.

The number of defended cases, i.e. Pleas of Not Guilty has increased markedly since the extension of free and subsidised legal aid. This has strained the facilities of the Court (both staff and venues) and has led to an increase in the waiting time for defended actions. It is hoped this may be overcome in the future by the appointment of a Clerk to assist the Clerk of Courts and a new Court building with larger and better facilities to replace the present Court, which is due for demolition in the near future. The increased number of defended cases coming before the Rockingham and Fremantle Children's Court has necessitated variations in the Court hearing days.

Rockingham Children's Court are now held the first, third and last Friday of the month and Fremantle every Tuesday and Wednesday. Midland and Perth remain unchanged, i.e. every Thursday at Midland and Monday to Friday at Perth.

The possession of, or use of, drugs by Juveniles has increased to such an extent that offences of this nature rival offences involving the unlawfull use of alcohol.

Drinking driving offences i.e. .08 per cent and driving under the influence of alcohol are an increasing problem with young motorists.

The unlawful use of Motor Vehicles is a continuing major problem, as are crimes of violence.

Cases involving shop lifting remain a sizeable problem. Information and recommendations contained in Field Officers' Reports and submitted to the Court by the Court Officer continue to be of invaluable assistance to the Special Magistrates.

Thanks are also due to Child Guidance Clinics, Psychiatric Services (Private), Psychologists, Police, National Safety Council and Education Department (School Welfare and Teachers), as the Court is reliant on pertinent information concerning the children appearing before it, in assessing a fair penalty for the offence once the charge is proven or application granted.

Financial Aid

Under the provisions of the Welfare and Assistance Act 1961, assistance to families and single persons in need is granted. The Act also regulates the recovery of monies so advanced.

In most instances continuing assistance is rendered to single parents with dependent children, such as deserted wives or husbands, unmarried mothers, or wives of prisoners. Assistance is also extended to two parent families and single persons in emergency situations where no other avenue of support is available.

VARIATION IN RATES

The rates of assistance have been reviewed and subsequently increased twice during the current financial year.

An increase in the rates paid to the parent (by \$2.75 per week to \$38.75) and each child (by .50 cents per week to \$7.50) were made on 5th November 1975. A further increase in the rate paid to the parent (\$2.50 to \$41.25) was made on 19th May 1976.

Units	7/5/75	5/11/75	19/5/76
	\$	\$	\$
Parent	36.00	38.75	41.25
Parent and one child	47.00	50.25	52.75
Parent and two children	54.00	57.75	60.25
Parent and three children	61.00	65.25	67.75
Parent and four children	68.00	72.75	75.25
Parent and five children	75.00	80.25	82.75
Parent and six children	82.00	87.75	90.25
Parent and seven children	89.00	95.25	97.75
Parent and eight children	96.00	102.75	105.25

EXPENDITURE

Expenditure for the year totalled \$2 228 859 after recoup of \$1 458 673.65 from the Commonwealth Government under the provisions of the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act. Thus a total of \$3 687 532.65 was paid to families receiving assistance.

	1974/75	1975/76
	\$	\$
Expenditure:		
Financial Assistance to Indigent Persons	1 589 972	2 097 859
Unemployment Relief.....	156 406	131 000
	1 746 378	2 228 859
	\$	\$
Recovery:		
Recovery of Assistance paid to families	263 520	257 040
Recovery of Maintenance of Wards	54 262	52 425
	317 782	309 465

APPLICATIONS GRANTED

Category	1974/75			1975/76		
	New Applications Received	Receiving Assistance as at 30th June		New Applications Received	Receiving Assistance as at 30th June	
		Families	Children		Families	Children
Deserted Wives	3 278	1 066	2 309	3 372	1 074	2 307
Unmarried Mothers	617	246	286	644	239	251
Wives of Prisoners	320	59	136	264	50	129
Other	640	48	108	583	43	85
Total	4 855	1 419	2 839	4 863	1 406	2 772

TABLE 2
Juvenile Offences

Cases appearing in Children's Courts in Western Australia which were attended by Departmental Officers during the past 3 years

				1973/74			1974/75			1975/76		
				Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Offences against property	....	....	(A)	7 701	907	8 608	7 874	1 090	8 964	8 738	1 076	9 814
			(B)	3 399	595	3 994	3 360	647	4 007	3 527	599	4 126
			(C)	2 270	462	2 732	2 200	583	2 783	2 325	431	2 756
Offences against person	....	....	(A)	319	29	348	306	33	339	375	73	448
			(B)	247	22	269	245	25	270	268	46	314
			(C)	186	13	199	177	17	194	177	20	197
Offences against good order	....	....	(A)	1 669	414	2 083	1 813	409	2 222	2 120	314	2 434
			(B)	615	278	893	747	303	1 050	759	224	983
			(C)	460	172	632	468	152	620	509	139	648
Total	....	....	(A)	9 689	1 350	11 039	9 993	1 532	11 525	11 233	1 463	12 696
			(B)	4 261	895	5 156	4 352	975	5 327	4 554	869	5 423
			(C)	2 916	647	3 563	2 845	752	3 597	3 011	590	3 601

- (A) Number of offences for which children were charged.
 (B) Number of child appearances (including children who appeared on two or more occasions).
 (C) Number of individual children concerned.
Offences against property—includes stealing and receiving (largest category); breaking, entering and stealing; unlawful use of motor vehicles; wilful damage; false pretences.
Offences against the person—includes assault; sex offences; robbery with violence.
Offences against good order—includes disorderly conduct; false name and address; resisting arrest; liquor; betting and traffic offences

TABLE 3
Juvenile Offenders

Departmental placement of children committed and re-committed to the care of the Department for Community Welfare for the year ended 30 June 1976

				Male	Female	Total
Released to Parents	....	....	(A)	159	32	191
			(B)	141	27	168
Released to Relatives	....	....	(A)	16	5	21
			(B)	25	9	34
Released to persons other than relatives			(A)	5	....	5
			(B)	2	....	2
Released to employment	....	....	(A)	5	1	6
			(B)	7	....	7
Placed in Riverbank or Longmore	....		(A)	12	2	14
			(B)	186	5	191
Placed in Hillston	....	....	(A)	12	....	12
			(B)	132	....	132
Placed in independent institutions	....		(A)	56	10	66
			(B)	144	40	184
Placed in Neuville	....	....	(A)	1	....	1
			(B)	2	3	5
Placed with foster parents	....	....	(A)	18	12	30
			(B)	43	17	60
Placed in Nyandi	....	....	(A)	....	3	3
			(B)	....	76	76
TOTALS	....	....	(A)	284	65	349
			(B)	682	177	859

- (A) Committed to care of Department.
 (B) Re-committed to care of Department.

Note that most of the children committed to the care of the Department are placed for assessment in one of the Department's assessment centres, viz., Longmore, Bridgewater or Mount Lawley Reception Home, prior to being placed as detailed above.

TABLE 4

Juvenile Misbehaviour

Cases of juvenile misbehaviour appearing in Children's Courts in Western Australia for the year ended 30th June, 1976.

	7 years			8 years			9 years			10 years			11 years			12 years		
	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Uncontrolled	1	1
Neglect (generally uncontrolled)	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	1	3
Neglect (involving sexual misconduct)	1	1
Truancy	1	....	1	....	....	....	....	2	....	5	6
Breaking terms of probation
Total	1	1	2	....	....	....	2	....	2	3	8	11

	13 years			14 years			15 years			16 years			17 years			TOTAL		
	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T
Uncontrolled .....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1
Neglect (generally uncontrolled)	2	8	10	2	28	30	2	13	15	2	7	9	3	2	5	13	60	73
Neglect (involving sexual misconduct) .....	....	2	2	....	5	5	....	6	6	....	11	11	....	3	3	....	28	28
Truancy	10	7	17	4	5	9	3	3	6	....	....	....	....	....	....	21	20	41
Breaking terms of probation .....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Total	12	17	29	6	38	44	5	22	27	2	18	20	3	5	8	34	109	143

B—Boys appearing G—Girls appearing T—Total appearing

TABLE 5

Child Neglect

Cases of Parental Neglect and Destitution appearing in Children's Courts in Western Australia for the year ended 30th June, 1976

Reason for Appearance				AGE									
				Under 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Parental Neglect	Boys .....	....	....	9	4	4	4	4	5	1	4	6	2
	Girls .....	....	....	6	4	1	4	1	2	5	3	3	2
Destitution	Boys .....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
	Girls .....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Total	Boys .....	....	....	9	4	4	4	4	5	1	4	6	2
	Girls .....	....	....	6	4	1	4	1	2	5	3	3	2
Grand Total .....	....	....	....	15	8	5	8	5	7	6	7	9	4

Reason for Appearance						AGE								TOTAL
						10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
Parental Neglect	....	....	....	Boys	....	2	1	....	1	1	....	....	....	48
				Girls	....	1	4	3	6	4	5	1	....	55
Destitution	....	....	....	Boys	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
				Girls	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1
Total	....	....	....	Boys	....	2	1	....	1	1	....	....	....	48
				Girls	....	1	4	3	6	4	5	1	1	56
Grand Total	....	....	....	....	....	3	5	3	7	5	5	1	1	104

TABLE 6
Juvenile Misbehaviour and Child Neglect

Court decisions in regard to cases of juvenile misbehaviour, neglect and destitution in Western Australia for the year ended 30 June 1976

Court Decision	Male	Female	Total
Dismissed	....	2	2
Dismissed with Supervision	....	1	1
Placed on probation	4	17	21
Committed to care of Department	74	141	215
Recommitted to care of Department	4	4	8
Total	82	165	247

"Juvenile misbehaviour" includes cases where the child is deemed uncontrolled or to be neglected by virtue of his own behaviour, for example sexual misconduct. Truancy and failure to comply with Court-imposed terms of probation are also included in this section. The children involved are not regarded in the same light as juveniles convicted of criminal offences.

"Child neglect" covers children neglected by their parents or who are destitute.

TABLE 7
Juvenile Misbehaviour and Child Neglect

Departmental placement of children committed and re-committed to the care of the Department for Community Welfare for juvenile misbehaviour, parental neglect or destitution in Western Australia for the year ended 30 June 1976.

Departmental Disposal	Male	Female	Total
Released to parents	24	63	87
Released to relatives	9	7	16
Released to other than relatives	2	1	3
Placed with foster parents	18	38	56
Released to employment	....	....	....
Placed in independent institutions	21	32	53
Placed in Neuville	....	2	2
Placed in Hillston	3	....	3
Placed in Nyandi	....	2	2
Placed in Riverbank	1	....	1
Total	78	145	223

"Juvenile misbehaviour" includes cases where the child is deemed uncontrolled or to be neglected by virtue of his own behaviour, for example sexual misconduct. Truancy and failure to comply with Court-imposed terms of probation are also included in this section. The children involved are not regarded in the same light as juveniles convicted of criminal offences.

TABLE 8

Ministerial Committals

Children placed under the care of the Department for Community Welfare by means of Ministerial Committal for the year ended 30 June 1976

							AGE									
							Under 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Section 47A	....	....	....	....	Boys	....	....	....	....	1	1	....	....	....	....	1
					Girls	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....
Section 47B	....	....	....	....	Boys	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
					Girls	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	1	....
Section 47C	....	....	....	....	Boys	....	7	2	3	....	1	3	....	....	....	1
					Girls	....	3	2	1	2	1	....	....	1	1	....
Total	....	....	....	....	....	....	10	4	4	3	3	3	1	1	3	2

							AGE								Total
							10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
Section 47A	....	....	....	....	Boys	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	4
					Girls	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2
Section 47B	....	....	....	....	Boys	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	1
					Girls	....	1	1	....	2	....	1	....	....	7
Section 47C	....	....	....	....	Boys	....	1	2	1	1	....	....	....	....	22
					Girls	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	....	1	14
Total	....	....	....	....	....	....	3	3	1	3	....	5	....	1	50

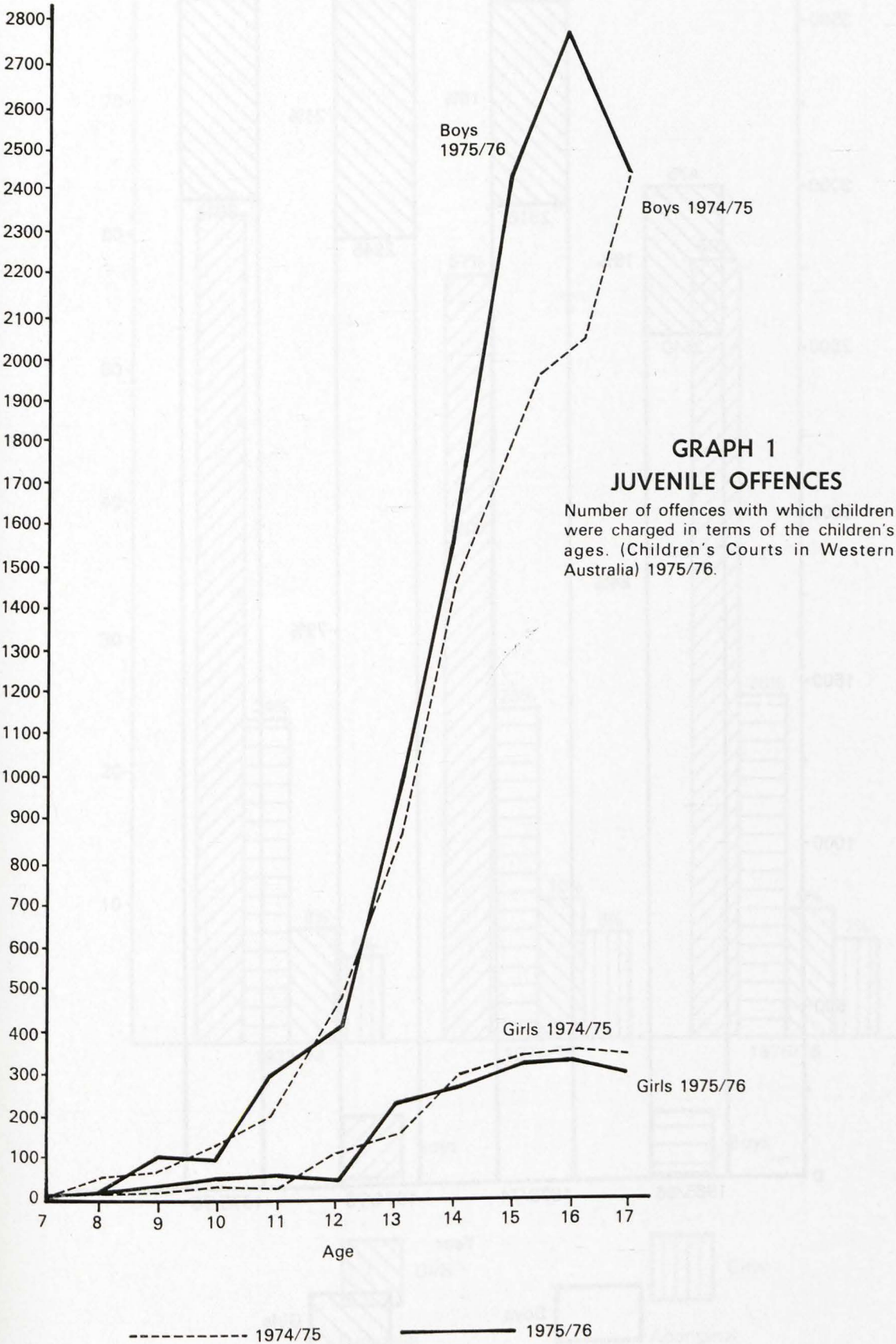
NOTE: These committals are authorized by the Hon. Minister by virtue of power given to him in accordance with Sections 47A, 47B and 47C of the Child Welfare Act, which provides for power to commit those cases which may not otherwise be committed.
47A deals with children left by their parents in Institutions or with other persons and no maintenance.
47B deals with children who have no legal guardian but who are not destitute.
47C deals with children whose parents consider it is in the best interests of the children to be committed.

TABLE 9

Number of Court Appearances of Children in Metropolitan Area 1975/76

Local Government Area					Caucasian			Aboriginal			Total
					Male	Female	Sub-Total	Male	Female	Sub-Total	
Stirling (C)....	....	....	....	....	603	220	823	65	36	101	924
Perth (C) ....	....	....	....	....	225	97	322	35	13	48	370
Canning (T) ....	....	....	....	....	234	76	310	37	16	53	363
Melville (C) ....	....	....	....	....	273	75	348	6	....	6	354
Belmont ....	....	....	....	....	204	60	264	28	7	35	299
Bayswater ....	....	....	....	....	179	78	257	18	18	36	293
Wanneroo ....	....	....	....	....	176	59	235	25	3	28	263
Fremantle (C) ....	....	....	....	....	193	50	243	9	1	10	253
Gosnells (T) ....	....	....	....	....	157	60	217	25	2	27	244
Swan ....	....	....	....	....	124	56	180	41	16	57	237
Cockburn (T) ....	....	....	....	....	124	46	170	29	15	44	214
Armada-Kelmscott	....	....	....	....	125	30	155	45	8	53	208
Kwinana ....	....	....	....	....	105	42	147	26	8	34	181
South Perth (C) ....	....	....	....	....	111	39	150	6	1	7	157
Mundaring ....	....	....	....	....	85	31	116	15	5	20	136
Bassendean (T) ....	....	....	....	....	91	27	118	4	5	9	127
Kalamunda ....	....	....	....	....	58	32	90	17	2	19	109
Rockingham ....	....	....	....	....	84	22	106	....	....	....	106
East Fremantle (T) ....	....	....	....	....	55	13	68	2	....	2	70
Nedlands (C) ....	....	....	....	....	23	6	29	1	....	1	30
Claremont (T) ....	....	....	....	....	17	11	28	....	....	....	28
Cottesloe (T) ....	....	....	....	....	14	10	24	....	....	....	24
Subiaco (C) ....	....	....	....	....	18	5	23	....	....	....	23
Serpentine-Jarrahdale	....	....	....	....	11	....	11	....	....	....	11
Mosman Park (T) ....	....	....	....	....	3	5	8	....	....	....	8
Peppermint Grove ....	....	....	....	....	....	3	3	....	....	....	3
Total ....	....	....	....	....	3 292	1 153	4 445	434	156	590	5 035

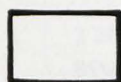
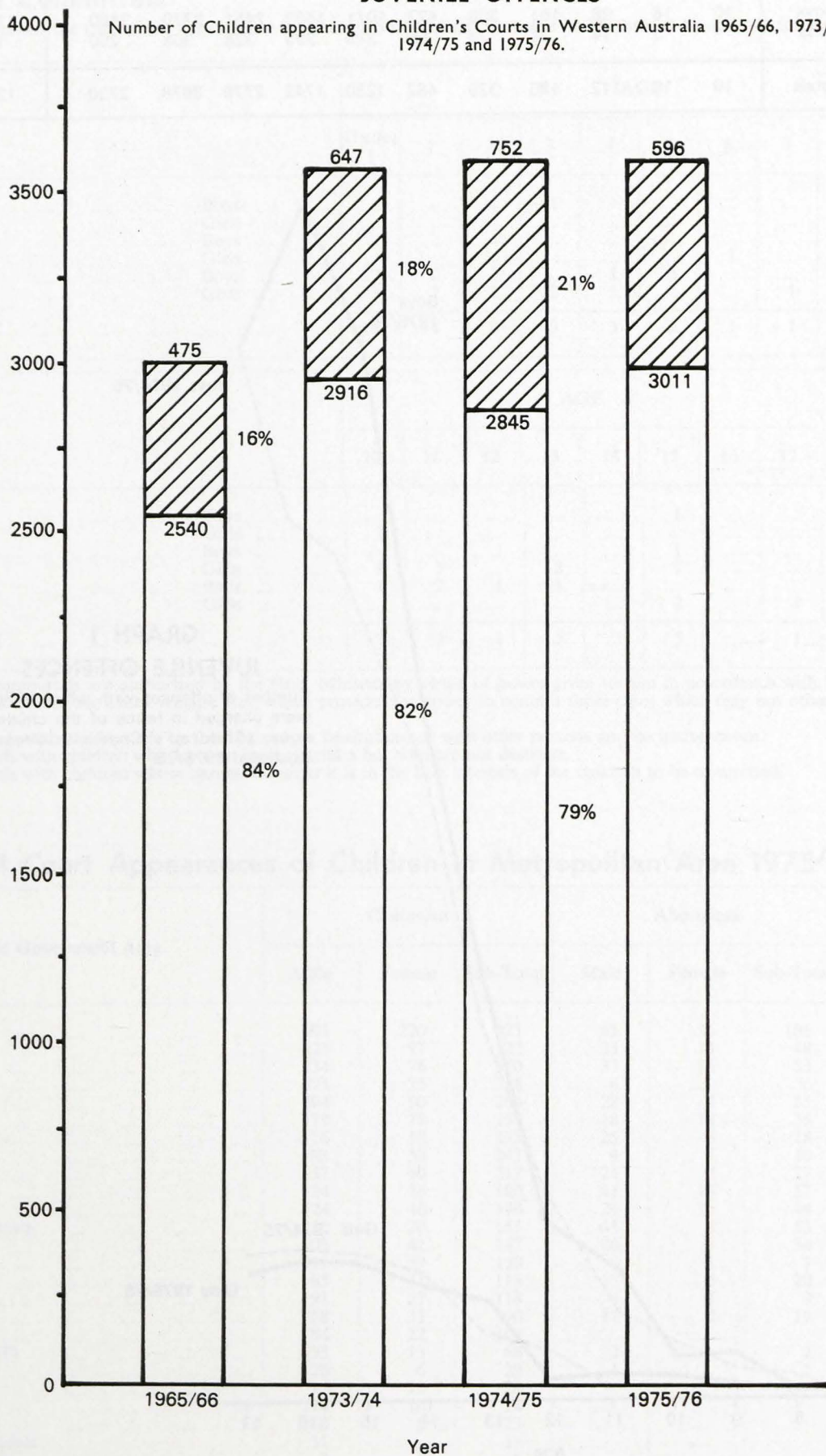
Age yrs	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Boys	10	16	98	161	306	427	1011	1503	2451	2770	2480	11233
Girls	-	3	14	24	23	55	219	239	328	308	250	1463
Totals	10	19	112	185	329	482	1230	1742	2779	3078	2730	12696



Children
appearing

GRAPH 2 JUVENILE OFFENCES

Number of Children appearing in Children's Courts in Western Australia 1965/66, 1973/74,
1974/75 and 1975/76.



Boys

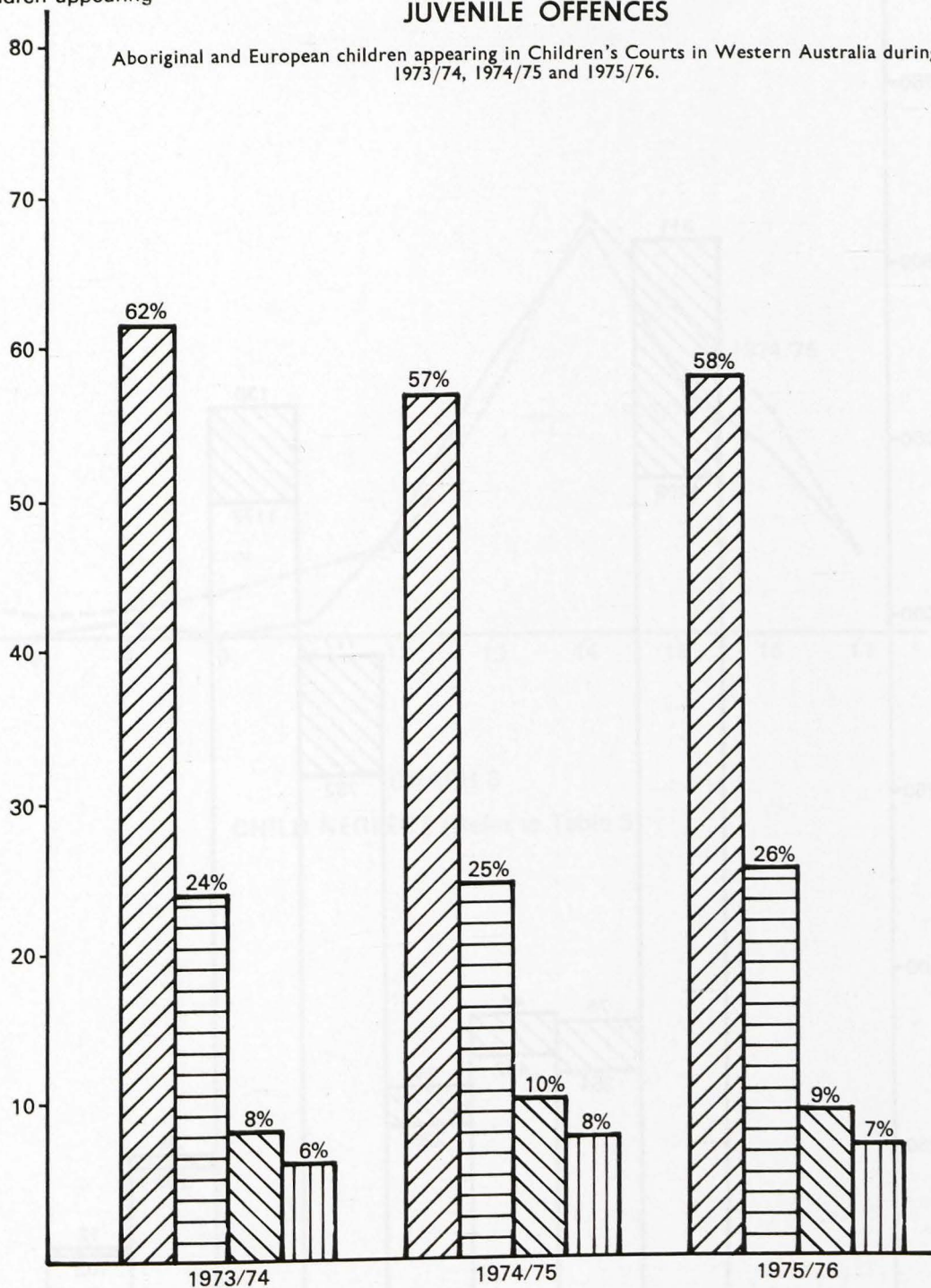


Girls

Percentage of
Children appearing

GRAPH 3 JUVENILE OFFENCES

Aboriginal and European children appearing in Children's Courts in Western Australia during
1973/74, 1974/75 and 1975/76.



Boys



Boys



Girls



Girls

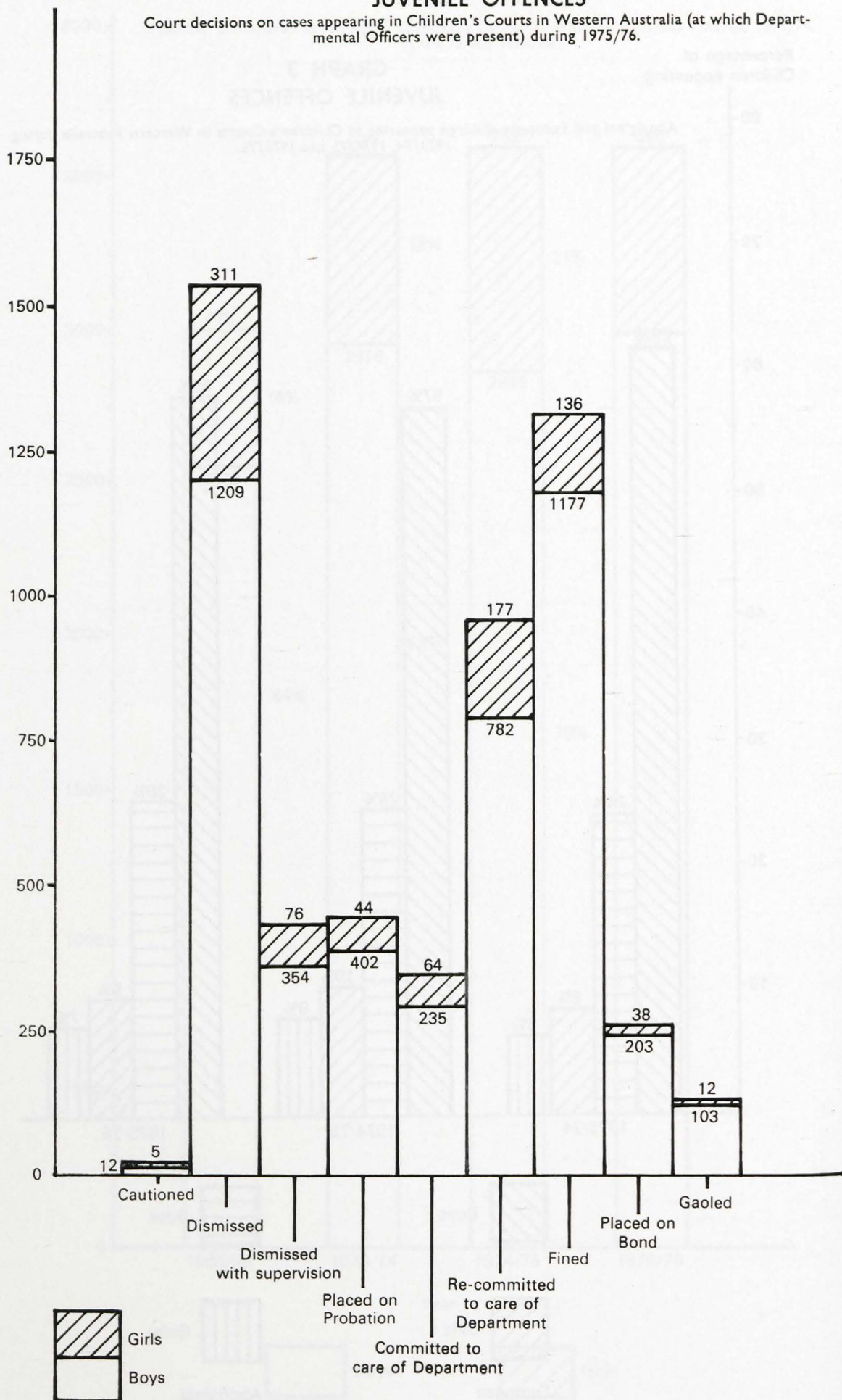
European

Aboriginal

No. of Court
Decisions

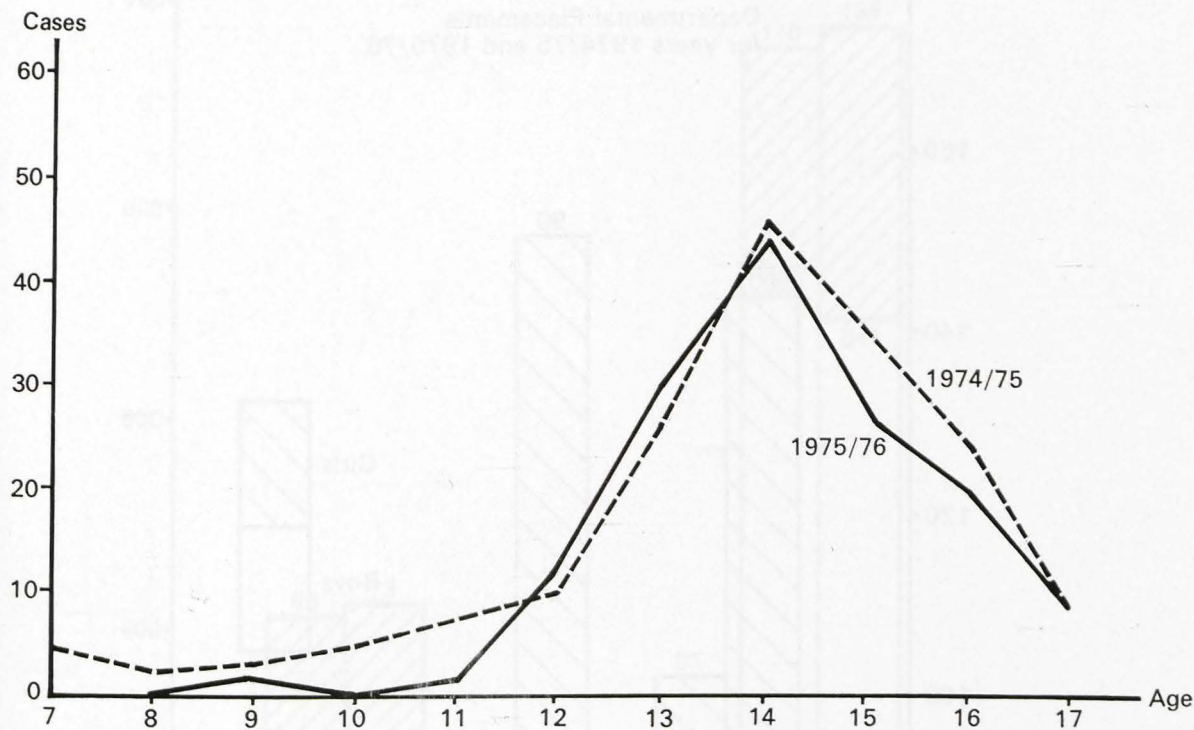
GRAPH 4 JUVENILE OFFENCES

Court decisions on cases appearing in Children's Courts in Western Australia (at which Departmental Officers were present) during 1975/76.



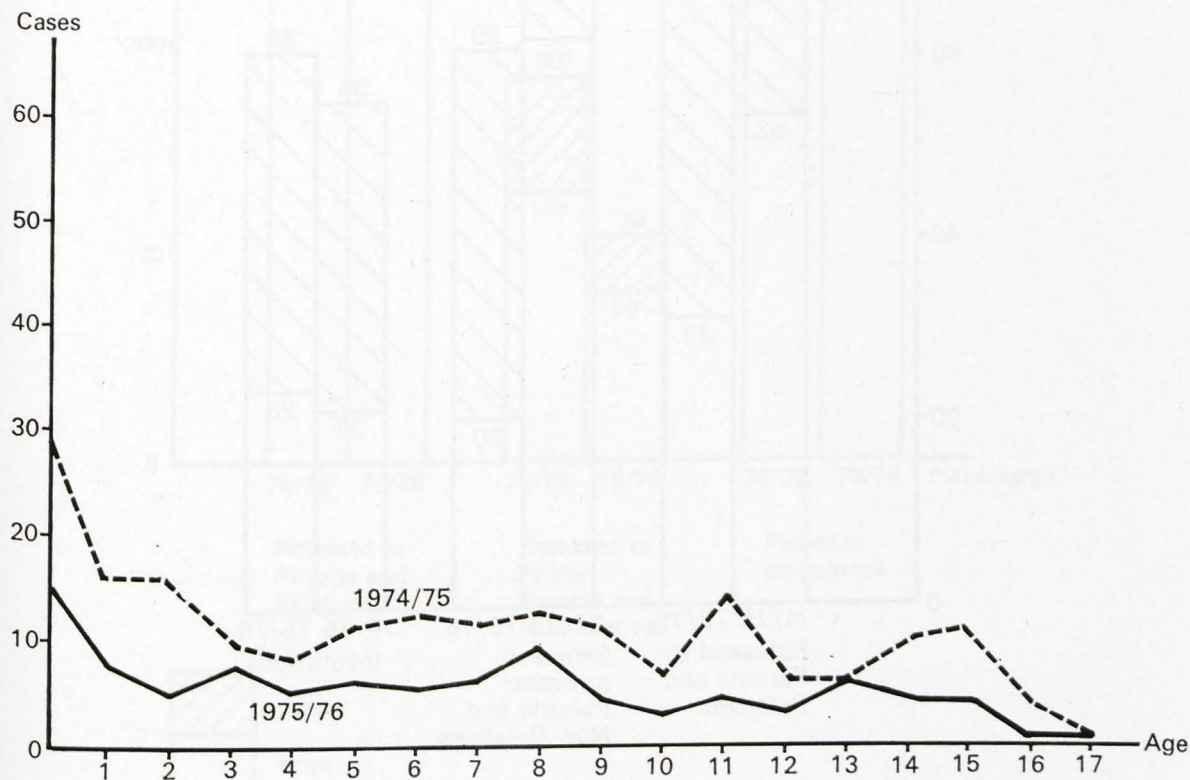
GRAPH 5

JUVENILE MISBEHAVIOUR (Refer to Table 4)
Cases appearing by age 1974/75 and 1975/76



GRAPH 6

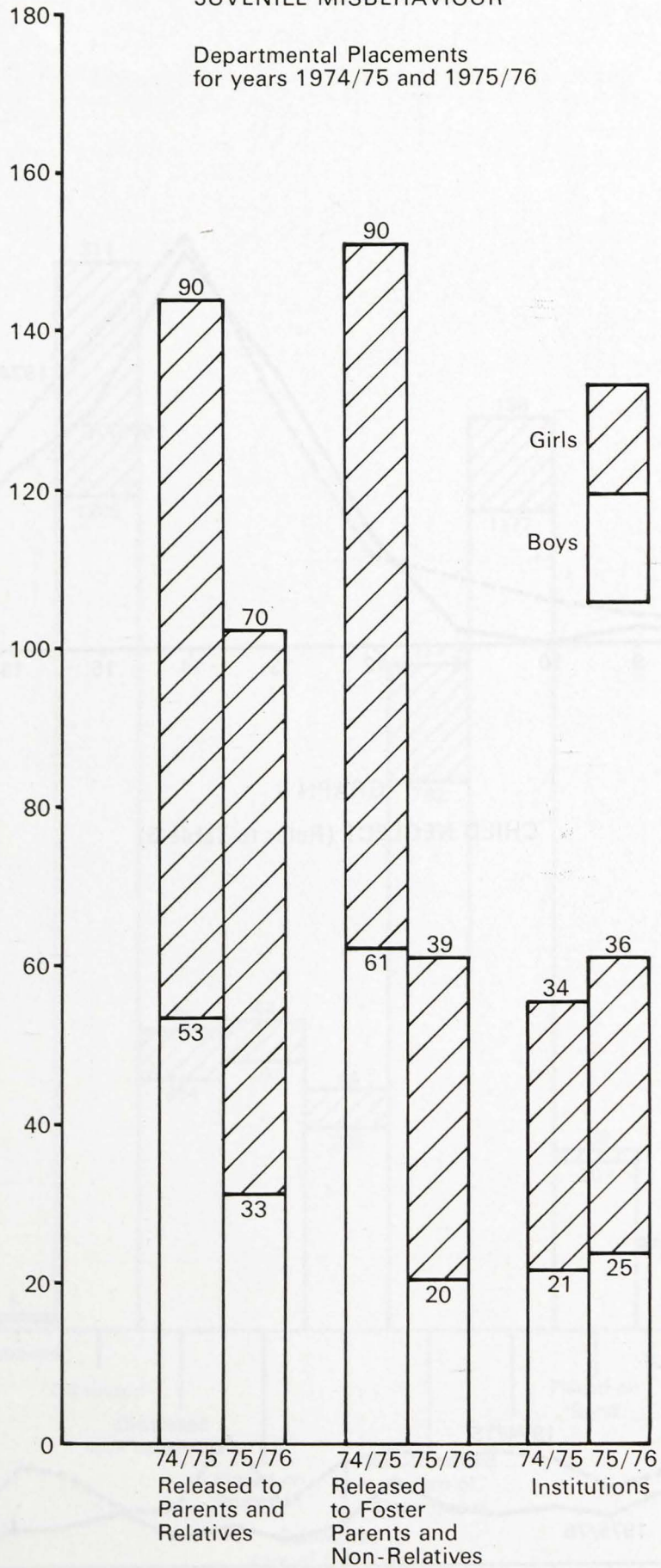
CHILD NEGLECT (Refer to Table 5)



GRAPH 7

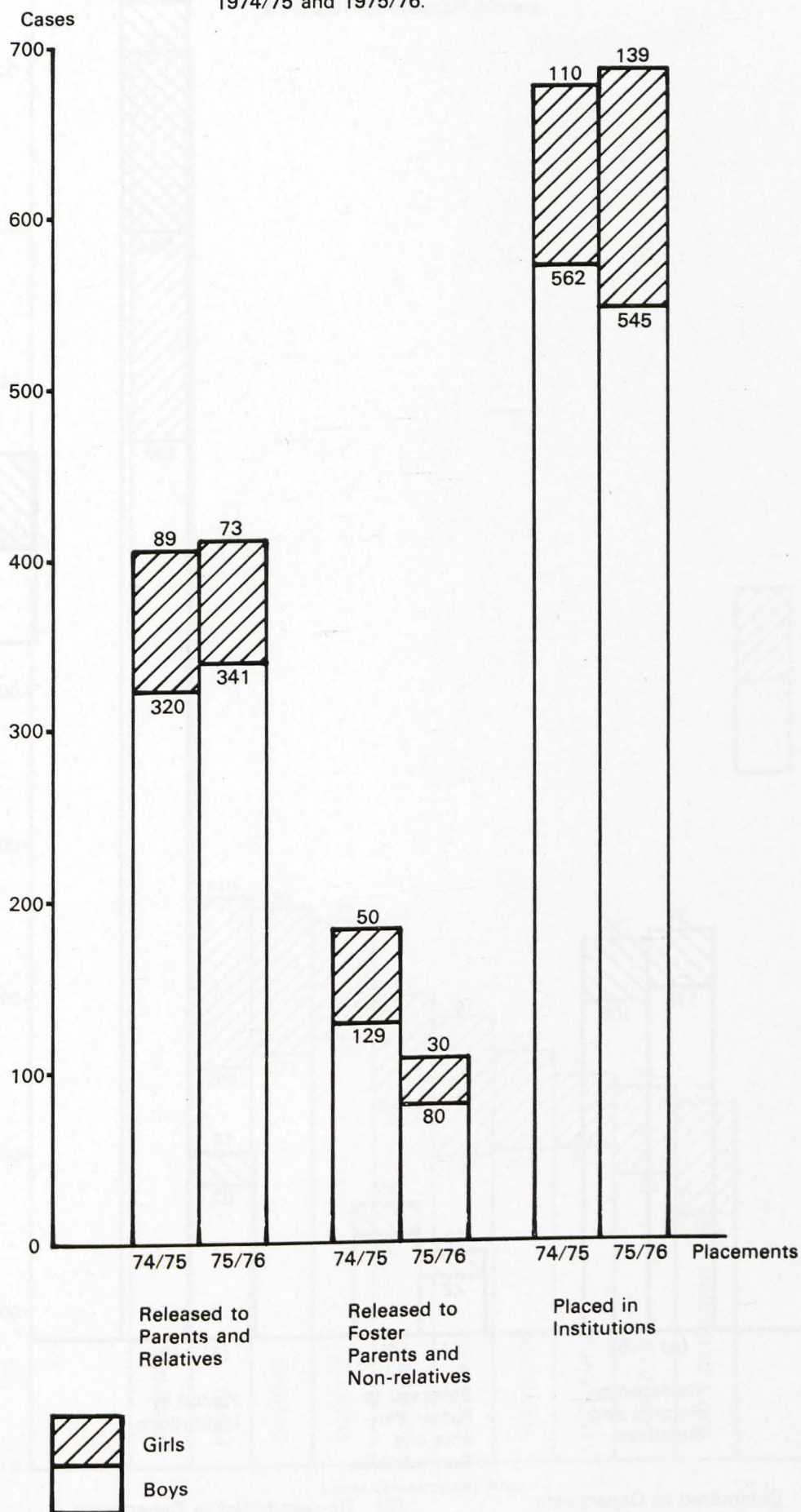
CHILD NEGLECT
DESTITUTION AND
JUVENILE MISBEHAVIOUR

Departmental Placements
for years 1974/75 and 1975/76



GRAPH 8 JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Departmental Placements
1974/75 and 1975/76.



GRAPH 9 JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Committal and Re-committal Departmental Placements—1975/76.

