

Book Reviews . . .

seems to be incompatible with many aspects of the book. For example, an extensive English vocabulary is presumed and this means that many of the poor, and many migrants, will not be able to use it. This fact can be demonstrated by the following explanation of bail, "An accused may be discharged from custody on his entering into an undertaking with or without sureties, that he will appear for the hearing at the time and place named in the undertaking." (page 12-29). Further, the mode of possible collection of maintenance payment is listed as garnishment, seizure of property and sequestration of estate (p.5-21). Often legal terms are explained, but some such as "tort" and "lien" are introduced without explanation.

Secondly, although the procedures for some legal action are given in easy to follow point form, some aspects are not strongly stressed. Good examples of these procedural formats are the steps involved with a consumer grievance, starting from approaching the retailer, through to approaching the Small Claims Tribunal. The nine steps involved in having a claim heard in the tribunal are also listed (pages 2-72, 2-86). Yet it is not until the section on debts that the importance of keeping a copy of all correspondence is mentioned, and this is a very basic rule for survival in many legal dealings.

For some of these reasons it is pertinent to wonder whether pamphlets such as those produced by the Law Department might not be more successful in bringing the law directly to the people. One can imagine people being more likely to pick up and read a pamphlet than the Legal Resource Book, mainly because the book is large and looks rather scholastic. The pamphlets are pro-

duced in many languages and deal with specific sections of the law such as divorce, wills, the courts and so on. However, it is still arguable whether these bring 'poverty law' to the people. Perhaps something more subversive is needed to achieve this aim, something similar to survival information.

For instance, the Legal Resources Book makes no bones about the fact that police often violate a citizen's rights during questioning, and that little redress is possible after violation (page 6-8,10; 12-13,20). Perhaps further time should be spent indicating what might happen if a youth 'courteously tells a police officer that he doesn't wish to answer any questions until he has spoken to a lawyer'. (page 6-10)

Similar information could be available on court appearances. For instance, details on the procedures and personnel involved in the courts. Advice could be given on the advantages of addressing the bench in a polite submissive manner, how a solicitor might manoeuvre so that cases are heard before a certain magistrate, how to avoid being goaded by the opposing barrister. Without this type of information an idealised account of the law in action is presented.

But perhaps this is expecting too much from a single resource book which covers a great deal, and is an excellent exercise in bringing the law closer to the people even if, as I suspect, it will be brought through intermediaries, rather than direct.

Carol Mathew,



The Child Protection Team Handbook: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Managing Child Abuse and Neglect.

Edited by Barton D. Schmitt
Garland STPM Press, New York
and London 1977
pp 435
Price \$24.50

Publications on the subject of Child Abuse appear to be rolling off the presses at an ever increasing (some might say alarming) rate, and I was not overjoyed to see Dr. Kempe's name on the dust jacket of this one: "With a foreword by C. Henry Kempe". I admit to making irreverent comparisons with P. G. Wodehouse and J. P. Donleavy, who it appears, successfully reworked, or in the latter's case, rework, the same old theme. Reviewing the book in Australia's Garden State, where the grass is growing lush and thick under the abused child's feet, added further whimsical irony.

The book sets out to supply the reader with "a practical down-to-earth handbook for multidisciplinary child protection teams". It has been suggested by members of many professions that the "multidisciplinary" aspect is more of a problem than the Child Abuse itself so the need for such a book has obviously been noted.

The editor assumes that the reader will have some basic knowledge of the subject but recommends that the reader who is new to

Book Reviews . . .

the field should first review the introduction. This supplies some basic information (and assumptions) concerning Child Abuse and Neglect that should be compulsory reading for all those, directly or indirectly, involved in any way with the issue. I propose to underline a few of the points here by quoting them directly:— “In areas where there is early detection and intervention, the death rate is less than 1 percent. In areas where the case finding is inadequate, the death rate may climb to 10 percent”.

“The most important type of child abuse and neglect to diagnose is physical abuse of a child under the age of two. Every one of these cases is a potentially fatal one.”

“The highest priority of treatment is to protect the child. If in doubt the issue should be resolved in favor of the child. The second priority of treatment is to help the parents; and the third priority is to restore the family if possible.”

“Failure to treat child abuse can lead to reinjury and death. Also, abused children grow up and some of them become violent members of our society. Child Abuse has been correlated with playground violence, street violence, juvenile delinquency, marital violence and criminal violence.”

The emphasis in choosing those particular points is mine but they reflect the urgency and necessity of co-operation between involved professions. The authors are drawn from those professions, social work, medicine, psychiatry, law, nursing, that have the greatest contribution to make.

The book is divided into four parts and Part One deals with setting up a Child Protection Team, both a nuclear and an extended consultative team, describes the roles

and procedures, and ways in which the team can improve its handling of cases, its case finding and the community's treatment services.

Part Two clearly describes the diagnostic tasks of each team member, and provides a check list for each profession. The social worker's checklist for physical abuse high-risk factors is particularly interesting: it is a tool for thoroughly evaluating the safety of the home and proposes a “scoring” system which is in the process of being validated at the University of Colorado Medical Center. Ten factors are listed, and weighted differently, based on the experience of the authors. Practical issues are not overlooked either; for example the guidelines for giving evidence in court proceedings will be found useful by many, as will the duties of, and qualifications required by, the team co-ordinator.

Child Protection Team conferences are the subject of Part Three and particular emphasis is laid on the necessity for firm ground rules in order to make the meetings productive in decision-making terms and efficient in use of time. The problem-oriented record, introduced by Dr Lawrence Weed in 1968, is recommended and adapted for use in Child Abuse cases. Another particularly invaluable chapter is devoted to describing useful guidelines for the common case management decisions that have to be made by Child Abuse Teams; although not intended as absolute criteria, the authors of this section have attempted to provide direction and assistance in coming to terms with such problems as when court action is required, when to return a child home, and when to recommend criminal investigation of offences.

Part Four examines the treatment

tasks necessary to attempt rehabilitation of families. The roles of the court, the social worker and his or her supervisor, the physician and nurse are examined in detail and many of the possible pitfalls underlined. The chapter on treatment options is depressingly short, (ten pages including references), but the need for careful planning and a combination of services is highly stressed. The central goal in working with abusive parents is seen as helping them replace their former dysfunctional patterns of child care with a method that is more rewarding and productive for both the parents and the child.

Finally, a large portion of the book (and presumably of its cost) is devoted to over one hundred pages of appendices and it would be a pity, important though this section is, if this restricted its potential market.

Child Abuse can be an unrewarding field in which to work and one full of dangers for the unwary. This book represents a practical model of team work which the authors claim should be applicable to most settings. The Australian reader, starved of indigenous literature, will as always find some chapters more useful than others. The human conflicts and problems described, however, and the possible means of their resolution, are universal: inter-professional rivalry; lack of co-ordination, high staff turnover, the attempts to change the untreatable family, over-identification with the parents, or the child, are all gratifyingly and realistically dealt with. The book is a valuable addition to the literature for this reason alone.

Chris Goddard,
Deputy Chief Medical Social
Worker,
Royal Children's Hospital,
Melbourne.



CARE
International Year
of the Child 1979

AUSTRALIAN
FOSTER CARE
CONFERENCE
-IYC-



Families Helping Families

CHEVRON HOTEL, POTTS POINT, SYDNEY
SEPTEMBER 1-5, 1979

Conference Office: P.O. Box 2244,
North Parramatta,
N.S.W. 2151
Telephone: (02) 683 1422

SPONSORED BY THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU OF AUSTRALIA



About the Conference

The Australian Foster Care Conference - IYC will focus on the use of one of the nation's basic resources - the family - to help children and other families.

Foster Care is a planned community service to children and families involving interaction between children, natural families, foster families and foster care agencies. Foster care provides family life for a child while his or her own family cannot cope. The usual plan is that the child will eventually return to its own family.

As with most family care programmes, foster care has developed on a State basis, and there have been few opportunities for exchange of invaluable experience and knowledge nationally.

The Australian Foster Care Conference - IYC will bring together foster parents, foster children and adults who have been fostered as children, foster care agency staff, staff and others involved in related family services, and any others who may wish to attend.

Why have a national conference on foster care? The following seven aims have been identified:

1. To provide a critical examination of foster care in the context of a continuum of preventive and remedial community services aimed at supporting and enhancing the lives of children and families.
2. To provide an opportunity for people involved in all aspects of foster care to consult as colleagues.
3. To provide the means of sharing and gaining information and knowledge in relation to foster care goals and practice.
4. To provide an incentive to research into and evaluation of foster care programmes.
5. To work towards the improvement of the quality of all foster care programmes.
6. To develop and share resources for training and education of foster parents and foster care workers.
7. To develop a greater community awareness and acceptance of the needs of children separated from their families, and of foster care as one form of substitute family care for children, with a view to widening its appropriate use and recruiting new foster parents.

THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU OF AUSTRALIA
INVITES YOU TO BE PART OF
THE AUSTRALIAN FOSTER CARE CONFERENCE - IYC

Conference Programme

Note: The Conference has been arranged to enable all conference members to participate in large meetings and smaller groups (workshops), and interest groups. Members may attend any choice of workshops and interest groups. You should indicate on the registration form which workshops and interest groups you wish to attend, giving 1st and 2nd preferences. All workshops will be held twice to enable wider participation and choice.

SATURDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER, 1979

- 4.00 p.m. - 7.45 p.m.** Conference Reception desk open for checking in.
- 8.00 p.m.** Official Opening by the Hon. R.F. Jackson, N.S.W. Minister for Youth and Community Services.
- Keynote address, Professor Mary Reistroffer
"Delivering on Our Promises in Foster Care"

SUNDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER, 1979

- 10.00 a.m. - 12 noon** Full Conference Meeting
Panel: "On Being A
Foster Parent
Natural Parent
Fostered Person
Foster Care Worker"
- 1.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.** Interest groups
1. On Being a Foster Parent
 2. On Being a Natural Parent
 3. On Being a Fostered Person
 4. On Being a Foster Care Worker
- 7.00 p.m.** Private dinner parties for country, interstate and overseas conference members.

MONDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 1979

- 10.00 a.m. - 12 noon** Workshops
1. National Standards for Foster Care
 2. Placement Decisions: Who goes where and who does what?
 3. Recruitment, Assessment and Training of Foster Parents
 4. The Family of the Child in Care
 5. Natural Family and Foster Family Working Relationships
 6. Self Help Groups
 7. Evaluating Foster Care Programmes
 8. Training of Foster Care Workers
 9. Foster Parents: "What do you do when . . . ?"
 10. Foster Parents and Agencies: Colleagues or Clients?
 11. Case Study of a Child and Family
 12. Breakdown of Foster Placements

13. Emotionally Disturbed Child in Foster Care
14. Short Term Foster Care

- 1.30 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.** Full Conference Meeting
"Who Am I? - the Question of Identity"
- 8.00 p.m.** Public Meeting
Professor Mary Reistroffer:
"Foster Parents and Agencies:
Tasks in Teamship"

TUESDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1979

- 9.30 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.** Full Conference Meeting
Panel: The Teenager in Foster Care
Aboriginal Foster Care
Foster Care for the Children of Ethnic Groups.
Foster Care and Children with Physical Handicaps
Foster Care and Children with Intellectual Handicaps
Foster Care and the Abused Child
- 11.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.** Interest Groups
1. The Teenager in Foster Care
 2. Aboriginal Foster Care
 3. Foster Care for the Children of Ethnic Groups
 4. Foster Care and Children with Physical Handicaps
 5. Foster Care and Children with Intellectual Handicaps
 6. Foster Care and the Abused Child

2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. Workshops

Repeat of Workshops 1-14 as on Monday Morning

Evening Harbour Cruise and Dinner Dance (Non-Conference Members may come)

WEDNESDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 1979

- 10.00 a.m. - 12 noon** Full Conference Meeting
Final Address,
Professor Mary Reistroffer
Conference Statement on a
Commitment to Caring
- 12.30 p.m.** Conference Luncheon

General Information

VENUE AND ACCOMMODATION

The Conference will be held at the Chevron Hotel, McLeay Street, Potts Point, Sydney - just around the corner from Kings Cross, and within easy reach of Sydney's tourist attractions.

Accommodation is available at the Chevron at special prices for participants and their families: Single Room \$20 per night, Twin Room \$28, and Family Room (accommodation for three people) \$30.

CONFERENCE COSTS

Full Registration (includes entrance to all sessions, morning and afternoon tea and closing lunch):

Individual	\$45
Each additional Family Member	\$15
Concessional (for undergraduate students, people on pensions or benefits)	\$25

Part Time Registration Per Day \$12

Evening Public Meetings Only \$ 1 (payable at door)

Harbour Cruise and Dinner Dance \$15 per person

Financial assistance towards costs of travel and accommodation may be available to conference members whose costs are not being met by an agency or organization, especially natural parents and fostered persons. Application should be made by letter to the Conference Office.

CHILD MINDING

Supervised child minding will be available during the day for children accompanying country and interstate conference members but a charge may have to be made. Please indicate your requirements on the registration form.

TRAVEL

Ansett Airlines of Australia are the official carriers for the Conference. We recommend you contact the Ansett representatives detailed on the back of this brochure to obtain group concessions.

PRIVATE DINNER PARTIES

Some Sydney families have invited country, interstate and overseas conference members to be their guests at dinner parties on Sunday evening. Please indicate on the registration form if you wish to attend.

BOOKSHOP

Books of interest to all Conference members will be on sale at a special bookshop organized for the Conference. Many books are being especially imported, including those written by the guest speaker, Mary Reistroffer.

STATEMENT ON COMMITMENT TO CARING

A small committee will be at work through the conference drawing together resolutions, recommendations and opinions from conference sessions. As a climax to the Conference and as a result of their work, this committee will bring to the final session on Wednesday morning a proposed statement on "A Commitment to Caring", which will be debated and voted upon.

Registration

A separate Registration Form should be filled in for each conference member.

Where rooms are being shared, please send registration forms in together.

Ms., Miss, Mrs., Mr.,)

NAME
(SURNAME) (FIRST NAME)

ADDRESS
..... POSTCODE

PHONE HOME WORK

OCCUPATION AND/OR AREA OF INTEREST (please tick)

- Foster Parent
- Foster Care Worker
- Natural Parent
- Fostered Person
- Other (please specify)

FULL REGISTRATION (please tick)

PART TIME REGISTRATION

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday
(please tick)

WORKSHOP AND INTEREST GROUPS

- Sunday p.m. 1st Preference Interest Group
- Number ...
- 2nd Preference Interest Group
- Number ...
- Monday a.m. 1st Preference Workshop
- Number ...
- 2nd Preference Workshop
- Number ...
- Tuesday a.m. 1st Preference Interest Group
- Number ...
- 2nd Preference Interest Group
- Number ...
- Tuesday p.m. 1st Preference Workshop
- Number ...
- 2nd Preference Workshop
- Number ...