

BOOK REVIEWS

Child Welfare in Israel, Eliezer David Jaffe, New York: Praeger Publications, 1982, pp. 319.

As the author puts it, "the purpose of this book is to present a concise, up-to-date description, analysis and critique of Israeli child welfare services." Israel has been faced with social problems similar to other Western, industrial, technologically oriented countries, as well as the problems of mass immigrant absorptions, defense and volatile ethnic relations. The child welfare services that "grew up" in response to these problems make up the content of present book. The author deals with dependent children and concentrates on family services. The services for delinquent and physically handicapped children are not included in the book. These groups of children are purposely excluded by the author, who observes that sufficient published material is available on the subject.

The book is divided into three parts: 1. Overview and Historical Context, 2. Services in Support of Children At Home, 3. Services for Children Away From Home. The beginning section consists of two chapters. The first chapter traces the religious, historical and social roots of child welfare in the State of Israel and also acquaints the readers with several of the outstanding personalities who played major roles in shaping Israeli child welfare concepts and services. The significant aspect of child welfare services in Israel is keeping the family as the main unit and by offering appropriate help to the family as a whole, it is possible consequently to help the child. In this chapter, the author traces the history of Social Work Education in Israel also and gives information about social work education programme in schools of social work in the State. The second chapter contains a discussion on ethnic groups and demographic background of Israel. The informa-

tion is supplemented by several statistical tables.

The second section with four chapters includes discussion on services of Day Care, Family Income Maintenance, School Social Work and Home Maker Services. It is interesting to know that the use of Day Care in Israel has steadily increased due to policy considerations. Significantly, the training of Day Care staff is given due consideration in the State. Income Maintenance is one of the most important supportive services to families and major social security programmes in Israel that support children and families during economic crises. These are described under the service of Family Income Maintenance. School social work is a growing branch of social work practice in Israel. The fifth chapter makes a review of the origin and goals of school social work and its development. The service of the homemaker is useful for families in crises, such as death, illness or absence of the father/mother. The case illustrations in the sixth chapter show the utility of the homemaker service as a comparatively cheaper form of alternative solution to family crisis. The important aspects like training of Home Makers and their supervision are also highlighted.

The services of Adoption, Foster Care and Institutional Placement are discussed in the third section. It is interesting to know that there are no private agencies providing adoption services in Israel and the adoption work is managed totally by the Government. The author critically discusses the provisions of Adoption Law 1960 and the newly proposed Adoption Law 1980. Many issues in adoption work are also dealt with. Significantly, Foster Care in Israel is also provided by Government officials and municipal welfare officers. The author has discussed issues like the scope of foster care, recruitment of foster parents, the child in foster care, ethnic issues in foster care, etc.,

and rightly stressed the need for more research on foster care. The chapter on Institutional placement deals with the scope and trends in institutional care, different types of agencies providing institutional care etc. Interestingly, the de-institutionalization trends at the Government level are also discussed. Group Homes and Kibbutz placement play a major role in providing care for a large number of dependent children in Israel. The author has suggested to have more evaluation and demonstration studies on institutional care.

The last chapter on "Summary and Perspectives" gives some important lessons for

social work students and child care professionals. In brief, the book is very informative, and presents the panorama of child welfare history and services in Israel. Some of the community-based welfare programmes like tutorial help for deprived children after school hours, children's Meals Programme in schools, summer camps, mother and child health clinics, etc., provide good models for developing countries like India.

The book is a welcome addition to the literature for the use of social work students, social work educators and field practitioners.

— *Asha Rane*