# A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF THE NEED FOR COMPULSORY APPROVAL OF PRESCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA

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# A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF THE NEED FOR COMPULSORY APPROVAL OF PRESCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA

by

Jannis Breeden Shea

An Abstract

Submitted to the College of Home Economics
Michigan State University of Agriculture and
Applied Science in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Home Management
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the need for compulsory approval of preschools in Louisiana.

A tentative schedule of standards for use in studying twenty selected preschools in Baton Rouge, Louisiana was compiled from a revision of existing requirements for voluntary licensing of preschools in Louisiana, from licensing requirements of other states and from the literature. The standards were submitted to a panel of three specialists in the field of nursery education for their evaluation and suggestions for revisions.

The revised standards comprised the schedule which was utilized in the interviews with staff members of preschools and in observation of the daily program of each school under observation. Data collected and examined in this study's survey of twenty selected preschools included information on enrollment, staff, health policies and procedures, plant and equipment, program, records, and home-school relations.

Although weaknesses were evident in all areas under consideration, there appeared to be a trend among directors of preschools toward an increasing awareness of their responsibilities in offering more challenging educational opportunities for young children.

The findings from each of the categories of preschool administration under consideration are summarized as follows:

1. In the area of "enrollment" several schools exceeded the maximum recommendations for size of nursery and kindergarten groups. Also, the ratio of children to adults was found to be in excess of recommended standards in several schools.

2. Lack of professional preparation posed the most serious weakness found in the area of "staff".

3. Findings from the study of "health policies and procedures" revealed that preschools needed to improve in effective use of health record forms, daily health inspections, and in establishing definite policies relating to routine health procedures to be followed.

4. Several problems were evident in the area concerning "plant and equipment"; these included inadequate indoor play space, inadequate facilities for storing children's clothing, limited toilet and washbowl facilities, poor provisions for isolation areas, and limited equipment for outdoor play equipment.

5. Reports from the section of "program" were encouraging in that the majority of schools were making progress toward providing a general program based on needs and interests of the children.

6. In the area of "records" evidence of information pertaining to family case records and children's personal records was scant. Areas in which standards were moderately well met included records concerning personal data about the family; cumulative records of physical, emotional, intellectual and social characteristics and behavior; and periodic summaries of child's progress at appropriate intervals.

7. The opportunities most often used to stimulate the active relationship between parents and the school included casual contacts, specific appointments, school visits by parents for the observation of children's activities, initial

conferences with the parent before the child enters the group, and parent and child visits to school. The potential for making use of group meetings and home visits was often overlooked.

A program of compulsory licensing, as a long-range goal, would be a major contribution toward eliminating or reducing the inadequacies in preschool education found by this study.

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The writer wishes to express her sincere appreciation to all who helped in the preparation of this problem. This includes officials from the state departments of education, health, and welfare whose replies to letters of inquiry made possible the survey of licensing practices for preschools in each of the fifty states; the preschool administrators in Baton Rouge, Louisiana who made possible visits to their schools; specialists in the field of nursery education who served as judges of the schedule: Dr. Clara Tucker of Louisiana State University, Miss Emily Hobbs of the University of Oklahoma, and Miss Willie Fletcher of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute.

Special gratitude is due the writer's problem director, Dr. Bernice D. Borgman, for her discerning guidance and valuable suggestions. Sincere appreciation is extended to Dr. Borgman for her untiring patience in directing this problem by correspondence with the writer.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

During recent years, especially since World War II when preschools became a necessity for children of working mothers, awareness of the needs of young children has been increasing among both professionals in preschool education and among lay people. The educational value of preschools to young children is becoming recognized and accepted today as a contribution to children's learning to live in a democratic society.

"Since education is a means by which individuals are initiated into the ways of their culture, any American educational group has its purpose clearly defined, namely, to help American children learn to live in a democratic culture. The preschool has an important role to play in achieving this purpose since it offers children their earliest opportunity outside of the home to live with a group of contemporaries and thus to develop attitudes toward themselves and others that may be basic to their learning to live in a democracy."[1] The preschool is not meant to take the place of the home and family life, but

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[1]National Association for Nursery Education, Essentials of Nursery Education, A Report Prepared by the

rather to supplement and enrich the child's development.

The foundation of our democracy is built upon the respect for individuality. This, too, is the foundation of a good preschool program. The curriculum has as its basis the needs and interests of the individual children in the group. "It may be said then that nursery education, through its deep respect for the individual, its emphasis on producing sound, critical, creative thinking, and its promotion of cooperative effort may make an important contribution to each child's growth and in turn play an important part in the total educational scheme."[2]

Recognizing then the importance of preschools as a foundation for democratic living, one might ask several questions. In the complex society of today how much of the responsibility for meeting the needs of the very young children should be assumed by agencies outside the home? In supplementing the contributions of the home to the growth, development, and education of young children, what is the role of the preschool? If programs for group care of young children are considered to be a valuable supplement to the home, what assurance is there that the agencies which operate these are assuming proper responsibility for the education of our youngest citizens? Are there any

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Publication Committee of the National Association for Nursery Education (Kingston, Rhode Island: National Association for Nursery Education, 1957), p. 7.

[2]Ibid., p. 9.

state laws requiring certain standards for programs for group care of normal children under six years of age? Do these standards safe-guard the child's emotional, social, and intellectual well-being as well as his physical welfare?

"Wherever children are, whatever their environment, and whatever their experiences may be, for good or for ill, they are learning."[1] Whether or not a place for group care calls itself a "school", education is taking place there; the lives of young citizens are being affected. Therefore, what takes place in a preschool may be considered a long-range concern of the state. Such questions as the following may be asked: What kinds of experiences is the child having? Are these experiences on the level of his abilities? Do they meet his needs? Are they detrimental or helpful to his normal growth and development? Are the people who work with children in these places qualified to guide and influence the children during their important formative years?

## Purpose

The purposes of this problem were two-fold: (1) to investigate the need for compulsory licensing of preschools in Louisiana through a survey of the extent to which the

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[1]Cornelia Goldsmith, " Good Education for Our Young Children - What is it?", Good Education for Young Children (rev. ed., New York: New York State Council for Early Childhood Education, 1947), pp. 3 - 15.

preschools in a typical city were meeting a prescribed set of standards. (2) to contribute to better understanding of the importance of the licensing aspect of preschool education.

## Justification

Presently in Louisiana only child-care institutions and day-care centers are subject to compulsory licensing under the supervision of the Louisiana State Welfare Department. Licensing in accordance with approved standards for preschools also would offer the following advantages:

1. Definition of a satisfactory program
2. Provision for evaluation of the educational program and for encouraging continuous improvement
3. Protection of standards for reputable schools
4. Strengthening of nursery education in the state
5. Insurance of a suitable school environment for young children
6. Supervision by trained personnel.

In many of Louisiana's private preschools, the teaching personnel have been trained in elementary education but have not had training in child development and nursery education. Consequently, many are not aware of the particular educational needs of preschool children nor of ways of meeting these needs. Private preschools in Louisiana could benefit greatly from state supervision and assistance offered through professionally trained consultants.

Since there is an increasing awareness and interest concerning the importance of meeting the needs of children in the formative years, a survey of conditions existing in a typical Louisiana city would seem to be an important contribution in pointing up the needs for compulsory licensing of preschools in Louisiana.

## Scope of the Study

The study was concerned with preschool programs for groups of normal children over two but not over six years of age, who regularly spend only a part of the day in a group situation. It did not include institutions set up for the care of dependent children or for children who are physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped; nor did it include Sunday Schools where groups of children go for only one or two hours, one day per week.

The focus of investigation was limited to preschools, i.e., nursery schools and kindergartens which have as their purpose the educational values to the child. It did not include day-care centers.

## Definitions

1. Preschools - a place operating for a period of four consecutive hours or less daily, offering educational advantages to the child.

2. Compulsory licensing - mandatory licensing or approval of preschools by some state control such as state departments of education, welfare and/or health.

3. Voluntary licensing - existence of state licensing standards but no provisions for mandatory licensing.

## Assumptions

1. It is assumed that inherent in compulsory licensing of preschools would be provisions for qualified personnel who would periodically inspect and consequently advise the licensed schools so as to achieve and maintain the standards set.

2. It is assumed that preschools in one Louisiana city - Baton Rouge - represent situations typical of preschools elsewhere in the state.

## Procedure

### Reviewing the Literature and Licensing Regulations from Various States

To develop a background for evaluation of state licensing requirements, this problem was begun by a library survey of literature on the subject of standards for licensing. An examination was made of available library resource material as well as pamphlets and bulletins issued by national and state professional organizations in nursery education. The few reports available seemed to be an indication of a lack of licensing regulations in a large number of states. To determine the extent to which states have in effect a program of compulsory licensing, information relating to licensing practices and procedures was requested from each of the fifty states. A letter was sent to the state department of education in each state requesting

information as to what licensing standards for preschools existed and whether licensing was compulsory or voluntary. In order to obtain as complete information as possible, it was requested that the letter be forwarded to other state departments if the information was not available at the state department of education. (See Appendix I for letter.) Findings from the states were categorized to determine the states having no licensing requirements and those having voluntary or compulsory licensing. Material received from states also served as source material for revising Louisiana standards.

## Revising the Louisiana Standards for Licensing Preschools

A copy of existing requirements for voluntary licensing of preschools in Louisiana was secured from the state department of education for evaluation. This was revised to incorporate considerations from library materials and the requirements of other states. This tentative set of standards for licensing was submitted to three specialists in the field of nursery education for their evaluation and suggested revisions.[1]

The revised standards were utilized in the interviews with staff members of preschools and in observation of the

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[1]Dr. Clara Tucker, Head - College of Home Economics, Louisiana State University; Emily Hobbs, Assistant Professor-Child Development, Oklahoma State University; Willie Fletcher, Professor-Child Development, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute

daily program of each school under investigation.

The following aspects of nursery education were included in the survey.[1]

1. Enrollment
   Age range of children enrolled; number of children enrolled; number of children per unit; adult-child ratio

2. Staff
   Qualifications of teachers and other staff members

3. Health
   Immunization of children; health history; daily health practices

4. Plant
   Location; lighting; ventilation; temperature; sanitation; fire prevention; indoor and outdoor play space; space for eating, resting, toileting; isolation; kitchen

5. Equipment
   For play: for large muscle development; manipulative skills; construction and experiment; dramatic play; aesthetic experiences; nature experiences

   For routines: for eating; sleeping; toileting and washing; first aid; preparation and service of food

6. Program
   Flexibility; variety and balance of activities; provision for children's learning experiences in physical, mental, social and emotional development

7. Records
   Background information of family and child; health and progress records

8. Home-School Relations
   Relationship between parents and school; home-school communication; parent participation

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[1]See Appendix II for schedule used in the survey of preschools.

## Collecting and Analyzing Data Concerning Existing Conditions in Louisiana Preschools

Twenty preschools in Baton Rouge were visited between January and May, 1962 to secure the information desired in this study. An urban area was considered typical of Louisiana's preschools since most of them are located in urban areas. The schools included in the study were of the following types of sponsorship:

3 - Private, non-church affiliated

16- Church affiliated

1 - University laboratory

Arrangements were made for visiting the schools through a letter[1] to directors of the schools sent two weeks prior to the visit. Visits were limited to one daily session consisting of two or three hours at each school.

Findings obtained by use of the schedule during visits were tabulated and described. (Chapter III) Based upon findings of this study, recommendations for further action were made. (Chapter IV)

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[1]See Appendix III for letter sent to directors.

## CHAPTER II

## THE NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISION IN THE FIELD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The increased demand for the services of preschools is evidence of their widespread acceptance. The programs and methods by which children are taught influence their learning throughout later school years. If the school environment fails to challenge children with appropriate developmental tasks, or if their teachers lack adequate qualifications, their experience in the early school years may seriously hamper their later progress in schools. For these reasons parents need reliable guides in selecting a school for their children. They also need assurance that when the term "school" is used, it applies to a bona-fide educational institution.

The state education agency might logically assume responsibility for seeing that children who begin their education in public or non-public preschools have educational experiences of satisfactory quality. Compulsory licensing at the state level is a means by which the quality of early childhood education can be improved. The purposes of this chapter are to discuss some aspects of preschool licensing at the state level and also to suggest responsibilities of state departments of education

for preschools.

## Some Aspects of Preschool Licensing

### Licensing Defined

Some professions, through their professional groups, have well defined standards and means for maintaining them. The medical profession, social work, and professional nursing are examples. Their standards are maintained by setting up boards of examiners in each state who scrutinize the qualifications of prospective members of the profession. In some instances, society has delegated to government the responsibility for regulating many aspects of business and services for the protection of people. For example, there are fire, building, and sanitary codes to insure general health and safety. There are regulations concerning private and public schools, child welfare services, and the daytime care of children away from their homes.

Preschool licensing or approval refers to the "requirement by law that a license or a permit be secured, or some form of registration take place before a person, agency, corporation, etc. take on the care of children during the day away from their own homes."[1] Approval is further defined as "the official act of the state

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[1]Winifred A. Moore, Some Aspects of Day Care Licensing, A Report for the Child Welfare League of America (New York: Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1947), p.6.

department of education certifying that a school or a school system complies with laws, rules, or regulations for administrative purposes. Approval of a school may be a statute or a regulation of the state board of education having the force of law. Since the nursery school and kindergarten are considered units of the elementary schools, these programs are included in a plan of state approval which meets standards for the operation of an educational program for young children."[1]

A program of approval of preschool facilities necessitates the preparation of appropriate standards which are issued as pamphlets or bulletins to the public.

Another concern of licensing is the process by which the law is carried out. This requires a trained staff who must visit regularly the preschool institutions for the purposes of evaluating facilities and programs of schools. After observation, the staff may or may not recommend approval. Maintaining a staff to facilitate the approval program is an expense which many state departments of education at present are unable or unwilling to assume.

## The Need for Licensing

The function of licensing is a protective one, for

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[1] Council of Chief State School Officers, Responsibilities of State Departments of Education for Nursery School and Kindergarten, A Policy Statement Prepared by the Council of Chief State School Officers (Washington D.C. : Council of Chief School Officers, 1951), p. 14.

through licensing, services are improved and there is increased understanding by the public. As a result there is support for adequate standards. "Cooperation on the part of community agencies, professional organizations and citizen groups working closely with the public agencies is necessary for increasing public awareness of children's needs, to understanding of licensing regulations, and to support for improved services."[1] Furthermore, the fundamental purpose of licensing is the protection of children receiving preschool services by establishing and maintaining adequate standards and in the improvement of all such services. There is increased awareness that sound personality development depends on healthy growth during infancy and early childhood.

The increasing employment of women brought impetus to the growth of day care facilities. Similarly, the increased interest in nursery school and kindergarten education for children has contributed to the development of the services. Observation and research studies point out the extremely variable standards under which these schools operate. Concern for good programs for children has stimulated the interest of parents, preschool teachers, as well as the general public so that there is an increasing demand for state approval of services for children.

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[1]Ibid., p. 7.

States Requiring Licensing

There are certain limitations to the accurate presentation of information concerning licensing in the various states. This is due mainly to the variation in interpretation and enforcement of laws found in different states. Frequently, laws are so loosely written that their interpretation is difficult. Further complicating the problem is that the responsibility of different departments is not clearly designated. Many states do not distinguish clearly between day-care and preschool standards.

Moustakas and Berson, in their survey of nursery schools and child care centers, published in 1955 a chart (See Table 1) showing the states requiring licensing and listing the licensing agency.[1]

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[1]Minnie R. Berson and Clark E. Moustakas, The Nursery School and Child Care Center (New York: Whiteside and Morrow, 1955), p. 217.

TABLE 1

LICENSING OF NURSERY SCHOOL AND/OR CHILD CARE CENTERS:
STATES REQUIRING AND LICENSING AGENCY

| State | Licensing Agency | Licenses N. Schools* | Licenses C.C. Centers* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama | Public Welfare | ____ | * |
| California | Social Welfare | * | * |
| Delaware | State Board Welf. | ____ | * |
| Washington DC. | Office of Health | * | * |
| Idaho | Public Assist. Dept. | ____ | * |
| Illinois | Public Welfare | * | * |
| Indiana | Public Welfare | ____ | * |
| Iowa | Att. Gen.'s Office | ____ | * |
| Louisiana | Public Welfare | * | * |
| Maryland | Dept. Education | * | ____ |
| Massachusetts | Board of Health | * | * |
| Michigan | Social Welfare | * | * |
| Minnesota | Social Welfare | * | * |
| Mississippi | Public Welfare | ____ | * |
| Montana | Public Welfare | * | * |
| Nebraska | Dept. Asst., Ch.Welf. | ____ | * |
| New Jersey | Dept. Education | * | * |
| New Mexico | Public Welfare | * | * |
| North Carolina | Public Welfare | * | * |
| Ohio | Public Welfare | * | * |
| Oregon | State Board Health | ____ | * |
| Pennsylvania | Public Instruction | * | ____ |

*Indicates that Licensing is required.

TABLE 1 - Continued

| State | Licensing Agency | Licenses N. Schools* | Licenses C. C. Centers* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tennessee | Dept. Education | * | ____ |
| Texas | Public Welfare | ____ | * |
| Utah | Public Welfare | ____ | * |
| Virginia | Dept. Welfare and Instru. | * | * |
| Washington | Social Security | ____ | * |
| West Virginia | Dept. Public Assist. | ____ | * |
| Wisconsin | Public Welfare | * | * |

According to the statistics shown in Table 1, sixteen states and the District of Columbia had programs of compulsory approval of nursery schools. This might or might not include licensing of kindergartens since in some states nurseries are included as child-care facilities and are approved by those standards, whereas, kindergartens may be part of the education program and are subject to those regulations. It would seem to be practical to include nursery schools and kindergartens as preschools under the sponsorship of the department of education and maintain child-care centers under the direction of welfare departments.

In the 1962 survey of states undertaken as part of this problem all fifty states responded. Findings as shown in Table 2 are somewhat different from those of Moustakas and Berson in 1955.

TABLE 2

STATES HAVING COMPULSORY, VOLUNTARY OR NO LICENSING, LICENSING STANDARDS, AND THE LICENSING AGENCY

| State | Compulsory Licensing | Voluntary Licensing | No Licensing | Licensing Standards | Licensing Agency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama | | | * | | |
| Alaska | | | * | | |
| Arizona | | | * | | |
| Arkansas | | | * | | |
| California | * | | | * | Private-Welf. Public-Educ. |
| Colorado | | | * | | |
| Connecticut | | | * | | |
| Delaware | | | * | | |
| Florida | | | * | | |
| Georgia | | * | | * | |
| Hawaii | * | | | * | Soc.Service |
| Illinois | * | | | * | Mental Health |
| Idaho | | | * | | |
| Indiana | | | * | | |
| Iowa | * | | | * | Soc. Welf. |
| Kansas | | | * | | |

*Indicates that state has Compulsory, Voluntary or No Licensing, and Licensing Standards.

TABLE 2- Continued

| State | Compulsory Licensing | Voluntary Licensing | No Licensing | Licensing Standards | Licensing Agency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kentucky | * | | | * | Education |
| Louisiana | | * | | * | |
| Maine | | | * | | |
| Maryland | * | | | * | Education |
| Massachusetts | * | | | * | Health |
| Michigan | * | | | * | Welfare |
| Minnesota | | | * | | |
| Mississippi | | * | | * | |
| Missouri | | | * | | |
| Montana | | | * | | |
| Nebraska | | * | | * | |
| Nevada | * | | | * | Nursery-Welfare Kindergarten Education |
| New Hampshire | * | | | | Education |
| New Jersey | * | | | * | Education |
| New Mexico | | | * | | |
| New York | | * | | * | |
| North Carolina | | | * | | |
| North Dakota | | | * | | |
| Ohio | | | * | | |
| Oklahoma | | | * | | |
| Oregon | | | * | | |

TABLE 2 - Continued

| State | Compulsory Licensing | Voluntary Licensing | No Licensing | Licensing Standards | Licensing Agency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pennsylvania | * | | | * | Education |
| Rhode Island | | * | | * | |
| South Carolina | | | * | | |
| South Dakota | * | | | | Education |
| Tennessee | * | | | * | Welfare |
| Texas | | | * | | |
| Utah | | | * | | |
| Vermont | | | * | | |
| Virginia | | | * | | |
| Washington | | | * | | |
| West Virginia | | * | | * | |
| Wisconsin | | | * | | |
| Wyoming | | | * | | |

Interpretation of available data indicated that fourteen states had programs of compulsory licensing for preschools. Of this group of fourteen, two states indicated that they had no minimum requirements for licensing. In these two states the licensing requirement was met in the following manner. New Hampshire required only certification from the New Hampshire state health department for licensing; South Dakota issued a license on the basis of teacher's qualifications. Services of the departments of health,

welfare, and education were utilized, with both education and welfare departments being responsible for directing the licensing program in one state. Seven states had programs of voluntary licensing. In twenty-nine states there were no licensing programs either compulsory or voluntary for any type of day care for children under six.

Since there was no uniform pattern among states for establishing and implementing programs for licensing of preschools, results of a survey such as this were based upon interpretation of available data. Often, states did not distinguish between day-care and preschool services; i.e. there may have been specific requirements for day-care centers with no mention as to whether or not preschools were included. In some instances where states had no licensing requirement, minimum standards were recommended to be used as a guide in improving the quality of established schools as well as new ones being planned. Occasionally there was no distinction made between requirements for day-care and those for preschool licensing.

## Relationship of Standards to Licensing

Ideally, state departments having a licensing law should include standards which must be met in order to receive a license. This procedure was not always practiced as evidenced in the two cases cited earlier in this paper. To consider only a single factor such as teacher certification, or approval by a health agency greatly reduces the

value of the licensing requirement.

"Required standards may appear as specific provisions of the licensing act, or code, enacted by the state legislature and incorporated in the state law, and they are issued as "rules and regulations" defining minimum standards and practices, prepared by the department charged by law with this responsibility."[1]

Recommended standards have no legal authority, but are important aids to standard-raising and to the acceptance of a good program, and stimulate the desire of parents and of community to provide the best for their children. Recommended standards have been issued not only by the licensing agency, but also by state departments which have no licensing responsibility. Also agencies and organizations other than state departments have prepared and issued various statements and recommended standards referring to their specialized areas of knowledge.

### Preparation of Standards and Their Enforcement

Besides the state departments of health, education, and welfare, there are other departments which also share in the responsibility of preparation of standards. These include agriculture, labor, mental health, fire, building, and sanitation commissioners, etc. The actual preparation of a statement of standards is carried out by the department

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[1] Winifred Moore, op. cit., p. 12 .

to which this responsibility is delegated by law. However, the cooperation of other departments may be volunteered, requested or authorized by law. Professional agencies such as the National Association for Nursery Education and the Child Welfare League of America, etc. frequently share in the preparation of standards.

Enforcement of licensing regulations is carried out by means of inspections, supervision of services, and by consultation service to persons responsible for services to children. Consultations may be on a compulsory or a voluntary basis. The most evident factors affecting the adequacy of licensing are (1) the clarity of administrative responsibility and cooperation between the various departments involved; (2) provision of adequate staff in the licensing agency; (3) existence of "teeth" in the law, with provisions for a penalty for non-compliance; and (4) support of public opinion.[1]

The need for sufficient staff is frequently referred to as an essential factor in the ability of the responsible department to implement existing licensing regulations. "Where staff shortages exist, a damper is naturally put on the state department's efforts to publicize the need for licensing, or to encourage requests for consultation, and the effectiveness of the licensing program is greatly

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[1]Ibid., p. 16.

limited.... Those states where the licensing program has been most fully developed consider that a feeling of mutual cooperation between operators and the licensing staff, and the availability of consultation on a voluntary basis have been essential factors in improving the daytime care of children."[1]

## Responsibilities of State Departments of Education for Licensing

The widespread acceptance that nursery school and kindergarten represent an extension of the primary grades for children under six and thus require an organized education program has resulted in much demand for educational planning and leadership.

"Our system of constitutional government makes the states responsible for the organization and administration of public education and for the general supervision of non-public schools."[2] Other educational organizations such as National Education Association, Educational Policies Commission, Association of Childhood Educational International, U.S. Office of Education, and the White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1950 and 1960 have also endorsed nursery school and kindergarten as the beginning units of elementary education.

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[1]Ibid.

[2]National Council of Chief School Officers, Our System of Education (Washington, D.C. : the Council, 1950), p. 9 .

Over the years, there have been four major steps in the development of school legislation for young children: (1) Legislation is enacted which enables communities to establish kindergartens and to provide for use of local funds for them. (All states with the exception of one have done this) (2) The state provides money for kindergartens. (23 states have state aid for these programs) (3) The state authorizes local schools to establish nursery schools and to use their own funds for them or to receive private funds for this purpose. (17 states do this) (4) Voluntary or mandatory registration and approval of nonpublic schools exists. (24 states provide or require this.)[1]

Place of Nursery Schools and Kindergartens in the Total Education Program

A complete understanding and acceptance of the importance of preschool education in the total education of the child and hence the need for licensing requirements, cannot be assured until the purposes of nursery school and kindergarten education are clearly defined. The contribution which preschools make to the education of children and their parents is summarized as follows:

1. They provide opportunities for children to associate with their peers in a stimulating environment.

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[1]Council of Chief State School Officers, op. cit., 1961, p. 8.

2. Parents learn more about their responsibilities through professional guidance.

3. The amount of independence and self-determination allowed an American child of three and four years makes the conventional age of six late for school entrance. Restrictions on the child at the preschool age can do much to damage his natural curiosity and desire to learn.

4. Preschools supplement the home environment which may not be able to sufficiently challenge the child's maximum growth and development.

5. They provide suitable play space, a wide range of play materials and playmates of similar age.

6. Preschools make possible the gradual transition from the home to the school.

7. Cultural deprivations can be diminished if children receive educational opportunities early.

8. As more mothers enter the national labor force, it seems certain that the sound development of children as well as the national welfare requires the establishment and operation of good preschools.

9. Preschools provide opportunities for children to learn to take their place in a group, to have confidence in their powers, and to show initiative in work and play.

10. Preschools also make a special contribution to the handicapped child. "The greatest promise of helping him is in the very early years."[1]

## Responsibilities and Services of State Departments of Education for Preschools

The National Council of Chief State School Officers recommends that the state departments of education assume the following responsibilities as part of their leadership role.

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[1]Ibid., pp. 9 - 10.

1. Extend to all children three to six years of age on a voluntary basis equal opportunities for preschool education.

2. Develop and assume leadership for preschools as an integral part of public elementary schools in the state school system.

3. Establish certification for teachers in early childhood education and approve programs leading to certification.

4. Guarantee at least a minimum level of education through constant evaluation of services for children.

5. Develop plans for initiation of parent education programs or the improvement of existing programs.

6. Conserve human resources by establishing preschools which help to identify early needs and problems of children, and to provide the nurture and education that may, in the long run, prevent or reduce the need for treatment of later behavior difficulties.

7. Facilitate and extend the use of existing research findings in child growth and development through programs which demonstrate how new knowledge may be put into practice.

8. Collect information and statistics on early childhood education, including number of schools and their location; number of teachers and their professional preparation and experience; number of children enrolled; and other facts relating to the operation and quality of the schools.

9. Establish standards, regulations, and guides for administrators and teachers in raising the quality of preschool programs in public and nonpublic schools .

10. Coordinate the efforts of groups in the state concerned with educational programs and bring other agencies into the planning of programs when their responsibilities relate to those of the state education agency.

11. Include preschools in the foundation program for state school support.

12. Provide consultative services in the initiation of new programs and in the improvement of existing programs.

13. Recommend needed legislation or changes in present statutes.

14. Include preschools in the regular state program of approval and accreditation.[1]

Purposes of a State Plan for Approval of Preschools

The Council of Chief State School Officers lists the following major purposes of a state program for improvement of public and non-public preschools.

1. To define a satisfactory program.

2. To provide for evaluating educational programs and for encouraging continuous improvement.

3. To protect the standing of reputable schools.

4. To provide professional guidance.

5. To insure a suitable school environment for young children.[2]

The state departments of education, by developing standards for approval of preschools, would recognize their leadership role for the extension of education for the very young. The essential standards for evaluating preschools should include the following categories: physical facilities, equipment, space, educational program, personnel, provision for health, safety, and sanitation, size of school,

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[1]Ibid., pp. 11 - 12.

[2]Ibid., p. 15.

enrollment, teacher-pupil ratio, length of school day and year, parent education program, school records, and financing. Such standards for approval should be included in a printed manual prepared by the state education agency and distributed to the public.

To evaluate educational programs and to encourage continuous improvement necessitates having professionally trained staff whose responsibility it is to implement an effective program for this purpose. Without this service any licensing procedure is virtually meaningless. The problem of financing this place of a licensing program must be met satisfactorily by each state.

Reputable schools frequently have difficulty in competing for support with those schools whose purpose is not based upon educational opportunities for young children. The general public may not be aware of differences which exist between the two nor of the contribution to a child's development they have a right to expect from reputable schools. An effective licensing program would give distinction to schools which meet established requirements and would also give the general public a sound basis on which to select preschool facilities for their children.

Surveys of existing schools reveal that directors of preschools, particularly of those schools which are privately owned and operated have had insufficient professional training. Their contribution to preschool education would be more valuable if professional guidance were made

available in order to give needed direction and assistance for improving the programs of these facilities.

Without the assurance of a suitable school environment for young children, there is little to be gained from a group experience of this kind. In fact, an unhealthy environment is likely to be detrimental to the child's later adjustment in elementary school. A program of compulsory licensing and professional supervision is an effective means of helping to promote a suitable school environment for young children.

## Summary

It is evident from the survey that many states were concerned, at least to some degree, with providing good facilities for education of children under six. Some states had progressed further than others in assuming this responsibility. There were many problems involved in establishment and implementation of standards. Reasons given for not having standards, as stated in letters received from the survey of states, included the following.

1. The department of education has no jurisdiction over places for group care of preschool age.
2. The department of education has authority only over public schools.
3. State funds are not available for schools for children under five and therefore no regulations are established.
4. Trained personnel are lacking .
5. When health, education, and welfare have not

> been given any legal responsibility they do not wish to assume responsibility for setting standards.

Because the educational aspect of preschools is of primary concern the state department of education would be the appropriate governmental agency to be charged by law to assume responsibility for including this educational opportunity as part of its sponsorship.

At present there seem to be no generally accepted criteria for an adequate licensing law. Under the guidance of professional leadership, standards for approval could well be established which states could adapt to their particular needs.

A professional staff would need to be provided for implementing a program of compulsory approval through inspections, supervision and consultation. With the establishment and implementation of standards for compulsory approval the quality of preschools would be greatly improved. With the increase in quality, there would be a greater challenge for young people to pursue preschool teaching and administration as a profession, thus alleviating to some extent the problem of inadequately trained staff.

## CHAPTER III

## A SUMMARY OF EXISTING STANDARDS IN PRESCHOOLS AS COMPARED TO SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF PRESCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA

Because programs for care and education of preschool children are being offered today by a number of diverse organizations in many different forms and variety of patterns, there is an urgent need for the development and enforcement of licensing standards for such programs. Although day-care centers in Louisiana, at the present writing, are already included in a licensing program, preschools are not. Hence the need for licensing standards for preschools in the state bears investigation.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings from a survey of existing conditions in twenty selected preschools in a Louisiana metropolitan area. The data were obtained through observation of the schools in session and by interviewing the staff person in charge. The observer used a schedule which provided data for use in comparing existing conditions with proposed standards. (See Appendix II for schedule.)

Included in the schedule were the following aspects of preschool administration: enrollment, staff, health policies and procedures, plant and equipment, program,

records, and home-school relations.

The schools selected to study were located in an urban area, since in Louisiana, most preschools are located in urban areas. The following types of sponsorship were included in the schools under investigation:

3 - Private non-church affiliated

16 - Church affiliated

1 - University laboratory

In the ensuing discussion the findings concerning existing practices are compared with suggested standards for licensing.

## Enrollment

Diversity of opinion regarding the composition of a preschool group as to size, age upon entry, adult-child ratios, etc. was found among recommendations in the literature and of nursery educators currently working in the field. The answer depends upon the number, skill and experience of teachers; the facilities available; and other similar factors. A number of authorities in the field of child development have written on the subject of enrollment. Among those whose literature served as a basis for establishing recommended standards were Heinrich and Elizabeth Waechter, Rose Alschuler, Karen Ellstrom, Clark Moustakas and Minnie Berson. Also the published standards of approval for child care centers and preschools in the states of Michigan, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey were considered.

On the subject of age upon entry into preschool groups,

Rose Alschuler suggests age groups as follows:

Group I , Nursery, 2 - 3½ years
Group II, Junior Kindergarten, 3½ - 5 years
Group III, Kindergarten, 5 - 6 years[1]

It was the opinion of the judges who served as consultants for evaluating suggested standards that a child of less than three years of age was not sufficiently mature to benefit from structured group experiences for the preschool age child. Child-care facilities, whose major concern is for the physical welfare of the child, usually do include children of two years. Since this survey included only preschools, the requirements of three years for entrance into nursery school and of five years for entrance into kindergarten were set as minimum ages for children to enter preschool groups.

Sizes of groups for nursery schools and kindergartens are recommended by various authorities. Waechter and Waechter suggest figures for numbers of children in a group as follows:

Age 3 ..... 18 - 22 children in group
" 4 ..... 22 - 25 " " "
" 5 ..... up to 25 " " "[2]

The optimal number of children per group as suggested by Rose Alschuler is 16 - 30; numbers for groups of varying

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[1]Rose Alschuler, Children's Centers (New York: Wm. Morrow & Co., 1942), p. 97.

[2]Heinrich H. Waechter and Elizabeth Waechter, Schools for the Very Young (Printed and bound in U.S.A.: copyright by F.W. Dodge Corp., 1951) p. 37.

ages of children is recommended as follows:

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ages | 2 - 3½ | years | of | age | ..... | 16 - 22 | children | in | group |
| " | 3½ - 5 | " | " | " | ..... | 22 - 25 | " | " | " |
| " | 5 | " | " | " | ..... | 25 - 30 | " | " | "[1] |

Figures recommended as maximal group enrollment for child-care centers in the state of New Jersey have been set at:

15 - three year olds
18 - four " "
25 - five " "[2]

The suggested standards used in this study of twenty children for maximum enrollment of nursery school units and twenty-five children for maximum enrollment of kindergartens approximated the average of the figures from the sources listed above.

To enable preschools to comply with maximum enrollment recommendations for size of group, several units may be necessary in order to provide for the total number of children enrolled. Where schools are sufficiently large to require several units, maturity groupings are recommended in order to offer experiences suitable to the various levels of development.

The ratio of adults to children is scaled to the children's growth toward independence, the index commonly used being chronological age. Standards for approval of

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[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 98.

[2]Division of Curriculum and Instruction Office of Elementary Education, Standards for Approval of Child Care Centers, A Report Prepared by the State of New Jersey Department of Education (Trenton, New Jersey, 1959), p. 14.

child-care centers in New Jersey recommend the following ratio:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| three year olds | 8 - 10 | children | per | teacher |
| four " " | 10 - 12 | " | " | " |
| five " " | 15 - 20 | " | " | "[1] |

According to Karen Hilstrom, the average number of children per adult suggested by the National Association for Nursery Education is:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 adult per | 10 - 14 | three year | olds |
| " " " | 14 - 18 | four " | " |
| " " " | 18 - 20 | five " | "[2] |

Alschuler suggests an over-all ratio of eight to ten children per adult.[3] Adult-child ratios cited by Karen Hilstrom were considered to have too few adults, hence ratios as required in New Jersey standards were selected as being more acceptable.

All reference sources reviewed emphasized the importance of having two adults present in any group as a safety precaution, regardless of size of group or age of children.

On the basis of all the foregoing considerations, recommendations for enrollment were established. The suggested standards for preschool enrollment are enumerated in the schedule as shown in Table 3.

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[1] Ibid., p. 14.

[2] Karen Hilstrom, "The Study of State Space and Staff Requirements for Nursery Schools", The Journal of Nursery Education, XV (Summer, 1960), p. 143.

[3] Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 79.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR ENROLLMENT

| Omit* | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 2 | 10 | a. | Nursery school age shall be defined as beginning at three years as of September 1 of the year beginning school. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | b. | Kindergarten age shall be defined as beginning at four years and eight months as of September 1 of the year beginning school. |
| 8 | 3 | 9 | c. | Maximum enrollment of a nursery school unit shall not exceed 20 children. |
| 0 | 4 | 16 | d. | Maximum enrollment of a kindergarten unit shall not exceed 25 children. |
| 0 | 5 | 15 | e. | Schools shall maintain as many units as are needed to provide for the children enrolled. |
| 6 | 6 | 8 | f. | Maturity groupings are recommended where several units are provided. |
| | | | g. | Ratio of adults to children shall not exceed: |
| 10 | 4 | 6 | | 1 adult to 8 - 10 three year olds |
| 5 | 9 | 6 | | 1 adult to 10 - 12 four year olds |
| 0 | 6 | 14 | | 1 adult to 15 - 20 five year olds |
| 0 | 5 | 15 | | Besides the preschool teacher, there shall at all times be another adult available in case of emergency. |

*The column headed Omit indicates that the statement did not apply to the school situation because the factor under consideration did not exist or was not applicable to the school under observation.

Of the twenty preschools visited twelve included children they considered to be of "nursery age". Ten directors from this group agreed that three years was the acceptable age for entry into the youngest preschool group. Ages of children from these ten schools ranged from three through five years. Directors from the two remaining schools accepted children as young as two years into their "nursery age" group. The director of the university laboratory preschool stated that, in her opinion, children younger than 3½ years should not be accepted into preschool groups. Each of the schools visited included children they considered to be of "kindergarten age"; however the director from one school accepted children as young as three years and eight months into this group, rather than the suggested four years and eight months as was accepted by the remaining nineteen schools.

Although the majority of groups did not exceed figures listed for maximum enrollment, it was noted that three schools had enrollments greater than maximum recommendations of twenty for nursery age groups and four exceeded the standard of twenty-five for kindergartens. Schools which are operated primarily for monetary gains may attempt to handle groups which are too large for most effective results. Moustakas and Berson state that "too often business goals take precedence over educational standards".[1] The most seriously

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[1]Clark E. Moustakas and Minnie Berson, op. cit., p.62.

overcrowded groups were found in two schools where children numbered as many as 50 four-and five-year old children per teacher. The philosophy in these two schools differed from that of other preschool groups, the main focus of their program being academic learning and rigid discipline.

Fifteen of the twenty schools visited maintained several units, as needed to provide for the children enrolled. In five schools, where facilities were grossly overcrowded, there was no division by units.

Of schools where several units were provided, eight grouped children according to maturity. Six schools, although having several units, did not group children according to maturity. The six schools consisting of only one unit were included in the "omit" column since the matter of grouping according to maturity would not apply to their situation.

Reports on the number of children per adults were varied. Since the pupil-teacher ratio increases with age of children, it was in the oldest age range that size of group limitations were most likely to be respected. Of the ten schools accepting children in the three year group, six schools operated within the suggested adult-child ratio; four schools had more than the suggested number of children per adult. Among the fifteen schools accepting four-year old children there were six who met the recommendations for adult-child ratio; nine exceeded the suggested limits. Each of the twenty schools included five-year-old children. Of these, fourteen operated within the suggested ratio of

children per adult; six had an abundance of children per adult. Five of the twenty preschool groups had only one adult available during the school session. Directors of these schools stated that there had been no occasion when the presence of another adult was necessary. However, all sources of information specify that in every group, regardless of age and number of children, there should be two or more teachers per group. This is to prevent a group of children from being left alone in case of an emergency.

To summarize the extent to which the schools met the proposed standards for enrollment, the survey showed that in three-fourths or more of the preschools where the standards were applicable the suggested standards for age of admission, size of enrollment, and maintenance of sufficient number of units needed to provide for the children enrolled were met, whereas, the recommendations pertaining to establishment of maturity groupings and adult-child ratio were met in about one-half to three-fourths of the cases wherever the standards applied. To limit the size of groups could be a means of reducing the need for maturity groupings. In some schools, an increase in tuition would be needed to add sufficient staff to maintain the suggested adult-child ratio.

## Staff

A competent staff is of paramount importance in providing adequate education for young children. The staff in any type of preschool, be it private, public, laboratory, etc., is made up of persons with varied types of training and experience. "The number of staff members required will depend upon the size of the school, the arrangement of the building, the ages of the children, and the facilities made available through cooperation with other social and health agencies."[1] Another factor which affects the number of persons needed is the daily schedule. Some activities such as meal times require more supervision than does the free play period, for example.

"All members of staff must work together to build a friendly, tension-free atmosphere for children. Only through cooperative effort on the part of every member of the staff can a school develop the atmosphere and spirit of good will best suited to the care of young children. Every member of the staff has a distinctive contribution to make and a personal responsibility for the success of the unit."[2]

The Association for Childhood Education International, Committee on Nursery Education has listed what they term "some qualifications which are basic" for those who work

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[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 79.

[2]Ibid.

with young children. These include:

1. Specific training in the understanding and guidance of 2 - 6 year old children.

2. A warm and outgoing personality and the ability to give affection without smothering or overwhelming.

3. Good health and physical stamina, such as willingness and ability to spend considerable time out of doors in cold weather.

4. Ability to work well with both adults and children, ability to offer and accept suggestions.

5. Attitude of continued growth on the job.[1]

The following discussion describes suggested staff members and proposed qualifications for each as used in the schedule for obtaining data for this study.

Head Teacher

According to the literature, the general duties of the director may be summarized thus: (1) she supervises the professional staff and all employees; (2) she arranges for in-service training of assistants; (3) she is responsible for the acquisition of materials and equipment; (4) she is responsible for maintaining accessibility to public and private welfare agencies; (5) she takes every precaution to maintain hygienic school conditions; (6) she is in charge of supervision of luncheon menus; (7) she coordinates and organizes all phases of the school program; and (8) she

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[1]The Association for Childhood Education International, So You Want to Work With Young Children, A Report Prepared by the Committee on Nursery Education (Washington, D.C.: The Association for Childhood Education International, June, 1955) 5 pp.

provides interpretation of the school program to parents and the community.

The head teacher was designated in the suggested standards as the person responsible for the school program. Qualifications were listed for the head teacher or director with or without a college degree.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR HEAD TEACHER

| Crit | No | Yes | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | The head teacher with a college degree: |
| 6 | 0 | 14 | a. Shall have graduated from an accredited four-year college or teacher training institution. |
| 6 | 14 | 0 | b. Shall have had a minimum of 30 semester hours in psychology, human growth and development, early childhood curriculum and family life education. |
| 6 | 14 | 0 | c. Should have had at least two years teaching experience in an approved school. |
| | | | The head teacher without a college degree: |
| 14 | 5 | 1 | a. Shall have had a minimum of two full years of college work and is committed to completing a degree within five years from the time she is hired as head teacher. |
| 14 | 5 | 1 | b. Shall be taking courses in early childhood education and related fields in accredited schools. She shall complete at least six credits a year until 30 semester credits are completed. |

Results from the survey revealed that of the total of twenty directors of head teachers interviewed, fourteen were college graduates. Of this number there were none who satisfied the requirement of having had a minimum of thirty semester hours of specialized training in education for the preschool child. Most of these persons had received training for elementary education and had received little or no instruction in preschool curriculum.

Since approval of preschools in Louisiana at the time of this study was voluntary and existing state standards difficult to meet, there were only two approved schools in the state, these being university and college laboratory schools. This may have been one reason why none of the directors having college degrees had had teaching experience in approved schools. The director of the university laboratory school included in this survey was teaching in a state-approved school but at the time of this study she had completed only one year there as a staff member rather than the suggested two.

Of head teachers without college degrees, there were six. Only one of this number had completed two years of college and, likewise, only one was engaged in a program of in-service training.

Moustakas and Berson, in their study of public, private and community child-care centers and nursery schools found that private centers rated low in academic training

of staff members. "The majority of teachers in those centers (private centers) were inadequately trained and had had meager experience with young children; three (of the 44) in this survey were without a high school diploma. Only twelve had college degrees. Approximately half of the group had never before worked with children."[1]

Conditions similar to those described by Moustakas and Berson were found to exist in some of the schools visited in this study. Of the six head teachers or directors who did not have college degrees two were high school graduates, three had completed less than one year of college, and one had had two full years of college. Only one head teacher was taking courses in early childhood education at the time of this study. Since there were no adult-education courses in early childhood development being offered by Louisiana college or university institutions, there was little opportunity for additional training from this source.

## Assistant Teacher

Although the assistant teacher works under the supervision of the head teacher, she should be prepared to carry on any phase of the school routine. Among her responsibilities is the directing of routine activities such as eating, sleeping, etc. She is also concerned with creating stability and self-dependence. Alschuler suggests that as they supervise play, "They try to rasie standards of workmanship,

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[1]Clark E. Moustakas and Minnie P. Berson, op.cit., p.160.

encourage creative expression and maintain an atmosphere of happy activity."[1]

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR ASSISTANT TEACHER

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | An assistant teacher: |
| 6 | 2 | 12 | a. | Shall have had two full years of college work. |
| 6 | 9 | 5 | b. | Shall have had fifteen semester hours in early childhood education curriculum and child development. |
| 6 | 14 | 0 | c. | Should have had one year's teaching experience as an assistant or as a student teacher in an approved school. |

Of the fourteen assistant teachers who were included in this study, twelve had completed two years of college work. Five indicated completion of fifteen hours of early childhood curriculum and child development. Here again, this training was in elementary education. Further professional training in most college curricula does not come until after completion of the second year of college work. As with directors, there were no assistant teachers who had teaching experience in an approved preschool.

[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 80.

## Assistants to the Teacher

Extensive professional training was not considered as necessary for this position as for directors and assistants to the director, since assistants to the teacher work under the direction of the head teachers and/or assistant teachers. Their primary responsibility is to assist in supervising routine activities or in carrying out specific instructions from those in charge of the school program. Even though less professional knowledge is required, completion of secondary school education is expected.

TABLE 6

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR ASSISTANTS TO THE TEACHER

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 1 | 5 | a. | She shall be a secondary school graduate. |
| 14 | 0 | 6 | b. | Assistants to the teacher always work under supervision. |
| 14 | 0 | 6 | c. | Assistants to the teacher should be encouraged to take courses toward becoming qualified teachers. |

Five of the six assistants to the teacher were secondary school graduates; one was not. All assistants worked exclusively under supervision. Although assistants to the teacher were encouraged to take courses toward becoming qualified teachers, none were participating in a program of in-service training. Extension courses in

early childhood development and education were not being offered in that locality, therefore opportunity for in-service training was limited. Upon request by a reasonable number of interested people, all colleges in the state agreed that such courses could be made available. Another factor to be considered is that there was little enthusiam for taking courses toward becoming qualified teachers since there was no certificate issued for preschool teachers and salaries were very low even for well-trained teachers.

Parent Assistants

A parent who feels adequate and confident within himself is free to live creatively with his children. Participation in the preschool is an opportunity for a parent to strengthen his feeling of adequacy and confidence in himself as well as in his child. In the preschool there is an opportunity to get a more objective picture of the child, clarify one's feelings toward his behavior, and more clearly define one's role in nurture and guidance.

"Participation will involve several types of activities: (1) observing children and teachers; (2)taking records of children's behavior; (3) preparing materials for children's use - for example, arranging the sandbox for play, making the housekeeping area inviting, readying the setup for snack or rest, mixing paints for the easel, making finger paints and dough, setting out wood, hammer, and nails; (4) relating directly with children; for example,

reading stories to a small group, supervising a play area in the yard, helping children with wraps, helping children in the bathroom, taking a few children on a walk, preparing, initiating, and carrying out an experience especially for children."[1]

TABLE 7

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR PARENT ASSISTANTS

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 0 | 5 | a. | Parent assistants shall have special orientation in a planned series of meetings beginning prior to and continuing throughout their period of service. |
| 15 | 0 | 5 | b. | They shall have specific guidance and interpretation from the teacher while working with children or in informal conferences afterwards. |

Only five schools in the survey made use of parent assistants. Their contributions included such activities as chauffeuring for special trips and assisting with events such as picnics, parties, etc. Two schools visited had parents who were trained in music and were called upon to direct the music periods. In all cases parent assistants were given special orientation and guidance from the teacher

[1]Helen M. Christianson, Mary M. Rogers, and Blanche A. Ludlum, The Nursery School - Adventure in Living and Learning (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1941), p. 76.

while working with children.

## Volunteers

The services of volunteers can be a valuable contribution to the school program. Parents or other interested individuals who have special training or interests can assist in music and art activities. In some instances parents who are registered nurses may conduct health inspections.

TABLE 8

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEERS

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 0 | 11 | a. | Volunteers in the preschools shall always work with a qualified teacher who knows the children. |
| 9 | 0 | 11 | b. | They shall be selected on the basis of natural aptitudes as well as training. |
| 9 | 1 | 10 | c. | They shall have regularly scheduled hours for participation. |

Eleven of the twenty schools in the survey indicated the use of volunteers in their programs. In each instance volunteers in the preschools worked with a qualified person. Thought was given to the matter of selection on the basis of training and natural aptitude in each instance. One of the eleven volunteers was noted as not having regularly scheduled hours for participation. Unexpected appearances

often create confusion in scheduled activities both for staff and children.

## Cooks

In schools where the noon meal is served, a cook is a necessary member of the staff. If the services of a nutritionist are not available, the cook must be sufficiently experienced so that she can assume full responsibility for ordering supplies and preparing food. Food must be prepared simply and economically in ways that are appealing and nutritious for young children.

TABLE 9

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR COOKS

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | 1 | 3 | a. | Cooks should plan and prepare food under the supervision of the director. They shall apply principles of food preparation for young children. |
| 16 | 0 | 4 | b. | They shall be responsible for serving the meal, for washing dishes, and for keeping the kitchen clean, sanitary and orderly. |

Four schools in this survey served the noon meal. In three schools, cooks worked under the supervision of the director. Cooks from each of the four schools were responsible for meal preparation and service as well as for routine care of the kitchen facilities.

## Janitors

Janitorial duties include heating of the building, cleaning rooms, gardening, repair of toys, etc. depending on the organization of the school.

TABLE 10

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR JANITORS

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 2 | 13 | a. | Care shall be taken to select a person who is appreciative of children's needs. |
| 5 | 2 | 13 | b. | It is desirable that the janitor be a general handy man. |
| 5 | 0 | 15 | c. | Duties shall be assigned by the person in charge. |

Five schools hired no one specifically to perform janitorial services. In thirteen of the fifteen schools where janitors were employed, they were selected with consideration being given to appreciation of children's needs. Some directors indicated that they did not regard this as an important factor to consider since the janitor need not necessarily come into direct contact with the children. However, in this study this was included as an important consideration since the janitor, like other staff members, through his attitude of understanding and cooperation, contributes toward creating a desirable atmosphere for young children.

In some instances, parents helped with repair of toys. This not only gave service to the school but was an opportunity for furthering good home-school relations. Where the parents did not help, the janitor usually was general handy man whose responsibilities included repair of toys and equipment. Thirteen of the fifteen schools who employed janitors included this among his tasks.

Duties were assigned by the person in charge in each of the schools where janitors were included among the staff members.

It was a common practice among church-sponsored schools (13) to use the church janitor. The university preschool maintained a full-time janitor. In the private non-church affiliated school (1) the director or her personal maid performed the janitorial duties.

Special Personnel

In addition to the functions normally handled by the staff, there are certain services which a preschool should provide. The use of a nurse, a physician, social case workers, a psychologist, and a nutritionist may be supplied either by trained persons attached to the staff, by trained volunteers, or by cooperation with other community agencies. In some instances these need be only part-time workers, on duty only when their services are needed.

A registered nurse, such as the public health nurse, is sometimes available through public or private agencies.

She keeps height-weight records and periodically informs parents as to the physical condition and development of the children. She also attends to minor injuries. She should be thoroughly informed as to clinical facilities in the community, especially if there is no physician attached to the staff. In such case she may have other duties, such as arranging for physical exams, referring parents to proper sources for medical attention for children, making morning health inspection, and/or supervising and checking the sanitary facilities of the school and disposal of waste.

A physician or pediatrician should be regularly available. His duties include instructing someone in the technique of inspection if he does not do it himself; he consults with the nurse or director as to the health of individual children; he takes care of accidents and plans a program that will protect the children, in so far as possible, against infections, diseases and epidemics.

Social workers are becoming part of the counseling service offered in sound education institutions from nursery school through college. "If we are to help children both in school and out, we must understand causes and effects in human relationships."[1] Problems difficult or impossible to be reached by regular staff often may be dealt with helpfully by the techniques of social case workers.

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[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 91.

"The psychologist administers tests, advises on problems of children who need special help, and directs them to psychiatric help if needed."[2]

A nutritionist should be available at least for consultation in schools where meals are served to see that nutritionally adequate meals are being served. At the pre-school age where growth is rapid, and where foundations of good eating habits are being laid, proper consideration should be given to serving nutritionally adequate and appetizing meals.

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[2]Ibid., p. 92.

TABLE 11

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL PERSONNEL

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 13 | 7 | a. | Nurse<br><br>A public health nurse currently licensed shall be available to advise the teachers in the health program. She should be fitted by experience, training and personality to work with young children. |
| 0 | 4 | 16 | b. | Physician<br><br>A physician shall be available for consultation and emergencies. |
| 0 | 17 | 3 | c. | Social Case Worker<br><br>Emphasis should be placed on a counseling service for parents of day nurseries and on the availability of social case work services to connect the preschool with community services. |
| 0 | 13 | 7 | d. | Psychologist<br><br>The services of a psychologist shall be obtainable for counseling with the staff. |
| 0 | 17 | 3 | e. | Nutritionist<br><br>A trained nutritionist shall be available. Such services may be planned on a counseling basis locally or regionally. |

Seven schools in the survey had the services of a nurse. Her primary responsibility was to administer the daily health inspection. In every instance her services were volunteered. Directors from three schools stated that

they did not regard the services of a nurse as a necessity, but that schools maintained a nurse for the benefit of parents who tended to regard such facilities as a guide in evaluating the quality of a preschool program. Any member of the staff who was properly trained, they felt, could effectively administer the health program. Directors from four schools felt that having a nurse available was a necessity.

It was interesting to note that four schools had experienced no occasion for using the services of a physician, not even for consultation. In most instances the name of the physician of the individual child, as noted on the entrance data form, was kept on record and the physician was called upon when needed.

Only three schools had made use of the services of a social worker.

In seven instances directors had called upon psychologists for consultation. Frequently mentioned was the problem of parents not recognizing the fact that children were in need of psychological care.

The three schools which served noon meals did utilize a nutritionist's services.

## Health Policies of Staff

Every possible precaution must be taken to insure the health of children enrolled in the preschool in order to guard against epidemics of contagious and infectious

diseases. To take for granted precautionary health measures may be to jeopardize the health of staff and children.

TABLE 12

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS OF HEALTH POLICIES FOR STAFF

| Omit | No | Yes | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 14 | 6 | Each adult person connected with a pre-school shall present to the center an annual written statement from a qualified physician certifying his physical health, attesting to the absence of contagious or infectious deseases, including tuberculosis, typhoid, dysentery, all forms of venereal diseases, and active malaria. The certificate shall also show that the person has been vaccinated for small pox and polio. |

Six schools included this general statement as a required policy. Those who did not have a similar requirement stated that their staff members were "known to be healthy", or that it was simply understood that staff members would have an annual physical examination even though a statement attesting to such was not required.

To summarize the findings from the study of "Staff" it appears that the most serious weakness is found to be in the matter of professional preparation of major staff members. Review of literature indicates that this is a general problem, not limited to the state of Louisiana.

Karen Hilstrom, in her study of state space and staff requirements for nursery schools found that requirements

regarding staff qualifications were very diversified. In her study which included a survey of forty-eight states in which forty responded, she found the following state staff requirements:[1]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Health | |
| | Certificate required yearly | 18 |
| | Certificate recommended | 0 |
| | Certificate not mentioned | 11 |
| 2. | Education of Director | |
| | Graduate work or experience beyond B.A. degree | 3 |
| | Bachelor Degree | 9 |
| | No degree requirements, or same requirements as for teachers | 17 |
| 3. | Education of other Staff | |
| | Bachelor degree | 4 |
| | Basic knowledge or experience | 11 |
| | None, or high school diploma | 14 |
| 4. | Personality | |
| | Specific requirements | 18 |
| | Recommendations | 5 |
| | None mentioned | 6 |

Miss Hilstrom concludes that the overall picture of staff requirements is a discouraging one. It is her opinion that much of the problem is due to inadequate supply of qualified teachers and also to lack of financial support for nursery education.

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[1]Karen Hilstrom, op. cit., pp. 141 - 144.
In this study, undertaken 1959 - 1960, forty of the forty-eight states cooperated in the study; eleven states had no requirements, leaving 29 states from which to draw conclusions.

Health Policies and Procedures

"The real worth and quality of the health program will depend upon the vital interest, understanding and cooperation of the teaching staff. Rules, regulations and even physical examinations will be valuable in so far as they are intelligently used by the staff in connection with each child's total home and school program. Available services will differ from one locality to another. City, county, or other public health departments, infant welfare organizations, pediatric groups and occasionally, private health agencies or individuals may be called upon for help in providing adequate health services."[1]

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[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 84.

TABLE 13

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS OF HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 5 | 15 | a. | Upon enrollment each child must present a doctor 's certificate attesting to immunization against small pox, diphtheria, polio, tetanus and whooping cough and to the absence of other infections. |
| 0 | 10 | 10 | b. | The school shall provide a form upon which the physician shall submit a record of the child's health history, immunization data, and the findings of the last medical examination. |
| 0 | 13 | 7 | c. | Upon daily arrival each child shall be examined by a nurse or other qualified person for symptoms of common cold, other apparent infections, and symptoms of communicable diseases and ill health. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | d. | Any child showing signs of illness upon arrival or while in attendance shall be promptly isolated and kept apart from the group until he can be sent home. |
| 0 | 9 | 11 | e. | In the event of known exposure to a contagious disease the child shall be excluded from the preschool for the remaining portion of the incubation period deemed advisable by the local health authorities. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | f. | A child having a physical or mental handicap which requires special care or continued close supervision shall be enrolled only with the approval of the physician and the head teacher. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | g. | A first aid kit shall be provided and kept completely stocked and there shall be a person on the staff qualified to give first aid. |

TABLE 13 - Continued

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 2 | 1 | h. | Children in an all-day program shall have a rest period on cots of at least 45 minutes after the noon meal. |
| | | | i. | Provisions for serving food to the children: |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | (1) | A hot lunch shall be served if the program runs through the noon meal. An adequate lunch shall include at least: |
| | | | 3 | a. one-half pint of plain whole milk as a beverage. |
| | | | 3 | b. one ounce of protein (lean meat, poultry, fish, or cheese) |
| | | | 3 | c. one-half cup of vegetables or fruit. |
| | | | 3 | d. one portion of bread. |
| | | | 3 | e. one teaspoon of butter or margarine. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | (2) | In addition to the main meals, a mid-morning and a mid-afternoon snack of juice or milk shall be provided. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | (3) | If the noon meal is provided it shall be served in surroundings conducive to good eating habits, away from distracting activities. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | (4) | Facilities for serving (tables, chairs, utensils) shall be child size. |

The policies and procedures recommended here are basic to most school programs in any state. Although none is difficult to comply with, there were several instances in which recommendations were not met. Cooperation of both staff and parents is needed in order to implement these precautionary measures.

Three-fourths of the schools required children to have been immunized against common infectious diseases. Directors stated that parents occasionally objected to having their children innoculated against some diseases because doctors advised that if given too early, protection expired before children would have reached the less critical age for contracting certain illnesses. However, the same reasons for requiring these innoculations upon entrance into public schools exist in the preschool situation. If later re-vaccinations should become necessary, they could be administered without ill effects to the child.

Knowing the general health history of a child, his susceptibility to colds and other infections, etc., is an important contribution to the overall understanding of the child and his needs. Half of the schools visited did secure the child's health history.

In thirteen of the schools, there was no daily health inspection when children arrived at school. The general feeling among directors of these schools which had no health inspection was that little could be determined by this routine. Did they not feel that discovery of a

throat infection or an infectious rash might prevent spread of contagious diseases?

Although there was no instance of special facilities for isolation, eighteen schools stated that separation of children taken ill while at school was practiced. It was found that the children were often placed in unoccupied rooms without cots, without items of interest for the child's activity, and also without supervision.

In the event of known exposure to disease, several variations of practice were observed. The policy of some schools was to notify all parents when any child enrolled had been exposed to a contagious disease and parents' wishes determined action to be taken. For example, if parents did not object to possible exposure of their children, then the child who had been exposed was not excluded from the group. In other instances it was agreed that children would not be excluded from the group after exposure to a disease since it was felt that contracting such "childhood" diseases was not hazardous at the preschool age. Still others relied upon the advice of the local pediatrician in questionable cases.

Of the eighteen schools who would accept "special" children, only one had actually done so, this being a heart patient. When there is no physical risk to the child involved, there are advantages for the handicapped as well as for the normal children when both are together in a

preschool situation. Each comes to accept the other's abilities and limitations, thus learning at an early age to accept these facts of life.

The importance of maintaining first aid equipment was recognized by all schools in the survey.

Of the three schools providing the noon meal, only one provided for a rest period following the meal. In another instance children went home after lunch. Least satisfactory was the situation in which children returned to their "classroom" desks for another hour of instruction. Children of preschool age require rest after periods of busy activity and opportunity for quiet periods of relaxation and sleep should be provided.

In two of the three schools where lunch was served directors were responsible for planning menus. The remaining school was a kindergarten included as part of a church-sponsored grade school in which all children ate the noon meal in the school cafeteria. Although nutritionally complete menus were noted as being served, starchy foods were frequently used.

All but one school served a mid-morning snack. The attitude of the director was that since the procedure was not practiced in public schools, preschool children should not be "spoiled by such pampering".

All schools in the survey provided well for child-sized serving facilities.

Absence of records of health history of children;

lack of daily health inspection; absence of concrete procedures to be practiced in the matter of exposure to contagious diseases and infections; and lack of proper facilities for isolation in case of illness at school indicated areas of health procedure which were least adequate. Provisions for first aid equipment and facilities for serving food were well met.

## Plant and Equipment

### Plant

Conditions under which children were gathered varied widely. Most private non-church supported preschools were located in converted garages or remodeled rooms of the owner's house. Church-sponsored groups were most often housed in buildings or rooms especially designed to meet children's needs. The latter arrangement was likely to be more adequate since special consideration had been given to planning for all activities of the preschool program.

"Under no circumstances should any building be accepted unless it is safe for the habitation of very young children"[1] is emphasized by Alschuler.

A discussion follows of the various elements of housing to be considered wherever there are children.

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[1] Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 100.

Housing

TABLE 14

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR HOUSING OF A PRESCHOOL

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | a. | General |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | | (1) The preschool unit shall be located on the first floor, preferably with south and east exposures. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | | (2) The school shall adjoin a place for active play that is light and provides fresh air. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | | (3) The rooms shall be well ventilated, dry, of comfortable temperature, pleasant, sunny and cheerful. |
| 20 | 0 | 0 | | (4) If a basement is used for brief play periods, it must be warm, damp-proof, and have sufficient natural light. |
| 20 | 0 | 0 | b. | Rooms used as family living quarters shall not be included unless especially approved. |
| | | | c. | Exits |
| 0 | 4 | 16 | | (1) two unobstructed exits shall be provided from all floors and basement areas used by children. These exits shall be easily accessible to the rooms and to the out-of-doors. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | | (2) Outside exit doors shall open outward. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | d. | Walls and floors shall have easily cleaned surfaces. |

TABLE 14 - Continued

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 20 | e. | Fireplaces, hot radiators, electrical outlets, and hazardous windows in rooms used by children shall be adequately protected by screens and guards. |
| 18 | 1 | 1 | f. | Stairs shall be easy to climb and safe for children's use with a handrail that children can easily reach. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | g. | A temperature of 63 - 70° shall be maintained throughout the day at a point 2 or 3 feet from the floor when the outdoor temperature is below 63°. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | h. | The water shall be from a water system which has been approved by the board of health. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | i. | Individual drinking utensils or a fountain shall be provided. |

There were only a few instances in which general recommendations for housing were not met by each of the twenty schools: two schools had upstairs classrooms, one of which had not adapted handrails to the use of small children; one school had inadequate play space adjoining the building; one school was found to have inadequate lighting and ventilation.

The major fault observed in this area was the number of exits provided. Four schools had only one exit rather than the recommended two. All remaining points under consideration in this area of housing (Table 14, c.(2) - i, except for f.) were met by all schools in the

study.

Playrooms

The playroom is the basic element of the preschool and should be analyzed most carefully. "The playroom, as the center of nursery school activities serves many different purposes. It is the workshop, the art studio, and the scene of housekeeping and dramatic play. It is also used for music and story groups and for the serving of juice and even the noon meal."[1] There should be a separate room for each group of children, the groups being divided according to age and development.

Although most authorities agree that it is difficult to establish hard-and-fast rules concerning space requirements since there are many variables which affect the amount of space needed such as the age of the child and his work and play needs, a minimum of thirty-five square feet per child exclusively for play activities is commonly agreed upon. In the study by Karen Hilstrom[2], previously mentioned, thirty-five square feet per child was used as the accepted standard for indoor space. Her survey revealed that eighteen states from a total of twenty-nine participating had less than this minimum allowance. Thus nearly two-thirds of the total group in her survey was below standard in

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[1]Heinrich H. Waechter and Elizabeth Waechter, op. cit., p. 36.

[2]Karen Hilstrom, op. cit.

indoor play space. It is important to consider that the proper arrangement of the required areas determines whether or not the room can give the largest amount of usable space with the smallest amount of actual floor area.

Reference is often made by authors concerning the importance of having well-lighted rooms but specific recommendations seldom are mentioned. The standard of twenty-foot candles selected in this study was taken from the New Jersey "Minimum Regulations for Nursery and Day Care Centers"[1]. Local authorities approved this amount.

According to Alschuler, "the child living in a world where furniture is planned for adults is handicapped in the learning process because he is repeatedly faced with obstacles which he cannot surmount. He is forced to rely upon help to get into bed; his toys and often his clothes are left on the floor because he has no cupboard or drawer space that he can reach or call his own. Carelessness and dependence are often direct results of furniture and equipment poorly selected as far as the child is concerned"[2]. Alschuler lists three criteria for selection of furniture: size and shape of furniture should fit the child; furniture should be substantially constructed; and it should be attractively colored.[3]

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[1]New Jersey publication, op.cit., p. 14.

[2]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 136.

[3]Ibid.

For hygienic reasons the essential consideration in storage of children's clothing is complete separation. Shoulder-level height or about thirty-six inches is the suggested height for placement of shelf space or hooks. Various dimensions are mentioned by specialists. New Jersey, in its bulletin of licensing requirements, recommends the following measurements for cubbies:

12" x 10" x 10" for blankets

7" x 10" x 10" for hat

30" x 10" x 10" for coat, leggings, etc.

10" x 10" x 10" for boots[1]

TABLE 15

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR PLAYROOMS

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 7 | 13 | a. | The playrooms shall allow a minimum of 35 square feet of floor space per child exclusive of bathrooms, lockers, kitchen, office, and storage. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | b. | There shall be a minimum of 20 foot-candles of light in all parts of the playrooms. Light should be evenly distributed, nowhere intensely bright or glaring. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | c. | Window space should be 1/5 or more of the floor area. Low windows are recommended so children can look out and light may come in to benefit floor play. |

[1]New Jersey publication, op. cit., p. 16.

TABLE 15 - Continued

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | d. | Storage |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | | (1) At the child's eye level, some of the wall space of the play centers shall be composed of open shelves. |
| 0 | 4 | 16 | | (2) Block shelves are near open floor space; puzzles, take-apart toys, and collage materials on shelves near tables; dishes on shelves near stove and sink; books in a display rack near library table. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | e. | Closed cupboard space should be provided for extra supplies. |
| 0 | 6 | 14 | f. | Water conveniently available to art center, home play center, and science centers. |
| | | | g. | Furniture |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | | (1) All furniture shall be sturdy, movable, and child-sized. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | | (2) Tables have "easy-to-clean" surfaces. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | | (3) Posture-type chairs of various heights shall be provided as follows: 8", 9", 10", 12", 14" from seat to floor. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | | (4) Tables shall be of various heights as follows: 14"-16", 16"-18", 18"-20" from table top to floor. |
| 19 | 0 | 1 | | (5) A 54" cot is suitable for children two to five years of age. |
| | | | h. | Clothing storage |
| 0 | 11 | 9 | | (1) Cubbies near the entrance for storing child's outside clothing and other personal belongings. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | | (2) Free floor space nearby to encourage independent dressing is important. |

Of the seven schools in this survey whose space allowance fell below the minimum requirement, play space in three schools was inadequate to a critical extent.

Adequate lighting was not found to be a serious problem in this study. Only one school had poor lighting, this school being a converted garage.

With the exception of this school, which had a limited number of windows and placed too high for children's use, other schools visited easily met the requirement of windows low enough for children to look out and for light to illuminate floor play.

The majority of schools provided for storage at the child's eye-level. Placing some types of equipment so that it may be selected and used at the convenience of the child encourages independence and creative thinking, this being one of the major objectives of preschool education.

Closed cupboard space is needed for extra supplies. Although the space was not always adequate in amount, administrators had attempted to provide for this need.

Water play was denied children in six schools because directors considered it a messy activity. To exclude this activity probably reduced opportunities for new experiences always found enjoyable by the child.

Two schools failed to meet all of the recommendations for furniture. At one school children were confined to individual child-sized desks for activities other than

organized game periods. In another school six to eight children were crowded around each table where they sat for extended periods during the day. At this school there was no space available for free play activities.

More than half of the schools visited provided nothing more than hooks along a wall or a closet with adult-sized coat hangers placed on rods above the children's reach. Such arrangements usually do not encourage one of the primary objectives of preschool education - that of fostering independence and providing opportunities for the child to succeed in an environment planned for his needs.

Resting Facilities

"Attitudes toward the basic health activities of elimination, eating, and rest are formed during the preschool years. A good nursery school experience contributes to positive attitudes."[1] The rest period during the nursery school day can be a source of satisfaction and pleasure and also offers an opportunity for closer adult-child relationships. "Adequate rest is essential as it relaxes active bodies and gives children renewed energy. Rest before luncheon and a nap in the afternoon are needed divisions of the young child's school day."[2]

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[1]Helen M. Christiansen, Mary M. Rogers, and Blanche A. Ludlum, op. cit., pp. 59 - 60.

[2]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 55.

TABLE 16

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR RESTING FACILITIES*

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | 15 | a. | For the half-day program each child shall be provided with an individual rug, mat, or cot. |
| 18 | 1 | 1 | b. | For the all-day program children shall have individual cots, sheets, and blankets. Beds used by members of the household shall not be used by the children. Cots, bedding, and rugs shall be kept clean. |

The four schools that did not provide facilities for rest felt that a nap period after children returned to their homes after lunch was sufficient for them.

Cots were provided by only one of the two schools having programs extending after lunch. The opinion of one director was that the children resting their heads on their tables was sufficient rest for children in her group.

Toileting and Washing Facilities

The number of children per toilet and per lavatory recommended by Waechter and Waechter is six to one.[1]

*The figures in Table 16 include one school (church-supported) which maintains both half-day and full-day programs; therefore, each of the suggested standards was applicable and was met.

[1]Heinrich Waechter and Elizabeth Waechter, op. cit., p. 39.

Foster and Mattson suggest one toilet per 10 - 12 children and one lavatory per 8 - 9 children.[1] This recommendation is less adequate than the ratio suggested by Waechter and Waechter. A distance of 10" - 12" apart for individual wash cloths is recommended by most sources.

The toilet and wash areas should be easy to supervise; consequently, no partitions are needed for subdividing the rooms. Short and low partitions between toilets may be used, if desired.

Ideally in the bathroom for small children there should be a laundry tub and a dryer.

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[1]Josephine C. Foster and Marion L. Mattson, Nursery School Procedure (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1929), p. 3[illegible].

TABLE 17

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR TOILET AND WASHING FACILITIES

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 13 | 7 | a. | At least one toilet and wash bowl with low mirror for every 6 - 10 children and a supply of warm and cold water shall be provided. Facilities shall be kept in a sanitary condition. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | b. | Cloth towels and wash cloths, if used, shall be individually marked and hung up and properly washed and dried under sanitary conditions. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | c. | The toilet room shall be easily accessible to the playroom. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | d. | The toilet room shall be easily reached from the playground. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | e. | Toilet and wash bowl shall be child-size or standard fixtures adapted to the use of the small child by a low platform four or five inches from the floor. |
| 0 | 9 | 11 | f. | The toilet and wash area shall be easy to supervise. No partition shall subdivide the rooms except for low partitions between toilets if so desired. |

Inadequacies found in this area of investigation were especially evident in respect to sufficient number of toilets and lavatories and ease of supervision. Toilet and wash bowl facilities were limited in thirteen schools; in most cases only one toilet and lavatory were available. Mirrors were seldom provided; directors seemed unaware of

TABLE 17

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR TOILET AND WASHING FACILITIES

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 13 | 7 | a. | At least one toilet and wash bowl with low mirror for every 6 - 10 children and a supply of warm and cold water shall be provided. Facilities shall be kept in a sanitary condition. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | b. | Cloth towels and wash cloths, if used, shall be individually marked and hung up and properly washed and dried under sanitary conditions. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | c. | The toilet room shall be easily accessible to the playroom. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | d. | The toilet room shall be easily reached from the playground. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | e. | Toilet and wash bowl shall be child-size or standard fixtures adapted to the use of the small child by a low platform four or five inches from the floor. |
| 0 | 9 | 11 | f. | The toilet and wash area shall be easy to supervise. No partition shall subdivide the rooms except for low partitions between toilets if so desired. |

Inadequacies found in this area of investigation were especially evident in respect to sufficient number of toilets and lavatories and ease of supervision. Toilet and wash bowl facilities were limited in thirteen schools; in most cases only one toilet and lavatory were available. Mirrors were seldom provided; directors seemed unaware of

their usefulness. In nine of the schools, the toilet and wash areas were so located that casual supervision was impossible. Sometimes toilets were completely enclosed behind doors which closed automatically. Most fixtures were of suitable size for children's use. Paper toweling was used by most schools. In three schools, the toilet room was not readily accessible to the playground, but was easily accessible to the playroom in each of the twenty schools visited.

Isolation Room

"The isolation room is for the purpose of receiving children who have been found not well. In case of an accident, first aid can be given in this room. In either case, the child is not expected to stay in the isolation room any longer than is necessary, i.e. until brought home, or if necessary, transported to a hospital."[1]

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[1]Heinrich Waechter and Elizabeth Waechter, op. cit., p. 41.

TABLE 18

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR ISOLATION ROOM

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 9 | 11 | a. | An isolation area shall be available. It should be furnished with a cot and articles that can be thoroughly cleaned and with bedding that can be boiled. |
| 12 | 0 | 1 | b. | If a separate medical unit is provided for isolation use, the room should contain medicine cabinet, a lavatory, desk for inspecting nurse, a scale, and filing cabinet for health records. |

Eleven schools had provided some type of isolation area, usually consisting of adapted sitting rooms. Only one school (university-sponsored) had a separate medical unit. Nine schools had made no provision for isolation.

Kitchen

Most sources refer to kitchen facilities only in a general way, suggesting that the kitchen should be near the dining room, should have a separate service entrance, and should be equipped to prepare large quantities of food. It is important however that some specific recommendations be enumerated as in the table shown on the following page.

TABLE 19

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR KITCHEN

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 0 | 3 | a. | When children remain for lunch, a unit separate from other rooms shall be provided for the kitchen equipped with stove, refrigerator, sink with hot and cold water, dishes and cooking utensils adequate to prepare and serve the noon meals as well as mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | b. | It shall be kept clean and well lighted. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | c. | Closed cupboards shall be provided for the storage of dishes and cooking equipment. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | d. | A mechanical dishwasher shall be provided to insure sterilization of dishes used in serving children. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | e. | Towels shall be laundered daily. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | f. | Kitchens shall be screened and effective measures used as a protection against insects and rodents. |
| 17 | 0 | 3 | g. | Approved daily garbage disposal shall be provided for sanitary removal of wastes. Mechanical garbage disposers are recommended. |

In this survey it was found that three groups remained for lunch at school. Two of these groups had complete kitchens, separate from the other facilities. The remaining group was a kindergarten class in conjunction with a church school, and like the older children, the preschoolers ate in the school cafeteria, having the same

diet as older children. In addition, there were five schools which had complete kitchen facilities even though they did not serve the noon meal. All other schools had facilities sufficient for serving mid-morning snacks.

Outdoor Play Space

The important factor in considering outdoor play is to provide ample space for active play yet not so large an area that it cannot be easily supervised by available staff. A fence around the playground enables the teacher to direct her energies toward play activities. Here, as in indoor play space, there is no unanimous opinion as to what minimum requirements should be; suggested figures vary between sixty to one hundred square feet per child. It has been noted that the National Society for the study of Education recommends one hundred square feet per child.[1] Alschuler, Waechter and Waechter, and Foster and Mattson suggest sixty to seventy-five square feet per child.[2]

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[1]Karen Hilstrom, op. cit., p. 142.

[2]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 110; Heinrich Waechter and Elizabeth Waechter, op. cit., p. 101; Josephine C. Foster and Marion L. Mattson, op. cit., p. 34.

TABLE 20

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS CONFORMING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 8 | 12 | a. | Area - 75 - 100 square feet of space per child shall be required. |
| 0 | 6 | 14 | b. | Surface - Varied natural terrain is best, with good drainage, grass and earth, trees and shrubs, and varied exposure to sun and shade. A portion of paved area is recommended for wheel toys, block construction, and for short periods of play in inclement weather. |
| 0 | 7 | 13 | c. | Water - An outlet for running water is recommended, especially for programs that move outdoors for warm weather. |
| 0 | 13 | 7 | d. | Storage - An outdoor storage shed shall be provided for wheel toys, hollow blocks, and other equipment which cannot be left out in the weather. |
| | | | e. | Access |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | | (1) The outdoor area should be readily accessible to the playroom. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | | (2) The outdoor area should be readily accessible to toilet facilities. |

As the above figures indicate, the most serious problems were limited space provided for outside activities and poor provision for storage of outside equipment. These results on space allowance are similar to the findings of Karen Hilstrom who states that only seventeen of the

twenty-nine states had the recommended outside play space of seventy-five square feet per child.[1]

In approximately one-third of the schools visited in this survey the kind of surface provided on the playground was not as recommended and water for outdoor play was not available on the playground.

The outdoor play space of three schools was not easily accessible to the playroom and toilet facilities.

Equipment

"During the years of two through five, children are forming their concepts of space, distance, size and height and are experimenting with their bodies, discovering possible uses and needed muscle controls. Since muscles develop through use and body balance is gained through establishing proper coordination of all these forces, both the equipment and the guidance of its use in the nursery school should be planned to promote this development. One must always remember that there must be a balance between the challenge offered by the equipment and the child's mental and physical abilities."[2]

According to Foster and Mattson[3], the ideal piece of apparatus is the one which appeals to many different

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[1]Karen Hilstrom, op. cit., p. 144.

[2]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 117.

[3]Josephine C. Foster and Marion L. Mattson, op. cit., p. 47.

children of a fairly large range of age and can be used in many different kinds of activity.

Waechter and Waechter state that "only equipment which is built according to recognized standards should be accepted. Splinters, projecting nails, and improper construction can be detrimental to safety."[1]

To generalize recommendations from various sources it may be said that materials for both indoor and outdoor play shall be adequate in quantity and quality to meet the needs of the children and reflect the resources of the environment and the initiative of the teacher. A variety of types of equipment shown in the two succeeding tables is suggested as a guide in selecting indoor and outdoor equipment.

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[1] Heinrich Waechter and Elizabeth Waechter, op. cit., p. 116.

Indoor Play Equipment

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS CONFORMING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR TYPES OF EQUIPMENT FOR INDOOR PLAY

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 2 | 18 | a. | Creative |
| 0 | 5 | 15 | b. | Physical and Large Motor |
| 0 | 4 | 16 | c. | Dramatic and Social |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | d. | Constructive |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | e. | Manipulative |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | f. | Books and Pictures |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | g. | Music |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | h. | Natural Science |

As a whole schools rated high in variety of indoor play equipment. The major weaknesses were in providing equipment for dramatic and social and for physical and large motor activities. In four schools there were no "dress-up clothes" for stimulating dramatic play; in five schools facilities for physical and large motor activities were not available indoors.

Outdoor Play Equipment

TABLE 22

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR TYPES OF EQUIPMENT FOR OUTDOOR PLAY CENTERS

| Omit | No | Yes | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 3 | 17 | a. Climbing |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | b. Swinging |
| 0 | 11 | 9 | c. See-sawing |
| 0 | 10 | 10 | d. Riding |
| 0 | 4 | 16 | e. Digging (in dirt and in sand) |
| 0 | 16 | 4 | f. Water Play |
| 0 | 10 | 10 | g. Building |
| 0 | 6 | 14 | h. Pushing |
| 0 | 7 | 13 | i. Pulling |
| 0 | 10 | 10 | j. Lifting |

Evidence indicates that the standards for facilities for outdoor play equipment were not as well met as standards in the other areas of"plant and equipment". Facilities for climbing, swinging and digging were absent from less than five schools. Most obvious omissions of outdoor play equipment included see-saws, riding toys, facilities for water play, building, pushing, pulling, and lifting.

Few reasons were given for the omissions. See-saws were considered dangerous by many directors; because tricycles are owned by most children, they were considered

unnecessary at preschools; water play was considered to create too much of a mess and children got their clothes wet; materials for pushing, pulling and lifting were grossly overlooked.

## Program

The program varies from one group to another depending on length of school day, the climate, age of children, their interests and abilities, arrangement and facilities of the building, space available, aims of the school, and to a great extent, the abilities and interests of the teachers. Seasons of the year also will affect changes in the daily program.

Even with flexibility in planning the program, a certain amount of routine is essential both for teachers and for children. For the teacher there is less confusion and activities run more smoothly. This is especially true when there are a number of assistants with varying backgrounds. For the child, a schedule is desirable since he soon knows the succession of events from past experience and thus passes more easily from one activity to another.

"In so far as possible, the children's interests and needs should determine the time and duration of each activity."[1]

Both Ischler and Foster and Mattson enumerate

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[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 54.

suggestions to be considered in planning the daily schedule: Meals and sleeping hours should be at the same time each day; toilet schedule should provide for the needs of the youngest children; as much time as possible should be allowed for outdoor play; periods of organized group activities should not exceed fifteen minutes; free periods should be fairly long and uninterrupted by requests from teachers; periods of active and quiet play should alternate so that children do not become over-tired; and one activity should be dove-tailed into another so that the program runs more smoothly.

With these considerations in mind recommendations for planning a "child-centered" program as listed in the questionnaire were developed.

TABLE 23

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SELECTED STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | The daily program: |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | a. | Shall have reasonable regularity, with a similar sequence for the children from day to day; that is, regular daily provision for play, for eating, for resting, for toileting, for washing, etc. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | b. | Shall be sufficiently flexible so that children may move in groups of 2 or 3 throughout routine activities. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | c. | Shall encourage children to accept responsibility according to their capabilities for their own care and allows ample time for this. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | d. | Balances indoor and outdoor activity, weather permitting. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | e. | Gives opportunity for the child to work out good social relationships on his own level. |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | f. | Is planned to meet the physical, social, intellectual and emotional needs of each individual child. |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | g. | Shall provide for quiet and noisy activities, free play, group play, and individual play. |

Reports from this section of the study were encouraging. Observations of the programs of schools indicated that needs and interests of the children were prime considerations in seventeen of the twenty schools visited. It was evident that in the three remaining schools

there was little thought given to planning a program suitable for children of the preschool age. In two of these schools the atmosphere was formal with rigid discipline measures practiced. The activities were structured similar to those of the traditional grade school with emphasis on recitation of religious and academic learning. The third school which failed to meet recommendations for program appeared to perceive the operation primarily as a source of income. Personnel was untrained and inexperienced in planning and presenting a preschool program.

All but two schools had programs which met standards of regularity, flexibility, variety of activities, balance of indoor and outdoor activities, and encouraged children's self-reliance.

## Records

"So many factors in children's lives affect their responses in school as well as at home that it is usually only as we get facts and observations down on paper and as we consider and discuss them that we understand their bearing on one another."[1] A certain amount of data should be obtained on a child before he enters school so that teachers can be familiar with his qualities and defects in advance. If records are to be of any value they must be recorded and handled in a systematic way.

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[1]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 76.

Foster and Mattson[2] enumerate various uses of records here summarized:

1. Records for the parent keep him informed as to the child's condition and behavior.

2. Records for the teacher aid her in understanding the child and improving her methods of handling individual children. Records may also help the teacher in the guidance of other children.

3. Records for other workers such as research or case workers are valuable in aiding studies of mental exams, play interests, family history, disease, formation and dissolution of undesirable habits.

4. Records of attendance may be used in calculating the probable per cent of the total enrollment which may be expected to be at school on any day.

5. Records of physical condition are important to both teacher and parent since the preschool age is one when slight changes in diet and routine are of great effect.

6. Records of mental tests should be for the information of teachers and not the parent. The teacher may receive further insight by reviewing such tests with a psychologist.

7. Records of the child at home aid the teachers in training the child skillfully at school because they have a clear understanding of the home situation.

8. Annual or semi-annual reports are valuable when there is not time for daily or weekly reports.

In an approved nursery school, according to Alschuler,[2] records of the nature outlined in Table 24 shall be kept for each child.

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[1]Josephine J. Foster and Marion L. Mattson, op. cit., p. 135.

[2]Rose Alschuler, op. cit., p. 77.

TABLE 24

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR RECORDS

| Omit | No | Yes | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | a. Family Case Records |
| 0 | 8 | 12 | (1) Early and present facts concerning the family as these relate to the program of the children's center. |
| 0 | 13 | 7 | (2) Cumulative record of contacts between the center and the family. |
| | | | b. Personal Record |
| | | | (1) Medical Record |
| 0 | 11 | 9 | (a) Developmental and physical history of the child. |
| 0 | 16 | 4 | (b) Records of all examinations and re-examinations. |
| 0 | 15 | 5 | (c) Height and weight charts |
| | | | (2) Progress Record |
| 0 | 9 | 11 | (a) Cumulative records of physical, emotional, intellectual, and social characteristics and behavior. |
| 0 | 10 | 10 | (b) Specific procedures planned in connection with the child's needs and the results of plans. |
| 0 | 6 | 14 | (c) Periodic summary of child's progress at appropriate intervals. |

In general it was found that standards for records kept by the schools for each child were not well met. Slightly over half of the schools recorded information

relating to past history of the family but approximately one-third kept cumulative records of family and school contacts. Less than one-half of the schools kept personal medical records of children, whereas slightly more than one-half kept records of progress of individual children.

Home-School Relations

"It is important for the parent to realize that the school is vitally concerned about the child's 24-hour day, his home, his family and their well-being. Bringing a youngster to school for the first time usually is a deeply emotional wrench for the mother as well as for the child and it is important that the transitions be made easy and comfortable for both parent and child... The establishment of a friendly inter-relationship between school staff and parents is important to the child's progress, to the teacher's growth and to the integrity and strength of the school in the community."[1]

Parent participation in preschool is vital. Meetings in which parents and teachers carry out some activities together enable them to talk freely and easily about children's needs and problems. Discussion meetings planned in advance with parents who are prepared to report on given subjects are likely to be satisfactory. Parents should be taught to understand their children and also they

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[1]Rose Fischeler, op. cit., pp. 72 - 74.

must know that they may be able to expect some deviations from the usual.

The preschool experience is likely to be a young child's first real opportunity to have group experiences outside the home. The ease with which this adjustment is made will affect to a great extent the success of these experiences and their value to the child. This first break from the confines of home is likely to be a difficult period for parent as well as for the child. The preschool teacher has the opportunity and the obligation to make every effort to see that this transition is made as easily as possible. To overlook the importance of these various opportunities of creating a favorable rapport between parent and school is doing injustice to both the child and his parent.

With these facts in mind special consideration should be given to the matter of home-school relations.

TABLE 25

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS COMPLYING WITH SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

| Omit | No | Yes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | a. | Provision shall be made for active relationship between parents and the school through: |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | (1) | Casual contacts |
| 0 | 2 | 18 | (2) | Specific appointments |
| 0 | 14 | 5 | (3) | Home visits by the teacher and by other members of the staff after a child's entry into preschool. |
| 0 | 1 | 19 | (4) | School visits by parents for observation of children's activities. |
| 0 | 5 | 15 | (5) | Encouragement of parent participation in the preschool through music, stories, children's parties, toy repairing, etc. |
| 0 | 9 | 11 | (6) | Group meetings - talks, lectures, films which interpret child development and discussions between parents and teachers. |
| | | | b. | Parent participation in orientation of the newly enrolled child shall be required. This may utilize techniques as: |
| 0 | 3 | 17 | (1) | Initial conferences with the parent before the child enters the group. |
| 0 | 11 | 9 | (2) | Home visits by the teacher before the child enters preschool. |
| 0 | 0 | 20 | (3) | Parent and child visits to school. |
| 0 | 8 | 12 | (4) | Parent remaining at school for a time with the child as individual adjustment may require. |
| 0 | 13 | 7 | (5) | A bulletin board and a circulating library provided for staff and parents. |

The most widely accepted means of creating an active relationship between parents and the school were found to be through casual contacts, specific appointments, school visits by parents for observation of children, and participation by parents in school activities. About half of the directors indicated that home visits were made before a child entered the preschool group, whereas less than one-third of the directors made home visits after a child's entry into preschool. The reason most frequently given was lack of time.

Group meetings were occasionally held, but directors were not encouraged by the participation and interest shown by parents.

All but three schools were found to have some form of initial conference before the child entered the group. All schools reported that a visit to the school prior to enrollment of the child was made by parent and child. Although some schools permitted parents to remain at school for a time with the child, some teachers did not consider it a good practice, feeling that children made the adjustment sooner alone. In the instances where a bulletin board and a circulating library were provided for staff and parents, it was reported that these facilities were seldom used by parents.

outstanding work was being done in several areas described throughout the schedule. Most assistant directors met the teacher qualifications set forth in the suggested standards as did a large group of assistant teachers, parent assistants, cooks and other members of the staff. With but few exceptions, the schools met the suggested standards of health policies and procedures and housing. Many of the recommendations for standards for programs were met by at least four-fifths of the schools visited in the survey. Schools with suitable variety of materials and experiences for indoor play outnumbered those who lacked these facilities. Notable achievement was shown in the discussion concerning the daily program where almost all of the schools met suggested standards.

## Summary

This chapter describes the findings from a survey of twenty selected nursery schools and kindergartens in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in which the existing conditions in the schools were compared with suggested standards for licensing of preschools. The survey included such aspects of preschool administration as enrollment, staff, health policies and procedures, plant and equipment, program, records, and home-school relations.

Nursery education programs for the very young were found to exist in varying degrees of quality, ranging from little more than custodial care as found in a private home to a school operating with high standards, sponsored by the state university. Some weaknesses were noted in almost every school visited; some were more serious than others. Outstanding inadequacies included disproportions in adult/ child ratio; shortage of professionally trained staff; little utilization of the contributions of parents, volunteers and other professionally trained service people; inadequate health precautions; insufficient space allowance per child both indoors and outdoors; lack of some types of outdoor play equipment; inadequate records kept by staff of the child's preschool experience; and limited provisions for good home-school relations.

Weaknesses in preschool practices and programs were evident, but in many of the preschools visited in this survey

# CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This problem was undertaken for the purpose of investigating the need for compulsory licensing of preschools in Louisiana. This chapter presents both a summary of the investigation and suggestions for the implementation of a licensing program.

### Summary

From the review of literature, the examination of licensing practices and procedures as they were reported from each of the fifty states, and the survey of existing conditions in twenty selected preschools in a Louisiana metropolitan area, evidence was presented indicating the need for educational leadership and supervision in the field of early childhood education. The growing recognition by the general public of the contributions of preschools, and the concern shown by directors of preschools for meeting the challenge which has been presented, bring into focus the need for programs of compulsory licensing of preschools.

From the survey of states undertaken as part of this study it was found that: twenty-nine states had no licensing standards; seven states, including Louisiana, had voluntary licensing; while fourteen states had compulsory licensing

programs.

Data from this study's survey of twenty selected preschools in Baton Rouge, Louisiana were examined regarding the aspects of preschool administration including enrollment, staff, health policies and procedures, plant and equipment, program, records, and home-school relations. Although weaknesses were evident in all areas under consideration, there appeared to be a trend among directors of preschools toward an increasing awareness of their responsibilities in offering more challenging educational opportunities for young children.

The most serious problems were found in the area of "enrollment" where seven schools had groups exceeding the maximum recommendations for size of nursery and kindergarten groups. Closely related to this was the fact that the ratio of children to adults, particularly among the younger children, was in excess of recommended standards in several schools.

Lack of professional preparation posed the most serious weakness found in the area of "staff". Educational background of head teachers who were college graduates as well as those who were not college graduates was found to be deficient in psychology, human growth and development, early childhood curriculum and family life education. Among head teachers and assistant teachers there was none who had completed teaching experience in an approved school. There was little evidence indicating the practice of

in-service training programs for teachers without college degrees. Services of non-professional staff were used to varying degrees, always under the direction of the head teacher.

Findings from the study of "health policies and procedures" revealed that preschools needed to improve in effective use of health record forms, daily health inspections, and in establishing definite policies relating to routine procedures to be followed in this area of administration. Standards most adequately met in this section of the study concerned presentation of child's health certificate upon entrance into school, isolation of children taken ill at school, enrollment of children having a physical or mental handicap only with approval of the physician and the head teacher, availability of first-aid equipment, and provision of mid-morning and afternoon snacks.

Several problems were evident in the area concerning "plant and equipment". Indoor play space was inadequate in about one-third of the schools in the study and children's clothing storage facilities were inadequate in about one-half of the schools. Toilet and washbowl facilities were limited in two-thirds of schools. Accessibility of toilet facilities to playrooms was good in all of the schools and readily accessible to playground in all but three schools. Facilities for isolation needed improvement. Although an isolation area was provided in at least half of the schools, these areas were poorly equipped and situated. Often there

was no place for children to lie down while waiting to be taken home. Items of interest for his activity while isolated from the group were not made available to him. In most instances isolation areas were so far removed from play areas of the school that casual supervision by teachers was not possible. Facilities for outdoor play equipment were not as well met as standards in other areas of "plant and equipment". Equipment for see-sawing, riding, water play, building, pulling, and lifting were not available in ten to sixteen of the schools.

Reports from the section of "program" were encouraging in that seventeen of the schools visited were making progress toward providing a general program based on needs and interests of the children.

It was found that standards for the section devoted to "records" were not well met in all areas. Areas in which the standards were moderately well met (i.e. by over half of the schools) included records concerning personal data about the family; cumulative records of physical, emotional, intellectual, and social characteristics and behavior; and periodic summaries of child's progress at appropriate intervals. Evidence of information pertaining to family case records and children's personal records was scant.

Several possibilities for promoting an active relationship with parents and the child were utilized. Casual contacts, specific appointments, school visits by parents

for the observation of children's activities, initial conferences with the parent before the child enters the group, and parent and child visits to school were the opportunities most often used (17 - 19 of the schools) to stimulate an active relationship between parents and the school. Opportunities including parent participation in the preschool activities, group meetings, and parent's remaining at school for a time with the child as individual adjustment may require were used to a moderate extent (12 - 15 of the schools). The potential for making use of group meetings and home visits was often overlooked.

Interpretations and Recommendations

Under conditions existing at the time of this study the enactment of a compulsory licensing program must necessarily be considered a long-range goal in Louisiana. The first step toward achieving this goal would be to bring the problem before the public in order to gain the cooperation and support of community agencies, state professional organizations, preschool administrators, and parents of the preschool-age child. Preparation of proposed licensing standards must be a cooperative effort on the part of all concerned.

The state department of education, by assuming responsibility for developing and enforcing standards for approval, would recognize its leadership role for the extension of education for the very young. The state

department of education, through legislative action, should be charged by law to assume this responsibility. Duties of such responsibility would need to be designated clearly, for a licensing program to be effective must have provisions for adequate enforcement by the agency charged with this responsibility.

Further success of a licensing program would depend on the availability of professionally trained staff for the schools. Weaknesses which were apparent in this study of preschools appeared to be directly related to the problem of inadequate preparation and educational philosophy of directors and their staffs. For this study, thirty semester hours in early childhood education and child development had been recommended as a qualification for head teacher. Because at the time of this study no colleges or universities in Louisiana offered a complete curriculum in this field, meeting the above requirements would be an impossibility in colleges and universities in the state. Until such teacher training programs become available, Louisiana might certify as a preschool teacher one who had received a degree in early elementary education or in vocational home economics education with additional specialized training in child development and early childhood education. A requirement of fifteen semester hours for the director and at least ten for assistant teachers would appear to be reasonable standards at the present writing. To enable staff members to meet this requirement, extension classes

taught by child development and preschool education specialists should be offered by the state universities and colleges. Representatives from such institutions in Louisiana agreed that this would be possible if there were enough interest.

Motivation for becoming qualified teachers is important. This could be accomplished in part by legislation and enforcement of state approval for preschool education. But qualified teachers should be in a position to receive acceptable salaries. Parents desiring good educational opportunities for young children comprise an element which to some extent should be willing and able to pay higher tuition if such became necessary in order to employ qualified teachers. Additional support offered by voluntary organizations might supplement fees paid by parents. Public support through taxation is recommended as the ultimate goal which would put education for young children on a par in importance with later education and stabilize programs of early childhood education. Such financial support would be a natural accompaniment of charging the state department of education with responsibility for setting and enforcing standards.

Before notable progress could be made toward accepting a program of compulsory licensing there must first be an awareness of the contributions of such a procedure. This awareness could be achieved in a number of

ways: through courses offered on credit or non-credit basis through college and university extension courses; through educational workshops; or through utilizing services of special consultants. With these experiences should come a desire to implement the kind of preschool program which will enrich the learning of young children and best prepare them for their next steps toward becoming mature adults in a democratic society. With a strong desire and a sound philosophy the means could be found to achieve adequate standards.

The following are recommendations for securing the implementation of compulsory state licensing of preschools. It is to be understood, of course, that these recommendations would require a relatively long period of time to be effectively implemented.

1. Arouse the interest and concern of parents, the general public, state professional agencies, parent-teacher associations, individual citizens groups, and the press to secure necessary legislation for implementing good programs for young children.

2. Secure the services of three state departments - education, health, welfare - in establishing and enforcing standards for preschools.

3. Involve preschool personnel in formulation and implementation of effective standards.

4. Clarify policies and terminology of existing regulations.

5. Revise loosely written or ambiguous laws and standards.

6. Develop standards enabling immediate approval or providing for an interim growth period.

7. Help parents to recognize facilities maintaining acceptable standards.

## Conclusion

A program of compulsory licensing, as a long-range goal, would be a major contribution toward eliminating or reducing the inadequacies in preschool education found by this study. Schools operated as bonafide preschools could thus have their programs strengthened through unity and professional guidance. Licensed schools could thus be set apart from other preschools and child-care facilities unable to meet state licensing requirements.

It is hoped that this study, through the revelation of inadequacies of existing preschools and the recommendations for improvements in licensing, will have made a contribution to the better understanding of the importance of licensing of preschools in Louisiana and other states.

# APPENDIXES

# APPENDIX I

## LETTER SENT TO STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

April 6, 1962

I am presently completing my work for Master's degree in child development. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree I am doing a special problem under the direction of Dr. Bernice Bergman at Michigan State University. The title of my study is "A Preliminary Investigation of the Need for Compulsory Approval of Preschools in Louisiana". As part of my study, I hope to include a discussion of licensing practices of other states.

Answers to the following questions will be helpful in summarizing this information.

1. Does your state have a licensing program for public and/or private nursery schools and kindergartens at this time:

2. If so, is licensing secured on a voluntary or on a compulsory basis?

3. Are there required standards which must be met for compulsory licensing, or suggested minimum requirements for voluntary licensing?

4. If standards (compulsory or voluntary) are available, I would very much appreciate a copy of this material.

If this information is not available at your office and can be obtained from the departments of health or welfare, please forward my letter to the appropriate office.

Sincerely,

Mrs. J.E. Shea

# APPENDIX II

## METHODS USED IN THE REVIEW OF RESEARCH

SUGGESTED STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF NURSERY SCHOOLS IN MICHIGAN

In the blanks provided before each statement, answer each statement with "Yes", "No", or "Omit". "Yes" indicates that your school does practice the suggested standard; "No", your school does not meet the suggested standard; "Omit", the factor under consideration does not exist or is not applicable to your situation.

I. Enrollment

_____ A. Nursery school age shall be defined as beginning at three years as of September 1 of the year beginning school.

_____ B. Kindergarten age shall be defined as beginning at four years and eight months as of September 1 of the year beginning school.

_____ C. Maximum enrollment of a nursery school unit shall not exceed 20 children.

_____ D. Maximum enrollment of a kindergarten unit shall not exceed 25 children.

_____ E. Schools shall maintain as many units as needed to provide for the children enrolled.

_____ F. Maturity groupings are recommended where several units are provided.

G. Ratio of adults to children shall not exceed:

_____ one adult to 8 - 10 three year olds.

_____ one adult to 10- 12 four year olds.

_____ one adult to 15- 20 five year olds.

_____ Besides the preschool teacher, there shall be at all times another adult available in case of emergency.

II. Staff

A. Head Teacher

The head teacher shall be the person responsible for the school program.

1. The head teacher with a college degree:

_____ a. Shall have graduated from an accredited four-year college or teacher training institution.

_____ b. Shall have had a minimum of thirty semester hours in psychology, human growth and development, early childhood curriculum and family life education.

_____ c. Should have had at least two years teaching experience in an approved school.

2. The head teacher without a college degree:

_____ a. Shall have had a minimum of two full years of college work and is committed to completing a degree within five years from the time she is hired as head teacher.

_____ b. Shall be taking courses in early childhood education and related fields in accredited schools. She shall complete at least six credits a year until thirty semester credits are completed.

B. Assistant Teacher

An assistant teacher:

_____ 1. Shall have had two full years of college work.

_____ 2. Shall have had fifteen semester hours in early childhood education curriculum and child development.

_____ 3. Should have had one year's teaching experience as an assistant or as a student teacher in an approved preschool.

C. Assistant to the Teacher

_____ 1. She shall be a secondary school graduate.

_____ 2. Assistants to the teacher always work under supervision.

_____ 3. Assistants to the teacher should be encouraged to take courses toward becoming qualified teachers.

D. Parent Assistants

_____ 1. Parent assistants shall have special orientation in a planned series of meetings beginning prior to and continuing throughout their period of service.

_____ 2. They shall have specific guidance and interpretation from the teacher while working with children or in informal conferences afterwards.

E. Volunteers

_____ 1. Volunteers in the preschool shall always work with a qualified teacher who knows the children.

_____ 2. They shall be selected on the basis of natural aptitudes as well as training.

_____ 3. They shall have regularly scheduled hours for participation.

F. Cooks

_____ 1. Cooks should plan and prepare food under the supervision of the director. They shall apply principles of food preparation for young children.

_____ 2. They shall be responsible for serving the meal, for washing the dishes, and keeping the kitchen clean, sanitary, and orderly.

G. Janitor

_____ 1. Care shall be taken to select a person who is appreciative of children's needs.

_____ 2. It is desirable that the janitor be a general handy man.

_____ 3. Duties shall be assigned by the person in charge.

H. Special Personnel

_____ 1. The nurse
It is helpful for a public health nurse currently licensed to be available to advise the teachers in the health program. She should be fitted by

experience, training and personality to work with young children.

_____ 2. The physician
A physician shall be available for consultation and for emergencies.

_____ 3. The social case worker
Emphasis should be placed on a counseling service for parents of day nurseries and on the availability of social case work services to connect the preschool with community services.

_____ 4. The psychologist
The services of a psychologist shall be obtainable for counseling with the staff.

_____ 5. The nutritionist
A trained nutritionist shall be available. Such services may be planned on a counseling basis locally or regionally.

_____ I. Each adult person connected with a preschool shall present to the center an annual written statement from a qualified physician certifying his physical health, attesting to the absence of contagious or infectious diseases, including tuberculosis, typhoid, dysentery, all forms of venereal diseases, and active malaria. The certificate shall also show that the person has been vaccinated for small pox and polio.

III. Health Policies and Procedures

_____ A. Upon enrollment each child shall present a doctor's certificate attesting to immunization against small pox, diphtheria, polio, tetanus and whooping cough and to the absence of other infections.

_____ B. The school shall provide a form upon which the physician shall submit a record of the child's health history, immunization data, and the findings of the last medical examination.

_____ C. Upon daily arrival each child shall be examined by a nurse or other qualified person for symptoms of common cold, other apparent infections, and symptoms of communicable diseases and ill health.

_____ D. Any child showing signs of illness upon arrival or while in attendance shall be promptly isolated and kept apart from the group until he can be sent home.

_____ E. In the event of known exposure to a contagious disease the child shall be excluded from the preschool for the remaining portion of the incubation period deemed advisable by the local health authorities.

_____ F. A child having a physical or mental handicap which requires special care or continued close supervision shall be enrolled only with the approval of the physican and the head teacher.

_____ G. A first aid kit shall be provided and kept completely stocked and there shall be a person on the staff qualified to give first aid.

_____ H. Children in an all-day program shall have a rest period on cots of at least 45 minutes after the noon meal.

I. Provisions for serving food to the children:

_____ 1. A hot lunch shall be served if the program runs through the noon meal. An adequate lunch shall include at least:

___ a. one-half pint of plain whole milk as a beverage.
___ b. One ounce of protein (lean meat, poultry, fish, or cheese).
___ c. one-half cup of vegetables or fruit.
___ d. one portion of bread.
___ e. one teaspoon of butter or margarine.

_____ 2. In addition to the main meals, a mid-morning and a mid-afternoon snack of juice or milk shall be provided.

_____ 3. If the noon meal is provided it shall be served in surroundings conducive to good eating habits,

away from distracting activities.

_____ 4. Facilities for serving (tables, chairs, utensils) shall be child size.

IV. Plant and Equipment

A. Plant

1. Housing

a. General

_____ (1) The preschool unit shall be located on the first floor, preferably with south and east exposure.

_____ (2) The school shall adjoin a place for active play that is light and provides fresh air.

_____ (3) The rooms shall be well ventilated, dry, of comfortable temperature, pleasant, sunny and cheerful.

_____ (4) If a basement is used for brief play periods, it must be warm, damp-proof, and have sufficient natural light.

_____ b. Rooms used as family living quarters shall not be included unless specially approved.

c. Exits

_____ (1) Two unobstructed exits shall be provided from all floors and basement areas used by children. These exits shall be easily accessible to the rooms and to the out of doors.

_____ (2) Outside exit doors shall open outward.

_____ d. Walls and floors shall have easily cleaned surfaces.

_____ e. Fireplaces, hot radiators, electrical outlets, and hazardous windows, in rooms used by children, shall be adequately protected by screens or guards.

_____ f. Stairs shall be easy to climb and safe for children's use with a handrail that children can easily reach.

_____ g. A temperature of 68 - 70° shall be maintained throughout the day at a point 2 or 3 feet from the floor when the outdoor temperature is below 60°.

_____ h. The water shall be from a water system which has been approved by the board of health.

_____ i. Individual drinking utensils or a fountain shall be provided.

2. Play Rooms

_____ a. The playrooms shall allow a minimum of thirty-five square feet of floor space per child, exclusive of bathroom, lockers, kitchen, office and storage.

_____ b. There shall be a minimum of 20-foot candles of light in all parts of the playrooms. Light should be evenly distributed, nowhere intensely bright or glaring.

_____ c. Window space should be one-fifth or more of the floor area. Low windows are recommended so children can look out and light may come in to benefit floor play.

d. Storage

____ (1) At the child's eye-level, some of the wall space of the play centers shall be composed of open shelves.

____ (2) Block shelves are near open floor space; puzzles, take-apart toys, and collage materials on shelves near tables; dishes on shelves near sink and stove; books in a display rack near library table.

_____ e. Closed cupboard space should be supplied for extra supplies.

_____ f. Water conveniently available to art center, home play center, and science centers.

c. Furniture

_____ (1) All furniture shall be sturdy, movable, and child-sized.

_____ (2) Tables have "easy-to-clean surfaces.

_____ (3) Posture-type chairs of various heights shall be provided as follows:

8", 9", 10", 12", 14" from seat to floor.

_____ (4) Tables shall be of various heights as follows:

14" - 16", 14" - 18", 18" - 20" from table top to the floor.

_____ (5) A 54" cot is suitable for children two to five years of age.

h. Clothing storage

_____ (1) Cubbies near the entrance for storing child's outside clothing and other personal belongings shall be provided.

_____ (2) Free floor space nearby to encourage independent dressing is important.

3. Resting Facilities

_____ a. For the half-day program each child shall be provided with an individual rug, mat, or cot.

_____ b. For the all-day program, children shall have individual cots, sheets, and blankets. Beds used by members of the household shall not be used by the children. Cots, bedding and rugs shall be kept clean.

4. Toileting and Washing Facilities

_____ a. At least one toilet and washbowl with low mirror for every 6 - 10

children and a supply of warm and cold water shall be provided. Facilities shall be kept in a sanitary condition.

_____ b. Cloth towels and wash cloths, if used, shall be individually marked and hung up and properly washed and dried under sanitary conditions.

_____ c. The toilet room shall be easily accessible to the playroom.

_____ d. The toilet room shall be easily accessible to the playground.

_____ e. Toilet and wash bowl shall be child size or standard fixtures adapted to the use of the small child by a low platform four or five inches from the floor.

_____ f. The toilet and wash area shall be easy to supervise. No partition shall subdivide the rooms except for low partitions between toilets if so desired.

5. Isolation Room

_____ a. An isolation area shall be available. It should be furnished with a cot and articles that can be thoroughly cleaned and with bedding that can be boiled .

_____ b. If a separate medical unit is provided for isolation use, the room should contain medicine cabinet, a lavatory, desk for inspecting nurse, a scale, and filing cabinet for health records.

6. Kitchen

_____ a. When children remain for lunch, a unit separate from other rooms shall be provided for the kitchen equipped with stove, refrigerator, sink with hot and cold water, dishes and cooking utensils adequate to prepare and serve the noon meals as well as mid-morning and afternoon snacks.

_____ b. It shall be kept clean and well lighted.

_____ c. Closed cupboards shall be provided for the storage of dishes and cooking equipment.

_____ d. A mechanical dishwasher shall be provided to insure sterilization of dishes used in serving children.

_____ e. Towels shall be laundered daily.

_____ f. Kitchens shall be screened and effective measures used as a protection against insects and rodents.

_____ g. Approved daily garbage disposal shall be provided for sanitary removal of wastes. Mechanical garbage disposers are recommended.

7. Outdoor Play Space

_____ a. Area - 75-100 square feet of space per child shall be required.

_____ b. Surface - varied natural terrain is best, with good drainage, grass and earth, trees and shrubs, and varied exposure to sun and shade. A portion of paved area is recommended for wheel toys, block construction, and for short periods of play in inclement weather.

_____ c. Water - An outlet for running water is recommended, especially for programs that move outdoors for warm weather.

_____ d. Storage - An outdoor storage shed shall be provided for wheel toys, hollow blocks, and other equipment which cannot be left out in the weather.

_____ e. Access- The outdoor area should be readily accessible to the playroom and to toilet facilities.

D. Equipment

Materials for both indoor and outdoor play shall be adequate in quantity and quality to meet the needs

of the children and reflect the resources of the environment and the initiative of the teacher. Have a variety of types of the following categories:

1. Indoor Play Centers
   - ____ a. Creative
   - ____ b. Physical and Large Motor
   - ____ c. Dramatic and Social
   - ____ d. Constructive
   - ____ e. Manipulative
   - ____ f. Books and Pictures
   - ____ g. Music
   - ____ h. Natural Science
2. Outdoor Play Equipment
   - ____ a. Climbing
   - ____ b. Swinging
   - ____ c. See-sawing
   - ____ d. Riding
   - ____ e. Digging (in dirt and in sand)
   - ____ f. Water play
   - ____ g. Building
   - ____ h. Pushing
   - ____ i. Pulling
   - ____ j. Lifting

V. Program

The Daily Program:

_____ A. Shall have reasonable regularity, with a similar sequence for the children from day to day; that is, regular daily provision for play, for eating, for resting, for toileting, for washing, etc.

_____ B. Shall be sufficiently flexible so that children may move in groups of 2 or 3 throughout routine activities.

_____ C. Shall encourage children to accept responsibility according to their capabilities for their own care and allows ample time for this.

_____ D. Balances indoor and outdoor activity, weather permitting.

_____ E. Gives opportunity for the child to work out good social relationships on his own level.

_____ F. Is planned to meet the physical, social, intellectual and emotional needs of each individual child.

_____ G. Shall provide for quiet and noisy activities, free play, group play, and individual play.

VI. Records of the following nature shall be kept for each child:

A. Family Case Records

_____ 1. Early and present facts concerning the family as these relate to the children's center.

_____ 2. Cumulative records of contacts between the center and the family.

B. Personal Record

1. Medical Record

_____ (a) Developmental and physical history of the child .

_____ (b) Records of all examinations and re-examinations.

_____ (c) Height and weight charts

2. Progress Record

_____ (a) Cumulative records of physical, emotional, intellectual, and social characteristics and behavior.

_____ (b) Specific procedures planned in connection with the child's needs and the results of plans.

_____ (c) Periodic summary of child's progress at appropriate intervals.

VII. Home-School Relations

A. Provision shall be made for active relationship between parents and the school through:

_____ 1. Casual contacts

_____ 2. Specific appointments

_____ 3. Home visits by the teacher and by other members of the staff after a child's entry into preschool.

_____ 4. School visits by parents for observation of children's activities.

_____ 5. Encouragement of parent participation in the preschool through music, stories, children's parties, toy repairing, etc.

_____ 6. Group meetings- talks, lectures, films, etc. which interpret child development and discussions between parents and teachers.

B. Parent participation in orientation of the newly enrolled child shall be required. This may utilize techniques such as:

_____ 1. Initial conferences with the parent before the child enters the group.

_____ 2. Home visits by the teacher before the child enters preschool.

_____ 3. Parent and child visits to school.

_____ 4. Parent remaining at school for a time with the child as individual adjustment may require.

_____ 5. A bulletin board and a circulating library provided for staff and parents.

# APPENDIX III

## LETTER SENT TO DIRECTORS OF PRESCHOOLS

April 6, 1962

I am a 1959 graduate of Louisiana State University and am now completing my study toward a Masters Degree in Child Development from Michigan State University. At present I am living in Louisiana while continuing work on a thesis problem. Dr. Clara Tucker, Head of Home Economics at L.S.U. is my local counselor for the work on my problem.

Since there is a growing interest and increasing need for preschools in Louisiana, I have selected them as the subject of my study. I wish to focus on obtaining a picture of preschool education in Louisiana as I believe such information would be of value in informing the public of the importance of schools for early childhood education. It is my wish to visit a number of nursery schools and kindergartens in Louisiana so that, through observation and interviews with directors, I may secure information concerning preschool education typical in this state. I should like to include information on such subjects as enrollment, staff, health policies, housing and equipment, program planning, records, home-school and school - community relations. Knowing that you are vitally interested in this important phase of education, I would greatly appreciate discussing with you our mutual interests.

You will find enclosed a self-addressed card. Will you please indicate by checking and returning it to me that you will be interested in having a discussion with me. If so, I shall call at a later date to make an appointment with you. It is my plan to visit you during the month of May.

Sincerely,

Mrs. J.B. Shea

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A Preliminary Investigation of
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