

EVALUATION OF THE PHILADELPHIA
DEFENDER CHILD ADVOCACY UNIT

FINAL REPORT

VOLUME III: IMPACT EVALUATION

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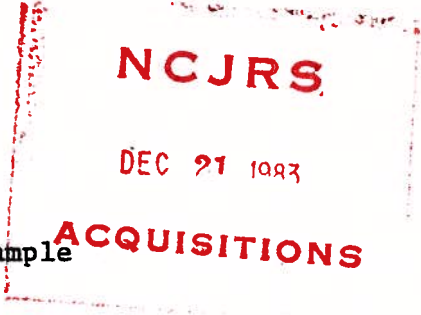
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VOLUME III: IMPACT EVALUATION

Introduction

The impact of the Child Advocacy Unit on its clients and on the justice and social service systems was assessed using two primary methodologies. First, the impact of the CAU's establishment was evaluated statistically using data gathered from Family Court and CAU case records in a time series design. Second, the impact of the CAU on client-children and their families was evaluated by studying a small number of cases in great depth. Details of the research design and results of statistical analyses are included in Part I of this volume. The 29 case studies are introduced and presented in Part II. The final section, Part III, contains conclusions and general observations on the impact of CAU drawn from both the statistical study and the case studies.

PART I: TIME SERIES ANALYSIS

Method

Research Design

Data were gathered concerning the experience of children who entered the Family Court during each of six years, 1973 to 1975 before CAU began representing children, and 1976 to 1978 after the establishment of CAU. Children in four case types were selected randomly to make the samples in the six time periods as equivalent as possible and thereby allow the rigorous testing of hypotheses using time series analysis. Randomization within case type or strata allowed changes in dependent variables to be attributed to the impact of CAU rather than to differences among children. Repeated measures were taken for the set of dependent variables to look for discontinuities which corresponded to establishment of CAU. The basic hypothesis being tested was that the introduction of CAU in time period four (1976) would induce larger change in the dependent variables than that caused by exogenous effects (such as changes in statutes, judges or public sentiment) in other time periods.

A set of analyses of variance was performed within each case type with year as the independent variable, and appropriate pre hoc and post hoc tests performed to examine pairs of means on the dependent variable for adjacent time periods. Additional analyses were performed to supplement the basic impact study design, including analyses with race and sex as independent variables, and crosstabulations between pairs of variables to examine patterns in the data set and trends across time.

Data Sources and Data

Family Court records and Child Advocacy Unit files were used exclusively as data sources. Access to Department of Public Welfare records for some case types was denied under Pennsylvania confidentiality laws, and access to school records proved impractical within the scope of the project. The Juvenile Aid Division of the Philadelphia Police Department agreed to provide information on members of the sample from their files, but no new information beyond that available from the court or CAU was obtained from this source.

Sample

Cases were selected for inclusion using a disproportionately stratified design with sampling fractions derived for each case type and year. The population comprised Family Court records for new cases in the three pre-CAU years and records of the Child Advocacy Unit for the three years after the CAU was established, as shown in Table 1 below.

In Table I, the numbers for the pre-CAU time periods, 1973 to 1975, refer to cases disposed of during each calendar year. The numbers for the CAU time periods, 1976 to 1978, refer to cases assigned to the Child Advocacy Unit for which petitions were filed during each calendar year. Changes in definitions and procedures for dependent cases between 1973 and 1978 are reflected in the table. There are two entries for Truancy in 1973 because there were both

delinquent and dependent petitions filed for truant children in 1973. Incur-
 rigibility (status offenses) was defined as delinquency prior to 1975.
 Because there were not sufficient cases, sexual abuse was deleted as a cate-
 gory, and the 1976 incorrigibility cell was empty.

Table 1

POPULATION OF SELECTED FAMILY COURT CASES
 1973 to 1978

Case Type	Year					
	1973	1974	1975	1976 ^h	1977 ^h	1978 ^h
Neglect	503 ^a	546 ^d	680 ^f	127	132	230
Abuse	130 ^a	134 ^d	315 ^f	104	123	125
Truancy	61 ^a 116 ^b	64 ^d	23 ^f	21	87	114
Incorrigibility	266 ^b	298 ^e	1748	0	40	49
Sexual Abuse	c	c	c	6	23	17

^a Family Court Division 1973 Report, page 94: Table 31 "Reason for Referral of Child to Court: 1973." Sum of "Inadequate Care" and "Neglect to Provide Care" for Neglect.

^b Family Court Division 1973 Report, page 67: Table 12, "Reason for Referral of Delinquent Cases by Sex and Race: 1973."

^c No distinct category defined, no cases identified among dependent petitions.

^d Family Court Division 1974 Report, page 92: Table 31, Reason for Referral of Non-Delinquency Cases, 1974." Sum of "Inadequate Care" and "Neglect" for Neglect.

^e Family Court Division 1974 Report, page 68: Table 12, "Reason for Referral of Delinquency Cases by Sex and Race: 1974."

^f Family Court Division 1975 Report, page 90: Table 31, "Reason for Referral of Non-Delinquency Cases: 1975." Sum of "Inadequate Care" and "Neglect" for Neglect.

^g Family Court Division 1975 Report, page 66: Table 12, "Reason for Referral of Delinquency Cases by Sex and Race: 1975."

^h Child Advocacy Unit, count of Child Card File.

Only four of ten possible case types were eligible for inclusion in the time series. Cases involving sexual abuse, adoption, medical, and involuntary terminations of parental rights were of such small annual volume as to make random selection impossible. Neither mental health/mental retardation nor domestic relations (custody and visitation) cases provide definable and comparable pre-CAU populations.

Table 2

TIME SERIES ANALYSIS SAMPLE

Sample Cases by Case Type

Year of Entry into Juvenile Court	Abuse	Neglect	(Education) Truancy	(Status Offense) Incorrigibility
1973 (Juvenile Court Files)	10	10	9	10
1974 (Juvenile Court Files)	10	10	10	10
1975 (Juvenile Court Files)	10	10	10	9
1976 (CAU Files)	10	10	10	0
1977 (CAU Files)	10	10	10	10
1978 (CAU Files)	10	10	10	10

ResultsCharacteristics of the Sample

Generally there was more variation between case types than there was within each case type on background variables. That is, cases with similar presenting problems were distinguishable from cases with other presenting problems on several specific variables. Further, there was no "average" or

"typical" child who was referred to Family Court. This can be seen in the sample distribution by background variables including age, sex, race, parents' marital status, and source of petition, shown in Table 2. For example, the average age at time of petition for all children in the sample was 10.1. Among the four case types represented, mean age for Abuse and Neglect cases was four years less, and the mean age for Truancy and Incorrigibility cases was five years greater than the overall mean. The latter two case types also represent a far narrower range of ages as is apparent from the relative magnitudes of their standard deviations.

Table 3

BACKGROUND VARIABLES BY CASE TYPE

		Case Type									
		Total	Abuse		Neglect		Truancy		Incorri- gibility		
N		228	60		60		59		49		
Sex	female	114	25	42%	33	55%	23	39%	33	67%	
	male	114	35	58%	27	45%	36	61%	16	33%	
Race	black	147	41	68%	43	72%	31	53%	32	65%	
	white	67	15	25%	16	27%	20	34%	16	33%	
	other	14	4	7%	1	2%	8	13%	1	2%	
Parents	married	49	12	20%	6	10%	17	29%	14	29%	
	divorced/ separated	87	18	30%	22	37%	26	44%	21	43%	
	never married	67	24	40%	27	45%	7	12%	9	18%	
	unknown/ widowed	25	6	10%	5	8%	9	15%	5	10%	
Petitioner	DPW	97	49	82%	45	75%	3	5%			
	Board of Ed.	54					54	92%			
	Relative Referral	53	5	9%	8	14%	2	3%	46	93%	
	from Adult or Juvenile Court	22	11	14%					3	6%	

Table 3 (continued)

BACKGROUND VARIABLES BY CASE TYPE

		Case Type				
		Total	Abuse	Neglect	Truancy	Incorri- gibility
Age at Petition	mean	10.1	5.8	6.3	14.7	14.7
	s.d		5.3	4.6	1.8	1.5
Number of Court Appearances	mean	3.4	3.5	3.0	3.1	4.4
	s.d	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.4	1.8

Dependent Variables

The 24 dependent variables entered into the analysis of variance design with entry year as the independent variable are shown in Table 3. A number of important aspects of a case's progress could not be assessed directly. Variables to represent family stability, willingness of the family to cooperate in the child's interest or level of activity in a case, for example, were derived indirectly from available records.

Table 4

DEPENDENT VARIABLES FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

1. Age at petition
2. Parents separated or divorced during year after petition
3. Whom child lived with at time of petition
4. Whom child lived with one year after petition
5. Child stayed with family throughout year after petition
6. Evaluation(s) of child completed
7. Delinquent charges and disposition during year after petition
8. School attendance
9. School performance
10. Time between petition date and first court appearance
11. Number of court appearances during year after petition

DEPENDENT VARIABLES FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

- 12. Number of non-appearances for scheduled court appearances
- 13. Number of bench warrants issued
- 14. Child committed to DPW
- 15. Child assigned to DPW for supervision
- 16. Child placed outside family (e.g., foster care, group home)
- 17. Child returned to family after placement
- 18. Evaluation(s) or study of child ordered
- 19. Evaluation(s) or study of parent ordered
- 20. Counseling ordered for parent
- 21. Counseling ordered for child
- 22. Counseling ordered for family (parent and child)
- 23. Petition disposed within one year
- 24. Agreement among parties in case

Items 12 through 24 refer to court dispositions and court ordered activities

The number of occasions when principles of the case such as the child or parent failed to appear for a scheduled court appearance, the number of bench warrants issued pertaining to the case, and the number of instances of agreement among the parties, are rough measures of willingness to cooperate with the Family Court process. The number of court appearances and the number of evaluations or studies of the child completed are indicators of level of activity in a case. School attendance and performance measures were not available directly from school records; notes or reports from caseworkers concerning school behavior were used instead.

Differences by Year

The results of the analysis of variance by year did not support the hypothesized improvement in available outcome measures resulting from the establishment of CAU. The impact of CAU on the justice and social service

systems produced no significant changes in the variables measured. Differences in the dependent variables were not consistent or large and generally not coincident with the establishment of CAU. Tests for differences in pairs of means for adjacent years using pre hoc tests (t-tests) and post hoc tests (Duncan's multiple range test) did not reach significance for any dependent variable. There were isolated instances of statistically significant main effects between years which did not conform to the model specified a priori. These effects were ascribed to extraneous factors and are not presented as evidence of the impact of CAU.

Trends

A subset of the dependent variables from the analysis of variance were further examined using crosstabulation tables to explore trends in the variables across time and to delineate differing needs of children across the four case types. With whom the child resides is an example of differences in circumstances implied by case type, as shown in Table 5 below. Most children in the sample lived with a parent or parents at the time the petition was filed. However, the majority did not stay with their parent(s) throughout the year following the petition date, and a large portion of those who left or were removed from home remained in placement with non-relatives (e.g., foster care or a group home) at the end of one year. The exception was truancy cases: 95% began with a parent and 75% were with a parent after one year. In only six truancy cases was the child in placement with non-relatives after one year.

Table 5

CHILD'S RESIDENCE BY CASE TYPE

		Case Type							
		Abuse		Neglect		Truancy		Incorrigibility	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Whom child lived with at time of petition	Parent	54	90%	36	60%	56	95%	44	90%
	Relative	2	3%	5	8%	3	5%	3	6%
	Other	4	7%	19	32%			1	2%
Whom child lived with one year after petition	Parent	30	50%	24	40%	44	75%	16	33%
	Relative	8	13%	7	12%	5	9%	6	12%
	Other	22	37%	27	45%	6	10%	25	51%
	Unknown			2	3%	4	7%	2	4%
Child stayed with family throughout year	Yes	11	19%	8	13%	37	63%	9	19%
	No	48	81%	52	87%	17	29%	39	81%

Several court disposition elements varied across case types, as shown in Table 6 which presents the overall proportion of cases which included each element. In addition, certain trends appeared to develop after 1976. Across all case types, counseling was more likely to be ordered by judges after the establishment of CAU, particularly counseling for the child in truancy cases and counseling for parent(s) in abuse and neglect cases. Accompanying this pattern, the majority of abuse cases were placed outside the family prior to CAU's creation in 1976, but the majority stayed with their parent(s) after 1976. For abuse and neglect cases, agreements reached in court among the parties were more likely to occur after CAU was established.

Table 6
COURT DISPOSITION ELEMENTS BY CASE TYPE

Disposition	Case Type							
	Abuse		Neglect		Truancy		Incorrigibility	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
DPW commit ordered	48	80%	44	73%	11	19%	21	43%
DPW supervision ordered	17	28%	8	13%	6	10%	3	6%
Child placed outside family	32	53%	24	40%	11	19%	26	53%
Counseling ordered for child or parent ^a	27	45%	8	13%	8	14%	11	22%
Agreement reached among parties in case ^b	24	40%	19	32%	6	10%	3	6%

^a chi-square = 14.3, 5d.f., $p \leq .05$ for abuse cases by year;

chi-square = 11.6, 5d.f., $p \leq .05$ for truancy cases by year

^b chi-square = 16.7, 5d.f., $p \leq .05$ for abuse cases by year;

chi-square = 15.2, 5d.f., $p \leq .01$ for neglect cases by year.

Differences by Race and Sex

The set of dependent variables tested for differences by year were examined further using analysis of variance for differences by race and t-tests for differences by sex. There were significant effects by race or sex for only two dependent variables. Age at petition date varied by race among truancy cases with black children about eight months older than white children and a year and four months older than children of other races ($F(2,56) = 3.8, p .05$). A second significant effect involving age occurred among abuse cases with girls on the average about three years and eight months older than boys ($t(58) = -2.8, p .01$). The variable which measured the proportion of children placed outside the family who returned home within a year of the petition date showed a significant effect for race among abuse cases. Black children who were placed were somewhat more likely to return home than children of other races or whites ($F(2,57) = 4.0, p \leq .05$). In general, both

race and sex, like year of entry, were irrelevant as sources of variation in the dependent variables.

Summary

In summary, then, although some "trend" data suggest that elements of case disposition changed after establishment of the CAU, the data generally do not reach significance. The time series analyses indicate that establishment of the CAU had no statistical effect upon the dependent variables obtained from CAU and court records (Table 4).

PART II: CASE STUDIES

Selection of Cases

The 29 case studies which follow were selected for intensive examination by the evaluation team with the assistance of the Child Advocacy Unit. CAU social workers were asked to suggest cases which were successful, unsuccessful, exceptionally complex or otherwise interesting based on their familiarity with the children, the families and the issues involved. Additional cases were identified for inclusion from among those heard in Court during two weeks of courtroom observation by members of the evaluation team, and from among cases seen by members of the evaluation team during observation of social workers in the field. Cases suggested by the evaluation team were screened by CAU social workers to eliminate cases in which family or client stability might be harmed by interviews. CAU social workers made the initial contact with the family in each case.

Of the 35 cases selected for intensive study, 6 were deleted because the family or the CAU refused permission for interviews. Several case studies were retained despite refused interviews if the family had been observed in court. The final set of 29 cases includes 14 suggested directly by CAU social workers and 15 suggested by the evaluation team and screened by CAU. The cases selected include several considered successful and several considered unsuccessful by their CAU social workers or the evaluation team, some cases characterized by entanglement of circumstances and others which had interesting aspects or raised important issues in advocacy for children. Several cases were selected in each of the case types handled most frequently by the CAU: abuse, sexual abuse, neglect,

truancy, incorrigibility, mental health/mental retardation (MH/MR), and domestic relations (custody). Three case types represented by very few cases but having interesting legal aspects accounted for one case study apiece: medical, adoption and involuntary termination of parental rights.

Members of the evaluation team reviewed the case file and interviewed the principals in each case, including the client, parents, CAU social workers and attorneys, social service providers, DPW caseworkers and School District personnel.

Fictitious names are used throughout the case studies. A consistent format was adopted to facilitate exposition and comparison across cases and case types. Background includes a description of the child and the circumstances leading to filing of a dependent petition in Family Court. Progress of the Case includes a summary of major events in the case since the petition was filed, and CAU Activities includes a description of the investigation and recommendations of the CAU staff members assigned to the case. Client and Parent Response and Other Response are presented last.

CASE STUDY #1: ABUSEJAMESBackground

James is a one-year old boy living with his mother and two pre-school brothers in a North Philadelphia Housing Project. He came to the attention of the Court in February, 1980, when he was treated for suspicious burns on the arm, stomach, and buttocks, and was determined to be underdeveloped. A CY47 was filed by the attending physician, and the Department of Public Welfare took James into temporary custody and filed a petition for court review and possible long-term placement. The mother had been reported for suspected child abuse previously, had been monitored by DPW, and had been referred for counseling at SCAN, an organization providing assistance to abusing families.

Progress of the Case

The case was heard in Dependency Court in early March, delayed by the birth of a baby to the mother. The mother claimed that the burns were an accident; when James and his brothers were having a breakfast of hot cereal, one of the brothers bumped his cereal on James who was crawling on the floor under the table. Nevertheless, based on the physician's findings, the court ordered that the child should remain in protective custody temporarily while his mother received counseling through SCAN, Inc. The child was returned to his family in June, 1980, still under DPW supervision, and the mother agreed to continue counseling.

CAU Activities

The CAU social worker visited the mother at the apartment of a neighbor, gathering information about the alleged abuse incident and the home in general. The mother claimed innocence in this and other alleged abuse, stating that the first report the year before had been lodged by her grandmother for no apparent reason. She reported that she had had contact with SCAN before. The CAU social worker referred the mother to CAPE (Child Abuse Prevention Hotline), and the two other children appeared to be healthy and unabused.

The CAU did not want the child removed from the home but wanted the mother to accept treatment. Apparently, the CAU based its recommendations on the attending physician's written report (detailing the suspicious nature of the child's injuries), which was not available in the file but the contents of which were known to the social worker. Because the mother testified that she was willing to accept counseling, the CAU believed that the child was not endangered.

Parent Response

The evaluation team met the mother in the company of the CAU social worker. The mother and her neighbor both expressed amazement and disbelief when they heard that the one-year-old boy was to have a lawyer. The mother complained that even she had been unable to obtain representation through Community Legal Services. She seemed to have little concept of the role of the Child Advocacy Unit.

CASE STUDY, #2: ABUSEGEORGEBackground

George, a three-year-old boy, and a younger sister lived with their parents and several other family members in an overcrowded and very dirty apartment.

Progress of the Case

This case was brought to the attention of the Court as a result of a missing person investigation. George had wandered away from home; his mother called the police who found George not far away and returned him to his mother. The police investigator, upon seeing the condition of the home, filed a petition of suspected abuse or neglect (CY 47) with the Department of Public Welfare. DPW in turn filed a neglect petition in Family Court. In several court appearances most of the issues raised involved securing adequate housing for the family. An apartment in a high-rise project was eventually secured.

CAU Activities

The CAU was appointed at the initial court hearing, after which the social worker contacted the mother requesting an interview. The social worker also met with the DPW caseworker assigned to the case. All agreed that the mother should have counseling to improve her parenting skills and that better housing should be found. The social worker worked closely with the mother and the Philadelphia Housing Authority on this issue. The mother was very cooperative with the CAU social worker but not with the DPW caseworker. Several times she cancelled meetings with DPW or did not show at designated locations.

Client and Parent Response

A member of the evaluation team interviewed the mother after the birth of her third child. She stated that the role of CAU was to help her with her children and represent them in court. She found the social worker easy to talk with and was helpful in making her realize that she could get her own apartment. The mother said the social worker was in court with her once. Overall she was pleased with the social worker and felt she could always call him. She spoke with a CAU attorney outside of court but could not remember her name. The father was interviewed, and an interview was attempted with George, at their home. George, although four-years-old, was not able to talk. His father said that George liked the social worker very much. The father found the CAU to be helpful and said that he would go back to them again if he needed additional help.

CASE STUDY #3: ABUSE

SHERRY

Background

Sherry is an 11-year-old girl. Her father died two years ago, and Sherry was living at home with her mother, her sixteen-year-old sister and two older brothers. She is now living in a foster home. Sherry has been diagnosed as suffering from psychosocial dwarfism, failure to grow in an emotionally non-nurturing environment. Sherry's height and weight are roughly that of a seven-year-old.

Sherry's family is beset with many problems; the mother has been described as an alcoholic with physical and mental deterioration, and both older brothers have behavior problems. Her sister appears to assume an adult role in this family. Sherry has missed considerable school during the past two years as a result of a car accident and other medical problems.

Progress of the Case

During November of 1979, Sherry was admitted to Parkview Osteopathic Hospital because of a bowel obstruction and failure to eat. Shortly after her admittance, the hospital filed a CY 47 alleging abuse because of Sherry's apparent failure to grow. DPW then filed a dependent petition and took temporary custody of Sherry. DPW requested that she be adjudicated dependent under the Juvenile Act and severely neglected under the Child Protective Services Act.

Sherry was soon transferred to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for further evaluation of her nutritional status and her failure to attain normal size. In December of 1979 Sherry was admitted to the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic for further evaluation, and an attempt to help her family to be more supportive and nurturant toward her.

Her physician at Children's Hospital continued to supervise Sherry's medical case, and concurred in the diagnosis of psychosocial dwarfism after finding no organic causes for Sherry's failure to gain weight. Her physician predicted that it might take many months in a more emotionally nurturing environment before Sherry's body begins to utilize calories to promote growth.

In January, 1980, Sherry's case was heard in Dependency Court, with the evaluation team observing. Sherry's mother, not represented by an attorney and appearing distraught, interrupted the hearing many times to express her closeness to Sherry, to object to the Child Guidance Center's testimony that she failed to cooperate in therapy and to visit Sherry during her stay at Child Guidance, explaining that her physical infirmities and the expense made public transportation too difficult, and to complain loudly about the unfairness of the proceeding. The Department of Welfare

caseworker (a student) and attorney and the CAU attorney, conferred hurriedly immediately before the hearing, and jointly recommended that Sherry be placed temporarily with her uncle, who stated his willingness to the court with the proviso that his family responsibilities precluded his assuming long-term care. The court found Sherry dependent and placed her in the custody of the Department of Welfare, to live temporarily in her uncle's home. The CAU attorney emphasized the importance of maintaining the close bond between mother and child, and helping the mother get help.

Within the next few months, Sherry's uncle was no longer able to care for her. There are some indications that, had he received financial support, he may have provided a more permanent home, because his other heavy family responsibilities made this additional burden difficult. Sherry was moved by the Department of Welfare to a foster home outside of Philadelphia, and her mother and sister do not know where she is.

CAU Activities

The CAU was court approved as a child advocate for Sherry in November, 1979. Shortly thereafter, the CAU social worker, a social work student, requested and conducted a home visit with the mother. As a result of this interview, the CAU recommended a psychological evaluation of Sherry and her mother. The CAU social worker also spoke to physicians and social workers from all the hospitals where Sherry was treated and evaluated, as well as with her family physician. Several planning conferences were held with agency representatives involved in this case. The CAU appeared to have changed their recommendations as a result of input from these sessions. Their first recorded recommendation was for Sherry to remain at home and undergo therapy with her mother. At the time of the hearing, after conferring with DPW representatives immediately before the hearing, CAU recommended that Sherry live temporarily with her uncle while her mother received therapy. After several months, the CAU joined other agencies in recommending that Sherry be placed in foster care, that DPW continue to sustain contact between Sherry and her natural family, and that Sherry and her mother continue counseling toward the eventual goal of reuniting the family. The CAU social worker student handling this case completed her practicum and left the agency. The CAU's Director of Social Services put a memorandum in Sherry's file, stating that, with the departure of the social work student, no CAU social worker would be covering the case due to case load demands. No mention was made of the great distance placed between Sherry and her mother, the remoteness of family reunification under this arrangement, or a date for review.

Client and Parent Response

Sherry was seen at the time of her first court hearing. She was not allowed to stay in the courtroom, although she appeared mature and articulate for her age. As a social worker supervisor (not an agency representative) explained the proceedings to her outside the courtroom, Sherry, unaware that the CAU attorney was in court, said, "But who is representing me?" Sherry expressed her desire to go home with her mother

to those outside the courtroom. The evaluators were unable to locate Sherry in foster care for a later interview.

Sherry's mother was interviewed twice, the first interview being short as the mother was incoherent. Sherry's mother still had difficulty on the second meeting, but was able to answer questions with the assistance of her future son-in-law.

The mother vaguely recalled the CAU social worker assigned to the case. She largely remembered working with a DPW worker, but met the CAU attorney in court, and felt that the CAU had done nothing for Sherry and the family.

The mother and her future son-in-law expressed great dissatisfaction with the child welfare system. They have tried and failed to find Sherry, calling DPW many times to leave messages but never receiving any response. They had not called the CAU for information or assistance.

CASE STUDY #4: SEXUAL ABUSESIMON and ROBINBackground

The family first came to the court's attention in February of 1978 when Simon's and Robin's two older sisters were involved in auto theft and running away from home. Since both of these girls are now married, they are considered by the CAU to be "stabilized".

The children's mother has been diagnosed as schizophrenic, while the father has been identified as an alcoholic with serious personality disorders. Although both parents have been advised to seek therapy, Juvenile Court has no jurisdiction over the mental health of parents, and they could not, therefore, be required to seek help. Both, despite repeated requests by various professionals, refused to seek help. The Department of Public Welfare therefore requested in early 1979 that the two younger children, Simon (11) and Robin (9), be removed from the custody of the parents.

Progress of the Case

The children were committed to DPW and placed at the Ivy House Group Home, run by the Salvation Army. New psychological tests were given to the parents, and they were encouraged to go into therapy. Once again, they refused. They also refused to visit their son and daughter at Ivy House. The children did, however, receive frequent visits from their two older sisters, who took them to see their parents. The children were fairly happy with their placement at Ivy House.

As the investigation of the case proceeded, indications of sexual abuse of Simon by his mother were uncovered, although no real evidence was available. Issues of neglect rather than sexual abuse dominate the case record.

An attempt was made to have Simon stay with an aunt, but without success. It was about this time that the Salvation Army decided to close Ivy House. All of the children currently residing there had to be placed elsewhere. Robin had become involved in the Big Sisters program and with a well-to-do family while at Ivy House, and there appeared to be some interest in placing her with that family. However, the parents would not allow either of their children to be placed in a foster home, and both children were placed in the United Methodist Home for Children. The children are still at the Methodist Home, where a social worker has finally been successful in involving both parents in counseling sessions with the two children.

Involvement of CAU

The CAU social worker first visited the children at Ivy House, and saw them there several times before they were moved to the Methodist Home. It was her opinion (and that of the CAU) that siblings should be allowed to remain together, and that all attempts should be made to reunite the family unit. Thus the CAU recommended placement together at the Methodist Home. This point of view caused considerable controversy between CAU and the local Big Brothers and Big Sisters organizations. Both of the organizations lobbied for foster placements for the two children, and there is a letter from the Big Brothers Association to that effect in the file. The CAU social worker indicated that she considered such intervention as overstepping the role of the Big Brothers agency, and that deciding what placement is in the best interest of the child is the responsibility of the Department of Public Welfare. There is no indication that the CAU encouraged or assisted these articulate children to voice their opinions in the courtroom.

The CAU social worker also visited the children at the Methodist Home several times, once accompanied by a member of the evaluation team. During this visit, the children appeared to be more than happy to see her and even expressed disappointment in not having seen her as often as they had while at Ivy House. The social worker's rapport with these two children could not have been more apparent. Simon expressed dissatisfaction with the Methodist Home, although he indicated that he did not want to go home. Simon appeared uneasy with the thought of seeing his mother, and the social worker indicated that there had been a serious breakdown in communication between Simon and his mother.

Client and Parent Response

Simon and Robin were interviewed together by the evaluation team. The children indicated that their first contact with the CAU came when the CAU social worker visited them at Ivy House. They indicated that they really knew nothing about CAU, and that although they had wanted to go to their court hearing, the supervisor at Ivy House told them they did not need to go, and in fact refused to allow them to appear.

Simon had not wanted to be placed in the Methodist Home. He wanted to go to a foster home. Robin had also wanted to be placed in a foster home, but she said that she would have been too far from her mother, so she accepted placement at the Methodist Home.

Simon's and Robin's mother was interviewed by the evaluation team. She indicated that she learned of the CAU's involvement through the case social worker, although she did not know why they were involved. When questioned as to the CAU's affiliation, she indicated that she thought CAU was a part of the Court, though not part of DPW. The mother reported that the only questions asked of her in Court by the CAU attorney were in reference to the maintenance of her daughter's relationship with Big Sisters, and that she could remember no specific recommendations being made to the judge by the CAU attorney.

She felt that CAU was helpful in some ways, particularly during the movements of the children from Ivy House to the Methodist Home, but that they hurt the family because of the continuing separation of family members from each other. The mother felt that the CAU was doing the best they could, but that her greatest need was for a job rather than welfare. She apparently felt that finding her a job was a legitimate responsibility of the CAU.

Other Response

The evaluation team interviewed the children's social worker at the United Methodist Home, and their DPW caseworker. The Methodist Home social worker indicated satisfaction with the involvement of CAU in the case, and cited specifically the rapport of the CAU social worker with Simon and Robin. She said that the CAU social worker called about two weeks after the children were placed at the Home to talk with her. She has had no conflicts with CAU although she has heard other agencies express concern about CAU's meddling. Her plan throughout has been to try to bring the family together to help them deal with their problems.

The children's caseworker from DPW indicated that at times he was unsure what the CAU's position was, and the children also seemed confused as to what would happen to them. He felt that in the end, all parties were in agreement that reunification was in the childrens' best interest.

CASE STUDY #5: SEXUAL ABUSEKELLYBackground

Kelly, age fourteen, lives at home with her parents and her fifteen year-old sister. In 1978, the father attempted to rape Kelly at home, when the mother was hospitalized. Subsequent attempts occurred over a period of months. The father does not deny these allegations. Kelly's sister was never molested.

Progress of the Case

In 1979, Kelly and her father had a disagreement, prompting Kelly to write a note to her mother describing the sexual incidents. Her mother was outraged, asked the father to leave, and went to the Housing Authority to apply for a larger residence in a different neighborhood. She explained to the caseworker the problems at home and the caseworker then reported the alleged sexual abuse to the Department of Public Welfare.

The case was brought to Family Court, and the Court ordered evaluation of and treatment for the family at the Joseph J. Peters Institute (formerly the Center for Rape Concern). Two months later (December 1979) treatment began and continued until April 1980. The case was discharged in April, 1980, because the family had stabilized.

CAU Activities

The CAU was appointed when the case came to court in October, 1979. The CAU social worker contacted the family by mail and interviewed the family at home. After this interview, the social worker contacted the Peters Institute requesting therapeutic assistance and the Institute agreed to take the case. The CAU social worker contacted the family, and told them to call the Peters Institute. CAU had further contact with the family only prior to their review hearing. The CAU attorney was involved in this case only in the presentation of the social worker's recommendation in court.

Client and Parent Response

Kelly, her mother, and her sister were interviewed by the evaluation team. All three seemed unclear about the role of the Child Advocacy Unit. They did recall the CAU social worker's two visits to their home. They thought she was very understanding and made them feel comfortable enough to talk to her about their problems. They worked much more closely with a social worker from the Peters Institute. They did mention that the CAU seemed to care about their problems, but they did not recall speaking with a CAU attorney. They recalled clearly that the Peters Institute social worker spoke in court.

Other Agency Response

The evaluation team interviewed the DPW caseworker and the Peters Institute social worker assigned to the case. The DPW caseworker was generally complimentary of the CAU's work, but described the Peters Institute as more involved in the case. She did say that the CAU social worker often annoyed her by calling the day before a meeting requesting an update. She would have preferred that the CAU be more continuously involved in the case.

The Peters Institute social worker described the CAU as an organization representing children and protecting children's rights. She said that she had contact only with the social worker who originally called her requesting her involvement. She felt that Kelly's family was not really clear about the role of the CAU, but added that the family had been over-involved with the welfare system so that the CAU represented one more of many agencies involved in their lives. Professionally, this social worker respects the case worker, but would have liked the CAU to be more involved. Several times the CAU failed to return phone calls, and the CAU's role in this case seemed to consist only of brokering services for the family.

CASE STUDY #6: SEXUAL ABUSEMIABackground:

Mia is a fourteen-year-old girl who has been involved with the Family Court system for six years. In 1977, she was raped and brutalized, but her history includes elements of neglect, truancy, incorrigibility, and mental health problems as well. The CAU does not categorize this as a sex abuse case because a family member was not involved in the incident, although a CAU social worker submitted it as such.

She is currently living at home with her two sisters in an unsupervised atmosphere, but has experienced three separate periods of placement outside the home. None have been successful in altering her rebellious behavior, and her mother is seeking another placement for her.

Progress of the Case

Mia first came to the attention of the Department of Public Welfare in April, 1974, when neighbors lodged a complaint that the mother was leaving her three young children unsupervised from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. daily during her employment. Mia had been consistently truant and had run away from home; the girl was not properly cared for and nurtured.

Mia's first court hearing was in early 1975 at which time she was placed in the custody of the court and sent to Shallcross, a residential educational center. She returned home in June, 1976.

However, Mia's behavior remained basically unchanged and she continued to run away and sleep in cars. In 1977 she was raped and brutalized. She was treated at a city hospital where once again she came to the attention of the Department of Public Welfare. There is a record of what services she received.

An incorrigibility and truancy petition was filed in 1977; Mia was placed at the Stenton Child Care Center, but absconded three hours later. In April, 1978, she was committed to the Eastern State School and Hospital for violent and suicidal behavior. Shortly thereafter she returned home.

She has continued to be truant and uncontrollable, living almost totally without supervision. Her mother requested placement once again in the spring of 1980 based on recent acting-out incidents, and the Court ordered that arrangements be made for a residential situation and counseling.

CAU Activities

It appears that the CAU was appointed to represent Mia in 1977 at the time the truancy and incorrigibility petition was filed although the record is not clear. Case notes suggest the the CAU has concentrated on the truancy problem, with little emphasis on the sexual trauma Mia suffered, or on the problems between mother and daughter.

The CAU sees Mia as almost totally resistant to treatment and control, of low intelligence, and greatly in need of therapy. The mother does not appear to understand the complexity of her daughter's problems.

The CAU has most recently recommended that Mia be referred to the West Philadelphia Youth Counseling Center for counseling, and to the Pennsylvania Youth Advocacy Program for a living arrangement.

Client Response

Mia was interviewed by the evaluation team. She was familiar with the Child Advocacy Unit, but thought they were a part of the Court and the Department of Public Welfare. She believed that the CAU was trying to help her but did not have an idea of what she needs from them. She described all her problems as arising from her poor relationship with her mother, from which she wished to escape.

CASE STUDY #7: SEXUAL ABUSECHERYLBackground

Cheryl is the youngest child of a large family. She is a 16-year-old teenager who had been living with her elderly parents, who died in 1978 and 1979, respectively.

After the death of her mother, she moved in with a sibling and spouse. This arrangement did not work out and eventually she moved in with another sibling. It is reported that their family had financial problems; Cheryl stated that she did not always get enough to eat. Cheryl alleged that her brother-in-law sexually abused her several times. He became angry with her when she forcefully refused subsequent advances, and she eventually walked out of the home and spent the night with her boyfriend. After this she went to live with a brother and his wife.

Progress of the Case

The case came to the attention of the Court when a school counselor reported the alleged sexual abuse to the Department of Public Welfare. When Cheryl's brother and sister-in-law began forcing their religious convictions on her, she began talking to the counselor and related the sexual incident. The case was brought to Court in the spring of 1980.

Several family members appeared and are fighting for custody of Cheryl. Cheryl, however, wishes to be placed in a group home so that she can get away from the family. She is currently committed to DPW and was placed at the Youth Study Center until a suitable home can be found for her.

CAU Activities

After the CAU was appointed to their case, the CAU social worker wrote a letter to the family and Cheryl requesting an appointment. She then interviewed several family members, including the prospective caretakers. The CAU social workers recommended to the Court that Cheryl be committed to DPW and placed in a group home where she could receive psychotherapy. Little emphasis was placed on the alleged sexual incident.

Client and Family Response

The evaluation team interviewed Cheryl and four members of her family just after the ten-day hearing. The family perceived the CAU as a public defender kind of organization, not part of the court but working with the court system. They said that the CAU social worker had interviewed them the day before the ten-day hearing. They were not aware of an attorney in court that day, although they had been approached by a CAU attorney after the detention hearing the week before. Only the CAU social worker spoke up in court.

They were aware of the CAU's recommendations, having talked to the CAU social worker prior to the hearing, and that they were in agreement. Overall the family was pleased with the way the CAU worked; staff were polite, understanding and concerned.

Cheryl stated that DPW told her that the CAU would be contacting her for an appointment. The social worker visited her home the day before the hearing. She stated that the role of the CAU was to help her with her problems.

Cheryl was not aware of the CAU attorney. She said that only the CAU social worker and a DPW representative spoke up in Court in her behalf. The social worker had outlined to her the CAU recommendation prior to this hearing, and that she was in agreement with it.

Overall, Cheryl said that the social worker was very helpful, "she was a friend and showed me that she cared." Cheryl said that she felt comfortable with the social worker, and that she was understanding about the case.

Other Response

The evaluation team interviewed the DPW caseworker and a representative of the School District. Both women stated that they had collaborated with the CAU on this case, and were in agreement with the CAU recommendation.

Both had worked with the CAU Social Worker on previous cases and felt that she was a thorough worker. They felt that they had a good working relationship with the CAU.

CASE STUDY #8: NEGLECTCLARISSEBackground

Clarisse is a fifteen-year -old girl now living with her grandmother. Her case actually began in February of 1976, when the Department of Public Welfare requested an urgent temporary commitment of Clarisse and her two younger brothers, who were found by Police without adult supervision in their home. Police had gone to the house with a warrant for the mother's arrest for abusing one of her sons. The mother had moved her son from a hospital where he had been taken by an adult for treatment of multiple bruises. Police placed all of the children in Stenton Child Care Center; the mother was arrested and released.

Clarisse's father was a patient in a psychiatric hospital in Coatesville, Pa. He is currently on leave, but unable to care for the children.

The children were temporarily committted to DPW and discharged to the mother. Clarisse continuously failed to attend school on a regular basis over the next three years, and finally ran away from home to live with her maternal grandmother.

Progress of the Case

In July of 1979, Clarisse's grandmother petitioned the court requesting custody of Clarisse. Clarisse had been living in her grandmother's home since May, 1979. Clarisse's habitual absences from school had continued. Her mother wanted her returned home, but was willing to accept the CAU social worker's recommendation to allow Clarisse to stay at her grandmother's. The court, however, on the recommendation of the CAU attorney, committed Clarisse to DPW; she lived in a foster home for thirty days, and was then allowed to stay with her grandmother.

Clarisse had indicated that her mother made too many demands on her, forcing her to stay at home with her brothers, doing housework, while her mother went out with her boyfriend. In allowing her to live with her grandmother, the court insisted that Clarisse attend school regularly. She was enrolled in a motivational program and she and her mother were required to attend counseling sessions at the Northwest Mental Health Center.

CAU Activities

A CAU social worker initiated the CAU's contact with Clarisse, visiting her several times at her grandmother's house. The social worker appeared to have a good personal rapport with Clarisse, and attempted to counsel her to work out problems with her mother.

The CAU social worker recommended, in agreement with DPW, that Clarisse be put in the custody of her grandmother. However, the CAU attorney advocated in Court that Clarisse be placed in the temporary custody of DPW, and the Court so ordered. Eventually, both felt that the child's best interests had ultimately been served.

Client and Parent Response

Clarisse and her grandmother were interviewed by the evaluation team. The mother was not available for interview.

Clarisse indicated that she was not aware of any legal representation for her until she went to Court. She remembered the CAU social worker, the CAU attorney, and her DPW caseworker in Court, but indicated that her DPW caseworker was the only one she spoke with before the hearing.

Clarisse reported that in the courtroom, the CAU attorney asked her questions about why she did not go to school and whether she wanted to go back to her mother. She also recalled the CAU attorney's recommendation to the Court that she be placed on neutral ground for a period of thirty days.

Asked whether she thought the CAU helped or hurt her, Clarisse answered that she felt she had been helped because they succeeded in convincing her to attend counseling sessions with her mother, whereas she refused to do that before. However, she said that she felt that the CAU hurt her mother because her mother had "put on a scene" in Court. But she felt that the family as a whole was helped by the CAU's insistence on family counseling.

Clarisse thought that the CAU was part of the Court, and indicated that CAU could be improved by increasing its staff. She liked the CAU social worker very much, and felt that her friendship had been very helpful.

Clarisse's grandmother indicated that she had been aware of the CAU's existence through articles in the Philadelphia news media a few years earlier. She indicated that the CAU attorney was assigned to the case when they went to Court and this prompted her to believe that CAU is in fact part of the Court. She felt that CAU works in conjunction with DPW. She further indicated that she received many visits and numerous phone calls from both the CAU attorney and social worker.

The grandmother corroborated Clarisse's recollection of questions asked and recommendations made by the CAU attorney in Court. She said that she disagreed with the recommendation and the Court's decision to place Clarisse in the custody of DPW for 30 days, but that the CAU actually helped Clarisse by this recommendation. By putting Clarisse on neutral ground, the grandmother felt that the Court was given a chance to study the case objectively, and thereby come up with the correct ultimate decision of allowing Clarisse to live with her. In this regard, she felt that the CAU had given Clarisse "excellent representation."

The grandmother also felt that the family was helped by counseling and was pleased with the manner in which DPW and CAU had worked together. She said that the CAU should be improved by increasing the staff size so as to reduce the individual worker's case load. Finally, she stated that CAU gives a child a fair chance in Court, and is therefore one of the best things ever done for children.

Other Response

Clarisse's DPW caseworker, was interviewed by the evaluation team. He indicated that this case had been handled "quite well from a social service point of view", although he felt that the child should never have been placed in the custody of DPW. Reflecting back, however, he indicated that the 30 days temporary commit to DPW was probably in the best interest of the child. He felt that CAU was a very strong advocate for the child in this case, and that the CAU social worker had put a tremendous amount of time and effort into it. He especially appreciated her involvement because of the enormity of his case load.

The caseworker indicated that a conflict had originally arisen between himself and the CAU attorney over the placement of Clarisse in the custody of DPW. The CAU attorney felt that the placement would serve as a respite in the conflicts surrounding the family, while the caseworker likened it to punishing the child for circumstances beyond her control. The DPW felt that the initial conflict got the case started off on the wrong foot, but that differences were ironed out and did not adversely affect his relationship with CAU.

CASE STUDY #9: NEGLECTPRESTONBackground

Preston is an eight-year-old child who is caught in the midst of a violent domestic struggle. His parents have been fighting constantly for a number of years, with several separations and reconciliations during their twelve years of marriage.

In June of 1978, the couple was in another period of separation, during which time the mother was pregnant with another child, and Preston was in the custody of his father. The Department of Public Welfare received a phone call from a neighbor informing them that Preston has been seen running around the neighborhood hungry and not properly clothed. Police placed Preston with a neighbor and took the father to the Albert Einstein Mental Health Center, where he was admitted following complaints by neighbors of bizarre behavior. Later, Preston was taken into custody by DPW when the neighbor was no longer able to care for him.

Progress of the Case

On June 15, 1979, Preston was temporarily committed to DPW, and the CAU was appointed. The parents were advised by the Court to attend counseling at Family Counseling Services, and the father was advised to seek individual counseling. The father refused both counseling and medication, and the couple's attendance at family counseling sessions was sporadic at first, then discontinued completely when they decided on still another separation.

Meanwhile, Preston was discharged from DPW in July of 1979, and returned to his parents. At this time, Preston became a disciplinary problem in school and was suspended for ten days. Following the suspension, school officials requested a disciplinary transfer, and Preston continued to create disturbances in school. Preston's father was called into the school several times, and on two separate occasions he created disturbances at Preston's school by refusing to cooperate with school officials.

The case was scheduled for review in January of 1980, but had to be rescheduled twice because both parents missed the hearings. Then in February, after the couple had gotten back together once again, the rescheduled hearing was held and the Court allowed the parents to retain custody of the child with the stipulation that they regularly attend family counseling and that they allow Preston to be tested. The Court also instructed the parents that if any further domestic problems were allowed to interfere with Preston's development, he would be removed from their custody.

The situation continued to deteriorate. There were even several instances of severe wife abuse which precipitated another separation in March, 1980, including dispute over custody of Preston. Finally, in April,

Preston was declared dependent, removed from the custody of his parents, and was committed to DPW by the Court.

CAU Activities

A CAU social worker interviewed the parents and Preston, and determined that neither parent was capable of providing a stable atmosphere for Preston. However, the CAU attorney was unwilling to recommend long-term separation from the family in the earlier hearings.

The evaluation team was present at the February 1980 hearing. The CAU social worker had arranged for both the principal and the guidance counselor at Preston's school to testify in Court; they were both eager to emphasize the gravity of Preston's situation in that the authority of the Court might influence Preston's parents to allow him to be tested. The CAU attorney did not object to his father's testimony that he was attending counseling and sincerely trying to change, although the CAU social worker felt that his behavior did not prove this.

The DPW social worker felt that the child should be removed from the custody of his parents because of the negative influence exerted on him by his father. After the Court ruled in favor of allowing the parents to retain custody, the CAU social worker asked to be recognized and requested that the Court further impress upon the parents the importance of attending family counseling and of allowing Preston to be tested. This action was criticized later by the CAU attorney as seeking to upset a stable situation.

As indicated above, the situation between the parents deteriorated rapidly following the February court hearing, including separation and dispute over custody of the child. In the April court hearing, the CAU finally recommended and the Court agreed that Preston should be removed from his parents' custody and committed to DPW.

Client and Parent Response

CAU staff considered this case to be too volatile, and requested that the evaluation team not conduct interviews. They felt that such intervention could exacerbate the situation and set back whatever progress had been made. The evaluation team had seen the parents in court, and agreed that the situation was highly stressful.

Other Response

The evaluation team was able to interview the DPW caseworker in the case. She characterized the CAU's handling of the case as "hot and cold", but described her own handling of the case in the same manner. She pointed to the rapid deterioration of the situation, the fact that in her opinion a male worker was needed to deal with the father, and the enormity of both the CAU's and her own caseloads. She did indicate, however, that the CAU social worker did much more than could possibly have been expected of her, and expressed relief at the fact that Preston had finally been removed from the custody of his father. She emphasized that she and the CAU social worker had been in agreement on this case.

CASE STUDY #10: NEGLECTBRODSKY CHILDRENBackground

The Child Advocacy Unit was appointed in late 1978 to represent the six children, two school-age boys and four younger children, in a neglect case with accompanying custody and visitation issues. The six children came to the attention of the court earlier that year, when the mother of the children, who had custody of all six children after a divorce in 1975, admitted herself to a psychiatric hospital, leaving the children in the care of her sister. The sister asked the Department of Public Welfare to care for the children, and DPW arranged temporary foster care with various family members and friends. After the mother signed herself out of the hospital, she began to seek the return of her children, and has been in court twelve times concerning custody and visitation.

Progress of the Case

The foster parents of all six children petitioned with the assistance of an attorney to gain permanent custody shortly after the children were placed. The mother secured legal representation to regain custody, and numerous battles have been fought in court. The foster parents and the mother's sister have reportedly testified that the mother is incapable of providing suitable care, abusing and neglecting the children, failing to provide nourishment to the point of malnutrition, verbally assaulting them, leaving them unsupervised, and failing to abide by court-ordered visitation rules. The mother has countered these claims, ascribing her difficulties to a conspiracy against her. Although the CAU continued to recommend foster care for the children, eventually the court returned all six children to their mother, who is living with her boyfriend and a new baby.

CAU Activities

After appointment, the CAU social worker contacted all parties and requested interviews. She spoke with the mother, her boyfriend, the father, the foster parents, and the children. Most of the CAU effort was directed toward solving the visitation problems, and school behavior problems exhibited by the two oldest boys.

Initially and for the duration of this case, the CAU recommended that the children remain with their caretakers, with limited visitation arrangements for their mother. The CAU staff felt the mother was not capable of handling her children, particularly with the school and behavior problems of the two older boys, who had both been diagnosed as emotionally/socially retarded.

Court hearings were often very lively, with complaints of the mother's violations of visitation agreements and repeated reprimands directed to the mother. The CAU social worker testified often in court, invited by the judge and the CAU attorney to address the bench. The social worker engaged in many verbal battles with the mother's attorney over visitation and custody.

The social worker was also active in setting up special educational assistance for the two older boys. She arranged for them to be transported daily to private schools.

Over the months, the older boys developed and expressed a strong desire to return to their mother. They spoke often in court in the judge's chambers. Eventually, over the CAU's recommendation, the children were returned to their mother, but were court-ordered to have visitation with their caretakers, with periodic review of the children's condition.

Client and Parent Response

The two older boys were interviewed by the evaluation team. They seemed to like the CAU social worker very much, finding her nice and helpful with their problems. They were not aware of a CAU attorney, nor were they specifically able to articulate the role of the CAU. They remembered discussing their living situation many times with the CAU social worker.

The mother was also interviewed. She described the CAU's function as speaking for the child but remaining neutral. She was in contact with the CAU social worker, but met a CAU attorney only once briefly. She believes that the CAU is part of the court system.

The mother disagreed with all of the CAU's recommendations. She complained that the CAU was ill-prepared for court hearings, and had made an erroneous determination that the two boys needed special classes. She continued that the CAU did not really understand her side of the case or what the boys wanted, and had not done thorough investigations. The mother felt strongly that she should have been consulted more by the CAU staff, and the CAU had always been only on the side of the caretakers.

Caretaker of Oldest Boy

This foster mother stated that the role of the CAU was to defend children. Up until the end of the case she thought the CAU social worker was the children's attorney and they had talked together often on the phone and prior to court hearings. She was satisfied with the CAU's performance, although she felt that the final decision was not in the best interest of the children because of the mother's inadequacies. This woman also said she would not abide by the court order to continue bringing her foster son back to visit, because it would be emotionally too difficult for both of them. She still wanted custody of the child.

Caretaker of the Second Boy

This woman was not sure of the role of the CAU. She also thought for some time that the CAU social worker was the children's attorney. She spoke often with the CAU and communicated by exchange of mail. She had met the CAU attorney at the end of the case, but was not sure of his role.

This woman felt that the CAU social worker confused her, changing her recommendations often and not clarifying the direction she was taking on the case. She did not approve of the outcome of the case. She suggested that the CAU could improve its performance by increased follow-up.

CASE STUDY #11: NEGLECTAARONBackground

Aaron is a 2½-year-old boy born in 1978 to a 14-year-old unmarried mother. This case came to the attention of the court in May, 1978, when the physician treating the baby for a serious cold reported the family to DPW as severely neglecting the child to the point of abuse; the hospital was familiar with the mother, the teenaged aunt and the grandmother, who had a history of neglecting their children. The mother had evidenced emotional disturbances, and the entire family is known to many agencies as a disorganized and abusive group. The mother lives currently with her elderly aunt and uncle, her teenaged aunt with baby, and her teenaged brother. The grandmother, allegedly alcoholic, lives nearby with her boyfriend and retarded baby. Both homes have been described as filthy and hostile.

Progress of the Case

Aaron was temporarily committed to DPW, and placed in foster care in May, 1978, through Inter-Church Child Care, and has been reported to be thriving and healthy throughout the two years. The case has been heard in Dependency Court nine times since 1978, with no substantial progress made towards solving the mother's problems, both mental health and delinquency, or creating some permanent custody arrangement.

The mother underwent psychological and psychiatric evaluation at Hall-Mercer Community Mental Health Center in November, 1978; the report described her as extremely deprived and emotionally neglected herself, with virtually no prospects of providing stability and care for her son. The mother was later committed to the Child Guidance Clinic and Eastern State School and Hospital, and found to be troubled and immature, and resistant to education, counseling, and parenting training.

The mother has maintained a regular visiting schedule with her young son, usually accompanied by another family member. Inter-Church describes her as relating to her son as a toy, unwilling to take responsibility for the less pleasant aspects of child care, and responding with tantrums when her son's illness forced the cancellation of a visit. The child is always upset by the mother's roughness and irritability during visits. The foster agency recognizes that the mother is proud and possessive of her child, but that she has no desire to change and grow and will thus continue to be incapable of caring for her son. Aaron already stands in marked contrast to the development of the other babies in this family, and will find it difficult to adjust to the family lifestyle. Inter-Church has asked for a permanent decision to be made to terminate the mother's rights to the child to free him for adoption. A second option is to return him to the mother before it is too late for him to make the adjustment, given that DPW has not decided to remove the other two young children from an identical situation.

The subject of most court hearings has been the evaluation of the mother, and the obtaining of suitable services for her, although most concerned agencies, including DPW, have expressed despair about the family's prospects. There has been considerable confusion about various psychological reports and the assigning and fulfilling of responsibility for the mother's status. Both the Court and the Child Advocate Unit have spoken out strongly against removing the child permanently from his natural mother, preferring to give the mother more chance to improve her situation. Lately, there have been efforts to place the mother and the child together in a group home or foster care facility, but the mother has not cooperated.

CAU Activities

An investigator for the Child Advocate Unit visited all members of the family except the child soon after the petition was filed in 1978. At first the investigator recommended that the baby be committed to DPW while the mother receive counseling; shortly thereafter, the investigator began recommending that the essentially inadequate mother be relieved of her rights to the child. A second minimal investigation was conducted before the September, 1979 court review, phone contacts were made in March, 1980, and a CAU social worker visited Aaron for the first time after the March, 1980 hearing, at which the foster placement agency complained that CAU had no personal knowledge of the child, the interaction between mother and child, and the difficulties the child would face in returning home.

The CAU attorney's notes from the March 1980 court hearing indicate that the Child Advocate Unit finds that the "major issue here is that the mother needs services" and has not gotten them. The CAU opposed the freeing of the child for adoption, but noted that the unit ought to drop their strategy for placing the mother and child considering the strong objections of the DPW caseworker and the mother's attorney.

The CAU attorney expressed doubts about the viability of the family, but hesitated to voice these doubts in court because the judge would probably continue to reject the motion for Involuntary Termination.

Parent Response

The mother was interviewed by telephone by the evaluation team, but did not want to participate in a face-to-face interview. She was familiar with the Child Advocate Unit, but did not know what part they played in the proceedings. She emphasized that she wanted her son back, and did not want to be placed anywhere.

Other Response

A representative from Inter-Church Child Care was interviewed by the evaluation team. She reiterated the agency's position that the mother did not have the ability or the desire to learn to care adequately for her son, and that, even though efforts should be made to assist the mother, the fate of her young son should be addressed immediately and independently.

She advanced the opinion that the Child Advocate Unit is dedicated to the preservation of blood ties above all other rights and interests of the

child as an individual, which worked to the detriment of their client in this case. She felt that the CAU had actually inhibited the speedy solving of problems in this case. It is especially important to make permanent plans for Aaron immediately, because it will become more and more difficult for him to make the adjustments he must make - either adjusting to his natural family, which will provide a much more disorganized and less intellectually stimulating atmosphere than he has grown up in, or the better option, adjusting to a new adoptive family.

The attorney for the mother was also interviewed. Although she has sought to advance the desires of the mother over the two years, she has come to believe that a decision must be made quickly either to put the child up for adoption or return him to the family. She does not feel that the CAU understands the realities of the case, clinging instead to unspecific principles, nor have they been prepared to represent the child adequately.

CASE STUDY #12: TRUANCYDERRICKBackground

Derrick is a fifteen-year-old boy who resides in North Philadelphia with his mother. During the 1977-78 school year, Derrick was absent 132 days. His mother was unable to convince him to attend school regularly, and in September of 1978, the Philadelphia School District filed a truancy petition.

Progress of the Case

On November 2, 1979, Derrick appeared before the Court. He remained in the custody of his mother, was referred to the city's Counseling and Referral Services, and assigned a probation officer from the Northeast Probation Office. No other court appearances were scheduled. Derrick did attend counseling sessions with his mother, but on an irregular basis.

CAU Activities

The CAU was assigned to the case shortly before Derrick's hearing. A CAU social worker attempted to establish a dialogue between Derrick and his mother. The mother indicated that truancy was merely the "tip of the iceberg" regarding problems with Derrick. She was experiencing severe communication and incorrigibility problems with her son. She indicated that on several occasions Derrick had stolen money from home.

Just prior to the visit Derrick had been playing with friends outside of the house, and had broken one of the windows with a rock. His mother had taken this incident as an indication of Derrick's insensitivity to her struggle as a single parent to provide a decent home for him, and felt that the communication gap between them was widening.

The CAU social worker confronted Derrick with this, but was unable to engage him in any real discussion. Derrick did, however, display evidence of feelings of guilt, and agreed to try to understand his mother's situation. The CAU social worker suggested that the mother contact the Albert Einstein Community Mental Health Center for family counseling to encourage communication between herself and Derrick. Derrick was at first uncooperative, and the social worker attempted to convince him of the merits of establishing a dialogue between himself and his mother. He did finally agree to attend counseling sessions with her, though he attended only sporadically.

The CAU primarily attempted to counsel Derrick and his mother, and to encourage them to find professional help.

Client and Parent Response

A member of the evaluation team accompanied the social worker on a home visit, on an occasion when the mother was at work and Derrick was at home alone. Derrick appeared unresponsive, although he listened attentively to the CAU social worker. The social worker attempted once again to impress upon him the necessity of attending school regularly and trying to communicate with his mother. Derrick did not care to comment on his understanding of the part played by the CAU.

Derrick's mother indicated in an interview that the CAU social worker had done the best that could be expected with her son. She pointed to his unresponsive nature and only hoped that he would "come around". She indicated that she had been in contact with the CAU several times by telephone, and was appreciative of support of any kind.

Other Response

Derrick's Probation Officer indicated that she and the CAU social worker enjoyed good rapport, and that this case was a difficult one because Derrick's mother was really trying with her son but received no cooperation and understanding from him. She felt that all agencies, including the CAU, experience great frustration with cases like Derrick's.

CASE STUDY #13: TRUANCYCHARLIEBackground

Charlie, a sixteen-year-old boy, lives in South Philadelphia with his parents. The youngest of six children, Charlie has had a pattern of non-attendance at school since the first grade. During the 1977-78 school year Charlie was absent 165 days. During the next school year (1978-79) he was absent, unexcused, for 143 days.

Based on this pattern of school attendance, the School District of Philadelphia assigned a Home and School Visitor, traditionally called a Truant Officer, to escort Charlie to school on a daily basis. This arrangement worked well and it was then determined that there no longer was a need to escort Charlie to school. However, once this arrangement was terminated, Charlie resumed his pattern of non-attendance.

Progress of the Case

On February 21, 1980, Charlie appeared in Family Court, cited as a truant by the Philadelphia Board of Education. The judge ordered the Board of Education to provide an overall, comprehensive plan by April 29, 1980, which would be responsive to Charlie's educational needs. It was also decided at this time that he should be enrolled in the Franklin Learning Center, a center within the Philadelphia Public School System which is oriented towards specialized education including remedial courses.

Ironically, before the judge's order, Charlie had expressed an interest in attending the Franklin Learning Center but was not referred there. However, a week prior to his court hearing, Charlie received a letter of acceptance stating that he should report to the school on February 20th, the day before his hearing. He began attending after the court hearing.

CAU Activities

The Child Advocacy Unit (CAU) was appointed to the case in February of 1980. Subsequently, a CAU social worker visited with Charlie and his parents to discuss the upcoming court hearing. It was at this time that the CAU learned that Charlie had already been accepted at the Franklin Learning Center.

The social worker made arrangements to escort Charlie to the Franklin Learning Center to discuss a program for meeting his educational needs.

The social worker, after reviewing Charlie's files, felt that the primary reason for Charlie's pattern of non-attendance was his poor reading skills. He expressed concern that the Board of Education, in anticipation of the judge's order, was attempting to appear as though it was being "decisive" in meeting Charlie's need, but that Charlie would not really have a specialized program mapped out for him once he entered FLC. The social worker wanted to discuss such a specialized program with the FLC counselors.

Client and Parent Response

Charlie and his parents were interviewed by the evaluation team. Charlie stated that he first found out that the CAU was representing him through the Neighborhood Youth Corps. However, his mother indicated that the first time he knew anything was when the social worker came to her house to discuss Charlie's upcoming hearing. Both said they thought the CAU was part of the court system as well as "most likely" being a part of the Department of Public Welfare.

Although Charlie stated that no one asked him any questions in the courtroom, he did speak to the social worker both before his hearing and after it. He felt that he was helped by the CAU when the social worker escorted him to the Franklin Learning Center. However, he strongly felt that the CAU could better serve him by finding a "place for me to learn because 9:00-3:00 won't get it. I'll just be in the streets." And he expected the CAU to find him an alternative educational arrangement beyond the program he had been offered.

His parents felt that Charlie has been helped by the CAU because the social worker did come and talk with him about his school attendance problem, showing concern beyond what had been shown by the Board of Education.

CASE STUDY #14: TRUANCYCALVINBackground

Calvin is a 15-year-old boy who is currently living with a distant relative who refers to herself as his grandmother. Calvin has a history of runaways and prefers to live with his "grandmother" than with his natural mother and his stepfather. Calvin's case was presented to the Court by the School District in May of 1979, when they filed a truancy petition as a result of his poor school attendance.

Progress of the Case

At Calvin's first court hearing in 1979, he was ordered to live at home and attend school. His school attendance improved only minimally by his October 1979 review hearing, after which he ran away from Philadelphia to Texas, returning several months later to live with his "grandmother". In May of 1980, he reported his travels to the Court; despite poor school attendance and the objections of his parents, the Court ordered that he should remain in the custody of his "grandmother". He was warned that he must attend school regularly or face placement in a residential program.

CAU Activities

After the CAU was appointed to this case, the CAU social worker sent a letter to Calvin and his mother and stepfather. This was followed by a phone call in which the social worker requested an appointment for an interview. The client and his parents cancelled this appointment and subsequent others. The first face-to-face meeting between the CAU social worker and the family was at the May 1980 hearing. However, the social worker spoke with Calvin on the phone several times, and with his "grandmother" at least once. The CAU attorney spoke to Calvin and his parents before court hearings. It appears that the CAU was involved in this case only before court hearings. At these times, the CAU social worker would contact the parties involved, assess the progress that had or had not been made, and come up with a recommendation for future treatment.

A member of the evaluation team observed Calvin's May 1980 hearing. Those present included Calvin, his mother and stepfather, and his "grandmother". Also present were the CAU social worker, the CAU attorney, the Court medical social worker, and other court representatives.

The CAU attorney recommended that Calvin be allowed to live with his "grandmother", as he seemed more stable since residing with her. The School Board representatives informed the court that Calvin had only been in school for a two-week period since October. The CAU had apparently failed to determine the status of Calvin's school attendance in the course of its investigation, and was reprimanded by the Court for focusing on the custody issue rather than the truancy. However, the Court ultimately followed the CAU recommendations, which were strongly upheld by the Court social worker, and Calvin was allowed to live with his "grandmother".

Client and Parent Response

All parties were interviewed by a member of the evaluation team prior to the hearing.

The "grandmother" first heard of the CAU when the CAU social worker called her to inform her of Calvin's May review hearing. The social worker explained the role of the CAU at this time and encouraged the "grandmother" to attend the hearing. The "grandmother" understands that the CAU was representing Calvin's best interests. She asked for the CAU social worker to arrange for an individualized educational program for Calvin.

The "grandmother" was impressed by the CAU's ability to do a thorough job despite a heavy case load, and to gain Calvin's confidence. She knew the CAU's position prior to the hearing, and she had agreed with their recommendation.

The mother and stepfather stated that the role of the CAU was to protect the child so that he/she does not get shuffled in the system. They first found out about the CAU's role in their case through Calvin's probation officer. They stated that they received no letters from the CAU, rather the social worker called several times on the phone to arrange an interview. They reported that they had to cancel these appointments because of scheduling conflicts, so that they had just met the social worker the day of the May, 1980 hearing. They had met a CAU attorney in previous court sessions and talked to her briefly prior to the hearing, but they had not spoken to the CAU attorney who represented Calvin in the May, 1980 hearing.

They perceived the CAU as part of the Court. They did not agree with the CAU's position, but the social worker had listened to their reservations and explained her position before the hearing. They were fairly satisfied with the CAU's handling of the case.

Calvin stated that he thought the CAU was trying to help him find an answer to his problems. He said that the social worker had written him letters, had tried to arrange appointments, and had arranged for him to take certain psychological tests. When asked if he perceived the CAU to be a part of the Court, he said, "No, I think they are like the opposite, even though they are in the Court building. They are mostly on the child's side".

Calvin stated that he had put all of his trust in the CAU social worker: "She really gets into it and tries to help me." Overall, he said he was very satisfied with the CAU.

Other Response

The evaluation team interviewed the Court's medical social worker, who stated that she understood the role of the CAU was to act as representative for children in court. However, she also said that she was court-ordered to administer tests to Calvin and his family, and did not know the CAU was involved in this case until the May, 1980, hearing.

She did not work directly with the CAU on this case, but has worked with them in the past. She stated that their role is vital to the Family Court system and that they usually do a good job.

CASE STUDY #15: INCORRIGIBILITYHAZELBackground

Hazel and her twin sister are the youngest children in a family of seven. Her parents are a married couple in their mid-40's with a history of serious health problems. Hazel is seventeen-years-old.

Hazel has had a long history of acting-out in school and at home. She was diagnosed by a psychiatrist as extremely belligerent and assaultive to members of her family. Her older brother recently moved out of the house to get away from her. The psychiatrist also suggested that there may be brain damage and mild retardation.

Progress of the Case

Hazel was originally referred to a day treatment program by her junior high school in December, 1974, because of provocative peer and adult interacting, poor adherence to limits, negativism and underachievement. She continued to act out while in day treatment and the home as well. Finally, her mother requested hospitalization, and she was placed in the North West Institute of Psychiatry in March, 1978. In April, she was discharged and returned to day treatment, and the family was referred to a psychiatric institute for treatment. Hazel reportedly made only sporadic gains and finally refused to attend the program in the summer. She was discharged, although the facility felt that she still needed help.

In October, 1978, Hazel was committed to Eastern State School and Hospital at the recommendation of a psychiatrist. Hazel wanted to be placed to get away from home. She remained there for a year, and upon discharge, was referred to day treatment by the Court. Currently, Hazel is living at home and resisting day treatment. Several agencies are working together to get her involved with the Philadelphia Youth Advocate Program for intensive counseling.

CAU Activities

Upon appointment in 1978, a CAU social worker contacted Hazel and her family, requesting an interview. After the initial interview, contact was mostly by phone, either the family calling the CAU or vice versa. The social worker also was in contact with staff of the many agencies involved with Hazel.

CAU efforts were focused on finding an appropriate placement setting for Hazel, with input from Hazel, her parents and other agency staff members. The CAU attorney met the client and family only outside the court room prior to hearings.

Client and Parent Response

A member of the evaluation team interviewed both Hazel and her mother. Hazel saw the Child Advocate Unit as an agency that helped her get out of Eastern State. She said that she often spoke to the social worker either on the phone or on one of his visits to Eastern State. Hazel said that she did not recall speaking to an attorney from the CAU, nor did she recall the courtroom experience. She also stated that she did not have to speak in court, and that afterwards, the CAU social worker would tell her the results. Hazel has always agreed with what CAU has recommended; overall, she feels that the social worker was helpful and did all that he could do in her case. Hazel feels it is now up to her to change herself.

Hazel's mother was interviewed by the evaluation team. She saw the CAU as an organization that has helped her daughter and herself. She perceives the CAU to be a part of the court. She said that her contact person with the CAU has been the social worker. She recalled speaking with a CAU attorney outside of court. She stated that the CAU attorney spoke in court on Hazel's behalf.

Overall, the mother felt that the social worker has done a very good job with Hazel and that she feels free to call him whenever there is a problem. She added that Hazel feels very comfortable with her social worker, and that he is one of the most understanding social workers that Hazel has met over her years in treatment. She concluded by saying that she had always agreed with the CAU's recommendations and that these had been explained to Hazel and herself before court.

CASE STUDY #16: INCORRIGIBILITYPATSYBackground

Patsy's family came to the attention of the Family Court both as an incorrigibility and a domestic relations case. In September of 1978, the School District of Philadelphia filed an incorrigibility petition for Patsy, who had evidenced poor school attendance and behavior problems in school. Patsy, a fifteen-year-old girl, had a history of drug abuse and other mental health problems. The father, separated from the mother since 1977, requested Domestic Relations Court to ensure that his visitation rights were upheld. Patsy, her brother (17) and two younger siblings live with their mother.

Progress of the Case

The CAU represented the children both in Dependency and Domestic Relations Court. This case was before the Court nine times since September of 1979; hearings were continued several times because the mother and children failed to appear, with bench warrants issued as a result. Patsy continued to attend school irregularly, despite enrollment in a new school in March of 1980. Both she and her mother claimed that her excessive absenteeism was due to illness.

The Court placed Patsy in the temporary custody of DPW for resident placement. A visitation schedule was developed which would allow the father to visit his two younger children on Sundays in the home of another family member. The two older children do not wish to see their father.

CAU Activities

The CAU social worker initiated contact with the family by phone, then conducted home visits. The social worker had considerable difficulty contacting the mother, finally reaching her through the children's maternal grandmother, who was caring for them in the mother's absence. The social worker visited the mother and also spoke with the three youngest children.

Patsy's mother originally indicated that she would continue to deny her husband visitation rights and an opportunity to contest the custody of the children. She therefore avoided contact with both the Court and the CAU. She felt that the father showed little or no interest in the children, often missing scheduled visits and stating that he wished them dead. The mother claimed to love her husband and did not want to grant him a divorce. Eventually the mother indicated that she would allow her husband to visit the younger children, but only in the absence of the husband's girlfriend.

The mother admitted to problems in controlling Patsy, who she said used drugs to lure her father back to the family, and she exhibited a willingness to seek counseling for Patsy. She indicated that she was experiencing no problems with the younger children, and the older boy was virtually on his own.

The father felt that the mother was unable to properly care for the children, and often left them unattended. He respected the two older children's wishes not to see him, but wanted to exercise his right to see the younger children, and felt that they had enjoyed previous visits with him. Ultimately he wanted to be granted full custody of the younger children.

The CAU attorney, briefed by the social worker, recommended at the last hearing that Patsy remain in the custody of DPW and be placed in a local facility to ensure more regular school attendance and to continue drug-related therapy. The CAU attorney did not talk with any of the children except in court. Finally, the CAU recommended that the father's right to visit the younger children on a weekly basis should be upheld.

Client and Parent Response

The mother and the two youngest children were interviewed by the evaluation team. The two youngest children appeared shy, yet were willing to talk. They were unable to recall how the CAU social worker introduced herself but did remember talking to her about their problems. Both perceived CAU to be part of the Court. They remembered going to court, but did not remember seeing the social worker or an attorney from the CAU. They also had no recollection of what was recommended in court on their behalf. They did indicate, however, that they felt the social worker was helping the family by giving them someone to talk to, and helping Patsy solve her problems with school.

Patsy had equally vague recollections of the involvement of CAU in the case, although she indicated that she did speak to the social worker before entering the court. She also indicated that the social worker was helping her family. Patsy was under the impression that the social worker was actually the children's attorney.

The mother expressed dissatisfaction over the fact that the CAU social worker was not in court. She felt that the CAU attorney was not familiar enough with the case to adequately represent the interests of the children. She indicated agreement with the CAU's recommendation, except that she would have preferred to have Patsy stay at home. She felt that the social worker had established a good relationship with the children, and praised her ability to deal effectively with them while not becoming over-involved emotionally.

CASE STUDY #17: INCORRIGIBILITYWILLIEBackground

Willie, a seventeen-year-old boy, lives with his mother in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. Willie has a history of truancy, running away from home for days at a time, theft, and minor drug use. His mother attempted to seek help for her son at the Einstein Community Mental Health Center and Youth Conservation Services, but found that Willie's behavior continued to be beyond her control.

Progress of the Case

In 1979, Willie's mother filed a petition of incorrigibility in the Family Court. Based on the recommendation of the CAU, Willie was referred to the West Philadelphia Youth Counseling Center for counseling and an educational program. He attended infrequently, and continued in the behavior pattern established before the petition.

CAU Activities

The CAU social worker met with Willie and recorded telephone conversations with his mother. The CAU attempted to keep Willie out of residential placement, while locating an appropriate educational program for him. The CAU recommended to the Court that Willie be enrolled in the West Philadelphia Youth Counseling Center, and maintained minimal contact after that placement. The CAU social worker handling the case was Willie's counselor at the West Philadelphia Youth Counseling Center before joining the CAU staff.

Client and Parent Response

Willie agreed by phone to an interview with the evaluation team, but cancelled all appointments and chose not to discuss the Child Advocacy Unit. He seemed a rebellious and unhappy teenager.

The evaluation team interviewed Willie's mother, who expressed her frustration with her son and the failure of all intervening agencies to bring about any changes in his behavior. She claimed never to have been contacted by the CAU, either verbally or by letter. She learned that the CAU was representing her son at the court hearing. She believed the CAU to be a part of the Department of Public Welfare. She did not believe that a child should be represented by an attorney.

She remembered that during the court hearing, someone recommended that Willie should remain at home rather than being placed in a residential program, but she is uncertain who made the recommendation. At the time, she thought such a strategy was appropriate, but because her son was "back to his old tricks", she felt that everyone's effort had failed. "They (CAU) have tried, but it doesn't seem to help now."

Both Willie and his mother seemed confused by the move of his counselor from one program to another, and their lack of a clear understanding of the CAU's role may be attributable to the same professional staff person performing in two roles.

CASE STUDY #18: INCORRIGIBILITYSHARONBackground

Sharon is a sixteen-year-old adopted girl. She occasionally resides in the home of her adoptive parents and their fifteen-year-old natural son. She has a history of drug abuse, alcohol abuse, poor attendance and poor performance in school, shoplifting and running away. Her parents filed an incorrigibility petition in June, 1978, stating that the girl had been out of control for several years.

Progress of the Case

The CAU was appointed to the case on July 3, 1978. The case has been in court eleven times since that date. Sharon's appearances before the court involved placement and discharge issues. Her court records reflect a pattern of placement in several drug treatment facilities and, after a brief stay, returning home or running away from placement. Often Sharon had not appeared on the scheduled court date and several bench warrants had been issued. She also refused to attend scheduled pre-placement interviews.

Sharon's latest court placement was in a Juvenile Justice Center group home, where she was unhappy. Before a placement change could be made by the CAU, the Department of Public Welfare, and the Court, Sharon ran away and was out of contact with all parties.

CAU Activities

After appointment, a CAU social worker contacted the parents and requested an interview. She spoke with both parents and with Sharon. It appeared that a good rapport was developed with Sharon as well as with her parents. The mother had called frequently as well.

At first, the CAU attempted to get the family into counseling, but later most of the CAU activities involved working for appropriate services for Sharon. The CAU social worker's notes reflect a good deal of thought and research in an effort to come up with a treatment plan for Sharon. It also appeared that the CAU had many phone conversations with social workers and staff members from the agencies and homes where Sharon had been placed. In order to keep abreast of Sharon's progress, the CAU attorney had also developed a rapport with Sharon and her parents, receiving occasional letters from Sharon describing her progress and/or dissatisfaction, and requesting assistance from the CAU. Unfortunately, these relationships had failed to discourage the client from fleeing her placements.

Client and Parent Response

A member of the evaluation team interviewed the mother, but Sharon was unavailable for interview because she had run away from the Juvenile Justice Center. The mother reported that the CAU social worker approached her in court saying that she was going to represent Sharon as a court representative. She recalled meeting the CAU attorney for the case, but of the two CAU staff she felt closer to the social worker. She stated that although the social worker did not speak up too much in court, she was always present at hearings.

Sharon's mother expressed very positive feelings about the performance of the CAU unit, particularly citing the social worker's work. At first she did not agree with the CAU's recommendations to involve the family in family counseling. Eventually, the CAU recommended that Sharon enter a drug treatment facility, and this she agreed was the best recommendation for Sharon. The mother's greatest frustration was with the system in general, which she feels can do very little to assist parents in working with incorrigible children. She stated that often the CAU's hands were tied because Sharon was under 18 and therefore could not be placed in a secure facility.

CASE STUDY #19: MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATIONDAVIDBackground

David, an eighteen-year-old boy, lives at the Lakeside Boys' Home. He was placed there after two previously unsuccessful placements in foster homes. He has no family. During his residence at the Lakeside Boys' Home, David displayed belligerent behavior and evidence of paranoia, finally striking one of the counselors. He was committed to the Northwest Institute of Psychiatry on an emergency basis, and scheduled for a court hearing. The commitment was initiated by Lakeside.

Progress of the Case

David came to the attention of the Court when the Lakeside Home petitioned for a mental health commitment. The Court agreed to commit him to the Northwest Institute on a ninety-day tri-option as recommended by the CAU, giving the Institute the freedom to keep David for the full period, release him at any time, or maintain him as an outpatient. David's desire not to be committed was not voiced at the hearing.

He was released back to the Lakeside Home after several months, and remained there.

CAU Activities

The CAU's initial contract with David took place at the Northwest Institute of Psychiatry, shortly after he was admitted there. A CAU social worker, accompanied by a member of the evaluation team, interviewed David directly following an interview conducted by two of the Institute's psychiatrists. The social worker questioned the young man as to why he was sent to the hospital, and David was unable to supply any meaningful answer. David indicated that he felt as though "the Mafia" was after him, and felt unsafe walking the streets, or taking public transportation. It was obvious that David did not have any desire to be at the Northwest Institute of Psychiatry.

Following the interview with David, the CAU social worker met with a social worker at Northwest Institute for the purpose of mapping a strategy with which to approach the court hearing. Both workers were in agreement that a 90-day tri-option would be the best way to proceed.

At some point between the CAU social worker's visit and the initial hearing, a decision was made by the staff at the Northwest Institute to recommend that the child be committed on a voluntary, outpatient basis as opposed to the 90-day tri-option originally agreed upon by the two social

workers. The CAU social worker, feeling that such a change would not be in the interest of the child, was successful in having the recommendation reverted to its original form. The hearing took less than fifteen minutes and very little was said. David's desire to avoid hospitalization was not voiced at the hearing.

Once back at Lakeside, David refused to take medication prescribed for him, despite attempts by the staff at Lakeside to make him understand the necessity of complying with the doctor's wishes. This precipitated a second visit by the CAU social worker. She convinced David that unless he took the medication prescribed for him, he would probably be returned to the hospital.

The CAU found itself advocating a position that was at once contrary to the child's wishes and (in their opinion) in his best interest. The social worker felt that David would never voluntarily admit himself to the Northwest Institute as an outpatient. Indeed, her judgment may have proven correct considering David's later attitude toward taking his medication.

Further, the social worker indicated that ideally, she would like to continue to see David until he had progressed enough to be placed in an independent living situation. However, she further indicated that the priorities of her case load would most likely preclude any further contacts.

Client Response

David has no family. David was interviewed by the evaluation team. David indicated that he did not see how the CAU social worker could have been more helpful. He himself cited her ability to make him understand why it was necessary to take his medication.

David indicated that he found out about being represented in court when the CAU social worker first visited him at the Northwest Institute. However, he did not remember having conversations with anyone other than the CAU social worker, or seeing any other CAU staff member in court. Further, he indicated that he was not asked any questions in court, either by the judge or the CAU attorney. He could not remember any specific recommendations made in his presence in the courtroom.

David was anxious to show that he was interested in school and even pulled a knapsack filled with books from beneath his bed, saying, "See, all these are my books." During this visit, David appeared to be considerably younger than his eighteen years, by both his speech and his manners. However, he attempted to appear tough and street-wise, and to let everyone know that he was not really afraid of anyone. He indicated that all he wanted was to get off of medication, to be allowed to get an apartment, and to be left alone.

Other Response

The evaluation team interviewed a staff person at the Lakeside Boys' Home following David's return there. He had only positive remarks to make

regarding the CAU's handling of the case, both by the attorney and the social worker. He indicated that whereas other social workers tend to place themselves at odds with his agency, he found the CAU to be sensitive, excited, and willing to work with him. The CAU social worker succeeded in counseling David to take his medication, when all others had failed.

He further reported that the CAU attorney had been helpful in explaining both to him and to David exactly what would transpire in court, and what would be expected of them. Especially in the case of someone as "high strung" as David it was always best not to have any surprises, and he was grateful to the CAU for ensuring that there would be none.

CASE STUDY #20: MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATIONRICHARDBackground

Richard, 17, has been known to the Department of Public Welfare since the age of seven when his mother requested placement services because of her inability to cope with his erratic, and at times, violent behavior. Since 1971, Richard has lived in several group and foster homes throughout Philadelphia and surrounding counties.

As examples of his erratic behavior, in 1979 he attempted suicide by drinking two-thirds of the contents of a bottle of isopropol (rubbing) alcohol. He has also threatened his mother with a butcher's knife during one of his visits with her.

Richard has been diagnosed as mild-moderate mentally retarded with adjustment reaction to adolescence or, in lay terms, both emotionally disturbed and mildly mentally retarded.

Progress of the Case

The CAU was apparently appointed to the case in August, 1978, when Richard was placed in the Woodhaven School for the mentally retarded; from there he has been placed in several foster or boarding homes. Based on a recommendation by the Court, Richard was placed with his mother on a trial basis. However, this arrangement did not last.

The Northwest MH/MR Center, Richard's base service unit, has been active in seeking out appropriate services for Richard. He was admitted to the Eastern State School and Hospital, an in-patient psychiatric facility, in February 1980 under a court commitment for a 20-day evaluation period. He remained in the custody of the Welfare Department awaiting placement.

CAU Activities

From the CAU's point of view, the major cause of Richard's systematic "shuffling" from home-to-home, facility-to-facility is that he has been diagnosed as both emotionally disturbed and mildly mentally retarded. This has been problematic since a particular facility only treats one diagnosis or the other. In other words, the system has been unable to adequately treat clients with dual problems. Additionally, Richard is said to have a significant problem relating to his peers and this caused many problems in foster homes and public school.

The CAU social worker requested multiple psychological evaluations for Richard, in a continuing effort to bring his problem into clearer view and find appropriate placement. Thus far, all placements have been unsuccessful. The CAU attempted to work closely with Richard's social worker from the Northwest Center, but clearly both are frustrated by the cumbersomeness of services and the lack of an appropriate dual-purpose placement.

The CAU feels that Richard needs a very strong and supportive foster home to develop his peer relations and overall coping abilities.

Client and Parent Response

Richard and his mother were interviewed by the evaluation team. Richard respects the CAU social worker, but because another social worker from the Northwest Community Mental Health Center has been active in Richard's case, the role of the CAU social worker is slightly obscure for Richard.

Although Richard has appeared in court several times he is unaware that a CAU lawyer actually represents him.

Richard's mother stated that she learned of the CAU through Richard and that she was very confused about the role of the CAU in the child's life since he is still in the custody of the Department of Public Welfare. She is very familiar with the Northwest Center social worker, with whom she meets every Tuesday. However, no one from the CAU had ever visited her to talk to her. She said that she had met both the CAU lawyer and CAU social worker in the Court. However, "it always appeared as if so many people were representing him that I didn't know who was who."

Both Richard and his mother feel that he has been helped by the CAU but much more by the Northwest Center. His mother especially feels that with all the help he has received, it is still taking him too long to learn to cope.

Other Response

Richard's social worker from the Northwest Center was interviewed by the evaluation team. He agrees with the CAU evaluation of Richard's case, and shares their great frustration with finding appropriate placement for Richard.

The Northwest social worker finds his relationship with the CAU social worker "mutually beneficial" as information and problems can be shared. As the base service unit for Richard, the Northwest Center feels primarily responsible for Richard's program.

CASE STUDY #21: MENTAL/HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATIONBETSYBackground

Betsy is a nineteen-year-old girl whose parents divorced when she was six-years-old. Since that time, Betsy's father, who remarried and had three additional children, has been only minimally involved with his daughter. Betsy has two younger brothers, and all three teenagers live with their mother.

Betsy's problems first appeared during her tenure in junior high school. She did well academically, but she did not relate to her peers, and was excessively absent. In the summer of 1975, Betsy withdrew from people, and stayed home all the time. She studied the Bible and became more involved with the family's Pentecostal religion. In March of 1976, Betsy began screaming in school and her mother was asked to keep Betsy home. In April, Betsy was "speaking in tongues" persistently day and night for three weeks.

Progress of the Case

Betsy came to the attention of the Court when, upon the recommendation of the North Central MH/MR Center, she was voluntarily committed by her mother to St. Luke's hospital in May, 1976. The diagnosis was paranoid schizophrenia. She stayed until November, 1976, and then began receiving after-care from a local MH/MR unit. The mother had problems controlling Betsy, who continued to exhibit bizarre behavior. She was admitted to the Child Guidance Center in November, 1977, where it was determined that the severity of her psychotic episodes necessitated placement in a restricted residential setting. She was court-committed under Section 304 to Eastern State School and Hospital (ESSH) in August, 1977. She has remained there since, while attending the Adolescent Day Program at Philadelphia State Hospital (PSH).

CAU Activities

The CAU had been involved in this case since 1977. Their current recommendation is for Betsy to remain at ESSH, even though she is over-age, until a 24-hour adolescent program is established at PSH. Under no circumstances did they recommend that Betsy take up residence in a PSH adult unit. Rather they wished her to continue to participate in the PSH day treatment program. A CAU attorney and a CAU social worker worked on this case, both on a case and class advocacy level. On a case level, they visited Betsy at ESSH and at PSH, contacting all major professionals active in her case.

In addition, they used Betsy's case as an example of the need for a 24-hour adolescent/young adult treatment program in Philadelphia. CAU staff feel great frustration about the dearth of facilities for adolescents

who need in-patient care, and have made recommendations to judges and to the State Mental Health Department based on their inquiries in this and other adolescent mental health cases. Thus far, they have had little success in implementing the 24-hour unit.

Client and Parent Response

A member of the evaluation team interviewed Betsy in Philadelphia State Hospital. Her mother was unable to be reached for an interview.

Betsy was very withdrawn, and somewhat hostile during the interview. Initially, she did not want to answer any questions. Her psychologist then came into the room and was able to assist the evaluation team in eliciting some information from her.

Betsy was familiar with several CAU staff members, and remembered that they visited her at ESSH and in court. She remembered the judge, but not the content of her court hearing.

Other Response

The director of the Adolescent Program, who is also Betsy's psychologist, was interviewed by a member of the evaluation team. He understood the role of the CAU in representing children who come before family court and require hospitalization. His first contact was in March, 1978, when he began the Adolescent program. He contacted CAU's Director of Social Service for assistance in starting the program. Two CAU staff members came to Philadelphia State Hospital to confer about the Adolescent Program and work out a plan to develop governmental and judicial support.

On particular cases, the psychologist found CAU very helpful in assisting PSH staff to arrive at appropriate recommendations for their children. He commented that a CAU social worker met with Betsy, while only an attorney attended the hearing presenting a neutral position.

He expressed some concern about the CAU's use of this case to apply pressure to the state for a 24-hour adolescent program, fearing that this tactic might delay actual movement on Betsy's case itself. Betsy was too old for Eastern State placement, and needed more appropriate placement immediately. Overall, he was complimentary about the CAU's work and found his relationship with them cooperative and productive.

The evaluation team also interviewed a social worker at ESSH. She described the CAU as part of the Court, whose role is to stand up for patients' rights and to work with other agencies to solve problems for clients. She said that normally a staff member from the CAU contacts her before a court hearing and elicits information about the progress of a particular client. She stated that ESSH and the CAU have a cooperative relationship; they usually agree on a recommendation, and CAU staff sometimes attend client conferences at ESSH.

She stated that both the CAU attorneys and social workers speak up in court. Overall, she said the CAU was an "awfully good set-up" and that there was a great need for their organization, both to help individual clients but also to bring about change in the entire system.

CASE STUDY #22: MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATIONGARYBackground

Gary is a twelve-year old boy who has been living in institutions a good deal of his life. He has two siblings who live with relatives in Colorado. His mother currently lives alone or with her boyfriend. She is physically handicapped by an earlier accident and is confined to a wheelchair or a walker. Gary's father lives alone and sees his son occasionally.

Gary has always been a difficult child to manage. Early on in school he demonstrated unruly behavior. The major incident in Gary's life was his mother's accident when he was five. He witnessed his mother being shot in the back by her boyfriend. Following the accident, Gary lived with his grandmother while his mother was hospitalized for five months. His mother moved back to her mother's house, but she was unable physically or emotionally to care for Gary. Gary became increasingly difficult to manage, and began a series of placements in residential homes which continues to the present.

Progress of the Case

Gary has been known to DPW and the Family Court since July of 1978. He was committed to DPW on a dependent petition and by May, 1980, had come to court 37 times. Although he was adjudicated dependent, Gary's case was heard as delinquent because of his pre-delinquent record.

Gary has repeated the following pattern: he was placed in a facility, ran away from the agency, committed a pre-delinquent act such as pick-pocketing or purse-snatching and was picked up by the police; he was then returned to Court. DPW had been able to avoid a delinquent adjudication because of his young age. Treatment had been thwarted by Gary's running away from four residential programs from July of 1978 through October, 1979.

In addition, he had been committed to Eastern State School and Hospital (ESSH) seven times in two years.

ESSH completed a diagnostic evaluation in January, 1980 and concluded that there was no clinical evidence of mental illness. ESSH expressed very strong feelings against Gary being placed in their facility. Gary did not like ESSH, and DPW was also against his placement there. The CAU staff working on this case was, for a time, divided over this issue. The social worker was against ESSH for Gary, while the CAU attorney favored his placement there.

In 1980, Gary was placed in the Youth Study Center, a delinquent holding center. Most of the representatives from the different agencies working on this case agreed that Gary should be placed in this secure facility temporarily. Eventually, he was placed in Wiley House.

CAU Activities

A CAU attorney and two CAU social workers were involved in this case. Gary had mental health evaluations by five agencies, as well as by a CAU psychological consultant. The CAU social worker and the CAU attorney

reviewed all of these mental health evaluations. They both met with their CAU consultant to discuss his finding that Gary had mental health needs that should be addressed. At this time, they also discussed possible strategies to be employed in the cross examination during the January 25, 1980, hearing. The CAU consultant's evaluation was not accepted by the Court, and a final evaluation was ordered at a local Mental Health Center.

In February, 1980, the CAU Director of Social Services and the social worker met with the evaluation team of the local mental health facility to review their findings. After a long discussion, all agreed that the CAU and DPW should explore Presley Ridge School as a possible placement. All evaluations (except ESSH claimed that Gary had mental health problems due to a lack of nurturing and that he could benefit from special education.

DPW, which does not have a contract with Presley Ridge, decided to pursue an alternate placement plan. A DPW social worker explored twelve different placement settings, and Gary was rejected from each facility. This social worker, however, encouraged the CAU to continue to pursue its exploration of Presley Ridge, as it was always possible that the judge would order placement despite DPW's lack of relationship with Presley Ridge. If this happened, other financial arrangements would be explored.

The CAU attorney was against Presley Ridge as a placement for Gary because he had heard allegations of abuse there. The CAU social worker, the DPW case-worker, and a psychiatrist accompanied Gary to visit Presley Ridge, and all concluded that Presley Ridge was quite suitable. Based on these recommendations, the Court ordered Gary to stay in the Youth Study Center while DPW and the CAU pursued Presley Ridge. Subsequently DPW failed to finalize financial arrangements, and Gary was placed at Wiley House.

The CAU social worker and the CAU attorney had several disagreements over the direction this case was taking. Most of these disagreements centered on appropriateness of placements and adjudication, as well as differences in style of communicating with representatives of other agencies and with Gary. The CAU social worker wanted Gary to remain a dependent child, while the CAU attorney wanted Gary adjudicated delinquent. It is not clear whether these differences were resolved or if a forum was created to attempt reconciliation. It is also uncertain if these disagreements affected the final placement decision for Gary.

The CAU worked collaboratively with other agencies on this case, but had little contact with Gary's family. Both the attorney and the social worker attempted contact with Gary's parents with no cooperation.

Client Response

Gary was interviewed by the evaluation team at the Youth Study Center. He appeared shy and a bit reticent. Gary knew that the CAU was part of the Public Defender's organization and said that the CAU staff tried to help him and "try to let me know what's going on." He first met the CAU attorney in court and was later introduced by him to the social worker. He said that sometimes the CAU was not in court on the day of his hearings.

Gary thought the DPW social worker was in favor of letting him go home, while the CAU was more interested in placing him in a facility. Overall though, he said he usually agreed with the CAU's recommendations, and thought they did a good job.

Other Response

The evaluation team interviewed the DPW court representative who was involved in this case. She stated that she was unsure of the role of the CAU on this case, since a Public Defender was also involved. She stated that the role of the Public Defender is to try to get the charges removed for his/her client, while the role of the CAU is to serve the best interests of the child. Because it was not in Gary's best interest to have his charges cleared, she was unsure how the two branches of the agency could work together.

The DPW court representatives stated that she was very satisfied with the work of the CAU social service staff on this case, but not with the CAU attorney. Most of the problems arose around disagreements over placement and adjudication. Pressure was applied against the attorney, and eventually he agreed that delinquent adjudication was inappropriate, and that temporary placement at the Youth Study Center would prevent the boy from running away.

The evaluation team also interviewed the mental health representative of the Court. She stated that she knew the role of the CAU. She disagreed with several of the CAU's recommendations for Gary because they were too lenient. She was in favor of placing Gary at the Youth Study Center as he needed some "hard knocks". She was against his placement at Presley Ridge because he would run away again. She explained that she was able to convince the CAU that the Youth Study Center was temporarily appropriate until a secure, "hard knocks" program could be found.

CASE STUDY #23: DOMESTIC RELATIONSBUCKYBackground

Bucky is a nine-year-old boy currently living with his father. His parents were married in 1971 and divorced in 1975. His mother has been living with another man for about eight years. She refers to herself as his wife, although she has never officially married him. They have a five-year-old son by this relationship.

Progress of the CAU Case

When Bucky was six years old, his parents argued about his care, and his mother left home with Bucky and moved to Kentucky. A series of custody hearings were held and his mother retained custody of her son. The father was granted visitation rights. The mother moved again without informing the father but eventually, he found them. Another custody hearing was held and the mother again retained custody. Shortly thereafter, she moved to Texas without informing the father, but he was again able to find her, and armed with a custody petition from Philadelphia Family Court, he removed Bucky from school in Texas and returned to Philadelphia.

Bucky's mother, her common law husband, and their new son then moved to Philadelphia and were granted visitation privileges. The mother is currently requesting longer visits, and she eventually wants permanent custody of Bucky. The father insists that the mother would abduct Bucky if she were granted longer visits. He feels strongly about retaining custody of Bucky.

CAU Activities

When the court appointed the CAU to represent Bucky in 1979, the CAU social worker contacted the father and the mother by letter to inform them of the CAU's appointment and expressing a desire to meet with them to hear both parents' points of view and determine the suitability of each house as a possible home for Bucky.

The thrust of the CAU involvement was to resolve visitation disagreements between Bucky's parents. The CAU social worker made home visits and spoke often to all parties involved. Both parties contacted the CAU as problems arose. The CAU attorney involved with their case spoke with the family before court hearings.

The CAU attorney and social worker disagreed about the use of expert witnesses in the case. The social worker felt that the client's

therapist should be brought into court; the CAU attorney did not want to pay the therapist to appear. Only the CAU attorney appeared in court.

The CAU recommended that Bucky continue his Sunday visitation with his mother and that he and his natural parents continue family counseling.

Client and Parent Response

Bucky was interviewed by the evaluation team. He stated that the role of the CAU was to help him decide with which parent he wanted to live. He could not recall when he first met the social worker, nor could he remember how she explained her role. Bucky liked working with the CAU social worker and found it easy to talk to her during her visits. He said he usually talked with the CAU attorney outside of court, and he thought that the CAU was part of the Court.

The natural mother, the natural father, and the godfather were interviewed by the evaluation team. The mother said she had met the social worker several times since 1979. She said the role of the Child Advocacy Unit was to protect Bucky's rights. The mother was dissatisfied with the work of the CAU. She felt that the CAU social worker had been misled by the father and was too emotionally invested in the case. Because the social worker was close to the father, she was influenced by his opinions. The mother claimed that because she had violated court orders in the past, no one was willing to believe that she had changed.

The mother considered it unprofessional for the CAU social worker to talk to the psychiatrist working with Bucky and his father. She also complained that the CAU did not contact relatives and friends to better understand her point of view. Finally, the mother said that several times the social worker made a recommendation in Court that was different from what she had earlier described.

The father said that the role of the CAU was to protect Bucky's best interests. The father first met the social worker when she came to the house for an interview; he had only talked to the CAU attorney outside of court prior to hearings. He stated that the social worker had done a good job and had been able to secure Bucky's trust. While he was generally pleased with the work of the CAU and thought they tried to be fair, he felt the social worker tended to be overly concerned with protecting the rights of the mother at the expense of his own rights. He did not believe the CAU should push for increased visitation for the mother, but should listen to Bucky, who clearly stated that he did not want to spend time with his mother. However, the social worker had always told him her recommendation prior to court, so he was never surprised.

Bucky's godfather did not feel the CAU was doing its job of protecting the child's rights. He said the CAU social worker was not listening to Bucky's expressed interest, and was overly influenced by the mother's desire to increase her visitation.

CASE STUDY #24: DOMESTIC RELATIONSMARKBackground

Mark was born in 1974; his parents married in 1975. The marriage was unsuccessful, and in 1976, the parents separated. The divorce was formalized in 1977. Previous marriages for both parents had also ended in divorce. The mother agreed to allow the father to retain custody of Mark at the time of separation and divorce, and the court ordered that the father should maintain and support Mark without any contributions from his wife. Mark's mother was granted unrestricted visitation privileges every other week from Friday 6:00 P.M. until Sunday 6:00 P.M. Both initially agreed to share visitations on holidays. It was not until January, 1979, that the custody issue was disputed by Mark's mother. Mark currently lives with his father in Philadelphia's far Northeast. His mother lives outside Philadelphia with her third husband and a son from her first marriage.

Progress of the Case

The Court appointed the CAU at the first hearing of the case in January, 1979. Shortly after the first court appearance, a full hearing was commenced, continuing for eight days. The mother claimed that Mark's father had threatened and coerced her to allow him to have custody of the child. It was her understanding that the original custody decision was temporary, and she now wanted custody of Mark. The central issue of the case was a determination of which of the natural parents would have custody.

The CAU recommended that Mark should stay with his father, but that Mark and his mother should have some time together. In addition, the CAU suggested that family therapy should be undertaken so that the differences between the two parties could be reconciled.

Essentially, the Court accepted the CAU's recommendations, and ordered them to be initiated. The decision failed to solve the parent's visitation dispute, which continued, resulting in several additional court hearings in 1980.

CAU Activities

After the CAU's appointment, the CAU attorney spoke with the parents and described the CAU's role. A CAU social worker visited the homes of both natural parents, and spoke with Mark at his father's home. Information gleaned from these interviews was used to develop the CAU recommendations and was entered into the trial record as part of the testimony of the CAU social worker. It appears that the CAU also made use of an evaluation report of Mark and his father by a clinical psychologist retained by the father's attorney. The psychologist's recommendations were similar to those of the CAU. There is no record of CAU's determination of the mother's suitability.

Both parents indicated that the CAU initiated the first contact with them. This took the form of a letter, followed by a phone call and home visit. All future contacts were initiated by the parents. Most of the issues involved were disputes over visitation rights. Both parents felt very comfortable with the CAU social worker. While both claimed to have been more involved with the social worker than with the attorney, their correspondence to each other and their attorneys was all copied through the CAU attorney.

Client and Parent Response

The parents and Mark were interviewed by the evaluation team. Mark hid behind chairs and doors and refused to talk. However, he later agreed to a phone interview, during which he said that he liked the CAU social worker very much and that it was easy to talk with him. He said that the social worker came to see him and talked to him at the Court, and on the phone, each calling the other when questions came up. He found the social worker helpful because he encouraged Mark to figure out what he wanted to do. Mark was glad to be living with his father.

Mark's mother stated her feelings that she should have custody of the child. Therefore, she disagreed with the recommendation of the CAU. However, she felt that the CAU recommendation was fair given the facts they had to work with. To her, the CAU social worker on the case seemed more involved than the attorney. Overall, she thought that the idea of a child advocate agency served a useful purpose.

Mark's father agreed with the CAU recommendations, commenting that the CAU was a very professional and cooperative organization. He found the CAU to be responsive to his requests and honest in their approach to problems. The father felt the CAU social worker was particularly adept at dealing with his son, whom he considers to be a very shy and sensitive little boy. The social worker was extremely instrumental in building Mark's confidence. Overall, the father was satisfied with the performance of both the attorney and social worker, and found that the very existence of the CAU eliminated a number of potential problems in this case.

CASE STUDY #25: DOMESTIC RELATIONSBILLY AND JIMMYBackground

Billy, thirteen, and Jimmy, fifteen, are the sons of divorced parents. The custody of the two boys was in bitter contention from the time of the parents' separation and divorce, resulting in numerous court hearings. The boys lived with their mother until the father alleged that she was abusing the children.

Progress of the Case

After the alleged abuse, the CAU was appointed in 1977 to represent the children. The boys expressed a desire to live with their father, and in accordance with the CAU's consultant psychiatric report and CAU recommendations, the Court granted custody to the father with the proviso that the boys could change their minds in the future. A year and a half later, the older son returned to his mother and refused to communicate with his father; this arrangement was not made official in the Court. Although visitation problems have continued, most issues have been settled out of court since 1977. Currently, the father is speaking to the CAU about the loss of contact with his older son.

CAU Activities

When the CAU was appointed in 1977, the CAU attorney spoke to both parents outside the courtroom and explained his role. A CAU social worker interviewed both parents and the boys in their homes. The CAU also employed a consulting psychiatrist to evaluate the family. The boys wanted to live with their father; the psychiatrist report and the CAU recommendation concurred with the expressed wishes.

The family has continued to use the CAU to settle ongoing visitation conflicts and family problems out of court. Jimmy, especially, has frequently called the CAU social worker, and the parents have sent copies of their correspondence to the CAU.

Client and Parent Response

The evaluation team interviewed both boys, as well as both natural parents.

The mother stated that the role of the CAU was to protect the interest of the children. She recalled that her initial meeting with the CAU occurred after their court hearing where the CAU was appointed. The CAU

attorney introduced herself and explained that her role was to protect the best interest of the child. The mother remembered that the attorney said she was not interested in the parents' problems but in how they were affecting the children. After this, the CAU social worker contacted the children and parents via mail and phone, and visited both homes and spoke with all parties involved. The mother reported frequent contact with the CAU after that. She felt that the boys were very comfortable talking with the CAU social worker and called him freely if they were upset or had a problem.

The mother said that the family had been in court only once since the CAU became involved with the case. She stated that the CAU's presence had enabled them to settle differences out of court and to save considerable money and emotional upset. She felt that the CAU attorney did not have sufficient information about the case, primarily because most of the family's contact had been with the social worker. She supposed that they had not communicated enough before their court hearing.

The mother stated that she agreed with the recommendation of the CAU, although it was difficult for her to accept the loss of her children in the beginning. However, she wanted her children to do what they wanted. She had the "highest regard" for the CAU social worker, complimenting his ability to elicit trust from her boys giving them a chance to air their feelings. She thinks the CAU is crucial to divorce/custody cases.

The father explained that custody battles had been going on for years, but that the CAU did not get involved with the case until there was alleged child abuse. He said that a CAU representative was in court the day of a hearing and that she identified herself as the attorney for the children. The CAU representative said that her task was to represent the best interests of the children. The father said that she spoke with him after the hearing and discussed options about the custody of his children. He stated that she did the ground work on the case and then the social worker took over. The social worker came to his home for an interview and to observe the living conditions.

The father said that the CAU social worker was very active in the case; whenever there was a visitation problem, they contacted him. The father wanted his younger son to return to his home, but said that the social worker advised him to let the situation cool down for three months before pursuing the matter. He felt that the CAU should help him to find out why his son left and won't communicate, rather than accepting that his son really wanted to live with his mother. Overall, the father felt positive about the CAU's effectiveness, because their intervention had helped the boys make their own decisions.

Both boys stated that the role of the CAU was to help them decide who they wanted to live with. Both said they had met a woman attorney in court who told them that she would be representing them and that a social worker would be contacting them. Both remember the social worker coming to their father's house to interview each of them. They do not like a judge who decides things for them. They felt comfortable calling the CAU whenever there was a problem.

Other Response

The evaluation team interviewed the psychiatric consultant retained by the CAU. The doctor saw the CAU as a child advocate agency working for the best interest of their clients. He explained that the CAU refers to him approximately two to three cases a year. He understands that the CAU is not a part of the court or the Department of Public Welfare.

The doctor felt that the CAU social worker had a good understanding of the family dynamics in the case. He had discussed the case with the social worker on several occasions, and with the CAU attorney once, and felt comfortable with the CAU's recommendation. The doctor was called into court as an expert witness, and was impressed by the CAU attorney. He noted that the CAU attorney was particularly adept at listening to the input of others, while still maintaining his own opinions.

The doctor expressed his satisfaction with the CAU based on several years' experience. He believes that the service should be expanded, and should have a psychologist and psychiatrist on staff.

CASE STUDY #26: DOMESTIC RELATIONSABE, MARY, AND IRISBackground

This case was brought to the attention of the Court when the natural father filed for custody of his three children, Abe, age three, Mary, age nine and Iris, age eight. The parents were divorced and both had re-married. At the time of the filing of the custody petition, all three children were in the custody of their mother, although Abe was living with his father.

Progress of the Case

In March of 1980, a court hearing was held, at which both parents were represented by aggressive attorneys. The case developed into an explosive and bitter confrontation between the two parties. The Court ordered a protracted hearing so that the situation could be studied more thoroughly and ordered the parents to comply with a new visitation schedule for the children.

In April, the third hearing was held. Four days of testimony ensued, replete with new allegations made by the parents against each other, especially with regard to their ability to care for the children. Additionally, there had been problems with the visitation schedule with which the children's mother had failed to comply, only allowing Abe to see his sisters for eight hours instead of the twenty-four hour visit which the court had ordered.

Finally, after four days of bitter confrontation and testimony, including a contempt motion filed by the father against the children's mother involving visitation rights, the mother withdrew her claim for custody of the children, and custody was awarded to the father.

CAU Activities

The CAU was appointed at the March hearing. Letters were sent by the CAU social worker to both parents, explaining the role of the CAU and requesting appointments with them individually. A visit was first made to the father, since he was the only one to reply, when the social worker met with the natural father and his wife, then privately with Abe. The father alleged that his former wife was unable to care for the children, and Abe indicated a preference for staying with his father.

The social worker then visited the home of the children's mother and her husband, interviewing the couple first, then the two girls privately. The social worker said that the couple sat in their living room "downing one beer after another and chain smoking cigarettes", and discussing their marital problems. Mary definitely wanted to be with her father, but Iris was unsure of her preference.

Based on the observations of the social worker, the CAU recommended to the court that the girls be allowed to remain with their mother until the end of the school year, and then be transferred to the custody of their father.

The CAU social worker visited Abe and his stepmother between the two hearings. The stepmother indicated that Abe was upset about not being allowed to visit his sisters, and that he was beginning to experience some new behavioral problems as a result.

Abe himself indicated frustration with his mother's attitude. He felt that she was wrong not to comply with the court's visitation schedule, and that eight hours was simply not enough time to spend with his sisters. "By the time we get started talking to each other it's time to leave." He felt that he would prefer not to go at all unless he would be allowed to spend a reasonable amount of time with his sisters.

The CAU supported the father in his motion against the mother, and ultimately in his attempt to gain custody of the three children. The felt that it would be best not to separate the siblings, that the father was much more stable, and that he was better able to care for the children.

At the final hearing the CAU attorney complained to the court that she and her mother were being followed and receiving annoying telephone calls. The mother apologized in open court for these harassments, and this revelation may have contributed to her decision to withdraw her claim to custody.

Client and Parent Response

The CAU asked that the evaluation team not impose further stress on these families experiencing current crises. The evaluation team met the father and son while accompanying a social worker to the home, and saw the families in court. The father was apparently pleased with the CAU's support of his cause, and with their concern over the children.

Abe appeared to be an intelligent and unusually articulate and opinionated child for his ten years, and gave the impression of having exactly what he wanted and what he thought was right for him. He made it quite clear that he felt his and his sisters' best interests would be served by allowing them to live with their father.

The natural mother admitted in court to having harassed the CAU attorney; it can be assumed that she disapproved of the CAU's recommendations, and wished to deter them from exerting their influence on the case.

CASE STUDY #27: MEDICALSALLYBackground

Sally, a thirteen-year-old girl, lives with her parents, her two-year-old brother, and her infant sister in upstate New York. Her brother Mike suffers from acquired aplastic anemia, which doctors found would be terminal without bone marrow transplant. Mike was referred to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for evaluation and treatment, where physicians discovered that his sister Sally was the only histocompatible donor available for Mike. Children's Hospital attorneys desired that the Philadelphia Family Court assist in determining the appropriateness of a minor child's parents giving consent for their daughter to serve as a bone marrow donor.

Progress of the Case

The CAU was appointed in October, 1978, to represent the interests of Sally, the prospective donor, in the proceedings. An attorney from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia represented the interests of the parents. The CAU began an investigation of the issues involved. They found their tasks to be: determining if Sally was a psychologically and medically suitable donor; determining if Sally freely assented to the donation of her bone marrow to Mike, and identifying risks involved for Sally in the process and how the risks were to be minimized by the team. A CAU attorney handled all aspects of the case. There was no CAU social worker involved.

The case proceeded smoothly, with only one disagreement between Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the CAU. The hospital felt that the parents should not give consent, preferring to be protected by a highly binding consent on behalf of Sally, because there was some concern that the parents might be in a conflicting position in determining the welfare of both healthy donor and recipient ill child. The CAU, on the basis of their findings, recommended that the Court make a determination that Sally and Mike's parents can give, and have given, informed consent on behalf of their minor daughter. Sally for the bone marrow transplant, which consent will be legally binding upon Sally.

The Court concurred with the CAU recommendation, and the transplant was subsequently carried out at Children's Hospital in March, 1979. The first transplant was not successful, and within two months, a second operation was undertaken. It appears that this second transplant was successful, and Mike seems to be steadily improving, with only minor complications. He and his mother return to Philadelphia every 100 days for a five day check-up. Sally seems to have recovered quite well, both physically and psychologically.

CAU Activities

The CAU reviewed written records and conducted personal interviews in order to make a recommendation to the Court. The CAU conducted interviews with Sally, her parents, the clinical team at Children's Hospital, a social worker at Children's Hospital, and the referring physician from New York. In addition, the CAU used the reports of two independent psychiatric and physical examinations.

The CAU identified the following potential risks to their client, the donor: adverse reactions to general anesthesia; infection, post-operative pain, needle marks to skin, and personal psychological trauma depending upon post-operative results. The CAU attorney found assurances that the risks were minimal and outweighed by the benefits, that all parties understood the risks, and that resources would be available to the donor both in Philadelphia and in New York if any ill-effects manifested themselves. The CAU found their client to be a medically and psychologically suitable donor.

The CAU maintains contact with the family into the present.

Client and Parent Response

The parents were interviewed by the evaluation team during a hospital visit to Philadelphia with Mike. Sally was interviewed by phone in New York, as she rarely returns to Philadelphia.

Both parents are pleased and satisfied with the services received from the Child Advocacy Unit. They were informed that the CAU services would be provided to Sally by Mike's physician in New York. According to the parents, the CAU attorney first met Sally in the hospital in October 1978. The parents stated that they understand the role of the CAU as representing Sally's interests in the bone marrow transplant process.

Overall, the parents felt that the CAU attorney was genuinely interested in their case and was very kind to the family. They were also impressed that the CAU is still involved in the case. Specifically, the mother stated that the attorney visits the family in the hospital often when she and Mike return to Philadelphia for a hundred-day check-up. Finally, both parents stated that the Child Advocacy Unit is a necessary service, and that one should exist in other places as well.

Sally stated that the role of the Child Advocate Unit was to protect the best interests of the child. She said that the CAU attorney met her in the hospital and said that she would be protecting her rights during the Court process. Sally expressed admiration and appreciation for the CAU attorney. The attorney was very interested in the case and very thorough, now almost a close family friend who continually stayed involved with the case. Sally also expressed a desire to have the CAU duplicated in other areas of the country.

CASE STUDY #28: ADOPTIONSUSANBackground

Susan was adopted by her parents three days after her birth. She is currently twelve years old. In August 1971, the mother left her husband and child in a domestic relations dispute. Sometime after that the mother regained custody of Susan. She remarried in December 1975, and Susan has been living with the couple since that date. This case was opened because the stepfather petitioned the court for adoption of Susan.

The mother and stepfather are in their late thirties and are reported to present themselves as a cohesive couple. The stepfather, however, has a criminal record (conviction for indecent sexual assault on a minor) and was hospitalized for alcoholism.

Progress of the Case

The case began when the stepfather petitioned the Court to adopt Susan. There were several court hearings; the stepfather and his family were evaluated and treated for potential emotional problems. The results of these evaluations were in the case record and used toward the development of a CAU recommendation. The CAU worked closely with the Court's Adoption Unit and initiated contact with former therapists of the mother and stepfather. This case involved intensive evaluations and assessments of the parents and child to ensure that the adoption served the best interest of the child.

CAU Activities

A CAU attorney and social worker were involved in this case. At the outset, the CAU social worker contacted the family requesting an initial interview. The family granted the interview and the social worker spoke with all family members. At this time she explained her role in the case and the role of the CAU.

The CAU was concerned with providing Susan with a normal living situation. They worked with the court adoptions social worker and psychologist, and requested outside consultants' opinions on the suitability of adoption. At one hearing the CAU recommended a continuance because they felt the case needed more investigation. Most of the uncertainty was with the stepfather. His previous arrest record and mental health history and their possible effects on Susan were a source of concern to the CAU. The CAU was able to request more testing and therapy for him, and eventually perceived some improvement on his part. This led them to believe that Susan would be suitably cared for by her new father. The CAU's final recommendation was for adoption, and the Court concurred.

CASE STUDY #29: INVOLUNTARY TERMINATIONJOHNBackground

John, a four-year-old child, was born to a fourteen-year-old unmarried mother in 1976. His mother was living in a Catholic Social Services facility at the time of his birth; John was immediately placed in a foster home in Northeast Philadelphia and has remained there ever since. His mother has continued to live at CSS and up until recently she visited John on a monthly basis. In April of 1979 the Court appointed the Child Advocate Unit to represent John in a motion for Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights.

Progress of the Case

The Plaintiff, Catholic Children's Bureau (CCB), filed a petition of involuntary relinquishment for custody of John, declaring that the mother of the child had not contributed to the well-being of the child. The mother was expecting a second child in the Spring of 1979. The CCB stated that the mother had verbally agreed to relinquish the child for adoption, but had failed to sign the adoption papers. Eventually the mother did consent on her own, and the court ordered termination of parental rights.

CAU Activities

The Child Advocate Unit was unwilling to allow the evaluation team to interview any parents involved in Termination cases, including this case. After appointment, the CAU social worker interviewed the mother at the Catholic Social Services facility to learn of her feelings regarding her son's case. The CAU determined that the mother was level-headed; she wanted the best for her son. She felt that she could not care for him adequately, and had already decided to free him for adoption. The Catholic Social Services social worker corroborated this finding, and agreed that the mother was able to reach an independent decision.

The CAU social worker proceeded to assist the mother to find appropriate services for herself, and to counsel her about employment and educational possibilities. The CAU social worker testified in the court hearing that the mother had voluntarily agreed to termination, and was mature enough to make the decision.

Client and Parent Response

The mother and stepfather recently moved to Nevada, and the evaluation team, even with the assistance of the CAU staff and a court worker, was unable to determine their local address and phone number. However, because the CAU has a limited adoption caseload, it was decided that the progress of this case should be reported.

Other Response

A social worker from the Court's Hospital Division was interviewed by the evaluation team. The CAU's social worker worked closely with the CAU attorney and social worker on their case, but never appeared in court. She is very satisfied with the CAU involvement in this case and agrees with their recommendation.

The Court social worker worked closely with the CAU attorney and social worker on their case, but never appeared in court. She was very satisfied with the CAU involvement in this case and agreed with their recommendation. She understood the role of the CAU to be that of a neutral party charged with the task of looking out for the best interests of the child. She saw the Unit as useful in emotional cases such as adoption.

PART III: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Conclusions for the impact evaluation are drawn from both the time series analysis and the Case Studies. The two groups of cases are not strictly comparable because selection criteria for inclusion were very different. Cases for the time series were randomly drawn from Court and CAU files to allow generalization about the population of CAU cases of four types. Each case in the time series represents a larger group of cases, whereas cases for the Case Studies were selected to be illustrative of salient issues and current procedures. Every case in the six time periods and four case types of the time series analysis had a theoretically equal probability of selection for the time series sample. In contrast, the CAU had direct and indirect control of cases selected for Case Studies in that only cases suggested by CAU social workers or cases seen by the evaluation team in the courtroom or the field and screened by CAU were eligible for intensive study. This criterion eliminated most cases which had no CAU involvement outside of court as well as cases which CAU staff found difficult or traumatic and for which interviews might have been harmful to families' stability.

With these caveats, the conclusions to be drawn from the results of each methodology are strengthened by presenting them together. The absence of substantive differences in handling of children by sex or by race, and the presence of differences in procedures by age and by case type, which were documented in the time series analysis, can be seen in the experiences of actual children in the Case Studies. Similarly, on several dependent variables for which there was no significant difference in value between pre-CAU and post-CAU time periods, there appeared to be a consistent shift in values after 1976 when the Child Advocacy Unit was established. The existence of these trends are discussed by reviewing the experiences of some children in

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the Case Studies. It must be kept in mind that trends are suggestive rather than substantive, and indicative rather than descriptive of most cases. The same pattern might be produced by a minimal change (e.g. in level of activity or quality of service) in all cases or by a substantial change occurring inconsistently or arbitrarily in selected cases. Also, since no Case Studies were conducted among pre-CAU cases, only one portion of any trend can be illuminated by referring to Case Studies performed.

Impacts of the Child Advocacy Unit in four areas will be presented in this section:

1. Impact of the program on attitudes and behavior of youth, including delinquency prevention and school performance.
2. Impact of the program on stability of families, including discouraging divorce or separation of parents, keeping children and their parents together, and preventing sibling involvement with dependent or delinquent court.
3. Impact of the program on the experiences of dependent youth in the justice and social service systems, including legal representation, outcomes and dispositions, identification of needs, and service delivery.
4. Impact of the program by ten major case types represented by the CAU.

The first two areas represent major federal goals for this evaluation and major objectives of the CAU for their program activities.

Impact on Behavior of Youth: School Performance

There were no significant differences in improvement of school performance or school attendance by clients of the Child Advocacy Unit over pre-CAU dependent children in the four case types analyzed in the time series. Over all six years, 39% of truants improved or were acceptable in school attendance, and 36% improved or were acceptable in school performance within a year after court appearance; 31% of incorrigibility cases improved or were acceptable in attendance and 27% improved or were acceptable in performance;

15% of neglect cases exhibited improved or acceptable attendance and performance; 17% of abuse cases exhibited improved or acceptable attendance and 13% exhibited improved on acceptable school performance. These percentages basically held steady before and after the development of the CAU.

School attendance and school performance were often not recorded in court and CAU case files, although this information is clearly relevant to evaluation of many children's interests and needs. Only among truancy cases, of which 59% of the six years' files sampled included school performance information and 64% included school attendance information, did the majority include school information. Less than half (45%) of incorrigibility cases sampled included any school information. Such information was rarer yet in neglect cases (26%) and abuse cases (12%), but of course many neglect and abuse cases involved children of less than school age (neglect, 26 children; abuse, 31 children). This important aspect of children's lives was not well documented before or during the operation of CAU, even when truancy or other school problems were noted in the presenting problems on the petition, as in all truancy cases and in most incorrigibility cases, including the three described in Case Studies #16, 17, and 18. Case Study #14 illustrates a truancy case for which the CAU's failure to investigate a client's school attendance brought forth a reprimand from the hearing judge.

Cases #6, 8, 9, and 10 illustrate the difficulty in separating out education problems from among the overlapping and interrelated problems of a single client, but also emphasize the frequency of education problems among the CAU's entire population of school age clients. All four of these abuse and neglect cases concern children whose poor attendance and/or poor behavior in school are major factors in their constellation of problems. These cases do not differ significantly from most truancy and incorrigibility cases

except in their point of entry into the justice system. There seems to be no justification for the failure of court and CAU files to include educational evaluations and school progress reports in the decision and planning process for all school-age children.

The three truancy Case Studies, #12, 13, and 14, and the four incorrigibility Case Studies, #14, 16, 17, and 18, illustrate the protracted nature of these cases both before and after they come to the attention of the court. Each of these young people had been evidencing truancy and other behavior problems for at least a year before their petitions were filed; Charlie of Case #16 had not been attending school consistently for the entire ten years of his school career. The CAU had been representing three of the four incorrigibility cases for more than two years; each had come before the court on many occasions, often without resolution of any problems. The long and problematic histories these clients bring to the CAU may militate against any real improvement in school performance and general attitude. However, the CAU has not been effective in reducing the length or frequency of court contact for these young people, nor do these Case Studies show evidence of innovative interventions or planning developed by CAU to reduce the very frustrating nature of these cases.

Impact on Behavior of Youth: Delinquency Prevention

There was no significant difference in the number of delinquent incidents between pre-CAU children and CAU clients in the four case types included in the time series analysis. Fourteen clients of the CAU had delinquent charges within one year after their petition dates; nineteen pre-CAU clients had later delinquent charges. The CAU did not have records of later delinquent behavior for any of their clients; however, delinquent cases are heard in

delinquent rather than dependent court, which may account for this misapprehension. Records of delinquency charges are available to CAU staff on the Family Court computer if they desire to conduct follow-up of this nature.

Over the six years' sample, delinquent charges were likeliest within one year after the petition date for truancy and incorrigibility cases, in part because these clients usually enter the system in their teen years. The CAU has simply not been in operation long enough to measure their impact on the later careers of the young abused and neglected clients they represent. Nineteen of the forty-nine incorrigibility cases sampled had delinquency charges brought against them within the year after their incorrigibility petition, and five more cases had siblings with delinquency charges. Even though incorrigibility was considered a delinquent offense prior to 1976, the evaluation did not count subsequent status offenses as delinquent charges. Twelve of the fifty-nine truancy cases sampled had later delinquency charges, with four more cases having siblings with delinquency charges. Only two of sixty abuse cases later came to court for delinquency matters; five siblings of abused clients and three siblings of neglected clients had later delinquency charges.

Youth in the case types likeliest to include delinquent elements were also likeliest to have other problems as well. Incorrigibility cases in the time series had more court appearances (4.4) than other case types sampled in the time series (3.0 to 3.4), and more institutional commitments for mental health problems as elements of the court disposition for dependency petitions and delinquent charges. The mental health overlap in truancy and incorrigibility cases is illustrated in Case Studies #6, 15, and 16.

None of the seven incorrigibility and truancy Case Study clients (#12-18) evidenced later delinquency charges (note that not all were studied at least one year after petition date so the entire sample would not have qualified

for the time series analysis). However, three incorrigibility cases involve clients who appear to have committed acts that under some circumstances could have led to police contact and delinquency arrests. Patsy, Case Study #16, was found by the CAU to need drug treatment a year after her petition, suggesting that she was still using drugs. Willie, Case Study #17, was reported by his mother to have continued his behavior patterns during the years following his entry in the court system, suggesting that theft and drug use were not curtailed by court or CAU involvement. Similarly, Sharon, Case Study #18, continued to be out of the control of her parents and her placement program even two years after her incorrigibility petition was filed. Drug and alcohol use and shoplifting were part of that behavior; even though Sharon was not brought to delinquency court on any such charges, she continued to abscond from home and placements, and was out of contact with all parties at the time her case was studied by the evaluation team. None of these three cases evidenced significant behavior or attitude improvement even after extensive intervention by numerous agencies.

Finally, one CAU mental health case is of particular interest in regard to its delinquency issues. Gary, Case Study #22, is a twelve-year-old boy, described as very personable and appealing, who has amassed a considerable collection of charges which would be classed as delinquent if committed by an older youth. Many other pre-CAU and CAU cases may likely contain similar hidden delinquences. Years of intervention by courts, mental health facilities, and the CAU have thus far failed to resolve fundamental diagnostic and placement questions: is Gary mentally ill, and should he be restrained in a secure facility in keeping with his delinquent activities and running away? Clearly, his behavior and attitudes continue to be troublesome to all authorities and agencies concerned with his care. Differences among CAU staff

provide a microcosm of divergent ideologies working in the service system: treatment v. punishment for children; protective restraint v. liberty, mental illness v. problems in living. Lack of resolution of these dichotomies may well contribute to the endless frustration of working with troubled clients who appear to need help but run from it. In addition, a court employee suggested that the Public Defender's purpose - that of reducing or removing delinquent charges from clients - clearly clashed with the CAU's purpose of serving the best interest of the child - to get needed treatment for the child; yet both were called upon to represent the child.

Impact on Family Stability

In the time series analysis, there were no significant differences between pre-CAU and CAU cases on any of the dependent variables representing impacts on the three aspects of family stability. There were almost no dependent petitions involving siblings of the sampled children within one year subsequent to the original petition date. There was no difference in the rate of divorce or separation of parents of sampled cases. The number of children who remained with their families throughout the year, and the number of children who were with their families at the end of one year, did not change between pre-CAU and post-CAU time periods.

The majority of cases in the four case types sampled for the time series analysis did not involve natural nuclear families at the outset. Such goals as prevention of divorce or separation of parents and the retention of children in their own natural families are somewhat gross and misleading given the varied life circumstances of clients when they come to court. Similarly, decisions to keep a child with his natural parent(s) or provide foster care or adoption involve value judgements which must be made without clear guidelines and feedback about the success of various methods. More subtle

measures of stabilization in non-intact families were simply not available for study in the time series analysis.

The stated needs of the children and the needs of their families differed substantially across the four case types in the time series. Both the age of the child and the composition of the family might be considered indicators of case type; abuse and neglect cases typically involved young children of divorced or never married parents, whereas truancy and incorrigibility cases typically involved teenage children of divorced or married parents. Abuse and especially neglect cases frequently included problems of the parents as part or all of the child's presenting problem. Parental problems, such as advanced age or infirmity, alcohol or drug abuse, psychological or emotional difficulties, or incarceration or institutionalization, form part of the context for children's growth and development. Effects of these parental problems included inability to find or hold employment, inadequate parenting skills, or inability to fulfill the child's needs for adequate food, housing and nurturance. Within the Family Court and social service delivery system, parental problems were frequently acknowledged and services directed to the family in the form of counseling, advice, or other services. There are obvious limitations to this approach because parents involved in civil proceedings cannot be ordered to seek help in meeting their own needs nor can they be required to accept available services for themselves.

While the behavior of truant and incorrigible youths may also derive in part from specific parental problems, far more often the presenting problem for these case types included problems of the child and problems in relationships with parents. In the time series cases, the services required to meet the needs of clients in truancy and incorrigibility cases were directed to the youth rather than to the parents or the family as in abuse or neglect

cases. Counseling for the child was an element of the court disposition for 14% of truancy and 26% of incorrigibility cases in the time series. Counseling for the parent was an element of the court disposition in 33% of abuse cases and 13% of neglect cases. Similarly, evaluations or studies were court-ordered in 18-20% of abuse and neglect cases for parents, and for client youth in 31% and 67% of truancy and incorrigibility cases, respectively.

The Case Studies serve to corroborate the findings of the time series analysis in regard to family stability. Of the twenty-nine cases intensively examined, only eight cases entered the justice system with natural nuclear families intact; of these clients, Calvin in Case Study #14 refused to live with his natural parents. As in the time series, the truancy and incorrigibility clients were much more likely to come from intact nuclear families; of seven truancy and incorrigibility Case Studies, four represented intact nuclear families, whereas only three of seven abuse and neglect cases involved intact nuclear families. No mental health/mental retardation Case Studies involved intact nuclear families; neither did the adoption or the involuntary termination cases. Of course, the domestic relations cases represented already fractured families.

The Case Studies illustrate the panoply of parental woes that bring cases into dependency court. Six of the first eleven Case Studies - the abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect sample - presented parents with psychiatric problems, most of which had precipitated institutional commitments which left children without the care of one or both parents. Three of the four sexually abused children were allegedly abused by their fathers or other relatives. In addition, Case Study #2 presents a family with seriously inadequate hous-

ing (a problem which CAU staff report to be very common among their clientele). Case Studies #7 and #19 present children whose parents had died, and in #15, both parents have a history of serious health problems. Nine of the parents were single mothers.

Thus the Case Studies emphasize that for the CAU simply to work to "stabilize" families is both an extremely difficult task, and one that requires further refinement to fit the very heterogeneous array of family situations in which clients live and might be living. Operationally, the CAU variously perceived natural parents, a parent and a step-parent (Case Study #28), a grandmother (#8), a fictive grandmother (#14), and a fourteen-year-old unwed mother with few internal or external supports (#11) as families to be stabilized and retained intact. A number of cases illustrate internal CAU disagreements about whether to separate children from their families (Case Studies #3, #9, #11) and disagreements between the CAU and other agencies, including the Court, about which family settings can offer the best care to children (Case Studies #1, #4, #8, #10, and #11). In addition, the CAU is often called upon to decide between two natural parents, or between a parent and another long-term caretaker (Case Studies #8, #9, #16, #23, #24, #25, #26). As the Case Studies show, it is not always possible to take sides while still fostering peaceful negotiations and long-term mutual coexistence between warring parties, nor have guidelines for decision-making and long-term prognoses been carefully worked out so that agencies responsible for these children can plan in a clear and coordinated fashion.

As in the time series cases, counseling was more frequently recommended or court-ordered for parents in abuse and neglect Case Studies and for children in truancy and incorrigibility Case Studies. In one truancy case (#12) and one incorrigibility case (#18), counseling was recommended for both parents and children. For the several abuse Case Studies, a case-type not

included in the time series analysis, counseling was recommended for the child in only one case, one where the teenaged client was also considered incorrigible (Case Study #6). In both of the other two sexual abuse cases where parents were living, the parents were advised to seek counseling. For the mental health cases (Case Studies #19-22), the case type necessarily implies that all children were to be committed to mental health facilities and therefore were determined to need treatment; none of their parents were advised to seek counseling. In their domestic relations cases, the CAU recommended family counseling for two families (Case Studies #23 and #24), and independent psychiatric evaluation for one of the remaining two cases for which Case Studies were prepared (#25). Neither the medical case (#27) nor the involuntary termination case (#29) involved counseling at all.

Case Study #28 is interesting in that the suitability of a step-father to assume adoptive parenthood of the CAU's client is the crucial issue of the case. The step-father's previous arrest record for indecent sexual assault and his treatment for this and other mental health problems were a major stumbling block to the adoption; review of his therapy history, current evaluations, and CAU-recommended additional therapy did finally convince the court of the step-father's normality and stability. Clearly the CAU's involvement and the court's receptiveness to the salubrious effects of therapy allowed this adoption to proceed.

The incidence of counseling among the elements of court dispositions has increased in recent years. Only 9 pre-CAU cases in the time series included counseling in their court dispositions, while among CAU case samples in the time series, 23% of neglect cases, 27% of truancy cases, 32% of incorrigibility cases, and 67% of abuse cases included court-ordered counseling. Only in the abuse case type was the increase in counseling statistically

significant; however, there does appear to be a trend towards increased recommending and ordering of counseling in all case types.

Concurrent with the trend towards increased counseling in the disposition of abuse cases, there appeared a trend towards decreasing numbers of children placed in the care of the Department of Public Welfare by the Court. Although the differences appear large (one-third of the CAU abused clients removed from their families versus two-thirds of the pre-CAU abused clients removed), they are not statistically significant. Placement appeared in the same proportion of court dispositions for pre-CAU and CAU time periods for the other three case types in the time series. The Case Studies do not bear out this trend toward decreased placement. Nine of the eleven abused, sexually abused, and neglected children for whom Case Studies were prepared were removed from their families and placed in foster care or other facilities by the Court for varying periods of time; two of the three abused children were removed from their homes. Three of four incorrigible children were placed in the care of DPW or committed to psychiatric facilities, and the child involved in the involuntary termination case (#29) was placed in foster care. One reason for this heavy representation of placed children may be found in the selection process for the Case Studies. The process clearly selected for those cases in which CAU had involvement beyond the courtroom; children removed from their families produce cases which continue over time, call for more reviews, and may elicit longer and more intense involvement by the CAU staff, thus making them more likely candidates for Case Studies.

Beyond numbers, the Case Studies, along with courtroom observation, suggest that removal of children from their parents is still a very common result of court hearings for abuse and neglect. Furthermore, removal of children for their short-term protection may not be practiced on a uniform

and rationalized basis. For instance, in Case Study #11, Aaron had been removed from his mother, but his two other young cousins had been left in the same disorganized and abusive household. Decisions about removing children appear to be based not so much on the facts or seriousness of abuse or neglect, but on the parent's willingness to accept counseling (Case Studies #1, #4, #5) and on the best guesses of the various court and social service personnel about the prognoses for future harm. In addition, placements may not be carried out in ways that facilitate the expressed goal of reunification of families (Case Study #11). The CAU has not developed or participated in developing alternatives to temporary placement for the child's protection despite the shortcomings of the model as described in Volume I and directly above.

As described above, measures for evaluating change in family stability beyond the grosser measures of problems with other siblings, divorce and separation of parents and removal of children from their homes were not available for the time series sample. In the absence of clear goals and outcome assessments by the CAU staff themselves, the evaluation team attempted to develop a valid rating scale for improvement/deterioration in clients' circumstances after court intervention (and CAU intervention in the CAU sample), a scale which should include stability in a home setting as one of many contributing dimensions. The effort was unsuccessful, hindered by lack of recorded information in case files, the multiplicity of variables, and the difficulty of assigning positive or negative values to these variables. The attempt to rate CAU's effectiveness by improvement/deterioration of clients' situations did serve to emphasize the very problems that CAU staff face in 1) developing long-term plans and goals for clients and 2) evaluating their own performance and effectiveness by case outcomes.

In some cases, improvement is obvious. In Case Study #5, for instance, Kelly was sexually abused by her father; the family was court-ordered to undergo therapy at an agency especially designed to handle such families, and the agency deemed the treatment successful after five months. None of the authorities involved found it advisable to criminally prosecute the father or separate the family for Kelly's protection. The father's willingness to receive help and the mother's outrage at the abuse probably contributed to a successful resolution of the case. The CAU had very little involvement with the young woman or her family beyond helping to arrange for treatment.

Some cases clearly deteriorate over time. Preston, in Case Study #9, is an eight-year-old boy whose entire life had been affected by the struggles between his unstable parents. For nearly two years, the CAU had attempted to stabilize the family by therapy and educational evaluation for their son. The CAU social worker, who had personal contact with the parents and with Preston, was convinced by early 1980 that neither parent was capable of providing a stable environment for the child, but the CAU attorney insisted on maintaining efforts to strengthen the natural family. After putting up a good stable front in court in February, 1980, the parents argued and separated once again. By April, both the judge and the CAU attorney were willing to call a halt to fruitless attempts to stabilize the family. There did not appear to be clear guidelines for deciding if or when a family is salvageable; in addition, lack of agreement within the CAU may have adversely affected the unit's effectiveness in this case.

Most cases do not show dramatic change in either direction. For example, although Clarisse (Case Study #8) did not appear to have made progress in working out problems with her mother or in improving her school attendance, she did find a more desirable home for herself with her grandmother. In this

case, the Court and the CAU both appeared to perceive the grandmother, not the mother, as a family to be stabilized by official custody, although Clarisse and her mother were instructed to attend counseling together. In a second case, Case Study #11, a young child had been in foster placement for two-and-a-half years while the Court, DPW, a foster care agency, and the CAU attempted to assist his troubled fourteen-year-old mother to develop into an adequate parent for her little son. The mother gave no indication of becoming more responsible, and the boy continued to be caught in the limbo of foster care. The lack of change over two-and-one-half years might be considered deterioration by some observers.

A third example of stasis is Case Study #17, one of three incorrigibility cases where no movement is seen. As in the previous two Case Studies, the client remained a rebellious teenager who continued to run away from home and commit petty crimes despite court and CAU intervention.

Finally, neither the Mental Health nor the Domestic Relations cases show evidence of much change in the stability of families, probably because nearly all of these cases involved families that were already seriously fractured when the CAU was appointed to them. None of the three mental health clients with parents was able, after representation and commitment to a residential facility, to live successfully at home with family. Their families could be seen as stabilized, perhaps, by the removal of the mentally ill child.

In regard to the Domestic Relations cases, the CAU's chosen task was not to reunite families but to reduce tension and hostility between estranged spouses in order to protect children from emotional trauma. While the CAU clearly played a facilitating role in these cases, it is unclear if CAU intervention defused animosities between parties to any great extent. Case Study #26 illustrates a custody case marked by continued bitter confrontation

and even the mother's harassment of the CAU attorney after it became clear that the CAU found the father to be the more suitable parent. Although the evaluation team could not interview the parents, they were observed in court; the father appeared pleased by the CAU's support of his position, the mother appeared highly displeased. Similarly, although Case Study #23 is not such an openly hostile case, still each parent remarked that the CAU was more concerned with protecting the rights and interests of the other parent. In both Case Study #24 and #25, parents seemed to feel that the CAU's participation did reduce tension and animosity; however, in neither case had the fundamental custody issue been solved.

The implication of a stable family situation for children's well-being and development are clear, but at present the CAU has not clearly defined operational goals for defining a family, for stabilizing that family, and for evaluating the success of their interventions. While the trend towards increased court-ordered counseling for families may signal a positive step towards improved family relationships, still the complex interweaving of the rights of the parents, children, and the State as discussed in the Issues section of Volume I must be carefully considered in developing programs and individual CAU recommendations.

Impact on the Experiences of Youth in the Justice and Social Service System.

The Child Advocacy Unit seeks to affect the larger system in which their clients must exist, helping families to use the Family Court and the myriad of social service agencies to their benefit and ensuring that State intervention into children's lives is as beneficial as possible. While not specifically designed as fine measures, dependent variables 10-24 in the time series analysis are all concerned with the nature and length of interaction with the

justice and social service systems (See Table 3). No additional finer outcome measures (did clients get better, for example) were tested due to lack of information and lack of client case goals, but Case Studies do provide some useful non-statistical information.

There were no significant differences between pre-CAU and post-CAU cases on any of the set of dependent measures of outcome and disposition variables tested in the time series analysis. That is, the CAU did not exert any significant influence on the court process, on court-ordered disposition, or on the kinds of therapeutic interventions ordered, as described by the rough measures used here. The CAU did not have a measurably significant effect on the number of court hearings required per client per year, the cooperativeness of families with Family court, the number of commitments to or supervision by the Department of Public Welfare, the number of placements outside the family and eventual reuniting of families, the number of cases disposed of in a year, or the number of agreements reached between parties. Long-term outcomes were not analyzed in this study.

As described above, the incidence of counseling among the elements of court dispositions appears to be on the rise. Only in the abuse case type was the increase in ordered counseling statistically significant; however, there does appear to be a trend toward increased recommending and ordering of counseling in all case types, a trend clearly encouraged by the CAU. Case Studies corroborated this finding. Case Studies also suggested that removal of children from their homes continues to be a common result of appearance in Family Court for CAU's client population as it was for the same population before CAU's birth. The number of children reunited with their families within a year has not been affected by CAU intervention.

There were no differences in the handling of cases based on the race or sex of the client in either the pre-CAU or the CAU time periods, although there were differences in the racial and sexual composition of the four case types. Incurrigibility and neglect cases for all years were likelier to be female, while abuse and truancy cases were likelier to be male. Through all six years, the majority of clients in each case type was black. For abuse and neglect case, 68% and 72% respectively of all clients were black, with no significant differences between pre-CAU and CAU time periods (See Table 3, p. 5).

There are obvious differences between the pre-CAU and CAU time periods with reference to legal representation of client children. Incurrigibility (and truancy for 1973) cases, because they were defined as delinquency in the pre-CAU time periods, were usually represented by voluntary defenders or occasionally by private attorneys in Family Court. But, children in abuse and neglect cases were usually not represented by counsel before the advent of the CAU. Despite these apparent differences in representation, there were no differences between pre-CAU and CAU time periods on any of the dependent measures of court-related activity such as number of scheduled court appearances within a year of petition date, number of continuances for failure to appear of parent or clients, nor on any disposition measures such as incidence of court-ordered counseling or placement.

The CAU procedure of assigning a social worker to each new case implies a net increase in social service involvement in CAU cases. The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) assigned caseworkers to all cases with DPW involvement in all six sample years, which included all abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect cases. Similarly, where the Court ordered probation for incurrigibility cases, a probation officer was assigned. Thus for the three CAU sample years, an additional social service worker was assigned to each child. The

level of involvement of CAU's social service and investigative staff varied across cases and especially across case types. In some instances, CAU staff relied on the investigations and recommendations of probation officers, DPW caseworkers, or Home and School Visitors. This mode takes advantage of the overlap in responsibilities associated with several case types and economizes on CAU social service staff time. For abuse and neglect cases, CAU and DPW share responsibility. For truancy cases, CAU and the school board share responsibility. For some incorrigibility cases, probation officers are assigned; for others, DPW involvement is court-ordered, in addition to CAU's assignment to the case.

Several case types which were excluded from the time series sample usually do not include extensive involvement by other agencies except the Family Court, and some involve CAU exclusively. For these case types the nature and intensity of CAU's involvement is broader, less predictable, and provides more latitude for creativity in meeting clients' needs and in contributing to child advocacy law. Domestic relations, adoption and medical cases are of this kind (see Case Studies #23 to #28).

The Case Studies illustrate some ways in which the CAU has attempted to improve the justice and social service systems. As described above, the CAU has emphasized counseling as an intervention for parents and children in several kinds of cases. In Case Study #5, Kelly's family was referred for specialized therapy as a result of alleged sexual abuse by her father in an effort to keep the family intact and to protect Kelly from further abuse. In response to a Court order, the CAU referred Mia (Case Study #6) to two programs, one for outpatient counseling and one for a more suitable living arrangement. Both these cases suggest that the CAU has tried to consolidate and instrumentalize the non-punitive approach to dependency cases specified

by Pennsylvania law. On the other hand, at least some CAU staff persons have advocated secure placements for non-delinquent children who continually abscond from treatment facilities (See Case Study #22).

The CAU has worked to bring the problems of children in the mental health/mental retardation system into clearer view. Richard, Case Study #20, is a teenager whose dual retardation and mental health problems have, in the CAU's view, left him outside of the available one-track services provided by the mental health/mental retardation system. The CAU has continued to request psychological studies, and to work with his base service unit to find appropriate placements. All parties seem frustrated by the lack of dual-purpose placement for this child, and it is unclear if CAU staff have attempted to work with this problem beyond this individual case. No change is evident in the system. In Case Study #21, however, the CAU has approached the problem both on a case and a class level. CAU staff have used Betsy's case as an example of the need for a 24-hour adolescent/young adult treatment program in Philadelphia, and have made recommendations to judges and the Pennsylvania Department of Mental Health Department based on her case. In addition, CAU staff met with Philadelphia State Hospital Staff to confer on the design of a day adolescent program to serve as a stop-gap measure until a residential program can be brought into being and to discuss the gaining of governmental support for needed services. Thus far, no one has been successful in obtaining funds for a 24-hour adolescent program.

While not illustrated by a Case Study, interviews reveal that CAU staff have worked with the Philadelphia Schools to make the exchange of information about truancy cases more efficient. And department of Public Welfare staff report that over the years, the CAU has assisted in adjusting some dependency procedures to the mutual benefit of all parties. Finally, as described in

Case Study #19, CAU staff have served as educators about the court system for various agencies who must bring their clients to court and might otherwise come unprepared.

As a whole, the statistical information and the Case Studies suggest that the CAU's impact on the justice and social service system has not been great. The CAU's system advocacy activities have been seriously limited by its heavy client caseload. The agency has chosen to work primarily by forging individual relationships with agencies where its clients are placed, and has not sought to publicize or mobilize broad support for systemic changes either in ideology or procedure. Although the CAU has been able to obtain and monitor services for some of its clients, the system-wide impact of this effort has been largely diluted by the size of the agency's caseload.

Impact by Case Types Represented by the CAU

The evaluation of the Child Advocacy Unit ascertained that the program did not have significantly different effects on any one case type over another. That is, CAU staff have not developed markedly different approaches for different types of cases, nor have they demonstrated particular success in certain case types over others. Medical and Domestic Relations Cases, however, do stand somewhat apart from the other eight case types and will be separately addressed.

As described in the Process Report, the CAU's ten-fold division of case types - mental health/mental retardation, domestic relations, medical, abuse, neglect, sex abuse, truancy, incorrigibility, adoption, and involuntary termination - is a somewhat arbitrary system marked by overlap and indistinct boundaries. CAU office staff assign incoming cases to a particular category based on the brief case history printed on the court petition; review of the of the entire 1978-1979 caseload indicates that cases are often assigned to a different category the second time around.

As CAU staff pointed out, Case Studies clearly show how deeply inter-related are the problems associated with various case types. Abuse, sex abuse, and neglect, all brought to court under the Child Protective Service Law, are often very difficult to separate. For example, the CAU assigned Case Study #2 to the abuse category when it came to them as suspected abuse and neglect; DPW subsequently filed a petition alleging neglect, and the CAU's work on the case centered primarily on obtaining adequate housing for the family. Case Studies #3 and #11 illustrate the difficulty in differentiating between severe neglect and abuse. In Case Study #4, Simon and Robin came to the Court's attention because of neglect issues; the sexual abuse aspects of the case did not surface until later, and were never addressed apart from the neglect.

Similarly, mental health issues are scattered throughout other case types besides the mental health/mental retardation commitment cases. Hazel, Case Study #15, was labeled incorrigible by petition but was hospitalized and latter court-committed for psychiatric problems. Several other truancy and incorrigibility clients were labeled as drug abusers and were recommended for placement in drug treatment facilities. Part of the difficulty with Gary's case, an mental health/mental retardation commitment described in Case Study #22, was the continuing confusion about the exact etiology of his delinquent activities; was his a mental illness or a difficult behavior problem?

Custody issues pervade all case types. Case Studies #1, 2, and 3, all abuse cases, demanded decision about short-term placements. Case Studies #4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, and 22 all illustrate issues of long-term custody. Of course the Domestic Relations and Adoption cases center on decisions of permanent custody.

Case type, then, is less an indication of client problems than a marker for point of entry into the system. In addition, the statistical study shows that, for the four case types included in the time series analysis, case types are an indicator of client age (e.g., truants are usually teenagers). The CAU has not appeared to have developed different case handling methods for or to have achieved differential success with different aged clients, except insofar as very young preschool clients are less often approached by social workers with a goal towards developing personal relationships.

Both Domestic Relations and Medical cases stand apart in that CAU staff appear to find unique satisfaction and stimulation in the representation of these clients. These cases offer variety to the staff; different judges hear the cases, aggressive private attorneys are more often involved, and the cumbersome welfare/social service system is less likely to have a hold on these families. The CAU philosophy of fostering negotiation and reducing animosity is particularly suited to practice in Domestic Relations cases; because the CAU staff person is often the only professional person involved besides the parents' attorneys, these cases allow wide latitude for attorneys and social workers to relate to judges, parents, and children. CAU staff find the Domestic Relations courtroom practice particularly challenging and fulfilling because they meet with more respectful attention, more full hearings, and less of an assembly-line atmosphere. As described above in the section on family impact, there is no clear evidence that CAU staff have been more effective in achieving goals in this case type than in others. Unfortunately, heavy caseload forced the CAU to discontinue Domestic Relations work during the course of the evaluation.

Medical cases also allow wide latitude and creativity to CAU staff. Case Study #27, one of only a few medical cases CAU has handled thus far, illus-

trates the interesting legal question raised by modern medical practice and the opportunities this case provided to the CAU to gain professional recognition and to train other professionals in the logic of child advocacy. The CAU determined that Sally, the donor, was freely consenting to donate her bone marrow, that Sally was protected from undue pre-and post-surgical risk, and that hers and her parents' interests were not in conflict. It is not clear if other child-donors will need independent representation to determine eligibility and consent given that the CAU found the parents to be able to give informed consent for their child. Perhaps because of time constraints, CAU staff have not yet participated widely in such cases, nor have they published articles about the experience.

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CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FOR YOUTHS AND THEIR PARENT OR GUARDIAN

The University City Science Center is doing an evaluation of the Child Advocacy Unit of the Defender's Association of Philadelphia. One of the purposes of the study is to find out what kinds of experiences clients and their families have had with the Child Advocates.

We asked the Child Advocacy Unit to contact you because they thought you would have important things to tell us about the CAU, and might be willing to talk with us. We would like to talk with your child and with you about your experiences. We would like to interview each of you separately for about an hour.

Some of the areas of the study can be very sensitive. If at any time you or your child feels that the questions are too personal or too embarrassing, you may feel free to refuse to answer them.

Steps have been taken to insure confidentiality. As soon as all the information is gathered, all names will be removed from our files. Only authorized members of the research team will have access to the files. All information you give us will be held strictly confidential and will in no way affect the services you receive from the Child Advocacy Unit, the Family Court, or any other agency.

We do not expect that the research project will directly benefit you or your child. However, we hope that the information gathered will help children and their families in the future.

I hereby consent to participate in this project and to allow my child to participate. I understand that I may withdraw my permission at any time.

Signed _____
Mother/Father/Guardian

For My Child _____

I hereby consent to participate in this project. I understand that I may withdraw my permission at any time.

Signed _____
Subject

Date

Investigator's Signature

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR CAU CLIENTS

I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences with the Child Advocacy Unit. The first group of questions is about what the Child Advocates did.

1. Did you know the Child Advocates were representing you in Court?
How did you find out? Do you remember who was in Court?
2. Is the CAU part of the Court? Part of the Welfare Department?
3. Did you ever talk to someone from the Child Advocates before or after you went to Court?
4. Did the Child Advocate ask you any questions in the Courtroom?
5. Did the Child Advocate make any recommendations to the Judge?
6. Did you agree with what the Child Advocates said?

The next few questions are about how the Child Advocates affected you and your family?

7. Do you think the Child Advocates helped or hurt you? How?
8. Do you think the Child Advocate helped or hurt your parents?
9. Do you think the Child Advocate helped or hurt your family as a whole?
10. How could the Child Advocates be better?
11. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about the Child Advocates?