

SMALL GROUP COUNSELING WITH ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

By

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The purpose of this study was to measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a developmentally based group counseling unit on fourth and fifth grade children of divorce who were exhibiting academic behavior problems in the classroom. Specifically the study examined five hypotheses regarding the subjects and their family and divorce attitudes, self-esteem, classroom behavior, and school attendance as related to, or in the absence of, the Children's Divorce Group (CDG).

Children of divorce who exhibited behavioral problems related to academic performance were selected from the fourth and fifth grades of five schools in Alachua County, Florida. From a group of children whose parents had given written approval for the research, an experimental group (N=26) and a control group (N=24) were randomly selected from a separate

list of boys and girls for each school. There were 27 girls and 23 boys included in the research.

The research lasted a total of seven weeks. During the first week the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance (ERAP) was administered to the teachers of each child of divorce in the fourth and fifth grades at each of the five schools. The custodial parents of the 10 lowest scoring girls and the 10 lowest scoring boys in each school were sent a letter requesting permission for their child to be included in the study. From the positive responses the experimental and control groups were selected during the second week.

Over the next four weeks the treatment, the CDG, was led by the elementary counselor in each school. The control group received no treatment at this time. During the seventh week the posttreatment data were collected.

The data collected were analyzed by a 2x2 analysis of variance to determine the effects of the 2 independent variables (group and sex of subject) on each of the 15 dependent variable measures. These data related directly to the following hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding attitudes on family and divorce, as measured by the Divorce Attitude Measure.

2. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.
3. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance.
4. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding school attendance, as measured by school attendance records.
5. There will be no significant differences between sex of subjects in the CDG group and the control group as assessed by the five criterion measures.

No significant differences were found for Hypotheses One, Two, and Four at the .05 level of confidence. These null hypotheses were supported. Hypotheses Three and Five were rejected at the .05 level of confidence. A significant difference between groups was found on one of the behavior ratings on the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (DESB). The treatment group received the more positive rating on comprehension. Between sexes there were significant differences on four behavior ratings on the DESB (classroom disturbance, impatience, inattentive-withdrawn, and irrelevant-responsiveness). Girls received more positive ratings in these areas.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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The effect of a divorce upon the children in a family is something which research has been unable to identify accurately. To date there are only a few research studies published dealing with this topic, and their findings are limited because of procedural and design errors. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that divorce is an event which can create traumatic adjustments for the children who are involved. These new adjustments can bring intense emotions with which the child needs to cope. Can group counseling meet the needs of the children of divorce?

Purpose of the Study

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The purpose of this study was to measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a developmentally based group counseling unit, the Children's Divorce Group (CDG), on fourth and fifth grade children of divorce who were exhibiting behavioral problems in the classroom. The following four questions were investigated:

1. What effect will the CDG have on a group member's

attitude toward peers, father, mother, and divorce?

2. What effect will the CDG have on a group member's level of self-esteem?

3. What effect will the CDG have on a teacher's perception of the overt behavior of the group members?

4. What effect will the CDG have on the group member's school attendance?

Need for This Study

The increase of divorce as a solution to marriages which are in conflict invariably leads to an increased number of children faced with adjustment problems. Some adjustments revolve around such things as a new home, peer rejection, personal insecurity, financial uncertainty, less time with one or both parents, a felt rejection from one or both parents, and bitter postdivorce battles between parents. Intense emotions of guilt, rejection, hate, anger, hostility, fear, depression, relief, love, and elation can individually or in combination become pervasive in the life of the child. Understandably, this separation experience in a young person's life can be critical in the overall development. The foundation for an emotionally and physically healthy adult is formed in the early years. The ability of the child to cope with these adjustments and deal with the emotions may spell the difference between personal fulfillment and personal tragedy.

Schools are a significant part of a young person's life in terms of both the time and the preparation received for adulthood. It is logical to conclude that our educational institutions should be interested and involved in providing developmental assistance to those individuals who are faced with critical life situations such as the divorce of one's parents. To date there are few, if any, published strategies on the manner in which elementary schools can provide some specific assistance to the child involved in divorce. The small group counseling unit studied here, the CDG, is one which is based upon the principles and the goals of developmental group counseling and can be used by school personnel.

Developmental group counseling has become an important technique in the professional repertoire of the elementary school counselor. The basic goals of developmental groups for the group member are to (a) know and understand himself, (b) develop self-acceptance and a feeling of being worthwhile in his own right, (c) develop methods of coping with the developmental tasks of life, (d) develop self-direction, better problem solving skills, and better decision making abilities, and (e) develop sensitivity to the needs of others (Dinkmeyer & Caldwell, 1970).

As well as having similar goals, the CDG has specific strategies within the unit which are very much like those used

in other developmental group activities. Because of this, if the CDG is found to be effective in the areas under investigation, then elementary counselors can provide aid for these children in a manner which is familiar and within their professional competencies.

Organization of the Study

The remainder of this study is organized into four additional chapters plus appendices. Chapter II includes a review of the literature on divorce in the United States, effects of divorce on children, therapeutic techniques used with children of divorce, and group counseling in the schools. Chapter III contains the methods and procedures of the study, including the hypotheses, the design of the study, the descriptions of the criterion measures, and the treatment. The research findings are presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V includes a summary of the study and a discussion of the results as well as recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature related to this study is focused on the following areas: (a) the statistics and changing attitudes concerning divorce in the United States; (b) the effects of divorce on children; (c) the therapeutic help for children of divorce; and (d) the effects of group counseling approaches with school children.

Divorce in the United States

Recent statistics compiled by the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics (1974) showed that the number of divorces during the 12-month period ending in August 1974 was 948,000. This was a 56,000 increase in the rate from the previous year and a rise of more than 450,000 since 1964 (Sprey, 1969).

In Florida during 1974 there were 59,417 divorces decreed. The rate for the state was 7.2 per 1,000 people. This figure is the highest among Southeastern states and one of the highest in the country. For every 100 marriages performed in Florida in 1974 there were 65.8 divorces. In Alachua

County, Florida, there were nearly 1,000 divorces in 1974 (Thompson, 1976).

Several socioeconomic changes during the last few decades have been hypothesized as having an effect on this sharp rise in divorce: (a) an increased educational level for women making them financially more independent; (b) an overall family income increase to a level where couples can afford the cost of a divorce; (c) an increased availability of free legal aid; and (d) the Vietnam War which complicated the transition of millions of men into marriage or made marital adjustments more difficult than normal. Other changes which may have contributed to the increased divorce rate are less economic in nature: (a) a greater social acceptance of divorce as a means for resolving marriage difficulties; (b) the relaxed attitudes about divorce by a growing number of religious denominations; (c) the relatively objective study of marriage and family relationships at the high school and college levels; (d) the increase in the degree of equality of the sexes, making the social adjustment of persons not married easier; and (e) the reform in the divorce laws, particularly the no-fault divorce law which by January of 1974 had been adopted in some form by 24 states (Glick, 1975).

With the growth in the divorce rate there has been the expected increase in the number of children affected by divorce.

The latest U.S. Government statistics on the number of children involved in divorce are from 1971 (U.S. Department of H.E.W., 1975). At this time there was a rate of 1.22 children under 18 per divorce decree. Using this rate figure to estimate the number of children involved in divorce for the 12-month statistics in 1974 reported above (948,000), there were over one million children affected during this period. Using the same method of estimation for the State of Florida, there were approximately 70,000 children involved by divorce in 1974. In Alachua County the figure would be approximately 1,200 children of divorce in 1974.

At present almost 20 percent of all children under 18 are affected by divorce. In total numbers there are nearly 13,000,000 children in the United States who are involved with divorce. It has been predicted that within a few years the children of divorce may in fact become the majority of all children (Walters, 1976).

Attitudes have changed about divorce in the United States (Despert, 1953; Gardner, 1970; Gettleman & Markowitz, 1974; Glick, 1975; Grollman, 1969; Harper, 1959; Kessler, 1976; Krantzler, 1973; Nye & Berardo, 1973). The consensus of these writers is that divorce is not necessarily a negative process. To the contrary, divorce can at times be a positive, personal growth-producing experience for both the adults and children involved.

With the more relaxed and liberal attitudes regarding divorce there has been an increasing interest in helping those involved with divorce through the traumatic stages, which are often a part of the separation process. Kessler (1976) listed the goals for her Divorce Adjustment Groups as follows: (a) to help individuals regain emotional autonomy; (b) to mitigate the debilitating aspects of divorce; (c) to provide a place to safely discharge some of the emotionality of divorce; (d) to help people develop a broader concept of divorce; (e) to assist people in meeting new friends in a meaningful way; and (f) to enable people to learn coping mechanisms that they can use in dealing with other losses.

Gettleman and Markowitz (1974) in The Courage to Divorce focus on the "anti-divorce establishment" which includes mental health professionals, courts, churches, and the mass media. They contend that the hard line biases offered by these institutions against divorce can obstruct individuals from reaching happiness and personal fulfillment.

Krantzier (1973) wrote in Creative Divorce about the emotional stages a divorced person must proceed through in order that he or she can accept divorce as the solution, not a punishment. These stages are (a) initial denial that the relationship has ended, (b) powerful feelings of hostility and anger toward the absent person, (c) pervasive feelings of

guilt, (d) a withdrawal from those parts of the past too painful to cope with, (e) a gradual testing and retesting of reality, and (f) an eventual letting-go from the influence of the past relationship so that a new life can begin.

The attitude that divorce produces a tragic effect upon children has also been contested. There is increasingly a more realistic understanding that a conflict-filled environment of an unhappy, but unbroken home, can be more devastating to children than parent separation. Despert (1953) was one of the first writers to advocate this position challenging the adage that marriages should be kept together for the sake of the children. Research evidence supports Despert's early contention and has convinced most child specialists that divorce is not necessarily a tragic and threatening influence upon children, although it is a disruptive influence in their lives that does necessitate an adjustment.

Conspicuously ignored in the helping strategies concerning divorce is a plan of action specifically designed for children. Despite the dramatic changes in divorce attitude, little is usually done to directly help children adjust better to the inevitable changes created by divorce.

With the changing attitudes about divorce and the increasing number of children being affected, an imperative question to answer is, "What are the effects of divorce on children?"

The Effects of Divorce on Children

The amount of literature on the effects of divorce on children is disappointing. A review of twenty years of Psychological Abstracts, a review of a decade of Dissertation Abstracts, and an Educational Resources Information Center search provided relatively few studies focused on this area. This section reviews that literature along with other sources found by the researcher.

Subjective and/or Clinical Opinion

The emotional difficulties experienced by children when their parents divorce has been described in the literature. Many of these articles are, however, based on subjective or clinical opinion and are unsupported by any form of research data, e.g., Berstein and Robey, 1962; Esman, 1971; Gardner, 1956; Hudson and Hudson, 1969; Mahler and Rabinovitch, 1956; Pannon and Schild, 1960; Rice, 1970; and Westman, 1972.

Westman (1972) discussed the effects of divorce on children at four age levels: infancy, early childhood, school-aged children, and adolescence. In the infancy period he believes that the effects on children are mostly secondary as a result of the remaining parent's emotional stability. Divorce during the early childhood, Westman wrote, is the most damaging period because this is the stage of life which is most important in the child's personality development. It is at this time that

the oedipal complex is being resolved and the departure of the father can cause excessive guilt and subsequent damage to the self-concept.

The school-aged period is when the child can intellectually understand the divorce. Often times he is still hurt deeply by the rejection of the departing parent. According to Westman, it is likely that a depressive reaction will develop at this point, leading to a disinterest in school or perhaps withdrawn behavior. Westman believes that divorce during the adolescent stage has the least affect on personality development because, for the most part, the personality structure has already formed by this time.

Westman concluded that most children are not clinically affected by divorce. He said that the experience of divorce constitutes stress and frustration that can potentially strengthen coping skills, the capacity to master stress, and the general course of personality development. Because of this, he advocates strongly that psychiatrists and other mental health workers should become involved with children during the divorce process to prevent emotional disorder as a result of the crisis experience.

Esman (1971) wrote that marital conflict creates tensions that can adversely affect the child's growth. He provided several case studies showing the reaction of children to the

family disturbance. Esman stated that the emotional reactions of the child are usually the most obvious manifestation of marital discord. He recommended that family physicians be aware of these manifestations so that prompt intervention may serve to forestall emotional damage when the marriage itself may be beyond repair.

Rice (1970) wrote that divorce creates serious emotional financial, moral, and social problems of long duration and great intensity. He recommended that specially trained guidance counselors deal with parents, children, and attorneys when divorce takes place. He also suggested that special judges and/or counselors on domestic relations matters take measures before and after the divorce for the prevention of emotional disturbances in minor children.

Hudson and Hudson (1969) also stated that the children of divorce can be adversely affected by the separation process. They recommended that the marriage counselors take an active role in working with adolescents through an educative process so that the conflict, guilt, and hostility of both parents and children can be minimized.

Berstein and Robey (1962) thought that hostility in the divorce process can be particularly debilitating to the children involved. They felt that the conflicts of divorced parents distort the normal process by which a child develops.

Like some of the preceding authors, Berstein and Robey suggested intervention to reveal the basic problems and help establish better conditions for the emotional development of these children. They thought that the pediatrician is the most logical professional to help the family through this time of stress.

Pannon and Schild (1960) opined that divorce reflects a failure in interpersonal relationships and that social case-work can minimize this failure for the child. They felt that divorce can interfere with reality testing and that within the helping situation the child can learn to deal with the reality factors. This is supposed to lessen the amount of frustration and disappointment that exists because of the divorce and free the child to make satisfying affectional relationships.

The separation of parents has two significant effects on children according to Gardner (1956). These are that the child's self-concept and the child's concepts of other human beings will be unavoidably affected. Gardner focused much of his discussion on the ego development of the child and the possible effects on the child of different ways divorce can be handled by parents. He concluded that divorce will have a potentially adverse effect on the developing self-concept and human-being concept of the child, no matter how the parents handle the situation.

Using a psychoanalytical framework, Mahler and Rabinovitch

(1956) suggested that divorce causes deep inner conflict which becomes apparent as the child gets older. Unbalanced identification and disturbance in the solution of normal developmental conflicts may be expressed by the child in neurotic symptom formation as well as unpredictable acting out and serious deformities of character. Even if the marital discord may not always lead to manifest neurotic symptoms in the child, Mahler and Rabinovitch believe that the child's attitudes and outlook on life are affected. This may later appear as unconscious patterns which impair the choice of sexual and marital partners. When the child of divorce becomes an adult, he may repeat in a similar or complementary way the traumatic situations which the divorce of his parents stamped on his pliable personality structure as a child.

Evidence Based on Research Findings

McDermott (1968) stated,

It is difficult to separate the effects of divorce from those of the prolonged trauma and strain preceding it. The child's reactions also depend upon such factors as his or her age, sex, extent and nature of family disharmony prior to divorce, each parent's personality and previous relationship with the child, the child's relationship with siblings, as well as the emotional availability of all important people during the divorce period, and his or her own personality strengths and capacities to adjust to stresses such as separation in the past. Furthermore, in any study of the child's reaction to the divorce, it is important to recognize the considerable difficulty in differentiating the impact of several factors: 1) direct impact on the

child of the strife around the divorce; 2) immediate reactions of the child to the loss of a parent; 3) the impact of the divorce on the remaining parent reverberating in the child; and 4) the impact, probably sometime later, of the loss of a parental model. (p. 1424)

With this in mind, the most significant research studies of the effects of divorce on children are reviewed.

Retrospective Studies

Several studies examined specific abnormal populations of individuals and in retrospect determined the percentage of this population which came from divorced homes. The specific abnormal populations studied in this manner are juvenile delinquents (Glueck & Glueck, 1950), attempted suicide and psychiatric out-patients (Bruhn, 1962), attempted suicide in college students (Blaine & Carmen, 1968), psychiatric in-patients (Gregory, 1966), depressive adults (Munro, 1966), depressive children (Caplan & Douglas, 1969), and psychoneurotics (Ingham, 1949).

In an early study Glueck and Glueck (1950) found that 21 percent of the juvenile delinquent boys studied came from homes where the parents were separated or divorced. It was also found that a significantly higher proportion of delinquent boys came from homes broken by abandonment, desertion, or divorce than those broken by parent death. In almost every case, however, other factors figured prominently, in particular

the economic situation and the physical condition of these broken homes.

Bruhn (1962) discovered that individuals who undergo factors of gross disorganization, regardless of their parental home background, are more likely to attempt suicide than receive the services of a psychiatric out-patient clinic. It was also found that a higher percentage of individuals from broken homes attempted suicide than were included in the psychiatric out-patient group. The definition of a broken home was, however, the absence or loss of one or more parents, by death or by separation due to marital disharmony, for periods of six months or more before the patient reached the age of 15. It is, therefore, impossible to see the specific effects of divorce separate from parental death or temporary separation.

Blaine and Carmen (1968) also studied the cases of attempted suicides and suicides but focused entirely on college students. They found among other things that there are slightly more instances of attempts and strikingly more suicides in students from families where there had been separation, divorce, or death of a parent. This study, like Bruhn's suggests a relationship between a parental background of separation and divorce with suicide and attempted suicide. Definitive conclusions cannot be drawn because of the inclusion in both studies of parental death within the broken home category.

Munro (1966) investigated the incidence of parental deprivation in depressive patients against a control group of general hospital out-patients. The results show that the percentage of individuals separated from a parent during childhood is not significantly different in both groups. He also found there was no significant difference between groups as to paternal or maternal absence. This study is limited as to its generalizability to children of divorce because the parent absence group also included temporary separations greater than three months.

Caplan and Douglas (1969) found through an analysis of early histories of a group of children with depressed mood and another group of nondepressed neurotic children that the early separation experiences were more common among depressed than among nondepressed neurotic children. For almost every type of separation studied, that is, separation due to death, divorce, desertion, illness, or foster home placement, the percentage of depressive subjects was higher than that of the nondepressed neurotic control group.

Gregory (1966) studied the effects of parental loss on psychiatric in-patients. The results of this study do not suggest that any form of permanent parental loss during childhood is associated with a vulnerability to depression or any other specific category of neurosis or psychosis in later life.

Again this study does not have an exclusive category for parental divorce but includes it with illegitimacy and desertion.

Ingham (1949) investigated several aspects of family relationships between a group of psychoneurotic college students and a normal control group of college students. The results were that separation of parents, mental illness of parents, lack of adjustment between parents, rejection by parent figures, parental overrestriction, mental illness in siblings or disturbed relationships between them, and disruption of subject's marriage are indicated considerably more frequently in those students suffering from psychoneurosis than in the college population at large. It is noteworthy that there was no significant difference between the psychoneurotic group and the control group for broken homes as a result of parental death. This suggests that the parental separation is more disturbing than an absence of a parent due to death.

School Studies

Four of the research studies found in reviewing the literature were on the effects of divorce upon children within the school environment (Felner, Stolberg, & Cowen, 1975; Giel & Van Luijk, 1968; Kelly, North, & Zingle, 1965; McDermott, 1968).

Felner, Stolberg, and Cowen (1975) studied the impact of

two types of potential crisis-producing experiences on the referral patterns of maladapting primary grade school children, parental separation/divorce and parental death. Each group was first compared to a normal control group and then with each other. Each crisis group had a significantly higher overall maladjustment score than its respective control group. Children of separation and divorce had significantly more aggression and acting out problems than the controls. The children with histories of parental death were significantly more anxious, depressed, and withdrawn than their controls. These significant differences held up when comparisons were made directly between crisis groups. The authors further stated that intervention is the key to educate children how to effectively cope with crisis situations.

Giel and Van Luijk (1968) studied the effects on children of divorce in junior high school in Ethiopia. There was no significant difference in the percentage of divorced children in the schools (37%) and the percentage of children of divorce showing behavioral abnormalities (35%) among a group of referred children. These results may not be generalizable to the United States because of the vast differences in attitude, culture, and socioeconomic factors between the countries.

Kelly, North, and Zingle (1965) measured the effect of divorce on junior high students using three variables: school

attendance, reading achievement, and teacher rating of behavior problems. In comparison to a control group, only the school attendance comparison was significant, with the children of divorce having the greater number of school absences.

McDermott's study (1968) was less impressive in its research design because of the small group it studied and the lack of a control group. However, the results showed that to the majority of nursery school children investigated (10 out of 16) divorce had an observable impact and represented a major crisis. Eight of the ten affected children were classified as sad, angry children. Other clinically observed phenomena were the inability to master anxiety and depression through play, regression to previously mastered levels of development, and increased school absences. McDermott also suggested that preventive measures should be undertaken most logically by the schools. He advocated the identification of and intervention with these children for preventive purposes.

Broken Homes vs. Unbroken Homes

Four other studies reported the findings of a direct comparison of broken homes with unbroken homes on several variables (Burchinal, 1964; Landis, 1955; McDermott, 1970; Nye, 1957).

Burchinal (1964) compared unbroken homes, broken homes, and three types of reconstituted homes on personality and social relationship variables with adolescents. Nonsignificant

differences among groups were found on the personality characteristics, participation in school or community activities, mean school grade points, and the number of schoolmates the respondent thought liked him or her. A significant difference was found for school absences, with the unbroken home group having the fewest missed school days. This study, however, did not distinguish happy and unhappy unbroken homes as did the Nye and Landis studies.

Landis (1955) compared the attitudes of college students from happy unbroken homes, unhappy unbroken homes, and broken homes toward marriage and the family. In all cases he found children from happy unbroken homes had the most positive attitudes. The attitudes of students from broken homes and unhappy unbroken homes were similar by some criteria. However, by other criteria the attitudes of those from broken homes were more positive than those from unhappy unbroken homes.

McDermott (1970) studied 1,487 children evaluated at a psychiatric hospital. They were divided into either a divorce group (116) or a group in which the families were intact. He concluded that the children of divorce were more likely to aggressively act out and show signs of depression than the intact family group. He believed that the problems resulting from divorce were shorter in duration and more sharply defined than in the other group. He concluded that the child of

divorce is likely to identify with the absent parent's behavior as a way to deal with the loss and conflict surrounding it. There in fact was a high correlation between the child's symptoms and the description of the absent parent. A weakness in this study is that McDermott did not distinguish between happy intact families and unhappy intact families.

Nye (1957) in his work with adolescents distinguished between happy and unhappy unbroken homes as well as broken homes. His results were similar to Landis' findings. In areas of church, school, and delinquent companionship there were no differences between broken and unhappy unbroken homes. Significant differences between the two groups on psychosomatic illness, delinquent behavior, and parent-child adjustment were found. In these areas the children from broken homes showed better adjustment. Nye also found that the children of divorce do not have poorer adjustment than those from homes broken in other ways.

Other Studies

Several other studies on various topics related to the effects of divorce on children are reported: mother's perceptions (Goode, 1956); child's attitudes (Landis, 1960); self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1972); mother and child's personality characteristics (Loeb & Price, 1966); and vocational maturity (Woodbury & Pate, 1974).

Goode (1956) surveyed divorced mothers and found that almost all mothers were worried about the effects of divorce on their children, but almost all remarried mothers subsequently thought their children's lives had improved after the divorce. They also believed that the substitute care during work or dates was either good or excellent. The extent to which the mothers perceived their children as having behavior problems varied directly with the degree of trauma the mother experienced. Goode stated that almost all mothers believed that their children had better lives as divorced children than they would have had as children in families with continual marital conflict.

Landis (1960) pointed out that it is unsound to group together and discuss all children of divorced homes as if they were a homogeneous group affected in the same ways by the divorces of their parents. He distinguished between those who could remember the divorce and those who could not as well as those who felt their homes were happy or unhappy before the divorce. The results indicated that the attitudes of the college students about the divorce differed considerably depending upon these two variables. The younger child who could remember the divorce tended to be less aware of the traumatic effects of divorce than older children. Those who felt their homes were happy before the divorce were more traumatized than those who knew the family was unhappy. It

was also seen that the worst predivorce situations from the children's perceptions were the cases in which the parents were less likely to remarry.

Rosenberg (1972) found that self-esteem was affected by divorce depending on several variables. First, if the child was Jewish or Catholic there was a clear effect on lowering the self-esteem. This was not so for the Protestant children surveyed. Another important variable was the mother's age at the time of the divorce. If she were young, there was a clear lowering of the child's self-esteem; and, if she were older, there was no effect. Self-esteem was also dependent upon remarriage in that the children whose mothers remarried seemed to be more disturbed than those whose mothers remained single. The effects of subculture norms, the stability of the mother, and the readjustment to new family circumstances were, thereby, important in the level of self-esteem shown by the children of divorce.

Loeb and Price (1966) studied the effect of the mother's personality in the contribution to the difficulties of the children from broken homes. More MMPI records of 44 divorced and separated mothers indicated personality disturbance than did records of continuously married mothers. Characteristics cited as being significantly different were impulsiveness, anger, and nonconformity usually associated with conduct

disorders (high Pd score on the MMPI). Child patients of the divorced and separated mothers were more frequently rated aggressive than the children of the continuously married mothers. The level of psychopathic deviate (Pd) as measured on the MMPI on both groups of mothers was not associated with the rated aggressiveness of the children. This suggests that there may have been an interaction with an unidentified variable and the Pd scores of the mothers.

Woodbury and Pate (1974) studied the differences in scores on each of six areas of the Cognitive Vocational Maturity Test between groups of delinquents: parents living together and parents divorced. From the analysis of the 42 adjudicated delinquents it was suggested that the divorce group possessed less knowledge about careers and less mature attitudes than do delinquents whose parents remained married. This lent support to the idea that aversive family relations of delinquents can influence vocational maturity.

Research Conclusions

Most of the studies reviewed showed associational relationships between divorce and various effects on children. The most supported effects were that these children tended to be more aggressive and depressed than children from intact families. Other significant relationships were found in decreased school attendance, self-esteem, and vocational

maturity. The results of all these studies are, however, complicated by the complex process of divorce. There was strong support for the idea that divorce is less harmful in its effects on children than an unhappy unbroken home.

Each of the studies presented in this section was not experimental but descriptive in nature. In light of this, it is impossible to definitely state that divorce has a significant effect upon the children involved. All that can be said with confidence is that there is an association between divorce and several behavioral problems of the children involved. In what ways are help offered to the children of divorce?

Therapeutic Help for the Children of Divorce

Indirect Help

Much has been written about the ways to indirectly help the children of divorce. Some of these writings suggested approaches for parents (Ard & Ard, 1969; Bernstein & Robey, 1962; Bitterman, 1968; Chapman, 1974; Despert, 1953; Esmar, 1971; Fisher, 1973; Gardner, 1970; Gettleman & Markowitz, 1974; Grollman, 1969; Hallett, 1974; Hudson & Hudson, 1969; Laury & Meerloo, 1967; Mahler & Rabinovitch, 1956; Rice, 1970; Sann & Solnit, 1968; Sheffner & Suarez, 1975).

Others suggested indirect aid through modification of the family courts (McDermott, 1970; Sheffner & Suarez, 1975). One

writer specifically suggested that mental health specialists consult with school personnel (Lindemann, 1956).

Each of the above writers stated that the child can benefit by the manner in which an important third party deals with him or her. None of these studies had research data to support the theories.

Direct Help

Fewer writers have advocated that children of divorce receive direct help from professional mental health workers (Bitterman, 1968; Felner, Stolberg, & Cowen, 1975; Hudson & Hudson, 1969; Pannon & Schild, 1960; Rice, 1970; Westman, Cline, Swift, & Kramer, 1970). No specific programs of counseling or therapy were suggested by the authors. Also, no research data have been published as to the effectiveness of direct intervention by mental health workers. In addition there are no published reports on the use of group counseling or therapy approaches with children from divorced families. What results have been found about group counseling in the schools?

The Effects of Group Counseling with School Children

The results of various forms of group counseling have been studied as to its effectiveness in changing achievement and adjustment. Positive results of nondirective play therapy (Moulin, 1970), selected guidance activities (Crider, 1966),

combination of remedial reading and group counseling (Strickler, 1965), and group counseling with students and their mothers (Shatter, 1957) have been found in work on reading achievement. Overall grade point average increases have been seen with boys receiving behavioral group counseling (Winkler, Teigland, Munger, & Kranzler, 1965) and with boys and girls receiving behavioral group counseling (Randolph & Hardage, 1973). Other studies on achievement and group counseling have been negative (Clements, 1963; Crow, 1971, Ohlsen & Gazda, 1965).

Group counseling techniques have also shown to be effective on adjustment as well as achievement. In all of the above studies except Moulin's (1970), there were significant changes in social and/or personal adjustment. Positive changes in sociometric level have been found as a result of traditional group counseling (Kranzler, Mayer, Doyer, & Munger, 1966; Schiffer, 1967; Thombs & Muro, 1973). No change in sociometric level was found after group counseling in other studies (Biasco, 1966; Kranzler, 1968; Mayer, Kranzler, & Maahas, 1967; Oldridge, 1964).

Group behavior modification techniques have also shown positive results on various social variables (Barclay, 1967; Clement & Milne, 1967; Hansen, Niland, & Zani, 1969; Hinds, 1968).

More traditional group approaches have been effective on

various adjustment variables such as attitudes toward school, learning, peers, teachers, attendance, and self-concept (Crow, 1971; Lodato, Sokoloff, & Schwartz, 1964; Mann, 1968; Palmo & Kuzniar, 1972; Quatrano & Bergland, 1974).

Howard and Zimpfer (1972) in their review of the literature on group counseling in the schools state that the overall direction is more positive than negative.

Summary

With the rising number of children from divorced homes attending schools, the educational system will find it necessary to deal with the behavioral effects of divorce on these children. Although the evidence about the effects of divorce on children is inconclusive, most writers believe that the divorce of one's parents is a crisis situation to the child. The child can either personally grow from his ability to cope with the crisis or develop serious emotional problems because of his inability to handle the situation well. To date there have been no published reports of systematic approaches to this problem in the schools. Because group counseling is presently among the skills of most elementary school counselors and it is seen as having some positive results with children, this study is focused on using such techniques with children of divorce who are having some behavioral difficulties in the classroom.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The child whose parents are divorced is confronted with stressful adjustments which are likely to create intense emotions. The child can grow in personal adjustment if he can learn to identify, clarify, and cope with these feelings. If a child can successfully adjust to his new family life, he is likely to become a stronger and more flexible individual. When an individual child cannot adjust satisfactorily and his emotions are unidentified and unclear leading to inappropriate behavior, then the child is likely to develop serious emotional problems. These problems may be reflected in decreased self-esteem and increased behavioral difficulties.

This study tested and attempted to critically analyze a small group counseling unit, the Children's Divorce Group (CDG), designed specifically for the child whose parents are divorced. It was intended that the CDG will provide the opportunity for the child who is having behavior difficulties in the classroom to examine his or her feelings and devise new alternatives to deal with the problems associated with divorce. In the

group setting the child would find an accepting and understanding environment with peers who have faced similar circumstances.

Chapter III deals with the hypotheses, population, sampling procedures, experimental design, experimental conditions, and the criterion instruments used in this study. An explanation of how the data were collected and analyzed concludes the chapter.

Hypotheses

This study focused on five hypotheses related to children whose parents are divorced and the children's adjustment as related to, or in the absence of, a small group counseling unit (CDG). The following major null hypotheses were tested:

1. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding attitudes on family and divorce, as measured by the Divorce Attitude Measure.
2. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.
3. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance.
4. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding school attendance, as measured by school attendance records.

In addition, the following minor null hypothesis was tested:

5. There will be no significant differences between sex of subjects in the CDG group and the control group as assessed by the five criterion measures.

Population and Sampling Procedures

Population

The population for this study was selected from those fourth and fifth grade children in five Alachua County schools whose parents had been divorced (N=250). All the schools are racially integrated and have a 65 percent white and a 35 percent black population. The proportion of boys and girls in each school is about equal. Students in the educable mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed special education classes were excluded because of their exceptionality.

From this group the experimenter, with the help of the school counselors and classroom teachers, identified those boys and girls who were exhibiting problems in behavior related to academic performance. This was done by having the classroom teachers fill out the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance (Appendix A) for all those in the group described above. The 10 lowest scoring boys and the 10 lowest scoring girls from each school made up the population for this study.

Sampling Procedure

The custodial parent of each child in the population was sent a letter outlining the purpose of the study and asking for permission to include the child in the study (Appendix B). From the positive parental consent responses the sample was chosen.

If in a school there were six or more positive returns from each of the girls' group and the boys' group, the experimenter randomly assigned three boys and three girls to the experimental group and three boys and three girls to the control group. This was done by randomly numbering each child with parental consent and then selecting the first three chosen from a list of random numbers as the experimental group and the next three as the control group. The remainder of the children, if any, were selected for alternate positions. If in a school there were fewer than six boys or six girls with parental consent, the experimenter randomly assigned half the boys or girls to the experimental group and half to the control group. In the case of an odd number of boys or girls, the additional child was added to the experimental group. The number of boys and girls in the experimental and control groups for each school is shown in Table 1.

Those students selected to be included in the groups were interviewed, given a brief explanation of group counseling,

TABLE 1
 NUMBER OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL
 AND CONTROL GROUPS FOR EACH SCHOOL

<u>School</u>	<u>Experimental</u>	<u>Control</u>	<u>Group Total</u>
<u>Stephen Foster</u>			
Boys	2	2	
Girls	3	3	
<u>Kirby Smith</u>			
Boys	2	2	
Girls	2	1	
<u>Rawlings</u>			
Boys	3	3	
Girls	3	3	
<u>Terwilliger</u>			
Boys	2	2	
Girls	3	3	
<u>Williams</u>			
Boys	3	3	
Girls	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	
<u>TOTAL</u>			
Boys	12	12	24
Girls	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>27</u>
Combined	26	25	51

and asked if they would like to participate. The counselors consulted with the classroom teachers to gain support for the treatment program and to find a suitable time for the group counseling unit.

Five professional counselors, all female, were selected for this study. Each counselor met the following criteria: (a) certified as an elementary school counselor by the Florida State Education Department; (b) employed as an elementary school counselor in Alachua County; (c) had at least one year of professional elementary school counseling experience; and (d) was instructed in the CDG unit.

The Design of the Study

Overview

The experimental design of this study was the randomized posttest only design (Isaac & Michael, 1971). The experiment lasted a total of seven weeks.

Procedures

During the first week the counselors asked the teachers to complete the Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance (BRAP). The experimental and control groups for each school were selected from those boys and girls who received the lowest scores in their respective groups. A letter requesting informed consent was sent to the parents having custody of those children in the study.

During the second week the counselors interviewed the students in both the experimental and the control groups to give them an overview of the treatment and to get their consent. In addition, the experimenter received parent permission slips.

The third through the sixth weeks was the time that the experimental group received the CDG unit. The control group during this time period received no treatment. The seventh week was the posttreatment assessment period. All measures were administered five days after the final group session to both the experimental and control groups.

The Children's Divorce Group

The Children's Divorce Group (Appendix C) takes eight sessions to complete. The main goals of the unit are

1. To clarify the child's feelings about the divorce
2. To help the child understand that others are experiencing similar feelings
3. To help the child gain a realistic picture of the divorce situation
4. To assist the child in learning new ways of coping with the feelings associated with divorce.

With the attainment of these goals it was hypothesized that the major null hypotheses of the study would be rejected.

Objectives of CDG

The specific objectives for the children in each of the CDG sessions are as follows:

- Session 1 a- get to know one another
b- self-disclosure (nondivorce related)
c- discuss ground rules for group
- Session 2 a- self-disclosure (nondivorce related)
b- increase feelings vocabulary
- Session 3 a- self-disclosure (divorce related)
b- develop feelings-behaviors-consequences list
- Session 4 a- self-disclosure (divorce related)
- Session 5 a- self-disclosure (divorce related)
b- develop list of problems related to divorce
c- dramatize problem situations through role playing
- Session 6 a- self-disclosure (divorce related)
b- dramatize problem situations associated with divorce through puppet play
c- develop alternative ways to cope with problems
- Session 7 a- self-disclose about positive changes since the divorce
- Session 8 a- give personal feedback to each other
b- express feelings about the group
c- close group

The CDG has been designed and refined over the last two years by the researcher and another elementary school counselor.

Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted with children in grades three, four, and five. In the spring of 1975 the experimenter conducted a pilot study involving third, fourth, and fifth grade children in Littlewood Elementary School, Gainesville, Florida. The group sessions were not structured, as in the present study, but some of the same experiences were used.

In this first pilot study there were six children randomly selected for the experimental group and six children for the control group. A Comfort Scale (Appendix D), a self-rating form developed by the researcher, measured the degree of the child's comfort in talking about the divorce with other children, father, mother, and other adults. This scale also measures the child's comfort level in thinking about the divorce. The Comfort Scale was administered to both the control and experimental groups before and after the experimental group received treatment. The children in the experimental group increased their comfort level on every item after the treatment while the control group did not change appreciably on any of the items.

A second pilot study was done in the fall of 1975 at P. K. Yonge Laboratory School and Littlewood Elementary School. Fifteen fourth and fifth grade students were involved in this study. Each of them received the treatment which consisted of the structured group experiences presented in this study. The results on the Comfort Scale were similar to the first pilot study. On each item there was a definite increase in comfort level from pretest to posttest. There was no control group in this second pilot study.

Instruments to Be Used in the Study

This study included five criterion measures. Two instruments

were administered to the students. One of the instruments, the Divorce Attitude Measure, was developed by the researcher. The Self-Esteem Inventory measured how subjects view their personal worth. The administration of these tests to the students took approximately 30 minutes.

The Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Relating to Academic Performance were administered to the teachers. The counselors reviewed the class attendance registers and recorded the daily attendance of the students.

Divorce Attitude Measure (DAM)

The DAM (Appendix E) measures the child's attitude about five areas associated with divorce: (a) comfort level in talking and thinking about divorce; (b) child-peer relationships; (c) child-father relationship; (d) child-mother relationship; and (e) general divorce attitude. There are 25 items on the instrument, 5 each for the five subtests. The children respond on a Likert-type scale of strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree. Of the 25 items, 12 are phrased in the positive while 13 are worded in the negative. For the positively worded items one point is assigned for a response as strongly disagree, two for disagree, three for uncertain, four for agree, and five for strongly agree. On the negative items the point values are assigned in the reverse

order. In this manner the maximum score is 125 and the minimum score is 25 (range = 100). The instructions and the 25 items were read aloud to the children.

A test-retest reliability measure was taken of the instrument with a product moment correlation of the two administrations of the instrument to 22 students of .83 with a two-week interval.

Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI)

The Self-Esteem Inventory was authored by Stanley Cooper-smith of the University of California, Davis, California (1967). Most of the 58 items on the SEI are based upon the 1954 Rogers and Dymand scale. All of the items on the scale have been worded for use with children 8 to 10. Each child read and listened to the 58 items read to them by the counselor. The alternative responses to the items are "Like me" or "Unlike me."

The SEI is a self-report instrument with five subscales: (a) General Self; (b) Social Self-Peers; (c) Home-Parents; (d) Lie Scale; and (e) School-Academic. A total score is also obtained by multiplying by two the total number of appropriate responses on all scales, except the Lie Scale. The highest possible total score is 100.

Test-retest reliability obtained for the SEI over a five-week period with a sample of 30 fifth grade children was .88. Reliability after a three-year interval with a different sample of 56 children was .70 (Coopersmith, 1967).

Coopersmith obtained content validity by having five psychologists sort the items either into a high self-esteem group or a low self-esteem group. A test of comprehensibility for the final items was performed with 30 children (Coopersmith, 1967).

The Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (DESB)

The DESB is a rating scale of overt behavior related to classroom achievement and is a rating form filled out by teachers. This instrument was developed by Spivak and Swift (1967). The scale contains 47 items which are separated into 11 dimensions: classroom disturbance; impatience; disrespect-defiance; external blame; achievement anxiety; external reliance; comprehension; inattentive-withdrawn; irrelevant responsiveness; creative initiative; and need for closeness to the teacher. Of the items, 26 are scored on a five-point scale of frequency while the remainder are scored on a seven-point scale of intensity.

Each child's raw score on the 11 dimensions can be converted into standard score units. The demographic data collected are name, age, sex, grade, school, teacher's name, subject, and date.

A test-retest reliability coefficient of .87 was obtained on all factors by the authors. This was based on 128 students with a one week interval between administrations of the DESB.

Test-retest correlations were also obtained for each item. The median coefficient was .76 with a range of .72 to .82 (Spivak & Swift, 1967).

Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance (BRAP)

The BRAP was developed by Myrick and Susman (1972). It is a nine-item rating scale of teachers' perceptions on the behavior of their students. The behaviors are associated with academic performance in the classroom. These included starting work on time, paying attention, completing assignments, and other observable behaviors. The respondent reports the perceived frequency of a behavior by rating each of the nine items on a five-point Likert-type scale.

Attendance

The school attendance of the children was recorded by each teacher in the class register. The counselors used the registers to count the number of days each student was absent during the posttreatment assessment period (five school days following the last group counseling session).

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of small group counseling, the Children's Divorce Group (CDG), on children of divorce who were also identified by their teachers as having some behavior problems associated with academic learning. Using randomization and a posttest only design model, a total of 15 dependent variables was monitored for both boys and girls in both the CDG and control groups. This chapter reports a systematic analysis of the data collected from these criteria measures as related to the five hypotheses that were investigated in this study.

A 2x2 analysis of variance was selected to determine the effects of the two independent variables (treatment and sex of subject) on each of the 15 dependent variables. This analysis enabled the researcher to test the equality of all the means, the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables, and the interaction effect. The level of confidence used in this research was the .05 level.

Hypothesis One: Attitudes Toward Family and Divorce

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences between students' attitudes in the CDG group and control group about family and divorce as measured by the Divorce Attitude Measure (DAM). An inspection of Table 2 indicates that the subjects who received treatment had a higher mean on the DAM (84.11) than the subjects in the control group (79.36). These scores indicated that the CDG group had more positive attitudes toward family and divorce than the control group.

The analysis of variance data reported in Table 3 indicated no statistically significant difference, however, between means for the experimental and control groups. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence (4.06). Therefore, null Hypothesis One was corroborated.

Hypothesis Two: Self-Esteem

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences between students' self-esteem in the CDG group and control group as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI). An inspection of Table 4 indicates that the subjects who received CDG had a lower mean on the SEI (54.46) than the subjects in the control group (58.33). These scores

TABLE 2

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON THE DIVORCE ATTITUDE
MEASURE FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Experimental (N=26)		Control (N=24)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
84.11	10.88	79.36	10.29

TABLE 3

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DIVORCE
ATTITUDE MEASURE BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	322.97	322.97	2.55
Sex	1	66.55	66.55	.52
Interaction	1	242.08	242.08	1.91
Within	46	5831.43	126.77	

indicate that the control group had a more positive self-esteem measurement than the experimental group.

Yet, the analysis of variance data reported in Table 5 indicated no statistically significant difference between means for the experimental and control groups. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence (4.06). Therefore, null Hypothesis Two was corroborated.

Hypothesis Three: Classroom Behavior

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences between students' classroom behavior in the CDG group and the control group as measured by teachers on the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (DESB) and the Teaching Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance (BRAP). There were 11 separate classroom behaviors measured on the DESB and, therefore, 11 mean scores for both the experimental and control groups to report in Table 6. The mean scores for the experimental group of D 2, D 3, D 4, D 5, D 7, D 9, and D 10 are higher than those for the control group. D 1 was even for both groups while the remainder were lower for the experimental group than the control group. Only D 6, D 7, D 8, and D 10 differences were in the direction hypothesized by the experimenter.

TABLE 4
 MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON THE SELF-ESTEEM
 INVENTORY FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Experimental (N=26)		Control (N=24)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
54.46	13.80	58.33	14.16

TABLE 5
 SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE SELF-
 ESTEEM INVENTORY BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	157.12	157.12	.72
Sex	1	175.77	175.77	.80
Interaction	1	202.80	202.80	.92
Within	46	10101.25	219.60	

TABLE 6

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON THE DEVEREUX ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE FOR EXPERIMENTAL
AND CONTROL GROUPS

Subscale	Experimental (N=26)		Control (N=24)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
D 1 (Classroom Disturbance)	11.58	4.52	11.58	3.69
D 2 (Impatience)	11.62	4.82	11.58	3.19
D 3 (Disrespect- Defiance)	7.66	2.98	7.34	3.02
D 4 (External Blame)	9.31	3.86	9.13	3.52
D 5 (Achievement Anxiety)	10.54	3.43	9.83	3.56
D 6 (External Reliance)	14.73	4.93	16.88	4.35
D 7 (Comprehension)	13.23	3.13	11.17	3.21
D 8 (Inattentive- Withdrawn)	10.69	5.30	11.17	4.50
D 9 (Irrelevant- Responsiveness)	7.92	2.65	7.62	2.96
D 10 (Creative Initiative)	10.58	3.35	9.25	3.07
D 11 (Need for Close- ness to the Teacher)	12.31	3.24	13.62	4.32

The analysis of variance data for the DESB, reported in Tables 7-17, indicated a statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence between means for the experimental and control groups on only one subscale, D 7 (Table 13). The F value of D 7 (5.14) is greater than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence (4.06). The experimental group received a significantly higher mean score on the dependent variable measuring comprehension. As seen in Tables 7-12 and Tables 14-17 there were no other statistically significant differences found between experimental and control groups mean scores. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence (4.06).

An inspection of Table 18 indicates that the subjects who received the CDG had lower differences between pretest and posttest mean scores (1.00) on the BRAP than subjects in the control group (2.29). These scores indicate that the control group improved their classroom behavior more than the experimental group.

The analysis of variance data on the BRAP reported in Table 19 indicated no statistically significant difference between means for the experimental group and control group at the .05 level of confidence. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex.

TABLE 7

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 1)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	.01	.01	.00
Sex	1	120.66	120.66	6.44*
Interaction	1	.35	.35	.02
Within	46	861.49	18.73	

* $p < .05$

TABLE 8

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 2)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	.07	.07	.00
Sex	1	233.02	233.02	11.84*
Interaction	1	6.29	6.29	.32
Within	46	905.17	19.68	

* $p < .05$

TABLE 9

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 3)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	1.33	1.33	.13
Sex	1	36.84	36.84	3.64
Interaction	1	.31	.31	.03
Within	46	465.74	10.12	

TABLE 10

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 4)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	.94	.94	.06
Sex	1	21.42	21.42	1.39
Interaction	1	13.14	13.14	1.18
Within	46	708.94	15.41	

TABLE 11

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 5)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	8.22	8.22	.61
Sex	1	.43	.43	.03
Interaction	1	22.69	22.69	1.68
Within	46	622.90	13.54	

TABLE 12

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 6)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	52.48	52.48	2.17
Sex	1	23.32	23.32	.96
Interaction	1	16.13	16.13	.67
Within	46	1114.65	24.23	

TABLE 13

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 7)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	58.18	58.18	5.14*
Sex	1	6.84	6.84	.60
Interaction	1	19.16	19.16	1.69
Within	46	520.83	11.32	

* $p < .05$

TABLE 14

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 8)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	4.12	4.12	.15
Sex	1	131.40	131.40	4.68*
Interaction	1	16.00	16.00	.57
Within	46	1230.94	28.06	

* $p < .05$

TABLE 15

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 9)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	1.49	1.49	.17
Sex	1	61.66	61.66	6.85*
Interaction	1	6.05	6.05	.67
Within	46	414.08	9.00	

* $p < .05$

TABLE 16

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 10)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	25.97	25.97	2.24
Sex	1	8.72	8.72	.75
Interaction	1	26.77	26.77	2.31
Within	46	532.54	11.58	

TABLE 17

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE DEVEREUX
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE (D 11)
BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	19.28	19.28	1.23
Sex	1	.72	.72	.05
Interaction	1	9.83	9.83	.63
Within	46	722.38	15.70	

TABLE 18

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR CHANGE SCORES ON THE
TEACHER RATING FORM ON BEHAVIOR RELATED TO
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND
CONTROL GROUPS

Experimental (N=26)		Control (N=24)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.59	2.29	5.25

TABLE 19

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR CHANGE SCORES
ON TEACHER RATING FORM ON BEHAVIOR RELATED TO ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	19.94	19.94	.74
Sex	1	2.30	2.30	.09
Interaction	1	.95	.95	.04
Within	46	1237.83	26.91	

Null Hypothesis Three was rejected because of the statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group means on D 7 (comprehension).

Hypothesis Four: School Attendance

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences between students' school attendance in the CDG group and the control group as measured by school attendance records. Table 20 indicates slightly higher mean school absences (.43) for the experimental group than the control group (.41).

The analysis of variance data reported in Table 21 indicated no statistically significant difference between means for the experimental group and the control group at the .05 level of confidence. There were no statistically significant

TABLE 20

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS ON ATTENDANCE
FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Experimental (N=26)		Control (N=24)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
.43	.63	.41	1.02

TABLE 21

SUMMARY TABLE FOR ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR
ATTENDANCE BY GROUP AND SEX

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	.00	.00	.00
Sex	1	.01	.01	.01
Interaction	1	.02	.02	.03
Within	46	38.15	.83	

interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence (4.06). Null Hypothesis Four was corroborated.

Hypothesis Five: Sex Differences

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences between the sex of subjects in the CDG and control groups as measured by the 15 dependent variables. An examination of Table 22 indicates that females had a higher mean score for the DAM, D 5, D 7, D 10, and BRAP (change) than did the males. On the other 10 dependent variables the males had higher mean scores.

In Tables 7, 8, 14, and 15 the analysis of the variance data indicate statistically significant differences between sexes on the dependent variables of D 1, D 2, D 8, and D 9 respectively. Each of these F values exceeds the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence (4.06). In the rating of classroom disturbance, impatience, inattentive-withdrawn, and irrelevant responsiveness females scored significantly more positively than did males. No other F values for sex comparisons in Tables 7-15 exceeded the F statistic (4.06). Null Hypothesis Five was rejected.

Summary of Results

Statistically significant difference at the .05 level of

TABLE 22
 MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS BY SEX OF SUBJECT

Variable	Female (N=27)		Male (N=23)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
DAM	82.81	11.55	80.70	9.48
SEI	54.52	14.66	58.43	13.16
D 1 (Classroom Disturbance)	10.15	3.85	13.26	4.45
D 2 (Impatience)	9.59	3.22	13.96	5.00
D 3 (Disrespect- Defiance)	6.71	2.53	8.44	3.56
D 4 (External Blame)	8.59	3.07	9.96	4.43
D 5 (Achievement Anxiety)	10.26	3.12	10.13	3.94
D 6 (External Reliance)	15.11	4.16	16.52	5.23
D 7 (Comprehension)	12.56	2.66	11.87	3.76
D 8 (Inattentive- Withdrawn)	9.44	4.46	12.65	5.68
D 9 (Irrelevant- Responsiveness)	6.74	2.21	9.00	3.49
D 10 (Creative Initiative)	10.29	3.40	9.52	2.99
D 11 (Need for Close- ness to the Teacher)	12.82	3.84	13.09	3.66
BRAP (Change)	1.82	4.35	1.39	5.59
School Attendance	.41	.96	.43	.65

confidence was found on one subscale of the DESB (comprehension) between experimental and control group mean scores. No significant differences were found between experimental and control group mean scores on the other 14 dependent variables. There were significant differences on four DESB subscales (classroom disturbance, impatience, inattentive-withdrawn, and irrelevant responsiveness) between female and male group mean scores. No significant differences were found between sexes on the other 11 dependent variables. No significant interaction effects between group (experimental-control) and sex (female-male) were found on any of the 15 dependent variables.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a developmentally based group counseling unit on fourth and fifth grade children of divorce who were exhibiting academic behavior problems in the classroom. Specifically the study examined five hypotheses regarding the subjects' family and divorce attitudes, self-esteem, classroom behavior, and school attendance.

Children of divorce who exhibited behavioral problems related to academic performance were selected from the fourth and fifth grades of five schools in Alachua County, Florida. From a group of children whose parents had given written approval for the research, an experimental group (N=26) and a control group (N=24) were randomly selected from a separate list of boys and girls for each school. There were 27 girls and 23 boys included in the research.

These subjects were administered the criterion measures which examined attitudes toward family and divorce: the Divorce Attitude Measure (DAM), self-esteem, the Self-Esteem Inventory

(SEI), classroom behavior, the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (DESB), and the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance (BRAP), and school attendance. The BRAP was used for selection criteria and was administered before and after the treatment. The remainder of the dependent variable measures were administered after the CDG unit was completed. The research lasted a total of seven weeks.

During the first week the BRAP was administered to the teachers of each child of divorce in the fourth and fifth grades at each of the five schools. The custodial parents of the 10 lowest scoring boys and the 10 lowest scoring girls in each school were sent a letter requesting permission for their child to be included in the study. From the 64 positive responses the experimental and control groups were selected during the second week.

Over the next four weeks the CDG unit was led by the elementary school counselor in each school. The control group received no counselor intervention at this time. During the seventh week the posttreatment data were collected.

The data collected were analyzed by a 2x2 analysis of variance to determine the effects of the two independent variables (group and sex of subject) on each of the 15 dependent variables. These data related directly to the following hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding attitudes on family and divorce, as measured by the Divorce Attitude Measure.

The analysis of variance comparing the means of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence. Null Hypothesis One was confirmed.

2. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.

The analysis of variance comparing the means of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Null Hypothesis Two was confirmed.

3. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the Teacher Rating Form on Behavior Related to Academic Performance.

The analysis of variance comparing the means of the experimental and control groups indicated a statistically significant difference on D 7 (comprehension) at the .05 level of confidence. The experimental group received the higher (positive) mean score on behavior related to comprehending the curriculum and teacher in the classroom. No other statistically significant differences related to treatment were indicated at the .05 level of confidence. Null Hypothesis Three was rejected.

4. There will be no significant difference between the CDG group and the control group regarding school attendance, as measured by school attendance records.

The analysis of variance comparing the means of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Null Hypothesis Four was confirmed.

5. There will be no significant differences between sex of subjects in the CDG group and the control group as assessed by the five criterion measures.

The analysis of variance comparing the means of boys and girls on the DAM, SEI, BRAP (change), and school attendance indicated no statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence. Statistical significance was found at the .05 level on the following DESB subscales: D 1 (classroom disturbance); D 2 (impatience); D 3 (inattentive-withdrawn); and D 9 (irrelevant-responsiveness). In each case the girls' mean was the more positive. On the remaining scales of the DESB there were no statistically significant differences due to sex of subject at the .05 level of confidence. Null Hypothesis Five was rejected.

Discussion of Results

The only statistically significant results found related to the small group counseling ^{were two findings. The first one being in the change} was that the subjects who ^{in the self-concept score at the time the subjects received the CDG and} received the CDG were better able to comprehend the curriculum ^{the second one being no change in the anxiety factor score} _{look at p 70 manual}

and the teacher than were the control subjects. There are two possible explanations for this result. First, the CDG may have dealt with unresolved conflict and/or intense feelings in a therapeutic way, allowing the subject to focus more accurately on the classroom activities. The second plausible explanation is that the statistical significance was an experimental-wise error in that 5 percent probability exists that the significance was due to chance.

The three DESB items on the comprehension subscale (D 7) ask the teacher to rate how well the child gets the point of what he reads or hears in class, is able to apply what he has learned to a new situation, and knows the material when called upon to recite in class. Further research is needed to determine if the significance on this dimension can be justly related to the CDG.

There were four significant differences between boys and girls on the DESB. The results indicated that the boys were more disturbing (D 1), impatient (D 2), inattentive-withdrawn (D 8), and irrelevant (D 9) in their classroom behavior as rated by teachers. This significance is not related to treatment. The results describe a rated behavioral difference between boys and girls of divorce across both experimental and control groups. In the DESB manual (Spivack & Swift, 1967) it is stated that boys tend to score higher on D 1 (classroom

disturbance), D 2 (impatience), D 3 (disrespect-defiance), and D 6 (external reliance). The results of this study confirm these findings with boys and girls of divorce on subscales D 1 and D 2. No significant differences were found on subscales D 3 and D 6. The significant differences found on D 8 and D 9 were not anticipated on inspection of the DESB manual. This may indicate that the boys of divorce are significantly higher in these areas than the girls of divorce while girls and boys in general are comparable. These findings support further investigation into the possible different effect divorce has on girls and boys.

Limitations

There were several possible limitations to this study. The population under study was different than the one investigated in the pilot studies. In this study the children of divorce with behavior problems related to academic performance made up the population. In the pilot studies there were no selection criteria other than the fact that the children had divorced parents. The combination of two selection criteria may have made the effects of the CDG more difficult to measure. When only the one selection criterion was used, as in both the pilot studies, there were considerable effects attributed to the CDG unit.

This study attempted to measure the effects of small group counseling with children of divorce on various measures. The CDG unit consisted of eight sessions over a period of three to four weeks. There is a possibility that the CDG unit was inadequate in terms of duration. This may be of particular significance in light of the academically related behavior problem population used in this study. Those students who demonstrate such behavioral problems may actually need more sessions than does a more representative sample of the whole student population.

Instrumentation could also have been a significant limitation in this study. The instruments used in this research to measure the dependent variables may not have been sensitive enough to detect slight differences from a short-term small group counseling unit. A factor analysis of the items and further validation of the DAM was intended for this study. This proved unworkable because of restrictions placed on the researcher by the local school district from which the subjects for such analysis were to be chosen.

The final limitation of this study was that the size of the sample was relatively small. This made it difficult to find significance on the dependent variables because of the statistical power of the analysis. A larger sample would reduce the experimental error considerably. On four of the

variables (DAM, D 6, D 8, and D 9) the differences were in the expected directions, but significance was not reached.

Recommendations

The experimenter believes that a replication of this study with some modifications is warranted. The results of the two pilot studies suggested that the CDG was effective in changing the comfort level of children in dealing with divorce issues. As well, considerable subjective reports from counselors, children, and parents indicate that the CDG has had beneficial effects. The lack of statistical significance is contradictory to those opinions. Further study is recommended to investigate this contradiction.

The lengthening of the CDG to 12-14 sessions instead of the 8 sessions may provide the children a greater chance to deal with the sometimes confused and intense emotional experiences surrounding divorce. This would also provide a greater length of time in which behavioral changes can occur.

The focus of the CDG perhaps might be shifted to include all children of divorce, not just those who are experiencing academic behavior problems. The population selected for this study is one with which it is difficult to work and achieve success. Further study about the effects of the CDG on children of divorce in general or on children of divorce with superior academic behavior may provide significant results.

Conclusions

As a result of this study, it can be concluded that there was little statistically significant effect with fourth and fifth grade children of divorce in regard to family and divorce attitudes, self-esteem, classroom behavior, and school attendance due to the Children's Divorce Group. Only one measure of classroom behavior, comprehension, was found to be significantly different between experimental and control groups.

The most noteworthy finding from this study was that there was a significant difference due to the sex of subject on the way teachers rate classroom behavior of children with divorced parents. Boys of divorce were significantly more disruptive, impatient, inattentive, and irrelevant than were girls of divorce. It can be concluded that there are differences between the way teachers rate the classroom behavior of boys and girls of divorce, respectively.

The data collected and analyzed in this study presented contradictory findings to earlier work done on the CDG. The subjective reports from counselors, parents, and students suggest that the CDG does have some positive effects in enabling the child of divorce to more effectively cope with family adjustments. The staggering increase in the number of children associated with divorce points to the need for effective counselor intervention methods in this area.

APPENDICES

7. Attempts new activities-

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very frequently

8. Does not do homework correctly-

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very frequently

9. Demonstrates a readiness to work-

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very frequently

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER

March 17, 1976

To the Parent of _____,

During the next few weeks the elementary guidance counselor in your child's school will be offering a structured group counseling unit for children with divorced parents. One of the important aspects of this project is to study the effectiveness of such counseling on the child's academic behavior in the classroom.

Your child has been selected through the counselor in your child's school as a possible participant in this study. With your approval, your child would be asked to complete two attitude measures. These measures would take about thirty minutes to complete. In addition, your child's teacher would be asked to complete rating forms on behavior related to academic performance.

Some of the children selected will be asked, in addition to the attitude measurement, to participate in the small group counseling. These groups will meet twice weekly for four weeks. In each of the several groups which have been completed during the last year both parents and children have made very positive comments about the group sessions.

This project is an innovative program to be offered by your school's guidance counselor. Because it involves sensitive and personal feelings and experiences, the guidance personnel will treat the group counseling sessions and the measurement data with the utmost respect and confidentiality.

Please indicate below if you approve of your child's participation in this project. If you have any questions regarding any aspect of this project, please contact your child's guidance counselor.

Sincerely,

Gary S. Wilkinson
Elementary Guidance Counselor
P. K. Yonge Laboratory School

_____ I approve of my child's participation.

_____ I do not approve of my child's participation.

_____ I would like more information. Please call me at
the following telephone number _____.

Signature

APPENDIX C

THE CHILDREN'S DIVORCE GROUP

Robert T. Bleck
Littlewood Elementary

Gary S. Wilkinson
P. K. Yonge School

Goals:

1. Clarify child's feelings about the divorce.
2. Help child understand that others are experiencing similar feelings.
3. Help child gain a realistic picture of the divorce situation.
4. Assist child in learning ways of coping with the feelings associated with divorce.

Session I

Objectives:

1. Children will hear the names of all others in the group.
2. The group will cooperatively discuss some simple and important rules for group discussion
3. Children will write and listen to secret statements about each other.

Activities:

1. Naming each other. The counselor asks, "Is there anyone in the group who can name everyone else?" All

those who wish to try are given a chance to do so. The counselor also tries to name every child. If anyone succeeds in naming the first names he/she is then asked to name all the surnames.

2. Discussion rules. "Sometimes people have trouble when they work in groups. What are some easy rules that might help our discussions to be better?" Some common rules are
 - (a) Take turns speaking, only one at a time
 - (b) Raise your hand, if you want to talk
 - (c) Anything said is O.K.
 - (d) Think about what the others are saying
 - (e) Things that are said here are private for the group

3. Sharing a secret. The counselor explains "Everyone here knows something about everyone else. We can see how each other dresses, the color of our eyes and skin, or how we comb our hair. All this we can see. However, we all have information about ourselves that maybe only a few people know. We would call this our secrets. A good way to get to know each other better is to share something secret about ourselves." The counselor then gives a personal example of a secret. "I might write about a time I got in trouble and was caught. I might write about something that I did this summer or something unpleasant that happened to me, or something pleasant that happened." The counselor collects the papers and reads to the group, pointing out similarities and differences where appropriate. The children are then encouraged to verbally share any other secrets that might have come to mind.

Session II

Objectives:

1. Each child will have the opportunity to self-disclose to members of the group.
2. A list of feeling words, categorized as pleasant or unpleasant, will be made by the group to increase the group members' feeling vocabulary.

Activities:

1. An animal like you. The counselor says, "Last time we shared secrets and we started to become better acquainted with each other. Today we are going to do something a little different. I'm going to hand out a piece of colored paper and I would like you to draw a picture of one animal that you feel is most like you. For example, I would draw a lion because sometimes I growl at people if they get me mad. I knew somebody else who once drew a bear because he was very lazy and liked to sleep a lot. Someone else drew a mouse because he liked to eat a lot of cheese. Some people I know drew deer because these people were as gentle as little deer. Remember, try to think of an animal that is most like you. After you draw your animal, cut it out and write your name on the front of it." When everyone is finished, the counselor encourages group members to share their animal, giving reasons for their selection. Similarities and differences in choices are pointed out.
2. Pleasant and unpleasant feeling words. The counselor says, "As people get to know each other better it is important they recognize and share their feelings. Now, we are going to list as many feelings as we can think of. We'll make two lists because some feelings can be pleasant, while others might be unpleasant. Let's list as many as we can." If the children are having difficulty the counselor can provide assistance by asking questions such as, "What kind of feeling do you have on your birthday? What kind of feelings do you have if you are playing a game and losing?"

Session IIIObjectives:

1. Children will see a filmstrip on divorce.
2. A list of feelings, behaviors and consequences that the children can identify from the filmstrip will be made.
3. Other feelings associated with divorce, but not evident in the filmstrip, will also be listed similarly.

Activities:

1. Filmstrip and discussion. Counselor introduces filmstrip, "Understanding Changes in the Family: Divorce," to the group members. After the filmstrip the counselor encourages the members to identify and discuss the various feelings exhibited by the characters in the filmstrip. The counselor asks members to recall specific scenes and help them discuss the feelings, behavior, and consequences pertaining to the scenes. Each feeling ---- behavior ---- consequence sequence is listed on a large sheet of paper.

Next the counselor asks, "Are there any other feelings associated with divorce which we can add to our list?" With the entire list the counselor then asks, "Would anyone like to share a time when they had one of these feelings related to their family?" The counselor leads the members to disclose the feeling ---- behavior ---- consequence sequence by asking, "What did that feeling make you do?" and "What happened as a result of what you did?" These sequences are listed on another sheet of paper.

Session IVObjectives:

1. Children will share personal feelings about divorce.

Activities:

1. Personal shield. The counselor says, "Last time we discussed many feelings which are associated with divorce. Today we are going to continue dealing with the feelings and behaviors surrounding divorce through pictures. On each of the shields that I'm handing out, there are four separate parts. For each part I will describe what I would like you to draw." The counselor then gives the following directives:
 - (a) Draw a picture about a good time you had with your family.
 - (b) Draw a picture about a time when you had an unpleasant time with your family.
 - (c) Draw a picture which stands for why you think your parents got a divorce.

- (d) Draw a picture of something you would like to see happening with your family in the next year.

When everyone is finished the counselor asks the group members to place their shields in front of them so all can see. A volunteer is then asked to share and describe one or more of the drawings to the others. The counselor will reflect feelings which have surfaced as a result of the sharing. Similarities and differences are pointed out where appropriate.

Session V

Objectives:

1. Children will develop a list of problem situations associated with divorce.
2. Children will select from the list those situations which are of most concern to them.
3. Children will dramatize selected situations through roleplaying.
4. Children will discuss the various feelings which are portrayed in the roleplay.

Activities:

1. Brainstorming problems. Counselor says, "During the last few weeks we have discussed many of the feelings and behaviors associated with families which are not together anymore. Now we are going to talk about many of the problems which are created by the divorce. To do so, let's make a list of as many problems as we can think of. Don't be afraid to mention any problem which comes to mind."
2. Ranking problems. The counselor continues: "Let's try to decide which 2 or 3 of these are the ones most important to the group." The group then votes on the problem situations which are most important to them.
3. Roleplay problems. The counselor then structures the roleplay of important situations by asking the members

what characters are needed and recruiting volunteers to play these characters. The counselor can give further direction by describing an appropriate setting and suggesting beginning dialogue. If necessary other group members may assist the characters in dialogue or action. Each roleplay will last between 3 and 5 minutes. After each roleplay situation, the counselor leads a discussion focusing on the important feelings and behaviors of each character. The consequences of each character's action should be further discussed.

Session VI

Objectives:

1. Children will dramatize selected problem situations through puppetplay.
2. Children will discuss feelings evoked through the puppetry.
3. Children will dramatize alternative ways of handling the problem situations and discuss the various consequences of each alternative.

Activities:

1. Puppet plays. Counselor says, "Last time we listed many problem situations which occur when families spilt up. We had a chance to roleplay a few of these and discuss the feelings and behavior of each play. Today we will use puppets to dramatize any of the problem situations discussed last time or any new one you may wish to add. Who would like to be the director of our first play? The director will make up a story and tell the other characters who they are and what he wants them to do. The director can pick any member from the group to help him." After the puppet play the counselor leads a group discussion of the feelings, behaviors, and consequences of the characters in the play.

The counselor then asks the members to suggest alternative ways of dealing with the enacted problem. Once these are clarified the puppet play can be re-enacted

using the new alternatives. As before, the discussion will center on feelings, behaviors, and consequences.

Other puppet plays can be created as time allows.

Session VII

Objectives:

1. Children will discuss positive aspects of the divorce situation.

Activities:

1. Divorce collage. Counselor says, "During these few weeks we have been talking about the problems and unpleasant feelings surrounding divorce. Today I'd like us to think about those things which have turned out to be pleasant or positive as a result of your parents separating. Some children I know have said that it has been easier to have their friends visit because they now don't have to worry about their parents fighting. Other children have said that after the breakup they have gotten to know one of their parents a lot better. Let's now make a collage of those pleasant situations which have come about because of the divorce. Look through these magazines and cut out pictures which could stand for those situations. You may also draw pictures to represent situations which you cannot find in the magazines." When children are through, the counselor encourages them to share their collages. The counselor reflects and clarifies where appropriate and points out similarities and differences mentioned by group members.

The counselor then says, "Has anyone ever shared these ideas and feelings with one or both of your parents? Do you feel that it might be important for them to hear these ideas and feelings? How do you feel about sharing these collages with them? What are some other ways we can tell them these pleasant things?"

Session VIIIObjectives:

1. Children will give and receive positive feedback.

Activities:

1. Positive feedback. The counselor says: "Often we want to tell each other how we feel about them, but sometimes we find it hard to put into words. Telling a person how you feel about what they are doing or what they have done is called feedback. I would like a volunteer to sit in the hot seat. Now I would like the rest of the group to give this person positive feedback, or tell him only your pleasant thoughts about him." Each child who wishes to volunteer for the hot seat is given the opportunity.

APPENDIX D

COMFORT SCALE

Circle One

Name: _____

1. Thinking about my parents divorce:

Very Uncomfortable											Very Comfortable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

2. Talking to other children about the divorce:

Very Uncomfortable											Very Comfortable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

3. Talking to my mother about the divorce:

Very Uncomfortable											Very Comfortable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

4. Talking to my father about the divorce:

Very Uncomfortable											Very Comfortable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

5. Talking to other adults about the divorce:

Very Uncomfortable											Very Comfortable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

APPENDIX E

DIVORCE ATTITUDE MEASURE

by
Gary S. Wilkinson

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____ DATE _____

PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER-

1. It bothers me to think about my parents' divorce.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. It upsets me to talk to other children about the divorce.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. Talking to my mother about the divorce is hard.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. Talking to my father about the divorce is hard.

1	2	3	4	8
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. I get upset when other adults talk with me about the divorce.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

6. I get along well with children my age.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. It is hard to share my feelings with my friends.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. My classmates understand me.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. I feel lonely.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. When I am upset, my friends are a big help.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. My father does not understand me.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. Knowing what my father thinks of me is important.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. I know my father's feelings about the divorce.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. When my father and I talk, I am able to say just what I want to say.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. My father is a big help when I am upset.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. My mother does not understand me.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. Knowing what my mother thinks of me is important.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

18. I know my mother's feelings about the divorce.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

19. When my mother and I talk, I am able to say just what I want to say.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. My mother is a big help when I am upset.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

21. My home life has become more difficult since my parents divorced.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

22. If I had one wish it would be to get my parents together again.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

23. The divorce has brought about some good changes in my life.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

24. I spend a great deal of time worrying about my parents' divorce.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

25. I am embarrassed when others find out my parents are divorced.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

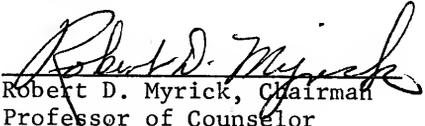
Gary Scott Wilkinson was born January 10, 1946, in Orange, New Jersey. He attended the Peddie School in Hightstown, New Jersey until 1963. From 1963 until 1969, he matriculated at the University of Virginia where he received his undergraduate degree and a master's in school psychology. After graduation he spent one year working for the Charlottesville Public Schools as a school psychologist.

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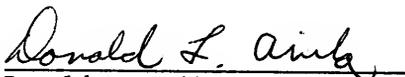
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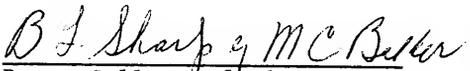

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