

ECTOR COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES



TEXAS DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC WELFARE
1976 ANNUAL REPORT

A BRIEF HISTORY

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On December 1, 1961 the responsibility and funding of the unit was totally assumed by Ector County. At this time Ector County had one supervisor and two case workers. In 1961 the staff served 334 children, placed 53 children in foster care and averaged 14 children in care each month.

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Staff of Children's Services

Unit 21

Jane Conner, Supervisor
Billie O'Dowdy, Substitute Care Worker
Beverly Mahon, Foster Home Licensing Worker
Sylvia Ramirez, Substitute Care Technician
Gail Goodrum, On-going Case Worker
James Allison, On-going Case Worker
Jean Chapman, On-going Case Worker
Susie Kimble, On-going Case Worker
Shirley Muery, Unit Steno
Patsy Prater, Clerk Typist
Denise Holliman, Clerk Typist

Unit 22

Martin Theophilus, Supervisor
Bruce Carter, Juvenile Case Worker
Kristen Boelter, Juvenile Case Worker
Pat Jones, Intake Case Worker
Gloria Godfrey, Intake Case Worker
Ronnie Sanchez, Intake Case Worker
Debbie Williams, Unit Steno & Bookkeeper
Ginnie Storey, Clerk Typist
Yvonne Howard, Clerk Typist

1976 Ex-Staff

Kathy League, Juvenile Case Worker
Linda Hannah, Unit Steno & Bookkeeper
Donna Malone, Clerk Typist
Jill Marrs, Clerk Typist
Chad Spears, Intake Case Worker

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Over the years the Children's Services staff has been officed in several different locations. Originally located in the courthouse basement, the staff was moved to the American Bank building during the courthouse renovation. The staff was then relocated

on the second floor, next to the County Attorney and Veterans offices. Later the Veterans office was combined in the County Welfare office and Children's Services picked up two more offices. The staff had grown from a supervisor and two caseworkers to a supervisor, four caseworkers and a case aide.

In 1975, because of the DPW's increasing intent to do prevention and not just crises intervention and the state wide Child Abuse Campaign which was doubling the frequency of abuse and neglect complaints, the staff was again increased. This time the county provided office space in the old County Health Unit building at 3rd & Lee. The staff now consisted of two supervisors and twelve caseworkers with six clerical support personnel. The total number of children served had grown from 557 in 1970 to 1885 in 1975.

The Children's Services staff moved one more time from the Health building to the new State DPW Office building at 3603 Andrews Highway. This present location consolidated all the DPW Social Service staff improving the coordination of services.

It is important to note that the increase in staff became very necessary due to increased caseloads, a concentration on prevention, and a new Texas Family Code mandating specific responsibilities to the State DPW.

Ector County Children's Services continues to be jointly supported by Ector County and the State DPW. The Board and Commissioners Court work closely to be sure the current program meets the protective service needs of the children in Ector County.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES BOARD

Dr. William D. Furst, Chairman

Mr. Keith Dial, Vice-Chairman

Mrs. Faye Connell, Secretary

Reverend Mike Miller

Ms. Mary McDowell

Mrs. H. H. Heap

Mr. Joel B. Locke

Reverend H. L. Steger

Mrs. Judy Lewis

Ms. Evelyn Almanza

Mrs. Allene E. Ford

Members who also served in 1976 were:

Mrs. Shirley Rodman

Mr. Kellus Turner

Ector County Children's Services is a joint State/County funded child protection program. A Board whose members are listed above are appointed by the Commissioners Court and meet each month to coordinate activities of Children's Services and to evaluate the program and its expectations. The Board has direct control of the AFDC fund expenditures on table 1 in the appendix. The AFDC fund pays for children's allowances, special medical expenditures and the answering service/paging system. Ector County provides foster care payments, medical and clothing expenses as well as travel payments and office equipment for a portion of the child welfare staff. The State Department of

Public Welfare provides salaries and other related benefits as well as training, office space, equipment and supplies for the staff. The State Department of Public Welfare is responsible for administering the child protection work. The immediate direction comes from Ms. Molly Whittington, Social Services Program Director in Midland. Odessa is a part of the subregion 12 and the primary administration is provided by Region 3 in El Paso. The Regional Director for Social Services in El Paso is Mr. John Miller. The Regional Administrator is Ms. Hazel Baylor.

Ector County expended \$70,535.57 during 1976 for protective services. The State Department of Public Welfare expended in excess of \$250,000 for the Ector County protective service program. A more detailed accounting of the expenditures may be found in the appendix.

The Year MCMLXXVI

During 1976 Children's Services experienced a large increase in the numbers of families and children served. As the caseloads grew so did the number of children in foster care. In 1975 the average number of children in foster care per month was 22. In 1976 this average increased 68% to an average of 37 per month. These increases resulted in a request to the Commissioners Court for a budget amendment. The amendment totaled \$31,590 most of which was placed in the foster care account.

The increased caseloads put quite a strain on our limited number of foster homes. For this reason our licensing worker, Beverly Mahon spent much of 1976 conducting major recruiting campaigns. We set up a booth at Winwood Mall, and at the County Fair in September. Newspaper ads were run and in November the Odessa Jaycees launched an extensive campaign directed at foster home recruitment and the need for reporting child abuse and neglect.

Unfortunately by the end of 1976 all the avid recruiting had not resulted in a very high number of foster parent inquiries. As a result more foster homes are still desperately needed.

During 1976 eight children were placed in adoptive homes. Children's Services staff do not complete the adoption families study. They utilize studies made by the Welfare Department's Adoption Worker in Midland. Children's Services also obtains family studies from around the county to find the best possible family for each child.

The State Department of Public Welfare and MHMR entered into a contract during 1976 to better serve our families. This contract allowed us to provide Mental Health services to children who were still in their own home and to parents who needed counseling services. We greatly appreciated MHMR's participation in this program which has enabled us to expand our preventative services.

Numerous presentations were made to community groups and schools regarding the prevention and reporting of abuse and neglect. These presentations are available to any group by contacting Mr. Bruce Carter, our Child Abuse Campaign Coordinator.

Acknowledgements

Our services would not be possible without the continued support of numerous individuals and agencies.

First we express our deep appreciation to the Ector County Commissioners Court for their interest in providing funding for these services.

For 1976 the Court included:

County Judge:

Mr. Joseph Connally

Commissioners:

Mr. Erskine Wunsch - Precinct Number 1

Mr. Salvador Guerrero - Precinct Number 4

Mr. Joe Johnson - Precinct Number 2

Mr. Julian Pressly - Precinct Number 3

When a child's situation becomes serious enough, legal action becomes necessary. Our case is first presented to the County Attorney's Office and during 1976 we worked closely with both County Attorney Bill McCoy and Mike Atkins. The assistants, Carol Gregg and John Pratt have worked closely with us to insure that appropriate court referrals were made.

District Judges R. L. McKim of 161st Judicial District Court and Judge C. V. Milburn of 70th Judicial District Court heard numerous cases during 1976. The decisions in child protective work are not easy ones and the District Judges have always carefully considered each case. We have appreciated the time they have taken to hear these cases and the suggestions and ideas they have

shared with us to improve our court presentations.

The numerous county departments have been very supportive and we are especially grateful to Mr. Bill Hicks and the Auditor's Office as well as Mr. Everett Berry, County Purchasing Agent, and Vickie Sullivan, County Treasurer. The District Clerk's Office, the County Clerk, County Welfare and many others have been very helpful. The Sheriff's Office and the Odessa Police Department often respond to our workers' requests for assistance. They have always been prompt and courteous.

Many of the local agencies, MHMR, Salvation Army, Texas Rehabilitation, Permian Basin Rehabilitation and many more have been invaluable to us. The school system works closely with our staff and this allows us to give more complete services to the children and their families.

The Ector County Juvenile Probation Department has been very cooperative with our Juvenile Workers. The Youth Center has been utilized to temporarily house runaways and older children with behavior problems. The Children's Services Board and Staff are working on developing more resources locally for the older child. Some ideas include establishing an Emergency Shelter for non-delinquent children and a group home for older children who have no place to live.

Needs

In addition to the tremendous need for a group home mentioned above, Children's Services and the Department of Public Welfare needs support in other areas also. Most of all we still need foster parents who are willing to accept children in their homes. These children have problems, but without concerned, loving foster parents; we cannot offer the child a better future.

The Department has a Volunteer Program that provides varied services to it's different programs. Volunteers are needed to assist the staff in providing transportation, helping applicants complete forms, assisting with child care and much more. If you might be interested in volunteering, please contact our agency.

The Board and Staff of Children's Services greatly appreciate those who have helped us so much in the past. Christmas 1976 was one of the best ever - thanks to the numerous donations that were received. It is this type of support and interest that enables us to provide the best possible protective services to children in Ector County.

A P P E N D I X

COUNTY EXPENDITURES

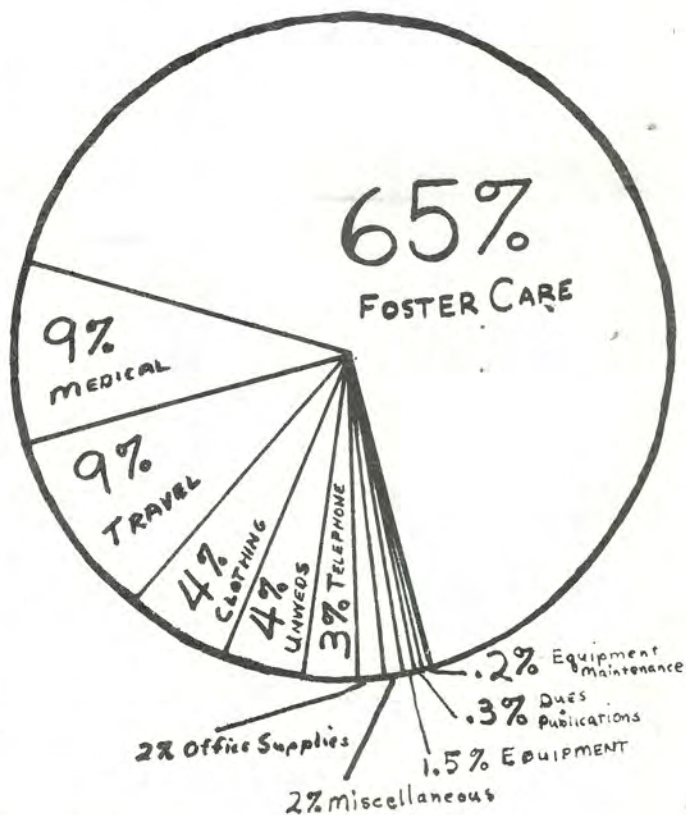
TABLE 1

A COMPARISON OF ALLOCATED AND EXPENDED FUNDING

YEAR	ALLOCATED	EXPENDED	TOTAL UNDER	and	OVER SPENT
1972	\$ 36,350.00	\$ 33,580.71	\$ 2,769.29	\$ -	
1973	\$ 39,294.00	\$ 35,206.94	\$ 4,087.06	\$ -	
1974	\$ 34,030.00	\$ 31,107.30	\$ 2,922.70	\$ -	
1975	\$ 44,770.00	\$ 41,739.94	\$ 3,030.06	\$ -	
1976 (ammended--68,340.00)	\$ 39,350.00	\$ 70,535.57	\$ -	\$ 2,195.57	
1977	\$ 64,800.00				

COUNTY EXPENDITURES - 1976

Foster Care Payments	\$ 46,092.57
Medical & Drugs	6,398.97
Travel, in & out County	6,286.98
Clothing for Foster Care	2,560.95
Unweds Medical Expenses	2,500.00
Telephone	2,452.60
Miscellaneous	1,649.00
Office Supplies	1,246.15
Equipment	944.51
Dues & Subscriptions	237.34
Equipment Maintenance	166.50
TOTAL EXPENDITURES - 1976	70,535.57



SPECIAL AFDC FUND EXPENDITURES

This fund utilizes monies reimbursed to Ector County by the Texas Department of Public Welfare for children placed in Ector County Foster Homes and who meet the eligibility requirements for Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR 1976.....\$ 23,251.05

SOURCE OF REFERRALS

TABLE 2

(This chart shows number and percent of all referrals)

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>1976 %</u>	<u>1975 %</u>
Individuals	142	20%	22%
Court or Legal	124	17%	14%
Law Enforcement	123	17%	13%
Relatives	102	14%	18%
Dept. of Public Welfare	54	8%	8%
Schools	48	7%	8%
Medical	44	6%	3%
Anonymous	29	4%	3%
Other	25	3%	7%
Self	23	3%	4%
Local Agencies	<u>5</u>	<u>1%</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	719	100%	100%

EMERGENCY AFTER HOURS CALLS

The Social Workers handle these calls on a rotation basis through an answering service. The 362-0464 number is available through this service 24 hours a day.

1976	TOTAL CALLS		TOTAL CALLS
January	51	July	111
February	40	August	78
March	82	September	52
April	34	October	40
May	63	November	60
June	46	December	56

TABLE 3

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED: 1966-1976
ALL CHILDREN BY YEAR

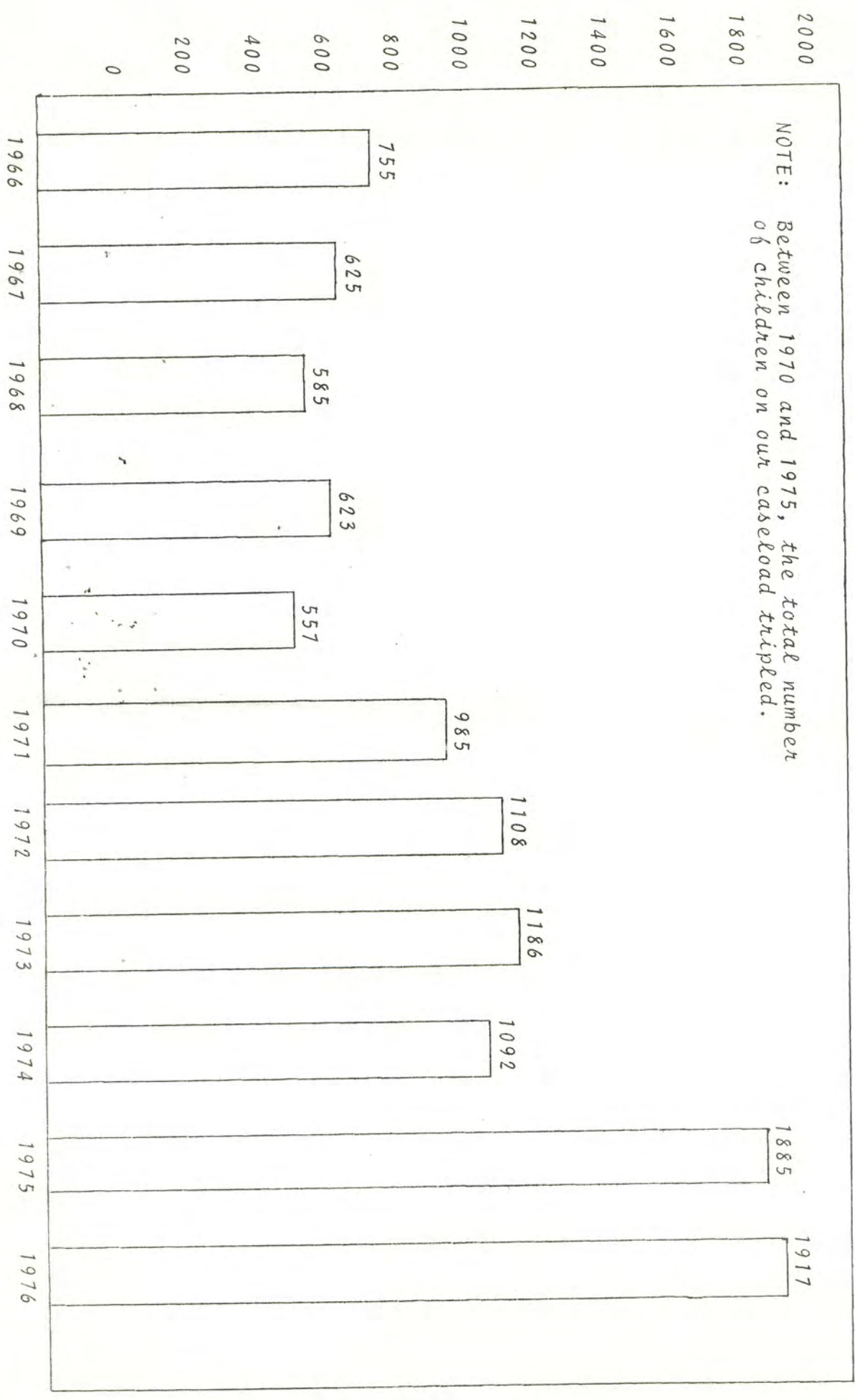


TABLE 4

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE BY MONTH

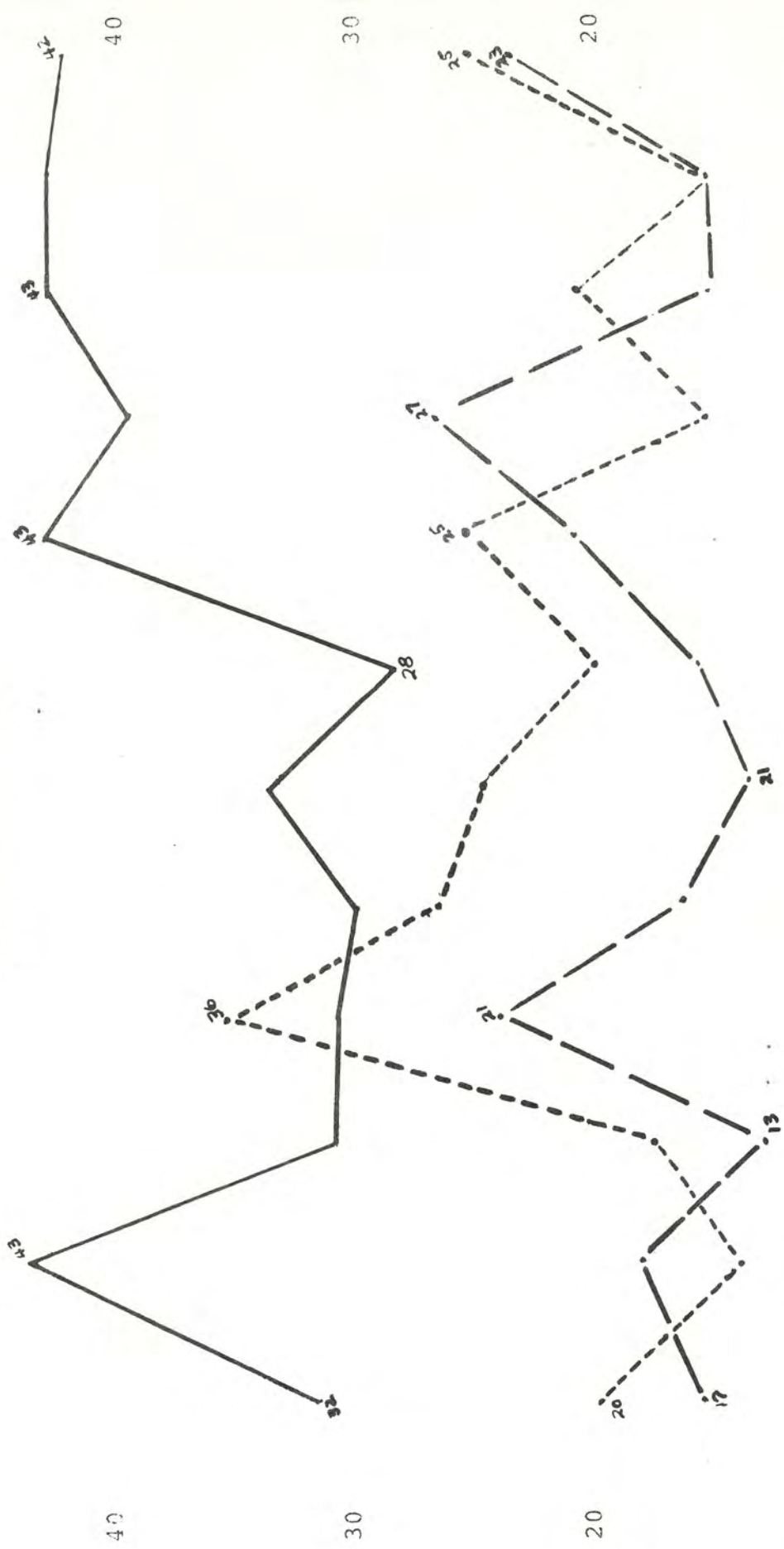
Number of Children

50

1974 — Average 17

1975 - - - Average 22

1976 — Average 37



10

10

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUNE JULY AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC