

(08) 223 2477

Child, Adolescent & Family Health Service

PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

Magarey House, 285 South Terrace, Adelaide, SA, 5000

8th December, 1981

Brigadier H. I. Steer,
 State Social Secretary,
 The Salvation Army,
 Social Services Department,
 211 Rundle Street,
ADELAIDE. S.A. 5000

Dear Brigadier Steer,

Re: Eden Park Home for Boys

In reply to your letter of 20th November, 1981 regarding the reappraisal of your Eden Park Centre, I would like to make the following points.

1. During the three years that I have held my position as Director of Child, Adolescent and Family Psychiatric Services, I have come to understand the substitute care facilities in Adelaide.

I have been heartened by the non-residential philosophy of the Department of Community Welfare who are attempting to deal with the problems which arise in all forms of substitute child care. The literature abounds with research projects weighing up the pros and cons of institutionalisation vs. foster care placement vs. intense reconstructive work in the family home. The research data shows that there is no panacea for substitute care, each child and family having to be assessed in terms of their own specific needs and community resources.

I have been practicing psychiatry for the last 22 years, 14 of those years have been spent in Child and Family Psychiatry and I am of the opinion that in any community there needs to be some residential facilities for the emotionally disturbed child, both male and female. There are times when placement in a residential centre allows time for both child and family growth and development

2. It is understood that of the 30 boys presently at Eden Park, 20 have been referred by our service. The boys who C.A.F.P.S. recommend for placement at Eden Park are severely emotionally disturbed. There are no other facilities in Adelaide to manage these boys with their emotional disturbances.

Such boys often disrupt foster homes through their aggressive provocative behaviour after the initial honeymoon is over. Often an initial placement with preparation for foster care enables a foster placement ultimately to be successful.

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It is noted that Eden Park provides a comprehensive program and is particularly helpful in modelling for appropriate peer relations.

One aspect that perhaps needs attention is the work between Eden Park and the families of the boys in terms of rehabilitation. We could perhaps give this matter some thought and discussion.

In essence C.A.F.P.S. sees Eden Park inpatient unit as an essential service and resource for the treatment of severely emotionally disturbed boys.

Yours sincerely,



Claire Irwin,
Director