

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ADJUSTMENT OF  
DELINQUENT CHILDREN IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ADJUSTMENT OF DELINQUENT  
CHILDREN IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

By

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AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

### AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ADJUSTMENT OF DELINQUENT CHILDREN IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

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This study attempts to determine if there are distinguishing characteristics between children who make a successful adjustment and those who do not make a successful adjustment in private institutions. It is thought that if there are such characteristics, it is possible to isolate them, determine their significance, and use them in developing an instrument that will suggest to court workers those children who are most likely to adjust or not to adjust in the private institutions.

Research indicates it is possible to isolate significant, distinguishing characteristics between select groups of individuals and to develop reliable prediction instruments. Their value lies in that they make it possible to evaluate a particular individual in the perspective of organized experiences with other individuals who are alike in many respects.



This study is made at the Kent County Juvenile Court Center, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The sample consists of 179 delinquent children -- 100 who make a successful adjustment and 79 who make a non-successful adjustment in the private institutions. Within certain limitations, this is the total number of delinquent children placed in private institutions by the Kent County Juvenile Court during the period of January 1, 1958, to December 31, 1962.

The successful and non-successful children are compared according to twenty items. Of the twenty items, nine items show a statistical significant difference between the two groups of children. They are as follows:

1. Race - The non-white children are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful rather than successful adjustment in the private institutions.

2. Age at First Court Appearance - The children who are 15 or older at the time of their first court appearance are almost twice as likely to make a successful rather than a non-successful adjustment.

3. Mother's Age at Time of Placement - The children with the "younger" mothers are almost twice as likely to make a non-successful rather than a successful adjustment.

4. Number of Contacts with Police Authorities -

The children who have four or additional contacts are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful rather than a successful adjustment.

5. Grade Completed Prior to Placement - The children

who have completed the 8th or higher grade are almost twice as likely to make a successful rather than a non-successful adjustment.

6. School Behavior Record - The children with the

"poor" behavioral records are 1.36 times more likely to make a non-successful rather than a successful adjustment.

7. Intelligence Quotient - The children with an

I.Q. above 114 are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful rather than a successful adjustment.

8. Psychological Diagnosis - The children labeled

with a neurotic reaction are about three times more likely to make a successful rather than a non-successful adjustment.

9. Length of Time in Placement - The children who

are released at or before nine months from the private institutions are almost seven times more likely to make a non-successful rather than a successful adjustment.

The major hypothesis of this study is confirmed. It seems it is possible to isolate distinguishing characteristics between the children who make a successful adjustment and those who do not make a successful adjustment in private institutions; and if other variables can be held constant, to use these characteristics to suggest to court workers those children who are more likely to adjust or not to adjust in private institutions.

Further research is necessary to validate the predictive reliability of the significant items.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

A common but continuing problem facing probation officers, supervisors and judges of the juvenile courts is what can be done with the adjudicated delinquent child who cannot be permitted to return to his own home. It is often realized that the child's home does not meet his needs, offers little chance of meeting his needs in the immediate future and is detrimental to his social and psychological well being. When this problem occurs, the question arises as to where should a child be placed to best insure his rehabilitation. Should he be placed in a foster home, a private institution, or a public institution?

This problem becomes especially acute in communities where intensive efforts are directed in helping a child when he first shows signs of maladjustment. It appears that in these communities it is the rule, rather than the exception, that the child who is in court today was the concern of some treatment or protection service yesterday. And it seems as more of the referrals to the court consist of these "failures"

the greater becomes the need for other than home placements.

Some writers feel, that outside of home, foster care is the preferred placement choice while others cite the advantages of institutional care.<sup>1</sup> One should not generalize, however, for some children are better helped in foster care while others need the resources which can best be provided in institutions. It seems to the writer that it is not really important which placement is used as long as it best meets the needs of the particular child. But this is not possible without a diversified placement program.

It is the opinion of some writers that the move toward diversification is well under way today.<sup>2</sup> It is generally conceded that this is good, but it is also recognized that it would not be possible without the inclusion of the private institutions. It is felt that only by including the private institutions does a placement agency, such as a court, have an opportunity to match the child's needs to a specialized treatment program.

The problem arises, however, frequently after a child and his family are thoroughly investigated, his problems,

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<sup>1</sup>Negley K. Teeters and John O. Reinemann, The Challenge of Delinquency (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950), p. 504.

<sup>2</sup>Alfred J. Kahn, Planning Community Services for Children in Trouble (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 420.

diagnosed and clarified, and he is placed in a private institution that seems best suited to fulfill his needs, the child fails to adjust. It is most disheartening for a probation officer to spend considerable time and effort to place a child in a private institution only to have him return to the court after a few days or weeks because he could not adjust to the program. This is no small problem; for, according to this writer's research during the period of January 1, 1958, to December 31, 1962, approximately 39% of the children placed in private institutions by the Kent County Juvenile Court failed to adjust. One could possibly conclude that not enough care was exerted in selecting the proper institution for the child, but this does not appear to be the whole answer. On the contrary, much consideration is given both by the court staff and the private institution before a child is placed. Yet this phenomena continues to occur.

Because of the extent and challenge of the problem, it was felt this phenomena should be further investigated. The writer then contacted most of the Probation Officers at the Kent County Juvenile Court and asked them for their reasons why certain children they had placed did not adjust in the private institutions. All of the answers revolved around two thoughts: lack of controls and neurotic dependency.

It was the feeling of many of the Probation Officers that the children did not have sufficient controls to be able to adjust in the private, open institution. Several of the other probation officers were convinced that the children were neurotically dependent on one or both parents, and this made it impossible for them to adjust in the private institution.

Although both points of view seemed reasonable, the writer then raised the question as to why so many children continue to fail in the private institution. If special attention were given to the children who need more controls or who are neurotically dependent on their parents, should not the number of children who fail to adjust be reduced? But the number seemed to remain fairly constant over the past few years. The writer then concluded that possibly each child possessed certain, undiscovered or unrecognized, characteristics which might affect his adjustment in the private institution. It was thought that if there were such characteristics then it might be possible to isolate them and determine their significance in the child's successful or non-successful adjustment.

Of course, even though a study such as this might isolate significant characteristics between those children

who adjust in a private institution and those who do not, this is not an attempt to replace social casework interviews or psychological evaluation reports in the placement of children. Rather, it was felt if significant differences could be distinguished between the children who adjust in private institutions and those who do not, conceivably, this could be an additional aid which might be influential in saving a child from experiencing another failure, the probation officer from some needless effort, and the court from some unnecessary expense.

Attempts to predict future behavior on the basis of certain characteristics is not new. The Gluecks for over thirty years have been engaged in prediction research.<sup>3</sup> In one of their best known books, Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency, they describe their study of 500 delinquent and 500 non-delinquent boys. They compared these two groups of boys according to some 400 traits and factors, and from these determined five factors which differentiated delinquent from non-delinquents. Originally, these five factors were the basis for their prediction of potential delinquent boys.

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<sup>3</sup> Maude M. Craig and Selma J. Glick, "Ten Years' Experience with the Glueck Social Prediction Table," Crime and Delinquency, Volume 9, No. 3 (July, 1963), p. 249.



Since that time other behavioral scientists have made prediction studies. One of the most recent, completed in 1960, attempted the prediction of recidivism among institutionalized juvenile delinquents.<sup>4</sup> The authors found ten significant differences between recidivist and non-recidivists. These ten differences formed the basis for their prediction check list. Although their findings need further validation, it seems to the writer the importance of their study was that it showed there are significant differences between recidivists and non-recidivists.

Other studies also showed significant differences between the groups of children that were compared. A study by Joe L. Perry and a study by Donald H. Campbell are cited later. A study by Evert W. Vermeer in 1961, showed several significant differences between the children who made a successful and unsuccessful adjustment in foster homes.<sup>5</sup>

From these mentioned studies it was concluded that it might be productive to make a comparative study of those children who made a successful and non-successful adjustment in the private institutions.

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<sup>4</sup>Dugald S. Arbuckle and Lawrence Litwack, "A Study of Recidivism Among Juvenile Delinquents," Federal Probation, XXIV, No. 4 (December, 1960), pp. 45-48.

<sup>5</sup>Evert W. Vermeer, "An Exploratory Study of Adjustment of Delinquent Children in Foster Homes." (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1961.)

This study was made at the Kent County Juvenile Court Center, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Children under 17 years of age who reside in the county come to the attention of this court for violation of city, state, or federal laws. After a thorough investigation and evaluation some of the adjudicated delinquents are placed in private institutions. This court places approximately 45 delinquent children in private institutions throughout the United States annually.

This study was limited to those delinquents who were placed in private institutions during the period of January 1, 1958, to December 31, 1962. It was further restricted to include delinquents who were released from the private institutions prior to December 1, 1963. Additionally, it included the delinquent's first placement in a private institution.

In order to set necessary limits for the study it is necessary that several of our terms be defined. A delinquent is considered a child who is referred to the court for violation of a city, state or federal law or violation of probation, a legal petition is accepted, and the child is adjudicated a delinquent and made a temporary ward of the court for the purpose of placement in a private institution.

A private institution is considered an "open" residential center without walls or fences, operated under private auspices, where boys or girls or both, reside at the center and attend either the center's own private school or their local public or parochial schools. The institution retains the authority to accept or reject all applicants for placement. Children are placed for an indefinite period of time and are returned to the court upon the recommendation of the institution with the concurring approval of the court.

Successful adjustment in a private institution refers to those delinquents who were released from the private institutions and returned to the court for satisfactory behavior or for having received maximum benefits from the institution.

Non-successful adjustment in private institutions refers to those delinquents who were released from the private institutions for unsatisfactory behavior or for further violations of the law and were returned to the court for further disposition.

The major focus or hypothesis of this study, as already implied, is that there are characteristics which contribute to a successful or non-successful adjustment in the private institution. It is felt that if there are such

contributing characteristics, then it might be possible to isolate them and hopefully use them later in helping to determine what children can or cannot adjust in private institutions.

More specifically, from observation by this writer and other staff members at the court, several other sub hypotheses seemed to be suggested.

It was felt that girls would more likely make a successful adjustment in the private institutions than boys. The theory behind this was that boys are more prone than girls to walk away from a placement and hitch-hike home or steal a car and continue to travel until apprehended.

It was also hypothesized that the children who attended church regularly prior to placement would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who did not. The thought behind this hypothesis was that the children who had attended church regularly might have a little more internal control and might receive some support from their religious faith, especially during the first few weeks of their placement.

It was further hypothesized that the fewer number of times the children were placed in the Detention Home prior to placement, the more likely they would make a successful adjustment in the private institution. It was reasoned that

the children who frequently needed the controls and security of detention would have greater difficulty adjusting to the "open" private institution.

Another hypothesis that seems to have merit is that the children classified with a "good" or "fair" school behavioral record would more likely make a successful adjustment in the private institution than the children classified with a "poor" school behavioral record. It was reasoned that the children would carry with them their past experiences and attitudes about school, and thus the children who have had a more difficult time in school will probably have a more difficult time in school in the private institutions. It seemed as if a child who was having trouble in school in the private institution would probably be less likely to make a successful adjustment.

It is further hypothesized that the children who remain in the private institution longer than nine months will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who are released at or before nine months. This hypothesis is based primarily on observation since the writer frequently observed children being returned to court prior to nine months for unsuccessful adjustment in the private institution.

Another hypothesis suggested by observation is that the children with a fewer number of contacts with the police

authorities at the time of placement will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with more or many contacts. The theory behind this hypothesis is that the children who have had many contacts with the police probably would be more aggressive and have less respect for authority. It is felt that this in turn might provoke more runaways or negative behavior at the private institutions.

The last hypothesis based on observation is that the children who are diagnosed by the psychologist and labeled "neurotic reaction" would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children labeled with some other diagnostic terms. The reasoning behind this hypothesis is that children with some type of characterological problem tend to act out in response to emotional tension, and, therefore, it is felt that these children might be more likely to run away or behave in some aggressive manner which would lead to an unsuccessful adjustment in the private institution.

Several of the hypotheses for this study are based on research made by D. H. Campbell in 1948.<sup>6</sup> Using several of his items that he found significant, it is hypothesized that the children placed in the private institution prior to

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<sup>6</sup>William C. Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent (Yonkers, New York: World Book Co., 1954), pp. 482-483, citing Prognostic Indicators of Delinquent Boys in a Training School, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1948.

their 13th birthday would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children placed after their 13th birthday. It is further hypothesized that the children who have four or more natural siblings will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who have three or less natural siblings. Also, on the basis of this same research, it is hypothesized that the children whose parents are living together would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children whose parents are not living together. And lastly, it is hypothesized that the children whose ordinal position in their family is last born would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who are not last born.

On the basis of a study made by J. L. Perry in 1953, this writer formulated the following hypotheses.<sup>7</sup> It is hypothesized that the children with an I.Q. score of 114 or less would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with an I.Q. score of above 114. It is also hypothesized that the children who commit offenses against property would be less likely to make a successful adjustment in the private institution than the children who commit other offenses.

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<sup>7</sup>William C. Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent (Yonkers, New York: New World Book Co., 1954), p. 494, citing The Construction and Validation of a Technique for Predicting the Incidence of Runaways Among Institutionalized Delinquent Boys, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Boston University, 1953.



It is further hypothesized that non-white children would more likely make a successful adjustment than white children and that the children who have "excessive" school truancy records would less likely make a successful adjustment than the children with "none" or "occasional" truancy records. Lastly, it is hypothesized on the basis of this study that the children who have three or more court appearances prior to placement are less likely to make a successful adjustment than the children who have two or less court appearances before placement.

On the basis of a study completed in 1960, the following several hypotheses were formulated.<sup>8</sup> It is hypothesized that the children with the "older" or "medium" age mother at the time of the children's placement would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with the "younger" mother. Further, it is hypothesized that the children who were 15 years old or older, at the time of their first appearance before the court would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who were under 15 years of age. Lastly, on the basis of this study, it is hypothesized that the children who had completed the 8th or

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<sup>8</sup>Dugald S. Arbuckle and Lawrence Litwack, "A Study of Recidivism Among Juvenile Delinquents," Federal Probation, XXIV, No. 4 (December, 1960), pp. 45-48.

a higher grade at the time of placement would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who had completed less than the 8th grade.

Finally, on the basis of a study made by H. L. Saverson in 1963, it was hypothesized that the children from the "low" economic families would be less likely to make a successful adjustment in the private institution than the children who were not from the "low" economic families.<sup>9</sup> In the study by Mr. H. L. Saverson, this item was very significant in differentiating the repeater from the non-repeater at the Kent County Juvenile Court. It was felt that possibly the factors that were involved in leading these children to commit another delinquent act might also be the factors involved in making it more difficult for them to make a successful adjustment in the private institution.

A word should be mentioned about our study in general. During the time of this study, the children were placed in 32 different private institutions. The names and locations of these institutions and the number of children who made a successful and non-successful adjustment in each institution, are listed in the appendices. We know these institutions are

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<sup>9</sup>Henry L. Saverson, "An Exploratory Study of Juvenile Repeaters and Non-Repeaters." (Unpublished Research Project, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1963), p. 6.

not all comparable regarding their size, location, population, number of staff, security, and methods of treatment. Therefore, in order to give this study meaning, we made three assumptions:

First, it was assumed that the institutions, although different, were comparable in their purpose and determination to help the particular children with whom they were working.

Secondly, it was assumed that the children were placed in the institution best suited to fulfill their particular needs.

Thirdly, it was assumed that all the court workers involved with these children were comparable in regard to competence and philosophy.

## CHAPTER II

### Background and Prior Research

The first institutions in the United States for the care of dependent and delinquent children were operated under private auspices.<sup>1</sup> John Griscom, an educator, deserves much of the credit for these institutions. Although he might not have been the first one to become alarmed at seeing youthful offenders sent to county jails and state prisons, he was the first one to do something about it. Borrowing ideas from the European "infant schools" and obtaining the help of a society that he initiated, Professor Griscom, in 1825, opened the New York City House of Refuge. The following year the House of Reformation was established in Boston, and two years later a similar institution was opened in Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup>

These three institutions, divorced from state control, became the trail-blazers for the other institutions that followed. Although their methods seemed to be punitive,

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<sup>1</sup>Negley K. Teeters and John O. Reinemann, The Challenge of Delinquency (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950), pp. 429-431.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

their purpose was to instruct and reform the children under their care; and this was an unusual philosophy for that day.

Apparently this approach or philosophy caught on, for approximately twenty years after the first private institution for delinquent children was opened in New York City, the Municipal Boys House of Refuge was established in New Orleans. This was the first public institution of its kind in the United States; and two years later, in 1847, was followed by a state reform school for boys in Massachusetts.<sup>3</sup> This last institution became the forerunner of the many other state reform schools which were built in the 1850's in the United States.

The first public reform schools seemed to be superior to the first houses of refuge both in architecture and methods.<sup>4</sup> Instead of the bleak, prison-like atmosphere of the Houses of Refuge, the reform schools, authorized and built in the various states, were built on the open, cottage type principle. Most of them were designed attractively, and at least attempts were made to eliminate prison-like characteristics. Although these institutions were an improvement over the older Houses of Refuge, it is believed they relied too

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 435.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 435-448.

heavily on severe discipline and long hours of work in the fields to be really considered treatment centers for juvenile delinquents.

From the humble beginnings of the first House of Refuge in New York City in 1825, there has developed today in the United States approximately 350 institutions serving adjudicated delinquent children.<sup>5</sup> Of these, one is the federal training school; 132 are state training schools; 52 are county or city training schools; 11 are state reception or diagnostic centers; 29 are forestry camps; and 135 are schools under private auspices. It is estimated the public institutions accommodate approximately 36,000 delinquent children at any one time while the private schools house approximately 10,000 children.<sup>6</sup>

One can see from the preceding figures the importance of the private schools today in the total national picture. Without the private schools it seems placement agencies would find it impossible to locate suitable institutions for the children that need them. Even with the number of private institutions which we have today, it is extremely difficult

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<sup>5</sup>Donald G. Blackburn, "Institutions for Juvenile Delinquents, A Review of Recent Developments," National Probation and Parole Association Journal, IV, No. 1 (January, 1958), p. 12.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

to place every child in the institution that seems best suited for his individual needs. But, with the current emphasis on greater diversification of treatment resources for children, it can be hoped, more specialized placement facilities will be available in the future.

As one reflects on the problem of more adequate and more specialized treatment institutions for children, one cannot help but raise the following question: how successful, really, are these institutions? Are they so much more effective than the first House of Refuge or the early, punitive method of placing children in the county jails and state prisons?

Early attempts to determine the effectiveness of the first houses of refuge made them appear rather successful. Although few, if any, valid follow-up studies were made of the children, one report indicated that of the 513 children who had returned to society from the New York City House of Refuge more than 200 were saved from "infallible ruin."<sup>7</sup> Later, studies would seem to question these findings; however, current research estimates the success rate for training schools at about 60 to 70%.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Teeters, op. cit., p. 440.

<sup>8</sup>Paul Schreiber, How Effective are Services for the Treatment of Delinquents, Childrens Bureau, Social Security Administration, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, No. 9 (Washington: 1960), p. 9.



St. Anne's Institution in New York, a private institution under Catholic auspices, reports 76% of their children have made excellent adjustments upon release.<sup>9</sup> Highfields, a public facility in New Jersey, reports 63% of their children have no difficulty in the community for at least one year after release.<sup>10</sup>

In 1953, the McCords studied the success ratio between Wiltwyck, a private school, and the New England State Training School. Their criterion for success was based on those delinquents who did not need to return to Court for further violations of the law. According to their findings during the five year period after release, 71% of the children from the private school were successful as compared to 53% from the state school.<sup>11</sup>

Although more and more research is being conducted in this area of the effectiveness of training schools, there are many areas where research is extremely limited. One such area is the question and problem of adjustment of children while in the institution. This is especially important in the private institutions, for they are open and without fences; and it is not difficult for a child to leave if he

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 10-11.

so desires. Since you have to "have them to treat them," it is important to know whether or not a child will be able to adjust to an institutional program. According to this writer's research, there have not been many studies which have attempted to predict a child's adjustment in an institution. There are three studies, however, which appear significantly and indirectly related to this question of adjustment. These studies, as well as the writer's observations as previously mentioned, are the basis for most of the writer's hypotheses in this study.

A study made by Donald H. Campbell in 1948, of factors or characteristics associated with successful treatment of delinquent children committed to the Lyman School for Boys in Massachusetts, showed that there were eight significant differences between the children who made a successful adjustment and those who did not. He found that the children with the following characteristics were the most likely to adjust:<sup>12</sup>

- (1) Early commitment under 13
- (2) School retardation not exceeding one year
- (3) Membership in large families

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<sup>12</sup>William C. Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent (Yonkers, New York: World Book Co., 1954), pp. 482-483, citing Prognostic Indicators of Delinquent Boys in a Training School. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1948.

- (4) Ordinal position in family as last born
- (5) Physical disability needing medical treatment
- (6) Intact home - parents living together
- (7) One outstanding high score on test battery
- (8) Lower than 80 on Healy Picture Completion Test

A similar study conducted by Joe L. Perry in 1953 at the Shirley Industrial School for Boys in Massachusetts, revealed 11 significant characteristics between the children who failed to adjust by running away and those who did not attempt to run away. Although this study is only indirectly related to our present study, it is felt that it is significant because many of the children who fail to adjust in private institutions do so by running away several or more times. Perry's study asserted that children with the following ten characteristics would be more likely to run away than the children not having these characteristics.<sup>13</sup> Listed, the characteristics are as follows:

- (1) Weight above 157
- (2) Age at commitment below 14 years
- (3) I.Q. above 114
- (4) White race

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<sup>13</sup> William C. Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent (Yonkers, New York: World Book Co., 1954), p. 494, citing The Construction and Validation of a Technique for Predicting the Incidence of Runaways Among Institutionalized Delinquent Boys, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Boston University, 1953.

- (5) Record of school truancy
- (6) Two times in court before commitment
- (7) Offense against property
- (8) Formerly on probation
- (9) Runaway from home or truancy school
- (10) Has step-mother

Finally, a third study, that again is only indirectly related to our present study, was made by Dugald S. Arbuckle and Lawrence Litwack.<sup>14</sup> In this study of 500 boys from the Lyman School for Boys in Massachusetts during 1953 to 1958, they found ten statistically significant differences between the recidivist and non-recidivist. Out of 163 variables the following ten were significant:

- (1) Height
- (2) Mother's age at time of boy's commitment
- (3) Father ever in jail
- (4) School grade completed
- (5) Age at first court appearance
- (6) Age at time of commitment
- (7) Age arrived at training school
- (8) Number of times in discipline cottage

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<sup>14</sup>Dugald S. Arbuckle and Lawrence Litwack, "A Study of Recidivism Among Juvenile Delinquents," Federal Probation, XXIV, No. 4 (December, 1960), pp. 45-48.

(9) Age at time of parole

(10) Paroled to school or work

The authors found that the taller the boy, the more likely he was to succeed; that the older the mother, the more likely a success; that if the father was never in jail, the boy was more likely to succeed; that the higher the grade reached by the boy, the more likely he was to succeed; that the older the boy, at the time of his first court appearance, commitment and arrival at the training school, the more likely he would succeed; that the boy who never was in the discipline cottage, the more likely he was to succeed; that the older the boy at the time of release on parole, the more likely a success; and that those paroled to work were more likely to succeed.

It was felt this study could be used to suggest some of our hypotheses, for it was reasoned that the non-recidivist probably received more meaningful help from the boys' school than the recidivist. Furthermore, it was thought that the boys that received the more meaningful help probably made the more successful adjustment in the boys school. Thus, it was felt that maybe some of these items might prove significant too, in a comparison of children who make a successful and non-successful adjustment in the private institutions.

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology and Explanation

As was mentioned in Chapter I, this study was made at the Kent County Juvenile Court Center, Grand Rapids, Michigan. A total of 214 cases was examined for this study. This was the total number of delinquent children placed by the Kent County Juvenile Court in private institutions during the period of January 1, 1958, to December 31, 1962. From this total, 25 cases had to be eliminated because the children, although placed during the above period, were not released from their private institutions prior to December 1, 1963. In addition, 10 cases also had to be eliminated because it was the child's second or additional private institutional placement. These limitations were necessary, in the first instance, to permit us to comply with the definition of our terms and, in the second instance, to provide for a valid comparison.

This would leave, then, out of a total of 214 cases, 179 cases for this study. By pre-examining the cases it was found 100 children made a successful adjustment in the private



institutions and 79 children failed to make a successful adjustment in the private institutions. This was determined by examining each child's liber card which is listed alphabetically at the court. Information on the liber card includes, among other things, the date when a child is committed to a private institution, the date he is released, the reason for his release, and the child's subsequent placement or disposition. From this card, then, it was possible to determine if a child had made a successful or non-successful adjustment in the private institution.

Our sample, then, was 100 children who made a successful adjustment in the private institution and 79 children who were non-successful. These two groups were then compared according to 20 variables. These variables were selected on the basis of the previously mentioned research and on availability and objectivity.

The 20 variables, with an explanation about each one, are listed as follows:

1. SEX - It was felt that girls would more likely adjust in a private institution than boys.
2. RACE - This item was broken down into two categories: (a) white children, (b) non-white children. Non-white children included Negroes, Indians, Mexicans



and Puerto Ricans. These races were grouped together because the sample included only three children other than Negro.

3. REASON FOR REFERRAL TO THE COURT - This item was separated into seven categories: (a) auto theft, (b) breaking and entering, (c) theft, (d) runaway, (e) ungovernable, (f) sex offense, and (g) other offenses. "Other" offenses included only non-property offenses such as assault and truancy. The categories of (a) through (c) were considered property offenses, and the categories (d) through (g) non-property offenses.

4. AGE AT FIRST COURT APPEARANCE - Appearance before the court was defined as appearance before the judge in a court hearing to answer the allegations of a petition. This item was separated into three categories: (a) 12 years old or younger, (b) 13 through 14 years of age, and (c) 15 or older.

5. NUMBER OF COURT APPEARANCES BEFORE PLACEMENT - Appearance before the court again was defined to mean an appearance before the judge in a court hearing to answer allegations of a petition. This item was broken down into three categories: (a) one appearance,

(b) two appearances, and (c) three or more appearances. It should be noted that all children placed in private institutions must have at least one court appearance before placement.

6. THE MOTHER'S AGE AT TIME OF PLACEMENT - This item was separated into three categories: (a) age 37 or younger, (b) 38 through 45, (c) age 46 or older. The first group was considered the younger mothers; the second group the medium age mothers; and the third group the older mothers.

7. PARENTS' MARITAL STATUS - This item was separated into five groups: (a) married, (b) separated, (c) divorced, (d) unmarried, (e) deceased. It should be noted that the parents who were married, but not living together, were considered as being separated. The only group, then, considered living together, were the married parents.

8. NUMBER OF NATURAL SIBLINGS - This item was separated into two categories: (a) three or less siblings, (b) four or more siblings. This item did not consider step or half or foster siblings.

9. FAMILY INCOME - This item was divided into three classifications: (a) \$80 or less per week,

(b) \$81 through \$99 per week, (c) \$100 or more per week. The first classification was considered to be the low economic families.

10. NUMBER OF CONTACTS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES -

This item was separated into four categories: (a) no contacts, (b) one contact, (c) two through three contacts, (d) four or more contacts. Contact with the police authorities refers to each occasion that the child came to the attention of the police authorities for some alleged delinquent act, and the authorities made a notation of the contact in the child's police record.

11. GRADE COMPLETED PRIOR TO PLACEMENT - This

item was separated into four categories: (a) 6th grade or less, (b) 7th grade, (c) 8th grade, (d) 9th grade or beyond.

12. SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RECORD - This item was

broken down into three categories: (a) good behavior record, (b) fair behavior records, and (c) poor behavior record. Although this is a subjective item, the writer attempted to be objective by very closely scrutinizing the school counselor's and teachers' comments regarding each child. "Good behavior" meant



school was not a problem for the child. "Fair behavior" meant that the child occasionally needed special attention from the school personnel. "Poor behavior" meant that school was a problem area for the child and the child needed special help.

13. SCHOOL TRUANCY RECORD - This item was separated into three categories: (a) excessive truancy, (b) occasional truancy, and (c) no truancy. This item, too, is subjective in nature; however, excessive truancy was defined to mean a child who is truant from school approximately 1/3 of the time. Occasional truancy was defined to mean the child who occasionally misses school without sufficient reason but is not considered a truancy problem by the school authorities. No truancy means that the child has no truancy record at school.

14. I.Q. - This item was separated into five categories: (a) I.Q., 84 or less; (b) I.Q., 85 to 94; (c) I.Q., 95 to 104; (d) I.Q., 105 to 114; and (e) I.Q., 115 or above. The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children was the standard I.Q. test for this item.

15. POSITION IN FAMILY - This item was broken down into four categories: (a) only child, (b) first

born child, (c) in-between child, and (d) last born. Half, step or foster siblings were not given consideration in this item.

16. NUMBER OF TIMES IN DETENTION HOME - This item was separated into four categories: (a) no times, (b) one time, (c) two times, or (d) three or more times.

17. AGE AT PLACEMENT - This item was divided into three categories: (a) 12 years old or younger, (b) 13 years through 15 years old and (c) 16 or older.

18. PSYCHOLOGICAL DIAGNOSIS - This item was separated into four categories: (a) neurotic reaction, (b) character disorder, (c) character neurosis, and (d) other diagnosis. A description of the first three categories are listed in the appendices. The category of "other diagnosis" included personality hysteria, behavioral schizophrenic, environmental reaction, sociopathic and psychopathic personality, situational reaction, paranoid reaction, and psychotic and anxiety reaction. These terms were taken from the psychological evaluation reports; and they were the terms used by the psychologists, in addition to the other three categories in diagnosing or labeling the particular child they were testing.

It should be mentioned that a total of eleven children, six in the successful and five in the non-successful group, were not tested or evaluated by the psychologist. These children were placed in the "other diagnosis" category. One might question the validity of these findings on this count; however, if one analyzes the data in this section, one will find even if the children had been tested by the psychologist and diagnosed to fit one of the other categories, the findings would still be significant.

19. LENGTH OF TIME IN PLACEMENT - This item was separated into three categories: (a) nine months or less, (b) ten to fifteen months, and (c) sixteen months or longer.

20. CHURCH ATTENDANCE - This item was separated into three categories: (a) regular church attendance, (b) occasional church attendance, and (c) no church attendance. Regular church attendance was defined to mean that the children attended church usually every Sunday. Occasional attendance was defined that the children went to church only on special occasions, and no church attendance meant that the children did not attend church anytime.

The information for this data was gathered exclusively from each child's social file. The child's social file at the Kent County Juvenile Court is broken down into two major divisions: Family Case Record and Correspondence and Miscellaneous.

The Family Case Record section of the file contains a face sheet, an example which is attached in the appendices, an intake worker's report, a field investigation or social history report, a psychological and occasionally a psychiatric evaluation report and chronological recording reports by the probation officer.

The Correspondence and Miscellaneous portion of the file contains all the correspondence regarding a particular child, including the child's referral report to the court if applicable, a copy of the legal petition, a detention admission report and other miscellaneous reports from the Detention Home if the child was in the Detention Home. This section of the file also contains the child's progress reports from the institution.



## CHAPTER IV

### Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data that was collected for this study was analyzed by computing the distribution percentages of each group within each item, by determining the level of significance of each item as measured by chi-square, and by determining the proportion for successful or non-successful adjustment in the significant items. If an item had a probability of .05 it was considered significant. If an item had a probability of .10 or larger it was considered insignificant. If an item had a probability of .02 or less it was considered very significant. The chi-square table used in this study was an abridged table of Fisher and Yates.<sup>1</sup>

Table 1 summarizes the findings of this study by listing the items of comparison and specifying their chi-square, degrees of freedom, and probability level.

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<sup>1</sup>Quinn McNemar, Psychological Statistics (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1949), pp. 350-351.

Table 1

Items of Comparison	Chi-Square	Degrees of Freedom	Probability Level
1. Sex	1.41	1	.80
2. Race	4.57	1	.05
3. Reason for Referral to the Court	9.85	6	.20
4. Age at First Court Appearance	6.27	2	.05
5. Number of Court Appearances	1.50	2	.50
6. Mother's Age at Time of Placement	9.17	2	.02
7. Parents' Marital Status	.63	4	.98
8. Number of Natural Siblings	.20	1	.70
9. Family Income	3.67	2	.20
10. Number of Contacts with Police Authorities	11.27	3	.02
11. Grade Completed Prior to Placement	14.96	3	.01
12. School Behavior Record	7.42	2	.05
13. School Truancy Record	4.11	2	.20
14. Intelligence Quotient	14.41	4	.01
15. Position in Family	.99	3	.90
16. Number of Times in Detention Home	3.95	3	.30
17. Age at Placement	3.41	2	.20
18. Psychological Diagnosis	15.74	3	.01
19. Length of Time in Placement	79.14	2	.00001
20. Church Attendance	1.10	2	.70

The following pages present and analyze the data of this study. It should be noted that the sample consists of 55.92% in the successful group and 44.08% in the non-successful group.

TABLE 2

## Comparison by Sex

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Boys</u>		<u>Girls</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Successful	39	39	61	61	100	100
Non-successful	33	41.8	46	58.2	79	100
Totals	72	40.2	107	59.8	179	100
$\chi^2 = .141 \quad P = < .80$						

The correlation of sex with successful or non-successful adjustment in private institutions is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings would tend to support our hypothesis that girls are more likely to adjust than boys. Of the successful group 61% were girls and 39% were boys; whereas, of the non-successful group 58.2% were girls and 41.8% were boys.

The most important thing about Table 2 appears to be that 59.8% of the children in private institutions are girls. This is quite surprising when one considers that there are

approximately three times as many boys referred to the court as girls. This means, then, that girls make up only about 25% of the referrals to the court; yet, they make up 59.8% of the court's population in the private institutions.

Apparently, it is felt that girls more often need private institutions than boys. According to the statistical report released by the Kent County Juvenile Court for 1963, this may be explained in part by the girls' offenses, by their home situations, and by the girls' greater need for detention. Perhaps, too, the court's attitude might be different toward delinquent girls than toward boys. This is an area where further research might be very helpful.

### TABLE 3

### Comparison by Race

Race	White		Non-white		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Successful	90	90	10	10	100	100
Non-successful	62	78.5	17	21.5	79	100
Totals	152	84.9	27	15.1	179	100
$\chi^2 = 4.57$	$P = < .05$					

The correlation of race with successful or non-successful adjustment in private institutions is significant. The findings do not support our hypothesis but rather confirm the opposite. That is, white children are more likely to make a successful adjustment in the private institution than non-white children.

Of the successful group, 90% were white and 10% were non-white, while of the non-successful group 78.5% were white and 21.5% were non-white. Proportionally, the non-white children are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institution. Our findings disagree with the study by Mr. Perry, who found that white boys are more likely to runaway from the institution than non-white boys.<sup>2</sup>

It is also interesting to note that of the 179 children in private institutions, 84.9% are white children and 15.1% are non-white children. According to statistics of the Kent County Juvenile Court for 1963, the racial composition of referrals to the court was 28.2% non-white children. Assuming that this percentage is about the same as the percentage of the years of this study, and, assuming

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<sup>2</sup> William C. Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent, (Yonkers, New York: World Book Co., 1954), p.494, citing The Construction and Validation of a Technique for Predicting the Incidence of Runaways Among Institutionalized Delinquent Boys, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Boston University, 1953.

that the two groups of children are comparable, it appears that the non-white children are about one half as likely to be placed in private institutions as white children. This observation appears remarkable, especially in view that the court makes every effort to treat each child only according to need. Perhaps the answer lies within the private institutions, for many are closed to non-white children. Possibly this category reflects the non-availability of private institutions for non-white children.

The correlation of reason for referral to court with successful or non-successful adjustment in private institutions is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings would tend to support our hypothesis that the children who are referred to the court for offenses against property are less likely to make a successful adjustment than the children who are referred for other offenses. Of the successful group, 23% were referred for offenses against property and 77% for other offenses; whereas, of the non-successful group, 29.1% were referred for offenses against property and 70.9% for other offenses. The findings tend to support other research that shows children with offenses against property are more likely to runaway from the institution.<sup>3</sup> This

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

TABLE 4

## Comparison by Reason for Referral to Court

Reason	Auto		B & E		Theft		Runaway		Ungovern- able		Sex		Other		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	9	9	6	6	8	8	23	23	30	30	11	11	13	13	100	100
Non- successful	3	3.8	9	11.4	11	13.9	25	31.6	22	27.9	4	5.1	5	6.3	79	100
Totals	12	6.7	15	8.4	19	10.6	48	26.8	52	29.1	15	8.4	18	10	179	100
$\chi^2 = 9.85$ $P = < .20$																

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TABLE 5

## Comparison by Age at First Court Appearance

Age	12 and younger		13 - 14		15 and older		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Successful	22	22	42	42	36	36	100	100
Non-successful	23	29.2	41	51.9	15	18.9	79	100
Totals	45	25.1	83	46.4	51	28.5	179	100
$\chi^2 = 6.27$		$P = < .05$						

category seems to support Table 2 which tended to show girls more often make a successful adjustment than boys. For according to statistics of the Kent County Juvenile Court for 1963, boys were most frequently referred for Breaking and Entering and Larceny (property offense) and girls for Runaway (non-property offense).

The correlation of the age of the child at first court appearance with successful or non-successful adjustment in private institutions is significant. The findings confirm our hypothesis that children who are 15 years old or older at the time of their first court appearance are more likely to make a successful adjustment than children who were under 15 years of age. Of the successful group, 64% were under 15 years of age and 36% were 15 or older; whereas, of the non-successful group 81.1% were under and 18.9% were 15 or older. Proportionally, the children who were 15 or older when they first appeared before court are almost twice as likely to make a successful adjustment than non-successful adjustment in private institutions. Our findings agree with the findings of previous research that the older the child at the time of his first court appearance the more likely he will succeed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Dugald S. Arbuckle and Lawrence Litwack, "A Study of Recidivism Among Juvenile Delinquents," Federal Probation, XXIV, No. 4 (December, 1960), pp. 45-48.



Speculating, it probably could be stated that the children who are older when they first appear before the court probably have better controls than the children who are referred at an early age, and this in turn may help them more likely make a successful adjustment in the private institution. It should be noted, however, that 71.5% of the children in the private institutions were under 15 years of age when they made their first court appearance.

TABLE 6

## Comparison by Number of Court Appearances Before Placement

Number	1		2		3 or more		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	38	38	44	44	18	18	100	100
Non-successful	26	32.9	33	41.8	20	25.3	79	100
Totals	64	35.6	77	43	38	21.4	179	100

$$X^2 = 1.50 \quad P = < .50$$

The correlation of number of court appearances before placement with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. The findings, percentage wise, tend to support our hypothesis that the children who had 3 or more court appearances before placement would be less likely to make a

successful adjustment than the children who had 2 or less court appearances. Of the successful group, 82% had 2 or less court appearances and 18% had 3 or more court appearances before placement; whereas, of the non-successful group, 74.7% had 2 or less appearances and 25.3% had 3 or more court appearances. Although the findings in this item are insignificant, it is interesting to note that 78.6% of the children in private institutions had 2 or less court appearances prior to placement. Considering the fact that the children must have one court appearance to be placed, it is surprising that 78.6% of the children are placed in private institutions at their first or second court appearance. The findings, although inconclusive, tend to support other research that the children who had two court appearances before placement were more likely to runaway.<sup>5</sup>

TABLE 7

## Comparison by Mother's Age at Time of Placement

Age	37 or younger		38 - 45		46 or older		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	23	23	55	55	22	22	100	100
Non-successful	34	43	28	35.5	17	21.5	79	100
Totals	57	31.8	83	46.4	39	21.8	179	100
$\chi^2 = 9.17 \quad P = < .02$								

<sup>5</sup>Kvaraceus, op. cit., p. 494.

The correlation of mother's age at time of placement with successful or non-successful adjustment is very significant. The findings confirm our hypothesis that the children with the medium age or older mothers, at the time of the children's placement, will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with the younger mothers. Of the successful group, 23% of the children's mothers were younger and 77% were medium age or older; whereas, of the non-successful group, 43% of the children's mothers were younger and 57% were medium age or older. These findings support prior research that the older the mother the more likely the child was to succeed.<sup>6</sup> Proportionally, the children with the younger mothers are almost twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institutions. If one were to speculate, possibly it could be stated that the older mothers are not as likely to work outside the home and thus the children receive more supervision at home. Perhaps this closer supervision at home makes it easier for the children to make a successful adjustment in the private institution.

The correlation of the parent's marital status with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant.

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<sup>6</sup>Arbuckle, loc. cit.

TABLE 8

## Comparison by Parent's Marital Status

Status	Married		Separated		Divorced		Unmarried		Deceased		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	40	40	9	9	33	33	6	6	12	12	100	100
Non-successful	31	39.3	6	7.6	30	37.9	4	5.1	8	10.1	79	100
Totals	71	39.7	15	8.4	63	35.2	10	5.6	20	11.1	179	100

$$\chi^2 = .63 \quad P = < .98$$

Percentage wise, too, the findings do not support our hypothesis that the children whose parents are living together will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children whose parents are not. Of the successful group, 40% of the parents were married and living together and 60% were not; whereas, of the non-successful group, 39.3% of the parents were married and living together and 60.7% were not. Our findings do not support other research that shows children whose parents are living together are more likely to adjust in the institutions.<sup>7</sup> Although these findings are too insignificant to be given further consideration, it is interesting to note that approximately 60% of the children in the private institutions come from home situations where the parents are not living together. It seems this may be one of the reasons why the children are placed in the private institutions.

The correlation of the number of natural siblings with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings tend to disprove the hypothesis that the children with 4 or additional siblings would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with 3 or fewer siblings. Of the successful group, 31% of the

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<sup>7</sup>William C. Kvaraceus, The Community and the Delinquent, (Yonkers, New York: World Book Co., 1954), pp. 482-483, citing Prognostic Indicators of Delinquent Boys in a Training School, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1948.



TABLE 9

## Comparison by Number of Natural Siblings

<u>Siblings</u>	<u>3 or fewer</u>		<u>4 or additional</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Successful	69	69	31	31	100	100
Non-Successful	52	65.8	27	34.2	79	100
Totals	121	67.6	58	32.4	179	100
$\chi^2 = .20 \quad P = < .70$						

children had 4 or additional siblings and 69% had 3 or fewer; whereas, of the non-successful group, 34.2% had 4 or additional and 65.8% had 3 or fewer siblings. The findings do not support previous research that showed children from large families will more likely adjust in the institution.<sup>8</sup>

TABLE 10

## Comparison by Family Income Per Week

<u>Income</u>	<u>\$80 or less</u>		<u>\$81 - \$99</u>		<u>\$100 or more</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	43	43	26	26	31	31	100	100
Non-successful	43	54.4	21	26.7	15	18.9	79	100
Totals	86	48	47	26.3	46	25.7	179	100
$\chi^2 = 3.67 \quad P = < .20$								

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

The correlation of family income with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings tend to support the hypothesis that the children from the low economic families would be less likely to make a successful adjustment than the children not from these families. Of the successful group, 43% were from the economically low families and 57% were not; whereas, of the non-successful group, 54.4% were from the low economic families and 45.6% were not. Although the findings are insignificant it appears one could state that the children who come from low economic families are not going to more successfully adjust in private institutions, merely because they now have a more adequate physical situation. Rather, it appears that children who have experienced economic deprivation also have other unmet needs which frequently are not met by the private institution. Our findings tend to support other research that shows children from the low economic families are more likely to be recidivists.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Henry L. Saverson, "An Exploratory Study of Juvenile Repeaters and Non-Repeaters" (Unpublished Research Project, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1963), p. 6.





The correlation of the number of contacts with police authorities with successful or non-successful adjustment is very significant. The findings confirm the hypothesis that the children with less number of contacts will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with more or many contacts. Of the successful group, 13% had no contacts, 26% had 1 contact, 38% had 2 - 3 contacts and 23% had 4 or more contacts. Of the non-successful group, 8.9% had no contacts, 18.9% had 1 contact, 25.3% had 2 - 3 contacts and 46.9% had 4 or more contacts. Apparently, if a child has four or more police contacts prior to the time of his placement he is more than twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institution.

Speculating, it appears that a child who has many contacts with the police over a period of time, has fewer internal controls and this might contribute to a non-successful adjustment in the private institution.

The correlation of the grade completed with successful or non-successful adjustment is very significant. The findings confirm the hypothesis that children who have completed the 8th grade or higher grade prior to placement will more likely make a successful adjustment. Of the successful group, 45% had completed less than the 8th grade and 55% had completed

the 8th grade or beyond; whereas, of the non-successful group, 72.2% had completed less than the 8th grade and only 27.8% had completed the 8th grade or beyond. Proportionally, a child who has completed the 8th or higher grade when placed is almost twice as likely to make a successful adjustment than non-successful adjustment. These findings seem to support other research that the higher the grade reached by the child the more likely he is to succeed. Apparently, the child who is in the higher grades has less difficulty in school. Thus, he would have less difficulty in the private school and thereby would be more likely to make a successful adjustment.

TABLE 13

### Comparison by School Behavior Record

Behavior	Good		Fair		Poor		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	16	16	32	32	52	52	100	100
Non-successful	5	6.3	18	22.8	56	70.9	79	100
Totals	21	11.7	50	27.9	108	60.4	179	100

$\chi^2 = 7.42$        $P = < .05$

The correlation of school behavioral record with successful or non-successful adjustment is significant. The findings confirm the hypothesis that children with "good" or "fair" behavior records in school will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with "poor" behavior records. Of the successful group, 48% were classified with "good" or "fair" behavior and 52% with "poor." Of the non-successful group, 29.1% were classified with "good" or "fair" behavior and 70.9% with "poor." Proportionally, a child with a "poor" behavior record in school is 1.36 times more likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institution. The findings seem to support the accepted belief that children who have behavior problems in school also have adjustment problems in other areas.

TABLE 14

### Comparison by School Truancy Record

Record	Excessive		Occasional		None		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	36	36	45	45	19	19	100	100
Non-successful	40	50.6	29	36.7	10	12.7	79	100
Totals	76	42.5	74	41.3	29	16.2	179	100

$\chi^2 = 4.11$        $P = < .20$



The correlation of school truancy record with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings tend to support the hypothesis that children who have excessive school truancy records will be less likely to make a successful adjustment than children with none or occasional truancy records. Of the successful group, 36% were excessive truants and 64% were not; whereas, of the non-successful group, 50.6% were excessive truants and 49.4% were not. Although the findings indicate a trend it is surprising that this item is not significant. It would seem that a child who was an excessive truant in school would tend to more likely truant from the open, private institution. Although our findings are inconclusive, other research has shown that children with truancy records are more likely to runaway from the institution.<sup>10</sup>

The correlation of I.Q. with successful or non-successful adjustment is very significant. The findings confirm the hypothesis that children with an I.Q. score of 114 or below will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with an I.Q. score above 114. Of the successful group, 92% of the children had a score of 114 or below and 8% above 114. Of the non-successful group, 81.1% had an I.Q.

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<sup>10</sup>Kvaraceus, op. cit., p. 494.



TABLE 15

## Comparison by Intelligence Quotient

I.Q.	84 or below		85 - 94		95 - 104		105 - 114		115 or above		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	8	8	22	22	41	41	21	21	8	8	100	100
Non-successful	8	10.1	10	12.7	18	22.8	28	35.5	15	18.9	79	100
Totals	16	8.9	32	17.9	59	32.9	49	27.4	23	12.9	179	100

$\chi^2 = 14.41$        $P = < .01$

TABLE 16

# Comparison by Ordinal Position in Family

Position	Only		First		In Between		Last		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	17	17	28	28	37	37	18	18	100	100
Non-successful	15	18.9	19	24.1	27	34.2	18	22.8	79	100
Totals	32	17.9	47	26.3	64	35.6	36	20.2	179	100

$\chi^2 = .99 \quad p = < .90$





score of 114 or below and 18.9% above 114. Proportionally, the children with an I.Q. score above 114 are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institution. Generally, it appears Table 15 indicates that the children with the I.Q. scores of below 105 will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with the I.Q. scores of 105 or above. Apparently, the children with the higher I.Q. scores have more difficulty accepting the private institutional placement and this may be reflected in their adjustment. These findings add support to other research that show that children with an I.Q. above 114 are more difficult to "treat."<sup>11</sup>

The correlation of ordinal position in the family with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. The findings do not support the hypothesis that the "last born" children will more likely make a successful adjustment than the non-last born children. Percentage wise, the findings tend to indicate the last born child will more likely make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment. Of the successful group, 18% were last born while of the non-successful group, 22.8% were last born. Apparently, ordinal position in the family has little bearing on a child's

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

adjustment in the private institution. Other research has shown, however, that the "last born" children were more likely to adjust to a boys' school in Massachusetts.<sup>12</sup>

The correlation of number of times in the detention home with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings tend to support the hypothesis that the less number of times the children had been placed in the detention home prior to placement the more likely they would make a successful adjustment. Of the successful group, 9% of the children were in the detention home no times, 44% 1 time, 33% 2 times and 14% 3 or more times. Of the non-successful group, 3.8% of the children were in no times, 39.2% 1 time, 34.2% 2 times and 22.8% 3 or more times. It appears that children who have not been in the detention home are about 3 times more likely to make a successful adjustment than non-successful adjustment in the private institution. Moreover, it appears that children with 3 or more times in the detention home are about twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment. These findings are not reliable, however, because of the very small sample, especially in the zero number of times in the detention home. The trend, however, would seem to indicate that the children who more often need the controls of the detention home will be less likely to make a successful adjustment in the private institution.

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<sup>12</sup>Kvaraceus, op. cit., p. 482.





The correlation of age at placement with successful or non-successful is insignificant. Percentage wise, the findings tend to support our hypothesis that children placed in the private institutions prior to their 13th birthday would more likely make a successful adjustment than children placed after their 13th birthday. Of the successful group, 13% were less than 13 and 87% were 13 or older; whereas, of the non-successful group, 11.4% were under 13 and 88.6% were 13 or older. Although these findings are insignificant they tend to support a previous study that has shown children placed under 13 years of age are more likely to adjust in the institution.<sup>13</sup> It should be noted, however, that 18% of the children who were 16 or older when placed were successful as compared to 8.9% who were non-successful. Proportionally, the child who is 16 years old or older when placed appears to be more than twice as likely to make a successful, rather than non-successful, adjustment. Other research also supports these findings.<sup>14</sup>

The correlation of psychological diagnosis with successful or non-successful adjustment is very significant.

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<sup>13</sup>Kvaraceus, op. cit., p. 482.

<sup>14</sup>Arbuckle, op. cit., p. 46.

TABLE 19

## Comparison by Psychological Diagnosis

Diagnosis	Neurotic Reaction		Character Disorder		Character Neurosis		Other		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	38	38	40	40	7	7	15	15	100	100
Non-successful	10	12.7	39	49.4	7	8.9	23	29	79	100
Totals	48	26.7	79	44.1	14	7.8	38	21.4	179	100

$\chi^2 = 15.74$ 
 $P = < .01$

TABLE 20

## Comparison by Length of Time in Placement

Time	9 months or less		10 - 15 months		16 months or more		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	11	11	40	40	49	49	100	100
Non-successful	60	75.7	12	15.4	7	8.9	79	100
Totals	71	39.7	52	29	56	31.3	179	100
$\chi^2 = 79.14 \quad P = < .00001$								

The findings confirm the hypothesis that the children who remain in the private institutions longer than nine months will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who are released at or prior to nine months. Percentage wise, of the successful group, 11% were released at or before nine months and 89% after nine months. Of the non-successful group, 75.7% were released at or before nine months and 24.3% after nine months. Proportionally, the children who are released at or before nine months are about seven times more likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institution. These findings are not surprising for the private institutions take a child for an indefinite period of time and if he cannot adjust he is released. It is obvious, if a child can adjust for nine months he will much more likely continue to adjust until he is successfully released. The findings again point out the importance of the first few months in determining whether or not a child is going to be able to adjust to a new situation.

The correlation of church attendance with successful or non-successful adjustment is insignificant. The findings do not support our hypothesis that the children who attend church regularly prior to placement will more likely make a





TABLE 21

## Comparison by Church Attendance

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Regular</u>		<u>Occasional</u>		<u>None</u>		<u>Totals</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Successful	35	35	39	39	26	26	100	100
Non-successful	32	40.5	25	31.7	22	27.8	79	100
Totals	67	37.4	64	35.8	48	26.8	179	100
$\chi^2 = 1.10 \quad P = < .70$								

successful adjustment than the children who do not. Percentage wise, of the successful group, 35% attended regularly and 65% did not. Of the non-successful group, 40.5% attended regularly and 59.5% did not. The findings are too insignificant to be conclusive. Apparently, church attendance has little bearing on whether or not a child will adjust in the private institution. Perhaps this points out that the children who do attend church regularly do so for reasons other than that it is meaningful to them. Or perhaps this points out that the church is not doing an effective job in influencing behavior.

## CHAPTER V

### Summary and Conclusions

This study was made in an attempt to determine if there were certain distinguishing characteristics between children who made a successful adjustment and non-successful adjustment in the private institutions.

The sample consisted of 179 children -- 100 who made a successful adjustment and 79 who made a non-successful adjustment in the private institutions. Since it was impossible to control the many variables involved with children placed in 32 different private institutions and their placement being effectuated by different probation officers, it was necessary to make several assumptions. It was assumed that the children were placed in the private institution best suited to fulfill their needs. It was assumed that the probation officers were comparable in ability and philosophy. And, it was assumed that the private institutions were comparable in determination and purpose in helping the children.

Of the twenty items used to compare the two groups, nine items showed a statistical significant difference.

They are as follows:

1. **RACE** - Contrary to the hypothesis, the findings showed that white children are more likely to make a successful adjustment in the private institutions than non-white children. Proportionally, the non-white children are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment.

2. **AGE AT FIRST COURT APPEARANCE** - It was found that children who were 15 years old or older at the time of their first appearance before court were more likely to make a successful adjustment than children under 15 years of age at the time of their first court appearance. Proportionally, the children who were 15 or older are almost twice as likely to make a successful adjustment than non-successful adjustment in the private institutions.

3. **MOTHER'S AGE AT TIME OF PLACEMENT** - It was found that the children with the medium age or older mothers, at the time of the children's placement, will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with the younger mothers. Proportionally,

the children with the younger mothers are almost twice as likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment in the private institutions.

**4. NUMBER OF CONTACTS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES -**

It was found that the children with fewer number of contacts with the police authorities, at the time of placement, will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with more or many contacts. Proportionally, the children who have four or more contacts are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful than successful adjustment in the private institutions.

**5. GRADE COMPLETED PRIOR TO PLACEMENT -** It was found that children who have completed the 8th grade or higher grade will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who have not. Proportionally, the children who have completed the 8th or higher grade are almost twice as likely to make a successful adjustment than non-successful adjustment.

**6. SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RECORD -** The findings indicated that children with "good" or "fair" behavior records in school will more likely make a successful adjustment



than the children with "poor" behavior records in school. Proportionally, the children with the "poor" behavior records are 1.36 times more likely to make a non-successful adjustment than successful adjustment.

7. INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT - The findings showed that children with an I.Q. score of 114 or less would more likely make a successful adjustment than the children with an I.Q. score above 114. Proportionally, the children with an I.Q. above 114 are more than twice as likely to make a non-successful than successful adjustment.

8. PSYCHOLOGICAL DIAGNOSIS - The findings indicated that children diagnosed by the psychologist and labeled a neurotic reaction will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children labeled a character disorder, character neurosis or "other" diagnosis. Proportionally, the children labeled with a neurotic reaction are about three times more likely to make a successful than non-successful adjustment.

9. LENGTH OF TIME IN PLACEMENT - The findings showed that the children who remain in the private institution longer than nine months will more likely make a successful adjustment than the children who

are released at or prior to nine months. Proportionally, the children who are released at or before nine months are almost seven times more likely to make a non-successful than successful adjustment in the private institutions.

It is felt that based on the above findings the over-all focus or major hypothesis of this study has been confirmed. It is believed that each child does have certain characteristics which do contribute to his successful or non-successful adjustment in the private institution. It appears that it is possible to isolate these distinguishing characteristics, and, if the other variables can be held constant, to use these characteristics to suggest to court workers whether or not a child has a greater or lesser chance of adjusting in the private institution.

In conclusion, this study points to several areas where further research might prove fruitful. It appears it would be valuable to determine the relationships that exist between the nine items that were significant in this study. By correlating these items a more concise and refined picture could be presented of the child who makes a successful and non-successful adjustment in the private institution.



It also seems to the writer that it would be interesting and profitable to make a similar study, such as this, of the children placed in the public institutions by the Kent County Juvenile Court. Although, a few definitions would have to be modified, it seems it would be profitable to determine if there are similar distinguishing characteristics between the children who make a successful and non-successful adjustment in the public institutions. It seems it would then be valuable to compare the children who make a successful adjustment in the private institution with the children who make a successful adjustment in the public institution. This type of research would help make a more refined and reliable predictive instrument.

Further research, also, is needed to explain why girls, who constitute about 25% of the referrals to the court, constitute 59.8% of the court's total population in private institutions. Possible reasons have been previously mentioned, but it appears added research in this area might produce some significant findings.

Another area that should be explored is that of the relationship of probation officers with successful or non-successful adjustment. It seems it would be profitable to determine the successful and non-successful rate of each

probation officer and then compare the children placed by each probation officer, according to the significant items of this study. Dependent on the findings, this possibly might improve the success rate of some probation officers.

It appears it also would be valuable to compare the parents' and the children's attitude toward placement with the significant findings of this study. It seems possible that there might be some significant correlations between attitudes toward placement and the significant items of this study. If there were, this might be one way to measure subjective items such as attitudes.

On the basis of this study it seems it also would be beneficial to classify the private institutions into several categories and then compare these children according to the significant items of this study. It seems there might be some significant differences between the children who adjust in one type of private institution and those who adjust in another.

Finally, a follow-up study would be helpful in checking the validity and reliability of the current findings. This could be done by comparing the children placed this year according to the nine significant items. If these findings were similar and significant the predictive or suggestive value of the study would be enhanced.



## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX I**  
**KENT COUNTY JUVENILE COURT**  
**FACE SHEET**

CASE #:		REFERRAL DATE:		WORKER:				
No.	Name	Age	Date of Birth	Place	Sex	Prev. Ct. Exp.	School/ Employer	Grade
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
<b>CHILD LIVES WITH</b>								
<b>CHILDREN'S ADDRESS</b>								
		<b>OWN PARENTS</b>			<b>STEP PARENTS</b>			
		Father			Mother			
		Address						
		Telephone						
		Age or BD						
		Birthplace						
		Extraction						
		Religion						
		Education						
		Res. in Cty.						
		Marr. Date						
		Div. Date						
		Div. Place						
		Occupation						
		Wk. Inc.						
		Employer						
		Dead? Date						
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>								
1 Married, together								
2 Intact, Sept.								
3 Father dead								
4 Mother dead								
5 Parents dead								
6 Divorced								
7 Sep./Deserted								
8 Unmarried								
9 Leg.Fa. not nat.								



[illegible]

## APPENDIX II

### CHARACTER DISORDER

1. Acts out in response to any emotional tension.
2. Relatively guilt free. Egosyntonic behavior - behavior is acceptable to the client.
3. Massive projection.
4. Insistence on self-justification and the need for change in others.
5. Insensitivity to needs of others.
6. Hopelessness.
7. Inefficient exploitation of others.

### CHARACTER NEUROSIS

1. Acts out in response to any emotional tension.
2. Self blame.
3. Ego-alien behavior - unacceptable behavior to client.
4. Desire to change self.
5. Some sensitivity to the needs of others.
6. Hopefulness.
7. Wanting to give to others, but lacking the ability to do so.

### NEUROTIC REACTION

1. Very anxious.
2. Much self blame - very guilt ridden.
3. Some awareness of the presence of internalized conflict.
4. Inability to see reality clearly - not sure of reality testing.
5. Decision making is difficult.
6. The super-ego overpowers the ego.



### APPENDIX III

<u>Name and Location of Private Institution</u>	<u>Number of Successful Adjustments</u>	<u>Number of Non-successful Adjustments</u>
Barot House Detroit, Michigan	0	1
Boys Republic Farmington, Michigan	5	10
Boystown Omaha, Nebraska	1	1
Berkshire Farms Canaan, New York	1	0
Chapin Hall St. Joseph, Michigan	1	5
Christian Youth Home Grand Rapids, Michigan	0	2
Delta Home for Girls Detroit, Michigan	2	1
Dewing Hall Kalamazoo, Michigan	1	2
Father Gilbaults Terre Haute, Indiana	7	2
Florence Crittenden Home Jackson, Michigan	1	0
Fort Wayne Children's Home Fort Wayne, Indiana	4	5
Gilmory School for Girls Cosaopolis, Pennsylvania	5	4

<u>Name and Location of Private Institution</u>	<u>Number of Successful Adjustments</u>	<u>Number of Non-successful Adjustments</u>
Girls Town Belleville, Michigan	1	0
Guardian Angel Home Detroit, Michigan	1	0
Harbor Creek School for Boys Harbor Creek, Pennsylvania	2	3
Kalamazoo Children's Home Kalamazoo, Michigan	1	0
Michigan Regular Baptist Children's Home St. Louis, Michigan	3	3
Muskegon Children's Home Muskegon, Michigan	2	1
Nazareth Academy Kalamazoo, Michigan	1	0
Oesterlan Home Springfield, Ohio	1	0
Our Lady of Valley School for Girls Wheeling, West Virginia	3	8
Our Lady of Charity Green Bay, Wisconsin	14	3
Our Lady of Charity Refuge Buffalo, New York	1	2
Protestant Children's Home Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan	1	0
Starr Commonwealth Albion, Michigan	13	5



<u>Name and Location of Private Institution</u>	<u>Number of Successful Adjustments</u>	<u>Number of Non-successful Adjustments</u>
St. Anne's Institute Albany, New York	1	0
St. John's Academy Winfield, Kansas	0	1
St. Peter's Home for Boys Detroit, Michigan	1	1
Villa Maria Grand Rapids, Michigan	16	8
Wedgewood Acres Wyoming, Michigan	1	1
White's Institute Wabash, Indiana	7	9
Whaley Memorial Flint, Michigan	2	1

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