



A survey of trends and practices in child development centers among land grant and state universities  
by Mary Stewart Brown

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE in Home Economics  
Montana State University  
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Abstract:  
Historically, beliefs regarding children have fluctuated.

During the 1960's, increased emphasis was placed on the preschool child, his care in facilities outside the home and preparation for his years of formal education. The need for trained personnel grew with the opening of each new preschool facility. As the demand for preschool teachers increased, universities, charged with the training of those teachers, faced an ever growing challenge. By the end of the decade, the shortage of qualified preschool personnel in Montana was nearing the critical point.

This study evaluated the Montana State University Child Development Center in the light of trends and practices in institutions with comparable goals across the country. A survey questionnaire mailed to the ninety-one member institutions of the National Association of Land Grant and State Universities throughout the United States produced a 90.1% response. Eighty-two institutions in forty-nine states were represented.

The findings revealed that: 1. A need for training child development personnel exists throughout the United States.

2. The type of organization which meets these needs will require expansion if its goals are to be accomplished.

3. The costs of such organization will require funding sources to supplement fees charged to parents.

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A SURVEY OF TRENDS AND PRACTICES IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
CENTERS AMONG LAND GRANT AND STATE UNIVERSITIES

by

MARY STEWART BROWN

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

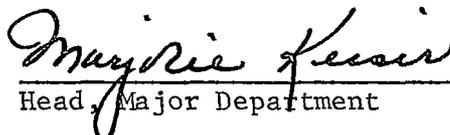
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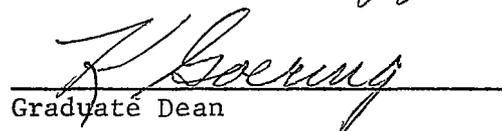
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ABSTRACT

Historically, beliefs regarding children have fluctuated. During the 1960's, increased emphasis was placed on the preschool child, his care in facilities outside the home and preparation for his years of formal education. The need for trained personnel grew with the opening of each new preschool facility. As the demand for preschool teachers increased, universities, charged with the training of those teachers, faced an ever growing challenge. By the end of the decade, the shortage of qualified preschool personnel in Montana was nearing the critical point.

This study evaluated the Montana State University Child Development Center in the light of trends and practices in institutions with comparable goals across the country. A survey questionnaire mailed to the ninety-one member institutions of the National Association of Land Grant and State Universities throughout the United States produced a 90.1% response. Eighty-two institutions in forty-nine states were represented.

The findings revealed that:

1. A need for training child development personnel exists throughout the United States.
2. The type of organization which meets these needs will require expansion if its goals are to be accomplished.
3. The costs of such organization will require funding sources to supplement fees charged to parents.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Teachers, administrators and researchers in the field of early childhood education have witnessed a concerted effort to develop programs designed to tackle the urgent problems faced by education. The trend has moved steadily downward from the adolescent to the preschool child. Three kinds of forces have aided the "rediscovery" of and the "new look" at infancy and early childhood: a political change which rediscovered the poor; the psychologist who rediscovered infancy and the young child; and the sociologist who rediscovered that language learning begins in the home.<sup>1</sup> Frost points out that this has paralleled recent development arising from massive federal support to the nation's schools.<sup>2</sup>

Many people from diverse areas of the country have become aware of and involved in preschool education. "Change," the central focus in our lives today, is one reason for the sudden interest in the preschool child.<sup>3</sup> Historically, beliefs regarding children have fluctuated. In

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<sup>1</sup>Ira Gordon, "The Young Child: A New Look" Early Childhood Education Rediscovered: Readings, ed. by Joe L. Frost (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Joe L. Frost, ed., Early Childhood Education Rediscovered: Readings (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), p. vii.

<sup>3</sup>Katherine H. Read, The Nursery School, A Human Relations Laboratory (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1966), p. v.

the United States alone during this century, that which was considered relevant to the preschool child's nature and education has varied greatly. Consider, for example, the "seen and not heard" training of early twentieth century as it was challenged by the followers of Mme. Montessori, and almost simultaneously by the 'progressive education' and the 'child centered approach' of Dewey and Kilpatrick. The Montessori approach then disappeared from the American scene for almost 40 years, only to be reintroduced in 1959 to experience a new level of popularity.<sup>4</sup>

Child care outside of the home, which started in the twentieth century, has continued to increase. Increasing numbers of women are involved in responsibilities outside of the home, many are working,<sup>5</sup> others are involved in community and volunteer services, still others have chosen to further their education.<sup>6</sup> It was "Project Head Start," however, that is credited with having given preschool education its sudden prominence.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Margaret Lay, "Nursery Education Today," Keeping Up With Elementary Education: E/K/N/E-NEA., Vol. 15, No. 1, Fall, 1969, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Mary B. Kievit, "Woman in Gainful and Useful Employment," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 60, No. 9 (November, 1969), p. 698.

<sup>6</sup>Wilma Baker Casper, "Consider the Higher Educational Limbs of Married Home Economists," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 60, No. 9 (November, 1968), p. 721.

<sup>7</sup>Sarah Hammond Leeper; Ruth J. Dales; Dora Sikes Skipper; Ralph L. Witherspoon, Good Schools for Young Children (New York: The MacMillan Company), p. 2.

### Importance of the Study

In 1966, it was observed that child care facilities were needed in almost every community in the nation.<sup>8</sup> By 1968, almost one-third of the nation's twelve million three to five year olds were enrolled in preprimary programs. Of these children, 816,000 were enrolled in pre-kindergarten or nursery school programs.<sup>9</sup> Many of the day care centers have been established by persons who lacked the experience and training to develop adequate facilities.<sup>10</sup> Because of this, many nursery school teachers have learned "on the job."<sup>11</sup> To fill the vacuum, many former grade school teachers and people from related fields were employed. Working with them were teaching assistants and aides who were without training.<sup>12</sup>

In 1970, additional trained personnel were in demand because business and banking firms, labor unions, utilities and industrial

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<sup>8</sup>Hortense M. Glenn and James Walters, "Feminine Stress in the Twentieth Century," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 58, No. 9 (November, 1966), p. 706.

<sup>9</sup>"Increased Number of Preschool Enrollees," Today's Child, Vol. 17, No. 7, September, 1969.

<sup>10</sup>Glenn and Walters, "Feminine Stress," p. 706.

<sup>11</sup>Marjorie M. Green and Elizabeth L. Woods, A Nursery School Handbook for Teachers and Parents, Sierre Madre Community Nursery School Association, Sierre Madre, California (1967), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>Virginia B. Hatch, "Creative Supervision of Head Start Centers," Young Children, Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXV, No. 2 (December, 1969), p. 97.

companies have become interested in establishing and operating day care programs for the children of their employees. Private day care centers, operating on a franchise basis and springing up in a number of states have added yet another need for trained personnel.<sup>13</sup> Ideally, if a quality preschool program is to be attained and maintained, the opening of each new preschool facility represents an additional challenge to the nation's training programs. Most of the training for preschool programs occurs in home economics curricula.

In a study of preschool facilities in Montana, Baringer found that of 211 full and part-time teachers in 61 preschools throughout the state, 55 had earned a bachelor degree and 7, masters degrees. Thirty-three of the 62 degrees were in Education, 8 in Home Economics, and 5 in Sociology. Based on national recommendations for certification, Montana has very few qualified teachers in the preschool program.<sup>14</sup>

Selected enrollment data shows that 6,318 bachelors degrees of Home Economics were awarded in 1967-68. Of these, 766 carried a major in the combined field of Child Development and Family Relations as did

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<sup>13</sup>Joseph Reid, "Day Care Services: Our Best Investment for the Future," Parents Magazine, Vol. XLV, No. 4, April, 1970, p. 26.

<sup>14</sup>Jean S. Baringer, A Survey of Nursery School Facilities in Montana, (Unpublished Thesis), Montana State University, 1970, p. 56

169 of the 963 master's degrees and 18 of the 118 doctor's degrees.<sup>15</sup> It does not seem, therefore, at the present pace enough preschool teachers can be trained to meet the nation's rapidly expanding needs.

#### Purpose of the Study

The first laboratory nursery school in the Montana State College Department of Home Economics was established in 1929. It lasted only one quarter due to lack of funds and equipment.<sup>16</sup> In 1932, the laboratory nursery school was re-established in Herrick Hall, the home economics building. Four years later, this facility was moved to the home management house where it was housed for twelve years.<sup>17</sup>

The present Child Development Center facility at Montana State University has been in continuous use as a child care facility since the mid 1940's. With the influx of veterans' families following the second world war, a portion of World War I barracks building was remodeled for the day care facility, known as the Veteran's Nursery School. It was financed by the College, by Community Chest funds, by donations and by minimal fees charged to parents. The facility was

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<sup>15</sup>"Selected Home Economics Enrollment Data from Member Institutions of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges," Dean's Office, School of Home Economics, Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas, 1968.

<sup>16</sup>History of the Department, edited by Gladys Roehm (unpublished paper) School of Home Economics, Montana State University, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

operated nine and one-half hours daily and had an enrollment limit of 50 children for any one session.<sup>18</sup>

In 1948, the Veteran's Nursery School, in search of a sponsor, became the sole responsibility of the Department of Home Economics. It was then that the laboratory nursery school was combined with the day care facility and was housed "temporarily" in the remodeled barracks facility on the campus.<sup>19</sup>

It is important at this time to explore the trends in Child Development Centers in institutions with comparable goals throughout the United States. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to survey those trends.

It is hypothesized that:

1. A need for training child development personnel exists throughout the United States.
2. The type of organization which meets these needs will require expansion if its goals are to be accomplished.
3. The cost of such organization will require funding sources to supplement parent tuition and fees.

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<sup>18</sup>Information from files of the Director of the Child Development Center, Montana State University.

<sup>19</sup>History of the Department, Montana State University.

Definition of Terms

Many types of children's centers are in operation. They vary in purpose and program. Generally, the schools for children of ages 2-5 years are concerned primarily with the total growth and educational development of the young child. For definition, see Appendix A.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As early as the sixteenth century, St. Ignatius claimed that if he could control the teaching of a child during the first six years of his life, nothing could undo those teachings.<sup>1</sup> The importance of the child's early formative years has been re-emphasized by the unprecedented focus of the past five years on the young child through intensive research, experimentation, and observation. The continued search for those means which could foster the young child's total development most effectively becomes a major concern of each institution.

#### University Child Development Centers

The first child care facilities in the United States were concerned primarily with the physical care of young children. Nursery schools, which served the twofold purpose of observation study as well as thoughtful care, were first introduced at Teachers' College, Columbia University and Merrill Palmer School of Motherhood and Home Training, Detroit. The emphasis on educational guidance of parents and children was in contrast to that of custodial care. Soon after the end of the First World War, grants from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial were used for the establishment and/or expansion of child study centers

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, Child Development, fourth edition, (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 717.

at various universities.<sup>2</sup> It was these college and university laboratory schools that pioneered in the field of preschool education and research. At the same time, facilities for the observation of well children were provided for nurses and pediatric interns.<sup>3</sup>

### Philosophy

The primary purpose of the Child Development Center is the training of students by providing laboratory facilities for observations, demonstrations, and participation. Within this broad context, the goals of preschool education must also be respected. In preschool, the focus is on recognition of differences, growth, and development.<sup>4</sup> "The means of reaching these goals have gone far beyond keeping children safe, busy, and happy,"<sup>5</sup> that without workbooks, or primers, without emphasis on specific grade school skills, three, four, and five year-olds could gain an understanding of the world around them and the culture in which

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<sup>2</sup>Sarah Hammond Leeper; Ruth J. Dales; Dora Sikes Skipper; Ralph L. Witherspoon, Good Schools for Young Children (New York: The MacMillan Company), p. 77.

<sup>3</sup>Marjorie Maynard and Anne Dondero, "Nurses Gain from Field Work with Young Children" Young Children: Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, XXIV, No. 5 (May, 1969), p. 298.

<sup>4</sup>Vivian E. Todd and Helen Hefferman, The Years Before School: Guiding Preschool Children (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1964), p. 52.

<sup>5</sup>Edith G. Neisser, "Preschools Are Not Just for Play," Parents Magazine, Vol. 39, No. 2, February, 1964, p. 130.

they live.

Preschool children should be stimulated, not pressured, to ask questions, to think for themselves, and to try new ideas, thereby giving them the opportunity to think, explore and learn. This philosophy has come to be known as the "traditional" approach to preschool education.

During the late 1960's, when the Head Start Program began, the door of the preschool facility was opened to the research psychologist.<sup>6</sup> The typical psychologist, of whom Bereiter and Englemann are among the most publicized, came to the preschool with the "learning theory" as his background. The basic assumptions of this theory differ from those of the "traditional" preschool educator.<sup>7</sup> Basically, the "traditional" approach emphasizes the provision for spontaneous questioning through play activities. The "experimental" or "academic" preschool promoted by the research psychologist emphasizes teacher-planned activities, and the use of praise, approval and rewards to encourage school related behavior in children.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>E. Robert LaCrosse, Jr., "Psychologist and Teacher Cooperation or Conflict?" Young Children: The Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXV, No. 4 (March, 1970), p. 224.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>8</sup>Lillian G. Katz, "Children and Teachers in Two Types of Head Start Classes," Young Children: Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXIV, No. 6 (September, 1969) p. 342.

In the academic approach, the young child may be regarded as a mind to be fed rather than an individual to be developed.<sup>9</sup> To date, there is no research available to show one method superior to the other.

There is evidence, however, that the traditional preschool does much more than the advocates of the academic preschool credit since the traditional preschool already embodies ideas which are beginning to appear at higher education levels. These include individual instruction, discovery learning, peer group stimulation and use of intrinsic motivation.<sup>10</sup>

It is an obligation of the University Child Development Center to maintain and promote the philosophy which best serves the preschool child.

#### Program

College Students.--Many curricula require an understanding of child development. These include home economics, sociology, nursing, education, and physical education (for men and women), psychology, physiology, anthropology, architecture, art, and speech.<sup>11</sup> In addition

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<sup>9</sup>"Preschool: Child's Domain or Theses Hatchery," Today's Child, Vol. 17, No. 8, October, 1969, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup>David Elkind, "The Case for the Academic Preschool: Fact or Fiction?" Young Children: A Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. 25, No. 3 (January, 1970), p. 132.

<sup>11</sup>Montana State University Bulletin, 1968-70, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, February, 1968.

to providing the basic preparation of many curricula in the university, a second goal is to train preschool teachers. Those who teach young children need to study childhood, recognize the uniqueness of each child, provide wholesome experiences, de-emphasize the skills, stress the content of cultural heritage, and help the child to build self-confidence.<sup>12</sup> There is an ever increasing demand for trained nursery school teachers caused by the increasing number of public and private nursery schools, day care centers,<sup>13</sup> preschool teacher certification,<sup>14</sup> the development of vocational preschool child care occupations in high school classes, and preparation for marriage.<sup>15</sup>

Research.--There is in the nursery school environment a persistent effort to view the child in process and in relation to the world outside the nursery school walls. The laboratory nursery school, therefore, provides a setting in which some of the prime concerns of the

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<sup>12</sup>H. Hefferman, "What is Good Education in Nursery Schools and Kindergarten," (Abstract), Childhood Education, Vol. 44, No. 1, September, 1964, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup>Susan Lytle Boswell, A Study of Day Care Provisions and Need in Nebraska. (Unpublished thesis), University of Nebraska, Lincoln, August, 1965.

<sup>14</sup>Norma Law, What are Nursery Schools For? Association for Childhood Education International, National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1629 21st St. N.W., Washington D.C., Bulletin G, 1964, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup>"Laboratory Nurseries in Schools Would Educate Future Parents," Today's Child, Vol. 17, No. 4, April, 1969, p. 2.

home economics profession can be investigated and answers to a wide variety of questions may be obtained. Nutrition, suitability and durability of clothing, the choices and uses of play materials and equipment as well as questions on the development of social behavior are examples of the kinds of research which make this facility a unique resource for the studies with children.<sup>16</sup>

Parents.--A third focus of the Child Development Center is toward meeting the needs of the parents through conferences, meetings, and parent education classes.<sup>17</sup> Authorities see parent education as one of the great untapped potentials in providing for the education of young children. They advocate techniques for helping parents see the home as a learning center from birth throughout childhood.<sup>18, 19</sup> Akers suggests further that active parent participation in the nursery school program aid both parents and teachers in their skills and understandings of the

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<sup>16</sup>Bruce D. Gardiner, "Child Development Research," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 51, No. 5 (May, 1959), p. 355.

<sup>17</sup>Katherine H. Read, The Nursery School, A Human Relations Laboratory (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1966), p. 50.

<sup>18</sup>Polly Greenberg, "Low Cost State Strategies with a New Look," Compact, Vol. 3, No. 6, Educational Commission of the States, December, 1969, p. 26.

<sup>19</sup>Ira J. Gordon, "Self Help Approach: Parents as Teachers," Compact, Vol. 3, No. 6, December, 1969, p. 32.

child rearing processes, in development of trust and in communication.<sup>20</sup>

Preparental Education.--Another of the real values of the laboratory nursery school is the education which is made available to the future parent. Despite the wealth of public information available, the fact remains that most people enter parenthood unprepared for the most important role of their lives. This is particularly true among those groups which have the greatest need for help, among them the young parents-to-be who are barely out of childhood themselves.<sup>21</sup> Murphy feels that every child care facility should consider making itself a "center for good foundations"<sup>22</sup> by helping parents and future parents in an understanding of family planning, parental care, good care at delivery, and with helping the mother with baby's earliest development. In addition to laboratory nursery schools at the college level, another specialist advocated laboratory nursery schools to provide pre-parental education for the vast majority of future parents who will never go

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<sup>20</sup>Milton A. Akers, "The Executive Director's Testimony Before the House Education and Labor Committee," Young Children: The Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXV, No. 4 (March, 1970), p. 244.

<sup>21</sup>Alicerose S. Barman, "Parent Education," Creative Guide for Preschool Teachers, ed by Joanne Wylie (Western Publishing Company, Inc.), p. 31.

<sup>22</sup>Lois Barclay Murphy, "Foundations for Good Beginnings," Young Children: Journal of the National Education for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXV, No. 1 (October, 1969), p. 8.

to college.<sup>23</sup>

Child.--As a human relations laboratory, the child development center is a place in which young children learn as they play with materials and share experiences with other children and with teachers in an environment enriched by a variety of opportunities which promote the growth and development of the "whole or total child."<sup>24</sup> It is especially valuable to the only child, to one whose family has wide-spread age differences, and to the child who lives in an apartment or mobile home.<sup>25</sup> Generally, laboratory nursery schools are designed for children ranging in age from three to five years. Sperry and Freedman noted in 1959 that "there are practically no programs with toddlers" in the child development laboratories.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike the usual nursery school, the university child development center involves a pre-selection method for enrolling children. The criteria for pre-selection is determined to a great extent by the philosophy, purpose, and goals of the center. Even though each of the

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<sup>23</sup>"Laboratory Nurseries in Schools Would Educate Future Parents," Today's Child, Vol. 17, No. 4 (April, 1969), p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>Read, The Nursery School, p. 3.

<sup>25</sup>Holly E. Brisbane, The Developing Child (Charles A. Bennett, Company, Inc., Peoria, Illinois, 1965), p. 322.

<sup>26</sup>Irvin V. Sperry and Rose Freedman, "Toddlers in the Child Development Laboratory Program," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 51, No. 8 (October, 1959), p. 698.

following categories may not be represented in every group at the center, the factors most often considered in the pre-selection process include:

1. A balance, in number of children according to age, sex, race, and national origin.
2. A variety of family backgrounds--children of parents who are: employed on campus, off campus, students, rural, urban, culturally deprived, and the parent without a partner.
3. The inclusion of handicapped children--physical, mental, emotional, speech, sight or hearing. The generally accepted ratio of handicapped children to nonhandicapped children is 2:11.
4. The child's position in the family--the youngest, the first born, the middle child, an only child, one of twins, adopted.
5. The child who is referred to the center by a professional in another discipline.<sup>27</sup>

The inclusion of children from a cross section of all children in the community provides the college student, parent, and preparent with a wide range of learning opportunities through observation, research and teaching participation.

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<sup>27</sup>Nursery School Management Class Notes, Home Economics 409, Montana State University, Winter, 1969.

Facilities

The physical plants which house child care facilities are controlled to some extent by state requirement for licensing.

Unusual or special features can add interest and versatility to the usual child care center. At one, an observation gallery was devised to open onto the two play rooms but raised three steps above the floor; thus, eliminating the need for one-way vision screen or glass.<sup>28</sup> At another, not only the playroom but parts of the outdoor play area are also visible from the observation room.<sup>29</sup>

Still another unique feature is the "doll house upstairs" at the National College of Education in Evansville, Illinois. It permits an illusion of privacy for the children as well as an area for storage.<sup>30</sup>

Staff Qualifications

Any preschool facility requires the services of many people; some must have professional skills, while others will need more general training. In addition, each staff member must possess an interest in

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<sup>28</sup>"University of Rhode Island Adds a New Child Development Center," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 51, No. 5 (May, 1959), p. 381.

<sup>29</sup>Lucy McCormack, "Child Development Observation in a Secondary School Program," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 51, No. 2 (February, 1969), p. 100.

<sup>30</sup>Albertine Noecker, "A Doll House Upstairs," Young Children: Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Vol. XXV, No. 2 (December, 1969), p. 102.

young children and an ability to work with them.<sup>31</sup> Since each member of the staff has a direct or indirect influence on each child, it is vitally important that all staff members work together for the well-being of each child.<sup>32</sup> Professionally, teachers should be graduates of a four-year college program with a major in Child Development, or comparable options. The personal qualities of the teacher, however, are fully as important as her training.<sup>33</sup>

#### Certification

In 1969, only 16 of the 50 states required a certificate to teach in a preschool education program. Vitally concerned associations, however, noted a trend among the states toward reviewing existing regulations and standards with consideration of more defensible bases for certification.<sup>34</sup> The Association for Childhood Education International, holds that the qualified teacher in nursery school, kindergarten and primary grades should be a graduate of an accredited four-year college

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<sup>31</sup>Office of Economic Opportunity, Project Head Start - The Staff #1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 2.

<sup>32</sup>National Association for the Education of Young Children, Some Ways of Distinguishing a Good School or Center for Young Children (2700 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016).

<sup>33</sup>Office of Economic Opportunity, The Staff #1, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup>Helen H. Hartle, "Early Childhood Programs in the States," Compact, Vol. 3, No. 6, December, 1969, p. 19.

with a major in early childhood education.<sup>35</sup>

### Funding

Because of the multifaceted approach, parent fees cannot be expected to support the majority of child development centers. The Johnstone Study recommended charges that fees for a child development laboratory should be related to the purposes of the program but could not cover all costs because few parents could pay them. Instead, the impact of the fee on parental attitude should be considered.<sup>36</sup> The fees charged parents, therefore, are usually considered supplementary and are not necessarily related to laboratory costs.

Federal Aid.--There is no direct aid from the federal government to university child development centers. Other programs have had a direct relationship with them or been incorporated in their organization. These include the 1933 children's centers which were part of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration designed to relieve unemployment by providing jobs for unemployed teachers and to supplement existing educational programs;<sup>37</sup> emergency schools to provide care for the children

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<sup>35</sup>Law, Nursery Schools, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup>Betty Jane Johnston, "Financial Arrangements for the Child Development Laboratories," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 58, No. 2 (February, 1966), p. 141.

<sup>37</sup>Leeper, et al., Good Schools, p. 78.

of working mothers in the war effort of 1942; and the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 which provided the Head Start Child Development Programs designed to prepare the children of the deprived for public school.<sup>38</sup>

Continued federal concern for early childhood education was shown by the establishment of an Office of Child Development in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1969,<sup>39</sup> and the 1970 White House Conference on Children.

Private Aid: Foundations.--Over the years, foundations have made grants to support preschool projects in various areas. One quarter of the funds of the Rockefeller Foundation is committed to its Equal Opportunity Program, and for years the Carnegie Corporation has been involved in a preschool education.<sup>40</sup> The Ford Foundation, a latecomer to pre-kindergarten programs, gives support to the Preschool and Primary Education Project connected with the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction.<sup>41</sup> The William H. Donner Foundation and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare were named in 1970 as the funding sources

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>39</sup>Wm. H. Marshall, "Washington News," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 61, No. 6, June 1969, p. 402.

<sup>40</sup>"How Local Projects Can Get Grants and Foundations," Good Housekeeping, Vol. 170, No. 1, January, 1970, p. 134.

<sup>41</sup>Allan S. Hartman, "How to Start a Preschool Program Without Waiting," Nation's Schools, Vol. 75, No. 4, April, 1965, p. 52.

for a major three-year, day care project for preschool and school age children in eight southeastern states.<sup>42</sup>

Montana State University

Philosophy

The primary purpose of the Montana State University Child Development Center is to serve as an academic classroom and laboratory facility for:

1. The training of preschool teachers.
2. A laboratory observation center for students enrolled in curricula requiring a knowledge of child growth and preschool education.
3. Pre-parental education.
4. Parent education.
5. Research.
6. Nursery school management and operation practicum.<sup>43</sup>

The nursery school which is a vital part of the academic laboratory-classroom is operated on the child centered "traditional" philosophy of preschool education as interpreted by Katherine Read and altered

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<sup>42</sup>"Day Care Project Announced," Keeping Up With Elementary Education: E/K/N/E-NEA., Vol. 15, No. 3, Spring, 1970.

<sup>43</sup>Information for Parents of Nursery School Children (leaflet), Montana State University Laboratory Nursery School.

to meet specific local needs.<sup>44</sup>

Program

College Students.--In keeping with the philosophy of the facility, the Montana State University Child Development Center provides a laboratory for the use of students enrolled in curricula which require an understanding of child development. During the past fifteen years, the enrollment in Child Development (Home Economics 105) has increased from 80 students during the 1955-56 school year to 672 students for 1969-70.<sup>45</sup> In addition to the lecture sections, the Child Development course requires one small group discussion session of 25 to 30 students, and one laboratory observation per student per week. The observation area in the Child Development Center observation area has limited space for 16 observers at any one time; classroom space is limited and staffing unavailable for so many students. Therefore, in 1969-70, it became necessary to limit the quarterly class enrollment to 110 students in each of two lecture sessions. This basic course draws students from nursing, elementary education, physical education, and home economics. Students from other disciplines such as art, secondary education, sociology, psychology, and commerce choose this course as a suggested

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<sup>44</sup>Nursery School Teaching Class Notes, Home Economics 422, Montana State University, Spring, 1969.

<sup>45</sup>Enrollment Trends in Child Development (leaflet), School of Home Economics, Montana State University.

elective.

A class in Nursery School Practicum designed to prepare future home economics instructors to operate play schools in connection with high school home economics classes was added to the university program in 1969. Students enrolled in the course use the Child Development Center as a laboratory to strengthen knowledge and teaching skills that can be adapted to a play school situation. Students enrolled in Nursery School Management (Home Economics 409) use the Child Development Center as a laboratory to study management procedures and administrative practices unique to conducting and operating a facility for preschool children.

Students enrolled in Nursery School Teaching (Home Economics 422) use the Child Development Center as a laboratory for supervised teaching experiences of toddlers, three year olds and four year olds.<sup>46</sup>

Observation.--Based on the theory that one of the most effective methods of learning about children and their development is to observe them at work and play,<sup>47</sup> the Montana State University School of Home Economics includes nursery school observations as an important teaching technique in a number of courses. Departments which do not require child development courses often recommend nursery school observations

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<sup>46</sup>Enrollment-School of Home Economics: Child Development and Family Life (leaflet), School of Home Economics, Montana State University.

<sup>47</sup>Read, Nursery School, p. 176-180.

to students for specific projects. Special observation arrangements also enable students to observe a group of three year olds during lunch time.

Research.--The application blank which must be completed by parents seeking a child's admission to the MSU's Child Development Center states that the nursery school is a laboratory for students enrolled in child development courses, and that children who attend are observed by students and are included in various research studies. The parent is then asked if he is willing to have his child observed and/or included in research studies.<sup>48</sup> The answers thus become a factor in child selection for a research study. The majority of parents consent to having their children included in research studies.

Space and facilities in the present Child Development Center limit the type of research which can be conducted to "moving research." These are short term research projects which can be carried out as the children move about in their normal play patterns. Occasionally, parental assistance is requested in research projects. One important goal of each project is to introduce the student to research techniques.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Nursery School Application Blank (leaflet), School of Home Economics, Montana State University.

<sup>49</sup>Information from Bethine Bigej, Director, Child Development Center, Montana State University.

Pre-Parental Education.--If not already a parent, the vast majority of students enrolled in any of the child development and family life oriented courses are potential parents. For these students, the Child Development Center provides many opportunities to develop a better understanding of the preschool child through resource materials, observations, and participation. Parent education classes further reinforce the learning opportunities for pre-parents and parents.

Parent Education.--Each parent of a preschool child enrolled in the Montana State University Child Development Center is encouraged to observe the nursery school sessions and to confer with nursery staff members on matters involving his or her child. Informative lectures and demonstrations are also presented to parent groups from time to time, thus providing an additional resource for learning experiences for students enrolled in Parent Education (Home Economics 442).<sup>50</sup> One special honor afforded the fathers of three-four year old class members is an invitation for one or possibly two fathers at a time to have lunch with his son or daughter.

Child.--Basically, the following criteria are used in selecting children to attend the Montana State University Child Development Center:

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<sup>50</sup>Parent Education Class Notes, Home Economics 442, Montana State University, Spring, 1970.

1. A balance in number of children of university staff parents (1/3), off-campus parents (1/3), and student parents (1/3).
2. A balance in number of girls and boys.
3. An age mate for each child.
4. Consideration is given to race and nationality.
5. Consideration is given to the handicapped child.
6. Consideration is given to referrals from professionals in other disciplines.<sup>51</sup>

The major goal in preselection of nursery school children is to provide as many observation and learning opportunities as possible for the college student who is enrolled in a course requiring nursery school observation or teaching participation. In keeping with this policy, a toddler's group of one and one-half to two and one-half year olds was added in 1964. The upper age range of the group was later extended to age three.<sup>52</sup>

The 60 children enrolled in the Center are divided into four groups:

1. Thirteen toddlers who attend two mornings per week for two hours.

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<sup>51</sup>Nursery School Teaching Class Notes, Home Economics 422, Montana State University, Spring, 1969.

<sup>52</sup>Enrollment Trends in Child Development (leaflet), School of Home Economics, Montana State University.

2. Twenty three-four year olds attend three hours per day, three mornings per week, lunch included.
3. Twelve four-five year olds attend three hours per day, three afternoons per week.
4. Fifteen four-five year olds attend three hours per day, two afternoons per week.

Speech Therapy.--During the 1968-70 school years, grant funds obtained by the Department of Speech at Montana State University were used to employ a part-time speech therapist for the Child Development Center. The therapist tested the children for speech and hearing problems and assisted in the reduction of such problems. In addition to providing an additional observation experience for the students enrolled in Child Development, the nursery school speech therapy sessions were observed by students from the speech department who were enrolled in remedial speech and audiology courses. Funding cutbacks forced the curtailment of this program at the end of the second year.

#### Facilities

Licensing.--In Montana, the State Department of Public Welfare is charged with the responsibility of licensing child care facilities. Since the regulations are directed toward ..."any...facility that receives seven or more children for care for five or more hours per

day,"<sup>53</sup> many facilities for preschool children are not licensed.<sup>54</sup> Many, however, operated within the rules and regulations even though no license is required by law.

Housing.--As described earlier, the Montana State University Child Development Center is housed in a portion of a remodeled World War I barracks building. In addition to the large play room (approximately 40 x 60 feet), the facility includes a kitchen, two toilet-lavatory rooms, with a total of four lavatories and six toilets immediately off of the play room, a combination classroom and office, and alcove used for special activities with individual children, an observation area which extends across one end of the play room and which is separated from the play room by counters and tall stools. An outside door provides easy access for observers.

In addition to the usual nursery school activity centers, the play room provides a wood working area made up of two work benches, "real" hammers, saws, nails, etc. The area which is used for the development of eye-hand coordination and for directing the release of feelings of hostility and aggression<sup>55</sup> will accommodate four children at one time.

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<sup>53</sup>State of Montana, Standards Relating to Licensing of Day Care Centers for Children, Department of Public Welfare, State Board of Health, Helena, Montana, (1968), Part 2, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup>Jean S. Baringer, A Survey of Nursery School Facilities in Montana (unpublished thesis), Montana State University, 1970, p. 69.

<sup>55</sup>Read, Nursery School, p. 210.

Another feature of the Center is a raised platform play area located in the center of the housekeeping area, and which provides an overview of the entire play room. The ladder by which the platform is approached can be easily removed to close the area to the toddler group. The open area below the platform serves as the doll's bedroom.

Outdoor Play.--The out-door fenced play yard with covered sand-box, and climbing equipment is located on the north side of the two-story building. Icicles which form on the eaves above the play yard present a hazard which prevents the use of the play yard during the winter and spring months. The front porch of the building serves as a covered play area on rainy days, and a grassed slope in front of the building serves as the winter play area. The absence of fencing on the slope area necessitates the enforcement of guidelines to determine the extent of that play area.

Each area of the Center provides the observer and the student teacher with opportunities to see 'theory in action,' decision making, individual differences, and the many facets of a child at work and play.

#### Staff Qualifications

Montana does not have certification requirements for teachers of preschool children; therefore, the State Department of Public Welfare is also charged with the responsibility of listing staff qualifications. This licensing agency recognizes personal qualifications to be of

"primary importance" in the selection of teachers and other staff members and lists ten such qualifications<sup>56</sup> (See Appendix A). Professional qualifications are not listed.

The Montana State University Child Development Center staff includes:

- 1 Director - Master of Science degree
- 1 Head teacher - Master of Science degree
- 1 Assistant teacher - Bachelor of Science degree
- 1 Graduate assistant per term
- 3-4 Student employees
- 1 Cook
- 1 Custodian (shared with entire building)
- 10-20 Student teachers and students enrolled in Child Development Practicum

Each employee is provided with a job description of each area of employment in keeping with good business practices to insure a smoothly running operation<sup>57</sup> (A copy is included in Appendix A).

### Funding

The Child Development Center as an academic classroom for the university receives funds from two sources: The state and parent fees.

State.--The state provides the building which houses the facility, utilities, and the custodian's salary. The director, the head teacher, and graduate teaching assistant hold university staff status in the

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<sup>56</sup>Montana, Standards, Part 1, p. 2-3.

<sup>57</sup>Responsibilities of Personnel of Child Development Centers (leaflet), School of Home Economics, Montana State University.

School of Home Economics.<sup>58</sup>

Parent Fees.--All other costs are charged to parent fees. These include the salaries of the assistant teacher and the cook, equipment, supplies, repairs, laundry, food, etc. Parents are charged fees at the following monthly rates:

Toddlers - \$12/month

Three-four year olds - \$18/month (lunch included)

Four-five year olds - \$18/month - two days per week

Four-five year olds - \$27/month - three days per week<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Nursery School Management Class Notes, Home Economics 409, Montana State University, Winter, 1969.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In order to determine those factors which merit consideration in the establishment of a new child development center facility at Montana State University, the purpose of this study was to explore the practices and trends in laboratory nursery schools operated by institutions with comparable goals throughout the United States.

#### Sampling Procedure

Montana State University, located in the sparsely populated area of the northwestern United States, is a land grant state institution. Other land grant institutions and state universities were selected for the sample to be surveyed. In order to view Montana's needs in relation to nationwide needs, a comparison of the trends and practices in schools over a wide range of regions of the United States also seemed important. Therefore, the sample was expanded to include all ninety-one member institutions of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges,<sup>1</sup> more recently known as the National Association of Land Grant and State Universities.

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<sup>1</sup>"Selected Home Economics Enrollment Data from Member Institutions of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges," Dean's Office, School of Home Economics, Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas, 1968.

### Sampling Instrument

Because of the scope and composition of the sample to be surveyed in this study, a written questionnaire seemed to be the instrument which could collect the necessary information efficiently and effectively, with a minimum of infringement upon the respondents' time. The first portion of the questionnaire requested information concerning (1) early childhood education at the institution and the department responsible for the facility, (2) the presence of a nursery school at the institution, and (3) the departments using the nursery school and the purposes for use was directed to the chairman of the home economics department at each institution. The remainder of the questionnaire requested information from the director of the nursery school.

### Pretest

A preliminary questionnaire was given to staff members in the Montana State University Child Development Center, to local nursery school personnel, and to graduate students in Child Development for a 'pretest'. The purpose of the 'pretest' was to check the instrument for understandable, familiar wording and accuracy. It also provided an opportunity for deletions, inclusions, and suggestions for improvement.

Information obtained from the pretest was incorporated into the finalized twenty-nine item questionnaire (Appendix A.).

#### Data Collection

The survey packet composed of the questionnaire, two self-addressed stamped envelopes to facilitate returning the questionnaire and a cover letter, (see Appendix), was mailed to the chairman or head of the home economics program in each of ninety-one member institutions of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges.<sup>2</sup>

Five weeks after the initial contact, 'follow-up' packets containing the same materials were mailed to the schools from which no response had been received and partial packets to those institutions from which only partial returns had been received. New cover letters were included in each packet (Appendix A.).

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

The purpose of this study was to explore the trends and practices in child development centers operated by institutions with comparable goals throughout the United States. This might help determine factors which merit consideration in the evaluation of the child development center facility at Montana State University.

### Sample

Two-part questionnaires were mailed to 91 member institutions of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges located in each of the 50 states and Puerto Rico. Responses were received from 82 (90.1%) of the institutions located in 49 states. Only one state, Pennsylvania, and Puerto Rico were not represented by the responding institutions. Figure No. 1 shows the locations of the institutions and responses received.

The high rate of response (90.1%) representing 98.0% of the states is construed to give a high level of credibility to the study in portraying the situation in comparable institutions throughout the United States.

Seventy-seven (93.9%) of the reporting schools indicated the presence of a child study laboratory connected with that college or university. Nine (10.9%) indicated that no child development center was









































































































































