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Social services for children/families: the impact of title XX in Vermont.

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SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN/FAMILIES:
THE IMPACT OF TITLE XX IN VERMONT

A Dissertation Presented

By

DAVID CARL BAKER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 1983

Political Science

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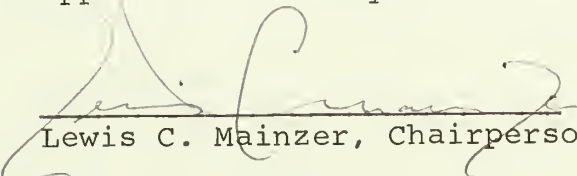
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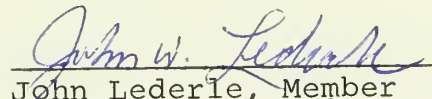
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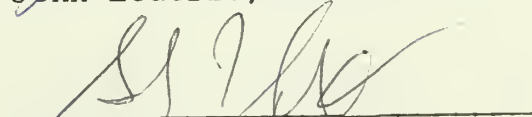
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ABSTRACT

Social Services for Children/Families:
The Impact of Title XX in Vermont

February 1983

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Title XX of the Social Security Act, enacted in January 1975, was potentially an innovative social services program for children/families. Congress designed Title XX, in part, to provide state decision makers flexibility in allocating social services resources and to help them to improve their program "planning" for children/families. The impact of Title XX on children's services in Vermont from 1975 to 1982 reveals that the program did not accomplish either of its aims, at least in this state. Moreover, given its design, it is doubtful whether it could have. It is not a tale of "implementation games." Rather, it is a story of a poorly designed federal program that did not provide necessary resources, financial or administrative, to accomplish its putative objectives. A federal fiscal ceiling incorporated

into the federal program in effect precluded the reallocation of funds among state programs or their redistribution among classes or recipients. Institutionalized patterns of funding were sufficiently long standing that they could only be maintained rather than altered under Title XX.

"Planning" requirements pointed to "needs assessment," "objective setting," and "evaluation," but provided no inducements to the state to go beyond mere descriptions of its activities in any of these areas. Reporting requirements and federal monitoring were process-oriented, and did not focus on objectives or results attained.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Two major tasks confront citizens and their public representatives in the United States. The first is to shape the contours of public policy. The second is to monitor and judge the performance of the institutions that formulate and implement that policy. Citizens and public officials continuously debate the appropriate substance of public policy and the adequacy of the institutional arrangements for producing and carrying out governmental programs. In the early 1980's, the intensity of these debates has increased. A "depressed" economy, a seemingly out of control federal deficit, the emergence of the "New Right" in American politics account in part for the broadening and intensification of the discussion of the appropriate role of government policy in this society.

Moreover, many people fear that the federal government has arrogated to itself too much power and responsibility for policy making. The American President suggests that effective and accountable program development would come about by decentralizing to state and local governments responsibilities for much of the public's business. Others disagree. They argue that only the federal government has the neces-

sary financial and professional resources to undertake the tasks of 20th century government.

These debates over institutional arrangements are significant. They indicate an awareness that policies are not formulated and implemented in a vacuum. Rather, their conception, birth, development, and success depend very much upon people performing a variety of interconnected tasks in public and often private institutions.

If debates over policy and institutional performance continue, most domestic programs will become at some point the focus of citizen and government officials' attention. For some public programs, public attention would not be new. Such is the case with social services. Social services for children and their families, as well as for the elderly, has received public notice for at least the last two decades. Conflicts of values, beliefs, opinions, and interests exemplify the intrinsically political character of social services policy making. Debates in Congress and in state and local governments have centered on issues such as the following: 1) What are the appropriate objectives of government programs directed toward children and their families? 2) Should all children be eligible for public benefits or only those classified as poor, abused, or in some similar

condition of extreme need? and 3) What types of services should be rendered by public agencies to children and their families? The outcome of debates on these issues has important consequences for the satisfaction of needs, the achievement of social justice, as well as for the extent and costs of governmental programs for children/families.

Policy makers have attempted also to determine the institutional requirements for effective implementation and evaluation of social services programs. The most innovative expression of this concern has been the creation in 1974 of Title XX of the Social Security Act. Congress designed Title XX to allow the states to make their own decisions about the suitability of social services programs for children (and the elderly) and to improve their performance in administering these programs. Specifically, Congress prescribed through Title XX the following: 1) a decentralized policy-making structure with less control over the states by the federal government; 2) greater emphasis on direct accountability to citizens in policy making; and 3) more coordinated and comprehensive social services program planning and evaluation.

Have these Congressional intentions, embodied in the

Title XX statute actually been implemented? What has been the impact of Title XX in the states since 1975? How has the social services provider role of state government changed under Title XX? (Do states offer the same or different services now? Have they altered their clientele over the years? Do the states provide more or less of the social services delivered in their jurisdictions?) In what way have states altered their policy making process in this area in the wake of Title XX? (Is there more coordination of efforts in social services development? Has citizen participation really increased in the decision-making process? Have the federal and state governments restructured their working relationships? Do politically elected state officials have more control over state social service program decisions?)

The purpose of this essay is to provide some answers to these questions. The answers will be limited in scope. They will not be based on a comprehensive survey of the impact of Title XX in all of the states. Nor will consideration be given to all types of social services administered under Title XX. Rather, the core of the essay will be an analysis of the impact of Title XX on social services for children and their families in Vermont. Day care, child protective ser-

vices, foster care and adoption services constitute a substantial portion of the Title XX budget in all of the states. Vermont offers special opportunities for studying the impact of changes in the development of social services. It is a small, rural state with a tradition of responsiveness to the human services needs of its citizens. It should provide therefore an opportunity for in-depth analysis of changes under the Title XX program. As the author's residence, it also offers great practical advantages for the conduct of a case study.

The essay begins by sketching a background against which one may study the Vermont social services scene. Chapter I presents an overview of the social services policy arena. The focus is on some important substantive issues debated and resolved in legislative developments at the federal level. Chapter II centers on questions of effective implementation of public programs and the role of institutional performance, particularly in the context of the federal system. The constraints and opportunities for effective implementation in a federal political/administrative forum are discussed. Chapters III and IV concentrate on the programmatic and institutional issues involved in social services policy making for

children and families in Vermont. The objective here is to determine the actual impact of Title XX on the allocation of social services and on the way that programmatic decisions for social services are made in Vermont. Many of the basic issues addressed intensively in Chapters III and IV parallel those concerns focused on in Chapters I and II respectively. Chapter V summarizes the findings from the analysis of the Vermont scene; and it analyzes alternative institutional arrangements and their probable impact on improving institutional performance in the social services area as well as determining the distribution of social services for children and their families. The central focus of the essay then is Vermont's response to Title XX; but the issues addressed will afford an opportunity for reflection on the problems of children/family policy making and implementation in the United States.

C H A P T E R I

CHILDREN/FAMILIES POLICY, 1935 TO TITLE XX

Children and Families as a Policy Focus

During the last decade, proponents of the "children's cause" in this country have renewed their commitment to bring about a transformation in public policies toward children and their families. Their efforts manifest themselves in conferences, reports, Congressional hearings, legislative proposals, administrative reforms, court cases, and advocacy organizations. In each forum they direct their attention toward children themselves and to the complex interpersonal and institutional environment in which they are raised and develop. Advocates have been drawn to numerous issues associated with children, including child health care, problems of the physically and mentally handicapped, education and child development, children and poverty, the fundamental relationships of children with their families, the role of technology and the mass media in children's lives, their legal rights and their relationships to the juvenile justice system, child abuse

and neglect, foster care and adoption, child nutrition and school lunches. Probably at no other time has the multifaceted nature of the living conditions and political status of children been given so much concerted attention.¹

In developing public policy to respond to these concerns for children and their environment, governmental policy planners make fundamental choices about the extent of governmental involvement in this policy area, the objectives of the social services programs, the types of services to be offered, the clientele to whom they should be provided, the level of funding for individual programs, and the priorities among different programs. The purposes of this chapter are: (1) to analyze some of the important dimensions of choice in social services policy making; and (2) to present an overview of the public programs dealing with children in the light of these policy choices.

Children/Families and the State: Nature of the Relationship

What is the appropriate scope of governmental involvement in the provision of social services or other benefits--to children, to the elderly, to the physically and mentally handicapped, to families in general and to those with dependent

members in particular? What are the legitimate objectives of the State in serving children and families in the era of the "welfare state"? Public debate in the United States over these questions reflects tensions, ambivalences, and a diversity of perspectives, informed by contrasting conceptions of these individual, family, and public (e.g., "social welfare") responsibilities.²

The traditional relationship and its demise. Traditionally, American attitudes have emphasized the responsibilities and concomitant rights of parents for the care and development of their children.³ Family responsibilities have included the financial support, protection, social control, socialization, and physical and emotional care of their offspring. The State has generally supported parents in their roles by maintaining a position of "benign neglect" toward the family care of children, assuming that parents could discern the needs of their children and respond to them more effectively than anyone else. This has produced the situation in which, as Gilbert Steiner has noted, "child rearing is the least regulated important aspect of American life."⁴ These attitudes on the allocation of family and public responsibilities reflect traditional American values of individual self-sufficiency,

independence, and minimal governmental interference in social and economic institutions. Policy makers assumed that freedom, equality of opportunity, and social justice could be achieved and maintained without extensive governmental regulation or public provision of good and services. Except for basic education, the State would intervene only in extreme circumstances, for example child abuse and neglect, death of the parents, unlawful behavior, or extreme poverty, to support or substitute for the family in the care of children.

Over the last few decades, confidence in the adequacy of this approach has waned, for several reasons. First, whatever the moral and psychological appeal of such notions as independence, self-sufficiency, etc., developments in the social, economic, and technological complexity of society have virtually precluded the realization of these values for most people. Unlike an agricultural economy, in which self-sufficiency is perhaps more easily attained, a modern industrial economy is characterized by a high degree of interdependence and cycles of instability which have a profound impact upon the attainment of economic security for families and children. Therefore, most individuals are not able to control the economic factors responsible for their well-

being; they have become very dependent on large-scale economic and political institutions for their security rather than upon their own efforts.

As society has become more technologically sophisticated, the knowledge required to understand and participate intelligently in society has increased and so therefore has the importance of education for children. Much of a child's life is spent attending formal educational institutions. Thus, the educational role of the family has been dramatically curtailed. Other "traditional" functions of the family are also being shared with other institutions or have been transferred to them completely. These include care for the sick and the elderly, care for the mentally ill or handicapped of all ages, and the provision of relief to economically disadvantaged relatives within one's family. Thus, families no longer have so high a proportion of child caring responsibilities as they once did. Other societal institutions play major roles in supporting, supplementing, and at times substituting for family child care functions.⁵

A second factor accounts in part for the change in the distribution of families and public responsibilities toward children: the weakened credibility of a laissez-faire ap-

proach by government to children and families. During the last several decades, individuals have become increasingly dependent on huge economic institutions for their economic well-being. Concurrently, the State has taken on the task of regulating social and economic conditions to ensure that children and their families will receive the goods and services needed for proper child development and for maintaining the family's stability and capacity to respond to the needs of its children. Public policy makers have been confronted with problems and issues (e.g., poverty, discrimination, economic inequality, women's rights, children's rights) that once might have been considered private troubles, but which now have been sufficiently politicized to become public issues demanding attention and action in a public forum. "In the nature of modern industrial society," Daniel Moynihan has remarked, "no government, however firm may be its wish, can avoid having policies that profoundly influence family relationships. This is not to be avoided. The only option is whether these will be purposeful, intended policies or whether they will be residual, derivative, in a sense concealed ones."⁶

Reforming the relationship: some 20th century alternatives.

Even in the 1980's, determining the appropriate character of

the relationship between the state and children/families remains a major moral and intellectual task for policy makers. Public action tends to be incremental and uncoordinated, and policy planners are cautious about "interfering" with the prerogatives of families as the primary child care institutions. Gilbert Steiner has noted a continuing tradition of "governmental reticence" in dealing with the lives of children. "When politicians consider legislation affecting children generally, they do so hesitantly and reluctantly, knowing that the American social system presumes that barring economic disaster or health crisis, a family should and will care for its children without public intervention."⁷

This hesitant and reluctant attitude informs policy makers' judgments about who should be eligible for public benefits. Theoretically, public officials may choose to distribute government aid on either a "universal" or a "selective" basis. A "universal" approach would be:

. . . one in which benefits are distributed without reference to individual incomes or means. Rather eligibility is established on the basis of group membership, by the onset of a specified condition or circumstances that is assumed "on the average" to warrant distribution of benefits, with or without prior contributions by or on behalf of the individual.⁸

In contrast a selective strategy operates as follows:

In order to qualify for cash benefits or services, in kind. . . the individual must demonstrate he currently has insufficient resources--income, assets, and other sources of support or ability to pay. . . . Depending on the way one looks at it, those who do not need assistance are excluded from receiving benefits; or benefits are channeled to those most in need of help.⁹

As Steiner indicates, Congress has been more comfortable with the restricted or "selective" response to people's "need." The responsibility of the State can be largely confined to the "residual" function of assisting those persons living in emergency situations or chronic dependency, either because of (1) individual circumstances (such as old age, illness, disability, child abuse or neglect), or (2) the malfunctioning of the "normal" institutions of society (e.g., during an economic depression).¹⁰ The purpose of the public response is to strengthen the resources (economic, social, psychological, occupational) of people in order to help them to become as independent and self-supporting as possible.¹¹

As much as possible, programs are designed as "investments" in people's development, rather than simply the provision of "consumption" goods and services as ends in themselves.

"Cost effectiveness" is a major concern for the proponents of this "selective" response. Programs are judged

"by the extent to which each dollar of benefit is allocated to those who are most in need and could not otherwise command the benefit on the open marketplace; the guiding thought is that there be no waste of resources."¹² To ensure that this objective is attained, wherever possible a person's eligibility is determined by a means-test. Persons who have sufficient resources themselves to purchase goods and services in the marketplace are thus excluded from receiving public support. The assumption here is that one's "need" for public benefits is determined by the level of one's income; an inverse relationship between income and need is presumed. An income threshold is imposed, above which needs can supposedly be satisfied adequately by individuals or families themselves.

The "universal" strategy contrasts sharply with the "selective" approach. It has challenged public officials to rethink the assumptions of the more traditional "selective" response and to alter public programs accordingly. Specifically, the "universal" perspective questions the assumption that social services are needed only by the poor, by those in need of counseling or therapy, or in times of economic depression. Rather, "all people are regarded as having

'needs' which ipso facto become a legitimate claim on the whole society.¹³ As Robert Morris has indicated:

. . . today, almost anyone can be vulnerable. And if not today, tomorrow. Anyone can be permanently crippled by injury, accident or devastating illness produced by disease or our industrial society's disruption of the environment. The wealthiest and strongest families give birth to the severely retarded and the physically damaged. The aberrations and instabilities of the national and international economies can and will convert a community with a strong industry and stable employment into a dismal backwater afflicted with permanent unemployment. The problems of the widow and of the orphan in the past have been joined by the difficulties of divorced mothers, often left to cope with small children. Without making any attribution of cause, it suffices to note that very deep social changes have introduced these and other hazards which can arise abruptly to confront any person and any family.

As a result, the network of programs and services which once expressed our human attempt to deal with these vulnerabilities now becomes a necessity for the well-being of the entire community, and not merely an expression of charity on the part of the safe and secure directed at the occasional victim.¹⁴

Public programs thus may serve "normal 'first line' functions of modern industrial society,"¹⁵ constituting "the normal and accepted means by which individuals, families, and communities fulfill their social needs and attain healthful living."¹⁶ Or so allege the proponents of the "universal" strategy.

Policy makers confront these debates on universal and selective strategies whenever they make public decisions on the appropriate relationship between children/families and the State. If Moynihan is correct, this confrontation today is inevitable. No longer can modern governments isolate themselves from the well-being of children and families. Their actions or inactions, for good or ill, will have a dramatic impact. But, as Gilbert Steiner points out, public officials make their decisions reluctantly and cautiously. At what point should the State intervene into the traditionally "private" realm of the family? Ultimately, the choices of decision makers appear most clearly in the public policies themselves. Here questions of eligibility (who benefits? who does not?) must be answered. And here one can observe concretely the shape of the relationship between government and children and their families.

Transforming Public Policy for Children/Families:
Program Designs, 1935-1975

During the past twenty years, social services for children and their families have undergone a series of transformations which have effected changes in the clientele served and the

specific provisions of the programs. Together they determine the contours of public action for these particular groups and individuals in our society. The principal programmatic structures that defined contemporary American policy makers' choices on these issues have been articulated within the context of the Social Security Act, culminating with the passage of Title XX ("Social Services for Individuals and Families") in 1974.

The following analysis will trace the gradual incorporation of a social service strategy for children and families into the Social Security Act. It will indicate Congress's specific decisions on the appropriate types of benefits for children and their families, as well as the conditions of eligibility for these benefits. The purpose of the analysis is to set into context the provisions of the Title XX amendment and to reveal the unique character of this legislation. It will also reveal the specific nature of the transformation of the federal response to the needs of children and families in the United States.

Universal social insurance strategy. In its initial form the Social Security Act (1935) was landmark legislation which catapulted the federal government into the fields of income

maintenance and social services for particular groups in need.¹⁷ Although building on the previous efforts of state and local governments, it was innovative, combining a variety of policy concepts, definitions of eligibility, types of public aid, and methods of administration into one omnibus legislative package. The basic design of the Act reflected an overriding concern for income maintenance programs with a secondary interest in social services programs. Although the portion of the legislation that focuses on services has increased since the original formulation, the emphasis remains on income maintenance programs, including those for children and their families. Therefore, it is appropriate to specify the character of these programs and their first impact upon the social and economic security of our youngest citizens.

In formulating the provisions of the Social Security Act, policy makers were influenced both by the economic pressures of the times and the basic ideological presuppositions of American society concerning the role of the federal government in providing for the well-being of its citizens. The political and economic realities of the Depression dictated primary concern with the financial insecurity of the unemployed and the elderly who were too old to work. The federal government

responded, in part, with two major social insurance programs --unemployment compensation and old-age insurance. In each case, compulsory contributions (in the form of a payroll tax) from employers and/or employees in "covered" employment created a special fund from which participating workers who became unemployed or retired could receive cash benefits as a matter of right because of their previous contributions to the special fund. In the case of the Old Age Insurance program, the exact amount of the pensions was subject to federal regulation and was based upon the average earnings received by a specific worker prior to his/her retirement. In regard to unemployment compensation, the states carried the major responsibilities for its implementation, and state legislatures decided upon the amount of the benefits to be awarded to the various unemployed workers, the length of time that benefits might be paid, and the requirements for attaining insured status in a covered employment. In both programs, therefore, the qualifications for receiving benefits were structured around the concepts of covered employment and payroll contributions rather than of economic need; and thus people who would not have lived in poverty conditions would still be eligible for benefits under stipulated conditions

of age and unemployment.¹⁸

The impact of the social insurance programs, especially OASDI and unemployment compensation, on children and families has been widespread. According to Alfred Kadushin, more than 90 percent of all families in the United States are covered by OASDI while a somewhat smaller percentage is eligible for unemployment compensation and workman's compensation.¹⁹

In 1973 there were seven million beneficiaries of unemployment compensation, many of them with dependent children. Furthermore, at the same time OASDI numbered about five million children as recipients of its benefits: 2.85 million children receiving benefits because their fathers had died; one million because of parent disability; 600,000 because their fathers had retired; and 300,000 children over eighteen who had incurred a disability before their eighteenth birthday, and whose fathers were dead, disabled, or retired.²⁰

Policy makers in the United States have typically viewed social insurance as the most reasonable and acceptable form of income maintenance. This is the case largely because the elderly and unemployed are looked upon more favorably than other groups needing public benefits, since they have conformed to the norms of productive work and have contributed to their

own relief. This is not to say, however, that public involvement in the various types of social insurance programs has come about without obstacles. Although survivors' insurance was added to the Social Security Act in 1939, disability insurance was not initiated until 1956, and Medicare was included only in 1965. Furthermore, a national health insurance program, even after many years of debate, is still not a reality in this country; nor has the United States followed the lead of most European countries and instituted a children's or family allowance program, designed to provide all families with children with financial support in the raising of their children.²¹

Targeting dollars to needy children and families. If the federal government has been cautious in becoming involved in a comprehensive manner in social and health insurance programs, its reluctance to take a lead in providing income maintenance or social services explicitly directed at needy or dependent children and their families has been even more marked. Until the 20th century, the development of programs for children was the responsibility of state, local, and voluntary organizations. Ever since colonial days, public and private agencies have provided sporadic relief to children in extreme situations,

such as those without parents, those who were physically or mentally ill or whose parents were so afflicted, those whose parents were destitute or who neglected or abused them. Programs to deal with these situations included a form of income maintenance for families ("outdoor relief"), protective services for children, institutional care (e.g., orphanages, almshouses), and a type of foster home care ("indentured apprenticeship," especially prevalent during the Colonial period).²² In the 20th century, two factors that have served as both cause and effect of a more intensive and continuous growth of the role of the federal government in planning for the welfare of children have been the decennial White House Conferences²³ and the Social Security Act itself.

The first White House Conference, convened by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1909, focused on the problems of the "dependent child" and urged that action be taken to encourage care for children in the home as much as possible, relegating the institutionalization of children to a last resort. There were two important concrete results of this first conference: the creation of the U.S. Children's Bureau "to investigate and report. . . upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people";

and the adoption by the states, beginning with Illinois in 1911, of "mothers' pension laws" to provide public payments to impoverished widows to keep their dependent children at home. (By 1934, most of the states had at least formally adopted this type of legislation.) The White House Conferences of 1919 and 1930 continued to develop standards for the evaluation of child welfare, health, and education programs, and to provide a forum for an increasing number of professional groups focusing their attention on the needs of children.

The actual translation of these concerns and analyses into policy action by the federal government was and continues to be a typically incremental process. Even in the formulation of the Social Security Act in 1935, the needs of children and their families were at best only a secondary focus of attention. As Gilbert Steiner has written, "within the package primarily addressed to a federal interest in the problems of unemployment and old age, in a kind of afterthought, sponsors included noncontroversial grants to the states for aid to dependent children--ultimately to become the largest public assistance program--and for child welfare services." Steiner comments further that "that afterthought of 1935 represents the most advanced stage of federal policy on behalf of children until at least the mid-sixties."²⁴

Within the Social Security Act the principal program designed to support children was Aid to Dependent Children (later Aid to Families with Dependent Children). Although the social insurance programs served indirectly to aid many children and families to maintain economic security, they did not cover such contingencies as: children with fathers who are ill for prolonged periods of time; long periods of unemployment after benefits have been exhausted or not paid at all because of lack of participation in a covered employment; desertion, divorce, separation, illegitimacy, imprisonment, death of the father (if not eligible for social insurance benefits)--all circumstances which might easily result in the reduction of economic well-being. Indeed, most AFDC families consist of a mother with children, but a father who is alive and absent from the home (because of divorce, desertion, etc.). The AFDC program is designed to provide income maintenance to these families if their situation requires such support in order to maintain economic well-being for the family. Determination of "need" is left to the states (and sometimes local authorities). They must determine the costs of living essentials (rent, clothes, food, utilities, etc.) in their particular areas, ascertain the income status of the AFDC

applicants, and thus the amount of benefits to be allocated in each case. Although benefit levels in most states cover only the essentials of living at best, the program does assist about eight million children in any single month, along with about three million parents. It is estimated that AFDC has assisted 100 million children since its inception in 1935 to grow up in their own homes rather than be put in foster homes or institutions.²⁵

Child welfare services. Provisions for social services to children/families constituted a separate section (Title V) of the Social Security Act and consisted of the following: maternal and child health services, services for crippled children, and child welfare services. "Child welfare services," instituted in Title V-3, were designed for "the protection and care of homeless, dependent, and neglected children, and children in danger of becoming delinquent." Both the health and welfare services were targeted originally toward "predominantly rural areas and areas of special need."²⁶ The purpose of the child welfare services, for example, was to assist the states in initiating new services, reaching more children with already existing services (albeit in predominantly rural areas), and improving the quality of services

in general. Unlike the comparable public assistance program for children and families, ADC or AFDC, child welfare services were not targeted to persons in severe economic need; rather, the aim of the program has been "to assure the availability of child welfare services to all children needing them, regardless of race, religion, economic or social status, or length of residence in one spot."²⁷ Thus, the child welfare services, at least in intent, incorporated some of the features of universalism, and in this respect distinguished themselves from the selective approach of Aid to Dependent Children with its strong emphasis on economic need as a basis for receiving benefits.

In 1958, the federal government abolished the restriction on the use of federal funds for the provision of services to rural areas, and thus urban segments of state populations became eligible for federal support. Indicative of the increasing concern by policy makers, Congress in 1958 also established an Advisory Council on Child Welfare Services to make recommendations on the planning of children's services. In 1960, both the Council's report and the decennial White House Conference called for the expansion of the definition of child welfare services. Congress responded in 1962 by amending

Title V-3 of the Social Security Act to give a new definition of the term "child welfare services" as follows.

Public social services which supplement or substitute for parental care and supervision for the purpose of (1) preventing or remedying, or assisting in the solution of problems which may result in the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children, (2) protecting and caring for the homeless, dependent, or neglected children, (3) protecting and promoting the welfare of children of working mothers, (4) otherwise protecting and promoting the welfare of children, including strengthening of their own home where possible, or where needed, the provision of adequate care of children away from their homes in foster family homes or day care or other child-care facilities.²⁸

With this expanded delineation of child welfare services, federal policy makers took a major step in differentiating the various types of services that might be pertinent to the well-being of children and their families. Currently, the term 'child welfare services' embraces, according to Alfred Kadushin, the following types of services: 1) "supportive services," such as mental health and family agency services, protective services and case work service under the AFDC program; they are designed to help families and children to cope with problems within the home; 2) "supplementary services," such as day care and home-maker services; they are designed to carry out on a temporary and limited basis one or more of the responsibilities of a parent or guardian; and 3) "substitutive

services," foster family care, adoption, or institutional child care; these services are designed to replace completely (on a temporary or permanent basis) the actions normally performed by parents or related guardians.²⁹

Social Services and Public Assistance: Initial Efforts

Unlike the child welfare service program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children was not originally a services program. As noted earlier, it was intended as an interim income maintenance program to assist particular categories of poor people who were temporarily unqualified for social insurance benefits while the latter program was expanding and maturing. However, the public assistance program did not "wither away" as policy makers had prescribed. By the 1950's, the persistent and growing number of persons receiving AFDC payments and the consequent rising costs of the program encouraged the search for solutions to the problem. According to professional social workers, the locus of the problem was the individual recipients themselves, whose maladjustments perpetuated their poverty in an affluent society. The proper remedy was professional treatment through social casework services. Such services had been provided on a sporadic basis by some workers

during the first twenty years of the AFDC program. It was not until 1956, however, that Congress, in the Social Security amendments, initiated a policy providing social services for public welfare recipients in order to assist them in becoming "economically self-sufficient." The Senate Finance Committee report on the bill noted that "services to strengthen family life are an investment in future citizens" and therefore an appropriate program objective for AFDC (and Aid to the Blind, Old Age Assistance). Furthermore, the report contended that services contribute to effective administration.

"To the extent that they can remove or ameliorate the causes of dependency they will decrease the time that assistance is needed and the amounts needed."³⁰ Although the final legislation authorized a 50 percent contribution to the states for the provision of social services, it did not specify a special authorization for social services, nor did it require the states to make services available.

The major impetus for the provision of social services for public assistance recipients came in the early 1960's. In September 1961, the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Welfare issued a report calling for changes in public welfare legisla-

tion, including "an accelerated, intensive program, throughout all welfare departments, of rehabilitative services to ADC families by trained personnel." The purpose of these services was "to help individuals and families receiving ADC become self-supporting, and to correct or prevent the family disruption which results from absence of a father or his unemployment."³¹ On February 1, 1962, President Kennedy presented a Special Message to Congress on the reform of the public welfare programs. Noting the continued dependency of many people, for reasons "often more social than economic, more often subtle than simple," Kennedy asserted that "merely responding with a 'relief check' to complicated social or personal problems--such as ill health, faulty education, domestic discord, racial discrimination, or inadequate skills--is not likely to provide a lasting solution. Such a check must be supplemented, or in some cases made unnecessary, by positive services and solutions, offering the total resources of the community to meet the total needs of the family to help our less fortunate citizens help themselves."³² Although neither the President nor his Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Abraham Ribicoff, believed that a social strategy alone would be effective in helping people attain self-

sufficiency, they did perceive social services as a necessary supplement to income maintenance in removing people permanently from the public assistance rolls.

From these early initiatives came a series of legislative efforts to institute and reformulate the appropriate objectives and role of social services for families and children in the AFDC program. The political and legislative history of these efforts are too intricate for a comprehensive discussion here.³³ As in the discussion of the child welfare service programs, the analysis will be confined to two principal questions: the basis of allocation of the services and the nature of services themselves. An overview of the development of social services for children and their families from 1962 to 1975 indicates a continuous expansion of social service clientele and a diversification of the services provided. The 1962 amendments limited eligibility for social services to people receiving public assistance (e.g., AFDC), to former recipients, and "others who, in the light of their precarious life circumstances, were potential candidates for public assistance."³⁴ The Bureau of Family Services (in DHEW) defined potential recipients as those who might reasonably need public assistance payments within one year of their

application for social services. Although theoretically this legislation and corresponding administrative regulations pointed toward the extension of social services beyond the public welfare recipient population, practically this was not the case. Neither financial nor professional social worker resources were available in sufficient quantities to make this a reality. Furthermore, there was a conflict in objectives, since the primary purpose of the social services was to reduce the size of the public assistance population while there was also an effort to expand the number of persons receiving public governmental benefits by providing social services to people who might become public assistance recipients during the next year.

The types of social services authorized in the 1962 amendment were less comprehensive than they were to become in subsequent years. Although the term "social services" was not defined in the legislation, the focus was on "intensive social casework services that presumably would rehabilitate the poor, changing their behavior in ways that would help them to become economically independent."³⁵ Authorized social services also included homemaker and foster care services, though these were subsidiary to the main thrust of social casework.

The evidence of the effect of social casework between 1962 and 1967, when this approach underwent major reevaluation, was disappointing to most policy makers. Between 1962 and 1966, one million recipients were added to the public assistance rolls. Whether social casework could have been successful under optimum conditions is a matter of conjecture. However, the conditions were far from optimal. As Neil Gilbert has observed, ". . . large caseloads, demands of eligibility certification (while trying to establish a casework relationship), diversity of clientele (many of whom did not need or want casework services but had to accept them), qualifications of staff (many of whom were not professionally trained), and omnipresent bureaucratic regulations of public assistance administration were hardly conducive to the performance of effective social casework."³⁶

Social services: 1967 amendments. Although Congress was dismayed at the lack of progress from 1962 to 1967 toward self-support for public assistance recipients, it did not abandon this strategy. On the contrary, in the 1967 Social Security Amendments, Congress expanded the range of social services for children and families, while the principal goals of self-support and strengthening the family remained the same. The

1967 legislation authorized a program of "family services" to achieve these goals. The Department of HEW regulations issued to implement the new amendment required that the states "assist all appropriate persons to achieve employment and self-sufficiency, (and provide) child care services for persons required to accept work or training, foster care services, family planning services, protective services, services related to health needs, and services to meet particular needs of families and children."³⁷ The "particular needs" phrase included "obtaining education, overcoming homemaking and housing problems, reuniting families, money management and consumer education, child rearing, education of family living, and in appropriate cases, protective and vendor payments and related services."³⁸ Furthermore, states had the option of providing (and being reimbursed for) various "family services" in order to strengthen the family or to assist members of the family to attain self-support and personal independence; and "selected services," including child care (in addition to those required), educational and training services (where there was no Work Incentive Program), emergency assistance and legal services. Mildred Rein has remarked that: "the 'particular needs' and 'full range' clauses of the regulations created

such a comprehensive array of specified services that literally almost any service was federally reimbursable."³⁹ Thus, by 1967, there was a trend away from a narrowly conceived set of social services, revolving around the activities of social casework, to a much more diversified conception of services. As Martha Derthick points out:

In official language, a distinction. . . began to develop between 'soft' and 'hard' services. Advice and counseling from a caseworker were 'soft' in this managerial parlance and presumably less valuable than day-care centers or drug treatment centers, or work training, which were 'hard' and which were much more widely available in 1969 than in 1962 because of the intervening growth of public programs for social purposes. The changed conception and changed social context help lay the basis for granting funds for a much wider range of activity than the daily routines of caseworkers.⁴⁰

Furthermore, there was a reorientation in the purpose of the social services away from a sole concern of reducing economic dependency to "a broad-scope network concerned to a large extent with maintenance and care-oriented services. These services are directed more at enhancing human development and the general quality of life for those in need than reducing economic dependency."⁴¹

Congress in 1967 also relaxed the requirements of eligibility for social service benefits. Former recipients of

public assistance were now defined as those who had received welfare benefits during the previous two years and potential recipients as those who might receive benefits within the next five years. Moreover, the concept of "group eligibility" was introduced so that people living in low income neighborhoods and in institutions became eligible for social services.

Aftermath of the 1967 amendments: challenge and response.

The effect of the broadening of eligibility and diversification of services was to increase dramatically the costs of the services for the federal government. From 1967 to 1971, federal grants for all social services in the public assistance titles increased from \$282 million to \$741 million; and from 1971 to 1972, federal expenditures in this area rose to \$1.6 billion. One explanation for this dramatic increase in annual spending for social services was the "open-end" funding arrangement by which the federal government contributed 75% of the funds for the provision of social services. Another factor which contributed to this continuous increase was a provision in the 1967 amendments which allowed the state welfare (or social service) agencies to purchase from private (non-profit) sources, as well as from other public agencies, the services needed by their clientele. These factors will be discussed

in more detail in Chapter II.

Alarmed by the accelerating costs of social services spending in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the Nixon Administration attempted to redirect social services and reduce the level of federal involvement in this policy area. It is beyond the scope of this essay to detail all of the proposals and counter-proposals, political and administrative actions centering on social services policy issues during this period. Rather, the focus of attention will center on proposed redirections of federal involvement initiated by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) and the Nixon Administration in the early 1970's. The controversies surrounding these proposals finally resolved themselves (at least temporarily) in an unexpected way with the creation of Title XX of the Social Security Act in 1974.

The first strategy to control federal social services spending was to attempt to impose a ceiling on the amount of funding that the government would allocate annually to the states. The first attempt at a "closed-end" type of appropriation came in 1970 in a proposed new social services title to accompany the Family Assistance Plan. Although FAP did not pass in both houses of Congress, the President requested

in both 1971 and 1972 that the increase in federal social services spending be limited to 10 percent above the previous year's total. However, many policy makers thought that this proposal would not resolve the inequities among the states that had resulted from the "open-end" approach; states that had not received their "fair share" in the past would be fixed in this position under the new proposal. Furthermore, these same policy makers considered that the 10 percent increase was too low and thus was not politically acceptable.⁴² Consequently, neither of these appropriation requests was enacted into law.

In October 1972, in the wake of a Presidential veto of the Department of HEW appropriation bill, partially on the grounds of the lack of a social services ceiling, and a projected need for a \$4.7 billion (as compared to \$1.6 billion in the previous fiscal year) federal contribution toward social services, Congress acted to control spending in this area. The result was a \$2.5 billion ceiling on social services expenditures by the federal government. The new law provided that 90 percent of the expenditures be allocated to public assistance recipients, while only 10 percent could be distributed for services to former or potential public assistance

recipients. Although some services were exempted from this ruling, such as child care, services to the mentally retarded, drug addicts, services for foster children and for family planning, the basic thrust of the legislation was to alter the apparent trend toward universalism that had been developing with respect to the provision of social services.

It is within the context of this legislation that one should view the proposed HEW social services regulations issued in February 1973. These regulations addressed the two principal substantive issues discussed in this section of the chapter--i.e., the basis of allocation of services and the types of social services to be offered through public agencies. On the former issue, the regulations redefined the terms "former" and "potential" recipient to include only those persons who had received public assistance within three months or were likely to need public assistance within the following six months. Furthermore, under the regulations, a person or family would be eligible for social services only if their income did not exceed 133 1/3 percent of the assistance payment level in the state, whereas former regulations had no income criterion; and no group eligibility was to be allowed.⁴³

In regard to the types of services provided, former regulations had authorized 21 services, 16 of which were mandatory. The new regulations proposed to require only three services: family planning, foster care, and child protection. In addition, there were eight optional services, including day care, educational services, health-related services, homemaker and home management services, among others.⁴⁴

These regulations engendered adverse reaction from many of the interest and constituency groups that had benefited from the previous loosely defined regulations, from professional groups interested in furthering the welfare of these beneficiaries (as well as enhancing their own positions), and from political and administrative officials in the states. For example, the National Governors' Conference responded that the regulations were contradictory to the tenets of New Federalism and unwise restrictions on the definition of eligibility standards.⁴⁵ Soon after the regulations were made public, a Social Services Coalition (initially about 20 organizations, including labor unions, associations of state and local governments, professional and advocate organizations in the social service field) was formed to study the regulations, determine what restrictive impacts they might

have, and plan strategies to counteract these policy proposals.

As a result of the efforts of the National Governors' Conference and the Social Services Coalition, the Senate Finance Committee held hearings on the proposed regulations in May 1973. The members of the committee were concerned by the testimony they received on the restrictive nature of these regulations. Therefore, they voted to prevent the regulations from going into effect until January 1974. This extension was later shortened to November 1973. Now the Social Services Coalition had two options: work to change the regulations or attempt to initiate new legislation to remove the provisions of the regulations that they opposed. They chose the latter option.

In subsequent meetings of the Coalition, controversies arose over whether there should be federally mandated services which the state would have to provide or whether there should be an emphasis on stating goals only and allowing the states to determine the actual services. In other words, could the states be trusted to provide the necessary services to enhance the well-being of their needy citizens? By the end of 1973, there was still no new legislation. Although the HEW regulations had gone into effect on November 1, Congress postponed

the effective date of the regulations until January 1, 1975.

During 1974 a spirit of cooperation emerged among the participants in the formulation of Title XX. Health, Education, and Welfare administrators realized that the regulatory strategy had failed and that new legislation was the only alternative. HEW officials proposed that policy making authority and responsibility for social services reside in the states rather than the federal government. This was clearly a dramatic change from their February 1973 position. Throughout 1974, there were meetings between the Social Services Coalition and members of HEW to work out compromises on many of the substantive issues. In October 1974, a bill was submitted to Congress and was passed in final form on December 20, 1974. President Ford signed the legislation on January 4, 1975, and Title XX of the Social Security Act became law.

Serving Children Through Title XX:
Mandates and Constraints

Title XX, like most important legislation, is a bundle of compromises. However, it has its own identity which differs from any other social service program. What are its fundamental characteristics? Three of them are embodied in require-

ments which stipulate: 1) the types of services that states can deliver under Title XX; 2) eligibility restrictions for services; and 3) limitations on federal financial involvement.⁴⁶

Types of services. Title XX grants to the states a relatively free hand in deciding what types of services to provide children, the aged, and other eligible groups in need. Rather than indicating explicitly what services a state must provide, the federal legislation states goals toward which services should be directed. They include:

- (1) Achieving and maintaining economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency;
- (2) Achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency, including reduction or prevention of dependency;
- (3) Preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults unable to protect their own interests, or preserving, rehabilitating, or reuniting families;
- (4) Preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care; or
- (5) Securing referral or admission for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate, or providing services for individuals in institutions.⁴⁷

The range of services appropriate to attaining these goals

is almost without bounds. The Title XX statute suggests the following as possibilities:

child care services, protective services for children and adults, services for children and adults in foster care, services related to the management and maintenance of the home, day care services for adults, transportation services, training and related services, employment services, informational, referral, and counseling services, the preparation and delivery of meals, health support services, and appropriate combinations of services designed to meet the special needs of children, the aged, the mentally retarded, the blind, the emotionally disturbed, the physically handicapped, and alcoholics and drug addicts.⁴⁸

And this list by no means exhausts the possibilities, for appropriate services are not limited to those listed in the statute. One might note the large number of services that focus directly or indirectly on the needs of children. They exhibit an awareness and concern for the special needs of this age group on the part of the federal legislators.

Congress went even further in assuring the states flexibility in determining appropriate services for their citizens. It stipulated that: "The Secretary (of HEW, now Health and Human Services) may not deny payment (under Title XX) to any state with respect to any expenditure on the ground that it is not an expenditure for the provision of a service directed at a goal described."⁴⁹ Congress thereby prohibited the federal government from vetoing a service proposal (with a few

exceptions, indicated below) by a state, if that state insisted that the service was intended to attain one of the five federal program goals.

The states, however, were not absolutely free to deliver any service under the auspices of Title XX. Congressional policy makers differentiated social services from medical services, which were covered in such legislation as Medicaid and Medicare. Moreover, Title XX stipulates that "the provision of any educational service which the State makes generally available to its residents without cost and without regard to their income" does not fall within the ambit of the Title XX social services.⁵⁰ Congress presumably wished to separate educational services with their thoroughly universalist foundations from social services developed largely within a more or less restricted or selectivist perspective. Even with these moderate restrictions, federal lawmakers dealt most leniently with types of services that states might deliver under the authority of Title XX.

Eligibility requirements. Title XX culminates a 12 year trend of loosening the eligibility requirements for social services recipients. The statute specifies three categories of recipients eligible for social services: 1) "income maintenance,"

2) "income eligible," and 3) "without regard to income."⁵¹

The "income maintenance" category is reserved for those persons either receiving or eligible to receive public assistance through either the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or Supplementary Security Income (SSI) programs. Persons in this category are "poor" according to federal or state means-test criteria. Congress indicated that at least 50 percent of the federal funds awarded to the states through Title XX must be allocated to persons qualifying for this status.

The "income eligible" category reveals an important aspect of Title XX's identity. Individuals and families in this category are not eligible for income maintenance, but their incomes are not greater than 115 percent of the state's median income (adjusted for family size). States may provide social services to persons and families within this income group, although mandatory fees must be imposed on families with incomes that range from 80 percent to 115 percent of the state's median income. However, individual states may set lower eligibility limits at their discretion and may impose fees for services provided to persons whose income is below the 80 percent state median, including those persons

receiving income maintenance. The only requirements in this case are that: 1) fees must be related to a person's income, and 2) fees "shall not exceed the cost of the service to the Title XX agency."⁵² Thus, the states have much greater flexibility than ever before in determining exactly who among what classes of people will receive social services under Title XX.

The final status, "without regard to income," is reserved for persons in need of special types of social services. They include: family planning services, information and referral services, and services "to prevent or remedy abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or adults."⁵³ Federal regulations indicate that people may receive these services regardless of their income status "at State option if the State so provides in its service plan."⁵⁴

The Title XX statutory and regulatory provisions on eligibility attempt to guide the states' efforts through mandates and opportunities. The states must respond to the service needs of those receiving income maintenance assistance. But all other social services legislation included that requirement. What is unique about Title XX is not only the wide-ranging choice among possible social services, but also the opportunity to allocate social services among a substantial

cross section of the socio-economic community, from the very poorest to those with middle class incomes, all the way to the upper classes (with respect to abuse and neglect services, for example).

Financial restrictions. Under Title XX there is a limit on the federal government's generosity in the financing social services in the states. Congress' 1972 \$2.5 billion ceiling on federal social services spending remained firmly in place under Title XX. However, even with the close-ended, formula type provision, Title XX remained a grant-in-aid program; under its requirements the states had to contribute their own share of the expenditures for the social services delivered or purchased from private sources. Congress stipulated that the federal government would continue to pay 75 percent of the costs, up to the federal allotment for each individual state. The states would provide the rest of the money. Family planning was an exception; in this case the federal would pay 90 percent of the costs, while the state would contribute the remaining 10 percent. Finally, Title XX stipulated that the states must maintain their spending level for social services at or above their appropriations for these programs during fiscal year 1974.

Summary

Because of its unique features, Title XX stands alone as a public programmatic response to the needs of children and families. However, Title XX is also embedded in an historical and developing context of public programs that serve children. Many of these programs were incorporated into the 1935 Social Security Act. They included income maintenance programs (e.g., Old Age and Survivor's Insurance and Aid to Families with Dependent Children), as well as an incipient child welfare services program that provided protective and substitutive services to children in rural areas. The major federal impetus for social services in recent years came in 1962, when Congress permitted services to public assistance recipients (and those persons who had received public assistance or were likely to receive it) and their children in order to further their economic self-sufficiency. In 1967 the eligibility standards were relaxed somewhat, and the range of social services expanded from an emphasis on "case work" services to the inclusion of educational and legal services for parents and day care services for children. The rapid growth of social services in many of the states, and the ensuing debates over the appropriate federal response, resulted

in the enactment of Title XX in December 1974. In creating the Title XX program, Congress moved closer than it ever had in the past to a universal strategy in providing social services to children and their families. The provisions of the statute apparently afford the states more opportunity for a flexible response to the "needs" of children in their respective jurisdictions. How have the states responded to this opportunity? Specifically, how has Vermont worked with-in these opportunities and constraints? An analysis of the continuing development of Title XX in Vermont from 1975 to the present is the subject of Chapters III and IV of this essay.

FOOTNOTES

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27. Mildred Arnold, "The Growth of Public Child Welfare Services," in Robert H. Bremner, Children and Youth in America: A Documentary History, Vol III (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1974), p. 622.
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42. Paul E. Mott, Meeting Human Needs: The Social and Political History of Title XX (Columbus, Ohio: National Conference on Social Welfare, 1976), p. 11.
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44. Ibid., p. 528.
45. Paul Mott, Meeting Human Needs, p. 28. (The following discussion of the development of Title XX is based largely on the research of Mott.)
46. The summary of the statute and regulations is taken from the Title XX statute and the administrative regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations.
47. Paul Mott, Meeting Human Needs, P. 87.
48. Title XX statute: Sec. 2002. (a)(1).
49. Title XX statute: Sec. 2002. (a)(3).
50. Title XX statute: Sec. 2002. (a)(10).
51. Code of Federal Regulations, op. cit., pp. 408-409.

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C H A P T E R I I

DESIGNING SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Through its decisions on the shape of social services programs, Congress attempts to mold the relationship of children, their families, and government in the United States. Social services programs, however, do not administer themselves. They do not automatically fulfill their creators' intentions. Nor do they acquire their mature form until long after their legislative birth. Until then, they often must "withstand buffeting by a constantly shifting set of political and social pressures during the implementation phase" of their existence.¹ Hence policy makers must create for their legislative offspring an institutional milieu that will ensure not only the program's survival, but also its effective administration. Effective program implementation occurs when the activities of administrators "conform" to the spirit of the program's design.²

The history of social welfare programs, and social services programs in particular, is in part a story of federal

public officials' attempts to ensure that their programs are administered in an effective manner. Because programs are always administered in an institutional context, the focus of the story is on the efforts of federal officials to develop and maintain high levels of institutional (in particular administrative) performances during the implementation of social welfare programs. The analysis of these efforts is essential for understanding the significance of Title XX.

This legislation is, in part, Congress's attempt to restructure the institutional arrangements, including federal and state relations and the decision-making processes in state administrative agencies, in order to ensure more effective and responsive social service programs for children and families (and adults). The particular identity of Title XX's administrative arrangements can be best seen in the wider context of social welfare administration in the United States since the 1930's. It is within this historical environment that Title XX developed and acquired its specific shape.

Implementing Public Programs:
the Context of Federalism

A federal arrangement of governmental institutions in the U.S. constrains the efforts of national policy makers to attain effective implementation of their programs. This federal structure may be characterized as a "kind of political order animated by political principles that emphasize the primacy of bargaining and negotiated coordination among the several power centers as a prelude to the exercise of power within a single political system, and stress the value of dispersed power centers as a means of safeguarding individual and local liberties."³ In practice this has meant that the federal government is not the actual deliverer of public goods and services; rather, it relies on the states and localities to perform the actual operating functions of most domestic programs, whether initiated at the federal or local levels. This intergovernmental feature of program implementation continues to challenge federal policy makers to devise institutional arrangements through which effective program administration may take place.

Specifically, they must address the following issues:

- 1) the appropriate division of functions and responsibilities

among federal and state (or local) governments; 2) the specific form of the intergovernmental program (e.g., categorical grant, block grant, special or general revenue sharing); 3) the extent to which detailed standards or guidelines are necessary; and 4) the degree of federal financial involvement in program implementation. In making these decisions, federal policy makers are constrained on the one hand by the status of the states in our political system, by their diversity of political and economic conditions, resources, and needs, and thus by pressures toward decentralization of implementing authority; and on the other hand, by the desire to have policies implemented according to federal standards, and thus traditionally by an emphasis on control and centralization.⁴

Institutional Structures for Social
Welfare Programs:
Intergovernmental Strategies

Social welfare programs in general and social services programs in particular clearly reflect the compromises between the centralization and non-centralization of decision-making authority. The diverse income maintenance and social service programs which constitute the field of social welfare policy incorporate different resolutions of debates over the

appropriate forms for intergovernmental programs, the extent of federal guidelines, and the degree of federal financial involvement. They range from complete federal control over program implementation to a much more common division of responsibility between federal and state (and local) governments. In the latter instances, the precise proportion of federal and state authority varies with each individual program. The common nurturing ground for all of them is the Social Security Act.

The federal control strategy. In the original Social Security Act (1935), there was only one program, Old Age Insurance (OAI), over which the federal government retained complete control. Federal policy makers opted for this arrangement in the "social security" program for the sake of administrative efficiency. They reasoned that the crucial task of keeping accurate records for all participating workers, many of whom move from one state to another during their working careers, could be accomplished best by one centralized agency. Furthermore, federal officials reasoned that equitable treatment of social security recipients necessitated a uniform program design throughout the country.⁵

The only other federally administered income maintenance program is Supplementary Security Income (SSI). It encompasses the previous Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, and the Aid to the Totally and Permanently Disabled programs, and is designed to provide cash assistance to poor people who are elderly, blind, or otherwise disabled and who qualify under a "means-test" criterion. The original programs were administered by the states under federal rules but with substantial discretion for the states built into the program design. Considerations of equity and efficiency again prompted lawmakers to nationalize and combine the three previous programs and thus ensure their effective implementation according to uniform federal guidelines.⁶

One other federal program, Disability Insurance, exhibits a slight modification of the total federal control approach. In this case, there is a program designed solely by federal authorities, with no state legislation needed to implement the program in each state. The goals and means of implementing the program are federally stipulated. However, state governments function as administrative agents of the federal government. State bureaucratic agencies determine whether applicants are eligible for disability insurance on

the basis of the federally determined criteria. A relationship of functional administrative decentralization obtains. The implementing task of one level of government has been transferred to another for the sake of efficiency and responsiveness to the particular situation in each state. However, even though state administrative discretion is very much circumscribed, the federal government is nevertheless dependent upon the states for the effective administration of the program. Evidence indicates that strict federal guidelines are not always sufficient to curtail state administrative action beyond the bounds of federal mandates. In several cases state administrators have been more responsive to the economic needs of their clientele than is warranted on the basis of the federal eligibility requirements. Thus ensuring compliant program administration even in a relatively centralized institutional arrangement within the federal system is by no means guaranteed.⁷

The federal-state partnership option. In the case of most income maintenance and social service programs, the goal of high quality implementation is potentially more elusive. In contrast to OAI, SSI, and Disability Insurance, Congress has designed the majority of its social welfare programs to

stimulate or support states' efforts to develop, expand, or maintain their own social welfare programs responsive to the diverse needs of their citizens. These programs include Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Child Welfare Services, Medicaid, and unemployment compensation. They reflect the fundamental role of the state governments in the American federal policy, since the states have been able to retain substantial control over the character and administration of these programs.

From a federal perspective, these programs offer a continuing challenge to devise methods for their effective administration. Since there are more politically powerful decision makers involved in the administration of these programs, the potential obstacles are more numerous. How much control does the federal government actually have in these cases? What important decisions concerning program administration have been left to the states? What strategies have federal officials developed to meet the challenge of high-quality administration?

Since these are federal programs, the federal government remains the initiator; and it has the opportunity to stipulate the fundamental goals of the programs.⁸ In the case of the

unemployment compensation program, the objective has been to ensure that the states will have a publicly funded operation to assist qualified persons in covered employment who have become unemployed. In regard to public assistance--Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and the former Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, and Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled programs--Congress specifies the particular types of people who can receive benefits under the program, such as the children of single parent families which have incomes below a specified level. In the child welfare programs, the federal government has encouraged the states to cooperate in "establishing, extending, and strengthening. . . public welfare services . . . for the protection and care of homeless, dependent, and neglected children, and children in danger of becoming delinquent."⁹

What had the federal government done to ensure effective programs to meet these goals? The detailed involvement of Congress or federal administrative officials in formulating directly or indirectly the provisions of the programs has varied considerably. In the case of unemployment compensation, there has been minimal federal involve-

ment in shaping the program. State legislatures decide the amount of benefits awarded to unemployed workers, the length of time that benefits may be paid, and the requirements for attaining insured status in a covered employment. In the public assistance programs, eligibility determination and the amount of payment to "welfare" recipients is a matter for state determination, within broad federal guidelines. The case of child welfare services is somewhat different. Here, state public welfare agencies are required to develop plans for the implementation of child welfare programs, and these plans have to be approved by federal administrative officials before federal funds are awarded to the states. Thus, with the partial exception of child welfare services, the states are not accountable to the federal government for the effectiveness of their actions in attaining specific objectives in these program areas. There are only vague goals held out before state administrative officials and only a few administrative stipulations about the appropriate actions to attain these goals. The real emphasis is on ensuring that federal monies will be spent on the specific programs for which they were intended (a fundamental feature of any "categorical" grant program), rather than the extent to

which that money accomplishes federal goals or deals adequately with the problems toward which the programs are directed.

This state of affairs in federal-state social welfare programs reflects the lack of consensus in American society on major policy issues and the effects of this situation on the way policies are made. In order to impose policy choices on the states, the federal government itself must have come to some definite conclusions on these matters. As the most inclusive political jurisdiction, it is the only government capable of formulating common goals for the nation. This is a difficult enough task in a purely federal program; but in an intergovernmental program, it is particularly troublesome, since "the extremely diverse interests of all state governments are directly engaged in the program's operation."¹⁰ The grant-in-aid system enables "the federal legislature to commit itself to serving very broad national purposes (such as 'more adequate' welfare) without assuming the burden of making all of the political choices it would have to make in a unitary system (how much welfare, for whom?)."¹¹ Partly reflecting this lack of consensus on particular, concrete issues, the structural mechanisms for unified, consistent

national policy making--for example, a "responsible" party system or a unified executive--are simply not present in our system of government.

Because of the "disjointed" character of the policy-making process in this country, federal efforts to ensure effective implementation of policies through intergovernmental grant-in-aid programs have focused on the administrative aspects of the implementation process, both as ends in themselves and as proxies for the control of policy outcomes. Again with reference to income maintenance programs, participating states have had to establish state administrative agencies either to implement the program itself or to oversee its administration by county or municipal jurisdictions. Furthermore, state programs have had to be in operation in all of the legal jurisdictions within the state, i.e. within all of the counties, cities, and towns in the state. Other federal provisions imposed a number of procedural requirements on state administrative agencies, including a fair hearing and appeal before a state agency for any individual whose application for financial assistance has been denied. As early as 1939 federal regulations also required that a merit system be used in the selection of administrators for

the welfare agencies implementing the programs. Federal administrators of grant programs have traditionally considered professionally competent, state administrators to be the sine qua non of efficient and responsible administration of federal policy. A counterweight to political non-centralization, they are perceived to be abiding allies of federal policy interests.¹² Thus, federal efforts to ensure high-quality program administration have tended to be indirect at best. Only rarely have they confronted in a detailed way the necessary and sufficient conditions for effective and accountable administration.

Institutional Implementation of Social Services:
A Challenge to Federal-State Relations

Social services programs for children and adults have developed within the same institutional and political milieu as most other social welfare programs in the United States. Their history reflects and accentuates many of the problems faced by programs implemented in a federal-state environment. What have been the peculiar dilemmas of social service implementation in this country? What has contributed to and reinforced these problems. What attempts have been

made to resolve these issues and with what effects? Finally, what is the special character of the Title XX response to the quest for effective administration of social services programs in the United States?

Social services' dilemma: "uncontrollable" spending. Incorporated into the 1962 Public Welfare Amendments (of the Social Security Act), social services developed as an adjunct to the public assistance programs. Social services grants required the states participating in public assistance programs to provide services to "welfare" recipients and authorized the federal government to pay 75 percent of the costs for these services. For the next decade federal control over the implementation of social services was either difficult or at times seemingly impossible. In the four years prior to 1972, social services grants to the states quadrupled, increasing from \$354 million in fiscal year 1969 to \$1.69 billion in fiscal year 1972.¹³ Neither the President nor Congress intended this growth of social services expenditures. Nor did social services professionals desire that "federal funds poured for purposes that no one in Washington knew and for which the states could offer no accounting." They "had wanted the painstaking cultivation

of professional specialties under Washington's guidance." By the early 1970's, however, social services grants had been transformed "into a measure of fiscal relief for the states."¹⁴ To many political and administrative officials, this was a dilemma. What were its causes? Who or what was responsible?

Social services legislation: loopholes in the amendments.

There appear to be two primary culprits: the 1962 and 1967 legislative amendments.¹⁵ In those amendments, lawmakers responded to four important issues: 1) how to define social services; 2) who would be eligible for social services; 3) who should provide the social services at the state level; and 4) the extent of federal financial support for the program. Potential obstacles to high-quality administration of the social services program are embedded in these responses.

The 1962 amendment specified only the purposes of the social services--self-support, self-care, strengthened family life, prevention of dependency, etc.; but it did not define exactly what services were permitted. This created a potential problem, given the high federal/state matching ratio and the lack of expenditure ceiling. The law indicated only

that the federal government would subsidize the costs of services "prescribed" or "specified" by the Secretary of HEW. The former category included those services required of states that wished to qualify for the social services grant; the latter category encompassed optional services that the states themselves might choose to provide to welfare recipients and others eligible for public aid.

In the 1967 Amendments, Congress did attempt to define 'social services', but its definition was circular and still vague. Family services became "services to a family or any member thereof for the purpose of preserving, rehabilitating, reuniting, or strengthening the family, and such other services as will assist members of a family to attain or retain capability for the maximum self-support and personal independence."¹⁶ The lack of clear definition of services meant that no precise social service objectives could be deduced from the legislation. This in turn made it difficult, if not impossible, to determine if and when social services were attaining the objectives set down for them.

In addition to the vague definitions, the 1967 Amendments omitted the stipulation that the Secretary of HEW was responsible for determining "specified" or "prescribed"

services. According to Martha Derthick, "the omission of these phrases in 1967 deprived the secretary of a firm statutory defense when states started making claims for activities they called services. The burden of proof that the claims were invalid now fell on HEW."¹⁷ Moreover, "the vagueness of the law had created a vast area of administrative choice. It was simply not clear what was authorized to be done, on behalf of whom, or by what state agencies."¹⁸ This situation exacerbated the problems of federal officials in holding the states accountable for their actions in implementing the program.

Besides the lack of clear definition of services, several other components of the social services legislation created potential difficulties for its implementation. The amendments authorized services not only to current recipients of public assistance programs, but also to former recipients and those who were "likely to become" recipients. The specification of who was "likely to become" a beneficiary changed over the years, varying from a "potential" recipient "within one year" in 1962, "within five years" in 1967, to "within six months" in the HEW proposed regulations in 1973. The effect of the 1962 and 1967 specifications was potentially

to expand the scope of the intended beneficiaries of social service aid and to move toward a more universal allocation of benefits. This might increase the effectiveness of the social services strategy in attaining the objectives of self-care and prevention of dependency. However, it also had the potential of rendering state agency judgments about a person's eligibility less susceptible to federal overview. After all, how does one effectively contradict an administrator's judgment that a person will be a public assistance recipient "within five years"?

The 1962 Public Welfare Amendments also permitted state agencies to purchase services from other state agencies, in particular state health and vocational rehabilitation agencies, "or any other state agency which the Secretary (of HEW) may determine to be appropriate." Social service agencies could not purchase services directly from private agencies in 1962, but they could do so indirectly by acting through one of the other state agencies which would then contract with the private agency. In 1967 the social service amendments broadened the authorization to purchase services to include private agencies, at the discretion of the Secretary of HEW. Once again this statutory feature of the program

held out the promise of effective and efficient action to respond to the social service needs of individuals. If an agency was not capable of supplying these needs itself, it could then "contract" for the service provisions. But the possibility of unaccountable private agency action (especially after 1967) could not be overlooked. Without the appropriate oversight, private agencies might charge state public agencies for services not actually rendered or for services provided that were really not necessary to the improved well-being of the recipient.

The final problematic feature of the social services amendments was their "open-ended" character. Congress obligated itself to match (on a 75/25 ratio) state expenditures, no matter how many people received social service benefits. It judged that the economic conditions in the states were in continuous flux, and so therefore were the number of service recipients and the aggregate size of state service expenditures. Consequently, Congress reasoned that it would be impractical to set a particular level of federal expenditures in advance. In the case of assistance payments, Congress had imposed a limit on federal obligations by stipulating the amount of money it would spend on each recipient.

The social services grants did not impose such a fiscal ceiling; the federal government agreed to pay 75 percent of social services expenditures, regardless of how much the states awarded to how ever many present, former, or potential "welfare" recipients.

Policy makers undoubtedly saw this provision as integral to their plan of action. Congress had formulated the goals of the program, (at least in 1962) prescribed the kinds of services appropriate to attaining these goals, and indicated the clientele eligible to receive services. Now it promised in advance to appropriate the needed funds to make the service strategy effective. But how to hold the states accountable for their actions and decisions? How to ensure that their choices about who to serve and how to serve them effectively (i.e., to ensure their independent status, rather than their continued dependence) would conform to federal intentions? Legislation which afforded the opportunity for potentially effective action also had the potential to become a Trojan horse of "uncontrollable" spending.

Federal/state administration: 1962-1967. In such a situation federal administrative guidelines became an important factor in securing federal control over state action. The

first set of HEW guidelines was issued by the Bureau of Family Services in 1962, and were in effect for five years. (FBS was founded in 1936 as the Bureau of Public Assistance and renamed in 1962 to reflect the new interest in social services.) The BFS was staffed by professional social work specialists who had a particular conception of social services and a strong professional attitude toward the appropriate administration of intergovernmental programs. It conceived of services in terms of social casework by a skilled social worker. Furthermore, the BFS considered its responsibilities to include the careful control of state execution of casework. For example, it promulgated rules and standards for caseloads, ratio of supervisors to workers, the frequency of social worker visits to clients, and the training of caseworkers. Federal social service grants went largely to pay for the salaries of these caseworkers, who would ensure adequate (effective and accountable) implementation of the program.

The Bureau did anticipate that one aspect of the law, the purchase of services provision, might make it vulnerable to state exploitation. It feared that the states would apply federal social service grants to the costs of schools, hos-

pitals, and other state activities. If this happened the goal of services directed primarily to the poor might be sacrificed to a more "universal" allocation of funds, and furthermore Congress might decide to alter the open-ended arrangement and thereby reduce the total funds available for social services expansion as well as the potential effectiveness of the program. Therefore, the BFS ordered state public assistance agencies not to purchase services that were normally the responsibility of other state agencies, and not to replace "present levels of effort by other state agencies in respect to public assistance clients."¹⁹

Overall, the Bureau of Family Service's relations with the states was "thoroughly regulatory and hortatory. Having a clear doctrine of what public assistance administration ought to be like, it set high standards for the states, spelled them out at great length in 'state letters', and (had) worked with utmost determination for some thirty years (i.e., from the beginning of the Bureau of Public Assistance in 1936) to bring state governments up to standards."²⁰

Whatever the virtues of this style of intergovernmental relations, however, it did not achieve the intended goals of the Public Welfare Amendments of 1962, i.e. the reduction

of welfare dependency. On the contrary, between 1962 and 1967, "welfare" rolls increased steadily.

This situation engendered reactions from Congress, high level administrators in HEW, and the public in general. Critics saw the problem in terms of ineffective implementation of the program. Specifically, they argued that the BFS approach was too rigid and narrow. Subsequently, statutory and administrative reforms were instituted that would have profound effects on the character and direction of the program and the relations of federal and state officials in controlling its implementation.

Impact of 1967 reforms: the road to "uncontrollable" spending. As discussed earlier, the 1967 Amendments mandated a broadened scope of services and allowed purchase of services from private agencies. This in effect expanded the federal fiscal role in social service delivery, while again leaving to HEW the formulation of specific guidelines for the implementation of the program. The revised administrative guidelines emerged in January 1969 in the wake of an administrative reorganization in HEW. Responsibility for social services administration was removed from BFS and transferred to a new organization, the Social and Rehabilitation Service

(SRS), which encompassed the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, the Administration on Aging, the Mental Retardation Division of the Bureau of Health Services in the Public Health Service, and the Welfare Administration, comprising the Bureau of Family Services and the Children's Bureau. At first the administration of social service grants was divided among several of these units, but soon a new agency, The Community Services Administration, was created "to provide a focal point for development of improved methods of social service delivery, improve management of social service programs, and provide for better community-wide planning and coordination of these services."²¹ The point was to improve institutional performance at the state and federal levels to ensure the more effective implementation of the social services program.

The creation of the Community Services Administration and especially the Social and Rehabilitation Service increased the generalist administrative control over professional specialists in HEW and enabled better coordination among the specific services provided. "Career officials" in the SRS, members of the civil service, but not program specialists, prepared the new guidelines. In contrast to

the 1962 guidelines, which were prepared in the BFS by a professional social worker, the new guidelines were prepared by an inter-agency committee in the SRS which tended to subordinate the perspective of any one program specialty.²²

In virtually every respect the new guidelines were more permissive toward state administrative action than their 1962 counterparts. They abandoned the narrow BFS definition of social services as casework by trained specialists. Reflecting the new statutory emphasis, services provided through day care centers, drug treatment programs, or work training programs for AFDC recipients were added to the daily routines of social caseworkers as legitimate forms of state activity, for which the federal government would contribute 75 percent of the cost. Furthermore, in regard to casework activities, the previous standards relating to caseload, supervisor/worker ratios, and the number of visits per client were dropped.

The 1969 guidelines also addressed the issue of purchase of services. Most of the former restrictions were dropped, and state public welfare agencies were no longer forbidden to pay for services that were normally the responsibility of other state agencies. Indeed, "the new rules positively required the states to increase their use of pur-

chase; State plans were to 'assure progressive development of arrangements with a number and variety of agencies. . . with the aim of providing opportunities for individuals to exercise choice with regard to the source of purchased service.'"²³ Perhaps the best overall characterization of the 1969 guidelines is by Martha Derthick: "The guidelines . . . encouraged state entrepreneurship. States were invited to use their imaginations in devising services."²⁴

The new federal guidelines both reflected and encouraged a new perspective on the social services program. The new perspective was much more overtly "political" than had been the case previously. The arena of action at the state level had shifted in the middle 1960's. Governors and their appointed staffs took the lead in expanding social service programs in their states, and they continuously "tested the bounds of federal intent."²⁵ They were less concerned with professional standards of administration and accountability to federal bureaucratic officials than with securing for their individual states all the social service grant money that they could obtain. In this activity they were abetted by some of the principal officials in HEW responsible for the administration of the social services programs. Sev-

eral of them were former state officials who had worked earlier at the acquisition of grants for their respective states.²⁶

The combination of strong pressure by state officials, the predisposition of some politically appointed officials in HEW to respond favorably to the state demands, and the overall looseness of the federal statutory and administrative guidelines for social service implementation resulted in a period of "uncontrollable" social service grant increases. The largest states, such as New York, Illinois, and California accounted for much of this growth; collectively, they received 58 percent of the federal social service grants in 1972. Between fiscal years 1971 and 1972, when federal social services grants increased by nearly one billion dollars (from \$740 million to \$1.68 billion), New York and Illinois together accounted for 70 percent of this growth in expenditures. Most of the increases in state expenditures came from the federal encouragement of purchases of services by welfare departments from other state agencies, including (in New York) health, education, corrections, narcotics control, youth, probation, and state university organizations.²⁷ Other small states began to follow the example of

these larger states; and in July 1972, nine states projected increases of over 1,000 percent above their grant allotments for the previous year. Incredibly, "Mississippi projected an increase of 42,118 percent (sic), a sum that was more than half of the state's budget."²⁸

The federal response to "uncontrollable" spending: playing the Title XX card. Social services grants had increased sufficiently by 1971 to engender a Presidential response. In 1971, and again in 1972, the Administration proposed limiting social services grants increases to 110 percent of the previous fiscal year. In both instances, Congress defeated these measures. The Nixon Administration also recommended reorganizing social services within the context of its Family Assistance Plan (FAP), but this program too was defeated in Congress. Finally, in October 1972, Congress agreed to impose a \$2.5 billion ceiling on social services expenditures by the federal government. Moreover, it instructed HEW to prepare a new set of regulations for the social services programs.

The second Nixon Administration, beginning in January 1973, was much more oriented to fiscal management, especially

in dealing with social programs, than was the first Administration. Reflecting this perspective, the new regulations on social services were quite restrictive in terms of state discretionary action. The emphasis was now on institutional changes that would ensure tight accountability for social services programs in the states. The sudden change in attitude and the restrictive actions based on it intensified considerably the conflict between the federal HEW officials and the state and local officials and interest groups who desired to continue to provide social services in a more expansive manner. As the last chapter indicated, the many proposals and counterproposals eventually resulted in the compromise legislation that became Title XX of the Social Security Act in January 1975.

Like the 1962 and 1967 Amendments, Congress designed Title XX in part to ensure high-quality administration of the social services programs within the context of federal-state "cooperation." As the analysis has indicated, the policy makers' first two efforts were not completely successful. How did Title XX differ from the two previous cases? How did Congress intend Title XX to improve the implementation of social services in the United States?

In the first place, Congress attempted no definition of social services in the Title XX legislation. It did indicate five broad goals toward which services should be directed; but, with a few specific exceptions, Congress left to the states the task of formulating social services appropriate to the attainment of the federal goals.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Congress mandated that at least 50 percent of federal social services funds should go to persons eligible for public assistance. However, beyond that prescription, it allowed each state to decide how to spend the remaining portion of its social services allotment, again within certain restrictions that would control the access to services by people with sufficiently high levels of income to pay in part or completely for them.

Congress balanced its leniency in service definition and eligibility requirements by imposing a strict limit on the federal contribution to social services spending. Policy makers stipulated a \$2.5 billion dollar ceiling on federal expenditures, to be allotted on a "formula" basis to the states. Congress intended here to restrict severely the "grantmanship" aspect of the previous experience with

the program. No longer would the size of state grants "be determined by creative interpretation of federal guidelines, enterprising administrative reorganizations, proposal-writing skills, and the general 'wheeling dealing' of the consummate grantsman."²⁹

Thus, in the Title XX program, Congress provided a direction for federal and state administrators' efforts (the five major goals), considerable flexibility to the states in devising methods of reaching those goals (loose specification of services), the opportunity to direct services for a fairly broad range of people (moderately unrestrictive eligibility requirements), and the incentive to implement the program in an efficient manner (because of the fixed amount of federal funding that each state might acquire under the social services program).

But Congress was not satisfied with these provisions. It wanted to ensure the effectiveness of the Title XX program. Perceiving the task to be bound up with high-quality institutional performance, Congress prescribed that each state submit to federal officials a Comprehensive Annual Services Program (CASP) plan. According to the Title XX statute, each CASP plan is to contain the following infor-

mation: 1) a statement of "the objectives to be achieved under the program"; 2) a listing of the services that the state intends to offer and a discussion of the relationship of the individual services and the Title XX goals; 3) the categories of individuals to whom the state will award social services; 4) the source of funding for the individual services; 5) an indication of the public and/or private agency responsible for the implementation of the services programs; 6) "a description of the planning, evaluation, and reporting activities to be carried out under the program"; 7) "a description of the steps taken, or to be taken, to assure that the needs of all residents of, and all geographic areas in, the state were taken into account in the development of the plan"; 8) an indication of how the Title XX authorized services will be coordinated with programs sponsored under the Title IV-A and IV-B (i.e., AFDC and child welfare services), the Supplementary Security Income (SSI), and the Medicaid programs, "to assure maximum feasible utilization of services under these programs to meet the needs of the low income population."³⁰

The HEW administrative regulations tend simply to reiterate these requirements. However, they do specify more

closely the CASP plan requirements at two points. First, in terms of objectives, the administrative regulations prescribe that the individual state objectives "shall be stated in the services plan in measurable terms so that an assessment may be made of the extent to which they are achieved."³¹ Secondly, the regulations formulate more clearly than the statute the meaning of the terms 'planning' and 'evaluation'. In its description of the 'planning' process, the state Title XX plan must characterize:

. . . (the) relationship with the State budget process and the legislature; input from other State, regional and local planning units and from local general purpose governmental units; citizen organizations and individuals; relationship of needs assessment and services resources inventory to setting of program priorities and allocations of resources.³²

For the 'evaluation' section, the federal regulations required a review of the "purpose, scope and timing of current and proposed evaluations, and the schedule for dissemination of evaluation reports."³³

The main objective of the CASP plan is to improve the effectiveness of social services programs by rendering the policy-making process more self-conscious and deliberative than it might otherwise be. Federal lawmakers also reasoned that the state policy-making process could be more accountable

to state citizens and more effective if they mandated citizen participation. Therefore, the Title XX statute specifies that each year a proposed CASP plan will be presented to the citizens at least ninety days prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. During this time the state must allow at least forty-five days for citizen responses. The administrative regulations require in the CASP plans:

. . . a general description of the steps taken to assure public participation in the development of the services program, including contacts with public and private organizations, officials of county and local general purpose government units, and citizen groups and individuals, including recipients of services.³⁴

The regulations furthermore mandate citizen participation in all important aspects of social services program planning, including "needs assessment, identification of priorities, and allocation of resources throughout the development of the services plan."³⁵

Properly implemented, federal lawmakers thought, Title XX would make state social services agencies more effective in helping children and families and also more accountable to the federal government, to state citizens, and to services recipients. It would help to ensure that the flexibility given to the states under Title XX would

be used by them in a responsible and productive manner.

Through Title XX's program design and requirements, Congress hoped to remedy the problems encountered during the previous twelve years of attempting to implement a social services program within a non-centralized political and administrative arena.

FOOTNOTES

1. Eugene Bardach, The Implementation Game (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1979), p. 5.
2. The implementation of a public program often does not allow for "letter of the law" compliance. Legislative mandates tend to be too vague for that kind of precision. So, "effective" implementation is not always a clear-cut matter. It is also important to note that "effective implementation" of a program does not guarantee the "effectiveness" of the program; that is, it does not ensure that the program design will be sufficient to attain the goals set forth for the program by the lawmakers. Nor does an "ineffectively" implemented program (one whose administration does not "conform" to the spirit of the design) mean that the goals of the program will not be attained. They may be, but not because of actions carried out in "conformance" with the program design.
For a discussion of the concept of 'effectiveness', see: Robert C. Fried, Performance in American Bureaucracy (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, and Co., 1976), Chapters 3 & 6.
3. Daniel Elazer, "Federalism", International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 5, p. 354.
4. For an analysis of the integral role of the states in the American federal system, see: Daniel Elazer, American Federalism: A View from the States, 2nd edition (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1972), p. 3. Also, on intergovernmental relations in general in the United States, see: Deil S. Wright, Understanding Intergovernmental Relations, 2nd edition (Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1982).
5. On the development of the "social security" program, see: Martha Derthick, Policy Making for Social Security (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1979).
6. For a short analysis of the SSI program, see: Sar Levitan, Programs in Aid of the Poor for the 1980's, 4th edition (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp. 35-38.

7. For an analysis of the problems of implementing the Disability Insurance Program, see: Irving Howards, Henry P. Brehm, and Saad Z. Nagi, Disability: From Social Problem to Federal Program (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980).
8. For analysis of the federal regulations and guidelines on these programs, see: Levitan, op. cit., passim.
9. For an analysis of the child welfare programs, see: Mildred Arnold, "The Growth of Public Child Welfare Services," in Robert Bremner, ed., Children and Youth in America: A Documentary History; Volume III: 1933-1973 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974, pp. 621-626.
10. Martha Derthick, The Influence of Federal Grants: Public Assistance in Massachusetts (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 195.
11. Ibid., p. 196.
12. For an analysis of federal attempts to improve personnel aspects of state administrative agencies in the public assistance field, see: Martha Derthick, ibid. But also see the following for discussions of the times when state professionals do not work "cooperatively with their federal counterparts:" Jerome T. Murphy, "The Education Bureaucracies Implement Novel Policy: The Politics of Title I of ESEA, 1965-1972," Policy and Politics in America, ed. by Allan P. Sindler. (Boston, Mass., Little, Brown, and Company, 1973. Also see Murphy's study of the implementation of Title V of the ESEA: State Education Agencies and Discretionary Funds (D.C. Heath, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1974). For an analysis of the importance of "dispositions" of bureaucrats as a determinant of their actions, see: George C. Edward, III, Implementing Public Policy (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1980), ch. 4.

13. Martha Derthick, Uncontrollable Spending for Social Services Grants (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1975), p.2.
14. Ibid., p. 4.
15. The following discussion of the 1962 and 1967 amendments is based on Derthick, ibid., chapter 2.
16. Ibid., p. 12.
17. Ibid., p. 12-13.
18. Ibid., p. 13.
19. Ibid., p. 20.
20. Ibid., p. 21.
21. Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare Appropriations for 1971, Hearings before the House Appropriations Committee, 91st Congress, 1st Session (1970), pt. 4, p. 3, quoted in Derthick, "Guidelines for Social Services Grants," Policy Sciences, 7 (1976), p. 494.
22. Derthick, ibid., p. 495.
23. Ibid., p. 494.
24. Ibid., p. 495.
25. Ibid., p. 502.
26. See: Derthick, Uncontrollable Spending, chapters 5-6.
27. Derthick, "Guidelines. . .", p. 499.
28. Ibid., p. 499.
29. Neil Gilbert, "The Transformation of Social Services," Social Service Review, 51 (December 1977), p. 634.

30. Title XX Statute: section 2004.
31. Code of Federal Regulations, 45, Public Welfare, Part 1220 to End (Revised as of October 1980), p. 394.
32. Ibid., p. 397.
33. Ibid., p. 397.
34. Ibid., p. 396.
35. Ibid., p. 397.

C H A P T E R I I I

ALLOCATING CHILDREN/FAMILY SERVICES: TITLE XX'S IMPACT IN VERMONT

Introduction

Title XX is the culmination of four decades of federal action to assist children and families. Its goals reveal the hopes of its formulators: self-sufficiency; the absence of abuse, neglect, or exploitation; "preserving, rehabilitating, and reuniting families"; community based care, with institutional care as a last resort; and access to the services needed by children and adults. Title XX's design allows potentially for a greater variety of services to more people than any previous services program in the United States.

Paradoxically, Title XX marks also a potential turning point in federal and state relations in the social services policy area. It symbolizes a reversal of a forty-year trend of relying on the federal government as the principal policy maker for social policy. Responsibility for decisions on which children (and adults) should receive public social services has now devolved in large part to the states. As

indicated in Chapter I, the states under Title XX have considerable freedom in determining appropriate social services to attain federal Title XX goals. Health and Human Services (HHS) officials have no authority to override these state decisions. Moreover, Congress authorized the states to provide services to children/families not eligible for income maintenance ("welfare") assistance. Some of these social services (e.g., day care), entail fees for persons above a specified income level, but others (e.g., protective services for children) are granted "without regard to income."

Of course, federal lawmakers have not abdicated completely responsibility for children and family services. The Title XX legislation specifies that 50 percent of the federal Title XX funds must be used to provide services to persons receiving or eligible for income maintenance (i.e., AFDC or SSI). Moreover, Congress did impose a formidable restriction by retaining the \$2.5 billion federal spending ceiling on social services that it had passed in 1972. And finally, as indicated in Chapter II, Title XX requires annual plans revealing each state's efforts on several aspects of social

services "planning." The coalition of Title XX supporters hoped in 1974 that this mixture of opportunities and mandates would enhance the flexibility of state officials, but also encourage them to create or maintain effective, efficient, and accountable social services networks for children and adults in their states.

In this essay, the focus is on one state, Vermont. The analysis, divided into two chapters, explores the contours of the social services structure for children/families in this state and assesses the efforts of state administrative and political officials to "plan" for effective, efficient, and accountable social services delivery.

Social Services for children/families are provided through a multitude of public and private organizations in Vermont. Title XX funded programs constitute an essential component of that effort. The purpose of this chapter is to delineate the types of services programs for children/families that are administered under the auspices of Title XX, and to describe briefly their purposes, their clientele, and their relative positions within the structure of social services in Vermont. This discussion will reveal the extent of state flexibility under Title XX in deciding how to allo-

cate social services for children/families.

Federal lawmakers and Title XX supporters wanted to do more with Title XX than simply grant the states additional flexibility in social services programming. They desired that the states use their new "freedom" to "plan" a social services network that would attain effectively and efficiently the federal goals stipulated in the legislation and also increase accountability to federal officials and to state citizens. Flexibility was to be limited by disciplined "planning" and monitoring of social services to ensure the achievement of these objectives. The nature of Vermont's efforts at social services "planning" for children and families will be explored in Chapter IV.

Social Services for Children in Vermont:
Background and Overview

Public social services in Vermont have developed in response to the needs and demands of its citizens. The extent of the need is, in part, a function of the social and economic conditions within the state, while the character of the state's response reflects its citizens' judgments about the appropriate role of its government in responding

to the various precarious situations of children, adults, and their families.

Vermont is a small, rural state, whose population of 511,000 people (in 1980) ranks it 48th in size among the states.¹ Vermont is also a society in transition. It has experienced a recent period of rapid growth; from 1960 to 1980, its population size increased by 31 percent. Most of this increase is accounted for by the growing industrialization of Vermont which has induced a large number of people to migrate to Vermont. While manufacturing had contributed the largest amount to the growth of the real gross state production (27% from 1970 to 1978) in recent years, the service sector is also largely responsible for this steady increase in economic development. Together they have supplied an economic base for financing public social services in the state.

The age distribution of the population contributes to the need and demand for social services. "Vermont is characterized by a high proportion of persons between 25 and 34 years of age (a result of the post-World War II "Baby Boom'), a lower proportion of persons in the 0-4 age class due to a nationwide decline in birth rates, and a relatively high

proportion of persons over 55 years of age."² Thirty-three percent of Vermont's population are between the ages of 20 and 44. If one adds the age category 45 to 54, this is another 10 percent of the population. This is significant, because it is this group (43 percent of the population) who are likely to have children potentially in need of public social services. These children themselves constitute 38 percent of Vermont's citizens.

Those persons in greatest need of public social services are the individuals and families living in poverty. During the 1970's the number of persons living in poverty, as defined by the federal government, declined in Vermont; but in 1975 the proportion of poor Vermont residents and families was 13.5 percent and 10.8 percent respectively. These averages were higher than those for the United States as a whole, where 11.4 percent of the citizens and 9.0 percent of the families lived below the poverty line. Thus the need for some response by the state is clearly evident.

What has been the response of Vermont to these needs? Surprisingly, more than one would expect probably from a small state whose population's median family income (\$12,415 in 1975) put it 44th in a ranking of states on this measure

of economic well-being. In 1972 Vermont extracted from its citizens for the "welfare" component of its public policy \$11.75 of every \$1,000 of personal income. This is an indicator of the state's effort in this area independent of federal contributions. Vermont ranked 7th among the states on this measure. Incidentally, in 1970, "Vermont had the greatest tax effort in the nation, taking 14.7 percent of the total personal income (of its citizens) in state and local tax collections."³ These statistics indicate something of the emphasis that Vermont's citizens place on public sector activities in general and on "welfare" programs in particular.

But why this kind of positive response to the needs of the poor and otherwise disadvantaged. After all, Vermont is supposedly a state that "prides itself on being a land of stubborn independence of attitude, with a generally conservative turn of mind, cut off from the mainstream of national development along industrial and urban lines."⁴ But Vermont and Vermonsters are more complex than this characterization indicates. For Vermont is "a land of political paradox. It is conservative, but it has a liberal strain."⁵

Vermont's "liberal strain," its willingness to respond

in a public manner to the financial and social services needs of its citizens, is in part explained by two factors which have had a profound effect on Vermont's political life. The first factor consists of the role of the federal government in this programmatic area over the last fifty years. Federal programs, and the funds which accompany those programs, are a major inducement for a state to create, develop, and maintain social welfare programs, especially when there is an observable need for such programs. A federal program which may pay for 50 to 75 percent of the costs of the program in the state is not something to be ignored or refused. Indeed, its acceptance may well reduce the costs of such programs over the long run, and thus allow a state such as Vermont to maintain its desired fiscal constraint, while at the same time responding to the needs of its citizens.

A second factor that explains Vermont's "liberal strain" is the character of the "environment" in which the state's political system is situated. Contrary to the "picture postcard" vision of Vermont, a quiet, peaceful setting of rolling hills, simple rural people with old-fashioned ideas and methods, living on small farms and carrying out their

tasks as their great-grandfathers did in the 19th century, this state is a developing "rural technopolity."⁶ Whether it be on a farm or in one of the larger urban areas, modern and sophisticated technology is pervasive in Vermont. Technology, and the quest for efficiency which underpins its growth and acceptability, is a phenomenon which Vermonters have learned to live with and utilize.

They have accepted it, as well as tried to cope with its implications, in the public sector as well as the private. In the public sector, "technology" takes the form of public programs and administrative bureaucratic agencies, staffed with professional personnel, to address the problems of poverty, educating children, dealing with crime, developing a transportation system, providing health care, and performing all of the other tasks of a "rural technopolity." Thus, behind Vermont's rural (conservative) character lies a technological strain which has more profound consequences for Vermont's political choices than does its sparsely populated landscape.

In fact, the state's use of public organizations specifically to serve children extends back at least to the early decades of this century. In 1913 in Brandon, an insti-

tution was established "for the care, training and education of idiotic and feeble-minded children, otherwise called mentally defective children, between 5 and 21 years."⁷ In 1917 a Board of Charities and Protection was created "to accept as wards, delinquent or neglected children committed to it. The board could then place the children in an institution or hospital or home."⁸ These activities constituted the beginnings of foster care for children in Vermont.

The federal Social Security Act provided the impetus for the creation of several new programs to aid the poor and needy children within the state. The Vermont legislature responded to the federal offers of assistance by establishing state aid to dependent children, maternal and child health services, and psychiatric services programs for its youngest citizens.

Public social services for children acquired additional institutional focus in 1967 when the Department of Social Welfare set up a separate division for "child welfare services." This organizational component is presently the Social Services Division of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. During the late 1960's and early 1970's, children's services programs grew in the wake of increased

federal efforts to fund child care (day care) through the Office of Economic Opportunity and the expansion of the Title IV-A program, and the passage of the 1973 Child Abuse Reporting Law, "which increased public sensitivity to the problem and substantially increased the reporting of abuse and neglect in the state."⁹

The Vermont human services landscape reflects the multi-dimensional nature of social programs for children/families and the discrete public and private institutional structures developed at the federal and state levels of government for each program.¹⁰ In 1971 the Vermont state legislature attempted to bring some order to the human services arena by creating the Agency of Human Services (AHS). The Agency consolidated into one institution the activities of the following public organizations: the Departments of Social Welfare, Social and Rehabilitative Services, Mental Health, Health, and Corrections, as well as the Offices of Comprehensive Employment and Training (CETA), Economic Opportunity, and Aging.

Several of the departments within the Agency of Human Services have responsibilities for programs which affect the well-being of children in Vermont. Although many of

these programs do not fall within the ambit of Title XX, their connections to the services offered under Title XX are important in fostering a "comprehensive approach" to the needs of children.

The Department of Health, according to its legislative mandate, is "to serve the public by supervising and directing the execution of all laws relating to public health." The responsibilities of the Department include such broadly focused concerns as the control of infectious diseases, regulation of some aspects of environmental quality (e.g., water supply), general health education, and family planning (through a contract with Planned Parenthood of Vermont). However, the Health Department also focuses specifically on children through the federal/state Maternal and Child Health program, well-baby clinics, services to handicapped children, immunization services, dental services for children in low income families, and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (APSDT) services. Finally, the Department administers a Women, Infants, and Children (W.I.C.) feeding program which uses federal funds "to purchase and distribute dairy, cereal, and fruit products, as well as for nutrition education."

The Department of Mental Health, created in 1964, is responsible for "the planning, development, evaluation, and administration of programs for the delivery of state-wide mental health and mental retardation services." Although the intention of the Department is to deemphasize as much as possible the use of institutions for the care of the mentally ill and retarded, Vermont does have programs which render care in community or institutional settings. The Mental Health Department is divided into four major component organizations: 1) the Community Mental Health Division is responsible for overseeing the programs of the ten private non-profit Community Mental Health Agencies which deliver non-institutional mental health services to adults and children in the state. In 1975, out of about 15,000 clients, 4,000 were persons under 18 years of age. 2) the Vermont State Hospital, the institutional counterpart of the Community Mental Health Agencies, "provides intensive treatment services to individuals who cannot be cared for in their local communities." In 1975, 24 children under the age of 18 constituted about six percent of the total caseload of 378 persons. 3) The Division of Mental Retardation Programs functions in conjunction with the Community Mental

Health Agencies, and is responsible for administering "residential, developmental, sheltered employment, family support and social services for children and adults." 4) Finally, the Brandon School "offers custody, treatment, education, rehabilitation, and remedial care of mentally defective (retarded) persons in Vermont. Out of approximately 460 clients (in 1975), 152 are under 18."

The Department of Social Welfare administers several programs with a major impact on children. According to the 1977 Report of the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth, Aid to Needy Families with Children (ANFC) provided financial grants to 27,000 individuals, of whom two-thirds were children (under 18 years of age). In addition, Medical Assistance, which pays for in-patient hospital, physician, and dental care for low income persons, served about 16,000 children (and 31,000 adults). The Food Stamps program, which allows eligible clients to obtain food coupons below their purchase value, served in 1977 a monthly average of 43,500 persons, about 50 percent of whom were children.

The Vermont State Economic Opportunity Office, established by Executive Order in 1964, functions as an advocate for "low-income Vermonters." "The SEOO must work with low-

income communities in Vermont to assess their problems and, with the assistance of the low-income communities, develop a plan to solve these problems." It channels funds to five regional community action agencies in Vermont as well as a summer youth recreation program for children between the ages of 8 and 14. It also purchases dental services for children of low income families through the private Vermont Dental Care program.

Finally, The Department of Education spent "a total of \$58,310,000 on the education of 108,500 children in 1977." Total local expenditures in addition to state aid amount to \$150 million in 1977. State aid supplemented local expenditures for elementary and secondary education, as well as providing for Special Education and guidance services to 8,192 physically and mentally handicapped children, and a school lunch program to 66,500 (in 1977).

According to the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth, in fiscal year 1977, Vermont spent about 23 percent of its total budget of \$475 million on programs for its children. "More than \$60 million of the children's share is derived from Vermont's 'General Fund'. This is about 36% of the State's total General Fund expenditures (\$167,735,000),

and amounts to 54% of the total expenditures for children."

Title XX Social Services for Children/Families

The variety of agencies, the diversity of their functions, and the magnitude of their expenditures reveal much about the character of the public response to the needs of children/families in Vermont. They indicate that Vermont's political culture has been supportive of programs for children. Whatever the fiscal conservative convictions of Vermonters, they have not prevented a genuinely responsive attitude toward a network of social services programs.

Title XX is implicated in this effort, but it does not touch directly upon the activities discussed so far. What then is Title XX's specific focus on children/families programs? What are the purposes of those programs and whom do they serve? A delineation and brief discussion of the Title XX programs for children/families, their purposes and clientele, will serve as a necessary preface to the analysis of the impact of Title XX on the allocation of resources among these programs. The discussion will illuminate the focus of Title XX, indicate its contribution to children's services in Vermont, and provide a basis for specifying any

changes in priorities among these programs that might have occurred under Title XX.

Title XX funded programs in Vermont include: 1) day care, 2) protective services, 3) services to foster care families, 4) adoption services, and 5) group homes and emergency shelter services for children. With the exception of most day care services, these programs are collectively labeled either "child welfare services" or the children's component of Children and Youth services. Together with day care, they are administered by the Social Services Division of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services within the Agency of Human Services. Since it is day care, or "child care," which serves the largest number of children/families in Vermont under the auspices of Title XX, it is with that program that the analysis of the Vermont Title XX scene for children begins.¹¹

Day care for children. Day care for children consists of "providing care, protection, growth, development and supervision of a child for a portion of the day" in the person's home or in a private or public facility. The Social Services Division of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) considers that a primary objective of day care

is "to ensure that when children are absent from their parents they receive care that is equal as possible to the care a good parent provides."

In Vermont publicly supported day care may be provided to support "the working or work-training welfare or low income parent," to give a "respite for parents who abuse or neglect their children," "to care for children whose parents are incapacitated," or to ensure "a normal developmental environment for children whose parents are failing to do so."

Providing day care for the children of low income working families or of parents who are participating in work training programs in order to "get off" welfare may help families to achieve or maintain "economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency." Day care thus provides benefits to parents as well as children, and facilitates greater independence both for parents and children.

Day care, as "respite" care for families who abuse or neglect their children, also aims at the Title XX goal of "preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children. . . unable to protect their own interests." By performing this service and an identical one for "chil-

dren whose parents are incapacitated," day care in Vermont works at "preserving, rehabilitating, or reuniting families," as well as "preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care" for children "at risk." In fact day care is "a primary resource available to social workers who are responsible for providing protective services."

Children receiving publicly subsidized day care services in Vermont fall into three distinct income status categories: 1) children of parents who are employed, in training, or incapacitated and who receive a full subsidy for day care costs; 2) children of parents who are employed, earn relatively low incomes, but who do not qualify for income maintenance assistance; these parents receive a partial day care expense subsidy (the size depending on the income level of the parents); and 3) children who are determined to be "at risk" of abuse or neglect. Day care is provided to these children regardless of the income status of their families.

Community day care centers and licensed day care homes are responsible for delivering day care services to children.

The day care centers receive about 75 percent of the public funds appropriated for this purpose, while the remainder is divided among "licensed or approved homes" (13%), "day care group homes" (8%), and "in-home providers" (1%). Day care centers and homes provide services to children in general on an individual fee-for-service basis, as well as to the families subsidized by the state. The individual centers and homes are licensed by the Day Care Licensing Unit in the Agency of Human Services, on the basis of state and federal regulations. Recently, a less formal process has been instituted for day care homes. In the new procedure, persons operating homes must simply register with the state agency, and certify that their day care operations are in conformance with state and federal standards.

Child welfare services. In Vermont child welfare services are presently subsumed under the category, Children and Youth Services. Their primary goal is "to ensure the safety and welfare of children and youth who are abused, neglected, or abandoned, or whose behavior bring them into conflict with the law and their own best interests." This objective requires public efforts in the area of child abuse or neglect, foster care, adoption, and group homes for children as well

as other specific juvenile oriented services.

According to its own judgment, the Social Services Division (of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services) "seeks to work with a child within the family and enhance parental functioning." Even when parents are ill or unavoidably absent from the home, Children and Youth Services can be used "to ensure that children are cared for and that family life is disrupted as little as possible." These purposes are in line with the Title XX goal of "preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care."

The Social Services Division also recognizes the importance of "preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children" and assisting children and families if necessary with institutional care, another of the goals of Title XX. In these extreme cases, the Social Services Division claims that "Children and Youth Services seek to ensure that the child lives in an age-appropriate way in the least restrictive setting necessary to ensure that his daily activities will cause measurable growth and change towards adequate adulthood."

The attainment of such "child welfare service" objectives requires a multitude of concrete services delivered by social caseworkers and an equally diverse set of "support services" administered by supervisors and higher level managers in the Social Services Division, as well as its parent organizations, the Social and Rehabilitation Services Department and the Agency of Human Services central office. Some of these services, totally or partially funded by Title XX, include: "investigation or screening, case planning and service definition, information and referral to appropriate community agencies providing needed services, case management, and counseling." In addition, "specialized services" include: "day care subsidies for children considered to be at risk of abuse or neglect (see the previous section for a discussion of this service); transportation of Medicaid-eligible children to medical care services; in-home services, out-of-home placement and adoption." Other Child and Youth Services focus on the persons caring for children and include "licensing, regulation, and training of group home and day care providers; foster parent recruitment, licensing, and training; recruitment of adoptive families for handicapped, special needs, and older children; post-adoption

counseling and support."

Children and Youth Services may be initiated by the state or delivered at the request of families seeking assistance with raising their children. The most active state role is played in the areas of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment. However, the state does rely heavily upon persons outside of the Agency of Human Services to bring such incidents to its attention. These people include other public agencies, private Child Protection organizations located throughout the state, doctors, and hospital staff, as well as educators and neighbors.

Unlike the day care program, in which eligibility for total or partial public subsidies is determined on the basis of a family's income level, many Child and Youth Services are provided with no financial eligibility restrictions. This applies particularly to the protective services and those designed for children in state custody living in foster homes or group homes.

The actual delivery of Child and Youth Services is carried out at the 12 Social Services District Offices throughout the state. Seventy-seven caseworkers are responsible for the "district casework services" to children and families. They are the ones who arrange for the placement of children

in substitute care (e.g., foster care); and they are "responsible for determining whether substitute-care services delivered to an individual child placed by him/her are adequate."

A brief review of the major child welfare services funded in whole or in part by Title XX affords an opportunity to specify in more detail the focus and contribution of Title XX to social services for children in Vermont. The Title XX social services discussed consist of: protective services, emergency shelter, group homes, foster care and specialized foster care services, and adoption services.

Protective Services for Children--Social service workers in the Agency of Human Services investigates situations of potential abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, and if necessary arrange for alternative care for the child. Services are provided without regard to the income of the child's family. Between 1975 and 1978, the estimated number of children served annually ranged from 2,568 to 3,000. The more recent Agency plans report data on child abuse cases in Vermont. In 1979, there were 711 "children involved in substantiated reports" of child abuse in the state. This number had increased by 35 percent to 962 for 1980. Federal and

state Title XX funds account for about 97 percent of the expenditures for protective services.

Emergency Shelter--This service is "available for a short period of time to children whose parents are unable to provide them with adequate care and supervision. Someone may come into a child's home to care for him if the parent is temporarily out of the home because of a serious illness or other emergency." All children/families are eligible for emergency shelter assistance without regard to income. Public assistance recipients may receive home-based care (i.e., temporary supervision) for their children, while others are eligible depending upon their "gross monthly income" and family size. From 1975 to 1978, Title XX funds contributed about 56 percent of the money for emergency shelter services, while the remaining 44 percent was provided by the federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA). The 1979 Title XX plan reports that the total funding for emergency shelter had been taken over by Title XX federal and state contributions.

Residential Treatment for Children (Group Homes)--Group Homes are used for children with emotional disorders who

"cannot adjust to their peer and educational environments." The actual services consist of "assessing the need for, arranging for, and providing twenty-four therapeutic residential services for children, including social and medical services, and room and board as necessary." Social and Rehabilitation Service (SRS) staff participate in this service, along with private agencies contracted for their particular services. Group Homes have been used in Vermont as an alternative to institutional care that used to be provided almost exclusively by the Weeks Training School, a "warehouse" for all kinds of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral problems. Both the 1976 and 1977 Title XX plans indicate an objective of providing for 137 children group home care "in order to avoid inappropriate institutional placement." Title XX contributes a substantial percentage (69% in 1977 of the funds for group homes in Vermont. Other sources of funding include LEAA, Title IV-B ("child welfare services") of the Social Security Act, and state funds targeted to residential treatment services. As Group Homes have come to be used more and more for adolescents with "behavioral" problems, the proportion of funding from law enforcement sources has increased to about one-third of the

total expenditures (1979), with Title XX and state appropriations each constituting about one-half of the remaining expenditures.

Foster Care Services--Foster care occurs when a child is placed in a substitute home when his parents are unable or unwilling to care for him. Title XX does not provide funds to pay the foster care family for its care of the child. Those funds are obtained from federal and state contributions to Title IV-A, Title IV-B, both of the Social Security Act, and additional state appropriations. However, many foster care services (as distinguished from payments to families) are provided under the auspices of Title XX. They include "working in behalf of or directly with the children and ensuring that arrangements for education, recreation, religion, medical-dental care, etc. are made. Social workers work with families while the child is in placement to help them improve their parenting skills with the goal of returning the child to his or her natural parents, if possible." Social service staff also play a major role in recruiting and approving foster care families, in monitoring the foster care given to the child, and in reassessing the need for continued foster care. These foster care services are pro-

vided directly by workers in the Social Services Division of the Agency of Human Services. They are available without cost to public assistance recipients and to those persons below a specified income level.

Specialized Foster Care--The 1977 Title XX plan notes that:

Some children have emotional, health, or behavioral problems that may have been caused by or been the cause of deteriorating family conditions. When these conditions are identified, part of the solution for both the family and the child is a placement in a specialized foster care home. In such a home, the child receives, in addition to the basics of love and understanding, special services from people who are qualified by training and experience to deal effectively with specific problems.

Foster parents who are specially trained thus provide specific services in addition to normal child care to deal with the particular emotional or behavioral problems of the child. The 1976 and 1977 Title XX plans indicate that 75 children were to be assisted with specialized foster care. Federal and state Title XX funds accounted for all of the expenditures in this area. Once again services are available free of charge to persons receiving income maintenance assistance and also to persons whose incomes fell below a specified amount.

Adoption Services--As with many of the other social services discussed above, adoption services subsume a multitude of specific activities. They include:

Assisting a parent (s) unwilling or unable to care for a child to surrender such child for adoption; the recruitment, study, and evaluation of interested prospective adoptive parents; training for prospective and approved adoptive parents; the evaluation, selection and placement of available children in such homes; counseling for families after placement; supervision of children in adoptive homes until legal adoption is completed; and post-adoptive services for the child and family for up to twelve months following the legal adoption.

Adoption services are provided directly by SRS's Adoption Unit. Similar to foster care, adoption services are available free of charge to public assistance recipients and to those persons whose income falls below a state specified level. All of the funds for public adoption services in Vermont came from Title XX in the years from 1975 to 1980. Since then, Title XX funds have been supplemented by funds appropriated under the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980.

Allocating Resources to Children's Services:
Title XX's Impact

The description of day care and child welfare services gives an indication of the purpose and character of Vermont's Title XX services programs for children and of the financial contribution of Title XX to these programs. On the basis of this limited and imprecise data, what conclusions are warranted about the impact of Title XX in Vermont. The principal conclusion is that Title XX has afforded Vermont's Agency of Human Services minimal flexibility in allocating resources for social services to children.

The proportionate allocation of resources among the principal Title XX children/family programs has remained approximately what it was under the Title IV-A and VI programs before 1975. As Table I (the following page) indicates, there were only minor fluctuations from 1975 to 1979 in the percentage of Title XX funds allocated to each of the services programs. Only day care appears to reveal a moderate change in its allocation of funds, dropping from 32 percent to 26 percent of Title XX expenditures between FY 1978 and FY 1979. However, this decrease is most likely accounted for by the decision of the Department of Social Welfare,

TABLE 1

Allocations of Vermont's Total Title XX
Funds for Children's Services Programs,
By Percentages

<u>Service:</u>	<u>FY1976</u>	<u>FY1977</u>	<u>FY1978</u>	<u>FY1979</u>
Adoption	1.4	1.32	1.0	1.2
Day Care	33	29.1	32	26
Emergency Shelter	1.2	1.4	2.5	3.7
Foster Care	7.7	7.1	6.9	8.7
Specialized Foster Care	0.9	0.7	1.3	1.4
Protective Services	10.2	12.5	11.2	12.0
Group Homes (Residential Treatment)	----	13.8	14	14.2
<hr/>				
Total Spending:	\$7.1m	\$7.7m	\$7.8m	\$7.3m
Percentage of Total T-XX Ex- penditures for All Children and Adult Services	55%	66%	69%	63%

Source: Compiled from Comprehensive Annual Service Program
(CASP) Plans of the Vermont Agency of Human Services.

in July 1978, to allow income maintenance recipients to deduct day care expenses and thus not rely upon Title XX funds to cover the costs of this service.

It is also apparent from the data that the overall percentage of Title XX contributions to children/family programs, as a proportion of the total Title XX expenditures, has remained fairly constant, with a mean of 66 percent. There has been some fluctuation here, but again it seems to be accounted for by the decrease in day care expenditures under Title XX after the 1978 change, and by the failure to include group homes (residential treatment centers) in the listing of Title XX services for children in the first Title XX plan.

Finally, in terms of the distribution of Title XX funds among socio-economic classes, it appears that Vermont had attempted to target social services for those children and families most in need of them, that is the lowest income groups in the state.¹² To be sure eligibility for day care extends beyond public assistance recipients; but this had been the case before Title XX. The states had been able to render day care services to "potential recipients" of public assistance, as well as to those actually receiving income maintenance. Moreover, protective services had always been avail-

able to children without regard to financial status of their families.

What accounts for the relatively inflexible allocation of social services spending for children and families under Title XX? Several factors are pertinent. First, Title XX confronted in Vermont (and in other states) a set of institutionalized social services programs for children/families. They had been developing since the late 1930's in the form of Title IV-B "child welfare service" programs and since 1962 under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act.

When Title XX replaced the service component of Title IV-A, it by no means erased the programs that had been funded under its auspices. Title XX provided only a substitute source of funding for these programs. In some instances it offered the states more funds than they had been receiving previously. But what Title XX did not do in Vermont, and could not do given its character, was to alter the institutionalized patterns of social services for children/families in the state in 1975. Title XX stipulated only general goals for the states; it explicitly declined to prescribe particular services or to rank these services in any order of priority. Therefore, Vermont could easily adhere to its traditional patterns of resource allocation to children's ser-

vices programs, for which it had on-going obligations that preceded the inception of Title XX.

Secondly, changes in the allocation of resources among programs are not likely to occur when there are insufficient funds to create or expand a social services program without diminishing the relative standing of other programs. One of the principal features of Title XX is its federal spending ceiling. A fixed amount of money (\$2.5 billion in 1975; \$2.7 billion in 1977) was allocated among the states. When a state reached its federal allocation ceiling, then it had to rely on state spending increases if it wished to expand its social services programs. Vermont reached its spending ceiling soon after the inception of Title XX. In such a no-growth financial situation, Vermont's Agency of Human Services confronted a zero-sum condition in which adding funds to one Title XX program meant taking some away from other programs.

Under these circumstances, there would have to have been some "force" to upset the fixed pattern and to impose or induce a new proportioning of resources among the services. The power to effect such a transformation would almost certainly had to have come from Agency officials them-

selves, state political officials, or from citizen demands for the alteration of the allocation of funds among the Title XX programs.

Of these sources of potential change, perhaps the least likely is the bureaucratic agency. Particularly in the labor intensive human services programs, social services workers have a large professional, as well as financial, stake in the preservation of their particular programs, whether it be providing foster care services or counseling for families that abuse or neglect their children. In such circumstances, bargaining among the defenders of programs will reduce the likelihood that major changes will be made in the allocation of resources. Particularly in a zero-sum situation, bargaining is likely to result in few changes of any import.

If changes do occur, they are likely to be engendered by political officials or strong citizen pressures for changes that would override the inertia or stalemate among bureaucratic professionals. In Vermont under Title XX, the Governor and the state legislature do not appear to have placed any pressure on the Agency of Human Services to reallocate resources among service programs. As a high level Agency official noted, the Governors since 1975 have not had

much interest in human services. Their concerns have focused on economic development and environmental issues. Therefore, the Secretary of the Agency and the Departments (staffed by professionals and paraprofessionals in various services areas) have had the principal responsibility for making decisions in regard to allocating funds among human services programs. The state legislature, according to officials in the Agency's Planning Division, has generally focused on the total amount of spending for the Agency, rather than on individual programs and the relative proportion of funds among those programs.

The final potential source of influence on the allocation of resources among programs is the citizenry itself. Title XX does mandate some citizen involvement in social services policy making; it consists of an advisory role with no opportunities for overriding Agency or legislative decisions. In the first two years of the implementation of Title XX, the Agency of Human Services did indeed organize public meetings so that citizens could express their judgments about the appropriate distribution of Title XX funds. However, the meetings were sparsely attended, and most of the citizens were public or private services providers who were

there to lobby for their programs. According to several administrative officials interviewed, citizens realized quickly that Title XX offered no real new funds for allocation. Therefore, the meetings did not become a forum for the discussion of Agency proposals and citizen "participation" quickly waned.

In conclusion, then, Title XX functioned as a distributive rather than a redistributive program. It allocated funds for the support of specific social services programs, but could not provide Vermont with sufficient stimulation to expand or alter its funding of children's services programs. In this sense the character of the Title XX program dictated the nature of the decision-making process in the state. The federal ceiling on funding and the substitutive nature of the expenditures (replacing Title IV-A--the services component; and Title VI) fostered literally "conservative" policy making which benefited social services programs that were already well-established and institutionalized. As a "block grant" then, Title XX was rather ineffective. Theoretically, it offered Vermont's Agency of Human Services, together with its political officials and citizens, flexibility in allocating social services resources. Practically, however, it did not

engender the necessary conditions for this flexibility.

Thus, Title XX reduced the number of sources of federal social services funds (though not the amount) to Vermont, but it did not expand or contract the destination in Vermont for those funds.

FOOTNOTES

1. This sketch of Vermont relies on the 1981 Comprehensive Human Services Plan, Part I.
2. Ibid., pp. 1-5.
3. Frank Bryan, Politics in the Rural States: People, Parties, Process (Boulder, Colorado; Westview Press, 1981), 58.
4. Duane Lockard, New England State Politics (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1968), p. 43.
5. Ibid., p. 8.
6. For a discussion of Vermont as a "rural technopolity," see: Frank M. Bryan, Yankee Politics in Rural Vermont (Hanover, New Hampshire: The University Press of New England, 1974), Chapter 6; and Bryan, Politics in the Rural States (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 263-276.
7. Lorenzo D'Agostino, The History of Public Welfare in Vermont (Winooski Park, Vermont: St. Michael's College Press, 1948), p. 214, cited in 1981 Comprehensive Human Services Plan, p. II-3.
8. Ibid., p. 272.
9. 1981, Plan, II-4.
10. The following discussion is based on the 1981 Plan and the Governor's Committee on Children and Youth's study: The 1977 Vermont Children's Budget (October 6, 1976).
11. The following discussion, including the statements quoted, of the day care and child welfare services programs, unless otherwise noted, is taken from the Comprehensive Annual Service Program Plans (CASP plans) developed by the Agency of Human Services from 1975 to 1979.

12. In the area of day care services, for example, in 1976, of the 1.160 parents receiving day care subsidies for the care of their children, 720 were eligible for full subsidies as income maintenance recipients.

C H A P T E R I V

PLANNING CHILDREN/FAMILY SERVICES: THE IMPACT OF TITLE XX IN VERMONT

Introduction

In creating Title XX, Congress enacted legislation with two primary objectives. First, the program was designed to ensure the states more flexibility in allocating social services by decentralizing to them the responsibility for these decisions. The impact of that aspect of Title XX in Vermont has been discussed in Chapter III. The second objective of Title XX was to encourage the states to adopt innovative policy making and administrative strategies to achieve the federal goals set forth in the legislation.

The catalyst for change in the states was to be the Comprehensive Annual Services Program (CASP) plan. In these annual plans, human service agencies were to report their analytical of "planning" activities for social services in their respective states. These activities were to include "needs assessment," "objective setting," "evaluation," and "program coordination," and were to involve citizen review

of the state agency's analysis and decisions. Without hampering flexibility, this "planning" process presumably would enable the state governments to design and redesign social services programs and projects that would meet the needs of children and adults in an effective and efficient manner, while holding the policy makers and services providers accountable for their actions.

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the impact of Title XX in Vermont on social services "planning" for children and their families. The principal questions will be: To what extent have "needs assessment," "objective setting," and "evaluation" or monitoring been carried out in Vermont; and what effects have these activities had on the attainment of effective, efficient, and accountable social services delivery for children and their families? The importance of addressing each of these "planning" activities will be justified when each in turn is discussed. The analysis will be preceded by a short discussion of social services "planning" activities before the inception of Title XX. It will be followed by an analysis of the overall impact of Title XX "planning" on social services for children/families in Vermont.

"Planning" Social Services:
The Agency of Human Services before Title XX

As indicated in Chapter III, Vermont developed a complex set of public human services organizations long before the creation of Title XX. The Vermont state legislature also took the initiative, four years before the passage of the federal legislation, to remodel these human services institutions to attempt to facilitate their delivery of social services.

The creation of the Agency of Human Services in 1971 was probably the most important single event in human services reform in Vermont prior to Title XX. Shortly after the creation of the Agency, William Cowles, Jr., the first Secretary of the Agency, issued a report to Governor Deane Davis, in which he outlined the goals of the new human services organization. Cowles' discussion is significant, because it reveals the concerns of its early leadership and shows that their priorities were similar to those of federal officials who developed the Title XX program.

Secretary Cowles indicated several priorities in the area of administrative organization. They all concentrated on improving accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency

in the Agency. The first goal was "to provide a management structure which will be more responsive to the executive and legislative branches and to changing needs."¹ This objective would be achieved in large part through a coordinated budget-making process, in which the Agency and Department leadership would have more control over the priorities of their organizations and programs.

The second goal of the Agency was "to achieve more effective methods to deliver services." Service delivery would be made more effective by developing more coordination between the departments and divisions of the Agency, as well as by "developing formal or informal working relationships with local public or voluntary human services agencies."² The Secretary indicated his desire to expand contractual arrangements with community-based organizations (e.g., home health and community mental health agencies), and he noted that the ability of the Agency to transfer funds among its accounts would facilitate this process. The "development of common intake procedures, case planning and problem-oriented records, interchangeable among agencies," would further enhance this activity.³

As an adjunct to this goal of effective services delivery,

the Secretary pointed out the need "to establish better means to determine and meet the needs of categories of people such as children, the aged, the poor, broken families, etc. who have special problems in maintaining a self-sustaining status."⁴

Finally, Secretary Cowles indicated that the new Agency had "to improve and coordinate the collection and analysis of information so that priorities can be established and policies formed upon the basis of fact." Cowles saw "close and frequent communication between the communities and the departments and among the departments" as "the only practicable way of maintaining an information flow upon which to base decisions." Therefore, he stipulated that a primary task of the planning division in his office would be "to develop a management information system upon which to base priority determinations and policy decisions."⁵

Thus, the intentions of the first Secretary of the Agency of Human Services were very much compatible with a "planning" process emphasizing the assessment of needs, the formulation of objectives and priorities among them, and the monitoring of the delivery of social services to determine their effectiveness and efficiency in attaining objectives. According to

the first Title XX plan (i.e., CASP plan), written in 1975, the Agency had been developing since 1973 its social services "planning" process in programs that would be funded after 1975 by Title XX. The catalyst of this effort was the separation of social services from income maintenance administration after July 1973, in the Title IV-A and VI programs of the Social Security Act.

"Planning" consisted of an attempt to ascertain the needs for social services in Vermont and to determine the resources available in the Agency to meet these needs. "Rather than undertaking a statewide, statistically valid and comprehensive 'needs assessment survey', the Agency of Human Services asked that public and private services identify areas where more services support was required and translate those ideas into program proposals."⁶ Soon it became clear, according to writers of the 1975 Title XX plan, that the "needs" of the people were greater than the resources of the Agency to provide for them. So the emphasis in "planning" was then placed on reviewing alternative strategies (under Titles IV-A and VI) to address these "needs."

Social services "planning" prior to Title XX was supposedly a relatively open process: "The Agency of Human Services

invited provider agencies who sought funding to present their proposals and invited local State agency staff and other interested persons to attend those presentations." The rationale for this approach was that "decisions on the funding or proposals should emanate from as diverse a group as possible." The Agency formed a Title IV-A/VI Unit, later to become the Title XX Unit, composed of representatives of the departments and offices of the Agency. According to the writers of the 1975 Title XX plan, the Title IV-A/VI Unit made recommendations for services based on the following criteria: 1) the relative need for the service in comparison with other needs of AFDC and SSI recipients; 2) the extent of the need of the individuals; 3) the relative merits of the public versus private delivery of services.⁷

All of the individual offices which presented proposals to the Title IV-A/VI Unit had to indicate: 1) "how the need was determined"; 2) who was involved in evaluating the need and "the selection of the most appropriate service provider"; and 3) whether "the total social services Resource Coordinator (in the Social Service District Offices) was involved in assessing existing resources and commenting on the need for the proposed service."⁸

Once again there are indications of "planning" for social services programs. In this case, more than intentions; here there are actual activities that might represent a forum for the analysis that is fundamental to any serious "planning." To what extent this pre-Title XX process foreshadowed social services "planning" for children/families under Title XX will be revealed in the following analysis. As indicated in the Introduction to this chapter, "needs assessment," "objective setting," and "monitoring" will constitute the principal aspects of the social services "planning" process to be reviewed.

Social Services for Children/Families:
Needs Assessment

The adequacy of a social services network depends, in part, on its effectiveness in addressing conditions which have evoked governmental action. It is toward the resolution of these conditions, or "needs," that public programs are directed; and it is by the extent of their success that they are judged adequate or inadequate. Therefore, any policy-making process, no matter how "political" or "rational," explicitly or tacitly defines "needs" and orients its

programmatic efforts toward reducing or alleviating those "needs."⁸

Officials in the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) and the Agency of Human Services CASP plans acknowledge the importance of "needs assessment" in social services planning. An SRS official argued that there were at least two major reasons for doing "needs assessment" in state bureaucracy. First, the state agency should allocate resources "in the most meaningful way," that is utilize scarce funds to provide services to those in the "greatest need." Secondly, an agency should know the extent of the discrepancy between "unmet needs" of individuals and groups and the resources available. This can serve potentially, according to the official, as an impetus for action to develop other resources (e.g., at the state or federal levels) to respond to those "unmet needs." The important function of "needs assessment" is echoed in the 1981 CASP plan: "The effectiveness of the human services system depends on services being appropriate and sufficient to meet the needs of Vermonters."

The importance of "needs assessment" in a social services planning process, however, does not necessarily mean

that it will be carried out in a continuous, systematic, or helpful manner. As an official in SRS indicated, "needs assessment has been the weakest area in the past" in social services administration, both for children and adults, in Vermont. Needs assessments have been done on an ad hoc basis for individual programs to collect information on particular issues. Traditionally, there has been relatively little coordination of efforts in searching out "unmet needs" for social services. Needs assessment has rested largely with social service workers in the district offices of the Social Services Division of SRS. Each district office has a Resource Coordinator who is responsible for assessing needs and inventorying resources to meet these needs. Also, Social Services Division district offices are responsible for assessing needs when they request budgets. One Planning Division official indicated that no surveys of "needs" are conducted in areas of foster care and day care. He did indicate, however, that the Planning Division and SRS may occasionally "survey" the needs of people actually being served by the Department (e.g., by the Social Services Division).

What accounts for the comparatively sparse "needs assess-

ment" processes under Title XX in Vermont? Officials in both the Planning Division of the Agency and the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services offered several explanations. First, the programs for children/families (and for adults as well) are separate from each other, and thus constitute a rather fragmented array of services, ranging from day care, protective services, to foster care, specialized foster care, group homes, adoption services, and others. All of these programs have separate identities that are often reinforced by federal and state statutes and federal regulations. As discussed in Chapter III, Vermont's public response to the "needs" of children consists of about 38 programs administered by 19 departments, agencies, and organizations. Title XX in particular, Vermont officials interviewed agreed, did virtually nothing to change the organizational or programmatic structure of this network. It has served largely as a source of funds to be channeled into a variety of programs for children and adults, and thus has in effect maintained the network of programs in its previous configuration.

Furthermore, Title XX never required a formal "needs assessment" process from the state implementing agency.

It mandated (as discussed in Chapter II) a Comprehensive Annual Services Program (CASP) plan; and this plan was to include a discussion of what the states were doing in the area of "needs assessment" in the social services. However, it did not specify any particular concrete approach for individual programs or a "coordinated" approach across departments and organizations using Title XX funds for particular categories of individuals (such as children or the elderly).

More "integrated" social services programs, however, would not necessarily result in greater "needs assessment." Some Agency of Human Services officials argue that under conditions of "level funding" (such as Title XX with its spending ceiling), "grand surveys" of needs do not result in improved or expanded programs; rather, they simply raise the expectations and hopes of people without providing them with additional services. Given a situation of relatively scarce resources, one Planning Division official asserted that "a lousy needs assessment on one group might be more effective in bringing public money to that group, than a general needs assessment with little focus." An SRS official added that along with the public funds available from federal and state sources, "SRS and other Departments have

legal mandates to serve specific clientele; furthermore, the Governor, the state legislature, the Secretary (of the Agency), and the Commissioner (of SRS) all have their own priorities" which are clearly established before any needs assessment process takes place.

Some administrative officials also exhibited a cautious attitude on the feasibility of using needs assessments to induce the acquisition of new resources to serve newly identified needs. Their perception is that spending resources to conduct surveys may be inappropriate because the state legislature may simply not be willing to listen to the arguments of bureaucratic officials that new services are needed. One SRS official recounted the story of a two year effort by SRS to convince the state legislature of a need for a small secure detention center capable of housing no more than 30 youths at one time for periods up to one year. According to this administrator, the Vermont General Assembly denied outright the appropriation of funds for this project. It was only after a bizarre murder of a 12 year-old girl in Essex Junction (and the attempted murder of another girl) by two Burlington youths in May 1981 that the state legislature recognized and responded vigorously to the call for

such a facility. Then, however, its members had to be convinced that only a small facility was needed and would be used, and that there was no need for a facility housing over 100 youths at a single time. The SRS administrator explained that the General Assembly has no professional staff to assist it in reviewing administrative recommendations, and, perhaps because of its ignorance, it is "anti-bureaucratic" in its general attitude.

The impact of fragmented programs, level financing, and feasibility does not explain totally the lack of major attempts at "needs assessment" in social services programs under Title XX. The whole foundation of "needs assessment" is predicated upon the idea that there is a systematic way to identify and assess "needs" of people, given an appropriate institutional and programmatic structure as well as adequate financing for programs and a responsive group of public officials to listen to the analyses. But this conception of "needs assessment" presupposes a perception of "needs" as existing "out there" in the real world to be identified by someone with the skills to locate them and record them. It also presumes that "needs" may be "assessed" in a systematic (and scientific?) manner, so that the great-

est needs are tended to with the highest priorities. However, "needs assessment" is essentially a "political" activity, in which the identification of "needs" is not a "scientific" activity and the "assessment" or ranking of those "needs" is not a rational process in which everyone could agree with the results.¹⁰ The 1981 CASP plan reflects this judgment when it notes that "the survey of existing information sources (for the construction of the plan) necessarily presents a particular view of the universe of real and potential needs, a view that has been shaped by the experiences and origins of existing programs, reflecting the state's human services needs as they have been perceived and formulated by researchers, advocates, media, the legislature, executive, and judiciary."

One administrative official in SRS revealed an important effect of this lack of scientific definition of needs. She argued that "needs assessment" was done haphazardly in the past (and was being done more systematically now) because identification and assessment of needs presupposes a set of concrete purposes or objectives for individual social workers and for public agencies as a whole. One must first be very clear, she argued, about the objectives that one is

seeking to pursue. Then, within the context of those short, medium, and long term goals, one can assess the needs of the program and of the clientele one is trying to serve. She spoke critically of attempts in the past within the Department of SRS to "send questionnaires to social caseworkers in the district offices to ask them what they needed for their programs and what their clients needed in terms of social services." "The problem with this approach," she argued, "was that SRS was asking people to articulate 'needs' when these same people did not know what exactly their jobs entailed, what their objectives were supposed to be with respect to individual clients, and most importantly what results were demanded of them within given periods of time." A similar attitude was expressed in a different context by an SRS official in her discussion of the impact of the new Child Information Management System being developed presently in SRS. She predicted that this "system" would give people throughout the Department a much better idea of the concrete needs of children (and youths) being "served" by the Agency of Human Services. There will be information collected on the exact status of children within the system, the effects of different services, etc.. This information,

she argued, should provide a better perspective on the exact "needs" of children, given specific objectives being developed presently within the Department.

One final factor that affects the degree of "needs assessment" in SRS and other social services agencies in the states is the nature of the functions of public social services organizations in this country. An SRS official commented that the public social services network "is almost by definition a crisis response system." It focuses on providing secondary and tertiary forms of treatment--i.e., group homes and foster care on the one hand, and institutional care (e.g., Brandon Training School or the Vermont State Hospital). Primary treatment focuses on prevention of conditions which necessitate the use of other forms of social service intervention. Of necessity, then, social services organizations are passive in orientation, and must wait for cases to be brought to their attention (e.g., reports of child abuse or neglect, court adjudications which award children to the state for foster care or group home placement, or persons who come to the state for assistance in financing day care for their children). The Agency of Human Services and its organizations thus do not actively

canvass the Vermont communities in search of "needy" children and families.

Many factors therefore account for the relative lack of comprehensive "needs assessment" practices in Title XX in Vermont. This analysis would be one sided, however, if it did not address the efforts that have been made on a smaller-scale basis to identify "needs" of children and families for social services. As discussed above, the new Child Management Information System offers hope that more consistent information will be available to all SRS and Agency officials on the status of children being served by only one department, and of course it will not address the potential "needs" of persons who have not come into contact with the Department. However, it is a step toward a more informed perspective on the children served by part of the Agency.

Other more informal practices may help in identifying "needs" of children who are served by other departments. A SRS administrator noted that the needs assessment process between programs and departments has become more coordinated over the last few years. There has been more communication between members of Departments (e.g., SRS and Mental Health);

informal arrangements (such as one or two day in-house training seminars) are becoming more standard; and forms generated by the new Child Management Information System provide information on services delivered to children in other divisions and departments.

In determining the "unmet needs" of children and families in Vermont, a potential contribution can be made by the network of child advocacy groups in the state. There is presently no government-based organization advocating for children as a whole. The Governor's Committee on Children and Youth is currently unfunded, and therefore virtually inactive. However, in the crucial area of child abuse and prevention, there is a coalition of Community Child Protection Teams, located throughout the state. These teams consist of state employees from various departments which assist children, as well as professional people in psychiatry, social work, nursing, education, etc.. They serve educational and counseling functions, as well as advocating for children. One concrete result of their efforts was the passage in April 1982 of a new child abuse and reporting law, which in part expanded (to include educators) the list of persons legally bound to report cases of potential child

abuse.

Summary. Needs serve as a standard for judging the effectiveness of social services programs. Needs assessment is considered an important activity by many Social and Rehabilitation Services officials. However, needs assessment has been an ad hoc activity in SRS, with only moderate coordination among the variety of social services programs. The fragmented and complex nature of social services programs (at the federal as well as state level) accounts for part of this situation. The tight fiscal condition of social services in Vermont, and the consequent lack of funds for new programs or clients, also contributes to the lack of vigorous needs assessment in a comprehensive manner. Where needs assessment has occurred, it has operated within a developing Management Information System to monitor the progress of clientele being served. Moreover, specialized advocacy groups have had some success in drawing public attention to the specific needs of abused and neglected children. Needs assessment then seems to work most effectively in a confined context of a single program where "needs" are clear and a consensus exists about their authenticity.

Social Services for Children/Families:
Objective Setting

Objectives reveal much about the character of an organization by indicating the purposes which animate its existence. They also serve as standards by which to grade an organization's performance.¹¹

The functions of public bureaucratic agencies are defined by the objectives that they pursue. Labels such as "Agency of Human Services" or "Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services" or "Social Services Division" are inadequate as identifiers of the tasks of individual organizations. They do not state clearly the organizational goals which motivate the actions of administrative officials. A more precise delineation of objectives, however, may provide some perspective on the purposes toward which agency action is directed.¹²

Objectives also articulate standards by which to judge the activities of the members of the organization. A clear set of objectives may illuminate the distance which separates organizational activity of administrative officials and the purposes for which that activity is designed. Providing day care for children is an activity, but it is not the pur-

pose of an organization. That purpose might be to ensure that children when absent from their parents receive as nearly as possible the same high quality care; or to ensure that children develop their intellectual, emotional, and social skills to levels that are appropriate to their age. It is these objectives, and their distinction from organizational activities, that allows one to judge the effectiveness or "quality" of administrative activities.¹³

Federal policy makers defined the character of the Title XX program with a set of goals that administrative officials, political representatives, and citizens presumably could use to judge the relative performance of their respective state programs. To what extent has Title XX oriented Vermont's Agency of Human Services in social services for children and provided a tool for holding its social services officials accountable for their actions?

As indicated in Chapter I, the Title XX statute outlined in general terms only the direction for social services to children (and adults). Federal lawmakers crafted five major goals which were to guide state administrators. They are worth repeating here:

- (1) Achieving or maintaining economic self-support to prevent, reduce, or eliminate dependency;
- (2) Achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency, including reduction or prevention of dependency;
- (3) Preventing or remedying neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults unable to protect their own interests, or preserving, rehabilitating, or reuniting families;
- (4) Preventing or reducing inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care; or
- (5) Securing referral or admission for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate, or providing services for individuals in institutions.¹⁴

These federal Title XX goals are sufficiently abstract and general that it is possible to conceive of virtually any social services programs activity attaining one or more of these objectives. As purposes by which to define specific activities, or standards by which to judge effective action, they are inadequate. There is no clear definition of what is "dependency" or "self-sufficiency." Is the objective of child abuse and neglect services to "prevent" or "remedy neglect, abuse, or exploitation"? Are resources to go to protecting children and adults from abuse, or should priority be given to "preserving, rehabilitating, or reuniting families"? How long should an agency work with a

family to "rehabilitate" it before judging that a child not return to that home? How does a state agency judge what is "inappropriate institutional care"? What if a community decides that it is "appropriate" for children with "behavioral problems" to be placed in institutions, rather than to live in "group homes" in the community? Is that an instance when institutional care should be prescribed, because "other forms of care are not appropriate"?

The ambiguity of Title XX's goals reveals its inadequacy as a delineator of the character of social service programs and as a means of setting standards by which to judge the effectiveness of those programs. Were Vermont's early attempts at Title XX social services "planning" for children more successful in setting objectives? A review of the initial CASP plans is suggestive.

Consider the following "objectives" drawn from the 1977 CASP plan; they are representative of the early CASP plans (1975-1978) in Vermont.

Day Care: "To provide day care services for 2,100 children to enable 1,500 parents to maintain employment (Goal I); for 240 children with special needs (Goals II and III); and specialized day care for 6 children (Goal II)."

Foster Care for Children: "To provide supervision, counseling and evaluation for 1,400 children in foster care."

Protective Services: "To provide services to 3,000 children."

Each of these descriptions of "objectives" is accompanied by a listing of "activities" which presumably constitute the actions performed under the service headings, "day care," "protective services," or "foster care." For example, under "Protective Services for Children," there is the following description of "activities":

Identification, investigation, study and evaluation of the individual and his family and determination that the individual is vulnerable or at risk of neglect, abuse, or exploitation. Arranging for the provision of appropriate services needed, including the selection and placement of such individual in a suitable foster care facility or emergency shelter. Arranging for and providing counseling, therapy, and training courses for the parent (s) and legal representation or advocacy of the child, and medical examination when necessary for the development of a services plan.

What this and other CASP plans articulated was a series of descriptions of activities (which could presumably be specified in more detail), sometimes related to Title XX goals but more often simply presented in a detached manner from any particular objectives. In regard to protective and foster care services, as illustrated above, the "ob-

jectives" section simply states in a cursory manner what the "activity" section elaborates in somewhat more detail. For example, the paragraph indicating what is involved in "protective services" for children merely specifies what "services" are to be provided to those "3,000 children." Clearly, the foster care and protective services "objectives" are no more than statements of intent to perform particular actions. The "objectives" of the "plan" are to carry out activities, but to what ends? Even if one could readily specify when an act of "counseling" or "evaluation" had been accomplished, that would not warrant any conclusions about the precise objectives which the actions were to attain, beyond simply enacting a routine set of behavior. Therefore, a person could be held accountable only for performing a specific number of steps in the "processing of a case," but not be held responsible for the effectiveness of those activities in attaining some particular objectives.

The "objective" for Day Care (in the 1977 CASP plan) differs somewhat from the ones for foster care and protective services, but not enough to make any real difference. Each part of the day care section relates an activity to an "objective." Two out of the three activities are juxtaposed

to a vague Title XX goal which is insufficiently precise to indicate, for example, when "specialized treatment" has attained the "objective" of "self-sufficiency" or "reduction or prevention of dependency." Only in the case of the objective "to provide day care services for 2,100 children to enable 1,500 parents to maintain employment" is there an objective set which allows one to perceive the intended direction of the activity that constitutes the social service. Even here, however, there is insufficient indication of other goals that day care might be serving (and by which it could be judged), such as providing a child with adequate substitute family care or with educational experiences suitable to preschool children.

On the basis of this analysis of the early CASP plans, one must conclude: setting clear objectives for social services is useful in determining the character of service activities and in judging the effectiveness of these efforts. The CASP plans fail on both accounts. They do not specify actions related carefully to objectives, and thereby do not indicate specific directions of the social services; consequently, the programs are left immune to accountability for their results.

Perhaps, these early "plans" were not an accurate reflection of the "planning" activity which actually informed the Social and Rehabilitation Services Department and its Social Services Division. Interviews with Department and Division officials actively involved in the Agency of Human Services during that time, however, indicate that these "plans" do in fact mirror the level of "planning" that existed there between 1975 and 1978. One official in SRS argued forcefully that "until about 1978, there was no 'planning' for social services for children within SRS." There were all kinds of "plans" for children in custody (unmanageable children and those who were victims of child abuse). But they consisted, for example, of taking children with "behavioral problems" and assigning them to the Weeks School in Vergennes. Until 1974, this official indicated, when the Vermont Child Abuse Law was passed, even children who were victims of child abuse were sent to the Weeks School. She added that "there was no planning for alternatives to the Weeks School" until the mid-1970's.

How does one explain this continuous emphasis on "process" or activity rather than results in social services administration in Vermont? In part, it is probably

a function of what Robert Merton has called the "displacement of goals," the redirection of attention from the purposes of one's activity (that should lie beyond that activity) to the actions themselves.¹⁵ The purpose of foster care is not simply to provide foster care, nor is the objective of group homes for children and adolescents only to have places available continually for a specific number of young persons who are in "need" of such facilities. The objectives actually lie outside of the activity, or else the purposes become "displaced" and find themselves identified with the actions and routines performed. This type of bureaucratic "pathology" is perhaps a "natural" tendency to all organizations, in the absence of sustained efforts to orient action beyond itself. Within the SRS Department, until 1978 (when major changes took place), this was the case.

This situation was reinforced by federal actions. An SRS official indicated that "the main problem with federal regulations in the 1960's and 1970's (including those of Title XX) was that they were 'process' oriented, rather than 'results' oriented."¹⁶ She recalled that the Federal Regional Office was concerned primarily about

"form," requesting more "documentation" about what was being done (i.e., what activities were being performed), what services were being delivered, who was served, etc.. The quest for information about "processes" indicated to this administrator that the federal government had insufficient concern with the actual results of all of those services that were delivered to children and their families. An Agency Planning Division official indicated that the Title XX process of collecting information was "meaningless" in that it concentrated on "mandatory social services reporting of information that was not useful for Vermont human services organizations, nor was it useful to the federal government in determining what was happening in the states." Officials from SRS and the Agency Planning Division agreed that Title XX had little impact on holding the state accountable other than in a financial sense for its actions in response to the "needs" of children and their families.

The precipitating factors inducing greater attention to setting objectives in SRS came not from Title XX, but from changes in Vermont's social services scene. As a result of many studies, the decision was made to close the Weeks

School. The institution had been "Vermont's most resource-consuming program providing services to troubled juveniles . . . The institution devoured 64 percent of all state funds allocated to adjudicated children, but served only 18 percent of those children."¹⁷ With the planned closing of the Weeks School, some real "planning" would have to be done, that is some concrete objectives would have to be established for dealing with juveniles and children in state custody. "The closing required an accountability for visible, genuine results for clients which the institution, by its very existence, rendered unattainable and unnecessary."¹⁸

Two other factors reinforced this effort. First, in 1978, the Social Services Division within SRS took responsibility for the provision of juvenile services that formerly had been delivered by the Department of Corrections. Children and Youth Services would have to be managed in a unified manner by one social services organization. The addition of responsibilities encouraged the sorting out of appropriate objectives for different groups of children and adolescents.

The incentive for this activity was increased by a second factor, the realization that federal spending for

social services for children/families was decreasing and that it would most likely continue to decline. Scarce funds would have to be used in an efficient and effective manner to attain specific concrete goals. Planning "focused heavily upon defining success. What, after all, is the State expected to achieve when it intervenes in the life of a child? By what methods will success be attained and how can it be known when it is accomplished?"¹⁹ Thus, developing a policy, a clear set of objectives, was considered fundamental to any kind of "planning" for children.

The concrete result of this effort was the "Task Based System of Supervision and Case Management" (TBS). "The Task Based System specifically defines results expected of agency intervention, delineates tasks entailed in a results-oriented method of case planning and establishes a system of case work and supervisory monitoring vis-a-vis the decision-making process of case management."²⁰ Thus, the everyday activities that constitute the core of this task based system of management presuppose that there will be "specifically defined results expected of agency intervention."

Under the immediate pressure of the closing of the Weeks School and the incentives from the federal Law Enforcement

Assistance Administration (LEAA) for more specific planning for juveniles, the TBS approach centered first of all on older children in the custody of the state. For these delinquent or unmanageable children, "the Vermont Department of SRS defined success in very simple, realistic terms. Each child subject to its intervention must become an adequate adult who:

- is self supporting (does not deplete community resources as they are allocated specifically to deal with handicaps and special circumstances);
- demonstrates self control (lives without supervision; is not destructive to self, others or property; makes the choices and decisions which direct life);
- lives without confrontation with the law."²¹

The Department's policy presumes that "an inadequate child will not become an adequate adult." Thus, SRS through casework services attempts to produce an "adequate child" who:

- "is using supports by family and/or community systems;
- is supervised;
- is involved in educational activity or job skills development for which community resources generally pay, or is working;
- demonstrates self control appropriate to age;

-avoids confrontation with the law."²²

Within this context, the Social Services Division assesses its short term success in planning for "adequate childhood" by the following indicator:

A child must live in an age appropriate way in the least restrictive setting necessary to ensure that daily activities are causing measurable growth and change toward adequate adulthood.²³

This indicator is used to define further in "behavioral" terms, accessible to child, parent, and staff alike, "the conditions to determine the appropriateness of the child's discharge from active intervention."²⁴

In terms of child welfare services for younger children, objectives have been developed more precisely and thus programs have become better defined in character and mission. One primary objective is to provide services "to strengthen families and to maintain children in their homes." The importance of this objective is reflected in the services directed to this goal: "continued enhancement of early intervention casework services"; an experimental attempt at "homemaker services" (in two Social Services Division District Offices); "family communications effectiveness training, intensive in-home supervision, shelter and reunification programs for runaways, and family violence

treatment and prevention programs."²⁵

Together with the objective of "strengthening families" is the goal of "controlling" the extent and duration of substitute services. According to the 1982 Agency of Human Services plan, the containment of substitute services is necessary so that resources can be reallocated to preventive services. "At the same time, the availability of preventive services impacts directly on the program's ability to manage a continued reduction in substitute care services."²⁶ From 1973 to 1980 mean substitute service case loads declined by 10 percent in spite of "the program's greatly increased responsibilities resulting from mandatory abuse/neglect investigation and casefinding and from Juvenile Services reorganization."²⁷

To reduce the duration of publicly subsidized substitute services (e.g., foster care), there has been an "emphasis on permanency planning that has been greatly strengthened through adequate legal and adoptive support."²⁸ "Permanency planning" requires that children in foster care be placed in adoptive families or returned to their natural families within one year of their coming into the custody of the state. Before the introduction of the "permanency

planning" concept, an average of 40 to 50 percent of the children in foster care remained there for five years, thus absorbing many social services resources and at the same time prolonging an unstable situation.

Finally, in regard to day care for children, the Agency's "primary objective" is "to ensure that when children are absent from their parents they receive care that is as equal as possible to the care a good parent provides."²⁹ The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services has further specified this notion of "care a good parent provides" by listing those components of day care services for which the state agency would pay and which ones would be considered "extras," the costs of which day care users would have to purchase for themselves. For the most part, the standard features of a "developmental" day care center (dental care, compensatory education, or specialized skill training) have not been included in the Department's concept of "care a good parent provides." Thus, the day care objective has circumscribed, and thereby set limits on, the role that the Department of SRS is prepared to take, with its limited resources, in this area of children's services. Regardless of the debates that still surround the

"appropriate" level of day care for children in the state, there is a sense of what "success" in child care provision means and thus a standard for measuring the degree of the "adequacy" of the service.

Summary. An organization's character is largely determined by its goals, and its effectiveness depends, in part, on whether it attains those goals. Organizational activities are connected to goals, at least in theory, if not always in practice. Federal policy makers stipulated five Title XX objectives to direct state social services activities for children/families. However, the objectives were abstract and ambiguous, and did not provide adequate standards for judging the "effectiveness" of Title XX programs in Vermont. In the wake of institutional changes in the social services network in Vermont (i.e., the closing of the Weeks School), and under the pressure of decreasing funds for social services, Vermont's Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services instituted a Task Based System of case management. According to administrative officials, it has been this innovation, rather than Title XX, which has brought about a change from virtually an exclusive concern with "process" to a new emphasis on "objectives" and "results." A focus

on objectives certainly cannot guarantee that "high quality" objectives will be pursued or attained. Nor can it absolve of responsibility for the choice of means to achieve objectives. However, it can make more visible the character of an organization and facilitate judgments about its performance.

Social Services for Children/Families:
Managing for Results

It is one thing to set objectives, however clear and precise; it is another matter to attain them. Effective social services delivery requires the latter, as well as the former. Both the Title XX statute and the subsequent administrative regulations reveal the concern of federal officials with the monitoring or evaluating by state administrators of the effectiveness of their social services programs. They desired accountable social services delivery, in the sense of persons being held responsible for achieving objectives.

The efforts of Vermont's Agency of Human Services to monitor children/family programs are embodied in several concrete forms, from "quality assurance" of services to

ensure that social workers implement their programs according to the prescribed rules and regulations, to the licensing and regulation of day care centers, and beyond to the institution of a "management information system" (MIS) for the "tracking" of children in the custody of the state (i.e., those children in foster care, group homes, and institutions).

The task of the Quality Assurance Unit in the Agency is twice each year:

to develop and conduct a review of service cases based on a random sample of cases in each program. This review consists of verification that a client's eligibility was properly determined, that services were delivered as described, and that service plans are maintained. The purpose of these reviews is to assure compliance with Federal and State regulations and to prevent payments for services to ineligible persons. Results of these reviews are reported to program managers, who are responsible for instituting corrective action as required.³⁰

This type of monitoring focuses on the decisions and actions of social service workers. The reviews are process-oriented and do not touch upon the issue of the effectiveness of the services delivered. However, they do serve at least two important functions in the "planning" of social services. First, they can ensure to some degree that financial, time, and staff resources are being targeted to the people who

are intended to benefit from these social services, that is those who are "eligible." Furthermore, quality assurance reviews can hold administrators accountable in the sense of "controlling" their actions toward the clients (were the services delivered? were the service plans maintained?). These are significant components of social services delivery. However, it is important to remember that these are circumscribed activities, in that they do not encompass the monitoring of "outcomes" of social services provision.

Day care regulation has taken two forms in Vermont, licensing and registration. Both are undertaken by the Day Care Licensing Unit in the Agency. Since the late 1960's, day care centers have operated theoretically under the Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements. These regulations prescribe the components of adequate day care delivery (e.g., the physical standards of the facilities and the staff/child ratios for children of different ages). Administrative officials admit, however, that their enforcement of these regulations has been hampered by the small number of full-time staff (three persons) in the Day Care Licensing Unit and the large number of day care centers (50) and homes (200).

Adapting to this situation, the Agency has recently supplemented its licensing process with a "registration" procedure for smaller day care homes. An administrative official noted that now more day care homes are registering with the Agency, whereas in the past, due to the lack of enforcement, they did not bother to go through the licensing process. Registration requires only that the day care home assure the Licensing Unit in writing that the requirements for the home are adhered to. These assurances are then accepted by the Licensing Unit, with no inspection to ensure their veracity, unless complaints are made by the users. These registration procedures, according to one official, will allow publicly subsidized day care users more alternatives to choose from for their children (since of course homes that did not go through the licensing process were not known to be offering services and therefore could not be paid for those services to the children of Title XX recipients).

Occasionally, the Title XX Unit of the Agency (responsible for oversight of programs using Title XX funds and for liaison between the federal government and departments/divisions administering Title XX funded programs) conducted

its own review of day care centers. These reviews incorporated surveys to measure the satisfaction of clients with the care that their children received from the centers and day care homes. However, these surveys were admittedly rather simple and straightforward, asking people basic questions such as: Did your children actually receive the services? Were you satisfied with those services--Yes? No? To the extent that monitoring did take place, though, it could provide some basic information on the quality of day care received by children.

Other federal requirements for state Title XX monitoring of social services programs for children (and adults) came in the form of periodic information collection, rather than through "heavy handed" reviews of social services delivery by federal Regional Office officials. Social services and client data were collected on a regular basis from service case workers to satisfy the Social Services Reporting Requirements. The process-oriented character of the Title XX SSRR's has been discussed already (see the "Objective Setting" section of this chapter), and there is no need to rehearse here the problems with that type of information collecting approach. It is sufficient to note that, accord-

ing to SRS and Agency officials, the Social Services Reporting Requirements were a burden to "street-level" social workers. Their valuable time was consumed in collecting information that would be of little use for their jobs or for their clients. The Requirements were perceived to engender greater complexity rather than real programmatic assistance at any level of the state human services bureaucracy.

Oversight of Title XX programs from the Federal Regional Office in Boston consisted of periodic visits of one federal official, whose area of responsibility included New Hampshire as well as Vermont. His principal function was to provide technical assistance to the Agency's Title XX Unit. Clarifications of Title XX regulations, eligibility requirements, and other legal matters constituted the focus of discussions. Visits to selected day care centers of to Social Service Division District Offices occasionally supplemented technical advice given at the state offices. One indicator of the lack of real federal monitoring of Title XX programs in Vermont is that there never was a federal audit for fraud or lack of compliance with eligibility requirements. Thus federal oversight of Title XX programs in Vermont

consisted of a combination of "meaningless" information collection balanced off by technical assistance in determining the federal requirements for the programs.

Despite their relative ineffectiveness in providing direction to the social services in Vermont, these "process-oriented" monitoring devices are often used. Their use is hardly the result of some capricious whim of administrative officials. They do focus on the activities which constitute the substance of a program. Administrators have to learn the concrete meaning of a program's provisions, and technical assistance is a means to that end. Moreover, to keep track of whether a program is being administered according to its specifications requires the collection of information and the monitoring of administrative activities. These then are necessary, although not sufficient, measures for the oversight of an operating program. But one can easily lose sight of the forest for the trees, if "process-oriented" monitoring is the only type of review undertaken. And this is what happened when federal administrators set out to oversee the implementation of Title XX in Vermont.

The significant innovations in "managing for results" in Title XX programs for children/families came not from

the federal program itself, but from SRS Department efforts. It is this Department, and its Social Services Division, that has been the real locus of the change from an exclusive focus on process to one that also encompasses results in the delivery of social services programs. "Managing for results" has become instantiated in the Task Based System of Case Management and Supervision (TBS), and the Social Services Information System (SSIS) incorporated into it.

As indicated in the previous section on "Objective Setting," TBS was developed by SRS in the late 1970's in Vermont to respond to a number of problems in the state's social services network. The closing of the Weeks School (which had served "troubled juveniles") in April 1979 was symbolic of the change in emphasis. The Weeks School, according to several SRS officials, was a clear manifestation of the exclusive emphasis on activity devoid of a clear high-quality purpose. The Weeks School consumed resources which were becoming more scarce, and it provided little evidence of "success" in assisting juveniles to cope with their "troubles." According to an SSD document, "the institution's fixed costs precluded meeting the fundamental directives of retrenchment: Do more; do it better and do

it for less!" The actual closing of the School, according to the SSD document, "required accountability for visible, genuine results with clients which the institution, by its very existence, rendered unattainable and unnecessary."³¹ The changing emphasis spread quickly beyond juvenile services to those for children and their families.

The Task Based System was to provide a structured method for this revised approach to social services delivery. Its theoretical foundations clearly are to be found in a management-by-objectives perspective, with its emphasis on linking together administrative activity and a precise set of objectives by which to judge the "effectiveness" of those actions. The actual development and implementation of TES in the Social Services Division of the Social and Rehabilitation Services Department reflected the concern of high level administrators in these organizations with responding adequately to what they perceived to be the need for purposive and accountable activity among social services workers.

A primary function of the TBS, in addition to recording policy objectives in concrete and precise terms, is to establish a structure of social services delivery which:

- 1) "fixes accountability"; 2) "tells everyone involved ex-

actly what must be done to achieve that accountability"; 3) "tells everyone involved what measures will be applied to each task to show success or failure"; and 4) "contains within itself a monitoring system (i.e., SSIS) documenting those measures." "The TES is designed to ensure that each client has a results oriented case plan and the results are in fact achieved in accordance with the Department's policy."³³ The TES is now being used in the juvenile, child protective, foster care and adoption services programs.

Clearly, a key component of the TES strategy is the Social Services Information System (SSIS). It is now just being readied for use in the Social Services Division of SRS. The SSIS consists basically of forms containing information on children served by the Division's District Offices. This information includes personal data on the child, his family background, the status of the child (e.g., foster care, group home, etc.), the placement history of the child (e.g., how many times in a foster home or group home), the type of placement, the reason for the state custody of the child (e.g., abused or neglected; unmanageable; emotional handicapped), and the goals of the individual case plan for child. These goals may consist of returning the child to

to his own home, placing the child with legal guardians, or in a stable foster home environment, or in a permanent adoptive home.

The Social Services Information System is a vehicle that Social Services Division officials hope will allow the collection of better results-oriented information, which can be used to evaluate the extent to which goals (e.g., permanency planning for children) are being attained. Since SSIS will be a computer operated system, it is hoped that state-level Social Services Division officials will be able to construct meaningful aggregates of different types of children being served by the individual District Offices and also target their attention to specific "problem" cases (e.g., a child that has been placed in several foster care homes without any real stability). The SSIS is tied tightly to the Task Based System's policy goals, so that there will be clear and precise information on performance of individual District Offices and the social case workers within them.

Although the short and long term effects of the SSIS will be determined in the future, the impact of the Task Based System is already apparent. Whereas eight years ago, Vermont had 1,500 children in custody (with as least 40 percent

in custody for five years), there are presently only about 850 children in the care of the state. Social Service Division officials indicate that there has been a major decline in the number of children and a precipitous reduction in the time that a child stays in the custody of the Agency since the introduction of TIS. The combination of clear, precise, and limited policy goals along with detailed practices or procedures to be followed in dealing with children and their families is, according to administrative officials, the cause of this trend.³⁴ The perceived success of the Task Based System is sufficiently strong that the American Public Welfare Association has distributed it as a model of policy and procedure in the area of children's services. Moreover, several other states have contacted the Social Service Division in order to ascertain whether this strategy would be appropriate in their own human services agencies.

"Managing for results" in social services for children in Vermont has consisted of more than the adoption and implementation of a Task Based System and accompanying Social Services Information System. Changes in the administrative structure of the Social Services Division and in budget mak-

ing have supplemented these primary efforts at improving social services delivery to children and their families. It is important to realize, however, that these latter alterations took place after the creation of the TBS strategy and are designed, according to SSD officials, to reinforce the effectiveness of the Task Based approach. In other words, there was a clear focus on purposes and strategies to attain these purposes before any tinkering with administrative structure and budget-making procedures was initiated. The latter have been developed within a clearly defined "system" and have derived their rationale from the operational requirements of that "system."

One administrative structural change centered in the central office of the Social Services Division. The purpose of this change was to enhance accountability and to ensure uniform guidelines from the central office to the District Offices. Prior to the structural changes, there were two assistant SSD Directors, each of whom was responsible for six of the twelve District Offices. The change eliminated the two positions and replaced them with one Operations Chief who is responsible for overseeing all of the District Offices. According to one high level SSD official,

this new situation allows for more uniformity in interpreting SSD policy and procedural guidelines to the District Offices. It also facilitates the line of control from the SSD Director to the District Office Directors and beyond them to the case work supervisors and case workers themselves.

The other noteworthy organizational change concerned the former Adoptions Unit of the Agency. Prior to 1980, it was a separate organization within the Agency. However, it is now incorporated into the District Offices. Four adoption workers each service three District Offices and function under the control of the District Office Directors. This apparently allows more coordination of efforts between District Office case workers and adoption workers, thus enabling the Division's efforts at permanency planning to be carried out more expeditiously.

Changes in budget-making procedures, according to Social Service Division officials, also have helped to improve "management for results" in the Division. Until about one year ago, control over budgets was centralized in the central office of the Social Services Division. District Office Directors had little knowledge of the total SSD budget or how the money was allocated among various programs. Moreover,

these Directors had no real responsibility for managing the resources allocated to their districts. Under the present arrangements, however, control over the administration of the budgets is decentralized to the District Office Directors. The total budget figure for the District is negotiated with the Social Services Division Directors; but the actual allocation of resources in each district is the responsibility of the District Director. The latter must decide how to use their allocations in such a manner as to attain the goals set forth by the Division for each of the protective service, foster care, group home, or adoption services programs. This new arrangement demands that the District Office Directors share responsibility (with the central office of SSD and with the caseworkers) for the effective and efficient allocation of resources among the children's services programs. They share the burden of deciding what strategies are cost effective in terms of their results and what allocation of resources is most efficient in achieving the "permanency planning" goals of the Division. In view of the fact that the Social Services Division lost \$1.4 million in FY 1982 due to cuts in federal social services programs, SSD officials see these

budgetary changes (in the context of TES) as crucial to the effective delivery of social services to children.

Summary. "Management by results" is thus an essential ingredient in social services "planning" for children and their families in Vermont. It apparently enhanced the Social Service Division's and the SRS Department's ability to attain its objectives of ensuring stability and development for children under its care. It does so in part by establishing a framework for acquiring information about the "outcomes" of social service delivery. The Social Services Information System is insinuated into a larger Task Based System which focuses attention on objectives and practices considered effective to attain those objectives. Although the development of this management strategy for children's services has occurred within the federally initiated and funded Title XX program, Title XX itself is not responsible for its nurturing. Title XX's statutory mandates did not require any specific level of results-oriented management; nor did its administrative regulations induce the Agency's organizations to undertake the monitoring of service "outcomes" for children or the restructuring of administrative or budgetary relationships in the Social Services Division.

These innovations were effected indigenously in Vermont's Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.

Title XX and "Planning" for Children/Families
in Vermont:
Conclusions

On the basis of this analysis of the impact of Title XX in Vermont, one must conclude: Title XX failed to induce or even facilitate social services "planning" for children and families in this state. In the three major aspects of social services "planning" discussed in this chapter--needs assessment, objective setting, and management by results (monitoring)--Title XX had only minimal impact on high-quality (effective, efficient, and accountable) social services provision for children/families. Title XX did not effect systematic needs assessment. Nor did it assist in the formulation of true objectives (rather than "measurable" activities that paraded as "objectives"). And finally, it did not facilitate the creation of an "outcome" or results-oriented monitoring system to serve as a foundation for an adequate management by results strategy.

Thus, although Title XX may have been administered in Vermont in formal compliance with federal statutory and

regulatory guidelines, it did not inform and thereby transform social services "planning" practices for children/families. To be sure, in formulating concrete objectives and in developing a framework for evaluating results, Vermont's Social and Rehabilitation Service's Department and its Social Services Division have made some significant strides over the last few years. But these do not attest to the impact of Title XX. They were attained in spite of Title XX, not because of it.

Of course, the failure of a public program to live up to its proponents expectations is nothing new in the public arena in the United States. As Richard Elmore has observed: "A large collection of carefully documented case studies--in education, manpower, housing, and economic development--points consistently to the same basic pattern: grand pretensions, faulty execution, and puny results."³⁵ Public programs must confront the "complexity of joint action," endure the omnipresence of "implementation games," withstand the intransigence of organizational "routines," and submit to the necessity of bargaining among a diverse group of bureaucratic and political officials (at the federal, state, and sometimes local levels) and interest groups. Often,

inadequate staff to carry out projects that are insufficiently funded add to the uncertainty of the outcome of public programs.³⁶

This uncertainty is not something that lawmakers necessarily can remedy in the design of public programs.

As Majone and Wildavsky observe:

Many, perhaps most, constraints (on the "successful" implementation of a program) remain hidden in the planning stage, and are only discovered in the implementing process. Moreover, feasibility conditions keep changing over time: old constraints disappear or are overcome (e.g. through learning), while new ones emerge. The solution space undergoes continuous transformations, shrinking in one direction, expanding in another.³⁷

Given the numerous pitfalls that any program encounters during its implementation, what key ingredients did Title XX lack as a strategy to effect innovations in Vermont's social services "planning" for children and their families? The following analysis will concentrate on three factors that imperiled the effectiveness of Title XX: 1) the Title XX statute and the administrative regulations; 2) the oversight role of the federal regional office; and 3) the lack of financial incentives for "planning" under Title XX.

Neither the Title XX statute nor the subsequent administrative regulations mandated any strategic social services

"planning" by an agency administering the program. The statute and regulations did not specify, for example, that the Agency of Human Services was to conduct regular needs assessments, stipulate precise objectives, or institute a framework for attaining objectives. The federal guidelines merely stipulated that the Comprehensive Annual Service Program (CASP) plans had to contain a description of what the state was doing in the areas of "needs assessment," or "objective setting," or "evaluation" (monitoring). Presumably, if Vermont was simply allocating resources on the basis of what it had done in previous years, with only minimal attention given to the major components of "planning," then the appropriate "description" of this activity would be put into the CASP plan. On the other hand, if Vermont's Agency of Human Services had made substantial innovations in "planning" for children's services, then that would be discussed in the plan. What was important was that the descriptions be in the plans, not what those descriptions revealed about the adequacy of "planning" in the individual state. Therefore, the statute and regulations provided little incentive to Vermont's Agency of Human Services, or its component organizations, to institute new methods of

social services "planning" for children or adults.

Within the context of this legal framework, it is not surprising that the principal role of the federal regional office was to provide technical assistance and to ensure that the appropriate information was collected to fulfill the Social Services Reporting Requirements. The provision of technical assistance is perhaps the least taxing function for federal officials, although the questions are albeit at times complicated. It requires a knowledge of the federal regulations, but it is a passive role which is played only at the request of a state agency, for example, that needs clarification on federal requirements for a program. Technical assistance may ensure compliance with a program, but it does not by itself induce innovation, for example in social services "planning."

The second federal role, as monitor, has more potential for effecting change in a subordinate administrative agency. However, in the case of Title XX, the statutory and regulatory framework of the program precluded any effective monitoring by federal officials. Title XX required no specific results from the states in the area of foster care services, protective services, or day care services for

children and their families. Therefore, the results of social services provision to children (or adults) was beyond the purview of federal administrators. The focus of their attention centered, once again, on what activities were being performed for whom. Their concern, drawn from the requirements of the Title XX program itself, was with plans, rather than with "planning."

Along with the lack of statutory and administrative mandates for social services "planning" for children/families came the lack of financial incentives for strategic reforms in this area. Vermont received a fixed allotment of funds for Title XX funded social services programs. As indicated in Chapter III, this money was sufficient to keep children's services programs going in the state. It did not really allow for innovations, in the sense of new services for larger numbers of children and families, but it did prevent the cutting back of programs (at least until 1981).

What the federal Title XX contribution to Vermont's social services programs did not produce was a set of incentives for innovations in services "planning." That would have required either more or less money transferred to the state Agency. More federal funds, especially if they had

been targeted to "planning" activities specifically, might have induced the Agency and its component organizations to undertake more "needs assessments," more elaborate "program evaluations," or more "policy analysis" in general. It is not clear, however, that increased funding would have brought about a Task Based System (TBS) or stimulated the formulation of specific objectives for the children's service programs.

For social services "planning" really to have taken hold under Title XX (that is, as a result of Title XX incentives), the annual federal contribution probably would have to have been less than what it was. In those circumstances "hard" decisions would have needed to be made about the actual objectives of children's services programs and there would have been concern to use the limited funds efficiently to attain those objectives. Indeed, one of the reasons (according to SRS and SSD officials interviewed) that the Task Based System had been accepted generally by social services workers and higher level officials in the Agency is that it does respond in some "rational" way to the reduction of federal funds that the Agency has experienced for the last two years. As it was, however, Title XX pre-

sented no incentive for any type serious "planning" for children's services programs.

In summary, then, social services "planning" for children and their families does indeed seem to have come to Vermont. Albeit in its early stages, there does appear to be a conscientious effort being made in the Department of SRS and its Social Services Division at least to formulate concrete, precise, realizable objectives, and to evaluate the progress that is being made to attain those objectives. However, Title XX has contributed very little to that effort. Because of its lack of strong statutory and regulatory mandates and the absence of appropriate financial incentives, it could not by its design induce this state to innovation in social services "planning" for its children. Title XX asked for little, and the state responded accordingly.

FOOTNOTES

1. William S. Cowles, Jr., "Operations and Future Goals and Objectives of the Agency of Human Services," Report to the Honorable Deane C. Davis, Governor of Vermont and to the General Assembly, State of Vermont (November 13, 1971), p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 11.
3. Ibid., p. 10.
4. Ibid., p. 9.
5. Ibid., p. 14.
6. Vermont Agency of Human Services, Comprehensive Service Program Plan, p. 11.
7. Ibid., p. 12
8. Ibid., p. 12.
9. For a discussion of "needs" and their significance, see: Larry M. Siegel, C. Clifford Attkisson, and Linda G. Carson, "Need Identification and Program Planning in the Community Context," in Evaluation of Human Service Programs, ed. C. Clifford Attkisson, William A. Hargreaves, and Mardi J. Horowitz (New York: Academic Press, 1978), pp. 215-252.
10. Much of the needs assessment literature seems to presume a "scientific" basis; see, for example, Larry Siegel, et. al., op. cit., and Roger Bell, Tuan Nguyen, George Warheit, and Joanne Buhl, "Service Utilization, Social Indicator, and Citizen Survey Approaches to Human Service Need Assessment," in Evaluation of Human Service Programs, op. cit., pp. 253-300. However, Ross Fitzgerald, in his edition of essays, Human Needs and Politics, reveals the underlying political nature of the definition and assessment of "needs."

11. The literature which emphasizes the importance of objectives is enormous. See, for example: James G. March and Herbert Simon, Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons); George L. Morrissey, Management by Objectives and Results in the Public Sector (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1976); Alfred Eichner and Charles Brecher, Controlling Social Expenditures: The Search for Output Measures (New York: Universe Books, 1979).
12. Determining the "real" objectives of an organization, however, is not a simple task. There may not be a consensus among administrators on what those objectives really are. And what appear to the "objectives" may hide the real organizational goals or simply may not be "objectives" at all.
13. This is really only a necessary condition for judging the effectiveness or "quality" of a program or organization. Effectiveness may mean more than attaining organizational goals (presuming that they exist); it may refer also to the adequacy of efforts of an organization, which may not be sufficient even though the goals are attained, to address and resolve a set of problems, such as child abuse and neglect, the "need" for day care services, etc.. Also, although 'quality' is often used as a synonym for effectiveness, it is important to recall that 'quality' refers to means as well as ends. Procedures and due process are important components of 'quality' administration, and should not be overlooked in a head-long quest for "results."
14. Paul Mott, Meeting Human Needs, p. 87.
15. Robert K. Merton, "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality," in Reader in Bureaucracy, ed. R. K. Merton, Ailsa P. Gray, Barbara Hockey and Hanan C. Selvin (New York: Free Press, 1952).
16. The administrative officials interviewed and this writer use the term 'process-oriented' to mean a concern with the activities of implementing the provisions of a program without much attention to the purposes of the programmatic activities. This should not be taken as a tacit denigration of procedures or of the importance

of "activity" that is congruent with the provisions of a program. However, without assuming a utilitarian calculus, programmatic actions can be judged profitably in terms of their results, as well as by the ethics of their means. Neither standard precludes the use of the other.

17. Marian Cummings and Cheryl Glaser, "An Agency Response to Fiscal Retrenchment," The Fifth National Institute on Social Work in Rural Areas, Burlington, Vermont, July 29, 1980, p.2.
18. Ibid., p. 4.
19. Ibid., p. 5.
20. Ibid., p. 1.
21. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
22. Ibid., p. 6.
23. Ibid., p. 6.
24. Ibid., p. 4.
25. Vermont Agency of Human Services, Vermont Comprehensive Program Plan: 1982-1983 (Waterbury, Vermont: Agency of Human Services, 1982), III-216.
26. Ibid., p. III-216.
27. Ibid., p. III-216.
28. Ibid., p. III-216.
29. Ibid., p. III-239.
30. Vermont Agency of Human Services, Comprehensive Annual Service Program Plan: 1976 (Waterbury, Vermont: Agency of Human Services, 1976), p. 12.
31. Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Social Services Division, "Vermont's Task Based System of Case Management and Supervision" (May 5, 1982), p. 1.

32. Ibid., p. 2.
33. Ibid., p. 1.
34. A study of the actual short and long term impact of TBS is beyond the scope of this essay. Even though Social Services Division administrators have great hopes for the "System," it is certainly conceivable that there will be unintended and unforeseen consequences that might arise from the emphasis on precision and "measured" results. One can only hope that children will not be "processed" in a hurried or careless manner in order to attain "results" or fulfill the dictates of the Task Based System. For a discussion of the unintended consequences of "measurement" of results, see: Peter Blau, Dynamics of Bureaucracy, Revised Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).
35. Richard Elmore, "Organizational Models of Social Program Implementation," Public Policy 26 (Spring 1978): 186.
36. The literature on the conditions that facilitate or inhibit "successful" implementation of programs is now enormous. Some helpful items include: Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, Implementation (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1973); Eugene Bardach, The Implementation Game (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1979); George C. Edwards, III, Implementing Public Policy (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1980); Jerome T. Murphy, State Education Agencies and Discretionary Funds (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1974); and Walter Williams, Government by Agency (New York: Academic Press, 1980).
37. Giandomenico Majone and Aaron Wildavsky, "Implementation as Evolution" in Implementation, 2nd ed., op. cit., p. 180.

C H A P T E R V

TITLE XX: FAILURES AND ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

This essay has explored two dimensions of Title XX's impact in Vermont. The discussion in Chapter III focused on the range of social services programs for children/families in Vermont and on Title XX's effect on the flexible allocation of resources among these programs. The analysis in Chapter IV concentrated on Title XX's impact on state social services "planning" for children/families. These chapters were preceded by historical analyses of the federal government's responses since the 1930's to the needs of children/families and its attempts to develop an appropriate institutional framework for the implementation of public social services programs. These overviews culminated with discussions respectively of the policy and institutional implementation provisions of Title XX. The purpose of this chapter is briefly to review the discussion of the previous sections of the essay, and then to suggest some alternatives to "the Title XX strategy" in administering social services for children and

and their families.

Social Services for Children/Families:
The Road to Title XX

As indicated in Chapter I, this is the era of the child. Virtually all aspects of children's lives, including health, nutrition, education, intellectual and emotional development, family life and care, have become public issues. Administrators, advocates, professional groups, and parents demand specific and often conflicting governmental responses. This situation has presented governmental policy makers with knotty problems. As public representatives and allocators of public resources, they must make decisions, no longer whether government should be active, but concerning what objectives programs (e.g., social services) should aim at, the types of appropriate programs, which persons should be served, and what level of funding would be appropriate.

Clearly, the traditional relationship of "benign neglect" of child care by government is no longer accepted by most people nor perhaps acceptable. Public action may be incremental, uncoordinated, cautious, or even reluctant, for there is a lingering fear of intruding on the traditional preroga-

tives and responsibilities of the family in caring for children. Nevertheless, federal and state governments since the 1930's have together developed on a continuous basis programs to assist children and their families.

These programs have ranged from income maintenance of poor families with children (e.g., Aid to Families with Dependent Children) to social services (e.g., child welfare services, day care), and beyond to programs for mentally retarded children and those with special developmental disabilities (e.g., special education programs). Some programs have been targeted to children from poor families (e.g., AFDC, day care), while others have been aimed at children from families of any income status (e.g., protective services, foster care). Occasionally, public programs for children/families are administered solely by the federal government, as in the case of Old Age and Survivors Insurance. More often, however, due in part to the lack of consensus on the precise goals of the program, they are implemented in a context of federal/state "cooperation" in which both the federal and state governments share responsibility for determining the exact design of the program and for administering it in an effective and efficient manner.

As discussed in Chapter II, this pragmatic, ad hoc manner of policy making has not always been conducive to the effective administration of public programs. This was especially true in the late 1960's and early 1970's for social services programs. At that time the federal requirements for the state implementation of the social services were relatively loose. Accountability of state administrators to federal officials was not strictly enforced. States had considerable flexibility, and large sums of money were spent, but with no exact reckoning of results. In 1972, in the wake of "uncontrollable" spending in the social services and with the impetus for control sought by the Nixon Administration, Congress placed a ceiling on federal spending for social services for children and adults.

Two years later, Congress created Title XX of the Social Security Act, a piece of legislation designed: 1) to ensure a continued public response to the services "needs" of children (and adults) and their families; 2) to provide the individual states with a large degree of flexibility in allocating resources among social services programs (e.g., day care, protective services, foster care, homemaker services for the elderly, etc.); 3) to promote "comprehensive plan-

ning" by each state government in the social services policy field; and 4) to retain a limit on federal financial participation in the social services enterprise. Judging from the original program design, each state was to act virtually as an independent social services policy maker, and have discretion in allocating resources among a myriad of social services programs.

The federal government stipulated only five broad "goals" at which the state services had to be directed. All social services (with very few exceptions) that a state chose to fund could be considered appropriate to attaining these "goals." Federal restrictions prescribed only that at least 50 percent of the state's Title XX federal allotment be spent on persons eligible for public assistance (i.e., income maintenance) benefits. The only other major restriction came in the form of the fixed allotment of federal funds for each state's social services programs.

In addition to facilitating state flexibility and federal spending control, Title XX's creators also sought to enhance state social services "planning." The legislation (and subsequent administrative regulations) prescribed that each state submit to the federal Department of Health, Education,

and Welfare (HEW), now Health and Human Services (HHS), Comprehensive Annual Services Program (CASP) plans, indicating in them what state "planning" activities had been undertaken in the areas of "needs assessment," "objective setting," "evaluation," and what was done to ensure citizen participation in the "planning" process.

Federal lawmakers presumed that this CASP "planning" process would enable individual state governments to utilize "wisely" the limited federal social services funds that they received. Flexibility was to be maintained (no priorities, except for the 50 percent rule, were set by the federal government), but "planning" presumably would guard against capricious and ad hoc decision making and at the same time more readily ensure that each state administered in an accountable manner effective programs to children (and adults) and their families.

Title XX in Vermont:
"Grand Pretensions, Puny Results"

In 1975, when Title XX was enacted into law, Vermont already had a highly developed social services network of public and private institutions. Programs for children and

families, such as day care, protective services, foster care, adoption services, etc., were already on-going enterprises, each with its own set of administrative practices and coterie of supportive professionals and advocates. The Agency of Human Services had been created in 1971 by the Vermont state legislature as an umbrella organization to oversee the activities of departments and divisions responsible for a wide variety of social service, health, mental health, rehabilitative, and corrections activities for citizens in Vermont.

It was into this network of institutions and programs that federal lawmakers hurled Title XX in 1975. The program was designed to attain two major institutional aims: flexibility for state decision makers in allocating social services resources and better social services program "planning" for children/families and adults (e.g., the elderly). Attainment of these aims, federal lawmakers presumed, would ensure or at least facilitate the achievement of Title XX's five policy goals. However, the account (in Chapters III and IV) of Title XX's impact in Vermont reveals that the program did not accomplish either of these objectives. Moreover, given its design, it is doubtful whether it could have.

Fundamentally, this case study is not a story of

"implementation games," that is of corrupt bureaucrats diverting public resources to their own ends, of administrators so enmeshed in "routines" that they "deflected goals" of Title XX in order to make them conform with their own traditional practices, or of recalcitrant state officials who worked continuously against federal officials to avoid changes in practices mandated by Title XX. Rather, it is a story of a poorly designed federal program that did not provide the necessary resources, financial or administrative, to accomplish its putative objectives.

That Vermont's Agency of Human Services did not gain significant flexibility from Title XX in allocating social services resources is due in large part to the federal fiscal ceiling incorporated into the program. Title XX funding was sufficient to keep children/family programs funded at constant levels, but insufficient (in the absence of some strong political pressures) to allow the reallocation of funds among programs or redistribution among classes of recipients. Institutionalized patterns of funding were sufficiently long standing that they could only be maintained rather than altered under Title XX. Moreover, the federal program provided no other inducements to the state to break

or even reconsider its traditional allocation of resources. There was no mandate for close review of Agency Decisions either by politically elected officials or citizens, since neither the statute nor the administrative regulations provided for their mandatory participation.

In terms of attaining the objective of flexibility, then, the federal program held out a promise to the states and its citizens that it did not have the resources to fulfill. Title XX posed no threat to administrative officials concerned about their respective programs, and it offered no incentive or reason to alter the proportional allocation of resources among on-going programs.

Title XX's program design was equally ineffective in inducing state officials to "plan" social services for children/families. Federal policy makers did not specify clearly what exactly "comprehensive services program planning" entailed. They pointed to aspects of "planning," including "needs assessment," "objective setting," and "evaluation" (monitoring), but what they called for in the CASP plans was a series of "descriptions" of activities performed in each of these areas. Apparently having no clear idea of what "planning" was, the federal lawmakers

could not communicate exactly what was required.

Where federal regulations were clear and precise, they focused on areas peripheral to "planning." Such was the case with the Social Services Reporting Requirements. To fulfill these Requirements, information was indeed collected and sent to federal officials, but it proved to be useless in helping state social services workers to "plan" more adequate social services for children/families. There is in virtually every conception of "planning" a central focus on objectives and the results obtained by specific strategies. The process-oriented SSRR was irrelevant to the provisions of needed results-oriented information. The "outcomes" of services programs seemed beyond the interest of federal officials, thus reinforcing an emphasis in program design on "process," rather than on objectives and results.

Finally, federal regional office administrators tended to be technical advisers to Vermont officials, a role certainly congruent with Title XX's design, rather than monitors of the "outcomes" of specific services programs. They performed passive services such as interpreting federal regulations when requested to do so by state officials and collecting information to satisfy the Reporting Requirements.

Helping Vermont Agency officials to attain a closer match between objectives and results was beyond their purview.

But, what if Title XX's design had incorporated more emphasis on the basic features of "planning," that is, a concern with setting concrete objectives, the development and testing of strategies to attain these objectives, and a set of management practices to help ensure a vital connection between objectives and results? Clearly, social services "planning" is an inescapable political activity fraught with difficulties. Even a Title XX program that focused in a more coherent and detailed manner on "planning" could not have produced an "objective," "scientific" model of "planning" in Vermont or any other state. However, as Vermont's own efforts (discussed in Chapter IV) indicate, there is room for some concrete "planning" which aims at setting clear and precise objectives and "manages for results" in a methodical way, even if only to learn how poorly the social services programs actually attain goals set forth for them. Even these moderate objectives for social services "planning" Title XX could not effect because of its inadequate design.

Serving Children/Families:
Social Services "Planning" Beyond Title XX

If Title XX is "unredeemable," then what are the alternatives? More important, how is one to think about "alternatives"? One might formulate some general goals for the well-being of children and their families, and then determine that level of government which probably would be most conducive to "responding" to those purposes. Or if the appropriate level of government is uncertain, then one could lobby a variety of sources--local, state, or federal--to ascertain which would be most willing to contribute to the worthy cause of furthering "child welfare."

This approach focuses solely on the legislative or policy formulation side of governmental activity. It may indeed stimulate the funding of children's services programs and the establishment of "goals" for them, but it cannot ensure effective, efficient, or accountable programs for children. Title XX had five principal policy goals, and Congress appropriated funds to attain these goals. It even offered the states flexibility in distributing these funds among various services programs. These factors by themselves, however, could not produce an effective network of social

services for children and families in Vermont.

The fundamental problem with an approach that concentrates solely on policy formulation is the illusion that public programs are normally "self-executing." But, they do not implement themselves, nor do they automatically produce desired (i.e., intended) results. As indicated in Chapter IV, the explanations for this condition range from "the complexity of joint action" (a diversity of actors and numerous decision points render coordinated action almost impossible); or "implementation games" (bureaucrats divert resources, deflect goals, delay action, etc.); to "organizational routines" (patterns of agency action are difficult to alter and bring into conformity with new policies); to inadequate "inputs," such as loose guidelines, inadequate financing, undertrained staff, or complex structures and insufficient communication.

Responses to these problems vary from proposals for greater centralization or decentralization of authority and responsibility for implementing public programs, to diatribes against public organizations and their inability to carry out programs effectively and efficiently. Each perspective presumes a model of how public organizations function and what

conditions are necessary for public program implementation.

The prescription for centralization focuses on the role of the federal government, not only as policy maker but as active implementor. The federal government is the appropriate policy maker, proponents of this position contend, because it is the only national forum for discussion of public issues and for an authoritative and unified response to "national" problems. Its position as principal revenue collector only adds to its preeminence among levels of government in the United States.

Advocates of this position also contend that the federal government must be intimately involved in the implementation of public programs. To have it otherwise is to endanger the effective administration of the program and thus the effectiveness of the program itself. According to Theodore Lowi, "when a central government authorizes a project or delegates any kind of powers that are not accompanied by some rather explicit standards of conduct, these powers are implemented according to the values of the localities where the implementation takes place."¹ Lowi contends that administration of public programs in the United States takes place with "a larger system of modern irresponsibility." It is

"a system in which governments collect money they do not spend and spend money they do not collect. This kind of specialization of function must inevitably involve the end of responsibility and therefore of good government."² Lowi emphasizes the need for state and local compliance with federal program designs, ones which would ensure accountability and presumably also effective programs.

Richard Elmore has characterized this and similar approaches to policy implementation as a "forward mapping" strategy. He notes that "forward mapping" is:

. . . the strategy that comes most readily to mind when one thinks about how a policymaker might try to affect the implementation process. It begins at the top of the process, with as clear a statement as possible of the policymaker's intent, and proceeds through a sequence of increasingly more specific steps to define what is expected of implementors at each level. At the bottom of the process, one states, again with as much precision as possible, what a satisfactory outcome would be, measured in terms of the original statement of intent.³

Applying this strategem, Elmore notes that Congress might state a policy and programmatic design (leaving room for administrative regulations consistent with the design), "elaborate a division of responsibilities between central and regional offices of the federal government (or among federal, state, and local administrators) such that each implementing

unit has a clearly defined mission.⁴ Regardless of the actual practice, the "underlying logic" of "forward mapping" "begins with an objective, it elaborates an increasingly specific set of steps for achieving that objective, and it states an outcome against which success or failure can be measured."⁵

Lowi and others who adopt a centralist perspective, one suspects, would not be surprised at Title XX's minimal impact in Vermont. They would point to the lack of clear goals, the discretion allowed the state (s) in deciding on appropriate services, the absence of substantial "planning" requirements, and the relatively passive technical assistance role of the federal regional officials as indicators of the loose federal control over the state's operations, and as explanations for the program's inability to induce change in social services policy making.

What then could a strong (as opposed to Title XX's relatively weak) federal presence effect in the implementation of children's services?: Better state compliance with federal statutory and regulatory mandates? This might be the case in large state governments or ones bent on playing "implementation games," but there is no evidence that Vermont's Agency of Human Services deliberately flouted federal Title XX

mandates. More substantial social services "planning" activity? The federal government could certainly require more detailed and continuous "planning."

It has done so for child welfare services in the 1980 Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (PL 96-272). A principal feature of this legislation is the objective of "permanency planning" for children in foster care. It is an attempt to ensure more stability in the lives of children temporarily or permanently unable to live with their parents. One Vermont Social Services Division official noted that the federal law reinforces "good practice" in Vermont's efforts for foster care children. In part it does so not only by setting objectives for the states, but also by requiring them to monitor the results of their efforts and to show what is being achieved. It is as yet unclear what will be the effects of 96-272 in Vermont and other states. Clearly such legislation vigorously enforced could make state officials more aware of their objectives and the extent to which they are attaining them. There does appear then to be some benefits to a centralist's strategy.

However, there are limits on what greater centralization can achieve in terms of the implementation of public social

service programs. The centralist strategy harbors a fundamental assumption. Its proponents presumed that "policy makers (can) control the organizational, political, and technological processes that affect implementation."⁶ Is this really the case? Not everyone would agree. For example, Richard Elmore contends that:

The notion that policymakers exercise--or ought to exercise--some kind of direct and determinant control over policy implementation might be called the "noble lie" of conventional public administration and policy analysis. Administrators legitimate their discretionary decisions by saying that their authority is delegated and controlled by elected and appointed policymakers. Policy analysts justify their existence by arguing that informed, rational choices by policymakers are necessary to guide and control administrators. Neither administrators nor policy analysts are very comfortable with the possibility that most of what happens in the implementation process cannot be explained by the intentions and directions of policymakers.

According to its critics, the centralist's dubious assumption about the capacity for control over the implementation process, when it forms the basis of action, results in unintentional consequences for the effective administration of public programs. A single-minded quest for accountability manifests itself in a concern for compliance with federal regulations and interpretive guidelines, engendering greater

complexity, and thus producing a situation in which control paradoxically becomes more elusive.

For evidence to support this position, consider the impact of Title XX in Vermont. Although intending to grant state administrators substantial flexibility in administering the program, federal lawmakers also wanted to ensure accountability. The Social Services Reporting Requirements constituted one means to this end. Rather than engendering more federal control, however, they rendered more complex the administration of Title XX, and diverted the attention of social services workers from delivering services to children and families to filling out forms with "information" that somehow would allow federal lawmakers to oversee the proper functioning of the Title XX program. The Requirements ensured neither the compliant administration of the program according to the intentions of federal policy makers, nor the effectiveness of the social services programs in responding to "needs" of children/families.

A counterargument to these qualms contends that a centralist strategy need not focus simply on a "letter of the law" compliance of state administrators to federal regulations, to the neglect of questions of effectiveness. Regu-

lations and guidelines can address the "outcomes" of programs, specifying particular results that states (or localities) must attain in a given period of time in order to attain the objectives of the program. Accountability then would not slight the issue of effectiveness, but would encompass it.

The centralist rebuttal, however, may not be adequate, at least in the area of social services. It is not clear that federal lawmakers have the capacity to control the effectiveness of programs (i.e., the extent to which stipulated goals are attained) through a process of regulation. Policy makers can, and should, monitor the "outcomes" of programs for which they contribute financially, whether those programs are administered by federal, state, or local governments. This information could be useful for all persons involved in social services administration. But, federal officials cannot transform through some alchemic process knowledge about results into control over those results.

In summary, then, the centralist strategy alone is not likely to be a viable alternative to the Title XX program. It concentrates too heavily on ensuring compliance with federal regulations in order to preserve accountability. And, it is overly confident in the ability of federal policy

makers solely through regulations to ensure the effectiveness of public social services programs.

What then is needed to supplement the centralist strategy? Chiefly, it is an awareness of the place of some "thoughtful" form of decentralization. To understand the need for a supplementary decentralist strategy, consider Richard Elmore's account of the analytical scheme that he calls "backward mapping":

The logic of backward mapping is, in all important respects, the opposite of forward mapping. It begins not at the top of the implementation process but at the last possible stage, the point at which administrative actions intersect private choices. . . . Having established a relatively precise target at the lowest level of the system, the analysis backs up through the structure of implementing agencies, asking at each level two questions: What is the ability of this unit to affect the behavior that is the target of the policy? And what resources does this require in order to have that effect? In the final stage of analysis the analyst or policymaker describes a policy that directs resources at the organizational units likely to have the greatest effect.⁸

"Backward Mapping" assumes that "the closer one is to the source of the problem, the greater is one's ability to influence it; and the problem-solving ability of complex organizations depends not on hierarchical control but on maximizing discretion at the point where the problem is most immediate."⁹ Elmore notes that:

The analytical solution offered by backward mapping stresses the dispersal of control and concentrates on factors that can only be indirectly influenced by policymakers: knowledge and problem-solving ability of lower-level administrators; incentive structures that operate on the subjects of policy; bargaining relationships among political actors at various levels of the implementation process; and the strategic use of funds to affect discretionary choices.¹⁰

The emphasis here is clearly on those persons and institutions closest to the delivery of services, e.g.. day care and child welfare services. The presumption is that ultimately a program succeeds or fails at the "street level," and to promote success requires an understanding of the subtle relationships among public officials, governmental and private institutions, and citizens. Only through an adequate awareness of these "variables" and the goals that one desires to achieve can one devise an appropriate role for higher level institutions (state and federal) and facilitate, though not ensure, the effectiveness of public programs.

Thus, "backward mapping" shares with the "forward mapping" (loosely centralist) strategy a concern for stipulating objectives that can be used to judge the effectiveness of social services activities. In this sense both strategies would induce the formulation of objectives more precise

than the amorphous "goals" that federal legislators produced for the Title XX program. However, the "backward mapping" approach does not prescribe who is to specify those objectives. It could be state and local authorities as well as the federal government.

In prescribing implementation roles of political and administrative actors, the "backward mapping" strategy emphasizes the kaleidoscopic nature of the local scene, where social services programs are actually carried out. This focus renders it more perceptive than the centralist strategies in dealing with child welfare services programs. Many of the "variables" which affect the success of these programs lie outside the direct control of public officials: the number of children requiring protective services, group homes, foster care, or adoption services may fluctuate in an unpredictable fashion; the sources of the individual problems of children and their families may not be remediable through social services efforts; and the "practices" of social services workers may not be sufficiently specified or specifiable to be encompassed within regulations. Thus, compliance with regulations could hamper as easily as promote the effective delivery of services for children and their families.

The federal role, however, is not negligible. Federal policy makers can set precise "national" objectives for child welfare services, and if they choose finance state and local efforts at a substantially higher level than under Title XX. (Of course, the actual trend is in the opposite direction, under the 1981 Social Services Block Grant, which supercedes Title XX.) They may impose sophisticated (albeit complex) "outcome" monitoring procedures on the states, as they have done in the recent Child Welfare legislation. They could even establish a continuous review procedure by the federal regional offices of state services programs. These actions would ensure the federal government a strong oversight role at the state and local levels of government.

But the ultimate effectiveness of child welfare services depends on the techniques of social services workers, the time available for individual "cases," and the responsiveness of the children and families involved (which, in turn, may be a function of countless factors beyond the pale of state administrators). It is a nexus of relationships that cannot be easily "managed" by administrative regulations, especially those written at the national level and applicable to all state jurisdictions.

The appropriate federal role, then, in the area of child welfare services is perhaps that of the "facilitator," although not identical to the "facilitating" role played by federal officials in Vermont under Title XX. Rather than simply a "technical assistance" function, federal officials, for example, could collect and exchange information among the states (on a nationwide basis) about what "works" and what does not in the delivery of child welfare services. This would involve an information giving role for federal officials that went beyond simple "technical assistance." The diversity of efforts engendered by a "backward mapping" strategy might well produce interesting and successful approaches to social service delivery, and federal officials could facilitate their adoption by other states, and thus help to increase the effectiveness of child welfare services on a nationwide basis.

The situation of day care is somewhat different from that of child welfare services. Publicly subsidized day care for children is a less complex, though no less important, social service. Its goal is normally the adequate care of children of "needy" parents while they are working. Day care for the most part (except in the case of protective day care)

does not seek to resolve "problematical" relationships between children and their families. The conditions relevant to the attainment of high-quality day care include sufficient financial resources for parents to purchase the service and an adequate supply of "quality" centers and homes to serve the children.

Both the "forward mapping" and "backward mapping" strategies probably would acknowledge a substantial role for the federal government in enhancing the effectiveness of day care. Proponents of both positions could agree on a pertinent federal role in resolving such issues as: Who is to be served? Under what conditions? How much money will individuals or families be allowed for day care expenditures? The federal government could "resolve" on a nationwide basis questions of adequacy and equity in the provision of day care services to "needy" families. In these matters, there do not appear to be any "political, organizational, or technical resources" over which federal lawmakers lack control.

In determining the appropriate federal role in ensuring "quality" day care provision, forward and backward "mappers" may disagree. The former might well emphasize the importance of vigorously implementing the Federal Inter-Agency Day Care

Requirements in all of the states, using the federal regional office administrators as the principal monitors of the states' conformity with the federal standards. Recognizing the inability of parents to oversee sufficiently the care that their children receive in day care centers or licensed homes, the "forward mappers" would opt for a strong governmental presence to ensure high-quality day care provision.

The "backward mappers" might well agree with the need to maintain high standards for day care, and they might also subscribe to the importance of a (federal) governmental role. But, it is also likely that they would seek ways to involve local citizens and parents in this oversight function. Here again, the objective would be to provide incentives and assistance to those persons closest to the provision of day care, namely the parents of the children being served. Federal or state regulations might facilitate the monitoring of day care provision by parents or persons appointed by them to fulfill these responsibilities. State governments could require the collection of pertinent information for parents on day care centers and homes. Richard Nelson has noted the flexible and effective role that parents can play, given the proper means, in regulating day care:

Parents may judge that the center provides inferior services and may try to change policies. Or they may withdraw their children. The center may try to persuade them otherwise, but the parents' acts clearly are legitimate. It is something else when the arm of government withdraws a license. Here, due process requires more than the personal judgment of an inspector. Some specific code must be violated. Perhaps the most important role of regulation. . . is to protect and enforce "open" operation.¹¹

To ensure this vital parental role requires more than federal "quality assurance" regulations; it necessitates a sense of the local "forces" that must be relied upon and encouraged to fulfill this function.

In summary, then, there are alternatives to the Title XX program that probably would improve the effectiveness of social services programs for children and their families in Vermont. These alternatives, however, cannot be encompassed within one strategy, whether that be to centralize or to decentralize even further social services policy making and delivery. If a national policy is one's goal, then clearly the federal government has an important role to play in the areas of day care and child welfare services. To ensure the effectiveness of the public programs created to attain policy goals is a more difficult, it not an impossible, task. The strategy of applying more control in hopes of aligning all

of the "factors" necessary to attain effective programs is based on a misconception of the nature of the conditions which obtain at the "street level" of social services delivery. However, one need not be satisfied with "the Title XX strategy." There is room for more federal control and direction, but also for more incentives and useful assistance, as well as continued discretion, for state governments and social services workers. The image of a desirable alternative then is neither the "iron fist" (of the centralist strategy) nor the "invisible hand" (indicative in large part of "the Title XX strategy"). Rather, it is that of the helmsman of a ship, always knowledgeable about his direction and fixed on his goal, but humbled by the fact that he is never in control of all the elements which will ensure safe arrival at his destination.

FOOTNOTES

1. Theodore J. Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, et. al., Poliscide (New York: Macmillan Co., 1976), p. 288.
2. Ibid., pp. 288-299.
3. Richard F. Elmore, "Backward Mapping: Implementation Research and Policy Decisions," Political Science Quarterly, 94 (Winter 1979/80), p. 602.
4. Ibid., pp. 602-603.
5. Ibid., p. 603.
6. Ibid., p. 603.
7. Ibid., p. 603.
8. Ibid., p. 604.
9. Ibid., p. 605.
10. Ibid., p. 605.
11. Richard R. Nelson, The Moon and the Ghetto: An Essay on Public Policy Analysis (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), p. 100.

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