

National Family Service Says All Classes Seek Counseling

People with money, education, and social position are now seeking professional help for family and personal problems, said James C. Allen, president of Family Service of Oakland County.

He cited a report issued Monday by the Family Service Association of America, the national accrediting organization for over 100 marriage and family counseling agencies. These agencies are largely supported by United Funds and Community Chests.

"Family Service Agencies in the last 10 to 20 years have been plagued," said Robert J. Jones, executive director, "by misunderstandings about their functions and who comes to them for help. We are very grateful for this new report from our national association because it will help considerably in clearing up erroneous notions about Family Service."

problems in the first interview. Marital problems top the list of problems brought to Family Agencies by people seeking counseling. Nearly half of all clients included in this study reported seeking marital problems to the counselor.

ALMOST ONE THIRD asked for guidance on parent-child problems. Individual personality adjustments of adults also ranked high as a source of concern. Marital problems were particularly high among recently married couples, the findings of the national study indicated. Parent-child problems were the top category among families with adolescent children.

Jones said, "In our local agency, marital problems are also the high-

est (51 per cent). "Some of the other types of problems brought to our agency are guidance on parent-child problems, including adolescents—20 per cent; economic problems, including financial management—9 per cent; individual personality adjustment of adults—11 per cent; families with problems of mental illness and adjustment to old age—2 per cent each.

IN COMMENTING on this study, Clark W. Blackburn, general director of the Family Service Association of America said: "One of the most significant findings of this study is the large number of young families served by our agencies. Clearly, Family Service Agencies are in the busi-

ness of preventive mental health work. The more extensively we can reach these families and the more we can help them, the greater all it can do to prevent family breakdown in this community.

"We are often hampered by a lack of funds, by lack of sufficient staff and by misunderstandings about what our agency does. This major study, published by our national office, should help a great deal."

Teacher to Attend Statewide Assembly

Mrs. Nur E. Hallack, of 1610 University, Mt. Pleasant, March 15, will attend the annual delegate assembly of the Michigan Department of Classroom Teachers at Central Michigan.

About 250 classroom teachers are expected to attend the session.

Southfield Airman Is Honor Graduate

Airman Third Class Thomas M. Bryant, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Bryant of 22257 Labor Road, Southfield, has been named honor graduate of the United States Air Force aircraft systems specialists course here.

He is being assigned to Stewart AFB, Tenn., for duty.

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THE REPORT, "Patterns in Use of Family Agency Services," contains the results of a nationwide study conducted by Dr. Dorothy Fabs Beck, the association's research director.

The study, which gives the most comprehensive picture ever assembled of family agency clients, was based on data gathered from a Monday day cross-section of applicants coming to Family Service agencies from coast to coast. It was timed to coincide with the national U.S. Census.

The interviews reported covered 577 families or attached individuals comprising a total of 2,560 persons.

In a detailed presentation, heavily supported with charts, the publication points up the following facts:

A LITTLE MORE than six per cent were referred by the clergy as compared to three per cent. Six per cent also came as a result of publicity compared to the local picture of 10 per cent. Physicians and psychiatrists referred five per cent of the clients and this was true locally, and lawyers referred four per cent, which was the same locally.

A surprising feature in national findings on sources of referral for clients of family agencies is the fact that business, industry and labor referred only two per cent of the clientele as compared to 1.5 per cent locally.

IN ADDITION TO income and educational background, the study also revealed some other surprising characteristics of families seeking help. For example: Young families with children especially heavy users of family agencies. In the U.S., there were 1.3 children under age 18, per family. Agency families around the country had an average of 2.2 children, under 18 per family.

"In our local agency," stated James, "our families average 2.7 children per family.

Families with children are more apt to seek counseling from Family Service agencies than families with no children. In comparison with the general population, a much higher proportion of husband-wife families coming to agencies have children under 18. Far fewer families had no children at home. Seventeen per cent of the families served by Family Service had no children.

HEADS OF FAMILIES coming to agencies were relatively young. Their median age was 38 as contrasted with 45 years for family heads in general. Among U.S. families in general, 30 per cent had family heads under 45 years, while 72 per cent of the family heads of agency families were under 45.

"In Family Service the per cent of family heads under 45 was 67 per cent," said Mr. Allen.

The differences between the upper and lower social classes were surprisingly minor in the overall number of problems reported (although the nature of the problems showed variations). Even families from the top social class reported an average of nearly three different

CONTRARY TO the common impression, persons from all social classes seek counseling help from Family Service Agencies.

The proportion of family heads who had a high school or college education was actually higher among agency applicants than in the general population. The median agency family head had completed 12.2 years of school as compared with 10.9 years for heads of families in general.

A higher proportion of family heads of agency applicants were in professional and technical and other white-collar occupations than in the general population.

In urbanized areas where most agencies are located, three per cent of agency families had annual incomes of \$15,000 or more as compared with four per cent of families in the general population in these with family incomes below \$2,000 was the same for both groups—nine per cent.

Only 1 per cent of agency families

are receiving public assistance from public welfare departments.

THERE IS NO question that the public issues that family agencies "save primarily the grossly under-polyitized does not fit the facts," Dr. Beck stated.

One of the interesting results of the study is the picture of how people in trouble happen to hear about the family agency and come for service.

In a detailed breakdown, the national study compared with our local picture shows that about 10 per cent of clients were referred by friends and neighbors compared to six per cent for 1961 in Oakland County; almost 10 per cent were referred by schools compared to eight per cent; almost seven per cent were referred by relatives compared to seven per cent; and referrals from courts, police and parole officers accounted for seven per cent as compared to eight per cent here.

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