

A b s t r a c t:

THE EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING ON HOMEFINDING

by

Peter James Doiron

This study investigates the effects of public relations and advertising on potential adoption and foster care applicants. This is an individual thesis written by a member of the 1969 class of the Maritime School of Social Work.

This study was carried out by means of an adoption and foster care promotional project planned and executed with the permission and cooperation of the three child welfare agencies in the Halifax-Dartmouth area. The results of the ten week "Home Finding Project" were used as data in determining the effectiveness of advertising and public relations on potential adoption and foster care applicants. The number of intakes was compared to the regular flow of intakes received by the three agencies involved during the same time period. The adoption intakes were also compared to the 1967 intakes received during the same time period as the Project.

It was found that after the ten week project period 73 respondents had expressed the desire to initiate home study procedures with a view to placement. Comparison showed that the "Home Finding Project" was responsible for a 63% increase in adoption and foster care applications during the ten week period, and an 80% increase in adoption applications over the 1967 intakes during the same time period. Recommendations were made concerning the value of the methods used in this Project along with criticisms and observations of its planning and execution.

Saint Mary's University Library

Degree of Master of Social Work

Maritime School of Social Work

St. Mary's University

Halifax, 1969

THE EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING ON HOMEFINDING

A Study of the Effects of Advertising and Public
Relations on Potential Adoption and
Foster Care Applicants

A Thesis

Submitted to the
800015

MARITIME SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

and

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for a
Master's Degree in Social Work

by

Peter James Doiron

Halifax, Nova Scotia

May, 1969

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express sincere thanks to Dr. H. D. Beach, Director of Research, and Mrs. Grace Veino, Thesis Advisor, for permission to write this thesis. Special thanks is extended to Mrs. Veino and Mrs. Linda Ruffman, Thesis Advisors, for their guidance and encouragement in its preparation.

Sincere appreciation is also extended to Mr. T. T. Daley, Administrator of the Children's Aid Society of Halifax and Director of the Department of Public Welfare, Halifax Regional Office through whose intervention, permission was obtained, from the Director of Child Welfare for the Province of Nova Scotia, to undertake this study.

Grateful appreciation is also extended to Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Hale, Protection Supervisor of the Children's Aid Society of Halifax, Mrs. Anna Welburn, Casework Supervisor of the Children's Aid Society of Halifax, Miss Shirley Ramey, Adoption and Ward Supervisor of the Department of Public Welfare, Halifax Regional Office, Miss Peggy MacKenzie, Adoption Worker of the Department of Public Welfare, Halifax Regional Office and Sister John Elizabeth, Director of Social Services, of the Home of the Guardian Angel of Halifax. Without the cooperation and assistance of the above

named, this study would not have been possible.

Although time and space do not permit a listing of all those involved, the writer would like to express a special note of thanks to the many staff members at both the Children's Aid Society and the Department of Public Welfare who willingly sacrificed many hours of their free time during the organization and execution of this Project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	11
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES AND ILLUSTRATIONS	vi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. PLANNING AND EXECUTION PHASES	8
III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	26
IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	42
APPENDIX	
A. PROJECT MANHOURS, PERSONNEL AND COSTS	46
B. INTAKE FORM USED FOR PROJECT	51
C. BROCHURE DISTRIBUTED FROM PROJECT BOOTH	52
D. POSTER USED FOR ADVERTISING OF PROJECT	53
REFERENCES	54

LIST OF TABLES

All tables refer to aspects of the "Home Finding Project" which was conducted with the cooperation and assistance of the Department of Public Welfare, the Children's Aid Society and the Home of the Guardian Angel, all of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Table	Page
I Distribution of Project's Adoption and Foster Care Applications	28
II Method of Advertising which had primarily motivated Applicants	30
III Comparison of Adoption and Foster Care Intakes received by Agency	33
IV Comparison of Project and Regular Intakes for Adoption and Foster Care by Agency	35
V Comparison of Regular and Project Adoption Intakes received by the three Agencies by Year	37
VI Comparison of Percentage Increase of Total Adoption Intakes received during Project Period by three Agencies by Year	38

LIST OF FIGURES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure Page

I Number of Intakes received per week 31

Illustration

I Entry in Dartmouth Natal Day Parade 17

II Information Booth 23

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Today, in the Province of Nova Scotia, there are approximately thirty-one hundred children who are wards of the Province under the care of the Director of Child Welfare. On the basis of information released by the Director of Child Welfare, it may be assumed that many of these children have had plans made for them and are being well cared for. However, a tremendous number of these children are desperately in need of homes. This fact can be illustrated by quoting the Administrator of the Children's Aid Society of Halifax who recently stated that his Society presently has in its care approximately four hundred adoptable children for whom there were no homes.

The greatest number of these children come from the illegitimate birthrate which, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in Canada, reached an unprecedented high of over thirty-thousand in the year nineteen hundred and sixty-seven. This figure takes on another dimension when it is compared, on a percentage basis with the increase in population over a seven year

period. In Canada, from 1960 to 1967 the population grew from approximately eighteen million to twenty million, or approximately eleven percent. During the same period, the illegitimate birthrate increased from approximately 20,200 to 30,300, or approximately fifty percent. Although these figures are approximations, they most definitely indicate a trend which results in a serious Canadian social problem. (D.B.S.,1967)

In line with the increasing seriousness of this problem, child welfare agencies in both Canada and the United States have begun to re-examine many of the older and traditional procedures used in securing adoption and foster homes. Social workers in many areas have come to the realization that sitting in their offices with lists of highly idealized and unpractical requirements pertaining to the qualifications for potential adoptive and foster care applicants has not solved the problem. Increasingly, the balance has been weighted towards a higher number of children needing homes than there are homes available.

In an attempt to alleviate the problem, new approaches have developed. Along with a revision of the qualification standards, various child welfare agencies have begun to make use of the news media of television, radio and newspapers. The response to

these changes appears to be favorable, although empirical data in this area is lacking, thereby making it extremely difficult to draw definite conclusions. However, in the search for newer and more efficient methods of securing adoption and foster homes two major factors have been discovered. The first is that a great majority of the public are unaware of the seriousness of the problem. The second is that many couples are discouraged from even inquiring because of the many popular misconceptions attributed to adoption and foster care requirements.

The matter of public unawareness is easily understood when one considers the attitudes prevalent in society during the past few decades. Such areas as illegitimate birthrates and homeless children were not popular topics of conversation. It was generally felt that although such things were present in society, they reflected an unacceptable image of society and discussion concerning these matters was therefore in bad taste. The majority of child welfare agencies seemed to reinforce this view by maintaining a solemn silence concerning their wards and in their highly guarded attitudes towards confidentiality concerning adoption and foster home placements. This puritanical attitude has diminished during the past few years, and

it is now becoming more acceptable for people to look into these areas, either to satisfy their curiosity or to help alleviate the problems.

The popular misconceptions attributed to adoption and foster care requirements today are best illustrated by listing a few of the requirements maintained by child welfare agencies as recently as the late 1950's and early 1960's. Couples wishing to adopt or foster a child were faced with such requirements as:

- (1) They must provide the agency with medically documented proof of their inability to procreate children of their own.
- (2) They must be in a specified income bracket.
- (3) They must own their own home.
- (4) They must be able to provide their adopted or foster child with a room of his or her own.
- (5) Foster parents may not adopt children they have had in their care as foster children.

Although not practiced universally, the preceding requirements were prevalent in many child welfare agencies and overtones of these requirements can still be seen in the attitudes of many Social Workers and agencies now functioning in society. Although but a few have been mentioned, it is easily understood

why people would think such requirements were, and are, unrealistic.

To counteract both the matter of general public unawareness and the popular misconceptions concerning the requirements of potential adoptive and foster care applicants, several measures have been attempted in the Halifax-Dartmouth area. Various church organizations have sponsored adoption year or adoption month campaigns. These projects are usually accomplished through the efforts of volunteers who are assisted by professional social workers. However, although these attempts have been well motivated there has been no documented follow-through and it is impossible to verify the results obtained.

With the idea in mind that advertizing and public relations might be a valuable addition to present methods used in obtaining adoption and foster care homes, a search was made of available literature in an attempt to secure some documented evidence that would substantiate this assumption. The only evidence available was that contained in a special report published in 1958 by the Council of Social Agencies of Rochester and Monroe County, New York. In essence, the report contained an explanation of a recruitment campaign conducted in an effort to secure more foster homes.

The campaign was a massive, one month saturation program which utilized the mass media to a very great extent. Although the report was a preliminary one, it did include a description of the various types of advertising and public relations techniques used during the campaign along with results. It was found that although eight modes of community contact were utilized, 86% of all intakes were received as a direct result of mass media coverage.

After studying the methods used in securing adoption and foster care homes by the three local child welfare agencies - the Children's Aid Society of Halifax, the Department of Public Welfare, Halifax Regional Office and the Home of the Guardian Angel of Halifax - the assumption was made that more adoption and foster care homes could be found if more emphasis was placed on good advertising and public relations. However, since the three local child welfare agencies had never before used the news media in a combined attempt to inform the general public of the problems found in the area of child welfare, and since the ultimate responsibility for the children in care rested with the Director of Child Welfare, difficulties were encountered in obtaining permission to undertake such a program.

The main consideration in granting permission

to undertake the project was the fear that such a project might cause undue criticism of the Provincial Government. This problem was dealt with by making the Children's Aid Society of Halifax, a private agency, the headquarters for activity concerning the study.

This investigation was conceived, planned and executed with the hope that documented evidence could be obtained regarding the effects of advertising and public relations on the recruitment of potential adoption and foster care applicants.

CHAPTER II
PLANNING AND EXECUTION PHASES

Section I: Planning

To facilitate the reader's comprehension of the methodology used in the planning and execution phases of the project, the material shall be presented in a sequential manner. This will be done with the hope that it will illustrate the imagination and innovatory skills of those involved in this aspect of the project, as well as the fact that a definite frame of reference on which to base their planning was lacking. It is also hoped that this method of presentation will afford the reader the opportunity of evaluating this segment of the project more accurately.

The first step in the planning process was the selection of a co-ordinating committee. The members of the committee included the Adoption and Ward Supervisor and Adoption worker from the Department of public Welfare, Halifax Regional Office; the Adoption Supervisor from the Home of the Guardian Angel; the Protection Supervisor, a protection worker and the Casework Supervisor from the Children's Aid Society of Halifax with the Casework Supervisor of the Children's

Aid Society acting as committee chairman.

The study was titled "Home Finding Project" with the theme of "Looking for a home". It was decided that the project focus would be an information booth manned by professional social workers, and after careful consideration the Mall of the Halifax Shopping Centre was selected as the best possible location in terms of reaching the greatest majority of the Halifax-Dartmouth area population. Before proceeding further, the manager of the Halifax Shopping Centre was contacted and permission to place the booth in the Mall was obtained. Also assurance was received that storage facilities would be available at the Centre for the booth when it was not in use. At this time, information was also obtained pertaining to the Shopping Centre's busiest periods which were found to be Thursday evenings, Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons.

The next stage in planning focused on the type of information booth that would be most effective in terms of drawing the attention of the shoppers. To aid in this decision, several information booths in the area were observed and compared. It was decided that a booth used by the Halifax Tourist Bureau would be most suitable for the Home Finding Project and several photographs were taken of this booth so as to pro-

vide a frame of reference in the construction of the Project booth.

The majority of these booths which had been observed were designed for only one person, so attention was focused on the booth size most suitable for the Project. This factor brought up two considerations. The first was in regard to the times the booth would be operated, and the second concerned the availability of volunteer personnel with which it could be manned. The matter of operation times was decided on the basis of the wishful assumption that the more exposure the better the results. The operating times were set down from seven to nine o'clock on Thursday and Friday evenings and one to four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. It was felt that it would be more beneficial for two workers rather than one to man the booth as it would provide those at the booth with the company of a co-worker and would ensure continual operation by allowing one worker to cover for the other, thereby not leaving the booth unattended.

The next priority in planning centered on the personnel who would be used to man the booth. This presented a problem as all times spent at the booth would be voluntary and after regular working hours. In considering this aspect of the Project, the overall

length of Project duration had to be decided upon. In order to be able to give a fair evaluation of the results of the Project a period of ten weeks was agreed upon by the committee, as its operating limit.

Since the staff of the Department of Public Welfare and the Children's Aid Society had indicated a willingness to participate, utilization of this source of manpower was attempted. Lists were drawn up indicating the operation times of the booth over the ten week period and volunteers were asked to sign for the time slots that would be most convenient for them. In order to balance the degree of involvement of each Agency, one worker from the Department of Welfare was teamed with one worker from the Children's Aid Society. It was found that many workers had to volunteer for more than one time at the booth to fill the required sixty time slots. Because many of those volunteering their time were not familiar with Adoption and Foster Care requirements and procedures, it was decided to give them special training sessions in these areas to increase their competence and usefulness.

One area of special import to the Project was that concerning the type of material and information which would be distributed to the general public from the booth. The objective of the Project was not to

brainwash people into applying, but to provide them with the facts pertaining to the areas of adoption and foster care, and allow them to make their own decision regarding application. For this reason, material to be distributed was limited to a specially prepared brochure which would provide basic information on both adoption and foster care. It was hoped that any problem areas, bothering potential applicants, would be clarified through discussion with the professional social workers manning the booth.

After due consideration, it was decided to limit the attentions of the Project to the population of the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth and the county of Halifax. It was felt by the committee that during the course of the ten week period a large number of persons in the specified area would potentially have the opportunity of visiting the booth at the Halifax Shopping Centre.

At this stage of the planning there arose problems pertaining to co-ordination and execution of the plans to date. The co-ordination centered on enlisting the voluntary cooperation of the newspaper, television and radio media in the area to give free coverage of the Project at the time of its beginning, so as to ensure that the population of the area was given the

opportunity to become acquainted with the Project, its purpose and location of the booth.

Since there was no money available to pay for any of the Project costs, the problem of execution of plans to date consisted in having five thousand brochures printed and the booth constructed and decorated, free of charge. While these factors were being considered, the question concerning a Project color combination was raised. After some investigation, it was found that yellow has the greatest attraction qualities, so a color combination of black on a yellow background was decided upon for both the booth and brochures.

While the preceding considerations were being weighed, the brochure, which was to be distributed from the booth, had been completed regarding the information it would contain pertaining to adoption and foster care. However, there were two areas concerning its content that had not been decided upon. The first concerned pictures of children. This was given serious thought because of the extra cost involved in the preparation of the printing plates as well as what children should be used, that is, actual wards or other children. This was settled by having pictures of wards in the Halifax area taken with a familiar background, keeping the older children's faces out of the picture

to preserve confidentiality. It was felt that by using a familiar background people would be more able to identify with the children and this possibly would add weight to their decision regarding application.

The second matter concerning the brochure was that of a reply address. Since three agencies were involved in the Project, it was felt that it would be unfair to list just one. However, a major consideration was in maintaining an accurate account of any response received as a result of the Project. It was felt that if all three agencies were listed in the brochure it would tend to confuse the public, as well as make it extremely difficult for the agencies involved to keep the Project results separate from their regular flow of intakes. This difficulty was overcome by having only a phone number and a post office box number printed on the brochure. The phone was a special direct line that would be used only for Project results and the mail resulting from the Project could be easily identified. It was further decided that any intakes resulting from the Project would be referred to the appropriate agencies, thereby saving any people applying undue difficulties of switchboard and referrals to other agencies.

While discussion was centered on the method to be used for any possible intakes resulting from the

Project, such areas as the type of intake information and the method for referrals to other agencies came under discussion. In regard to the information that would be taken on the initial contact it was decided to use the standard intake forms available at the Children's Aid Society. (See Appendix B) At a later time in the planning stage it was decided to also include information pertaining to where the people had received their information regarding the Project, that is, the booth, news media or posters. As to the method of referral, it was decided to make all referrals by telephone from Project headquarters to the appropriate agency and to follow through from Project headquarters to ensure that all those who had expressed interest in the Project were being promptly contacted. It was felt keeping accurate records of any possible intakes in one place would ensure accuracy of results. The use of the telephone enabled referrals to be made more quickly and gave more assurance against loss.

The next priority was in obtaining the services of a carpenter or carpenters to do the actual construction of the booth, along with soliciting the services of a printer and engraver to produce the completed brochure. It was assumed that because of the nature of the Project there would be no difficulty in obtaining

these services free of charge from business firms in the area. Following through with this assumption, a worker visited two wholesale suppliers of wood products who jointly contributed all the materials needed for the construction of the booth. A visit was also made to the Commander of the Atlantic Fleet School, Royal Canadian Navy, who put the entire carpentry and painting shops at the worker's disposal in their free time periods and requested personnel to construct the booth on their own time. Also one engraver supplied all paper, ink and printing. Two of the area's leading artists volunteered their time and talent in decorating the booth. In each case the firms and individuals were approached in the same manner with the worker explaining the problems existent in the area of Child Welfare. After providing the individuals with this information, the Project plans were explained stressing the fact that, since this was an entirely new approach to the problem, the entire program had to be a voluntary effort. In all cases, cooperation and participation were fully extended.

During the construction of the booth two new ideas were brought forward concerning the advertising of the Project. The first was that large posters be drawn up and posted throughout the area previously

defined. The second was that an entry into the Dartmouth Natal Day Parade would be a good means of reaching a great many people in a short time with a message concerning adoption and foster care. Both these ideas were accepted and acted upon. Another printer in the area provided five thousand posters free of charge. Since only one week was available in which to prepare an entry for the parade, it was decided to enter a car. Attempts were made to secure a yellow and black convertible so as to maintain consistency with the Project colors. In addition to the car, a yellow motorcycle was secured to act as an eyecatcher. Both the car and the motorcycle were donated free of charge with the owner of the motorcycle repainting the machine so it would be in good condition for the parade.

ILLUSTRATION I

ENTRY IN DARTMOUTH NATAL DAY PARADE



One week before the beginning of the Project the two local newspapers were provided with press releases explaining the motivation behind the Project, its purpose and location of the booth. They were requested to release the items the day before the Project was to begin. The newspapers were very cooperative and requested photographs of the booth which they could publish along with releases. A local photographer was contacted and, after hearing what was needed and the purpose for which it was to be used, he supplied his services and the required photographs free of charge.

During this same period a local television studio was contacted. The Project was explained to the program director and a one half hour show was scheduled exclusively for the purpose of promoting the Project. Upon hearing of the Project, a leading news announcer engaged in work at the same television studio became very interested in it and pledged his support by promising to insert several announcements concerning the Project into his news broadcasts.

With most of the detailed work completed, attention was focused on what would happen at the agencies involved if the Project proved to be successful and a great number of applications were received. Both the Department of Welfare and the Children's Aid

Society were limited in staff to one Adoption worker and one Foster Home finder each, all four of whom were overworked to begin with. As there was no way of determining whether or not the Project would be successful, it was impossible to add staff to either agency just as a precautionary measure. After serious deliberation it was decided that two experienced, retired social workers would be contacted and a request made that, in the event of a large number of respondents, they would work on a part-time basis processing those applications. This was done immediately and two workers were found who agreed to process any overflow of applications and be paid on a piecework basis.

During the last week of preparation the newly printed posters were delivered and the problem of distribution had to be settled. Since this task also had to be accomplished through the efforts of volunteers, it was felt that the area which was to be utilized should first be broken down into zones. Since the workers at the Department of Public Welfare worked in the area of the city of Dartmouth and the county of Halifax, it was felt that distribution of the posters in these areas would be left up to volunteers from that agency. Accordingly, as the workers at the Children's Aid Society worked the city of Halifax,

distribution of the posters in this area became their responsibility.

With the permission of the Director of the agencies involved, two staff meetings were held, one at the Department of Welfare, and the other at the Children's Aid Society. The purpose of these meetings was threefold: (1) Because all those involved were occupied and extremely busy with their own responsibilities and because the majority of preparation regarding the donation of brochures and posters and the construction of the booth had been handled by one worker, it was felt that an explanation of the progress to date would keep all those involved informed and thus heighten interest and the will to participate. (2) The matter of distribution of the posters was discussed and volunteers for this task were requested. (3) Because it was impossible to determine what type of response those manning the booth would receive, and facing the definite possibility that the many hours to be spent at the booth might be fruitless, it was decided to set an overall Project target of fifty homes to give the volunteers involved a definite goal. This was explained in detail as many of the workers interpreted the fifty home target as wanting fifty placements completed. Although the ultimate objective of the Project

was to obtain as many completed placements as possible, it was explained to the volunteers that the Project was specifically concerned with the effects of advertising and public relations on the general public and results would be tabulated on the number of requests for home studies received as a direct result of the Project.

The day before the beginning date of the Project the booth was moved to its place of storage at the Halifax Shopping Centre. In the meantime, the proposed float had been entered into the Dartmouth Natal Day Parade and had received very favorable reception. The posters were in the process of being distributed and the newspapers and television media were in the process of releasing the information concerning the Project.

SECTION II: EXECUTION

The first evening the booth was in operation a major difficulty was encountered. Because of the immense size of the Mall at the Halifax Shopping Centre the booth, even though it was over eight feet long, seven feet high and painted a bright glossy yellow, was easily missed by many shoppers. Although this presented a definite problem, it was felt that with the extensive coverage given the Project by means of newspapers, television and the posters, those hearing of the Project

who were interested in either adoption or foster care could easily locate the booth.

The theme "Looking for a home", had been used as the central focus of the booth, the brochures and the posters. Neither the booth nor the posters made mention of either adoption or foster care and after two weeks of operating the booth it was determined, on the basis of feedback, that many individuals were not aware of the function of the booth or posters.

In an attempt to overcome this difficulty, the services of the various firms used in the construction of the booth were again utilized to assist in the construction of two eight foot by four foot signs which would be used to flank each side of the booth. One sign specified Adoption Information and the other Foster Care Information. Both were attractively decorated in the same manner as the booth by the artists who had done the booth decoration. By making this task a priority, the signs were placed in the Shopping Centre by the beginning of the fourth week of operation. It was found that this addition to the booth was of great value, not only in acting as a source of information, but also in drawing more attention to the display, which with the addition of the signs, measured sixteen feet long and eight feet high.

ILLUSTRATION II
INFORMATION BOOTH



Operation at the booth continued with a fair degree of success until the end of the seventh week, at which time it was found, on the basis of the intakes received, that a noticeable drop in activity and

operation limit with few major difficulties. Aside from the tabulation and follow-through of results, the only major function concerning the Project after its completion was the drafting of personal thank-you letters which were sent to those firms or individuals who had contributed in any way to the Project, on behalf of all those involved in the Project from the social work end.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine the effects of advertising and public relations on potential adoptive and foster home applicants. The rate of success or failure of the study was to be determined on the basis of the number of referrals received from couples requesting that home studies be initiated with them.

Both the areas of adoption and foster care were included in the promotional aspects of the Project primarily because of the great need for more homes in these areas and because of the similarities between adoption and foster care policies and procedures.

Basically, adoption and foster care have the same ultimate goals in that both attempt to provide a homeless child with the security, love, care and direction of a normal home environment. The most significant difference between the two is in the area of ultimate responsibility. In adoption the child becomes a legal and permanent member of the family, who assume all responsibility for the child's upbringing and maintenance. In foster care the child becomes a temporary

member of the family; the placing agency retains ultimate responsibility for the child, especially in the financial area. The agency will delegate much of its authority for the child's upbringing to the foster parents and the child in question. Even with this major difference in the area of responsibility, the home study aspects and placing procedures of adoption and foster care homes are very similar and went very well together for the purposes of the promotional Project.

As seen in table I, the total results of the ten week Project period, combining both adoption and foster care applications, were 73 referrals. As a Project goal of 50 intakes had been set, the total number of 73 respondents achieved by the Project was very gratifying to the initiators of the Project. It is believed that all 73 respondents were motivated directly by the Project efforts, as it was only through some phase of the Project that they would receive information regarding the manner of application.

When making distinction between the Project intakes and those received through regular channels during the same time period as the Project, it was felt that it would be difficult to separate those respondents who were motivated entirely by the Project efforts from those who would have applied through regular channels

TABLE I
 DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECT'S ADOPTION
 AND FOSTER CARE APPLICATIONS

Adoption Referrals	31
Foster Care Referrals	42
Total	73

if the Project had not been in operation. To assist in determining the distinction between these respondents it was decided to screen the Project intakes extensively as to their motivation. During intake procedures the persons applying were questioned as to motivation and knowledge of regular intake procedures. Reapplications were not accepted as Project results. Instead they were referred to the appropriate agency. In addition, those couples who expressed interest previous to the Project along with knowledge of the agency to which they should submit application were not

counted as Project results.

Even with the extra precautions taken to ensure accurate results of the Project, there are, no doubt, Project results tabulated of respondents who would have applied through regular channels without assistance from the Project. However, it is known that several respondents, motivated entirely by the Project, submitted applications to agencies not involved with the Project. It is hoped that these factors tend to balance out.

In order to determine the effectiveness of the various methods of advertising and public relations which were used during the Project, applicants were asked to state what segment of the Project had primarily influenced their response. It was found that many of the respondents had come into contact with more than one segment of the Project. However, the respondents usually stated that they had been primarily motivated by that segment of the Project which had the greatest effect on them. For example, although many had heard of the Project through television, those who visited the booth usually stated that the booth had been their primary motivation. As seen in Table II, of the 73 respondents, 35 had spoken to social workers manning the booth, 25 had been motivated by the posters that

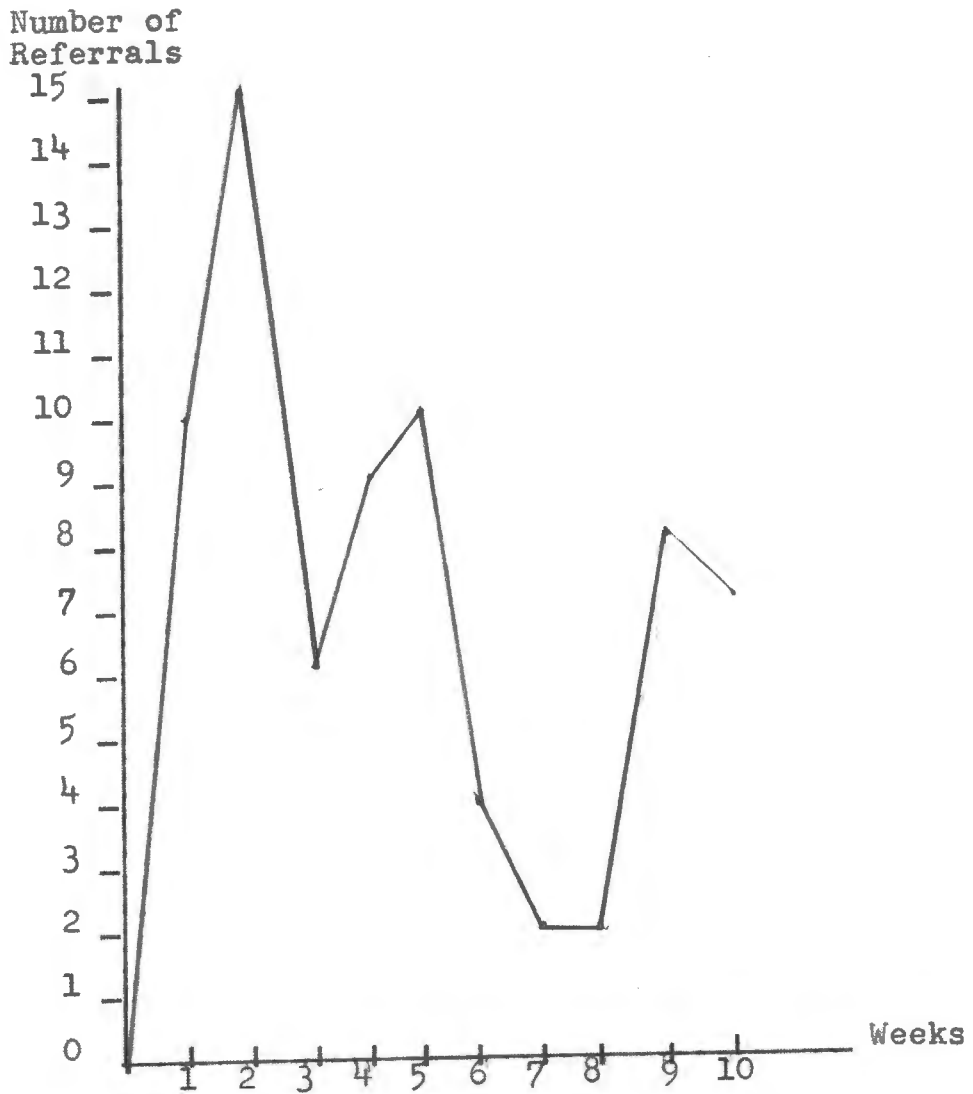
TABLE II
 METHOD OF ADVERTISING WHICH HAD
 PRIMARILY MOTIVATED APPLICANTS

Information Booth	35
Posters	25
News Media	11
Other	2
Total	73

had been circulated, 11 had been motivated by the news media and 2 by word of mouth conversations with friends familiar with the Project.

When reviewing the type of advertising or public relations responsible for motivating respondents it was found, that the heaviest influx of applications occurred during the first, second, fourth, fifth and the last two weeks of the Project's operation time. This is illustrated in Figure 1. These time periods of peak response occurred directly after some phase of

FIGURE 1
NUMBER OF INTAKES RECEIVED PER WEEK



concentrated advertising. In the first two weeks the Project received extended advertising through newspapers, television and radio, as well as through the entry of a float in the Dartmouth Natal Day parade. As can be seen in Figure 1 there was a noticeable drop in respondents during the third week of operation. At the beginning of the fourth week the additions to the booth were placed in the Shopping Centre and the results of this were noticeable during the fourth and fifth weeks of operation. During the eighth week of operation, after three consecutive weeks of poor response, it was decided to make use of the news media to once again bring the Project to the public. This action is believed to have had almost immediate results as the number of respondents increased during the last two weeks of operation. After studying the respondents according to numbers and times of application and then comparing these to the times of concentrated advertising, it is believed that the advertising played an important role in motivating the respondents to get in touch with Project personnel.

As seen in Table III, of the 73 referrals received as a result of the Project, 44 were forwarded to the Department of Public Welfare, 27 were forwarded to the Children's Aid Society, 1 was forwarded to the Home

TABLE III
 COMPARISON OF ADOPTION AND FOSTER
 CARE INTAKES RECEIVED
 BY AGENCY

Category	Adoption	Foster Care	Total
Department of Public Welfare	26	18	44
Children's Aid Society	4	23	27
Home of the Guardian Angel	1	N/A*	1
Other	—	1	1
Total	31	42	73

*N/A—not applicable because Home of the Guardian Angel does not accept foster care applications.

of the Guardian Angel and 1 was forwarded to an agency outside the Project area. Distribution of the adoption intakes received as a result of the Project was determined by the area in which the respondent lived. In referring adoption applications, those 26 living in the

city of Dartmouth or the county of Halifax were referred to the Department of Public Welfare as it is the agency responsible for these areas. The Children's Aid Society, having jurisdiction only within the Halifax city limits, received those 4 adoption applicants residing within the City. The Home of the Guardian Angel, although having jurisdiction in the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth and the county of Halifax, only process adoption applications requesting Catholic infants. During the Project only one such request was received.

In the case of distribution of the referrals received requesting foster care, it was decided to alternate each request between the Department of Public Welfare and the Children's Aid Society as both agencies have jurisdiction in the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth and the county of Halifax for foster home placements. The Children's Aid Society received five more referrals for foster care as the Department of Public Welfare were unable to process all the referrals they were receiving.

As a comparison of the foster care intakes received in 1967 with those received in 1968 was not possible, it was decided to compare the total Project results received and the total regular intakes received by the three agencies involved during the same time period as the Project. Although the Project intakes

TABLE IV
 COMPARISON OF PROJECT AND REGULAR
 INTAKES FOR ADOPTION AND
 FOSTER CARE BY AGENCY

Category	Adoption		Foster Care	
	Regular	Project	Regular	Project
Department of Public Welfare	28	26	25	18
Children's Aid Society	7	4	48	23
Home of the Guardian Angel	6	1	N/A*	N/A*
Total	41	31	73	41

*N/A—not applicable because Home of the Guardian Angel does not accept foster care applications.

received totaled 73, the comparison was based on 72 Project intakes as one intake was referred to an agency outside the Project area. During the same time period as the Project, a total of 114 regular intakes were received by the Department of Welfare, the Children's Aid

Society, and the Home of the Guardian Angel. A comparison of the 72 Project intakes with the 114 regular intakes received during the same period showed that the Project was responsible for a 63% increase.

Although the Project was responsible for a 63% increase in total intakes received, there were varying amounts of success in adoption and foster care. As can be seen in Table IV, the total number of foster care intakes received as a result of the Project totaled 41, 10 higher than the number of adoption intakes received. However, when the 41 Project intakes are compared with the 73 regular intakes, it can be seen that the Project was responsible for a 56% increase in foster care intakes, whereas the increase in adoption intakes was 76%. Thus, although in absolute numbers the foster care intakes were higher, the Project was more successful in the area of adoption.

To assess the effectiveness of the program, it was hoped that the intakes received by the three agencies during the same time period in previous years could be used to determine the overall increase in intakes for the Project period. However, the only reliable figures available were those pertaining to adoption intakes received by the three agencies involved during the same time period as the Project for

TABLE V
 COMPARISON OF REGULAR AND PROJECT ADOPTION
 INTAKES* RECEIVED BY THE THREE
 AGENCIES BY YEAR

Category	1967 regular	1968 regular	1968 project
Department of Public Welfare	30	28	26
Children's Aid Society	4	7	4
Home of the Guardian Angel	6	6	1
Total	40	41	31

*Figures based on new applications.

the previous year.

Table V illustrates that the increase in regular adoption intakes for the same time period as the Project from 1967 to 1968 amounted to only 1, or a 2.5% increase. It is interesting to note that the figures for regular intakes received by the three agencies in

TABLE VI
 COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE INCREASE OF
 TOTAL ADOPTION INTAKES* RECEIVED
 DURING PROJECT PERIOD BY THREE
 AGENCIES BY YEAR

Category	1967	1968 (project+regular)	% increase
Department of Public Welfare	30	54	80%
Children's Aid Society	4	11	175%
Home of the Guardian Angel	6	7	16%
Total	40	72	80%

*Figures based on new applications.

1967 and 1968 are so similar. When questioned as to the reason for the similarity in intakes for two years, personnel from the agencies involved stated that late summer and early fall, the time of year which the figures represent, has a consistency in being the poorest time of year for receipt of adoption inquiries.

However, this fact takes on another dimension when the regular intakes received in 1968 are combined with the Project intakes and this combined total is compared to the figures for 1967. As can be seen in Table VI, the combined figures for 1968 show an 80% increase over 1967.

Although the overall increase in intakes from 1967 to 1968 totaled 80%, agencies differed in how much they were helped by the Project, as seen in Table VI. The agency with the largest percentage gain was the Children's Aid Society, whose referrals increased 175%; this is 95% higher than that of the Department of Public Welfare, which was the agency receiving the largest number of referrals when looked upon in absolute figures. Although the agencies received differential benefit from the Project, they all received some and to them the overall increase of 80% is very gratifying.

Because of the screening procedures used during intake and because of the limited time, it was not possible to do a complete follow-through on all Project intakes. Thus, the success of the Project was only determined by the number of intakes received. However, partial follow-through was attempted on the adoption intakes. Of the 31 referrals received, there were initial interviews with 27 couples. Of the 27 inter-

views, 25 couples were given the appropriate application papers. Of the 25 who received papers, 21 returned the papers and to date, 13 home studies have been completed, 12 of which were approved for placement, and 8 studies are still in progress. On the basis of the information available to date, it is believed that 20 of the 31 referrals will result in placements in the near future and two more might be approved within the year. When asked to compare the caliber of the Project intakes with those received through regular channels, the agency personnel stated that they were not able to give definite figures on the percentage of initial intakes that follow-through as they varied over time. However, they did state that the Project intakes compared quite favorably with their regular intakes with regard to follow-through.

It is difficult to assess the over-all Project results because of the lack of agency records for past years. However, during the 1968 annual meeting of child care agencies for the Province of Nova Scotia, held in late November 1968, the Project was presented to the various agencies for their consideration. After an explanation by the three Halifax Agencies involved in the Project, it was unanimously agreed by those in attendance that this method of home finding is a

valuable addition to methods presently in use in the Province of Nova Scotia. It has since been found that many of the agencies in the province are now planning to present similar projects to their respective areas within the coming year.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded that the use of advertising and public relations does have a positive effect when used to supplement present adoption and foster care home finding methods.

It is also concluded from participation in the "Home Finding Project" that a large percentage of the community are willing to participate and contribute to worthwhile causes once they are informed of the prevalent problems and understand exactly how their contribution is to be used. However, it was found that the best method to use in obtaining assistance from community members is that of personal contact.

One factor of great import during this Project was the change in attitudes among the workers who were participating. It appeared that the newness of the Project, coupled with a change in routine, served to refresh those involved and make them more active and enthusiastic in even routine duties. This observation might serve as a valid topic for some future study.

Another area worth careful consideration in projects concerning adoption and foster care is the

involvement of known adoptive and foster care parents. During the operation of the booth a large number of couples who had previously adopted or fostered children made themselves known to the social workers manning the booth. Their interest and enthusiasm in the Project suggests that their services could be solicited and put to good use in endeavors similar to this.

Many varied areas of learning presented themselves in planning and executing the Project. The major difficulty encountered while planning the Project was the diversity of individual interests and responsibilities. All those involved were engaged in their regular occupations during both planning and execution of the Project. This reality led to many conflicts of interests. From the experience gained during this Project, it is strongly recommended that in future one Project head be appointed to conduct the entire operation. This individual should not be hampered by any other responsibilities during the planning stage of the Project. If this could be effected it would probably save a great deal of planning time, as much of the coordination would not be necessary.

Upon completion of this Project it was discovered that there were no Negroes among the 73 respondents. Because of the serious lack of Negro adoption and foster

care homes, efforts had been made during the planning stages to ensure that this problem received equal emphasis. It is believed that the location of the booth itself was, for the most part, responsible for this lack of Negro response. The majority of the Halifax-Dartmouth Negro population reside in areas with adequate shopping facilities, thus reducing the number of Negro shoppers frequenting the Halifax Shopping Centre. Coupled with this is the fact that Negro community leaders were not involved in the Project.

It was observed as well, that after the completion of the Project letters of appreciation were sent to all but six of the participating community members. Those receiving the letters reacted very favorably. However, on the basis of feedback, it was learned that those who did not receive official thank-you notes were very displeased. This fact suggests that follow-through plays an important role in continued good relations with participating community members.

During the course of this Project many other areas of concern were encountered. One such area was uncovered when attempts were made to calculate the percentage increase in intakes over a five year period for adoption and foster care. In many cases, it was found that records had not been kept for two years let alone

five.

In assessing the overall Project, the question was raised concerning the adoption services existent in the Halifax-Dartmouth area. On the basis of the feedback received from applicants during the Project, many of those involved felt that this area would be better served by a joint service rather than by the three separate agencies. It was felt that joint service would eliminate much overlapping and provide applicants with a more efficient service.

This Project was well received by social workers and the general public and is considered to be a success by both. Although some criticisms have been raised as to the planning and execution of this Project, it is hoped that the methods used, that is, advertising and public relations will be found beneficial to all adoption and foster care agencies and that the problem of homeless children will become non-existent.

APPENDIX A

PROJECT COSTS, PERSONNEL AND MANHOURS

A further area of consideration when discussing the results of the Project is the financial expenditure incurred in actually realizing it. As was previously stated, the entire Project was realized by the voluntary contributions of business firms and individual members of the community along with the active, voluntary cooperation of many professional social workers. The Project costs, not including estimates of the monetary value of the free coverage given by local television and radio stations or estimates of manhour contributions of professional social workers, reached a total cost of \$1,056.00. Of this figure, \$980.00 is the total cost which was donated by various businesses or individuals in the community. The remaining \$76.00 was paid by the Children's Aid Society, as the items involved were too insignificant in cost to warrant attempts to secure them free of charge. The figure of \$980.00 is the value placed on the contributions of time or materials by those who donated them.

One of the crucial areas for consideration when assessing the results of the Project is the number of personnel involved both in the planning and execution stages. Although the Project was predominately a social work venture motivated by the fact that a great number

TABLE VII
PROJECT COSTS

Area of Expenditure	Free Donations	Paid by Children's Aid Society
Booth Materials	\$75.00	\$14.00
Sign Materials	\$15.00	\$12.00
Booth Construction	\$75.00	
Sign Construction	\$35.00	
Decoration of the Booth and Signs	\$200.00	\$30.00
Brochures	\$200.00	
Posters	\$325.00	
Car Rental for Parade	\$30.00	
Transportation		\$20.00
Photography	\$25.00	
Total	\$980.00	\$76.00

TABLE VIII
PROJECT PERSONNEL

Category	Total
Department of Public Welfare	15
Children's Aid Society	13
Home of the Guardian Angel	1
Members of Local Business Firms	16
Royal Canadian Navy, Atlantic Fleet Command	11
Private Individuals	10
Total	66

of homeless children are present in society today, it would not have been possible to accomplish the Project without a great deal of involvement and cooperation from individual members of business firms, the military and a great number of private individuals. This can be

illustrated by stating that of the total number of 66 participants only 29, or 43%, were members of the social work community. The other 37 individuals, comprising 57% of the total number of participants came from the community at large.

Having considered the number of participants, the next consideration in studying the results of the Project is the total number of manhours spent in planning and executing the Project. During the entire Project the number of hours spent by social work personnel amounted to a total of 475 hours. However, this figure must be qualified as it does not include many hours of informal planning and discussion, nor does it include as well, any estimate of the time spent by workers at both the Children's Aid Society and the Department of Public Welfare in placing posters throughout the Project area. An important consideration when evaluating the manhours involved in the Project is, that because of method of intake, that is, a telephone specially set up for the Project, the time spent manning the phone for the Project period of ten weeks would normally have amounted to approximately 350 hours. This was avoided during the Project by placing it in a supervisor's office rather than having a worker devote full time to this area, thus reducing

TABLE IX
PROJECT MANHOURS

Category	Total
Formal Planning	75
Parade Entry	88
Soliciting Community Involvement	67
Manning Booth	200
Receiving Intakes and Making Referrals	25
Miscellaneous	20
Total	475

the actual figure to 25 hours spent in receiving and referring intakes.

APPENDIX B

Children's Aid Society of Halifax

INTAKE FORM

File No.

Initial:— Date Method: Source:

Name:

<u>Christian Names</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>	<u>Baptism</u>
------------------------	------------------	-------------------	----------------

Man:

Woman:

Children:

Address and Tenure:

Previous Addresses:

Telephone:

Religion:— Man:

Woman:

Date of Marriage: Place of Marriage:

Occupation:— Man:

Woman:

Members in Household:

Remarks & Comments:

Type of Case Made: Prot..... U.M..... A. H..... F. H..... N. F. M.....

Signed to: Supervisor's Approval:

Children's Aid Society of Halifax

INTAKE FORM

File No.

Arrival:— Date..... Method:..... Source:.....

Name:.....

<u>Christian Names</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>	<u>Baptism</u>
------------------------	------------------	-------------------	----------------

Man:.....

Woman:.....

Children:

Address and Tenure:.....

Previous Addresses:.....

Telephone:.....

Religion:— Man:.....

Woman:.....

Date of Marriage:..... Place of Marriage:.....

Occupation:— Man:.....

Woman:.....

Members in Household:

Problems & Comments:

Type of Case Made: Prot..... U.M..... A. H..... F. H..... N. F. M.....

Signed to:..... Supervisor's Approval:.....

Children's Aid Society of Halifax

INTAKE FORM

File No.....

Arrival:— Date..... Method:..... Source:.....

Name:.....

Christian Names

Birthdate

Birthplace

Baptism

Man:.....

Woman:.....

Children:

Address and Tenure:.....

Previous Addresses:.....

Telephone:.....

Religion:—Man:.....

Woman:.....

Date of Marriage:..... Place of Marriage:.....

Occupation:— Man:.....

Woman:.....

Others in Household:

Problems & Comments:

Type of Case Made: Prot..... U.M..... A. H..... F. H..... N. F. M.....

Assigned to:..... Supervisor's Approval:.....

APPENDIX C

For Further Information

DID YOU KNOW?

if you live. . . .

in the Halifax area

PHONE 423-8652

elsewhere in Nova Scotia

WRITE P. O. BOX 65

HALIFAX, N. S.



"I NEED A HOME"

- that you can complete the average adoption home study with a social worker within two months
- that the average adoption placement is made within four months
- that average legal fees to adopt are less than obstetrical fees

This brochure provided as a community service by ATLANTIC PRINT LIMITED

MARITIME PHOTO ENGRAVERS LTD.

Information Booth Materials courtesy of HALLDAY'S CRAFTSMEN LTD.

and PIERCEY'S SUPPLIES LTD.



LOOKING

FOR A

HOME . . .

**OUR CHILDREN ARE LOOKING . . .
FOR ADOPTION HOMES AND FOSTER HOMES**

- healthy normal babies
- cute adorable toddlers
- OR**
- confused, frightened youngsters who do not yet know how to love
- bewildered teenagers with "chips" on their shoulders
- children with special health problems
- children of mixed racial background
- AND**
- some need PERMANENT ADOPTION homes
- some need TEMPORARY FOSTER homes

BUT they all need LOVE, security and a place to belong

with people who can enjoy children and understand their needs are over 21 years of age and are in an age range compatible with the needs of the child they wish to care for are in good health are in ANY income group sufficient to maintain a satisfactory standard of living are living in adequate housing - - rented or self owned

WHEN YOU ADOPT

you maintain the child until he can become legally and permanently yours after a six month period

WHEN YOU FOSTER

the Agency maintains the child in your temporary care until he can return to his own home or be adopted

A CHILD'S FUTURE IS AT STAKE

CAN YOU HELP?

APPENDIX D



“We Need

w l

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES OF ROCHESTER AND MONROE
COUNTY; New York, Inc., 1958.

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS; Ottawa, 1967.