A STUDY OF 91 RUNAWAY CHILDREN FROM

BROKEN HOMES

BY

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1. Brief description of the group as a whole.
2. Classification of the maternal background in the cleaned area.
4. Measurement of the actual position of the children among siblings, and attitudes toward siblings expressed by them.
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INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this thesis is to make a study of those children who have run away from their homes, or home-substitutes, in an attempt to ascertain what factors are contributory in causing this form of behavior.

The term "runaway" child as used in the following study includes children who have remained away from home overnight or for a longer period, thus avoiding the consideration of children who are merely truants from school. The children were sent for study to the State Mental Hygiene Clinic of Virginia either solely because of the problem of running away, or with that problem included in the charge, in order that they might be studied and the factors influencing their behavior thereby determined and treatment prescribed for them.

The total number of cases studied by the State Mental Hygiene Clinic from October 1928 to January 1931 are 1500, and of this number 141 were of runaway children. Of these 141 cases, 50 children came from normal homes, in that both parents were living at the time. The remaining 91 came from homes broken either by death, desertion, divorce or institutionalization. This latter group was
chosen for analysis since it represents 64.8% of the total number of runaway children. The group includes children of both the negro and white races and represents a state-wide selection.

At the time the cases were studied, the State Mental Hygiene Clinic was equipped with two psychiatrists, two psychologists, a pediatrician, a psychiatric social worker and student social worker, and two clerical workers. Mobile clinics equipped with a psychiatrist, psychologist and social worker are conducted in each of the various sections of the State on an average of every three months. The child is given a thorough physical examination by the pediatrician, including necessary laboratory tests. Psychological tests are then given to the child to determine as nearly as possible his native mental capacity and to make possible a prediction of his probable ultimate achievement in school. A social history is then obtained by the social worker. After studying the child’s record, the psychiatrist interviews him to learn the emotional life and conflicts which may have influenced the child’s behavior. Following these studies a conference is held, consisting of the psychologist, psychiatrist, pediatrician and social worker, to discuss the child’s problems in the light of the test findings and to recommend the most suitable and advantageous treatment for the child.
In reviewing the material on the subject of children running away from home, one similar study was found, this of 75 children made by Florence Gilpin, Psychiatric Social Worker, Boston Psychopathic Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. The cases used in her research were unselected, and the data taken from house medical records, out-patient medical records, and social service records of the Boston Psychopathic Hospital covering the period from January 1920 to February 1926. Her study revealed the runaway tendency to be stronger in boys under 14 years of age than in girls of the same age group. Other delinquencies were common in the group, for boys lying and larceny being most frequent, and for girls delinquencies of a sexual nature. An unhappy home atmosphere played a large part in motivating the running away, while dissatisfaction in school also figured importantly. Neurotic traits were common in the group. She concludes her summary in stating that

"no one predominating cause can be said to produce the runaway tendency. Instead, it is produced by a variety of factors which are found in the environment of the child and in his own personality, a series of physical and psychological influences which must be understood before real causes can be determined. The important steps are to find from what and to what the child is running, to understand his personality, and thus to determine why this particular child should react to a given situation by running away."

II. FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS OF THE CHILD.

There are certain needs paramount in the developmental life of every child. When these needs are not met in the family life of the child, his attitude toward life becomes warped away from normalcy and the results of any such deprivation may take the form of delinquencies of various sorts.

Mary B. Sayles in The Problem Child at Home points out the fundamental needs of the child as security in the love of his parents, an opportunity to grow with concrete ideals, to grow toward, and companionship of contemporaries.

"Love for the child on the part of both of his parents is thus a first condition of his security; but no less vital is the harmony between parents. The home broken by discord or death, whose children are torn between the claims of rival parents or separated from both and scattered among relatives or strangers, is universally recognized as a chief source of juvenile delinquency and unhappiness." *

In The Normal Life Edward Devine says

"The preliminary condition to a normal infancy and childhood is a home. No satisfactory substitute has ever been

* Sayles, Mary B., "The Problem Child at Home," p. 5.
"Devised for the specialized and individualized attention which children receive in family life. . . . . Throughout the normal life of man the home is its natural background--its essential expression. . . . The primary function of the home is to give protection, privacy and security." *

According to Phyllis Blanchard, as stated in The Child and Society:

"The security of a harmonious family life is essential for normal personality development. . . . The half-orphan, whether his condition is the result of death or legal action, inevitably suffers from the lack of normal relationships with two parents. Responses are conditioned somewhat differently to father and mother, so that loss of either one is likely to bring about a somewhat one-sided development of the child's emotional reactions." **

"Aickhorn was convinced that the wild, neglected and anti-social youngsters in reform schools had become delinquent through lack of love at home. This theory he confirmed by experiment." ***

In the realm of psychological research it is generally held that the basis of personality, behavior patterns and character is laid in the formative period of childhood. It is during this period that the child's

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** Blanchard, Phyllis, The Child and Society, p. 43.
*** Moxon, Cavendish, "Anti-Social Attitudes, Their Formation and Reformation," Mental Hygiene, July 1929.
future reactions to life of the group are basically formed. Imitation and suggestion mold the child's life in an inestimable degree. So if the example of an unadjusted life is constantly before a child, it is probable that his behavior will be so patterned after those surrounding him that his adulthood will not be developed into the normal and accepted mode.

Ruth Reed in The Modern Family discusses the vital importance of family background and states that "the family has long been regarded as the primary and basic institution of our social structure." We find the same opinion expressed by Ernest Groves in:

"The child to be healthy minded and well prepared to do his part in the world needs the affectionate scrutiny of both father and mother in order that his outward traits may be recognized and discouraged and his favorable traits accentuated. Every child needs both parents, the child that does not have both an active mother and an active father is robbed of half of his birth right."

"It is more doubtful whether the broken home--anymore than the broken doll--can ever be made completely whole again, although social repairs are sometimes so skillfully made that only a psychiatrist or a psycho-analyst is able to detect them."}

* Reed, Ruth, The Modern Family, p. VII.


*** Guild, June P., Living With the Law, pp. 119-20.
"The Broken home, the patched-up home—these are the breeding spots for discontent and grudges which often develop into life-long rancor against fate and rebellion against authority. From homes in which there were such 'defective family relationships' came over half of the young delinquents studied by Cyril Burt; and no one who has worked with problem children has failed to note the disastrous effect of such insecure foundations upon the growing boy or girl."

With this realization of the vast importance of a normal home and family life for the child's development, the following study of children who had run away from broken homes was made. Since in a broken home there is most likely to be absent the elements which answer the fundamental needs of the child, it is natural to believe that a child may then seek such satisfactions elsewhere.

This study is made of the children in relation to the description of the family from which they come, the type of community background which furnished their environment, the other offenses with which running away is most often coupled and their physical and mental make-up.

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*Burt, Cyril, The Young Delinquent, p. 92.*

*Seyles, Mary B., The Problem Child at Home, p. 226.*
III. ANALYSIS OF THE GROUP.

Section I. Brief Description of the Group as a Whole.

Of the ninety-one children who ran away and who form the subject of this study, forty-three or 48% were living with neither parent and forty-eight or 52% with either one parent alone, or with a parent and a step-parent. Of this latter group a step-parent was present in 29 or 60% of the forty-eight homes. Where neither parent was living with the child, home substitutes consisted of foster homes, relatives’ homes, boarding houses, friends’ homes, and institutions. The situations in the homes and home-substitutes are described in succeeding sections of this thesis.

Sixty-four children or 69% are white and twenty-seven children or 29% are colored. Fifty-six boys or 63% and thirty-five girls or 37% constitute the whole group of ninety-one children.

The ages range from 8 to 18 years. The median for the boys is 13 years 1 month and for the girls 15 years 7 months, averaging a combined age median of 14 years 4 months for the entire group.

Forty-one children or 45% came from urban communities, seventeen children or 18% from towns and thirty-three children or 36.3% from rural communities.
The Intelligence Quotients range from 33 to 120, the median falling on 71.8, which is classified by Lewis Terman as borderline defective intelligence. *

Of the 91 runaway children, thirty-six children or 39% were committed for first offenses and fifty-five children or 61% for subsequent offenses.

The State Mental Hygiene Clinic functions as part of the State Board of Public Welfare, and these 91 children were committed by Juvenile Courts to the State Board of Public Welfare for investigation, prior to their placement. Under the Virginia Laws,

"The Board (of the Children's Bureau) is hereby authorized and empowered to receive mentally defective, delinquent, dependent, and neglected children committed to it by courts or justices and all children declared by any court to be delinquent and not suitable for probation shall be committed to the State Board of Public Welfare. . . . . The Board is further authorized to make a careful physical and mental examination of every child. . . . . " **

A "delinquent" is defined as a child under 18 years of age who commits certain offenses, among which is listed running away from home or any substitute for the home. **

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* Terman, Lewis, *The Measurement of Intelligence*, p. 79.  
** Virginia Code of Laws 1930, pp. 1902K-03K-1907K. 
Section 2. Parental Background of the Children.

As previously stated, of ninety-one children, who ran away from broken homes, 43 were living with neither parent at the time of running away, and 46 were living with either one parent alone or a parent and a step-parent.

In the first grouping of 43 children living with neither parent, the following table shows the home substitutes from which they ran away:

**TABLE I.**

Parental Background of 43 Children living with neither parent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOME SUBSTITUTE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster Homes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives' Homes</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends' Homes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding House</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total.</strong></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is felt that this division cannot be considered as indicative of any greater tendency to run away from foster homes and relatives than other situations, because these larger groups probably represent a larger percent age of the placement of children who are without homes in which to live.

Table II shows the conditions which made necessary the children's living away from both parents in the above group.
### TABLE II.

Reasons for 43 Children living with neither parent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>FATHER</th>
<th>MOTHER</th>
<th>BOTH PARENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desertion</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death and Desertion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death and Institutionalization</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desertion and Institutionalization</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 43 8 7 28

In this group we see that death and desertion, whether occurring separately or combined, are the two major causes of dependency of children. In the combination of death and desertion 50% of the desertions were by the mother after the father's death, and 50% by the father after the mother's death. In the one case of death and institutionalization, the father is in an institution because of killing the mother. In the combination of desertion and institutionalization as a cause of dependency, the percentage is again equal for desertion of the mother following the father's institutionalization and the father's desertion after institutionalization of the mother.
In the second group of forty-eight children living with either one parent alone or with a parent and a step-parent, Table III shows the situations from which the children ran away.

**TABLE III.**

Parental Background in 48 Broken Homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENTAL BACKGROUND</th>
<th>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father and Step-Mother</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and Step-Father</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This leads us to believe that the presence of a step-parent in a home is more conducive to running away than is a home with only one parent, since 29 out of the 48 cases or 62.5% of the group came from such homes. It is perhaps significant that the next largest group who ran away were living with the mother, although it will be seen later that in only 35.7% of these cases the father had deserted. However, Ruth Reed states that:

"It is believed that broken homes occasioned by the desertion of the fathers are an important factor in juvenile delinquency, since the economic hardship is accentuated by the absence of the father and the problem of discipline is rendered more difficult by the enforced employment of the mother away from home. Miss
"Brekenridge found that 8% of the delinquent children in her studies had been deserted by the father."

It would appear that the same economic results ensue from death of the father as well as desertion, and somewhat the same problems therefore arise.

Table IV shows the reasons for the broken home situation in the group of 48 children who were living with either one parent alone or a parent and a step-parent.

**TABLE IV.**

Reasons for Broken Homes in Group of 48 Children.
(Living with one parent alone or with a parent and step-parent.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>FATHER</th>
<th>MOTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deseretion</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows, also, that death and desertion are the major causes of dependency of children, divorce occupying an insignificantly small part of the causes of broken homes in this group.

The accompanying Graph I combines the findings in Tables II and IV and shows a comparison of the causes of broken homes in the entire group of 91 runaway children.

Graph I

Causes of Broken Homes of 91 Runaway Children

- Death: 51.6%
- Desertion: 41.6%
- Institutionalization: 4.1%
- Divorce: 2.5%

Father
Section 3. Attitudes of Children Toward Parents or Parent-Substitutes.

Corroborating the results of Florence Gilpin's study, an unhappy home atmosphere is found to be common in the group of children under consideration.

In the table below (V) the 43 children living with neither parent indicate the relations with their parent-substitutes.

**TABLE V.**
Existing Relationships Between Children and Parent-Substitutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Substitutes</th>
<th>Happy</th>
<th>Unhappy</th>
<th>Not Expressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster Homes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding House</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the entire group of 37 children who expressed an attitude toward their parent substitutes 71% were living in an unhappy atmosphere. This shows the largest number of children to be in foster homes and of these 72.2% expressed an unhappy relation between their foster parents and them.

selves when questioned by the psychiatrist. By an unhappy home atmosphere or relationship we mean any condition upon which the child expressed an opinion voiced in the following ways, shown in Table VI:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE VI.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Expression of Unpleasant Attitudes of Children Towards Parent-Substitutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOME SUBSTITUTES</th>
<th>UNPLEASANT ATTITUDES EXPRESSED OF CHILDREN</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster Homes</td>
<td>Dislike of Foster Home in which placed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inability to get along with Foster Parents</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treatment by Foster Parents not good</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ill temper and Sarcasm of Foster Mother</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neglect and ill treatment of Children</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfair whipping of Children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overcrowding of Children in home</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of Companions of Children's Age</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives Homes</td>
<td>Inability to get along with family</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cruelty to Children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ill Treatment of Children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quarreling with Children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>Weariness of Routine of Life</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abuse by Companions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strictness</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Ill Treatment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding House</td>
<td>Parent's Abuse</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this classification, we see that unhappiness in 12 out of the 26 children in home substitutes, or 46% was due to ill-treatment of some nature. This is shown by expressions in Table VI that are starred (*). The remaining 34% may have been due to conditions resulting entirely from the child's failure to adjust to the situation, or a combination of this and the inadequacy of the home-
substitute in answering the needs of the child. This is shown by the un-starred expressions in Table VI.

In the other group of 48 children where the home consisted of either one parent alone or a parent and a step-parent, conditions as indicated by the children, are set forth in Table VII.

**TABLE VII.**

Parent-Children-Relationship  Expressed by Children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Background</th>
<th>Good Treatment of Children</th>
<th>Ill Treatment of Children</th>
<th>Inability to Understand Children</th>
<th>None Given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father alone</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother alone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father and Step-Mother</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and Step-Father</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In analyzing the treatment of the children in this group, we find 62% of the children living with one parent alone considered themselves treated well as contrasted with 27% of those living with a parent and a step-parent feeling that they were well treated. This leads us to believe that the presence of a step-parent in the home is twice as conducive to ill treatment of a child as is the management of a home by one parent alone. This is further evidenced by
the fact that out of the treatment by 19 step-parents, 16 or 84% were not good to the children. In two cases this was counterbalanced by good treatment of the real parent, but in 6 cases both the parent and the step-parent were not "good to the child." In only one case was the step-parent good to the child and the real parent mistreated him. In this group seven children stated that the parent absent from home had been the parent best loved by the child.

The estimates of the children alone were used in this study of the relationships existing between them and their parents or parent substitutes, because the records included no parental expression of such a relationship, in most of the cases. Whereas these estimates may be prejudiced and therefore cannot be accepted without some reservations, they were considered significant because the child felt that such relationships existed to the extent of expressing them in the psychiatric interviews.

According to J. C. Flugel, the situation is rendered more acute if the step-parent is of the same sex as the child.

"The general outstanding feature of these relations is the manifestation of a more intense, or at any rate, a more open form of these feelings and tendencies which would normally exist between the child and the corresponding blood parent. A boy, for

"instance, who may have successfully dis-
placed or repressed his original feelings of
jealousy or hostility towards his own
father, may often prove incapable of carry-
ing out a similar re-adjustment in the case
of a subsequently acquired step-father. The
latter may have none of the glamour which
belonged to the former in virtue of his
position as head of the family (and therefore
centre of the child's world) during the in-
fancy of the child and which may have helped
to inhibit the original hostility experienced
towards him through arousal of the opposite
emotions of love, gratitude or admiration.
The step-father, therefore, may easily re-
awaken in his step-son any remnants of the
hatred which the latter may have experienced
towards his real father, without re-awakening
in corresponding degree the compensating
forces which kept the hate in check.

"Furthermore, the boy's mother only marries
the step-father after a period of widowhood
during which the boy may have appeared to
possess the sole, or at any rate the chief,
claim upon her interest and affection. By
her re-marriage she will probably seem to
the boy's unconscious mind to have been, in
a very real and poignant sense, unfaithful
to himself, and to have rejected his own
love for that of an outsider; an idea which
may appear in consciousness in the rational-
ized form of an imputation of unfaithfulness
towards the mother's previous husband—the
boy's own father." . . . . . In the case
of a girl, corresponding feelings may be
called up towards her step-mother on the re-
marrige of her father. . . . . These feel-
ings of hostility on the part of children to
their step-parents are of course bound to call
up some degree of reciprocal feeling on the part
of the step-parents themselves. The feelings
thus aroused, however, are often reinforced
by more direct causes of hostility, such as are
liable to affect in any case the attitude of
parent towards child. Here, however, the
absence of the real bond of parenthood, with
its accompanying incentives to tender feeling,
may easily cause the hostile tendencies
to meet with less resistance than usual
so that genuinely cruel or neglectful
behavior is more likely to occur."

A division according to sex of the group of
children living with a parent and a step-parent shows
90% of the girls, or 13 out of 14, ran away from a
home consisting of a father and step-mother, and 63.4%
of the boys, or 9 out of 15, from a home of a mother and
a step-father.
Section 4. Ordinal Position Among Siblings and Attitudes Towards Children.

The ordinal positions among Siblings of the 91 children are shown in Table VIII.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oldest</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Born &amp; others</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only Child</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Siblings unknown to children 8).

Thus, the youngest child represents the largest number, 35 or 38.4% of the entire group. The combined group of second born and other positions in the family is the next largest group, representing 21 or 24.4% of those running away. Nineteen and eight-tenths percent (19.3%) or 17 were only children, and 17.4% or 15, the smallest division, were the oldest children in the family.

According to Alfred Adler, the position of the child in the "family constellation" has an outstanding effect upon his development. Many influences can make for a feeling of inferiority, in both parental attitudes towards the child and his own native physical equipment, as well
as his position in the family group, resulting in his striving in some way for recognition and superiority. In the developmental life of every human being, Alfred Adler says:

"A desire to grow, to become as strong or even stronger than all others, arises in his soul."

Regarding the youngest child, which represents our largest group of runaways, Alfred Adler says:

"No child likes to be the smallest, the one whom one does not trust, the one in whom one has no confidence, all the time. Such knowledge stimulates a child to prove that he can do everything. His striving for power becomes markedly accentuated and we find the youngest very usually a man who has developed a desire to overcome all others, satisfied only with the very best. . . . If the other children are not to be excelled, the youngest child frequently shies from his tasks, becomes cowardly, a chronic plaintiff, forever seeking an excuse to evade his duties."

From this perspective it is easy to see why the youngest child should be the most frequent to break away from the home.

Likewise, the second-born and those occupying other positions between the oldest and youngest show similar characteristics, according to Alfred Adler.

"The second born are constantly under steam, striving for superiority under pressure. . . . The fact that there is someone ahead of him who has already gained power is a strong stimulus for the second born. . . . There is a dominant note of being slighted, neglected in his attitude. The second born may place

* Adler, Alfred, "Understanding Human Nature," P. 34
* P. 140
his goal so high that he suffers from it all his life, amnihilates his inner harmony in following, not the veritable facts of life, but an evanescent fiction and the valueless semblance of things."

This group of 21 represents 24.4% of the children studied.

The only child, 19.3% or 17 of the runaway group, constitutes a special problem, as seen by J. C. Flugel

"... A very small family, especially where there is an only child, will often have certain difficulties of its own, from which relatively large families may be free. There can be little doubt that in the case of the only child, the emancipation from the family influences may frequently present more than the usual amount of difficulty."

This would lead us to believe that the only child might be the most frequent type of runaway child. However, the only child's difficult emancipation from parental authority, probably resulting in a complete breaking away from the home, often does not take place at all, because of the concentrated attention of the parents upon the child, making him dependent in such a high degree as to render impossible any emancipation whatever.

Another position in which it is difficult for a child to develop normally, is that of an only boy in a

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*Ibid.,* p. 149

**Flugel, J. C., Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family,** p. 222
family of several girls. On this situation Alfred Adler says:

"His striving for recognition encounters great difficulties. Threatened on all sides, he never senses with certainty the privilege which in our retarded masculine civilization is given to every male. A lasting insecurity, an inability to evaluate himself as a human being, is his most characteristic trait. . . . On the one hand his courage and self-confidence may easily be eclipsed, on the other the stimulus may be so drastic that the young boy forces himself to great achievements." 

Six boys of our group were in such a position in the family.

In view of Alfred Adler's characterization of the oldest child, it is not surprising that this type of child, represents our smallest group, 15 or 17.4%, of runaway children.

"Tradition gives the oldest child a particularly favorable position. Usually the oldest child is one whom one accredits with enough power and common sense to be the helper or foreman of his parents. . . . Such individuals are markedly conservative and have an especially high evaluation for power." **

"We see therefore that the very position of the child in the family may lend shape and color to all the instincts, tropisms, faculties, and the like, which he brings with him into the world." ***

---

* Adler, Alfred, "Understand Human Nature", p.154
** Ibid, p. 149.
*** Ibid, 154.
Table IX shows the attitudes of the 91 children toward their siblings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Relations</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant Relations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifference</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Expression</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Siblings</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table X shows the causes of unpleasant relations with siblings of 8 children given in the above Table IX.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jealousy of one child but affection for others</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealousy of step-siblings</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealousy of all siblings</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the 5 children who were jealous of one sibling, but attached to other siblings, 4 were the youngest child in the family and the object of their jealousy was the immediately preceding sibling. The other one was the fifth child in a family of six, and was jealous of the youngest child.

Since 47 children, or 62.6% of the group failed to express an attitude toward their siblings, it is felt that those attitudes expressed cannot be considered indicative of the feeling of the entire group.

However, as 14 of the 27, or 51% of the children’s relations were considered pleasant, it would seem that attitudes towards siblings is not a very vital causal factor in running away.
Section 5. Other Offenses Correlated with Running Away.

Running away was the major problem, occurring alone, in 23 children or 22% of the cases studied and it was accompanied by other offenses in 66 children or 75% of the cases. Graph II illustrates this situation.

**GRAPH II. Relative Frequency of Running Away Alone and Accompanied by other Offenses.**

Running Away Alone.

With other Offenses.

 Girls □ Boys

Florence Gilpin also found in her study that running away occurred more frequently accompanied by other offenses than alone. Agreeing also with the results of her study, we find that stealing occurs with greater frequency in connection with running away in boys and offenses of a sexual nature in girls. Stealing was included in the charge against 45.4%, or 30, of the boys and 13% or 9 of the girls, showing a total of 58.4% of the cases.

* Gilpin, Florence, "The Runaway Child: A Case Study."

correlated with other offenses to be stealing. The largest number of other offenses for girls alone were of a sexual nature and represented 26% or 18 cases of the group.

The next most frequent charge coupled with running away is incorrigibility, representing 36% for boys and girls together, or 25 cases; 20% of these 36% of these cases being boys.

Truancy from school is the next most frequent type of offense for boys and girls combined, occurring in 16 or 36% of the cases with other offenses. When a sex division is made, truancy shows a ratio of 5 to 1 for boys and girls.

Thus for girls the highest correlation with running away is found to be (1) immorality, (2) incorrigibility, and (3) stealing. While for boys, the most frequent types of offenses are (1) stealing, (2) truancy from school, and (3) incorrigibility.

Florence Gilpin found in her study that delinquencies in most cases were found to precede the running away, and frequently they seemed to cause the actual flight episode.

William Healy says:

"Very often other types of delinquency complicate the picture of running away; the girls may be sexually delinquent and desire greater freedom for expression of their sexual life.

# Gilpin, Florence, "The Runaway Child", a Case Study", Pamphlet "Some Aspects of Mental Hygiene" May 1930, P.58
Graph III Offenses Correlated With Running Away

Running Away Alone
Running Away and Stealing
Running Away and Incorrigibility
Running Away and Truancy (School)
Running Away and Immorality
Running Away and Housebreaking
Running Away and Drinking
Running Away and Lying
Running Away and Arson
Running Away and Begging
Running Away and Forgery
Running Away and Selling Goods Under False Pretenses

Frequency

Boys
Girls
"With boys and girls, stealing is a frequent accompaniment of running away, sometimes in order to finance the expedition." *

Table XI shows the frequency of running away as a first offense or a subsequent offense in the group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows 55 children, or 60.4% of the runaway cases to be subsequent offenses. This does not mean that the previous offense was necessarily one of running away, but only that the child had been known to the Juvenile Court for some previous delinquency. Of the total number of 56 boys, 37 or 66% were recidivists and of the total number of 35 girls, 18 or 51.4% were recidivists.

* Healy, William, *Reconstructing Behavior in Youth*, p.34.
Section 6. Reasons given by children for running away.

Table XII below indicates the reasons given by the 91 children for their behavior by running away.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>White</th>
<th></th>
<th>Colored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike of Step-parents</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Others</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike of Foster-Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse by Parents</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urge to Room</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect by Parents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse by others in the Family</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine of Orphanage</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strictness of School</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partiality shown to other Children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Favorite Parent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put out of doors to sleep</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to know about life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to get work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Reason Given</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 23 children gave no reason for running away, the 68 remaining children gave eighty reasons. In generalizing the reasons given by the children, we find 46 of the 68 cases, or 67.7% attempting to get away from an unsatisfactory relationship with parents or parent-substitutes, as evidenced by expressions of: dislike of step-
parents, dislike of foster-parents, abuse of children by parents, neglect by parents, partiality shown to other children in the family, and resentment over being put out of doors to sleep. These 46 reasons represent 57.5% of the total number of 80 reasons given. Unhappiness due to other causes than parental relationships was the reason given by 13 out of the 63 or 19.1% of the children giving reasons for their behavior, representing 16.2% of the 80 reasons given. Hence we see 67.7% and 19.1%, or 86.8% of the 63 children were running away to escape an unhappy situation, according to their own testimony. Out of the 80 reasons given, escape from unhappiness represents 73.7%.

Eight out of the 63 reasons given, or 8%, were to find out about life, to get work, and the irresistible urge to roam—all suggestive of the desire for adventure and new experience, one of the typical adolescent drives.

On the subject of running away, William Healy says, "One must find out and reckon with the causes, such as the spirit of adventure, rebellion against home conditions, dissatisfaction with school life, desire for independence, fear of discipline, etc."

Seventeen percent of the eighty reasons given attributed their behavior to the influence of others. Although not clearly expressed as an influence of an organised gang, it may be considered as indicative of

* Ibid, p.34.
the existence of the so-called "gang spirit" in many of these cases. Frederic Thrasher says:

"The gang is largely an adolescent phenomenon . . . . a manifestation of the period of readjustment between childhood and maturity . . . . . . gangs represent the spontaneous effort of boys to create a society for themselves where none adequate to their need exists." 

The disintegration of family life is a large factor in the failure of customs and institutions in directing and controlling the boy's experience, according to Thrasher.

The gang functions in two ways:

"It provides a relief from suppression and distasteful behavior. It fills a gap and affords an escape." 

In consideration of the lack of a normal home environment and balanced parental influence as shown upon the children of this study, it is felt that a search for a compensation for these factors may be a very natural and vital contributing factor in their running away.

The prevalence of an inferior mental capacity in this group of children, as will be brought out in a later section, indicates the probable presence of a high degree of suggestibility in the children. This would tend to make them more easily influenced by others than children of a higher intellectual level.

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* Thrasher, Frederic, *The Gang*, pp. 36-7

** Ibid., p.39.**
Section 7. Racial and Sex Classifications, and Age

Grouping of Children.

Tables XIII, XIV and XV show the race and sex distribution of children.

**TABLE XIII** - 91 Children Running Away from Broken Homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE XIV** - 50 Children Running Away from Normal Homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE XV.** - All Children Studied at the State Mental Hygiene Clinic for Miscellaneous Offenses from June 1929-30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>786</strong></td>
<td><strong>525</strong></td>
<td><strong>261</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to ascertain any significant racial groupings, the percentage of colored children who ran away in the 91 children from broken homes and in the 50 children from normal homes was computed. Then an unselected group of children studied at the State Mental Hygiene Clinic representing all types of behavior problems was treated in the same manner to see if such a percentage of colored children was peculiar to runaway cases or to the general situation.

Twenty-nine and three-tenths percent (29.3%) of the 91 runaway children from broken homes were colored. Twenty-six and two-tenths percent (26.2%) of the 50 runaway children from normal homes were colored. Thirty-two and six-tenths (32.6%) percent of the 766 heterogeneous cases were colored children. This indicates the percentage of colored children to be nearly uniform in the different groupings, the average percentage of the total colored runaways being only 4.85% less than the percentage of colored children in the miscellaneous offense group.

In an attempt to ascertain whether boys run away more frequently than girls or if boys are more often delinquent in general, the percentage of boys in the total number of runaway children and in the total number of miscellaneous offenses was computed. In the white children the boys form 64.5% of the runaway cases and 61% of the miscellaneous offenses. This indicates that
white boys may tend slightly to run away more than to commit other delinquencies. For the colored children, the boys constitute 53% of the runaway cases and 77% of the miscellaneous offenses. This may show a tendency of colored boys to be delinquent in miscellaneous types of offenses rather than by running away. If these differences can be considered conclusive, the results will apply to the girls as well. This indicates, namely, that for the cases included in this study white girls tend to commit miscellaneous delinquencies more than running away, and that colored girls tend to run away more frequently than commit delinquencies in general.

When the colored and the white children are taken together, in the entire group of 141 runaway cases 63% are boys and in the group of miscellaneous offenses 66% are boys. Since this percentage shows little difference, it cannot be concluded that the runaway tendency is stronger in boys in general than in girls, since the entire delinquent group shows a male percentage. However, when the children under 14 years are considered separately, we find the tendency manifestly stronger in boys. Eighty-three and eight-tenths (83.8%) of the children under 14 years of age who ran away were boys.

Florence Gilpin also found this to be true in the group which she studied.*

* Gilpin, Florence, "The Runaway Child: A Case Study,"

Pamphlet, "Some Aspects of Mental Hygiene, May 1930. p. 58
Table XIV below shows the age median at which the children ran away from their homes or home-substitutes:

**TABLE XVI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Median of 141 Runaway Children.</th>
<th>Home Situations of the Groups of Children.</th>
<th>Age Median</th>
<th>In Years and Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average Both Races</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average Both Races</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 Children from Broken Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td>14½</td>
<td>13½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 Children from Normal Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td>14½</td>
<td>13½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be seen that the age median for boys, 13 years 6 months, is slightly younger than for girls, 15 years 10 months, throughout Table XVI. This is perhaps indicative of the more aggressive and adventurous characteristics in boys than in girls, and therefore the manifestation of them at an earlier age.

The ages range from 3 to 16 years. The age median of the children who ran away from broken homes is 14 years 4 months and slightly lower than that of the children who ran away from normal homes which is 15 years. Graphs IV and V show the age range and distribution of both the groups of 91 children who ran away from broken homes and the 50 children who ran away from normal homes.
Graph IV Age Distribution of 91 Children Running Away from Broken Homes

Graph IV Age Distribution of 50 Children Running Away from Normal Homes
The combined median for both sexes and races, of both groups of children from normal and broken homes is 14 years 8 months, near the beginning of the period recognized by psychologists as adolescence. This period has aptly been called the "psychological weaning" time of the child, when he begins to assert his individuality and wishes to break away from parental authority that has heretofore been exerted upon him. It has been termed "the awkward age" by H. L. Hollingworth. He says:

"Adolescent difficulties often originate in the elders rather than in the young. Habits of authority, exaction of obedience and respect, are not readily given over. Perhaps the most conspicuous environmental change at adolescence is the breaking of family connections and the launching of the individual into the larger social stream. Parents have their own habits of dependence, which impede the free development of youth. Especially on the part of the mother, who traditionally gives her whole attention to the children, and for whom home-making is a vocation, this adolescent flight seems to take away the very purpose of her being." *

Frankwood Williams says the adolescent confronts a world of two major problems: emancipation from the home and establishment of heterosexuality. It is with the first of these that we are concerned, since running away can be considered the extreme form of this attempted adjustment.

"In spite of the absolute, fundamental and primary importance of these two things, the home, the school, and the social life generally seem to be almost

* Hollingworth, H. L., Mental Growth and Decline, pp.243-4.
entirely organized and bonded together to defeat, in so far as they can, the establishment of these two things. . . . If to the first feeble efforts of the child to emancipate himself, resistance is raised, a child who is healthy mentally and physically will make yet another and more vigorous attempt to accomplish his objective. His own resistance will increase as the resistance he has to meet increases. . . . If the resistance mount to the point where the contest becomes vulgarized into a pushing and shoving contest, there is likely to be produced, because of the misunderstanding of the real significance of what is taking place and the consequent unwise resistance on the part of the parents, a whole host of secondary reactions, which are necessary for the child under the circumstances, but which are probably not nearly as healthy as were the first. The whole issue becomes confused. . . . . Emancipation from the home does not necessarily mean leaving home, renouncing it as if it were something unworthy and no longer of need. . . . . In some instances it may mean just this, but it should mean no more than the psychological freeing of oneself from childish bonds."  

Leta Hollingworth tells us that:

"Primitive man recognized, as the modern psychologists recognize, that there is an urge which develops in every normal human being in the years between twelve and twenty, to get away from family supervision and to become an independent person."  

Jessie Taft has described the state of adolescence in the following way:

"Normal adolescence is a combination of terms that may perhaps be considered contradictory. If by normal adolescence

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* Williams, F. E., Adolescence, pp.102-111.

one means average and at the same time implies painless adolescence or adolescence without conflict, then certainly there is a contradiction. For the adolescence that occurs without stress and strain is too unusual to be called normal, and if it were the usual thing it would have no mental hygiene problems to be discussed."

From this point of view, running away may be classified as an abnormal manifestation of a very normal tendency of children at the adolescent period. If the "natural emancipation" of the child is thwarted, for one reason or another, he then must follow one of two courses -- complete severing of all familial ties in an effort to assert this independence, or lapsing into an even more confirmed and overprotected state of dependence. When the former course is pursued, the result may easily take the form of running away.

---

Section 8. Urban, Town and Rural Backgrounds of the Children.

In dividing into types the community influences from which these children come, urban is used to describe a community with a population of ten thousand or more, town for a community with a population between one and ten thousand, and rural for any community whose population is less than one thousand. These divisions of population were taken because the clinic records when the study was made used this classification. No comparison is made between our results and the proportion of rural, town and urban population in Virginia, since the number which is generally taken to define rural population is twenty-five hundred, and any comparison on this basis would not be a true estimate.

**TABLE XVII.**
Community Background of 91 Runaway Children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF COMMUNITY</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Per-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Cen t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By examination of the above Table we see that the largest group of 41 cases, or 45%, comes from an urban population. This is not sufficiently larger than
the group of 33 children, or 36.3%, coming from rural communities, to show any conclusive evidence of an urban environment influencing running away more than does a rural background. However, when the remaining 17, or 18.7% of the children, coming from towns are added to the 41 children, or 45% from urban communities the total is 58 cases, or 63.7%. These children lived under the influence of some type of organized community life, either in small towns or cities, as contrasted with the 17 children, or 18.7%, who had no more gregarious influences than rural life affords. This may be significant in that the city has an opportunity to answer the needs of the child wherever the family fails, but in these cases evidently did not do so. On the other hand, city life is more complex and the gang associates which are available there may offer the child many inducements for delinquency that would generally be absent in a rural community. It will be seen in the following section that the mental capacity of this group falls largely in the borderline defective classification. Since 63.7% of the children were surrounded by urban and town environment, there may be some correlation between their limited intellectual capacity and an inability to adjust to the complexity of city life, to produce running away.
SECTION 9. -- Intelligence Quotients of the Children.

In all phases of research,

"Rigid definition must precede exact measurements. And before examining the nature of mental measurements, it will be necessary to consider how rigid the definition of mental functions may be--how narrow and how objective the limits." **

The following definitions of intelligence professed by psychologists who have conducted extensive research into the subject give us a picture of what we can expect from the possession of normal intelligence, or the lack of a normal amount of mental capacity.

E. L. Thorndike writes, "We may . . . define intellect in general as the power of good responses from the point of view of truth or fact." ***

Burt defines intelligence as "the power of readjustment to relatively novel situations by organizing new psycho-physical combinations." ****

Stern calls it "a general capacity of an individual consciously to adjust his thinking to new requirements--it is in general mental adaptability to new problems and conditions of life." *****


***** Stern, Wm., Psychological Methods of Testing Intelligence, translated by J. B. Whipple, p. 5.
Binet, as quoted by Terman, describes it as

"(1) the tendency of thought to take and maintain a definite direction, (2) the capacity to make adaptations for the purpose of attaining the desired end, and (3) the power of self-criticism." 

S. S. Colvin states that

"an individual possesses intelligence in so far as he has learned, or can learn to adjust himself to his environment." 

In the procedure of testing the mental capacity of the children in this study group, the Stanford Revision of the Binet-Simon Intelligence Test was given by the psychologist to measure the general intelligence possessed by each child. In addition to this, the Ferguson Form Boards test, a test primarily of manual ability, was given as part of the routine procedure. When the child showed significant ability in any particular type of test, specialized tests of that nature were given to supplement the general picture of the child's mental capacity, to the extent allowed by time. The Intelligent Quotient, or the ratio of mental age to chronological age, was then computed, and the results of the group studied are shown below.

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" Terman, L.; The Measurement of Intelligence, p. 45.

TABLE XVIII

Median of Intelligence Quotients of Delinquent Children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G-E-O-U-F-S</th>
<th>MEDIAN INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Colored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 runaway children from broken homes</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141 runaway children from both broken and normal homes</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 unselected delinquent children</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The median of the Intelligence Quotients of the 91 runaway children from broken homes falls in the group of border-line defective mentality, according to the Terman classification, and is often classified as feebleminded. * This table shows the median of this group to be 70.1, or 1.7 lower than that of the entire number of runaway children from both broken and normal homes, which is 71.3, an insignificant difference in classifying the groups on the basis of their quantitative intelligence. Likewise is the difference of .5 between the Intelligence Quotients of the unselected group of delinquents and the 91 runaways from broken homes insignificant.

* Terman, The Measurement of Intelligence, p. 79.
The Intelligence Quotients of the colored children, the average of the three different groups being 66.4, are consistently a degree lower, 8.2, than those of the white children whose average is 74.6. This difference of 8.2 places the median for the colored children under the borderline of feeblemindedness, which is taken at 70 by Terman. This difference cannot be considered conclusive evidence of significantly lower intelligence in the colored children, since a difference of 8.2 points in two ratings of 70 and 78.8, or 90 and 98.2 would make no change in the general classification of the groups. Originators of intelligence tests do not claim to measure intelligence to a fine point, but it is generally claimed by them, and conceded by others, that a general classification of one’s mental capacity can be estimated by such tests, and general quantitative groupings made thereupon.

Examination of the accompanying Graphs VI and VII indicate a high percentage of feeblemindedness in the group. In the 91 children running away from broken homes, 44 cases, or 48.3%, were classified as definitely feebleminded, and 20 cases, or 22%, as having border-line defective mentality—making a total of 70.3% of the children in this group whose intellectual capacity was shown by intelligence tests to be below normal. Of the 50 children who ran away from normal homes 15 cases, or 36%, were placed in the definitely feebleminded group, and 18 cases, or 36%, in the border-line
Graph II: Distribution of Intelligence Quotients of 91 Children from Broken Homes

Graph III: Distribution of Intelligence Quotients of 50 Children from Normal Homes