

Psychological Techniques Applied in a Group Situation—An Experiment in Group Work

SADIE GARLAND DREIKURS

In the summer of 1944, the Jewish Peoples Institute of Chicago appointed the writer as the director of its Day Camp serving 240 children 6 to 14 years of age. Dr. Philip S. Seman, the Director of the Jewish Peoples Institute, gave the director and staff a free hand in experimenting with new techniques, applying psychological methods to group work. The emphasis was placed on the direct methods of stimulating the social adjustment of the individual child, rather than letting the group situation as such influence the child in an indirect way. This technique attempted to integrate a typical case work approach, namely the understanding of the needs of the individual child, with the group work approach of arranging group situations which by themselves influence all participants.

The staff furthermore combined the indirect method of treatment through the group situation with a direct method of interpreting the child to himself and using the group indirectly for interpretation and stimulation of individual relationships.

It seemed advisable to meet each child with his mother in an effort to determine what type of child would attend, the problems that seemed general and the program that would fit the needs of the applicants. The results of these interviews indicated:

- (1) A relatively small number of children were attending Day Camp because of working mothers. These were not in need of custodial care because the parents had made some plan for the children.
- (2) Children were sent to Day Camp "to be kept off the street."
- (3) Children were sent because their mothers did not know what to do with them, as they got into trouble as soon as school was out and they were home.
- (4) Mothers "who wanted to rest their nerves" sent their children to Day Camp.
- (5) There was an amazingly large number of children who found difficulty in making friends and in playing with other children, and their mothers hoped they would learn to make friends.

An intensified staff training program was conducted. One of the greatest needs for the children was a program whereby they could get an experience "in living" which would be different from their home and school experience and which would enable them to make a better social adjustment. At almost the first staff conference there was unanimous agree-

ment that it was more important that the children learn through experience each day in doing things and experiencing a development in their social adjustment than making a final display through exhibition and through dramatic presentation, and that learning and not perfection was the goal. Therefore, while the group was conscious that at the end of the summer there would be a performance and an exhibition to which their parents would be invited, there was no pressure for perfection in achievement nor an imposition of adult ideas in the development of skills.

Before staff training started, the working routines and instructions were set up. Included in this were two points that seem important to mention as a sample of the set-up and because they proved valuable:

Counselors and counselor-aides were instructed to send a message to the director's office in case of fatigue or if they felt that the group had gotten out of control. They were cautioned not to try to carry on when discouraged or if the children were disturbed, but to get assistance and to be relieved for a few minutes. In this way the danger of using incorrect methods and disturbing the relationship with the children was minimized.

Staff meetings were held daily and were utilized not only for the planning of the next day's activities, but for staff training, for discussion of all problems related to the approach to the children, for maintenance of the atmosphere and for mutual co-operation. Once a week the staff meeting was used for a special training period with Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs, Professor of Psychiatry at the Chicago Medical School, who came with ten of his medical students to observe children, to give assistance with their problems and to help the staff to understand the children.

In the period of staff training it seemed important to introduce new ideas among the counselor-aides and staff to help them to understand the importance of group participation on the basis of co-operation rather than of competition and punishment and reward. The efficiency of such a psychological approach to group work depends on the previous training of at least a few staff members besides the director, to apply principles and suggestions.

Camp is an organized group experience where children not only have a good time, learn new skills and increase their knowledge, but also improve their personal development, their social adjustment. At home in their families they are exposed to a highly competitive order where father and mother, parents and children, younger and older siblings fight, sometimes openly, sometimes subtly for their position. The methods used generally imply discouragement. The children coming to the camp look primarily for their own position, discourage each other and expect discouragement from their leaders, just as in school where the competitive spirit and the lack of understanding leads frequently to discouragement. Most children are accustomed to respond only to punishment and reward.

They have seldom learned to enjoy co-operation, to be useful on their own volition and to contribute. Camp can help them to learn a different type of human relationship, to increase their feeling of belonging and to use co-operative methods in dealing with their own problems as well as with each other.

This co-operative experience, which must reckon with the unpreparedness of a great number of children, is possible only if the same spirit fills every staff member, if competition, personal prestige or feeling of inadequacy and failure are overcome in each member by mutual help and assistance. We all are handicapped in our social contact with each other, must understand and help each other, if the group as a whole should reach a higher level of co-operation.

The leaders must understand the child and help him in his individual adjustment, as they must increase their understanding of themselves and their fellow workers in helping themselves and the latter. The group situation is no obstacle for understanding the individual; on the contrary it helps considerably, as it is in the group, in dealing with others, that each individual reveals his own personality and his shortcomings.

In order to understand the child, we must understand his actions and the goals of his behavior. We must first distinguish the active and the passive child, and second, the child who reaches his objective by constructive, useful, and socially accepted methods, and the one who uses destructive or useless methods. All children who show any disturbing or defective behavior either drive for attention, or for proving their power and superiority, or they want revenge for being disliked. The least disturbing children are those who just want to get attention. They comprise most of the younger set. More belligerent children try to prove that nobody can stop them from doing what they want. Most of them have been exposed to power, which only works if used in extreme violence. The most hostile children, those who hit and bite and destroy, are mostly those who feel that they are not liked anyhow and nobody will like them, regardless of how they try. Then there is a fourth group of children who are merely so discouraged that they will refrain from doing anything. They just don't participate, remain isolated and can hardly be moved.

Understanding the child will help to develop situations which bring him out of his concept of himself. Detailed discussions of such children will help the staff in their skill to distinguish the various types and to find techniques which are effective with each child.

There are a few principles that have to be applied in any case:

- (1) Never humiliate or discourage a child. It only aggravates the situation.
- (2) Never fight with a child, regardless of how provocative the child may be.
- (3) Punishment as expression of the power of the leader is as little

effective as bribing with reward. On the other hand, the child should get away with as little as possible and should be made to experience the logical consequences of his behavior. Temporary isolation without any implements of punishment is the most effective method. It always must be left up to the child to return to the group as soon as he feels he is ready to co-operate again.

- (4) The tone of voice is one of the most important means of maintaining friendliness and co-operation. The leaders must help each other to check any tendency to be harsh, to bully, to scold and nag or to insult with inflection.
- (5) Extreme kindness does not exclude firmness. Each leader must overcome insecurity and feeling of inadequacy so that he knows what he wants and is willing to persist in what he considers right. Children feel determination and respond to it, so that less effort is necessary if the leader is determined from the beginning. Very few rules limiting the child's freedom should exist, but they should be scrupulously followed by each leader.
- (6) Group discussions have most influence on children's behavior.

It was a policy of the Day Camp to use every opportunity to have discussions with the children and to give them an opportunity to express their desires and to have a voice in decisions and in program planning. For example, the importance was stressed of getting an agreement on the rules necessary to have a good group experience and to enjoy activities. A simple illustration would be the handling of children who run in and out of activities to get a drink. On very warm days, the frequency of this need disrupted the whole group and caused considerable disturbance in the hallways and disapproval on the part of the maintenance staff, because of the wet condition around the drinking fountain.

The second day of the Day Camp the director visited each group, had a discussion with them, and came to an agreement about how many times during one period the children felt it was necessary to be excused for a drink. There was much discussion on how it is done in the public schools. When one or two of the children were inclined to clown "I want to go whenever I feel like it," the other members of the group took care of the situation by telling them they were silly and just "showing off." They then came to the agreement that it was reasonable that before each activity all members of the group stop for a drink and a visit to the washroom, and at the end of each period they do the same. There were only a few instances, and this mainly in the case of the disturbed children, where these rules were not observed.

Another illustration is the group discussion held before each excursion period. The children set up the rules of the excursion which were made by themselves after consideration of the need for protection and

safety and for group co-operation to assure a good time. If any member of the group broke a rule, it was understood that the whole particular group would be considered unready to participate in the next excursion; it would be excused from the excursion to give the children time to reconsider and to decide if they were willing and ready to observe the rules of the following excursion. Then they would again be given an opportunity. On one excursion, the Wild Cats, a group of 9-year-old boys, endangered their own safety and that of other campers by swinging on apparatus in a play park to a danger point. They were told they could not go on the next trip because they had broken the rules. The day before the time of the next trip the supervisor questioned the fairness of the decision, since the whole group had made the rules, and she was inclined to give them another chance. She was told that making this decision would impress the children with her power as a "dictator," even if the decision was in their favor, and that it would be a good educational experience to put the responsibility of a decision on the whole unit involved.

A meeting was held, the facts were presented, and the Wild Cats were asked how they felt about the decision of excluding them. They voiced the opinion that they felt since they had broken the rules it was fair that they be excluded. Several others were of the same opinion until one member of another group said he did not believe it was fair to exclude them since he personally had also disobeyed some rules and that he knew other boys had, and just because they weren't caught and they were not involved in disobeying as a group, it was not fair to exclude the one group only. He was in favor of giving the Wild Cats another chance. Several other children expressed themselves in a similar way. The meeting was adjourned for five minutes for the purpose of giving the children an opportunity to come to some decision without the presence of counselors.

When the meeting reconvened, the Wild Cats had chosen a spokesman who gave a report for the group. He felt that they should be excluded because they disobeyed, but since members of the other groups wanted to give them another chance they would like to prove they could obey the rules by going on the next excursion and co-operating. The spokesman for the other group expressed the idea that the majority of the children wished to give them another chance. A vote was taken, and there were four girls who did not agree with this decision. One did not agree for this reason: "If you give them another chance they will always break the rules, because they will think they can get another chance." It was explained that neither the director nor the supervisor was changing the decision, but that a majority of the children felt that the decision was unfair because other children, too, had broken the rules. Therefore, it was they who were changing the decision and it would have to be done on their own responsibility.

Another vote was taken and all agreed with the exception of one girl. Thereupon one of the Wild Cats got up and said, "She's voting against us because she's mad at me; I had a fight with her this morning." Another Wild Cat got up and said, "Sure, the Red Robins don't like us." (Red Robins is a group of 9-year-old girls; the four girls who voted against the Wild Cats belonged to this group). The director then asked how many Wild Cats liked the Red Robins; no one raised his hand. She then asked how many Red Robins liked the Wild Cats, and two girls raised their hands. The next question was, "How many Wild Cats would try to like the Red Robins?" and they all raised their hands. All Red Robins raised their hands when the same question was asked of them. When another vote was taken on whether the Wild Cats should be given another chance, all agreed. The next day on the excursion, which included eighty-seven children, neither the Wild Cats nor any other member of the unit broke the rules.

Group discussion was also used in the case of behavior problems of individual children. The counselor-aides and the supervisors were encouraged to call the director to the room where a disturbance was occurring, rather than use the method of bringing the child to the director's office. This gave an opportunity to ask the children's help and the help of the child in trouble to make a decision as to what was to be done. It gave an opportunity to ask a question like, "Why do children fight?" and to get some stimulating answers and to offer some psychological reasons for such behavior. This often not only helped to adjust the one child who was in difficulty at the moment, but served as a therapeutic measure for other children with similar difficulties.

On the Fourth of July, instead of having a program where an adult gave a patriotic speech on patriotism, the whole camp had a group discussion, and each child who wished to speak had an opportunity to express himself on the question, for instance, "What does the Fourth of July mean?" It meant many things to different campers. The discussion came down to "What does patriotism mean?" and to the final discussion, "What does it mean to be free?" First one child and then several others gave the explanation, "To be free means to do what you like, when you like." This offered an opportunity for a long discussion of how and why such a conclusion failed. The conclusion was, "To be patriotic and to be free was to obey the rules of the home, of the city, of the state, and of the country in which you live, and in which you have an opportunity to help make the rules."

For the special training project for the staff, held weekly by Dr. Dreikurs, the staff prepared a written report of each child who had some difficulties in making a group adjustment, either by aggressive or passive behavior. These were the children who did not participate, the children who disturbed or who were chronic wanderers. Some children were con-

sidered by their parents and teachers as "backward." Two students were assigned to observe a child in activity, to befriend the child, and to give a report at the staff meeting which followed. The campers liked the attention of the students, who spent one and a half hours with them.

Dr. Dreikurs opened the staff meeting with an explanation that the observations, the interpretations, and the suggested recommendations had the purpose to find some clue to understand the child. This type of observation can in no way mean that the child is receiving treatment. The observation and the short interview with the child can only offer some general ideas for the best way to approach the child's problem and to help him overcome his difficulties. No statement made at these conferences was given as a definite and conclusive diagnosis, but rather as a first impression, to stimulate the counselors to make new observations and to try certain methods of influencing the child. Only after several rechecks of new observations and of the result achieved by certain techniques of influence, will it become clear whether the first interpretation was correct or whether it needed some modification. As each case was discussed and the students and the staff were given opportunities to express their opinion, Dr. Dreikurs used the particular behavior problem to make general recommendations applicable to all children with similar behavior problems. Members of the staff used this opportunity to present various questions of handling children and situations, which were discussed by the whole group.

Twenty children were studied during the Day Camp period, several more than once. Of these, seventeen showed a marked change in behavior and several very definite, thrilling improvement. There was one involved group situation where the twins of the senior group and another member of the senior group used the whole group in their antagonism towards each other. When they started Day Camp, they carried over a fight in their own neighborhood, and they used this to disrupt their whole group. It was necessary not only to study the twins and their one antagonist, but to work with the whole group in order to adjust three of them. Two typical case studies of children follow: (One case report was given earlier¹)

SAUL, Age 6

Before camp opened the director interviewed the mother who came with Saul. He clung to her hand and hid behind her when an attempt was made to greet him. The mother explained that there were bad children in the neighborhood who frightened him, that he did not play with them, that he had no friends. She had trouble with him in school because he refused to talk to the teacher. No teacher had ever been able

¹Individual Psychology Bulletin, Vol. IV, 1944, p. 26.

to get an answer from him. When the mother spoke to him during the interview he did not answer her. Saul's mother hoped he would learn to talk freely, to play and to make friends in Day Camp.

The first day Saul's mother accompanied him to the roof. He hung on to her hand and did not permit her to leave. When she tried to leave him he cried. When it was suggested to the mother that she leave him, she refused to do so, and both he and the mother were ignored for a while. She tried to ease him, step by step, to the assembly, but when he began to cry she took him back again. That went on again and again. After a long period she got tired of it and left him. Thereupon Saul cried until he vomited. No attention was paid to this, and he later was seen to join his group. He did not talk to anyone, but seemed to enjoy himself. No effort was made to get his co-operation, but at the end of the day, when his mother called for him, she was told in his presence, "Saul was a big brave boy all day. He had had a good time. Perhaps she could be a big brave mother and hereafter wait for him downstairs."

For the first week it was not possible to make Saul talk or interest him in activities. He did not participate and was completely silent when he was asked anything, but instigated fights with the children around him. He would poke or push several of the children and would run away when a fight was started. He soon became the leader of a small group of boys to whom he spoke if he thought he was not observed. He led them in destructive activity and in wandering away from the group. He was in difficulty a good part of the time and looked frightened and wretched when he was alone.

Two of the medical students were assigned to study Saul. They observed him for one and a half hours in various activities. Their findings follow:

"Saul was observed to be the 'ringleader' of a small group of boys—all of them smaller in size and younger in age than he. He tried to incite his 'friends' to action against bigger boys, and yet he himself was most obviously frightened when the bigger boys turned toward him. He made frightening gestures, but quickly dropped his mask when deserted by his 'friends.' He is most active and tries to be the center of attraction.

"Saul is the youngest of three children — having a brother and a sister, both much older, both working. He claims he is not friendly with either of them, and also that he has no friends at all. One of his playmates, hearing him say that he had no friends, became indignant, and said, 'I'm friends with you.'

"Saul avoids contact and conversation with bigger and older boys, and evidently wields considerable power and influence over his smaller, younger colleagues.

"He refused to respond to our call for conversation and finally acquiesced only when he was allowed to bring two of the smaller boys with

him. So long as they were there he was communicative, but when they drifted away he stopped talking. It is our impression that Saul uses his silence as a tool against others, as this immediately places others on the defensive and in a position to cater to him. He has a tremendous lust for power, and he partially satisfies this drive by exerting his influence over the smaller boys. His response to the aggression of older boys is typical — he shuts up; and after the crisis has passed he gives vent to his frustration by bullying the small boys. Since he can't occupy a seat of honor and attention with the older ones, he prefers to associate with the little boys and his mother — all of whom yield to him and satisfy his desire for power."

Dr. Dreikurs confirmed their impressions by pointing out that Saul wants power. He tries to compensate for his position as the youngest in the family by getting even and being powerful. His older brothers and sisters may try to impress him with their power, so he, in turn, tries to impress other people with *his* power — even his mother is afraid of him. His refusing to talk shows that he is well prepared to demonstrate his power. He knows what to do. He is power-possessed. He evades the older children because of his lack of power over them.

He would like to be friends with the other children, but he only uses them. He does not stick up for them, because he does not consider them his friends. — His mother is not only over-protective over him, but actually afraid of him.

The discussion led to the following recommendations: Authority should never be exerted on a child like Saul; nobody will get anywhere by trying to force something upon him. He will go to the limit to show that he won't give in. The counselors should not get frightened of him, and should not let him dominate them. However, they should give him recognition and praise wherever possible. They may ask him whether he would like to take care of somebody. They can see his ability to handle people. He may be inclined to be brutal, but he may handle the children well.

He should be told, "I know you won't talk to me," and he will probably talk. He will be bound to show that he can talk if you say, "I know you won't talk." He then, can show authority by talking.

Saul was asked if he would like to help Sam, a much smaller boy. Sam was only 5 1-2 years old, a very sociable and friendly boy. Saul was told that since he is such a big boy it would be nice if he would be willing to take care of Sam, to see that he did not leave the building, and to help him when he needed help in activity. He did not reply, but he took Sam's hand and started to play with him. For the rest of the day they were seen together constantly, and they both seemed to enjoy the experience.

At another time all the children were singing. Saul did not sing.

He was told that if he could not sing he should stand on the side. This did not seem to impress him. He then was brought in front of the group and was asked to say whether he liked the group or not. He did not answer. He was told that the leader could wait until he answered yes or no, and that if he did not like the group he would be taken to another group. The leader waited for an answer, and soon Saul began to cry. He was told calmly that crying would not help him, and he finally said, "Yes." The leader and all the children in the room clapped their hands and told him they were very happy to have him. He said he wanted to stay with the group, and he sang with them. For the rest of the day a similar procedure was followed, and he started to talk to the leader. The next day he responded when she said "hello" to him, and he continued to talk to the leader all through camp period, as he had experienced the fact that his tool of power did not work.

Saul was praised when he co-operated, and gradually he became part of the group. His occasional destructive leadership was ignored and diverted by impressing him with the importance of how he could help the other children as he helped Sam. As he started to feel part of the group, he changed.

By the middle of the camp period Saul's appearance had changed. He laughed, he talked, he played with the other children and enjoyed activities, especially singing and woodshop. He frequently volunteered to sing with a small group of children, when they entertained the whole assembly. During one discussion period he raised his hand to answer along with the rest of the children. He once made a speech about patriotism.

During another discussion about a problem with another boy, the children were asked how they thought they could help the boy. Saul raised his hand and said, "Don't scare him, and he will be good."

A conference was held with the mother to explain to her the techniques used with Saul and the type of treatment he responded to.

GEORGE, Age 8

George started out by showing that he had no desire to be part of the group. He came late, and then wandered away after walking up to the front part of the assembly. When his group was ready for any activity he refused to go with them and always wanted to do something else. When given his choice, he would go to the room for a few minutes and then wander away and at times leave the building.

The following quotations of impressions on the part of the counselors will serve as a sample of the type of reporting in staff meetings:

A: "Does not respect authority. Does not care who is in charge of group; he is main person."

F: "He seems to push the counselors around. He wanted to take

the ball out, and I told him not to, and he said, 'I can do whatever I want.' "

PS: "In the show we had during rest period the other day he was very anxious to get up on the stage, and with a group of boys decided to do a skit. The next day the four boys, without consulting Miss D, the dramatics teacher, came to me, and said they were going to rehearse with Miss D for the skit. They were fooling around all morning on the roof."

AK: George was a camper in one of my groups in the summer of 1941. On the whole he now seems to be much quieter and more settled than he was then, when he was much younger, of course. In 1941 he was 'a wild Indian,' and a great problem to all the counselors. At one time he had a terrific temper tantrum and caused a great deal of trouble to the counselors, who were unable to handle him. George was asked not to come back to the roof after a series of occurrences that summer. He was, however, very lovable and well liked by the counselors, despite his ways. This can be accredited to the fact that he was a very good-looking child and knew how to get around the counselors."

J: "Behaved well in the morning, because I told him that if he behaved he could be front captain of the line. This afternoon he did not behave at all. During rest period he left the room without permission and did not return until it was time to go swimming. I met him in the hall before he came back into the room, and he would not come with me."

Mrs. N: "He has been very sweet in our group."

P: "He was a problem the first week. He always apologizes after he has been bad."

I: "This afternoon he told me he was not going up to the roof after swimming. I told him that he would have to go to assembly. He started swearing and said he would go home anyway."

George was not observed by the students or Dr. Dreikurs, but from description of his behavior in a staff meeting the following was suggested: "George stands for a great number of children who demonstrate by their behavior their lack of training in conformity and co-operation. He uses charm and/or defiance to have his own way. Counselors should not be provoked as the child's parents would be. George wishes to prove his strength, and the parents by their reactions try to say they are stronger. We have to help the child do the right thing. By friendly talk a great number of children may become better behaved." This clarified the staff's impressions.

During the first excursion George wandered away from the group, and it was some time before he was found. When the children returned, he was advised that he did not seem to be ready to observe the rules of the excursion. Therefore, the following week he would be excused from excursions and have time to prepare himself — if he felt ready to ob-

serve the rules at a later excursion he would be given an opportunity to go. His response was, "You can't keep me from going, if I want to." Next time, when the children were ready to leave, he left with them; when he was advised that he could not go, he crossed the street, boarded the street car ahead of the group and joined them at the museum. Campers and staff were asked to ignore him and his behavior when they met at the museum.

A conference with George's mother proved to be of great help, as she was willing to co-operate in any way to assist George in his difficulty. She informed us that he was the eldest of three children, that he was stubborn, — wanted his own way at all times, and that no amount of punishment changed his attitude. George's father at times was able to get him to co-operate by taking him away from the family group and talking to him.

The next morning George appeared late and seemed afraid to come in to join his group. He had a bunch of flowers in his hand. He looked bashful and worried. He was ignored, and no mention was made to him of his behavior. After the rest of the group were in activities, he sent his brother Donald with the flowers to the director's office with a message that he apologized. The brother was told to go to George and give back the flowers with the message that he was welcome to come up to the office if he had anything he would like to discuss. When he appeared he started to apologize. He was surprised when he was not reprimanded, but asked what he thought the director should say to him. His response was that he should not be permitted to go on the excursion the following week. When the day arrived, he did not go with the children, but he left the building and went swimming with a group of boys from the neighborhood, after appearing at Day Camp just to deposit his lunch. (His mother informed us over the telephone that George had told her he had permission from the director to go swimming, since he could not go on the excursion.) He appeared at noon, and his lunch could not be found, as it had not been collected, and no attention was paid to him and no questions were asked. When he came to inquire for his lunch and ask what he could do in the afternoon he was advised that, since he had chosen to make his own plans in the morning, he could continue to take care of himself for the rest of the day and make his own plans.

He appeared the next day and stated he was willing not to go to the excursion the following week and to stay in the building and accept suggestions for the day's activities.

During the week he came for conversation, and the director had an opportunity to interpret his own behavior to him and explain his reasons for such action.

When the next excursion day came, George appeared on time and asserted that he was "ready to take his medicine." He was told he could

go to the craft room if he liked, or he could play games with a younger group, since his group was going on an excursion. He went to crafts, and for the first time stayed until he completed a small woven article, which he displayed to the director with great pride of accomplishment. He decided to make another for his mother and one for his aunt. Later in the day he went to woodshop and made a boat for his little brother.

At another day he wanted to have his way in the woodshop by using a machine forbidden to the children. When this permission was not granted, he spat at the instructor. During a discussion with him he explained his behavior on the basis of his having a "bad temper," at which time he was not able to control himself. He was told that most people who lose their temper do so to cover up their desire to dominate by blaming their temper and not wishing to take responsibility for bad behavior themselves. This interested him greatly, and he talked about himself quite freely and asked advice about how he could stop losing his temper. He was told to try to remember why he loses his temper. He then decided to apologize to the woodshop instructor.

As the weeks went by he stopped wandering and became quite active with his group. He was one who contributed a great deal in the enacting and writing of his part of the pageant. He enacted the "boy who did not want to do anything" and he did his part well. He was also given an opportunity to read part of the narrative, and this filled him with pride, since he was chosen for this by his group because he helped them plan their act.

During the last day of camp he called on the director and said, "I think I have learned one thing this summer. It is not important to be boss."

George's father came to call, and the approach and his son's improvement were explained in detail.

During the whole camp period the goal of a good social adjustment for the *largest* number of children was kept in mind while planning the program, while training the staff, during play, during rest, during assembly, and throughout the day. The end of the season pointed to a considerable number of children who had made definite adjustments, and a great number of children who developed a sense of responsibility, a sense of "belonging," and a desire to continue in a group.

There were at least twenty more children in need of special service which could not be given because of the limited time. These children could have been assisted in a social adjustment if enough members of the staff were trained to deal with them adequately. It would not have taken more time, only a better knowledge of how to do it. The camp period was too short to arrange for an appointment with the psychiatrist for all children who needed help. Some of these children were either passive,

non-participating, or the aggressive and unhappy children similar to the disturbing children who had been studied.

In cases undertaken for study, only the director had contact with the parents to interpret to them the suggestions made, the approach used, and the possible reasons for the child's difficulties as advised by the psychiatrist. Similarly, in all cases where children were observed and recommendations made, the staff was instructed with the type of procedure and follow-up, but the director was the only one who had personal interviews with the children on a "psychological level."

The staff was especially co-operative and open-minded for the new approach and showed an amazing growth and understanding in dealing with the disturbed children.

The counselors, in many instances, learned about their own personalities through listening to the discussions of the reasons for the behavior of the children, and they were anxious to ask personal questions. Unfortunately there was no time for personal consultations with the counselors to discuss their own problems. For instance, one of the young people said, "I know it does not help to yell at the children; I have listened to your advice but why is it I can't stop?" Or, another — "I have an awful time keeping from hitting the children." This led to discussions of prestige, antagonism and competition between counselors and children.

A final pageant was an outgrowth of casual discussions, sometimes as a spontaneous result of some group difficulties, and sometimes as a planned part of the daily activity. The campers made their own decision as to the type of pageant they wanted. They wrote their own script, planned and made their own costumes, and chose their own cast without adult interference or influence. Three of the group who took part in narrative were considered "dull and backward" children by their parents. The presentation to the parents was given with an introduction and an explanation of the goal of the camp — the experience of creating and learning rather than competition and perfection of performance.

In the pageant the children tried to express their own conception of "Democracy in Action." They went back in history to the Indian Fathers and through all the important struggles of our young country, and in each case dwelt upon scenes and statements which to them meant "democracy." For the climax the following scene, which demonstrated "Democracy in Action in Our Day Camp," was presented by the group of 9-year-old boys who called themselves Wild Cats and spent the summer trying to live up to their name.

Norman: "I want to go swimming." Eugene: "Who wants to go to crafts?" George: "Let's go to the woodshop." Gerald: "I don't want to do anything." Victor: "I demand to play ping pong." Judah: "Let's

have a game of baseball." Alvin: "Let's play checkers." Harold S: "We want 'Sorry'." (Girls walk in).

Arlene: "Boys! Boys!" (The boys stop their noise and listen to Arlene). Carol: "This isn't any fun. Everybody wants to do something else, and nobody can do anything. We've got to get together." Joan: "Well, what shall we do?" Eunice: "We've got to decide somehow." Carolyn: "I've got an idea. Let's have a vote." Phyllis: "First we'll have to elect a chairman." Alice: "Let Harold take the votes." (All the boys and girls take seats and Harold goes to the front of the room. He takes the gavel and knocks three times).

Harold: "Nominations are in order. Does anybody have someone they wish to nominate?" Joyce: (raising her hand) "I nominate Judah." Shir: "I second it." Har: "Okay, Judah, you have been nominated. Will you please step to the front of the room?" (Judah steps to the front of the room). Har: "Are there any other nominations?" Annette: "I nominate Gerald." Car: "I second it." Har: "Gerald, will you please come up front." (Gerald comes up front and bows to the group). Har: "Are there any more nominations?" Al: "I nominate Victor." Shir: "I think Alvin would make a good chairman."

Har: "Will Victor and Alvin come up front? The boys will please turn their backs to the group while I count the votes. How many people vote for Victor? (he counts them) For Alvin? For Gerald? For Judah?"

Har: "Judah wins the nomination." (The boys shake hands with him and congratulate him). (Judah takes his place up front).

Jud: "Thank you, boys and girls. I am proud to be elected chairman of such a nice group. Now I think the first thing we have to decide is how we can organize so that we can have the best time, and so that everybody can do something and have fun. What do you think we ought to do?"

Pearl: "I think we should split up into two groups because one will be too large for any activity." Ruth: "I think that's a good suggestion."

Jud: "Yes, that sounds like a good idea. Any one else want to give me an idea?" Freckles: "Yeah, let the boys stick with the boys and the girls with the girls."

Jud: "Okay, let's go. Now, boys and girls, we have to decide how we can all have fun doing the things we like to do. What is the best way to satisfy everybody?" Har: "I think each group should vote on the activity they want." Herm: "Yes, then the activity that gets the most votes is the one we all go to."

Jud: "Yes, that is the way democracy works. The wish of each one of us may be different, but it is easy for all of us to get together and do things that will make everybody happy and give each person a chance to do the things he likes most to do. Is everybody happy?"

All: "Yes!" (They shout and cheer Judah).

An incident occurred during the last day of the summer which demonstrated the extent to which the young children understood the psychological explanation of their behavior. Larry, a child who had been in five different foster homes during six months, was very disturbed during the final rehearsal for the pageant in the evening. He stuck out like a sore thumb. He did everything he could think of to disturb those around him, — the counselors, the dramatics teacher and himself. Unfortunately, the dramatics teacher in her desperation threatened him by saying, "If you don't stop, I will send you home!" Of course, he met her challenge by disturbing again, shouting: "I won't go home." Actually Larry could not be sent home to his foster home, where he was in bad repute, even if it had not been against the policy of the Day Camp.

It was a problem what to do. We had to go on with the rehearsal, and the dramatics teacher having made such a threat had to be supported in some way. The writer took Larry by the hand and told him that he seemed very unhappy with the whole group of children — perhaps he would like to spend some time with the 6-year-old children who were playing some games in another section. He followed, but objected to being left with the "babies." He left there, and a few minutes later I was sent for. When I arrived, the leader had Larry on her lap and he was kicking and raising a fuss and yelling "I won't go home and I won't stay here."

I said to the group "Poor Larry, he is so unhappy, what shall we do with him?" Several hands of the 6-year-olds were raised. One said, "Let's put him in jail," and another, "Let's have him locked in a dark closet," and still another "Send him home and don't ever let him come back!" I said I was surprised they misunderstood me — I thought they knew that I wanted to help Larry, not punish him. I then asked how many children would like to help him. All hands were raised.

Susan who had spent the first week in camp doing everything to get attention said, "I think we can help him if we don't pay any attention to him when he does something bad, but when he does something good let's all clap our hands." Saul, the boy who did not speak said, — "Don't scare him and he will be good." Rita who kicked, bit and scratched other children, said, "Let's show him that we like him, and he will be good." When the first child spoke, Larry stopped struggling and beamed with interest. I whispered to him that since all the children wanted him, how would he like to help them. He replied "I am bigger than they are, maybe I can teach them some new games." — And he did, and he did not disturb for the rest of the day.

Note: From twenty children observed, eighteen returned to the following year's summer Day Camp and sixteen of them presented no problems or difficulties.