

P A R T II.EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE JOHANNESBURG
MUNICIPAL SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

Among the most important efforts of the Social Welfare Department to fill gaps in the existing state educational programme are the provision of such services as Play Centres, Park Supervision, Youth Social Centres, Community Centres, Sheltered Employment and Occupational Therapy, Research and Statistics, and Propaganda.

A more or less detailed description will be given of the first three as they are the most important from our viewpoint, viz. the educational. The others will merely be referred to very briefly as they are less important from the same viewpoint, being less directly educational, or because they are still largely in the initial stages, as is the case with Community Centres.

CHAPTER I.P L A Y C E N T R E S.

Play Centres originated in England during the last years of the 19th century and from there spread to America, the Continent and the Dominions, including South Africa.

Play Centres may be defined as clubs for young school-going children between the ages of six and twelve years, where children are helped to become adjusted to society and to become healthy and happy citizens of the future.

1. Play Centres in Other Countries.

The Play Centre movement started in England during the last years of the nineteenth century at Marchmont Hall on the Passmore Edwards Settlement. Their efforts did not owe any inspiration to any other country, but they arose spontaneously from the needs of the district, combined with the exceptional opportunities afforded by the settlement building.¹⁾

The movement began when industrialisation took away parks and open spaces where children could play and gave in return little in the way of organised leisure-time activities. Often both parents were working, with the result that juvenile delinquency and uncontrollability increased.

The first school play centres opened in 1905, when eight play centres were started in London. Their growth was rapid. In a year the enrolment was almost doubled from 5846 to 10030.

The play centre experiment was such a success that

1). Trevelyan; Evening Play Centres for Children. p.1 and p.120.

the attention of Parliament was drawn towards the problem of state obligation in the matter of children's play-time. The result was that in 1906 the play centre principle was embodied in an act of Parliament, namely the "Education (Administrative Provisions) Bill, 1907". This was the children's charter in the matter of organised recreation after school hours. Through this bill local authorities were enabled to spend money on the play-time of children. But there was no compulsion on them to do so, and it was still another matter to convince them of the necessity of doing so.

The country was not yet ready for so great an extension of its educational system. In fact, it was not until ten years later that the Board of Education could take the decisive step which has opened the way to play centres and recreation schools in every part of the country.

One of the greatest handicaps was the struggle with finance as the movement had to rely for its existence on public subscriptions. The London County Council refused appeals for assistance. Nevertheless, the number of centres rose from eight to twelve in 1908, to fifteen in 1910, and to twenty in 1914. Gradually the value of play centres were realised and magistrates and the police started to praise them. Probation officers assigned boys under their care to the centres and asked the superintendents to keep a special eye on them.

The attendance grew rapidly as the following table indicates.

TABLE VI.
PLAY CENTRE ATTENDANCES.1).

1907	418,113	1908	619,521
1909	738,496	1910	933,833

1). Trevelyan; Evening Play Centres for Children. p.35

1911	1,170,962.	1912	1,322,936.
1913	1,510,381.	1914	1,752,173.

Although the numbers multiplied three-fold during the period 1907 to 1912, the cost was only about doubled, viz. from £2,339 in 1907 to £5,403 in 1912.

The Great War of 1914-1918 brought a great new need for care and supervision of children after school hours, as most homes were left fatherless. The wilder spirits among the boys had too much liberty and so got themselves into trouble. Many gangs started and these often came into conflict with the law.

At last state recognition was afforded the movement, mainly in an effort to combat the growing evil of the alarming increase in crime. The Minister of Education signed a memorandum in which government assistance was promised for play centres throughout the country in the form of grants in regard to the maintenance of play centres on a 50% basis of the approved expenditure to combat the serious increase in juvenile offences since the beginning of the war. After the first payment of the government grant there was a rapid increase in the numbers of play centres. The movement rapidly spread to the great Provincial towns of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, etc.¹⁾.

The movement for the care of the school-age child also found response all over America, particularly in New York. Its development was, however, not so rapid as was the case in England.

In America the play centre movement started with Mrs. Moses D. Blitzer, when she noticed the numbers of children playing in the streets, while there were empty

1). Trevalear; Evening Play Centres for Children. p.p. 1-83
See also Reaney. The Place of Play in Education. p.63 f.

school rooms nearby. It was a movement to give back to children their right to play, through provision of play areas, supervised by play leaders. It developed as part of a complete recreation movement, more than as a counter measure to juvenile delinquency.¹⁾

The movement really took root in America during the Great War, when the need was felt more urgently for provision for the children of enlisted fathers and working mothers.

A notable development in America was the Parent-Teacher Organisation, and the Parent Education Department, which tries to guide parents, both on a group and an individual basis.

During the years between the Great War and the depression the American schools assumed all kinds of community service. It was during this period that the progressive movement in education emphasised the continuity of the child's experience, and the responsibility of the schools for extra-curricular activities.²⁾ The Play Centre was consequently often housed in the school building and, in the Gary System the schools, as an integral part of the community life, the schools were used day and night, six days a week, summer and winter, by adults as well as by children.³⁾

The Board of Education was interested from the beginning. In 1942 a special Committee made a careful study and evaluation of the movement. The result was that the board formally adopted the project and made it part of the great New York City School System. These schools were known as "The All-Day Neighbourhood Schools" and were to serve as demonstrations to other schools in the city. Specially selected teachers have been appointed to each school to act

- 1). Huus; Financing Municipal Recreation, Introduction, quoted by Thomsen: The Place of the Play Centre in a Social Welfare Program
- 2). Halsey; The Development of Recreation in Metropolitan Chicago. p.38
- 3). Halsey, op. cit. p. 188.

in an advisory capacity to the administration.¹⁾

2. The Importance of Play.

Play fulfils a basic need of children.

The need of play in an era of regimented amusements in a world of turmoil and frustrations, is often ignored or considered of small importance.

To many people play seems useless activity and a waste of valuable time. It seems to lead to no specific goal. Others consider it as sheer idleness or haphazard activity, while there are even a few for whom play may seem sinful just because it is pleasurable.²⁾

Yet play is of the utmost importance to the child and indispensable to his development and adjustment. Play is, in fact, next to the need for nourishment, protection and shelter, the most important basic need of the child.

For practical purposes play may be defined as activities which are engaged in for their own sake. Work, on the other hand, may be defined as activities which are directed at some more remote objective. Play is relatively spontaneous and participation is to a certain extent under one's own control. Work is performed more frequently as an obligation. When work takes on the spontaneous character of play, then the two seem to merge. They likewise merge when play takes on the compulsory or obligatory character of work. The difference between the two is fundamentally one of attitude. What for the one is play, is work for the other, and vice versa.³⁾

1). Franklin, and Benedict; Play Centres for School Children. p.p. 1-7. See also "Building for the Future", Annual Report of the Play Centre Ass., p.p. 3-7. Reaney; The Place of Play in Education p.p. 61-62.

2). Lampert; School's Out. p. 1

3). Warner, Queen & Harper; American Charities. p. 483.

Play is the bridge over which the child must pass in order to grow up and to make a satisfactory journey from childhood to adulthood.¹⁾ Play is the natural learning activity of children. Through it they digest some of the most deep-felt and acute experiences of their lives. Through it they fit the various parts of the world around them into an understandable whole. It is through their play that they come to understand human relationships, occupations, current events and practices.

In the agricultural period children found in everyday tasks many satisfactions and learning opportunities which are today available only in play. In those days adults and children shared many experiences. Boys learned occupations from their fathers, and girls learned household arts from their mothers. They acquired their knowledge at first hand and thus there was no need for them to play farmer or nurse, because such work was close at hand and they could readily participate in it.

The industrialisation which followed brought a need for greater opportunities for play, which had been satisfied naturally in the agricultural stage. Space for play almost disappeared. The content of play contracted so that many forms of play, through which children had learned the current habits, customs, occupations, arts and ideas, and the use of their bodies, were lost. Thus play, the birthright of every child, became the privilege of the few. Play spots decreased while the hazards of participation increased.²⁾

Educators have long appreciated the vast significance of play. We talk of the play way in education and learning

1). Lambert; School's Out. p. 24.
 2). Lambert; op. cit. p.p. 24-25

through play. Most of the best modern educational systems or plans embody play in one form or another in their activities.¹⁾ Psycho-analysts have shown how play is indeed the breath of life of the child, since it is through play activities that he finds mental ease and can work upon his wishes, fears and phantasies, so as to integrate them into a living personality.²⁾

Play is also important in the social development of children. In this respect Dr. Susan Isaacs says: "Play is not only the means by which the child comes to discover the world; it is supremely the activity which brings him psychic equilibrium in the early years.....And gradually he learns to relate his deepest and most primitive phantasies to the ordered world of real activities.³⁾

The emotions of the child also find expression through play. Psychiatry has shown us the less obvious meaning of play and stressed its importance in the emotional growth of children.

There are two special ways in which children can respond to tensions in their environment, viz. they can be destructive and aggressive, or they can be passive and neurotic.⁴⁾

Thus a child who feels that he is resented, or unloved, may become disobedient at home, defy authority and demand attention unnecessarily. Likewise, a child may misbehave at school because he may be under the impression that the teacher dislikes him. He may then refuse to learn,

1). Caldwell Cook, The Play Way in Education.

Reaney; The Place of Play in Education p. 54 f.

2). See Freud; Beyond the Pleasure Principle. pp. 15-16.

3). Isaacs; Social Development in Young Children. p.425.
See also: Intellectual Growth in Young Children, by the same author.

4). Lambert; School's Out. p. 27.

or take it out of his playmates by bullying, or he may conform in school and give expression to his resentment in seemingly unrelated behaviour. Some children may not make any attempt at outward rebellion, but may express their insecurity through illness, or other neurotic symptoms instead.

Play is in such cases a safe means of releasing and directing hostile feelings. Through play the child may act and re-enact his violent impulses without actually harming any one. In this way the child drains off feelings which might otherwise be turned against society in destructive behaviour, or if deeply repressed, produces neuroses in the individual. If children are allowed to make full use of play in all its aspects it can be a valuable therapeutic agent. Pent-up emotions cannot be ignored as they must find an outlet or harm the child. Here play may act both as sublimating and as a useful safety valve.

Play also facilitates adjustment. Most of life's situations are too complex for the child to digest in their unadulterated state. They have to be simplified and approached by the child, preferable through play, before they are met with in their real state.

In spite of the tremendous significance of play, the play drive in children, particularly those living in cities, is stifled and starved of its normal and natural satisfaction. Maladjustment is often the result.

In most homes children do not enjoy the play facilities that they should. Few parents share in the play of their children. They amuse the children and take them to places of amusement, but rarely play with them, either by permitting them to help in the house, or

garden, or by entering into their phantasy play. Instead, parents place too many restrictions on the normal play of children. Although noise and disorder are the concomitants of play, the nerves of few modern parents are equal to it in the confined space of the home, with the result that they are either forbidden to play naturally, or are sent outside, which, in the poorer areas, too often means the street.

In most schools too little is made of the play impulses of the child, except in the lower standards. The emphasis is on formal instruction and mental activity and not on physical activity. For long periods the child is forced into a state of physical inactivity with no proper compensation afterwards. Little use is made of the fact that play is undoubtedly one of the most economical and effective ways of assimilating knowledge.

Not only in the home and in the school does the child receive inadequate satisfaction for his powerful play impulses, but he is also hemmed in outside, particularly in industrial areas. Adequate playing space is seldom provided. In most communities there are not enough parks, back yards and empty lots. Even where parks are provided the inevitable sign to keep off the grass and other restrictions make them ornaments rather than fit places for children to play in.

The result of all this is that the play impulses are stifled and starved in the child. Instead of going out to play in the fresh air and sunshine he goes to the movies or reads comics. The spirit of adventure and the phantasy of the child, which are normally satisfied through play, have to be content with these substitutes. The real

trouble is, however, that these substitutes offer as little real and lasting satisfaction as smoking a cigarette does to satisfy the sense of hunger. Many of the much decried modern evil practices of the child are symptomatic of his sterile play content. The remedy is emphatically more active and satisfying play facilities.¹⁾

The provision of Play Centres by the J.M.S.W.D. is a valuable contribution towards filling this gap in the welfare services for children. Although the Play Centre was provided in the first instance as a social welfare measure, it has nevertheless very important educational aspects as will also be seen from an examination of its aims.

3. Aims of Play Centres.

The aims of Play Centres have developed from the original remedial, through the rehabilitative, the preventive, to the promotive, and then to the formative aim.

(a). Remedial or Corrective:

It is the aim of the Play Centre to correct existing mistakes, maladjustments, behaviour abnormalities, etc.²⁾

(b). Rehabilitative:

By means of group work, individual treatment and play therapy, it is the aim of the Play Centre to rehabilitate difficult or behaviour problem children, who may come from broken homes, immoral homes, homes where both parents are working, or from other unsatisfactory homes.

(c). Preventive or Counter Measure:

Play Centres aim at preventing juvenile delinquency.

Whereas Play Centres developed in America as part of a complete recreation movement more than as a counter

1). See Kilpatrick: Group Education for Democracy.

2). See Report of "The South African National Conference on the Post-War Planning of Social Welfare Work", Chairman's

measure against juvenile delinquency,¹⁾ it was established in Johannesburg primarily to prevent delinquency and crime gangs developing by providing constructive and creative leisure-time activities.²⁾

Play Centres also aim at keeping children off the streets and so prevent traffic accidents.

It is also hoped to prevent sickness and disease by building up healthy, happy children through additional feeding, medical attention and physical activities, etc.

The Play Centre also aims at preventing children having undesirable friends, opportunities and practices, and from going to undesirable places.

(d). Promotive:

Although the immediate aim, at the establishment of the Play Centres in Johannesburg, was the remedying and preventing of undesirable conditions and practices, they have since developed into having a positive aim, viz. the training of children.³⁾

Amongst other things the Play Centre hopes: to promote better understanding of children's homes and parents, to bring about better relation between parent and child, teacher and child, and child and child; to teach hobbies and creative crafts and skills for use in later life; to give a feeling of appreciation for the better and beautiful things of life (art, music, drama, etc.) in order

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- 1). Trevelyan; Evening Play Centres for Children. Introduction. See also: Burt; The Young Delinquent. pp. 198, 204.
 - 2). Thomsen; The Place of the Play Centre in a Social Welfare Programme. p. 3
 - 3). Memorandum submitted by the Johannesburg City Council to The Commission on Prison and Penal Reform, July 1946.

to make for a more satisfying and full life; to teach a respect for property and the rights of others; to do for children, especially those of working mothers, what the most understanding parents generally try to give them in their out-of-school hours: opportunities to work and play alone and with others, in a place which belongs to them, with the help and appreciation from grown-ups who like and respect them; and to satisfy certain of the basic needs of children, viz.¹⁾ physical needs: food, shelter and medicinal care, entertainment, and opportunities for books and games; emotional needs:²⁾ need to be loved and wanted, (absence of this results in problem behaviour); need to be treated with consideration, (neglect may result in defeatism or resentment); need to win respect for achievement, (when lacking results in absence of inspiration); need to be understood, to make friends and be with equals, (when lacking results in feeling of inferiority); need to find stimulation in surroundings, (when lacking results in stunted experience, retarded growth and development; need for quiet at times, (when lacking results in nervousness and irritability); and need to play, to create, and to work and produce, (energy must be worked off in legitimate channels, otherwise acts of aggression and destruction may be possible.)³⁾

(e). Formative:

The real value of the Play Centre is to be

- 1). Guide for Teachers in Children's Play Centres; Child Care Staff; State EducationaDepartment, foreword.
- 2). See also Gardner; The Children's Play Centre, pp. 98-119
- 3). Gardner; op. cit. p. 116 ff.

measured not only by its success in keeping children out of harm's way and mischief, but also by the influence it exercises in the formation of character. The Play Centre aims to exercise this influence through genuine play, the spirit of free play and self-chosen occupation.¹⁾ It also wants to do this through enabling the child to learn new interests.

To summarise, Play Centres aim at being places where young children learn to adjust themselves to their fellows and to achieve a feeling of security. This adjustment includes physical, mental and social fitness. Social fitness is the highest of these three.²⁾ The key to social fitness is often the ability to compete with other children in the schoolroom and on the playing field. It is the aim of the Play Centre to provide the opportunity for exercising this form of self-expression.

In "Club Leadership" Henriques says: "...to-day they (the clubs) exist to educate them (boys) for the fulness of citizenship."³⁾

So also can we say of the Play Centres: their highest aim is education for citizenship.

Although Play Centres are no schools, they are educational centres. The schools have a compulsory programme, which is contrary to the Play Centre method. The Play Centre never compels, but only leads and guides.

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- 1). Trevelyan; Evening Play Centres for Children. p. 58.
 - 2). Tomsen; The Place of the Play Centre in a Social Welfare Programme. p. 5; see also Report of Commission on Prison and Penal Reform. p. 12.
 - 3). Henriques; Club Leadership. p. 1.

4. Need for Play Centres in Johannesburg.

Play Centres were introduced by the Johannesburg City Council in the first instance with the object of combating juvenile delinquency and of acting as a source to which children of working parents, children with inadequate play facilities at home, and children who simply desire to benefit from the attractive services at the centres, could be referred.¹⁾

(a). The Problem of Truancy and Juvenile Delinquency.

It is generally recognised that truancy is often a symptom of some underlying unrest, which if allowed to continue unchecked, may easily develop into juvenile delinquency, or in other ways hamper the social adjustment of the child.²⁾

In the year 1934 the number of absences from school in Johannesburg alone was estimated at an average of 1800 per day,³⁾ and not all of them stayed out for valid reasons. In 1946 337 cases of truancy were reported to the attendance officers of the Witwatersrand Central School Board.⁴⁾

This figure is a very conservative index of the true number of cases, because only the most persistent and glaring cases are usually reported, the remainder being dealt with by the school principals themselves. If only about one in three cases is reported the total number of cases of truancy in Johannesburg would be approximately

1). R. Knobel, Asst. Director of Social Welfare; Interem Report on Municipal Recreation; 29/1/1947.

2). Evidence submitted by the Johannesburg City Council to the Committee on Prison and Penal Reform; 1946. p. 11.

3). Report of the Provincial Committee of Inquiry into Social and Charitable Work on the Witwatersrand; Govt. Printer, Pretoria; 1934, pp. 25-27, and 83-84.

4). Figure supplied by the Witwatersrand Central School Board.

a thousand, or an average of five a day.

Truancy is usually the first step to delinquency and crime. The truants frequent café bioscopes, loaf about the streets, or associate with undesirable characters from whom they learn undesirable practices. If, as a result, they come into conflict with the law, they are classed as delinquents. According to the report of the Provincial Committee of Inquiry into Social and Charitable Work on the Witwatersrand "a juvenile delinquent is a young person who has come into conflict with the law and has thus committed a crime, although psychologically he may have no innate delinquent tendencies."¹⁾

(b). Extent of Delinquency in Johannesburg.

The following figures, quoted by the above-named commission of inquiry, from the Official Year Book of Union, 1939, gives some idea of the extent of juvenile delinquency in Johannesburg during the year 1939:-²⁾

2277 European juveniles of 16 years and younger were prosecuted for 86 different offences, 6477 juvenile adults of 17 to 20 years for 153 different offences, including assault, theft, drunkenness, housebreaking, incest, attempted murder, culpable homicide, etc.

The less serious cases dealt with by the Commissioner of Child Welfare are not included in the above figures. Besides, there are the cases in which the misbehaviour has not brought the children into conflict with the law, but nevertheless created serious misbehaviour problems for themselves, their parents, their teachers, and the community.

1). Report of the Provincial Committee of Inquiry into Social and Charitable Work, p. 25.

2). Op. cit. p. 157.

The commission thought that this clearly showed that the problem of maladjustment among children was disquietingly large and imperatively urgent, and should be tackled forthwith in all seriousness and determination.

The following table indicates the extent of juvenile delinquency in Johannesburg from 1940 onwards:

T A B L E VII.

European Juvenile Delinquency in Johannesburg, 1940-1946.¹⁾

Year	Under 16			16 & 17			18 to 21			Total			All Rases
	male	female	T	m	f	T	m	f	T	m	f	T	
1940	85	1	86	174	5	179	231	2	233	490	8	498	1721
1941	94	8	102	216	11	227	290	21	411	700	40	740	2109
1942	78	12	90	132	13	145	463	26	489	673	51	724	1984
1943	111	27	138	80	16	96	109	24	133	300	67	367	1405.
1944	87	16	103	77	22	99	80	23	103	244	61	305	1459
1945	129	11	140	109	15	124	84	17	101	322	43	365	1790
1946	89	5	94	98	15	113	67	3	70	254	23	277	1458

N.B. According to records of the Juvenile Court there is a decrease in the number of cases, but an increase in the seriousness of the offences committed.

1). Figures from the files of the commissioner of Child Welfare, Johannesburg, with kind permission of the Commissioner of Child Welfare, Johannesburg.

(c). Causes of Juvenile Delinquency in Johannesburg.

The causes of juvenile delinquency in Johannesburg are essentially the same as in any large city the world over.

In the report on Deviate Children these causes are stated as follows:¹⁾ "Deviate behaviour may be caused by either the innate disposition of the person or by his environment, which includes physical, spiritual and mental factors, bad education, and bad habits, ideals, unfulfilled desires, or by disposition as well as environment."

The Report of the Provincial Committee of Inquiry into Social and Charitable Work on the Witwatersrand mentions that in the majority of cases will be found that bad home and environmental influences contribute a determining factor. In the majority of cases will be present some mental or physical disorganisation which has operated causally. In both cases proper diagnosis is necessary before it can be properly treated.²⁾

At the Conference on Post-War Planning held in Johannesburg in 1944 Mr. W.L. Marsh, Juvenile Court Magistrate in Johannesburg, mentioned that 95% of European children's troubles before the courts arise from bad home conditions, the broken or drunken home being the most prolific source. Abnormal psychological or perhaps pathological mental conditions in the child produce most of the rest. He further mentioned that nearly all European "children in need of care", or juvenile delinquents, come from bad areas in the city, Fordsburg, Vrededorp, Newlands, Ophirton, and similar areas being the main sources.

1). Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children, p. 158.

2). Report of the Provincial Committee of Inquiry. op. cit. p. 25.

Burt mentions the following as the chief causes of delinquency:¹⁾

A. Home Conditions:

- (1). Poverty: overcrowding, absence of facilities for recreation at home;
- (2). Defective family relationships;
- (3). Defective discipline;
- (4). Viscious homes.

B. Conditions Outside the Home:

- (1). Companionships;
- (2). Conditions of leisure:
 - (a) excessive facilities for amusement,
 - (b) defective facilities for amusement;
- (3). Conditions of work.

The role of unsatisfactory environmental conditions in the causation of juvenile delinquency is clearly evident from the above. Mr. Marsh means that it is only with the environmental conditions that we can deal in the problem: heredity vs. environment. He also means that rehabilitation of the home is the most essential aspect in the treatment of juvenile delinquency.²⁾

(a). Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency in Johannesburg

The Committee of Inquiry into Social and Charitable Work on the Witwatersrand mentioned in its report that the modern tendency in dealing with young people who come into conflict with the law is to provide as far as possible

1). Burt; The Young Delinquent; pp. 66-176

2). S.A. Nat. Conference on the Post-War Planning of Social Welfare Work p. 146.

individual treatment to meet the individual needs of each case. The older method was to provide mass treatment, generally in reformatories, with the consequence that often more harm than good was done. Hostel treatment was found to be more beneficent. (At the time the Rand had five such hostels for Europeans, two for girls and three for boys).

In America the tendency is to transfer the emphasis in measures with regard to juvenile delinquency from the courts to the schools because it is realised more and more that delinquency is not made in a day, but that children often show tendencies, which if allowed to develop unchecked, end in crime.

So far our schools have made no systematic attempt to meet the problem. Although the Provincial Administration has a fully developed system of medical inspection to attend to the physical needs of children, there is no systematic provision, apart from sporadic clinical facilities, for supervising mental health, of school children, and for detecting and treating deviations in character and conduct.

The report went on to mention that in America such children are dealt with by the school authorities in so-called Disciplinary or Parental Schools on their own authority and without reference to the courts. In South Africa there are no such Truant Schools, although there is a great need for them, especially in Johannesburg.

Since 1913 there has been direct legislation dealing with behaviour problem children. The most recent and amended form is the Children's Act No. 31 of 1937. This act deals with offences against and

concerning children, such as neglect, cruelty, begging, etc. The provisions of this act are carried out by the Union Education Department, The Union Social Welfare Department, and the Department of Justice.

Certified institutions, such as Government Industrial Schools, are maintained in terms of this act. Under this act the Union Education Department may deal with uncontrollable and even delinquent children, but no liaison exists between this authority and the Provincial Education Departments, from whose schools these children are recruited, to facilitate measures on their behalf.¹⁾

More or less the same standpoint was adopted by the Committee on Deviate Children. It thought that except those whose deviation brings them into conflict with the law there are also those who evade the demands of their environment by withdrawal or escape from reality and by regression, severe introversion or phantasy. These children also need treatment.

The Committee recommended that the problem be approached from the preventive point of view, by moving the focal point from the control of the Government to the authority entrusted with the instruction of these children during those years when the unfavourable behaviour symptoms manifest themselves for the first time. If this were carried out the number of children sent to reformatories, industrial schools, and other institutions in terms of the provisions of the Children's Act, would in future decrease considerably and it would

1). Report Provincial Commission of Inquiry. p.p. 25-26
See also p. 84.

do away with the stigma which attaches to sending them to such institutes. Besides, the chances are that they get in contact with worse characters, and therefore probation officers and others dealing with delinquent children are reluctant to send them where there is punishment but seldom cure.¹⁾

Since the war broke out in 1939 many families have been rootless. Fathers have joined up and many mothers have gone to work. Thus the steadying influence was absent, with the consequence that the children fell into unsatisfactory modes of behaviour. They formed small gangs and exerted profound influence on the borderline cases, and they in their turn influenced children in more stable environments.

Many of the delinquents feel insecure and unwanted. Unless there is a friendly, happy place for them to go to regularly when school is over, where they can be supervised and guided by understanding adults until their mothers come home, they must be considered potential delinquents, susceptible to the destructive suggestions of their wildest contemporaries.

In connection with the prevention of delinquency Clara Lambert says that there is good reason to believe that there is a direct relationship between adequate play experiences and the prevention of delinquency.²⁾

(e). Need for recreation facilities for Johannesburg
School children.

The recreational needs of Johannesburg school children are essentially the same as in any city of like size.

1). Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children, op. cit. p 164.

2). Lambert; School's Out. p. 14.

This problem of finding leisure-time activities for children affects all parents, rich and poor alike, though in different ways. The rich often have other duties to attend to and often leave the children to the tender mercies of servants, or to find their own occupations as best they can. In the poorer areas recreation facilities in the home are usually non-existent, consequently they have to find their own amusement at the mercy of traffic-infested streets or in overcrowded and unhygienic backyards. Most children in large cities have no other place to play except in the streets and they have little else to do than dodge after balls amid traffic, to engage in desultry games, or simply to "hang around".¹⁾

Then there are the children of parents who both work. It is essential that they should be under some kind of supervision or control from the time that the schools close and five or six o'clock when father and mother come home. The position of these children, especially in the poorer areas, is one fraught with much danger. They are easily led astray by undesirable companions. Very few children of the tender age between six and fourteen or fifteen are mature enough to enjoy unrestricted freedom of movement in the poorer areas of a city. Sooner or later they are bound to pick up undesirable, if not actually harmful or even criminal, practices. Where adequate parental or home control is lacking, adequate recreation facilities offer a safe and positive substitute.

1). Franklin & Benedict; Play Centres for School Children. p. 13.

If work is not found for idle hands during idle hours, then these idle hands will find that kind of occupation which is not always desirable from the adult point of view. Leisure-time can be as fruitfully spent and can be as constructive as any truly educational activity. It need by no means be a fritting away of valuable time, but can be most educative if wisely occupied.

Therefore, the Play Centres were established by the Johannesburg Municipal Social Welfare Department with the express purpose of providing for this urgently felt need of offering suitable and adequate organised recreational facilities in order to prevent juvenile delinquency and to entice the children away from the many dangers of the streets.

5. Establishment of Play Centres in Johannesburg.

In May, 1941, strong representations were made by the staffs of the Probation Office, Hand Aid Association, Transvaal Association of Boy's Clubs, and the Children's Aid Society to the Johannesburg City Council to the effect that the Department should undertake the running of afternoon Play Centres as a means of providing constructive recreational outlets for young school-going children in the poorer areas of the city, where it was felt that the child's leisure-time environment might lead to delinquency.¹⁾

It was an urgently needed measure to combat juvenile delinquency and misdirected leisure-time activities among the poorer children, who were forced by home circumstances to spend their leisure-time in

1). Report of the Director of Social Welfare for the Period 1st July, 1940, to 30th June, 1941. p. 17

streets and other undesirable places where anti-social habits are readily acquired.

The Children's Aid Society quoted the following three types of cases from its records with a view to illustrating the need for this work:-

(a). Mrs. G., a widow, was left penniless in 1933 with four children of 12, 10, 9, and 4 years. The total income of the family was £7. 10. 0. per month, this being a Government maintenance grant. The mother, through years of penury and ill-health, was unable to control the boys. In 1943 the two eldest were convicted on a charge of housebreaking. Neither of the boys had an outlet for their somewhat superior intelligence and energy, and consequently sought more anti-social channels through which to express themselves. Both boys were then awaiting trial in the Johannesburg Fort on 18 counts of theft. Had there been centres where their energies could have been guided into constructive work, they might have been assets to the community instead of being a very real danger to the public.

(b). Mrs. E., a T.B. sufferer, was ordered to go to Mielfontein for curative treatment. Three children under 6 were all left in the Children's Aid Society's crèche. The mother was reluctant to go to hospital, in spite of the danger of infecting the whole family, on account of having to leave the three eldest children (aged 12, 10 and 8 years) entirely without supervision from 2 to 7 p.m., when the father returned from work. Had there been a Play Centre she would have gone to hospital with an easy mind, knowing that the children would have spent their afternoons under proper supervision.

(c). Mr. and Mrs. B. always neglected their six children. In 1940 they came before the court for neglect of their children, but were not convicted. The parents took no interest at all in the welfare of their children. The oldest ones were left to their own devices during the afternoon, and could not even depend on their parents for any consideration or interest when they were at home. In this case a Play Centre, besides supervising the leisure hours of the children, might well have provided them with some constructive interests.

The Council realised the importance of this work and adopted the following recommendations:-

1. That the experiment of conducting one afternoon Play Centre for boys and one for girls of school-going age where environment may lead to delinquency be agreed to for a trial period.

2. That the Acting Director of Social Welfare report on the progress of the experiment 12 months after its commencement.¹⁾

Thus the Council decided to run afternoon Play Centres for school-going children, in order that these children be properly cared for after school hours.

The first Play Centre was opened in August, 1941, although the official opening only took place on the 1st of December, 1941, at 17 Hanover Street, Mayfair. The staff consisted of a supervisor and an assistant supervisor, both trained social workers.

1). Extract from the Council Minutes Dated 27th May, 1941, (Vote 60/1/0001-2/0850.)

The Play Centre opened with 16 children with ages ranging from 6 to 12 years. The membership rose so rapidly that many prospective members had to be refused admission. By July, 1942, it was found necessary to restrict the membership of the Centre to 60 children, owing to limited staff and accommodation.

The Play Centre remained open on week-days only from 1:30 p.m. It was thus able to receive them straight from school and keep them until the parents arrived home ready to receive them for the evening.

The programme of the Centre evolved gradually from a simple beginning to eventually include both popular and instructive activities, such as hobbies and crafts, library facilities, communal games, showing of cinematograph films, and in- and outdoor entertainments. The programme was made elastic and adaptable in order to meet new or changing circumstances. No hard and fast restrictions were made apart from the elementary domestic rules of neatness, cleanliness and obedience. The guiding aim was to inculcate an attitude of good citizenship and social feeling by creating an informal atmosphere as nearly as possible similar to the easy discipline of wholesome family life.

The children attended regularly. Soon there was a long waiting list, which was a sure proof of the great and urgent need of such centres.

In her report to the Director of Social Welfare the Supervisor of the Mayfair Play Centre expressed the hope that the service should be extended to other parts of the city on the basis of this first successful experiment.¹⁾

1). Social Welfare Department: Play Centre File.

It was, however, not until February, 1944, that the second Play Centre was opened in Jeppe. Since then it has been the policy of the Council to establish two new Play Centres a year.

At its meeting on the 25th of July, 1944, the Council adopted a recommendation from the Social Welfare Department to establish two more Play Centres as soon as the necessary equipment had been obtained.¹⁾

As a result the Braamfontein Play Centre was opened in October, 1944, and the Kenilworth Play Centre in January, 1945. Twist Street was opened in May, 1945, Jan Hofmeyr in April, 1946, and the most recent one is in Sydenham.

The last four Play Centres were established in conjunction with the Government schools in their respective areas or with a Private Committee. The Principal of the Kenilworth Junior School donated £200 towards the equipment and the Council established the Play Centre at an estimated cost of £400.²⁾ The Twist Street and the Braamfontein School buildings were used during the afternoons to house the Play Centres for some time, but separate sites had eventually to be obtained, as it was found difficult to reconcile the free discipline of the Play Centre in the afternoon with the more strict and controlled discipline of the school.

The difficulty was, however, partly overcome in the case of the Jan Hofmeyr School, where the Principal originated the idea of running the Play Centre in close conjunction with the school, and where the Council assists

1). Vote- 50/01/1/0001, 60/01/2/1821.

2). Council Minutes Dated 25th July, 1944, vote- 60/01/2/1821.

the school with funds and three staff members.

In Sydenham the Play Centre is run in conjunction with a private committee helped by a grant-in-aid and one staff member.

There are at present seven Play Centres in Johannesburg. These are:- (in order of establishment).

<u>Centre</u>	<u>Address.</u>	<u>Establishment.</u>
Mayfair	17 Hanover Street, Mayfair.	1941.
Jeppe	Methodist Church Hall, Cr Jules Street and John Page Avenue, Jeppe	1944.
Braamfontein	1 Biccard Street, Braamfontein.	1944.
Kenilworth	Fraser Street, Kenilworth.	1945.
Twist Street.	21 A Koch Street,	1945.
Jan Hofmeyr.	Jan Hofmeyr Junior School.	1946.
Sydenham	Orange Grove Government School.	1946.

As the result of the Council's policy to first provide for the needs of the more congested areas, and as these areas are often far from stable in their extent and composition, (residential areas often become industrial areas, while areas occupied by Europeans are sometimes taken over by Non-Europeans), the problem of finding suitable premises in which to house the Play Centres is one of the most difficult with which the Department has had to cope. Although the ideal is that the Department should own the premises and that the buildings should be erected to suit the particular needs of the particular area, the Department has been forced to hire or purchase temporary premises, usually old dwelling houses, which are

not very suitable for the purpose for which they are intended.

Only one or two Play Centres conform to the first requirement of a Play Centre, namely, that it should be situated in extensive and attractive grounds. Only one of them can boast of a hall of some sorts, which is another indispensable necessity. Most of the buildings are drab and dreary affairs in spite of the laudable efforts of the Department and the staff members to make them otherwise. Nearly every report from the supervisors of the various Play Centres emphasises this unsuitability of the premises. How, they say, can children be expected to show respect for old and dilapidated property or show pride in them?

The Mayfair Play Centre is about the only one with fairly suitable premises, situated in extensive and fairly attractive grounds. It has a paddling pool, a sand pit, swings and other attractions for children. Most of the others labour under great difficulties. The Twist Street Centre, for instance, has a backyard not more than 25 feet by 30 feet, and a single lavatory for staff, European and native, and about sixty children.

Were it not that the dreariness, drabness and squaller of their homes are usually so much worse than that of some of the Play Centre buildings, few children would have been attracted to these Centres. Fortunately, however, that that is not the only or most important attraction which the Play Centres have to offer. The secret of their undoubted attraction lies not in the buildings, but in the activities in which the children can participate, and above all in the spirit which prevails there. There is sympathy, love and understanding,

without which a golden castle is but an empty shell, and blessed with it the most humble cottage is heaven on earth.

Thomsen offers the following suggestions for play centre premises:¹⁾.

1. Dining Room.

Folding tables and chairs should be used. This room could also be used for group work, when other accommodation is not available.

2. Kitchen, Scullery and Pantry.

There should be a communicating hatch into the Diningroom. In these rooms cookery classes, demonstrations, etc. could be held.

3. Boys' and Girls' Cloakrooms.

These rooms should contain baths, lavatories, showers, washbasins, lockers, and a First Aid Outfit.

4. Sick Bay.

This should be provided if adequate accommodation is available, and would contain the First Aid Outfit.

5. Carpentry Room.

The room would be used for woodwork, metalwork, etc.

6. Arts & Crafts Room.

Painting, modelling, soap carving, construction, paperwork, weaving, leatherwork, etc. would be undertaken in this room.

7. Club Room.

Individual play, knitting, sewing, etc. would take place here.

8. Library.

This would be a quiet room where reading, homework and puzzles are done and quiet games played.

9. Entrance Hall.

The hall would serve as a waiting room, and feature on a whiteboard all forthcoming events, etc.

1). Thomsen; "The Place of the Play Centre in a Social Welfare Programme", p. 12-13.

10. Office.11. Staff Rest Room.

This room should have toilet facilities attached.

12. Hall.

The Hall should be equipped with piano, radiogram, and projector, and removeable stage, or a fixture with storage space underneath.

Activities would include gym, boxing, eurhythmics, dancing, community and choir singing, musical appreciation, dramatics, concerts, film shows, talks etc.

13. Storage Room.

Gym equipment, arts and crafts and play materials would be stored in this room.

14. Sun Porch.

The porch could be used for individual play, group discussions, etc.

15. Grounds.

The following equipment, etc. should if possible, be available in the grounds:- Sandpit, jungle jim, swings, see-saws, slides, tree-houses, paddling pool, rabbit hutches, flower and vegetable gardens, athletics, soccer, rugby, cricket, baseball, and other outdoor games would be played and other group work held outside when the weather is fine.

All rooms should be well provided with cupboards.

The Play Centres dispose over fairly adequate and efficient equipment considering they were established during the war years, when most things were difficult to obtain. The equipment includes all kinds of sports requirements, such as balls and bats; physical training equipment, such as vaulting horses, bars, mats, etc. art and craft materials and tools, etc. a great assortment of toys suitable for various ages and tastes, and libraries.

As soon as it was decided to open a Play Centre in a particular area, it was usually the

practice to write letters to the principals of the schools in the area and request them to submit the names of the children (6-12 years) of working parents who most needed the service. Each principal was then visited and told of the objects of the scheme and his co-operation obtained. Letters were then written to the parents of the children and distributed by the principal. A large percentage of these children would then turn up at the centre, soon to be followed by their friends, until the quota of about sixty attending members had been attained. The remainder were then put on a waiting list, which at most centres is quite a long one. Priority for admission is given to those who most urgently require the facilities offered, namely "problem", truant, delinquent and unsupervised children.

All the Centres admit both boys and girls and most of them are open from 2 pm. to 5:30 pm. The average number of attending members at each Centre is about 60. The following table gives the attendances at the Play Centres for the Fourth Term, 1946:

T A B L E VIII.

<u>Centre.</u>	<u>On Roll.</u>	<u>Average attendance.</u>
Jeppe	93	63
Twist Street	73	51.6
Kenilworth	75	54
Mayfair	96	65
Jan Hofmeyr	107	50.5
Braamfontein	no figures available	50 (estimated)
Sydenham.	" "	50 (estimated)
<u>Average</u>	<u>88.8</u>	<u>54.9</u>

The number of attending members, i.e. the average number of members who attend per afternoon, has recently been increased to 90, in order to economise with premises and equipment. It was found that with only one additional assistant supervisor this number could be handled satisfactorily.¹⁾

The membership subscription varies at the different centres but is usually 1/- per month per child, and 6d for every additional child from the same family. This money is used for taking children on excursions, etc.

Although the Play Centres were originally established to combat juvenile delinquency and for keeping children off the streets, they have proved to be extremely useful places to which to send the children of working parents, also for providing recreational facilities for those who lack them, or who come from unsatisfactory homes, or who have one or other form of maladjustment.

The following tables give some idea of the reasons for attending at some of the Play Centres:-

1). Supplementary Report Director Social Welfare Department to the Public Health and Social Welfare Committee, 7/2/1947; p 5.

TABLE IX.

Fourth Term, 1946. Reasons for Attending.

CENTRE	On Roll	Normal Children	Handicapped Children.				% Normal vs Handicapped Children.
			Unsatisfactory Home Environment, (e.g. Immoral, Drunken, Serious Illness, Extreme Poverty Over-crowding, Divorce & Separation)	Both Parents Working	Behaviour Problem Children	MENTALLY RETARDED	
Twist St.	73	15	37	41	22	5	20%
Kenilworth	75	33	22	22	7	5	44%
Jan Hofmeyr	107	86	10	10	1	-	80%
Jeppe	93	15	36	38	7	-	16%
Mayfair	93	10	39	9	6	5	10%
Totals	444	159	144	120	43	15	
Percentage of Enrolment	100%	36%	32%	27%	10%	4%	64%

N.B. A child may be included under more than one heading if they apply to his case. Thus, a child may have an unsatisfactory home environment, be mentally retarded and also be a behaviour problem child.

T A B L E XA Previous Group, Mayfair Play Centre, On Roll : 102.

Reason	Number	Percentage of children on roll.
1. Unsatisfactory Home Conditions	93	91
2. Problem Children	28	27
3. Both Parents Working	11	11
4. Join merely for recreation afforded	6	6
5. mentally retarded	2	2
6. Recommended by Probation Officer	2	2
7. Sent by school	2	2

N.B. See remarks p. 67 re children being included under more than one heading.

The most significant facts which emerge from an examination of the above tables, especially the first one, are:- that a large percentage (64%) suffer from one or other handicap, either personal or environmental; that the greatest handicap is an unsatisfactory home environment (32%); (these are the chief potential delinquents); and that 27% have both parents working. This group is particularly susceptible to anti-social influences as they lack much of the steadying influence of the home.

The large membership at the various Play Centres necessitates a fairly large staff. The present staff consists of 27 members, under a Senior Supervisor and an Assistant Senior Supervisor.

The majority of the staff is well qualified, most of

them being in possession of the B.A. (Social Studies) degree.

The following table gives the classification of the staff.

T A B L E X I.

S T A F F T A B L E.

Number of Staff	Position
1	Senior Supervisor
1	Assistant Senior Supervisor
10	Supervisors
4	Arts and Craft Instructresses
6	Physical Instructresses
2	Dancing Teachers
1	Speech Therapist
1	Dietician
1	Music Instructress

27.

There are usually four persons engaged at a Play Centre: a Supervisor and an Assistant Supervisor (both qualified social workers), assisted by one or two assistants, usually an Art and Craft Instructress trained in leatherwork, boxing, dramatic art, drawing, etc. From time to time temporary assistance is given by students from the universities who come to the centre for practice work during vacations.

6. ACTIVITIES OF PLAY CENTRES IN JOHANNESBURG.

(a) Daily Routine.

The daily routine at the Play Centre commences with the opening daily at 2 or 2:30 p.m. as soon as the children come out of school.

As soon as they have been admitted, they wash their hands, comb their hair, and generally tidy themselves, so as to develop habits of personal hygiene.

Then a light nourishing meal is provided, although feeding is not really a function of the Play Centre. This is done because of the absence of the right and sufficient feeding at home, to supplement what was given at home and at school, and also to supply the necessary energy for the physical activities during the afternoon. The older children have to help in the kitchen or with the serving of the food. Through feeding children at the Centre an opportunity is afforded to teach them table manners, to eat and enjoy various kinds of foods, particularly vegetables and also that food must be prepared and served tastefully. (It is for instance, not uncommon for children to ask what kind of a thing it is when given beetroot for the first time.)

One boy, on being questioned by the writer, said that before coming to the Play Centre that afternoon he had first been home and had eaten an egg, coffee and porridge. At the Centre he enjoyed a hearty meal, consisting of a potato in the jacket, a hardboiled egg, half a tomato, a slice of sweet melon, an orange, and milk. What a contrast!

Here are two typical menus, one for summer and one for winter.

S U M M E R M E N U .MENU FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING : 25.3.46.Monday.

Mealies.
 Avocado Pear.
 Sandwiches.
 Milk.

Tuesday.

Stewed Pears.
 Cornflour Shape.
 Bread, butter,
 and jam.
 Milk.

Wednesday.

Mixed Salads.
 (Grated pine-
 apple, carrot,
 Beet, tomato,
 lettuce).
 Mashed potato
 with chopped
 hard-boiled egg.
 Milk. Bread &
 butter.

Thursday.

Scrambled egg
 with tomatoes.
 Jacket Potatoes.
 Lettuce.
 Milk.
 Bread and butter.

Friday.

Stewed Apples
 Spaghetti.
 Milk Pudding.
 Bread and butter
 and jam.
 Milk.

Remarks.

Menus dependent on supplies available.
 Additional fruit where possible.

WINTER MENU.PLAY CENTRE MENUS FOR WEEK BEGINNING 10.6.46.Monday.

Stuffed Eggs.
 Beetroot Salad.
 Bread and Cocoa.

Tuesday.

Vegetable Soup.
 Stewed Pine-apples
 Bread and Milk.

Wednesday.

Thick Soup.
 Grated Carrot
 Sandwiches.
 Oranges.
 Milk.

Thursday.

Fruit Salad.
 Thick Custard.
 Tomato and bread
 Cocoa, Peanuts.

Friday.

Bean Soup.
 Jacket Potatoes.
 Raisins, Bread
 and Milk.

After the meal the various groups take part in the activities arranged for that particular afternoon.

Children are divided into groups according to sex and size. Boys are usually kept separate for the rougher activities, while for some they may be combined as for art. There may be groups of big boys, and of small boys, and so also for girls. Sometimes one, two or more groups are grouped together if it is found necessary to do so, e.g. both groups of girls may be taken together for art and craft.

The project system is followed as much as possible. For instance, boys work on calendars or make a Native Kraal out of clay for art and craft. This has been found to be desirable and advantageous, as continuity of interest is thus maintained. The children are on the whole enthusiastic and show a great deal of natural talent for the various activities undertaken.

In order to further stimulate interest prizes are given for outstanding achievement, e.g. for monthly sportsmanship. The maximum value of such a prize is about 7/-. The child is allowed to buy what he likes with this prize money. A large packet of sweets is also given to the table which has the highest points for tidiness and general behaviour.

Punishment, in the ordinary sense of the term, is never resorted to. Satisfactory behaviour is approved of while unsatisfactory behaviour is disapproved of. If a child cannot take part in any activity without respecting the rights of the other children, he is not allowed to take part next time. Stronger measures rarely appear necessary and even then patience and ingenuity usually triumph.

The Following is a typical example of the weekly programme at a Play Centre.¹⁾

1). See Tables XIII & XIV on p.p. 95 & 96

(b). Various Activities.

In the weekly programme provision is made for physical, intellectual, cultural and social activities. Recreation involves the development of adjustment in all of these, namely the training of both body and mind, adjustment to society and combination with fellow beings, and appreciation of the better things of life. Recreation gives physical, mental and social health, and provides self-realisation, social adjustment and education towards citizenship and its duties, cultural development and creative usage of life and happiness.

The physical activities provided include gymnastics, boxing, swimming, gardening, outdoor games, and sports gatherings arranged between the various Centres. All these contribute towards the development of sportsmanship, self-control, and an active and healthy system. The experiment at the Mayfair Centre to have a physical educationalist on the staff, has proved such a success that it was decided to have one on the staff of all Play Centres in future.

Physical activity is, however, of little value in itself. It has to be combined with mental, cultural and social education in order to provide a proper balance for the adjustment of the children. In order to reap the full benefits of organised recreation all aspects of promoting the general welfare of the community must be recognised and catered for.

The intellectual activities include art, needlework, leatherwork, dramatic art, indoor games, reading, discussion, and silent activities.

It must be the endeavour of the Play Centre to give those coming within its purview ideals for which to strive. It must encourage spiritual and moral well-being, but it must also endeavour to greater love of arts among the less priveleged. It must see that they are taught or given the opportunity to appreciate some of the more beautiful things of life, such as painting, singing, dramatics, useful and beautiful needlework, etc. In order to promote this, attractive pictures are hung on the walls, and short talks given on such matters as poetry or how to appreciate pictures. The children are taken on trips, not only to places of interest, but also where beauty reigns, for instance to the art gallery, concerts, or out into nature.

The art and dramatics groups help a lot towards the cultural development of the children. The art group serves, besides as satisfaction of the creative urge, also as a valuable antidote to emotional excitement.

Leisure-time provisions at Play Centres are, however, not to be regarded as ends in themselves.

They are planned and selected in accordance with the individual needs of the children and integrated with constructive planning for all aspects of the children's social growth. Many of the children attending the Play Centres are socially maladjusted.

There are those who cannot move in a group. For them there is a quiet room, where they find a protecting atmosphere in an environment where they

can be occupied alone or with a few selected comrades to their hearts' content until such time as they have gained sufficient confidence, and are able to move outside this restricted group and participate in open group activities.

Then there are those at the opposite end of the scale, namely the over aggressive ones, the bullies, who love to take part in group activities but only as long as they can have things their own way. Their unsatisfied craving to be taken notice of is redirected in such a way at the Play Centre that they become valuable and energetic leaders instead.

Opportunities for satisfying social intercourse for boys and girls are provided by the Play Centres. This is further aided by the various mixed group activities in which they participate. It is the aim of the Play Centre to lead the child from individual to group and social activities. But the aim is not merely to socialise him. Notwithstanding all his social participation he remains an individual with an own personality. Thus the daily routine of the Play Centre also attempts to provide opportunities for the treatment plan formulated for each child in the programme. This is mainly achieved through the following measures:-

Cases of aggression and shyness are treated by the staff, mainly through encouragement and praise for improvement, etc.

Opportunities for legitimate outlets and responsibility are provided so that not only the

aggressive can find an outlet for his aggressiveness through legitimate channels, such as boxing, sports, woodwork, modelling, etc., but also so that the timid child can be given responsibility and so gain self-confidence.

Toys and games are prepared which will cater for individual needs to promote ^{the} physical and mental development of each child. In order to cater for all needs different types of play activities are found, including imaginative play, random and directed construction and spontaneous group activities.

In the first named props of different sorts (toys, fancy clothes, etc.) are used. The aim is very often individual aggrandisement. This type of play may be mental or physical activity of a crude and immature nature. Initially this is the most popular type of play activity.

In random construction the materials provided may be for some activity such as painting, woodwork, or handwork. The aim here is not social but rather mental activity, as the child works on his own although he is a member of a group.

In directed construction mental and social activity is combined and may be found in children working together to make a garden, or equip a doll's house. Here co-operation and tolerance are learned and the idea of a community spirit is fostered.

In the development from individual to social activities spontaneous group activity is the highest

and final stage. So far, however, this stage has not really been attained in the Play Centres. The group is not yet able to indicate and carry through successfully its own suggested activities.

The Programme of the Play Centres provides for activities under all of the first three stages of play: individual games and puzzles, handwork, which includes needlework, carpentry, painting, drawing, and modelling and physical activities, such as games, folk dancing, exercises, etc.

(c). Records.

The scientific bias of work in the Play Centres to-day is illustrated by the extensive records kept of all proceedings, and of the reactions of the children. Among the many practical advantages we may count the following as the most important: It allows someone else to take over easily; it makes review easy (any matter of policy could be altered if necessary); mistakes are more easily noticed and avoided; it acts as guidance to others and for the monthly case discussions; it leads to an intensive knowledge of each child's problems, progress and prestige; and it also leads to co-ordination of all activities at the Centre.

The measure of the treatment required is largely determined by the results of the information thus gathered and tabulated and preserved in the records.

The following are the most important cards and records kept:

(1). Admission Card.

On admission an index card is filled in for each member. This card contains such general information as: name, home address, Central Register number, school attended, standard, date of birth, name of father, and name of mother.

(2). Play Centre Record.

As the chief aim of the Play Centre is to prepare the child physically and mentally for normal adjustment in society, it is necessary, in the first place, to determine if the child suffers from any deviations, which make his adjustment to society more difficult, and if there is any need in him which requires special attention. To do this in the ordinary way would take a long time. Thus, in order to abbreviate the process and concentrate on the treatment, the time of observation of the child is reduced to a month or two. During this time as much information as possible concerning his health, personality, background, and social progress, is gathered from the parents and the school teacher. At the end of this period the child's home is visited and information gathered from the parents about the child's character and personality. All the factors on the record card are discussed with the parents and a careful record kept of all the information thus obtained.

The word "development" implies that records of change be accurately kept. The card in use at the Play Centres is based largely on the Detroit Scale for

Deviate Children¹⁾). With the help of Professor Mc.Crone, Professor of Psychology at the Witwatersrand University, a 21-point scale was drawn up. This particular scale was used because:

1. It was appropriate to the needs of Play Centres;
2. It gave details as to application and scoring, which were unobtainable for other similar tests; and
3. Alternative tests and scales were not so well arranged for the purpose of the Play Centres.

Twenty-one of the most relevant items were selected from the total sixty-six, including personality factors, which were found most diagnostic in distinguishing between behaviour problem and non-behaviour problem children. Each factor is covered by a set of questions which must be introduced informally into conversation, (the whole interview lasts about two hours) and scored according to a standardised five-point scale. Thus the factor dealing with the social type would be covered in the following way:²⁾.

Questions to:-

Children:

Do you get along with other well or poorly?
Do you quarrel or fight? Do you run away from others? With whom do you get along best among your playmates? The poorest?

Parents:

What type of people does he prefer and choose as friends? Does he seem happy or unhappy with his playmates?

1). Baker and Traphagen; Diagnosis and Treatment of Behaviour Problem Children. p. 23 F.

2). See Table XV on p.97 , for the number of interviews at the various Play Centres for a term.

Also: Does he make friends easily or with difficulty? Do other children pick on him? Is he easily teased? Does he tease others? Relate actual incidents. Does he seem to be shy and reserved or is he a boisterous type? Is he a good sport when a joke is on him? Can he lose in a game with a good grace or does he get angry? Can other children get him into trouble easily? Does he get into trouble easily? How well does he get along with his brothers and sisters? Is he very confidential with just one pal or playmate? Does he ever pretend that he is the hero in a rescue or that he is a cowboy or a crook?¹⁾.

On those factors where the child scores 1 or 2 a treatment plan is based. Thus carpentry or boxing is provided as an outlet for aggression in certain children, while the library was provided to allow timid children to gain confidence in a non-competitive atmosphere.

As the result of the records thus available a proper account of progress is possible, and a guide to development exists, which would not rest entirely on chance. These records further have the advantage of being objective, and it is the opinion of most of the staff that the time and work entailed in their compiling is well spent.

The cards cover the period of one year, but by using different coloured inks, they could serve for a number of years, giving a continuous picture of the child's

1). Adapted Detroit Scale:

Record Sheet (Back)

Economic Conditions Children
 (a) At Home
 Income Name Age Remarks .
 Father
 Mother
 Children
 Other Income
 Expenditure
 Rent
 Hire Purchase
 Insurance Premiums
 Other
 Home Conditions (b) Away from Home Age Remarks .
 Name
 Dwelling Rooms
 House
 Semi-D
 Flat
 Rooms
 Parents Father Mother
 Name
 Age
 Occupation
 Education
 Recreation
 Language
 Nationality
 Religion
 Health
 Attitude to Children
 Attitude to Other
 Parents
 General Impression

(3). Medical Examination Record
(front side.)

A recent development is the keeping of a medical examination record, on which appears the following information:

Name Case No.
 Address Birthdate
 School Std.
 Parents: Father Age of Parents: Father
 Mother Mother
 Employment: Father
 Mother

Remarks

 and on the reverse side:

Medical Report.

Date. Weight. Height. Progress Notes.

The main purpose of the medical examination is to ascertain if the children are physically fit for physical training.

(4). Group Records:

Apart from the individual records mentioned it was found extremely useful to keep group records also as they ensure careful planning of group activities and make deliberate attempts to recognise individual behaviour trends possible. These have been standardised under the following headings:

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Date. | 5. Materials or equipment. |
| 2. Time. | 6. Development. |
| 3. Place. | 7. Notes on individuals. |
| 4. Project. | 8. Remarks and future plans. |

Quarterly summaries of each group's progress are submitted to the supervisor who includes them in her quarterly report on the Centre to the Director of Social Welfare.¹⁾ As a direct result of keeping these records all groups, dramatic, art and craft, physical education, and quiet room, have improved in organisation and method.

Treatment Plan.

At the end of a month or two a great deal of information concerning the child's health, personality, background, and school progress was thus obtained from the child's parents, and his teacher. Thus, together with the information gained directly from him through having interviewed him and having applied certain tests to him, including an intelligence test, the Play Centre has a fairly complete picture of him as a total personality.

1). See Tables XIII, XIV on pages 95 & 96

The Play Centre is then in a better position to formulate an efficient treatment plan to remedy existing deviations and prevent possible future maladjustments.

Home Visits play an important part in the treatment plan.¹⁾ These home visits are of great value apart from the information that is gathered at the time. By home visiting and the resulting close contact with the family, the parents' responsibilities are often increased towards their children, and parents whose whole lives have been dull and full of fear, begin to realise what supervised recreation is giving their children, and they in turn make small but important efforts at adjustment.

Another important part of the treatment plan are special case studies.

For most children the ordinary opportunities of the Play Centre are sufficient as a preventive or promotive measure. There are, however, those for whom some or other form of special treatment is necessary.

Here follow a few typical case studies:

Case A. When Jannie (aged 8 years) was admitted to the Play Centre, he showed serious signs of anti-social, destructive and aggressive tendencies. He, for instance, hurt the others and destroyed their things. After a careful investigation of Jannie's background and personality, it was found that he had not received the necessary love and attention which he craved for at home, mainly because of the fact that both parents had to work, and his mother usually came home too tired at night to

1). See Table XV on page 97

take any notice of him, not even to mention showing any affection for him. The family lived in a single room, with the consequence that the children had nowhere to play at home. Jannie was not a very intelligent boy, consequently not much notice was taken of him at school either. The only way in which he could gain the recognition for which he craved was, in his opinion, in anti-social behaviour.

After a discussion with the rest of the Play Centre staff it was decided to acquaint his parents and his teacher with the above findings. It was suggested that Jannie should receive more love at home, while at school he was to be given the opportunity to achieve something in small things, e.g. in small services to his teachers like carrying teachers' books, etc. At the Play Centre he was also treated sympathetically as soon as he showed any social behaviour, ^{and} totally ignored as soon as he showed any of his earlier anti-social inclinations. Opportunity was also given for him to employ his aggressiveness in useful and socially acceptable channels, such as through boxing, woodwork, modelling, etc.

He soon noticed that he received more attention when his behaviour was social than when it was the opposite. To-day Jannie is a normally adjusted child, who shows no more problems at home, at school or at the Play Centre.

Case B. This is the case of a girl aged 8 years. Let us call her Mary, although that is not her real name.

Mary was referred to the Play Centre by the school in the vicinity for special treatment because she was very nervous and highly strung.

Economic Status: The father earns £500 per year. They live in a two-roomed flat. There are two children. The other one, also a girl, is aged six years.

Home Environment: The mother does not like Mary. She prefers the younger girl who, in comparison with Mary, is very attractive. Mary is a plain girl who is nervous and stutters and is backward at school. She is sickly and thin. Her mother has no patience with her and scolds her with little provocation. The younger one, on the other hand, is praised and patted and generally made a fuss of. The father is usually too tired at night to bother about the children.

Health: Mary has been to several doctors for treatment. Although she has an enormous appetite she is very thin. She is frequently bilious and screams in her sleep. The doctor ascribes her condition to bad nerves. She receives treatment from the Play Centre speech therapist for her stuttering.

Scholastic Achievement and Intelligence Quotient. She is backward at school, being particularly poor in reading. She is still in Gr. I as she failed the previous year. Her intelligence appears to be fairly normal, as she grasps things quite quickly, especially when encouraged and praised.

Personality Defects. When she joined the Play Centre she was extremely shy and cried to go home again. Her attendance was very irregular for several months. Then she asked if her younger sister might also attend the Play Centre. The younger one seemed to give her some feeling of protection. She relied on her and refused to

mix with any other children or to join the group activities. Mary complained to her mother that the other children bullied her, besides making several other excuses in order to remain away from the Play Centre.

Treatment: Mary preferred to stay with the supervisor as she was too shy to mix with the other children. After she had been allowed to bring her sister she gradually started to attend groups, although she was not forced to take an active part. She was praised and encouraged as soon as she made an effort to take part in any activity. In this way she gradually gained more selfconfidence. If she produced an article in art she was allowed to take it home to show to her mother. When the supervisor visited the home she always praised Mary to her mother and told her how much she was improving. She also advised the mother not to criticise Mary so much and to refrain as much as possible from praising the younger one in Mary's presence.

Improvement in Personality: As a result of the above treatment Mary has improved a great deal. With praise and encouragement and the improvement in her mother's attitude towards her, Mary's self-confidence has grown enormously. She comes to the Play Centre eagerly and is very regular in her attendance. She now joins in all groups and mixes quite easily. In dramatics Mary now goes on to the stage and shows talent and imagination in her performance. She is the leader of the Chinese dance. Her speech has also improved. She seldom stutters now. Mary is not nearly so shy, is more talkative and

has several friends. The younger one now relies on Mary, who prefers to play with children of her own age. She no longer minds if the younger sister stays at home. In art and craft she is improving, although she still lacks the self-confidence to draw new subjects in painting. Mary still needs praise in order to increase her self-confidence in certain groups, but she is adjusting well to other children.

Case C. This case concerns a girl whom we shall call Olive. Her age is 10 years and 8 months. She was also referred to the Play Centre by the school she attends.

Central Register History: She is known to the Rand Aid, Mental Hygiene, and Legal Aid Societies, as well as to the Child Guidance Clinic and the Probation Office.

Economic Status and Home Environment: Olive's mother was seduced at the age of fourteen and Olive was born. There is also a boy, aged five, also illegitimate. The mother then married and had two children, a girl or three and a baby of a few months old, by this man. With them also live the woman's mother and the man's young sister. They all live together in a double-storey, semi-detached house, of four bedrooms, diningroom, kitchen, bathroom, and pantry. The house is dirty and untidy. The man is a boiler maker and earns £9.15.0. per week. The mother works in a clothing factory and earns £5 per week. They pay £8.10.0. as rent, 17/6 per week for insurance, and £4 for a servant girl.

The man dislikes Olive and her brother and treats them unfairly. On one occasion he lost at dog-racing the

money which had been saved to pay for Olive's first term at a boarding school. The mother has a "boy friend", who drives a sports car and visits her in the husband's presence. The home environment has a bad influence on Olive. The parents quarrel a great deal and use foul language in front of the children. During the day the three younger children are left in charge of the Native girl, while the four adults are away at work.

The Child Guidance Clinic tried to remove Olive from her bad home environment. The supervisor of the Play Centre had arranged for her to go to the boarding school mentioned above, where only £28 was charged per year, but after the man had lost the money in the way mentioned, the parents were non-co-operative.

Scholastic Achievement and I.Q. Her school report stated that she made no progress at school, although her I.Q. is 104.

Health: Good. She had been knocked over by a car and thrown in front of a tram. She has also had St. Vitus Dance but has fully recovered.

Personality Defects: When she joined the Centre she was very cheeky and forward. She always had to have the biggest part in dramatics, or be first in dancing. She was bumptious and craved attention and affection. She often tried to kiss members of the staff, or flung her arms around them. She fought a great deal with the other children and had no friends. She was very excitable, had no apparent interests, and lacked concentration. She would start making an article and then soon after wander off to another group. On occasions she was

stubborn and sulky.

When she was interviewed by the supervisor three months after admission she asked a few questions on sex and then told the supervisor some dirty jokes. She is very good at acrobatic dancing and often performed for men in the parks, or for the men painting and renovating the school. Her language was very foul and she often told lies. Some time later she told the supervisor that a man had followed her and two other girls around and had offered them money for immoral purposes.

Treatment: Obviously the best way to correct her abnormal interest in sex was to sublimate it by developing other healthy interests at the Centre. Although her powers of concentration were limited she was made to stay in a group and then encouraged to a great extent. At first it was necessary to praise her more than her ability merited, but gradually she became enthusiastic and started to concentrate. In many groups she became so enthusiastic that she continually pushed to the front and demanded extra attention, in which case she was made to miss a turn or to wait until the other children had been attended to.

If she sulked or was stubborn she was completely ignored so that she might realise that there was nothing to be gained from such behaviour and that she thereby merely spited herself. When she flung her arms around staff members or behaved in some similar way it was just another example of her craving for affection. At first she was reprimanded, but this did not help much.

It was then explained to her that if she wished to gain other people's affection she had to be pleasant and kind so as to win their affection, but that she could not do it by forcing herself on people. She is reminded of this every time she tries to force her affection on staff members.

At first she was punished for quarrelling and swearing, but without effect. Then she was reminded that if she wanted people to like her and admire her she must not quarrel and swear.

Improvement in Personality: During the last four months she has improved enormously. She now has a great number of interests and is concentrating well. She is very good at games and she has also improved so much in dancing that she is going to learn dancing privately. She is doing well at art and craft and has joined Brownies. She mixes well and is popular on the whole. She still quarrels occasionally. Her speech has improved. Her school reports state that her work and behaviour have improved tremendously. The Play Centre staff have no further trouble with her. She seldom swears. Her interest in men and sex has been sublimated through the many group activities in which she is interested. She is less excitable, but is still inclined to an unnecessary show of affection towards staff members. She is still untidy in her dress.¹⁾

(e). Play Centre Statistics.

The following statistics are given as a useful and condensed index of some of the activities of the Play

1). S.W. Dept.:— Play Centres, Case Record Files.

Centres, and as supplementing the material contained in the foregoing sections:

(1) Finance.

T A B L E XII.

Annual Expenditure for Play Centre Branch. 1).

Financial Year Ending 30th June.	Amount	Percentage of Total Expenditure of the S.W. Dept.
1942.	Not available as it was included in the general expenditure of the Social Welfare Department.	
1943.	£190	appr. .5 %
1944.	£599	" 1 %
1945.	£2046	" 3 %
1946.	£15625	" 16 %
1947. (revised) (estimates)	£23056	" 10 %

(2). Group Activities.

T A B L E XIII.

Monthly Average of Groups Held, July - Sept. 1946.

Activity.	Mayfair.	Twist Street.	Jeppe.
Art and Craft	26	11	22
Games and P.T.	41	14	35.
Free Play	4	4	6
Music	3	2	-.
Dancing	3	2	1.3
Excursions	3	3	-.
Dramatics.	3	2.3	3.3
Needlework and Knitting	12	7	4
Constructional	2	4	-.
General	4	9	3
Gardening	7	3	-.

1). See also Table I. p. 27. (a)

T A B L E XIV.Monthly Averages of Groups Held, Jeppe Play Centre,Oct. - Dec. 1946.

<u>Activity.</u>	<u>Aver.</u>	<u>Activity.</u>	<u>Aver.</u>	<u>Activity.</u>	<u>Aver.</u>
<u>On Roll 57.</u>					
Home Visits	37	Cricket	2.	Stencilling	.6
Tumble and Vault	12.2	Dancing	2.	Shell Work	.6
Painting	9.8	Woodwork	2.	Tenmquidit	.6
Games	9.5	Claywork	2.	Plasticine	.5
Dramatics	6.7	Meetings	1.8	High Jump	.4
Lino Cut	6.	Parallel Bars	1.7	Potato Printing	.4
Quiet Room	5.5	Soccer	1.6	Soft Ball	.3
Girls P.T.	5.2	Case		Sketching	.3
Files Reopened	5.	Discussions	1.4	Paper Plates	.3
Story Telling	4.8	Interviews	1.1	Fabric Painting	.3
Badmington	4.	Finger Printing	1.1	Gardening	.3
New Members	4.	Rounders	1.	Cork Work	.3
Files Closed	4.	Papermarks	1.	Folk Dancing	.2
Leather Work	3.	Weaving	1.	Design	.2
Knitting	2.9	Parchment	1.	Xmas Cards	.1
Excursions	2.8	Hessian Work	1.	Mothers' Teas	.08
Chalk Drawing	2.8	Beauty Culture	.9	Boxing	--
Skipping	2.6	Costume design	.9	Musical Appreciation	--
Raffia Work	2.6	Pipe Cleaners	.8	Paperwork	--
Swimming	2.5	Paper Dolls	.8	Library	--
Concerts	2.	Xmas Decorations	.7	Felt Work	--
Exhibition	2.	Cooking	.7	Match Box Furniture	--
		Composition	.6	Sewing	--
				Toy Making.	--

(3). General Statistics.T A B L E XV.Organisation and Routine Activities, 1/7/1945- 30/6/1946.

	Twist Street.	Mayfair.	Braamf.	Kenilworth.	Jeppe.
Average Attendance	47	66	73	50	57
Policy Meetings	-	34	-	-	21
Case Discussions	10	16	27	20	20
Home Visits	291	301	461	367	375
School Visits	1	44	-	16	48
Mothers' Teas	-	4	-	20	7
New Cases Admitted	61	92	89	142	39
Cases Closed	51	19	86	94	33
" Reopened	12	15	15	37	6
Interviews	62	67	53	83	29
Cases Referred to Other Agencies	15	5	9	19	-
Cases Checked With Central Register	57	4	-	29	-
Excursions	26	-	21	28	19
Council Meetings	9	-	-	15	-

7. Probable Future Development.

The initial experimental stage of Play Centres in Johannesburg is now over. They have proved such an undoubted success that the time has now arrived for the extension of the service, both in the number of the centres, and in the extent and scope of their activities.

Play Centres were originally started for children between the ages of six and twelve, initially to keep them

off the streets and to diminish juvenile delinquency. They have developed from this original preventive service to their present positive policy.

The first Play Centres were opened where the need was most urgent, viz. in the poorer areas of the City. There are at present seven Play Centres in Johannesburg, apart from the one run as part of the Fordsburg Community Health Centre by the Witwatersrand University. The existing centres by no means meet the need, as such areas as Vrededorp, Westdene, Newlands, Brixton, Ophirton, Booysens, and La Rochelle need them no less than those areas already served.

It is the policy of the Council to establish two new centres every year. Before the end of this year the new centres at Brixton and Doornfontein will be open. If the present pace of expansion is maintained then within the next five or so years each of the poorer areas will be served by a Play Centre.

In connection with the question of extending the service to include all sections of the community the position is summed up in the following quotation from the evidence submitted by the Johannesburg City Council to the Penal Reform Commission in 1946:

"Views of the S.A. National Conference of Social Welfare Work:

That Play Centres should be made available to all sections of the community, but that the poorer classes should receive preference in the establishment of such centres." 1).

1). Evidence to Penal Reform Commission. p. 13.
See also S.A.N. Conference on Post-War Planning, p.259 F.

It will probably still be some time before the high stage of development in the Play Centre movement is reached in Johannesburg as in England and America, where it is extended to all sections of the community.

There are, however, some more or less serious handicaps in the way of the expansion of the service.

Firstly there is the difficulty of obtaining suitable premises. This has been the greatest handicap in the way of the desired expansion of the Play Centre movement.

Then there have been staff difficulties. It has been rather difficult, especially in the beginning, to obtain suitably trained and qualified staff. Since the universities have started training students for their degrees in social studies the position has been somewhat eased, although not entirely solved. There is a great wastage of experienced women staff through marriage, and unfortunately mostly in those most suitable. The Council has recently, and very wisely, amended the regulation in this respect and now allows married women the option of remaining in the service. Another bad result of the too frequent staff changes is that it is not conducive to continuity of policy and practice.

There is also the vexed question of finance. This has perhaps been the greatest handicap of all. Up to the present the Municipal Social Welfare Department has had to bear the entire financial responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of the Play Centres in Johannesburg.

As the service expanded the Social Welfare Department has asked the Union Social Welfare Department for a subsidy in respect of this service and it was supported in this request by the S.A. National Conference on Post-War Planning when it recommended "That the Union Social Welfare Department should be asked to subsidise the establishment and maintenance of Play Centres"¹⁾. The need for the service has been proved by the Municipal Social Welfare Department entirely at its own cost to the extent of 10% of its total estimated expenditure for 1946-1947 on all its services.²⁾ The service has now outgrown its former purely local significance and has assumed national importance. It therefore seems as if the time has arrived for the Central Government, through its Social Welfare Department, to take its rightful share of the financial responsibility. The M.S.W. Department hopes that as the result of the inspection of the Play Centres by Dr. Brummer of the Union S.W. Department this subsidy will be granted in the near future.

Lastly, there is the question of the housing of Play Centres.

There are two main lines of thought in connection with the housing of Play Centres, namely, the one that they should be housed in school buildings, and the other that they should form the nucleus of community centres. In England and America they are mostly housed in school buildings. There the logical

1). Post-War Planning. p. 259.

2). See p. 95, table XII

place for the Play Centre is considered to be in the public schools. These buildings, erected at great cost, stand idle for many hours of the day, while most schools could be adapted to serve the purpose of the centre at very little extra cost.¹⁾

The first Play Centres in Johannesburg were established in special buildings which were mostly far from suitable for the purpose. The next few were started in schools, but not under the control of the schools. The result was not too happy and both sides felt relieved at the parting. Then one more was started in conjunction with a school, but this time more or less under the control of the school. After overcoming some initial difficulties with regard to co-operation between the school staff and the Play Centre staff the result has been more satisfactory.

The Social Welfare Department, however, prefers that the Play Centre should be housed in a separate building. Most of the school principals concerned share in this view as they find that the dual control of the same building is undesirable, and that the two different standards of discipline lead to confusion.

Thomsen thinks that ideally the Play Centre forms part of a complete community centre. Innes Pearce and Lucy Crocker hold the same view in their book on the Peckham Experiment.²⁾

It is the policy of the Social Welfare Department that Play Centres are gradually to be developed into

- 1). Franklin & Benedict; Play Centres for School Children. Introduction. See also Halsey; The Development of Recreation in metropolitan Chicago. p. 188.
- 2). Pearce, and Crocker; The Peckham Experiment. p. 292 f. See also the Conduct of Community Centres. pp. 4-30.

Community Centres, more or less after the style of the Community Health Centre run by the Witwatersrand University in Fordsburg. The Department means that wherever possible these services should be co-ordinated and consolidated into Community Centres, which serve all age groups and include recreation, education, health, nutrition, vocational help, and social amenities, which will help to build up healthy, happy and alert citizens, taking their share in community responsibility.¹⁾

Through the establishment of the Play Centres in Johannesburg the City Council, through its Social Welfare Department, has filled a serious gap in the welfare services for the community. This has indeed proved a boon to deviate children, who would otherwise have appeared in the juvenile courts and perhaps have been sent to institutions, where contact with hardened cases could have offered but little if any prospect of ultimate cure. Besides making a real effort in this direction, Play Centres also prove to be of valuable promotive and formative value as will be seen from the description of their present activities. The Play Centre has developed into a valuable supplement to the home and the school in the education of the child.

The Play Centre Branch recently drew a plan for a suggested Play Centre.²⁾ This is not an ideal plan, but a practical one, which takes into consideration the present abnormal conditions with regard to scarcity of materials, high cost of building, and limitations of space.

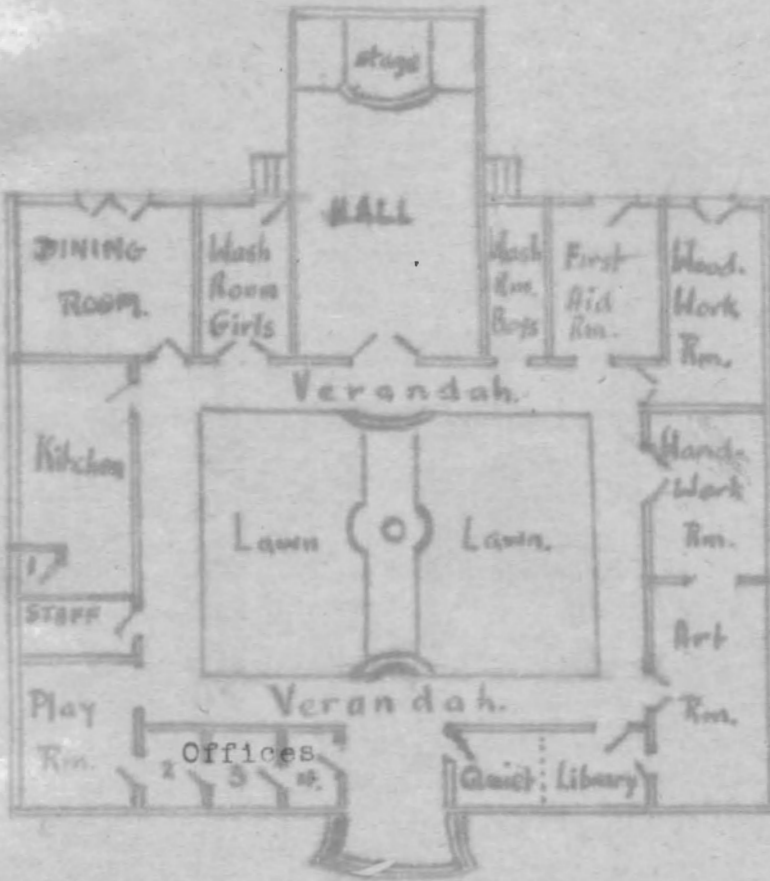
1). S.W. File; Suggestions for Resolutions from S.W. Dept. for National Council of Child Welfare Conference 27/7/46.

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JOHANNESBURG CITY COUNCIL.

SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

PLAN OF SUGGESTED PLAY CENTRE.



Scale: 1/32" to a ft.