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A PROGRAM FOR HOME VISITATION FOR THE CLASS ROOM TEACHER

by

THORA T. MOSBY

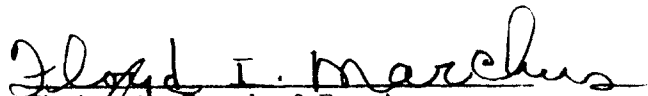
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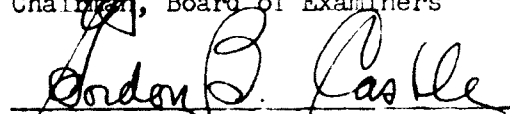
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Master of Education

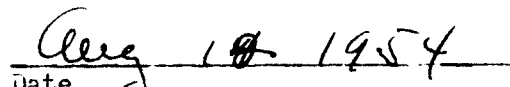
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1954

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

#### THE PROBLEM

In order to understand the problems of children better, it is important that the home life of the children be studied. One method is through a program of home visitation by the teacher. The following general question was employed as a guide in developing a plan for home visitation. What should be the plan for home visitation for a teacher in the Aberdeen Elementary School? This question may be analyzed into the following specific questions:

1. What suggestions are available in related literature?
2. How can the procedure of the interview be developed?
3. What areas for discussion with parents need to be kept in mind by the interviewer?
4. What general procedure does an interviewer need to follow in discussing the school progress of the child?
5. What does an interviewer need to get by observation?
6. How may the information secured in this study be employed in improving the educational program for the children?

7. How can a program for teacher visitation be organized for an elementary school?

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Home-school cooperation most often takes place within the school. The parents visit the school and confer with the teacher concerning the problems of the child. Garfield school had the conference method of reporting and all parents were invited to come to school three times during the year. However, at times it seemed necessary to visit the homes of the children, in order to understand the home conditions under which the children lived, and thereby to understand better the problems of the children in the classroom.

#### SETTING OF THE PROBLEM

Garfield School is one of the eight elementary schools in Aberdeen, South Dakota. It has one of the oldest school buildings in the city. There were eight classrooms, kindergarten through six, with two second grades. The enrollment in the school was approximately two hundred pupils. It is in the older section of Aberdeen, and is about six to eight blocks from the business district of the city. There are a few apartment houses in this district, and most of the families own their homes.

#### DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

The problem was restricted to the fourth grade in the Garfield school in Aberdeen, South Dakota, during the school year, 1953-1954.

The techniques and procedures employed in this study were by design not complicated in order that nearly any teacher would be encouraged to make home calls. It is assumed that there are advantages for the teacher in not imposing any definite pattern for the home interview. With the exception of the check sheet, it is not claimed in this paper that another teacher would arrive at exactly the same results. The results achieved in a teacher and parent interview is a function of the personalities represented, and would be different for different teachers. The value comes from reaching agreement between the parent and the teacher for the best welfare of the child.

#### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Home visitation. A home visitation was interpreted as a pre-arranged conference between the parent and the teacher in the home.

Check list. A guide was developed to aid the interviewer in discovering factors such as the composition of the family, social economic status, parent-child relationships, parent relationships with the school, activities that are shared, special interests of the child, and the like.

#### METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

Related literature was read concerning the value of home visitation and ways in which the home visits could be conducted. Information regarding the purposes of the interview was read, and techniques and procedures to use in the home interview were learned.

Shortly after school began in the fall, an interest inventory was given to each child to uncover some of his likes, dislikes, and



interests. Later a sociometric test was used to discover the leaders of the class, and to find the children who were not accepted by their peers.

A short letter (see Appendix A) was sent home to the parents in October telling them the teacher would like to call at their homes sometime during the school year. The home visit was arranged by telephone, or by note which the child took home to his parents. During the visit to the home no notes were taken, but a check sheet was filled out after the visit was made.

A check list which was developed before the teacher made any home visits was to be used as a guide for her observations. The items listed on the check list were decided upon after reading the literature available, and after conferring with other teachers on what they thought should be included in a check list.

Thirty-one homes were visited, some of them after school and others in the evening if the mother was working. The teacher used an unstructured interview, but problems that the teacher and the parent had in common were discussed.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### LITERATURE CONCERNING THE HOME INTERVIEW

Many teachers have planned visits where the parents may come to school to observe their child in the classroom and, thereby get a better understanding of children working in a group. This is a good procedure, and an excellent way of communicating with the parents, but it is equally important for the teacher to visit the home and find out something of the home background in order to better understand the child.

Harold Rugg<sup>1</sup> believes it is important to bring the parents into the school, but it is even more important for the teacher to go into the home. Nothing can take the place of the teacher seeing and experiencing first hand the home life of the individual children. Rugg believes that if the teacher works closely with the parent in the school and in home, a mutual confidence is built up. As a result, parents let the teacher know more and more of their home problems.

When the teacher becomes better acquainted with the parents

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<sup>1</sup> Harold Rugg, and B. Marion Brooks, The Teacher in School and Society (New York: World Book Company, 1950), p. 302.

and observes the child in the home situation, the parents often become more at ease and will reveal many conditions which may have been concealed if the parent came to school.<sup>2</sup>

Ruth Strang states,

Teachers say that they get more understanding of pupils from home visits than in any other way. In a home visit they see for themselves the physical conditions under which the child is growing up. Frequently they see the child and parents together, and thus gain objective evidence of the emotional relations between them. In an interview with the parents, the teacher may learn how the child feels toward school, how he behaves at home, what his real interests are, what methods of discipline the parents use, and what the parent-child relationships are, as well as the relationship among the children in the family.<sup>3</sup>

A teacher can learn much from a mother by listening to her talk. The teacher can learn about the things a child likes, things that make him happy, and things he does which worry the mother. A few remarks by the parent would be enough to show whether the child is constantly nagged, distrusted, and belittled. Such feelings are of great importance to the teacher because the relations of the child with his parents affects his relations with all other adults. If he is rejected or unloved at home, the teacher will have to make a special effort to win his friendship and confidence before she can teach him.<sup>4</sup>

A problem child usually comes from a problem home. The insecurities and frustrations that originate from an undesirable

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<sup>2</sup> Charlotte Buhler, and others, Childhood Problems And The Teacher (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1952), p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Strang, Reporting to Parents (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947), pp. 64-65.

<sup>4</sup> Ervin Winfred Detjen, and Mary Ford Detjen, Elementary School Guidance (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1952), p. 7.

home life carry over into school and sometimes assume such proportions that they block all academic progress.<sup>5</sup>

Sister Helen Catherine<sup>6</sup> feels it is of greatest importance that the teacher establish intimate working relations with every member of the class. To do this, it is important that the teacher know the parents well, and have a sympathetic understanding of the home life of her pupils.

The teacher should visit the homes of the children and be an interested listener. Parents soon sense that the interest is genuine and better school-community relations are developed. Brown<sup>7</sup> implies that knowing about the home environment of the children is beneficial not only to the pupils and the teacher but to the entire school system in establishing a better understanding and cooperative attitude between the home and the school.

Nicholas Schreiber says,

There is no substitute for personal contact in an effective public relations program. Once the confidence of the parents is gained through a visit to the home by an interested teacher, there need be no apprehension with regard to their attitude toward the school. Although good public relations is seldom the immediate or primary objective of a home visit, it must nevertheless be considered as an important concomitant.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Sister Helen Catherine, O. S. F., "Relationship Between Teachers, Parents and Pupils," Grade Teacher, 68:80, September, 1950.

<sup>7</sup> Robert H. Brown, Jr., "Home Visitations Prove Teacher + Parent = Better Pupils," School Executive, 72:46, November, 1952.

<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Schreiber, "Home Visits that Count," National Associations of Secondary School Principals Bulletin 32:177, February, 1948.

To help a child in the best possible way, it does seem that parents and teachers need to communicate, both by having the parents come to school and by the teacher going into the home. If the teacher visits the home, the parents are often more at ease, and much insight into the problems of the child may be obtained which might not be secured otherwise.

There is no substitute for personal contact in establishing good parent-teacher relationships. Often the confidence of the parent is gained through a visit to the home by an interested teacher. The parents consider a teacher to be a representative of the school, and tend to judge the school by the teacher's actions and works. The teacher needs to understand the school program, its policies, its objectives, and its philosophy and be in sympathy with them. Otherwise, she can do damage and injustice to the school and the school staff. During the visit, any appearance of fact-finding should be avoided. Parents will often volunteer much factual data that will be helpful in working with the pupil.<sup>9</sup>

Brown<sup>10</sup> sums up the purposes of home contacts as: to gain a better understanding of the child, so that his time spent in school would be more profitable; to increase the cooperation and understanding of the home and school; and to develop a friendly relationship between the teacher, pupil, and parent.

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<sup>9</sup> Roy DeVerl Willey, Guidance in Elementary Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 432.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, op. cit., p. 46.

LITERATURE ON THE INTERVIEW

In order to be able to get the most out of a home visit the teacher must know some of the techniques of interviewing. Erickson<sup>11</sup> defines interviewing as "conversation with a purpose". The purpose may vary greatly from situation to situation, and even the "small talk" used at times to initiate an interview has the purpose of putting the subject at ease.

There are four definite purposes in any interview. The first is to establish friendly relationships. Unless a friendly relationship is established the other purposes of the interview cannot be successfully performed. The second function is to get information about the pupil or the child that cannot be obtained through other records, inventories, and tests. The third function is to supply information, and to stimulate the thinking of the interviewee. The final purpose is to motivate; to promote thought, feeling and action.<sup>12</sup>

The interviewer should have certain important questions that he would like to have answered, but he should avoid allowing the interview to become stereotyped and formal. He should spend a few moments at the beginning of the interview in establishing rapport, and his questions should seem to arise naturally in the course of conversation. Considerable care should be used to see that the interview does not

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<sup>11</sup> Clifford E. Erickson, A Basic Text for Guidance Workers (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947), p. 122.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 123-124.

become an examination or even that of an oral questionnaire. This could lead to a feeling of antagonism and resentment, and defeat the purpose of the interview.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Arthur E. Traxler, Techniques of Guidance (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), p. 26.

## CHAPTER III

### DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN FOR HOME VISITATION

In order to develop the plan of home visitation the teacher chose four things to do before any attempt was made to make a home call. First, the teacher planned with the administration for the visit and set up the purposes for the call. Second, the teacher became acquainted with the fourth grade in order to know some of their interests, needs, and problems. Third, a check list was made to use as a guide during the visit. Fourth, the teacher learned some of the techniques used in interviewing. After the needs and problems of the children were known the teacher applied the plan in home visitations.

### PLANNING WITH THE ADMINISTRATION

Since no plan of home visitation had been set up in Garfield School, Aberdeen, South Dakota, very few teachers had visited any of their pupils' homes unless it was for a troublesome child or at the invitation of the parent to come to dinner. Most of the previous visits had been for disciplinary cases. The superintendent and the principal of the school were consulted regarding the plans to visit each home represented in the fourth grade. The purpose was to determine the needs and problems of the children, and when the needs were found, to



help the child overcome his difficulty so that he would enjoy his school year, and to produce better cooperation to the end that each child would receive the maximum benefits from what the school had to offer.

It was necessary to outline the plan to be used with the principal and to find the time for visiting that would not interfere with the routine of the school.

#### GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE CHILDREN

The teacher used three ways in learning to know the children at the beginning of the school year. The first was through an interest inventory. (See Appendix B). The children were asked to list their areas of reading interest. They listed the subject they enjoyed most, the subject they disliked, and their hobbies.

The areas of reading interest included animals, world neighbors, Indians, adventure, seasons, and history stories. All school subjects were listed as favorites. Arithmetic was given as the favorite of eight children; four children chose reading. No subjects were listed as disliked.

The hobbies for the girls were grouped around some activity with dolls, such as collecting story-book dolls, paper dolls, or pictures of dolls. The hobbies for the boys were activities with airplanes such as building model planes, or drawing planes. One child had a stamp collection, another a rock collection, and one collected pictures of animals.

This study showed that three children had no hobby; and eight

children showed no preference for any type of stories.

According to Detjen, "Children need to have a satisfying relationship with their teachers. But they need the approval of other children more than they need the good will of the adult."<sup>1</sup>

Often, the teacher, Detjen<sup>2</sup> says, relies on adult standards in judging the social acceptability of a child. The child is considered well adjusted if the teacher-pupil relationship is good. But the impression that the child makes upon the teacher is not necessarily the impression that he makes upon his playmates. So the most irritating child in the room from the standpoint of the teacher may be regarded by the children as the most friendly and likeable child in the room.

In order to determine the extent of acceptance and rejection within the pupil society of the classroom, the teacher administered a sociometric test, (see Appendix C) followed by interviews in which children were to explain their reasons for their choice of friends. This revealed which children were unchosen or rejected by their peers and excluded from any child-initiated activity. These children lacked a sense of belonging, and were frustrated in their attempts to become a part of their peer group. The sociometric test also discovered the children who were leaders, and they could help the isolated children to become accepted by the group.

The interviews with children about their choices revealed that

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<sup>1</sup> Ervin Winfred Detjen, and Mary Ford Detjen, Elementary School Guidance (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1952), p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

one child was rejected because "She hits the kids. She's always begging for food. She never asks us to her house." Following up such leads often gave the teacher some evidence of the disturbance in the child.

A teacher can learn a great deal about children by observing them. The teacher can notice which children are chosen for committees, for teams and squads when children play together. The remarks children make and the tone of voice they use in speaking and the glances that are passed between them often have a meaning for an alert teacher.<sup>3</sup>

Former reports were used to find out what kind of work could be expected from each child. Talks with the teachers who had worked with the children in earlier grades were used as a means by which the teacher became acquainted with them.

#### DEVELOPING THE CHECK LIST

The teacher talked with seven teachers in the elementary schools to find out what they would want to ask about in the home interview, and what they would try to get by observation.

To the first question, What would you ask the parent in the home interview? the responses were: What is the child's attitude toward the teacher and toward the school? How much help is given the child at home? What are the special interests and hobbies of the child? How does the child spend his leisure time? Does the child attend movies? If so, how often? Does he read funnies? Does the child attend church?

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

To the second question, What observations would you make in a home visit? the teacher wished to observe the: economic conditions, relationships in the family, reading material, parents' understanding of the child's problem, the discipline in the home, and the attitude of the parent toward the teacher, child, and school.

Detjen<sup>4</sup> points out that one of the important factors which affects the life of the child is the social and economic status of his home. A teacher often judges the family standard of living on the basis of the father's occupation. The amount of income, of course, must be considered in terms of the number of persons in the family. It must be remembered that the morals of the home and not the economic condition is the key to the mental health of the child. Many families are happy and well adjusted in spite of undesirable living conditions, and many are discontent in the midst of luxury.

The place where the child lives may affect emotional life. It makes a difference whether in a large house with plenty of outdoor play space or in a crowded small apartment. The child is concerned about the way his home compares with homes of his friends. The child may become emotionally disturbed by feeling that he lives in the least desirable home in the neighborhood, or he may get the impression that he is socially superior to other children if his home is better than theirs.

When finding out about the environment of the child, it is important to know about the composition of the family. Teachers find

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-4.

many emotional problems carry over into the school when homes are broken, or when relatives live in the home.

When investigating a home situation, the teacher should find out about the parents' physical health, emotional stability, intelligence, and judgment in dealing with children. Some parents show a thorough understanding of the child's problem, while others never seem to see his viewpoint or to appreciate his abilities and limitations. A home characterized by harmony, love, and understanding tends to produce happy well-adjusted children. But when parents quarrel, disagree on the rearing of the offspring, show partiality, or compare one child unfavorably with another, they pave the way for feelings of inferiority, jealousy, resentment, and rebellion.

After the interviews with the teachers, during which some of the problems in the class room had been discovered, an interview check list was devised to be a guide for the teacher in the home visitation, (see Appendix D). A part of the check list was to be used as a guide for interviewing the parent, and another part to record the observations in the home. The check list contained items concerning the economic conditions, cultural background, social conditions, leisure time activities, school relationships, and attitudes.

#### LEARNING THE TECHNIQUES OF INTERVIEWING

Because the interest of the school is the development of the "whole" child, frequent contacts with the parent are necessary to understand the needs of the child. This contact is often made through the interview between the parent and the teacher.

A well-handled interview can do much to bring about better understanding and cooperation between the home and school, and should result in the more effective handling of a child both in school and at home. However, a poor interview can increase any antagonism the parents already have toward the school, and may in the future cause the parent to take the child's part without weighing the facts of the situation. Therefore the teacher should know how to conduct an interview and know the purposes of an interview.

Bingham<sup>5</sup> says that in preparing for an interview, the objective must be defined. The interviewer needs to clarify in his own thinking the real end to be served by the interview. If it is possible, information about the person to be interviewed should be obtained before the interview. Bingham stresses that appointments should be made in advance, as it saves time, and one can know that the hour is satisfactory to the interviewee. The interviewer should practice taking the interviewee's point of view. It is very important that he keep an open mind, and not be prejudiced before the interview takes place.

Interviews must be prepared, and a time must be arranged when the parent and the teacher can give their full attention to the problem to be discussed. The teacher should plan exactly what she wants to say to the parent. She should know also what sort of help she should expect from the parent. The teacher should show she is willing to share the responsibility with the parent.

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<sup>5</sup> Walter Van Dyke Bingham, and Bruce Victor Moore, How to Interview (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1934), pp. 18-19.

In opening an interview Bingham indicates that the confidence of the interviewee must be won, and, "the only ideal relationship for successful interviewing is mutual confidence".<sup>6</sup> The best way to do this is to show genuine interest in him. Pleasant surroundings are a help in gaining the confidence of the person to be interviewed, and one does not attempt to hold an interview when the person being interviewed is angry, irritated or fatigued. The interviewer should begin by saying something of real interest to the interviewee, and then let him talk. When he begins to talk one should be on the alert to find points related to the problem. It is necessary that the interviewer listen, as many important things are revealed when the person rambles.

Direct questioning may arouse antagonism and resentment. After rapport has been established in a good interview, the interviewee is likely to talk freely and to volunteer information.

A pleasant word, a friendly smile, an impression of casualness will assist the interviewer to begin the interview in a relaxed manner.<sup>7</sup>

No notes were taken during the interview but observations and information received during the interview were recorded after the home visit. Parents tend to "freeze" if a person writes during the interview, and rapport is broken. Willey<sup>8</sup> recommends that a summary of the information be secured as soon after the interview as possible.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-21.

<sup>7</sup> Clifford E. Erickson, A Basic Text For Guidance Workers (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947), p. 135.

<sup>8</sup> Roy DeVerl Willey, Guidance in Elementary Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 425.

Success in interviewing is finally attained by discovering, mastering, and integrating the many specific habits, skills, and techniques required in order to formulate clearly the purpose of the particular interview, to plan its course intelligently, and to carry through its successive steps, from the first approach to the final write-up, expeditiously and well.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Bingham, op. cit., p. 34.



## CHAPTER IV

### REPORT OF FINDINGS FROM A HOME INTERVIEW

In this study the teacher visited thirty-one homes. The parents all expressed pleasure in having the teacher call, and many remarked that it was the first time any teacher had been in their home. Since this was not a statistical study the findings were general and were from observation made in the home and from the conversation in the unstructured interview.

Eight of the thirty-one homes visited by the teacher were broken homes. These homes were broken either by divorce or separation. This meant that the child lived either with his mother or father. In two cases the parent had remarried and there were step-children.

Seventeen of the homes had other people living with the family, as grandparents, roomers, or maids. Many of these "extras" in the home were given the responsibility of caring for the family when the mother worked.

There were fourteen mothers who were employed away from home at full or part-time work. The chief reason that was given for working was that they needed the extra money to help support the growing family. The typical jobs were: waitress, saleslady, private secretary, funeral chapel attendant, and bar-maid. One mother "farmed out" her small child,

and the school age children went home and made their own lunch at noon. During the cold winter months arrangements were made for the children to bring their lunches to school.

All the fathers and step-fathers but two were employed. The typical jobs were: auctioneer, contractor, district managers for grain, bread, and lumber companies, day laborer, machinist, merchant, government worker, and salesman. In two instances the father worked during the daytime, and the mother worked at night so they could eliminate the need of a housekeeper to care for the children.

There were thirteen families in this study that had two children. In all cases but one, the child that the interviewer was most interested in was the oldest. The parent depended upon the older child to take care of the younger one. The parent and the teacher discussed this problem. Sometimes the parent was not aware of the fact that the child was assuming too much responsibility for the younger child.

Nine families had an "at-home-night" quite regularly when the entire family would be together and they would do things as a family unit. A member of the family would choose what they should do for the evening. Some of the activities of this group were: visiting at home, games at home, attending a movie, or attending a ball game.

The child's friends were not accepted in five homes. In two of the homes, the parents made arrangements to entertain the group elsewhere, whenever it was their turn for entertaining. The school was used many times. The reasons the parents gave for not allowing children in their homes were: "We are living in grandma's house, and

I just wouldn't want anything broken". "There just isn't enough room for the children to bring their friends in." "I'm just too busy and tired to have more here than my own."

Some parents opened their homes for the children and their friends. They would have scout meetings in the basement, or entertain the children after school. Ten mothers helped serve as den mothers for the Cub Scouts, or leaders for Brownies or members on the Scout council.

The children spent their leisure time in various ways. Four children never attended movies. Sometimes the child was not interested; in other cases, the parent, because of religious beliefs, did not approve of the movies. The children who saw movies attended either Saturday or Sunday, but rarely during the school week. Eight parents attended the movies with the children. Several parents used the "Parent-Teacher Magazine" as a guide to what movies the child should see. Other parents had the standing rule, "a show every Saturday."

All the children read comic books. The children among themselves had set up an exchange so one day a week was "trading day". Very few mothers screened any comic books that her children read. In some instances, where the child was a poor reader, the teacher recommended to the parent to read the book with the child, so that he would see the words and not pictures only. The teacher and parent agreed that it would be much better if a story-book could be read in place of the comic book.

Some children assumed a great deal of responsibility in the home. They had complete charge of the younger children, or they had special duties as: getting the evening meal, doing the dishes, cleaning

their rooms, or helping with the furnace work. Eleven children planned with their parents and their work varied from week to week. Fourteen mothers never planned with their children, but dictated all the work that the child should do. The teacher and the parent discussed the need for planning and agreement was reached that children needed to be included in home planning as well as in school.

The relationship between the parent and the child varied in many homes. In some broken homes the children seemed to be on the defensive, and gave a feeling of insecurity and being unloved. The teacher and parent discussed the importance of having good relations between the parent, child and the teacher, and the effect of the child's mental health on his progress in school. Some of the children were victims of overprotective parents. The children were bossy and dominating. Many times the parent did not realize that the emotional need was present, and had dismissed the child as being shy or timid. A few children displayed jealousy especially if they had very young children in the home. In school they showed it by daydreaming and fighting. When this was discussed the parents admitted that the older child had not received as much affection and attention as the younger child.

Three families lived in small apartments that could not adequately take care of the family. One home had only the kitchen and a small bedroom to house five persons. Seventeen families owned their own homes, and most of the homes were adequate to care for the family.

The teacher learned much about the home from observation. The dress of the child and the appearance of the child's desk in the schoolroom seemed to be related to the appearance of the home. Many

homes were cluttered just as the desks in the classroom were. If the child came to school dirty, the teacher saw the same thing in the home. The teacher tried very tactfully to impress on the mother the importance of cleanliness in the home and school, and improvements were made after the visit. The teacher observed only two homes that could be considered dirty. Most of the homes were clean but eleven were lacking in comfort. There were very few pictures, no rugs, one or two easy chairs, but nothing that would give the appearance of being lived in, or comfortable. Two families had no radio, because they were unable to pay for repairs that were needed. Eighteen homes had pianos, and fourteen of the children were taking piano lessons. Two homes had recently installed television.

Three fathers were not considered to be in good health, but all mothers had excellent health. One father had had a recent back injury which was handicapping him in his work. The second father had a heart attack and was unable to do strenuous work. The teacher was not able to get any information about the third father, but it was referred to as an illness.

Seven fathers had had college training and there were two who were ministers, and another a physician and surgeon. Seven mothers had had or were receiving college training. Five of the mothers had taught school before they were married. One mother was reinstating her certificate and planned to do substitute teaching in the public schools.

Twelve families had large libraries, with many books that children could read. Five families bought encyclopedias during the school year to assist the children in studying. Ten families had no

evidence of any good reading material. There were many comic books. The teacher tried to encourage the parents to buy books for their children, and to make more use of the public library.

The parents were concerned about the same general problems as the teacher. They wanted to know how they could help as parents to give their child the best. They were concerned about what the school was doing to help the child receive the most benefits from what the school had to offer.

The parents were concerned about individual problems such as family insecurity, financial conditions, and the correct way to discipline a child. They wanted to know how they could help in handling a child with aggressive tendencies, or the timid, shy child.

The teacher tried to interpret some of the philosophy and policies of the school, and to inform the parents of the purposes of present day education as they relate to the needs of children. Adults often judge the school by the standard of the schools which they attended. As a result, they misinterpret some of the modern procedures.

Together the parent and teacher discussed the needs of the child and in most cases agreements were reached on how to make the school year the happiest and best for the child.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### BRIEF REVIEW OF THE STUDY

The teacher in the fourth grade of Garfield School, Aberdeen, South Dakota, made visitations to thirty-one homes in the Garfield district. The purpose of the study was to determine the needs and problems of the children and when the needs were found, to help them overcome their difficulties so that they could better enjoy the school year and receive the maximum benefits from what the school had to offer. One way to help the child was to study the home conditions, and to visit with the parents, in order that some agreements could be reached.

The problem was to make a plan for a home visitation. Related literature was read on the value of the home call, and how to conduct a visit. The techniques of the interview were studied and applied in a visitation. A check list was developed so that the teacher would have a guide to use during the interview. Seven teachers were interviewed concerning the things they would like to ask in a home visit, and also what they could gain by observation. The check list was developed into four parts, the socio-economic conditions, the cultural background, the leisure time activities, and the attitudes and relations of children and parents.

Before the interviews were begun, the teacher planned with the administration and two simple tests were given the children to find out their interests, and dislikes, the leaders in the room, and also the children who were rejected by their peers.

#### OBSERVATIONS

The study was kept simple by design so that teachers would be encouraged to make home calls. The following were some general observations and recommendations noted during the visits:

1. Twenty-nine per cent of the children were from broken homes.
2. Nearly fifty-three per cent of the homes had extra people living in their homes as grandparents, roomers, or maids.
3. Forty-five per cent of the mothers worked outside the home.
4. Only two fathers were unemployed, but the chief reason why mothers worked was that the father's salary was not adequate for the expenses of the home.
5. Two families were very poor financially.
6. The leisure time activities of some of the children in this study were shared with their parents. The activities were: working with hobbies, going to the movies, and reading.
7. Many children shared in the home responsibilities while a few did very little.
8. Ten mothers helped in the community in serving as den



- mothers, Brownie leaders, or on the Scout council.
9. No "screening" was done on the comic books, but a few mothers "screened" the movies the children attended.
  10. The teacher discovered that the parents were concerned with the same problems that the school faced. They wanted to know how they could help most, and what the school was doing to help the child.
  11. Parents welcomed the teacher, and better rapport was established between the home and the school.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that teachers do visit some homes during the school year. This visit should not be only for disciplinary cases, but with a firm accent on the social interaction of the parent and the teacher.
2. It is recommended that the home visits be made early in the school year, so that there can be follow-up on the progress the child is making.
3. It is recommended that the individual report of the visit be kept in the child's folder to be passed on to the next teacher.
4. It is recommended that the teacher make reports to the principal of any family that she suspects might need financial help, so that further investigation can be made.
5. It is recommended that the P. T. A. make more effort to get all the parents working in the organization. Too

often, the ones who could benefit the most by the meetings never attend.

The teacher gained from the home visits information concerning the child's interests, his attitudes, an observation of the home status, and a better rapport.

In concluding the writer wishes to say that she thought the study interesting and worthwhile. She feels that as the school develops among its staff members the techniques and procedures for securing more information about children, greater services for these children will be possible.

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## APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Garfield School  
Aberdeen, South Dakota  
October

Dear Parents,

I would like to make this school year one of the happiest and most successful for your child.

Your child has made a transition into the intermediate grades and there may be some things that you and I can talk over to make it easier for the child.

I would like to call at your home some afternoon to visit with you and to plan what we can do to make this year successful.

You will be notified either by note or telephone, when I plan to visit.

Sincerely yours,

APPENDIX B

LET'S GET ACQUAINTED

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

I live at \_\_\_\_\_ My birthday is \_\_\_\_\_.

I have \_\_\_\_\_ brothers. I have \_\_\_\_\_ sisters.

My father's name is \_\_\_\_\_.

My mother's name is \_\_\_\_\_.

The subject I like best in school is \_\_\_\_\_.

The subject I dislike in school is \_\_\_\_\_.

I like to read \_\_\_\_\_ stories.

I have a (an) \_\_\_\_\_ hobby.



APPENDIX C

SOCIOMETRIC TEST

We are going to divide the class into committees to work on our class project. In order that you may work with persons of your own choice, write your name first on this paper. Then write in order your first, second, and third choices of persons in this class with whom you would wish to work.

If you definitely prefer not to work with any particular person or persons, write their names at the very bottom of the paper.

Your name

First choice

Second choice

Third choice

I do not wish to work with

APPENDIX D

CHECK LIST TO BE USED FOR HOME VISITATION

SOCIAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Home life

Child lives with  
mother  
father  
step-father  
step-mother  
foster home  
grandparents  
relatives  
adopted

Adults who influence child  
grandparents  
roomers  
maid  
step-children

Home broken by  
death  
illness  
divorce  
separation  
economic conditions

Family relation  
only child  
older siblings  
oldest child  
adults

Type of neighborhood  
residential  
apartment  
ample space for play

Type of home  
apartment  
house  
number of rooms   ample space   crowded

Appearance of home  
attractive

Appearance of home -- continued

lacking in comfort

dirty

disorderly

Occupation

father

mother

unemployed

Health

father

mother

child

Emotional stability

father

mother

child

CULTURAL

Educational background

father

mother

Good reading material

books

magazines

Music

piano

radio

television

others

Racial and religious background

Catholic

Protestant

Jewish

Indian

Does the child attend church?

ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS

What is the parents' attitude toward school?

What is the child's attitude toward school?

What is the child's attitude toward the teacher?

What is the parents' attitude toward the child?

What is the child's attitude toward the parent?

What is the parents' attitude toward discipline?

What is the child's relationship with the parent?

What is the child's relationship with other children?

What is the parents' relationship with the child?

Does the parent understand the child's problem?

What is the parents' judgment in dealing with the child?

Words that may be used to describe the above statements

are: cooperative, indifferent, good, accepted, rejected,

yes, no, warm, affectionate, indifferent, hostile, jealousy,

overindulgent, domineering, indifferent, love, and resentment.

#### LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

What activities are shared by the family?

Does the child attend movies? How often?

Does the child read funny books?

Does the child have a hobby?

Are the child's friends accepted in the home?

Do the parents contribute to helping in youth organizations?

Does the child share in home responsibility?

#### COMMENTS BY THE TEACHER ON THE HOME VISIT