

THE SALVATION ARMY" E D E N P A R K H O M E F O R B O Y S "SOCIAL WORKERS BRIEFNOVEMBER, 1981INTRODUCTION

Eden Park was purchased by The Salvation Army in 1900 when it was seen that many young boys were being placed in Adelaide Goal for very minor offences, then after the Great War it became an Orphanage, and in 1970 a home for "Severely Emotionally Disturbed Boys". The boys are referred through the Childrens Hospital, Child Guidance Clinics or Department for Community Welfare.

The Social Worker plays an important role in the residential programme. He has the initial contact with the boy and his parents and therefore needs to have a comprehensive awareness of the policies and programme of the Home so as to be able to advise the parents of the prospective advantages of the boy coming to Eden Park.

The Social Worker will need to work his programme of visitation to suit the parents and the Home and not see his working hours as a 9am to 5pm job, but a vocation of service to the people working within the framework and principles of The Salvation Army. The following comments are a guideline of the Social Workers responsibility.

1. The Social Worker will work under the direction of the Manager or the assistant Officer in his absence and work in close co-operation with the staff and High and Primary Schools. A close working liaison needs to be maintained with the referring clinic or agency.
2. He will need to be able to assess the suitability of the boy being placed.
 - a. Will he readily fit into the Eden Park scene.
 - b. What backup service from referring agency.
 - c. Does the boy himself want to come into the Centre.
 - d. Degree of co-operation likely from parents.
 - e. What Sub School will be needed at High School.
 - f. Will boy be better suited at the Homes Primary School.
3. He will need to build up a history of the boy from information gained from parents, referring agency and other appropriate sources. This needs to be up to date and correct and a full intake report prepared (where possible) before the boy is considered for placement. Having decided that placement is appropriate the next step is for the parents to produce a birth certificate for the Dept. of Social Security and bring the boy up for a look over the Home. Then, if in consultation with the Manager the boy is considered suitable, a date is made for his admission.
4. Once the boy is admitted the Social Worker should take the first opportunity to see the boy and reassure him of his interest and then visit the parents to reassure them of their sons welfare and happiness and making this a regular fortnightly meeting with both the boy and parents.
5. It is important that a good relationship is maintained with the staff colleagues from other agencies and government departments. The Social Worker should give a weekly report to the Manager of his visits to the parents, of their comments and bring to his notice any complaints or weakness in the system the parents or boy may feel. He should prepare a report of parents comments etc for the Staff Meeting every Thursday and accept feedback for the parents.
6. The Social Worker will find that a major part of his work will be in counselling parents, working through their "guilt feelings", sorting out family problems and himself becoming a referral agency so that he does not carry all their problems, but shares them with other appropriate resources.
7. Public Relations is also important. The Social Worker should become involved with the Homes Auxiliary, arrange for himself or the Manager to address Service Clubs and keep himself informed of current movement in Childcare Services etc.

8. The Home operates under a contractual arrangement with the Minister of Community Welfare under which principle operating policies are agreed upon. Chief amongst these are:

1. The Home shall be conducted for boys between eight and sixteen years of age who have been assessed as being severely emotionally disturbed.
2. A Committee to be known as a Programme Panel shall be set up consisting of the Manager, Social Worker and Senior Residential Childcare Worker, etc., for the purpose of planning a programme for the boys development, relating to his education, personality, behaviour, and family connections.
3. A Board of Review consisting of the Manager, Social Worker, Child-care Workers, Teachers, Psychiatrist, Departmental Social Worker, Mental Health Visitors, and any other person who has contact with the boy and can contribute something to the Board's discussions. The Board shall have the Chairman of the Residential Childcare Advisory Committee, or his nominee as the Chairman, and should meet at least once every six months to review each boy in care to assess the progress he is making, how long he should be staying and plans for his future.

The Social Worker convenes these meetings notifying the dates available to the Chairman and the boys due for review. He also notifies the parents who are invited to attend or offer their own comments through the Social Worker.

9. The Social Worker should make himself available to meet the Mt. Barker bus on Friday evening 4.45pm to see that any boy arriving in Adelaide and not clear where he is going (Country Bus Routes) is placed on the right bus. The Social Worker is welcome to go on camp with the boy if he wishes, and to partake in any other outings with the boys.

10. These comments are only a guide to the overall work load of the Social Worker and as he develops his own routine he will find his work most interesting and rewarding.

11. As Eden Park is part of the total Salvation Army it will be expected that the Social Worker will co-operate with and where possible make use of other Salvation Army resources as may be appropriate.

12. Where possible volunteer workers are used to extend the support given to the resident boy's families in preparation for his successful return and the Social Worker will be involved in the planning, recruitment and co-ordination associated with this aspect.

(F. R. Meaby) Captain,
MANAGER,
EDEN PARK BOYS HOME