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# Records of Group Work Practice in India

*Edited by :*  
Perviz Markand Bhatt



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FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK,  
Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda,  
BARODA.



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF  
ADVANCED STUDY  
SIMLA**

# Records of Group Work Practice in India

*Edited by :*

**PERVIZ MARKAND BHATT,**

B.A. ( Bom. ); Dip. S.S.A.( Tata Inst. of Social Science, Bom. );  
M.S.W. ( University of Toronto, Canada ).



1960

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK,  
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda,  
BARODA.**

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UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS SALES UNIT,

Near Palace Gate, Palace Road, BARODA 1 ( India ).

Printed by Ramanlal J. Patel, Manager, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda Press  
( Sadhana Press ), Near Palace Gate, Palace Road, Baroda-1.

Published by Mrs. Indra S. Tayal, Dean, Faculty of Social Work, University Road, Baroda-2  
January 1960.

## INTRODUCTION

In the field of education for social work in India, the teachers of social work methods, have long felt a need for records of social work practice in Indian setting. We need a large and varied collection of records which would illustrate the practice of social work in different settings, which would give the students an opportunity to gain more awareness of the cultural and social factors, as well as give illustrations of social work practice in their country. It was felt that the use of this kind of recorded material in class would help the students in the integration of theory and practice.

It is hoped that this work will make a small contribution to this need, and will prove useful in the teaching of social group work. It includes records of group work practice in different types of social welfare agencies; community welfare centres—urban as well as rural, correctional institutions, institutions for the care of handicapped children, and hospitals. The records have been selected from the field work practice of the students, of the Faculty of Social Work. There is considerable variation in skill and method of handling. Records selected do not show only positive handling by worker, but have been chosen for their suitability for teaching. Identifying material has been disguised.

There is at times tendency to equate social group work with “fun and games” and to miss the social work content. Attempt has been made here to emphasise the social work focus and each record contains material both the setting as well as the helping method used by the worker. Teaching notes have been added at the end, which suggest some areas for discussion in class. These are only suggestive and are by no means exhaustive, as each teacher would wish to use the records differently in relation to the level of experience of the students.

I am grateful to many persons for their assistance in the preparation of this work : to all my colleagues at the Faculty of Social Work who have helped me in collecting this material; to the students whose beginning skill and real desire to help people can be seen so clearly in the recorded material. I would especially like to acknowledge the help given by my colleague at the Faculty, Mr. S. R. Yardi who discussed the records with

me and undertook the task of proof-reading. As a social worker I express my indebtedness to the many persons who as clients of social welfare agencies shared their problems with us and worked with us in the task of achieving a happier society.

PERVIZ MARKAND BHATT.

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## THE VILLAGE WOMEN MEET

*Introductory Comments :* The group of women ranging in age from 20-40 met with a woman worker in the rural community welfare centre. Excerpts have been taken from the record to show the discussions with the group on different topics; these discussions were of a spontaneous nature and took place simultaneously with the group activity which might be knitting or embroidery. Often the women let the work stop and focused mainly on the discussion.

### Group Members

Champaben	40	Maniben	32
Nirmalaben	35	Sumitraben	25
Gangaben	36	Vatsalaben	20
Jamnaben	30	Ramaben	28

### PURDAH\*

*6th August :*

The women today talked about the extramarital relationships that existed in the village and felt that there was nothing they could do about it. The women were very bitter and said that the men of the village were all the same and no one had any shame. They also advised me to take care of myself and not to move about in the village after dark. Then I asked them what they thought were the causes of such an atmosphere in the village ? No one answered. But Champaben got very excited and began to attack me. She commented on my fancy hair style, my habit of not covering my head, and said that due to new fashions and the abolition of the purdah the men were more attracted towards the women. So women had also a share of the blame in the conditions that prevailed. I said that even when women observed the purdah system the same things did happen. Then she said that it was not strict enough, previously the purdah system was very strict and then she began to show the different types of purdah much to the amusement of all the members. Then she said that now a new era had started and it would be difficult to improve the society as the children would also learn the bad ways from their parents. I said that

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\* The custom where by the women is expected to cover her face with the saree in the presence of older male relatives.

that was just the reason why they had to think about it because at least we hoped that our new generation should have a better life.

Then Champaben again got angry and said how it would be possible to have that when the women started to do work, she was very annoyed with me. She said that if she was able to meet my parents she would advise them to find out a husband for me in whose family I would have to grind five seers of grain every day. When she started to talk it was very difficult to stop her. The other women did not say much but they enjoyed the the discussion. I said little, smiled and heard her quietly.

I was interested in Champaben's feelings towards me. She had a somewhat motherly attitude towards me, although there seemed to be also some mixed feelings of jealousy and anger as she might think how this young girl dares to talk about such topics. Also some feelings of guilt arising out of the consciousness that the village women were responsible to some extent for the conditions that existed. This discussion has given me an opportunity to get to know the group members better. Today it was difficult to divert the attention of the group members from the fun and comments of Champaben to the seriousness of the topic but I plan to use discussions to help them start thinking on these and similar subjects.

*11th August :*

When we were talking I mentioned that there would be a special holiday on 15th August. The women did not know anything about the significance of that day. They said that they did not know much about such days but they did know the religious festivals and observed those.

Then Nirmalaben said that sometimes on Chora or village meeting place there were functions on such days. She said she did not attend it as she had to keep Purdah of the elders of the village. She said that if she refused to observe the custom the women would comment that she had gotten fancy ideas after living in the city for some time. She added that she liked the custom because it was a way of giving respect to elders. I asked her whether she thought all the women in the village liked the purdah system. She said that no one liked it, but if they would not observe it people would criticise them and say that they had become shameless and showed their faces to all men. I asked her what she thought could be done about this custom. She replied that in the city many women were

not observing this custom but in the village because of the criticism it was difficult.

*25th August :*

While we were sitting on the verandah and knitting, a woman passed by with a purdah on her face. One of the group members said, this was their custom and they had to observe it whether they liked it or disliked it. If they would not observe it, people would criticise them about their illegal relationship with men. Also purdah was needed to give respect to elders.

I asked them if there were extramarital relationships although the custom of purdah was observed. The women laughed and one of them said that it was quite true, such relationship did exist in their village. Then I asked them what were their ideas about giving respect to elders, how could this be done. They said that they had to take care of the elders, they should not speak against them, they should do according to their wishes. Then I said that may be these were some of the real ways of showing their respect to elders, but I asked if they were really able to show such respect to their elders. Then they said it was true at times older members of the family had a very difficult time and were badly treated.

I also remarked that Purdah would be inconvenient at the time of serving food to the elders. Then the women laughed and said that they could see all things through the saree. Then I asked what did they think was the use of the purdah. They said that it was only for show, but since there was no unity among the women, it was very difficult to do anything to remove the custom.

Then one woman asked me about my family. I replied that many years ago the custom of Purdah must have prevailed in our family also, but as the understanding came this custom has been removed. Nirmalaben said that in their community it was very difficult. I said that I realised it, but as now the six of them understood it, slowly and gradually the change would come. It might take years. Then Jamna said that it was a good idea to have such discussions.

### **Marriage Customs**

*22nd August :*

Then members mentioned that they did not have to cook today as it was a fast day.

I had taken with me a copy of the village magazine, in which I had written an article about the custom of dowery. They asked me to read it aloud to them. I had written it in the form of a dialouge, where I had used the names of the group members. They seemed both pleased and amused by it.

Then they started talking about their own problems. I asked them what they thought they could do since they found the dowery custom to be so troublesome? Champaben said that they would work hard and get money so that they could afford to get their daughters married off well. Jamnaben said that they were already working hard. Then Champaben said that when the people did not have money how they would be able to give the dowery. She felt that gradually the circumstances would force them to give up the custom. She gave her own example and said that she did not wish to do any reforms but her economic condition was such that she could not give money but only ornaments in the marriage of her daughters. However she had found it very difficult at the time of the marriage of her last daughter.

Ramaben said that the best way was to do according to the Village X. There the Panchayat had decided to fine any person who gave a dowery. They were not even allowed to have expensive musicians for the marriage celebrations. The group members said that this was not possible in this village. I asked why? Then they replied that there were a number of quarrels between the families and much competition for power. One of the member said that this village was no good. She suggested that I should go to some other village where I would get cooperation. I said that they (group members) had started to think and understand about the village and gradually the people would get more understanding.

*9th October :*

We were talking of this being the marriage season and Jamnaben said that she was going to get both her daughter—thirteen and sixteen years old—married at the same time because this would mean less expense. I reminded her about the law against child marriage. Then she said that they were prepared to pay the fine, because even then they would have less expense. I asked them whether they knew why Government objected to child marriages. Then we discussed the advantages and disadvantages of child marriage. They felt that in early marriages sometimes the girls had to suffer much. But as the whole caste had a custom of early mar-

riages, if they did not marry their daughters early, they would not be able to get good husbands for them.

Sumitraben said they had to behave according to the caste custom. If the girl could not get a suitable boy from the particular villages, the girl had to marry with an old man, but her parents could not get her married to a boy from another village though he may be of the same caste. They all believed that some change was necessary, but felt that it was very difficult. Sumitraben said sometimes it was necessary to do things differently, she herself had married her daughter to a serviceman, although in their community they gave first preference to the owners of land.

*29th October :*

Today Gangaben asked about my marriage. I told her that I was not married as I was still studying. Then she asked me if I would not be able to marry without study. I replied that I liked to study and tried to explain its advantage. But she became angry and said that if I would not be dependant on my husband then on whom would I be dependant. She said I should marry soon and leave the idea of doing a job, as it was very shameful for girls to go to work. I said that there were many useful things that women could do; I gave the example of lady doctors.

*19th November :*

They again suggested today that I should get married. From their talk I gathered that they liked the idea of the girl selecting a husband of her choice. However in the beging of the discussion they started by being rather critical of this idea. At the end they said that marriages which were according to the choice of both the girl as well as the boy were most desirable.

Then one of them said, half in fun and half seriously, what they could do about it now, that all of them had been married for a pretty long time. I told them that they could think about it at the time of their children's marriage. This seemed like a very new idea to them. For a while there was silence in the group. Then they smiled and said they did not know what changes would come in the future.

But I was pleased that they had atleast begun to think about it.

*6th December :*

Before the film show was to start, the workers started the music records and slowly the people began to assemble. Some of the girls came

and sat with me. Kanta had recently come from her Father-in-law's place, so I talked with her. Then all the girls started to ask me about marriage. They talked among themselves about the custom in the cities where the boys and girls could select their own partners, they could talk to each other before marriage, they could write letters to each other. In their talk about these customs there was a mixture of amazement that such things could be possible, as well as amusement.

Many of the girls were recently married. I asked them what they thought of the system where the boy and girl meet before the marriage. They said they liked the idea very much. But they had felt shy to tell their parents that they should be shown the boy before marriage. I said that I could understand that, but would they keep this point in mind when one day they had to get their own children married. They all laughed.

### **Child Care and Other Social Customs**

*7th November :*

The group members had heard today that the children's health programme was started in a nearby village, while the one that had been initiated in their village was to be closed. They asked me why it was stopped. Then we discussed some of the difficulties in continuing the programme; mainly one of lack of local initiative.

They said they thought the programme would be very useful for the children but they could not take the responsibility, as the whole village would criticise them that why they should care about the village, and take the responsibilities of the whole village on their shoulders. I said that it was quite possible that if any person wanted to do some work he would have to face some criticism. Then Champaben asked why they should hear the criticism for other people's children. I said that that was the main trouble, we did not think of the village children as our children. Then Champaben said that such unity and cooperation were impossible in this village. No one was going to improve, she advised me to keep on doing the embroidery and not bother about such discussions which only gave trouble to the brain. Then I said that this was my work, I would be discussing these matters with them, as they were the problems of the village in which all were concerned, the embroidery was a way whereby we could all meet together.

Then Gangaben said that in this village it was not possible, so it would be better if I would stop working here. I said that if we were hungry

we had to cook, similarly, if we wanted to do something, we had to start at least to think about it.

Champaben suggested that they were willing to contribute money to pay a woman who would do the work, but they themselves could not take the responsibility. The other members who were present on that day also agreed to contribute but said that they could not ask others to contribute.

#### *12th November :*

The group members started to talk about a dinner that was to be held that evening because of the death of an old lady. I asked them about the purpose of this custom of dinners after the death of someone. They said that in this way charity could be done so that the dead person could benefit in heaven. I remarked that it was a good idea to give in charity, in this world, but we were not knowing about heaven. They laughed and said that it was a belief.

Then I asked if they liked to eat sweets after someone's death. Champaben replied that they did not think the death of an old lady so painful. She added that after the death of a young person they did not give dinner to the whole community, but they gave something in charity to the school or some other institution. She said that the basic purpose of this custom was good but afterwards for the sake of show and prestige people often entered into debts to perform this ceremony. The women discussed this point for sometime, felt that this was the worst part of the custom.

#### *13th November :*

Today one of the group members talked about her daughter-in-law who had died, as her clothes had caught fire accidentally. She said that at that time she (mother-in-law) was in menstruation, so she hesitated to touch her, as she felt that was not permissible by religion. I found that she felt guilty about not having helped to save her daughter-in-law. I asked her more about the situation and she said that there were many other persons present but all were so frightened that nothing much could be done. Her brother-in-law had thrown a pot of water on her body. We discussed what should be done in case of fire.

Then I asked the women that they knew about the custom of not touching anything during menstruation. They said that they did not know anything, however they believed that if they did not observe this custom

some evil would befall them. I asked them many questions about how evil would befall them for non-observation of this custom, but they could not reply how they would be affected or what was bad about menstruation. I said that it might be possible that the elders had established such a custom in order to secure some rest for the women and they presented it as a religious concept so that people would observe it. Then I explained them the process of menstruation and explained that it was a natural physiological process. Then they said that as it was common to all women, there was nothing bad in it, but they had to observe the custom.

*15th November :*

While we were looking at one of the magazines there was a picture of Mahatma Gandhi. When I asked them about him, they said that they did not know anything about him. So I told them something about his work in the field of women's welfare and welfare of Harijans.

This talk reminded them of a particular incident. Nirmalaben described one incident when they had taken food together with the Harijans in one village. She said that on that day it was decided that Harijans had to serve and all other communities had to take food together. But the members of the communities were not ready for it. Also they wanted to respect the person who had arranged the dinner. So they asked the Bhil community persons to act as Harijans, and asked them to serve the food. The Harijans also agreed to this arrangement, and the dinner was held to the satisfaction of all. I asked them what were their feelings about Harijans. They said that as they had to live in their village society they did not mix with them. But if the whole village was ready they had no objection. Then I asked what they felt when the other higher community people did not mix with them. They said that they were used to it. But then Nirmalaben said that they did not consider their caste inferior because she knew how the caste system had come into existence. She said that it depended on who had the power. Before many years there was a Bhil king so the people used to obey him, then slowly the power shifted from the hand of one group to another and the people considered the persons with the greatest power to be superior.

*20th November :*

The women talked today about the difficulties of bringing up large families. The nurse who had been invited to the meeting today, and I talked

to them about the different methods of family planning, and the menstrual cycle in women. Then Champaben gave her own experience. She said that after marriage she had menstruated only once and then she conceived. She did not know that she was going to have a child. She used to wear "ghagra and seloo" ( the dress of young adolescent ). She used to tell her mother that her stomach was swollen due to some gas and she should be given some medicine to cure her of it. Then many of the women laughed and added their own experiences of little knowledge about physical matters during their adolescence.

Then I asked them if they felt it would have been better if they had the knowledge before they became mothers. They agreed but asked who could have told them about these things ? I said that mothers were the best persons to give this information, and asked them whether they thought it preferable to prepare their own daughters in this matter ? Some of the women agreed. Kantaben said that nowadays the girls were very clever and they knew all things without being told by anyone.

*13th December :*

Today Jamna expressed her anger towards the hospital as she had come back from the hospital without being operated for sterilization. From her talk I gathered that as she was anaemic the doctors had not felt it advisable to operate. Jamna however felt very angry that they had refused to operate after making all the preparations. I allowed her to express her disappointment and anger. Then I explained to her that due to lack of blood the doctor felt it would be dangerous for her if he operated and hence had postponed the matter. He had prescribed injections and medicines so that her general health could improve. We also discussed about nutritive diet which would help her to improve her condition.

Then I explained to them about other methods of birth control. They were interested and asked questions. Then Jamna commented that now a days the children became very mischievous so that they did not listen to their parents and were a lot of trouble. I told her that it was really difficult to handle five or six children at a time, but what did the group members think, from where did the children learn all these things. Then Champaben said that of course they learnt it from their parents. At this Jamna seemed to feel bad. I remarked that at times the parents did not know how to deal with some of the situations that arose. A very common example is one of parents who give threat to the children of

dogs or “ Bawa ”. I took this example as I had observed it to be a common method for parents to handle children who were naughty. Some of the group members commented that this was so and this might make the child timid or withdrawn.

Then Champaben gave her own example that once in her childhood she had seen the police beating a man in the bazar, from that day she was very much afraid of the police. Thus the childhood experiences had a deep influence on a person.

Then we discussed how children imitate their parents in walking, sitting, talking etc., and the women were very amused and pleased when they described their children's behaviour.

Jamna said that her five year old son often asked why God had sent his younger brother. I asked why he was behaving like that ? Jamna said that it was quite evident that he felt that his brother would have a share in the property which would otherwise be his; generally in the family they said that God sent his brothers and sisters.

I said that it is likely to confuse the child to be told this. I also commented that may be they were not sure what to say in reply to such questions from the child. Then they asked me what answers they could give ? I said that if they explained that the baby came from the mother's womb, for the time being his question would be answered. Then we discussed about preparing the older children about the arrival of the new baby by telling the other children during the period of pregnancy that one addition to the family would be there soon, they would like to play with him, and such other comments so that the other children also felt that this was a pleasant event in the family.

They seemed interested in this talk but they said that it was difficult for them to take such care of their children when they had so much work to do.

Then Kantaben spoke of her eye trouble. She said that she did not like to go to the hospital. I explained her the importance of treatment. She replied that she would like me to go with her on her first visit to the hospital in the city. I agreed, and said I would inquire about the working days for that department.

One of the group members commented that doctors had no other business, but to examine the sexual organs of the women. I asked her

what she thought, where was the life in our body ? She replied that it was in the heart. She I said that first of all Doctors examined our chest with a stethoscope to count the throbbing of the heart. Then I explained that if our eyes were bad, they would need to examine them; similarly if some women had trouble in menstruation or in pregnancy the doctor would naturally examine the sexual organs. Then she said that I did not understand anything as I had no experience. She gave an example where a woman had bad experience with a private doctor. I said that such a thing might happen, and it would be very disturbing. However in a large hospital there was little danger. Then Champaben said that if the women were afraid of such a thing they could take care and have another woman accompany the patient.

*15th December :*

I came to know that recently three or four families had broken away from the traditional joint family. I asked the group members what they thought of living apart from the joint family ? They replied that as no woman liked to work the whole day, naturally they would prefer to separate from the joint family. Gangaben and Hiraben, both of whom had recently separated from the joint families said that both of them had separated for that reason. I asked them if they had trouble with their mother-in-laws. They asked me if I had ever heard that mother-in-laws were good. It was much better to stay separately than to quarrel daily and separate after a bad quarrel. Just now they had good relationship with their mother-in-laws. I asked them that I had heard that in villages sometimes the mothers gave advice to their daughters not to obey the mother-in-laws as otherwise they would be ruled by them. Gangaben seemed to be embarrassed by this question. Hiraben said that without any advice from the parents, the girls these days were clever enough and knew how to avoid the work of the joint family.

From this discussion I felt that the women had the insight to understand that both parties were responsible for the conditions leading to separation, and also felt that it was more desirable to separate and live peacefully than to have daily quarrels in the family.

Today I also visited Ramaben. From her talk I came to know that her two sons had separated from the family after they had become financially well settled. Her husband was old and could not earn, so that in her old age she had to work. She said that sometimes she felt that she had

brought up her children with great care and now when the time had come to take rest she had to work.

Thus today I had an opportunity to get the point of view of both sides. But I felt that now the conditions were slightly changed. Previously the mother-in-laws were dominating and so the separation took place, but now the daughter-in-laws wanted to escape from the greater responsibility of the joint family and so they willingly wanted to separate.

*23rd December :*

Kantaben said that they had come from the city some hours back because a relative of theirs had died in the village. The women laughed and said that they enjoyed the custom where they had to beat on their chests to show their sorrow at the death of some person. I asked them why they said this. One of them showed me the style of hitting on the chest the person clapped one hand with the other and made a louder noise. They were very much amused and commented that the women competed with one another in seeing who could make the most noise.

Then I asked them if they knew the purpose of such a custom ? They said that they did not know anything but they followed their elders in this matter, they did know that if they refused to go to such occasions then they would be criticised.

Then I said that the purpose of such a custom might be that if the women who were close to the dead person, could give expression to their feelings of sorrow and grief, they would gain a certain amount of relief. Some of the women commented that the original purpose of such a custom was beneficial but when the people forgot this and used them only for show there was no meaning in the observation of such a custom.

Then I said that for many days I was thinking why the village women were so afraid of being criticised ? I asked them if they could tell me something about it as I was very much interested. Then they replied that they felt very bad when someone said anything critical about them. They gave some common examples of how the village people criticised each other. They said that a person could be criticised for wearing glasses, or would be criticised if he chewed "pan". I asked them if they thought it was bad to chew pan. They replied negatively. Then I asked them why they were afraid of criticism if they did not think it was bad. Then Champaben said it was very true, if we did not feel that a thing was bad we need not

feel bad about the criticism. Then I suggested that if five women would start taking pan, they might all be criticised, but then they would have the support of each other. Then they all laughed and said that sometimes it would be a good idea to put it into practice.

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## JUST FLYING KITES

### Brief Note on Agency and Group

The agency was community welfare centre in an urban area. The community of approximately two thousand five hundred, was of a heterogeneous nature in regard to both social and economic position of the families. The agency had worked for five years at the time of record, hence all members had long standing relationships with each other from previous membership in the centre, although they might not have belonged to the same group. At the time of record worker had worked with the group for five months. The group was composed of fourteen boys between the age of ten and fourteen.

### Group Members

Joseph	10	Saleem	12
Gopal	11	Ramesh	12
Dinesh	11	Maneck	13
Bansi	11	Dick	14
George	11	Moti	14
Ram	11	Hari	14
Mansur	12	Krishna	14

*12th January :*

As promised, today I took tissue paper and twine to the agency. Seeing me at the gate they all came running to me. All of them were so glad to see the kite paper in my hands that they started cheering loudly. George came forward and shook hands with me.

We all sat down to make kites. The boys had brought the necessary sticks with them. We had papers of different colours and everyone was given pieces of his own choice. Bansi had a broad smile on his face when he was given a big piece for himself. Mansur asked where I got these things from? I said from the market. Then he wanted to know the price. I told him. Then Maneck asked why I spent so much money. I thought that I should take this opportunity to explain the work of the agency more clearly to them. I said that the money was spent from the agency budget. Bansi asked with wonder : "You mean was this money spent for us ?"

I answered : " Yes, for you. " Then I continued that this was an agency that aimed at the welfare of the people in the community. We were seven workers, and as they knew we worked with different groups. For these activities there would be expenses and a budget was provided by the agency. Then Dick asked where this money came from. I said that the money came partly from contributions from the community and partly from the W. Committee. There were no further questions.

Meanwhile a few had started making kites. The cooperative spirit was quite clear in this activity. They helped each other in making the kites especially younger boys like Joseph and Bansi could not do much on their own, the older members Dick and Moti helped them.

They almost finished the kites before closing time. But the work of decorating the kites with tails remained. The boys also wanted to colour the thread we had brought and this work we kept for the next time. Then some of them asked me whether they could take the kites home. I said that if all of them wanted to take I had no objection. But I said that they should bring the kites back, finish the work and only then fly them. I said that if they were sure that they would bring it back they could take it. These kites were meant for flying on Wednesday morning. Then a few of them suggested that they would keep the kites in the agency, and we kept them on the shelf.

*Worker's Comments :* The activity was quite interesting today. An air of joy and delight was clear on their faces. They were curious to know the various details of the agency, and when they knew the things in detail they were surprised. Both the making of the kites and the discussions were carried on side by side. When they finished their own kite there was a smile of satisfaction on their faces, and while keeping the Kites on the shelf they were very careful.

*13th January :*

Today there were more members. The reason was clear, they knew that in the agency kite-making was going on and they could make one for themselves if they came. Those who had finished their kites yesterday began decorating them. Dick, Moti, Hari and Krishna were engaged in colouring the thread. The newcomers were given paper for kites and they also started their work.

At the time of distribution of the paper for the newcomers there was a little struggle. As I did yesterday, they also I allowed them to

choose their own colour. Only one half sheet of the red colour was left and Dinesh took it first, now Joseph wanted that sheet from Dinesh and they quarrelled. I interfered and told Joseph that since Dinesh had taken it first, he ( Joseph ) could not claim it now. If he wanted he could have taken first and now it was not possible for me to get him another sheet of the same colour. Anyway I told him that I would get him small pieces of that red colour, and we could attach it to his blue kite and it would be a good kite. I showed him such a kite which Dick had already made. Joseph was pleased. However I wanted them both to become friendly again hence I sat down with the two and we made the two kites, using the pieces of the one as tail for the other. By the time we finished the work they had forgotten the quarrel.

Today also we had a very interesting discussion, while doing our work. I asked them what " Utran " meant to them. They told me that from that day onwards the climate would change, the days would be hotter. I asked them the reason for that. Gopal said that it was due to the movement of the sun. He could not give more details neither could any one else. Therefore I told them that Utran meant " Uttarayana " a Sanskrit word which meant that sun had started moving North of the meridian line. Then I asked them whether they knew the four seasons based on the movement of the sun. They could tell me this in greater detail.

They asked me whether we in South ( Worker was from South India ) also had the custom of Kite-flying. I told them that we also had this festival but it was known not as Utran but as Pongal or Makara Sankrantam but kites were not flown on that day. In Tamil districts Pongal was a great festival. In Kerala, I told them, the festival was not of so much importance. On this day we worshipped the cows and had some other Pooja.

Tomorrow we decided to meet in the community at eight. I would be joining them in the kite flying.

*Worker's Comments :* In today's activity they were found to be very enthusiastic and active. It might be due to the thought of tomorrow morning. Moreover they had prepared kites of their own, and these were more valuable to them than the better ones they could get in the bazar. The discussion was also lively.

*14th January :*

Today was Utran day and I went to the community at eight in the morning. On one street I found a few members of my group on a terrace

and seeing me they shouted : “ Come this side.” Dinesh came down and took me to the terrace. Dick ,Moti, Joseph and a few boys from other groups were there. I met the owner of the house and introduced myself. The boys were all busy with their kites. Joseph showed me the kite he had prepared in the agency. Many of the boys had lost their kites in the game of cutting the kites. They had caught a lot of kites and each one had a bundle with them. They gave me a kite. I flew it for some time and then I handed it over to Maneck. Later I went near each boy one by one, flew the kite for a while and went to the other. The kite cutting competition was in full swing.

Once I was climbing a roof along with Dick and Moti. Both of them caught my hand so that I might not fall down. Their sincere feelings really made me feel happy.

I went to the different streets where the members of my group were busy with the kite flying. All the members were very happy to see me join them in the festival. Some of the parents were also glad to have “a person from the centre” join them.

The whole community was on the terrace—children, boys and girls, men and women, young and old—many of them flying kites and others observing the game. The rest I could see on the streets with long poles in their hands ready to catch the falling kites. Indeed it was a happy sight and for sometime I felt myself also to be one among them. I was with them for about three hours.

### **Community Contacts**

*15th January :*

Today there were only four members present : Bansi, Mansur, Saleem and Karim. We sat together and talked for some time about their adventures on Utran day. Then I asked whether they would like to play anything. Since many of their friends were absent they were not in a mood to have any games. Worker suggested that they could all go to the community to meet the other boys there.

Krishna asked me if I would go to his house and tell his parents to send him to the agency everyday. I asked him why they did not send. He said : “ Just like that, not with any reason.” I agreed to go to his house. Both his parents were at home. We talked about Utran and the children’s interest in it. Then I mentioned that Krishna sometimes did not come to the agency. His father said : “ I do not send him as I ask

him to do his lessons at that time." I asked : " At what time does he come back from school." Father : " 5.30". I asked : " Do you think that, immediately after coming back from school, if you ask him to study he can concentrate ?" The mother replied : " On the contrary he plays in the streets ". The father also said : " When I ask him to study he will sit with books for a while and then go away. " Then I said that, it seemed to me that along with work children also needed proper recreation for their development and that was what the community centre tried to provide. The father thought for a while and said : " Yes it is better to send him, rather than allow him to play in the streets. But the only thing I want is that he should also be good in his studies. " I will send him daily to the agency. " After a while I took leave of them.

Then I went to Gopal's place. I met his mother as well as Gopal. She was very pleased to see me. I inquired about Gopal's health. She said he had improved a lot. She added : " I owe you everything. " I said that it was not because of me, but their own interest that Gopal had improved. ( Worker had helped the family secure medical care in connection with a health problem of Gopal. ) When I inquired about his absence from the centre she said that she had no one to help her at home, and so he had many household duties. I asked her if she could try to send him for sometime daily, since he was interested in the agency activities. She said she would try to do so.

Then I visited Dinesh's mother. His father was not at home. She asked about Dinesh's behaviour in the agency. I told her that he was quite active and enthusiastic; he took interest in all the activities of the agency. She seemed pleased to hear that.

I met many of the group members in the streets. I talked to them, played with them with the kites for some time. They said they would all come to the agency tomorrow.

Today also the boys were busy with the kites, but not so busy as yesterday. They also looked tired—their faces showed that it was the day after the festival.

*16th January :*

Many boys had turned up today. For a while we talked about their adventures on Utran day. Then the boys decided to play Hututu, which is an old favourite with the group. Since they were playing it after a long time, they played with much enjoyment for about three-quarters of an hour.

Then we talked about tomorrow's programme. I told them that tomorrow I would not be able to come to the agency and hence the group would not meet. However I added that a film show was arranged and they could come at that time.

The Shivaji Sena ( Older Boy's Group ) was discussing, with their worker Mr. B., about a picnic on Sunday to Vasad. My group members came to know about this and asked me whether we could go along with them. Mr. B's. boys were also interested in having a combined picnic. I told the group that I was leaving the city tomorrow morning and would be back only on Sunday night. Moreover we did not have much time to organise the picnic, particularly as I would be absent on the next day. Then the group members told me that they themselves would organise it within the limited time they had and they only wanted me to come back by Sunday morning so that I could be with them on the picnic.

Since the group wanted it, I felt that it was my duty to help them. Moreover I felt that such an activity would help to a great extent towards bringing the two groups closer. I agreed to have the picnic on Sunday. The group members welcomed my words with cheers. It was decided that we all would go on bicycles, would carry our lunch and contribute four annas towards other expenses that might occur. We dispersed to meet again on Sunday morning at eight.

I asked those who were present to inform the other members also about the picnic. Dick, Maneck and Saleem took the responsibility for the necessary work. I suggested to take kites with them if possible, so that we could fly them there.

*Worker's Comments :* After the Utran festival the boys had again adjusted to the agency. They seemed very enthusiastic today. Their desire to have a picnic along with the elder group revealed their enthusiasm and interest in the agency activities. They showed their faith in the worker when they requested him to take them out for a picnic, even when they knew that he was otherwise engaged that day, and the worker responded.

### **A Joint Picnic**

*18th January :*

At about eight I reached the agency. When I entered the gate there were shouts of welcome, for all others had come and they were waiting for me. Without any more delay we started. We were twenty six in all

including the two workers, fourteen from my group and the rest from the elder one.

The journey up was quite interesting. All of us were full of enthusiasm and the desire to reach the place as early as possible made us cycle fast. Sometimes we had to check the boys, who went much ahead.

At about ten we reached Vasad. The cycles were kept in a small tea shop near the riverside. Then we went to the river. The boys asked for permission to swim and bathe. We allowed it. To avoid any trouble they might cause to the people who bathe and worship, the members were taken to a place where there were not many persons. The boys played in the water as they pleased. Workers found that the river was shallow, and calm. Hence we allowed them all freedom to play as they pleased. After an hour and a half they slowly came out. We told them to wipe off the water completely from the head and the body. In fact, I checked by touching the heads of some of the smaller members of the group like Joseph, Dinesh and Gopal.

After this we all took rest under the shadow of the bridge. Later Mr. B and a couple of the bigger boys went to the Vasad Bazar to bring some more things to eat.

I just lay down on the sand while the boys were all sitting and talking. They were talking of the fun they had in the river. I was listening to them. Then they started talking about penis. They might have been unaware of the fact that I was listening. This discussion led to talk on masturbation. They all started laughing loudly. I asked why they were laughing. They did not say anything but laughed more and more. I asked again, and nobody answered, instead they asked the others to tell me. At last Hari told me that they were talking about how certain boys in the community played mischief with the penis. Then I asked them what did they think of it. Now one by one, they started answering. Sam ( an elder group member ) said that it was bad. Saleem said that it was harmful for health. Dinesh added such a boy would be attacked by T. B. Joseph said it would give pain in the penis. I simply listened and said nothing. Then Sam asked me "What do you think ? You may have read about it." I said : "It is not at all injurious to health. It does not lead to T. B. or any other disease." Then Sam asked "Do you mean to say it is not bad ?" I replied : "It is not unusual. There is nothing abnormal in it. Almost all boys at certain age masturbate. What

do you feel about it ? Are you frightened about the consequences of it ? ” Many of them nodded or replied yes. Then I said : “ That is the injurious part of it. Often people become very frightened of the ill effects of masturbation. Masturbation does not do any harm, but doing it with fear is likely to make the person worried or uncomfortable. ” I did not go into greater details. I could see from their faces their wonder at hearing such an explanation. At last Sam said that these things were not taught to them either at home or at school, and that is why they were surprised to hear this from me.

By this time Mr. B. and party returned. We had our lunch. Everybody shared his food with others and it was an interesting lunch. All of us sat in a circle and ate together.

After this we all rested on the sand. Later the boys got up and started flying their kites. We watched them for some time and later joined in their game. While we were singing songs a group of students came and joined us. We introduced ourselves to each other. We had a couple of nice songs from both the parties.

At about four we started on our way back. First we went to Vasad Bazar, and had tea and then proceeded back. The journey back was really tedious. All of us were already tired and especially the younger boys. Hence we had to cycle quite slowly. The enthusiasm and energy that we had on our way up, were not at all seen in anybody. We reached the agency at seven.

*Worker's Comments :* However the picnic was really interesting. Everyone enjoyed it. They were so happy that while coming back they were talking about the next outing. It was a combined picnic and no spirit of competition was there. They were just like elder and younger brothers. All of them behaved themselves very well. There was not a single instance when I was irritated. Not only the group members but also the workers enjoyed the trip, and this gave us more confidence in them as well as in ourselves and courage to take them for such picnics in future.

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## RAMJI : A BAD BOY

*Brief Outline of Agency and Group :* The agency was a Community Welfare Centre situated in a residential community consisting mainly of factory workers having a low income. The population of the community was approximately two thousand and it was heterogeneous in regard to caste and religion. Due to the nature of the agency many group members had friendship ties prior to group experience at centre. Worker formed this group of eighteen members on the basis of age—12-15 years, and their common interest in games. Worker had worked with this group for three weeks prior to record. Out of the total membership only seven boys figure in the record.

Ramji	12	Arvind	14
Govind	12	Krishna	13
Vinod	13	Sorab	15
Pandav	14		

*22nd August :*

I met some of the group members in the street on the way to the centre. Seeing me they came running towards me. I enquired what they were doing. They replied they were awaiting my arrival.

After reaching the centre we met a few more members. The group members decided to play Hututu first. Today Ramji had come after many days. I inquired why he had not come for so many days. He replied that he had other work to do. Ramji, as I have previously mentioned, was considered to be a very bad boy, by most of the members in the agency. He usually did not participate in any game but teased the other members who were playing. Today when I asked the group members as to who would like to be captains of the two teams, Ramji volunteered in a jeering voice. I took the opportunity of encouraging him, and requested him to be one of the captains. He seemed terribly surprised and awkward. He refused. I told him that he need not be afraid, and he could do it as well as the others.

During the game he was feeling a bit self-conscious since it was the first time he was playing that game. Once during the game Ramji said : " I do not know how to play this game." To which Govind replied: then why did you become captain. Ramji replied : " Because I wanted

to and he (pointing to worker) allowed me." When he was out he did not argue like some of the members, but quietly went out of the game.

After playing a few games, we sat on the grass in a circle. In the meanwhile, Ramji had started his teasing and a busing and was thus distracting the attention of the boys. Vinod and he decided to wrestle and though I told them they would get hurt, they did not mind. I tried to ignore them and carried on a conversation with the group. I asked the boys how they learnt to sing songs. Govind said he went to see pictures, and so knew the film songs, while Pandav, Arvind and Krishna said they picked up the tunes from film songs which they heard from loudspeakers. I asked them whether they liked to see films, to which they replied that they did. I also asked them whether they had any hobbies or knew any crafts. Some of them said they could make clay dolls out of mud and cardboard; some said they liked to keep birds, especially parrots as pets. Quite a number of them said they liked to act in dramas. During this conversation Ramji also got interested and said he liked to play the part of an old man with a huge beard.

Ramji, I noticed always tried to behave in a comic manner, and was thus ridiculed by other members of the group. While leaving the centre I called him and told him that I would like to talk to him. He inquired what type of talk. I had to tell him. I smiled and said a pleasant one. I asked him what work his father did. He said that his father was an engine driver. I asked him if he had any brothers. He said that he had an elder brother who was about as big as me in size and also about the same age. I asked him whether his brother worked anywhere. He said no and added that another older brother also did not do anything. I asked if Ramji went to school or to work. He replied in the negative. I asked why. He said he did not want to. I inquired what he wanted to do. He replied that he wanted to be a motor driver. I told him that he was too young and would not be allowed to drive a car. He would not accept this comment and said that he could turn the steering wheel and release the breaks. I told him that he could try to work as an apprentice in a motor garage. He said that he would like that but above all he would like to drive a car. I told him he could do so when he grew a little older. I also inquired if his father did not get angry with him for not earning or going to school. To this he replied that there was no need to, as his mother cooked enough food at home, and also worked. I asked what his mother did. He said she worked part time as a maid. I then asked him if he would like to work

as a trainee in a motor garage. He said he would, provided that later on he would be taught to drive a car. I told him to come regularly to the centre and we could try for it.

In the meantime, other boys seeing that I was talking only to Ramji, came near and asked what I was talking with Ramji. I replied that I was just inquiring about him and his family, since I did not know him as well as I knew them.

*25th August :*

As it was raining, there were few group members present. Since we could not play team games both due to the lack in number as well as due to the climate, we gathered together and sat down for a while under the varandah roof.

While we were talking, a small girl came to join us. Since there was no place to sit down, I requested some boys to spread out a bit and give her some place to sit. Pandav remarked : "She is a Bhangi." I asked what did he mean by a Bhangi. He replied : "They are the people who clean the toilets." I asked him what he thought about Bhangis. He replied that he thought of them as dirty. Govind objected to this statement and said : "Why should you consider them dirty. They are also human beings like us and we should not make any discrimination." Pandav did not reply to this but looked apologetic.

I told them that the Bhangis were people who serve society as equally and importantly as others. As a matter of fact their work was very useful and important for had they not done the job they were doing, then what would happen to the cleanliness of our city ? This question brought forth a volley of remarks. One of the group members said : "Although their work may be dirty, they live very cleanly and have a bath after work, and their homes are clean." Another said : "Yes we should be kind and considerate to them since they are of great service to us, and we depend on them." Pandav was a bit embarrassed by these remarks. During this discussion the small girl was just smiling and did not look as if she was embarrassed or hurt. The group made room for her and she came and sat down shyly.

Since the showers had stopped by now, the group members decided to play Hututu. During the game Govind kept complaining that Sorab was too big and strong and thus should not be allowed to play. It was true that Sorab was far too strong and big in size for the other boys, espec-

ially in a game where strength was the major factor. I therefore put the stronger boys in the opposite team and the younger ones in Sorab's team. During a game of this type there is a tendency not to give the younger boys an equal chance to participate. I commented that the captains must make sure that everyone is given a chance to play.

We then changed the game to another one where both older and younger boys could participate equally. When it was time for me to leave, the members would not let me go, and asked me to remain for a while longer. I explained to them that my time was up and I would have to leave. I told them again of the days and time when the group sessions would be held, and said that I would definitely come on those days.

While leaving I called Ramji. Today Ramji was eager to talk to me because during the games he reminded me two or three times, that he would like to talk to me. I asked Ramji whether he had decided to work as a trainee in a motor garage. He said that he was willing. I told him that at first the work would be only of cleaning and wiping the vehicles and he may not find it interesting, but later on he will learn and get opportunities for doing other work such as repairing etc. Ramji said he was willing to undergo this training.

I told Ramji that I had consulted the head of the agency about the matter, and that he was helping me in trying to find out a garage where they would employ trainees. Ramji looked annoyed and said : " No, I do not want to have anything to do with him. " I asked him to explain what he meant because I could not follow him. Ramji replied : " I do not like him. " I asked him why. He replied : " He hit me once. " I asked him why did he hit him. He told me it was because of the tricks he used to play with previous workers. He told me that he had thrown a worker's shoes in the gutter; and had thrown mud on the white pehran of another worker.

I asked Ramji why did he do such things ? He replied, " That man used to call me " Beta " all the time. " I asked him why he did not like to be called thus, because perhaps the worker said it out of love and affection. Ramji said that he did not like it. He said : " He is not my father. " I told him if he did not like being called thus, then he could have told the worker. He said that he had done so, but still the other would call him " Beta ". He said that both workers used to give him punishments if he did not listen to them. I asked Ramji what punishments did they give

him. He said, they would make him sweep the agency room, and sometimes also ask him to leave the group.

I said that he was welcome to the group and that both the group members and I would be glad if he came and participated. I also told him that I shall try and look out for a job for him. He looked pleased, by the warm smile on his face.

*26th August :*

As most of the members did not feel like playing, we sat on the steps of the centre for a while. I asked the boys whether Ramji had come. They said that he had not, but he had told them that he would be coming to the centre in the evening. Govind asked me : " Why do you always talk with Ramji separately, we hear from him that you are trying to get him a job." I said that what Ramji had told them was true. We were trying to secure an apprenticeship for him in a motor garage. Govind said : " But Ramji does not obey anyone. The head of the agency sometimes asks him to leave the centre. Even at school he abused the teacher." I asked Govind if Ramji had studied anything. He said that Ramji attended for only a few days in the first class.

I told them that Ramji had expressed willingness to work in a motor garage. Since he had a liking for that particular work may be he would do it well. I also told them that I talk separately with him because, a person at times, hesitates to talk of things that are on his mind when he is with many persons, and prefers to talk with one person only. I added that I would be glad to talk with any of them if they wished.

In the meanwhile, Ramji appeared, riding a cycle. He seemed to ride well with confidence. I asked him whose cycle it was. He told me that he had taken it on hire. Ramji was quite proud of the fact that he could ride a cycle well, and rode fast and tried to perform tricks on it, to attract my attention. He also gave a ride to the boys on the carrier. The group members acknowledged his mastery on the cycle, and commented that he rode very well. Ramji asked me for my cycle lamp which I had in my hand. I told him there was no necessity of it since it was not dark. He replied that he wanted to fix it on for a while since it would look nice, because the lamp and the cycle were of the same colour.

I let Ramji have my lamp, which he fixed on his cycle. He then started to ride. Most of the boys warned me to take away the lamp since Ramji was liable not to return it. I asked them why they thought Ramji

would do so. Pandav said he used to do the same to the other workers who worked here before you. I said that I did not mind lending the lamp to Ramji, as I felt sure that he would return it. Although Ramji did go away into the Basti, he came back and returned the lamp in a short while.

While Ramji went to return the cycle, Pandav said that Ramji was a good friend of his. I asked then why did the group members quarrel with him often. Pandav said that Vinod always started the quarrels with him. Vinod was Ramji's cousin. Pandav also said : " Ramji gets teased and angry for very small reasons, and starts fighting." I said that Ramji did seem to get angry very quickly, and would it help if they did not tease him so much, then may be he would also not lose his temper.

We played team games for the rest of the time. While leaving Ramji followed me. Some of his other friends also came along. Ramji felt awkward to talk in front of them. I requested the boys to leave since Ramji wanted to speak only with me. Vinod replied that Ramji would not mind if they were present. I said that Ramji might not feel comfortable to say things in front of them, so it would be very good of them if they left. Govind seemed to understand and he took the lead. He asked the boys to come along with him.

After the boys left, Ramji said : " Get me a job ". I said that I was trying. I added that I would like to meet his parents if he did not mind. He said he would like me to meet his parents and talk about the matter with them. I asked him to ask his parents the date and time convenient to them, so that I could and meet them at that time. He agreed to do so.

*15th November :*

#### **Summary Comment on Individual Group Member : Ramji :**

Ramji a boy aged 12 years, was tall and thin and very restless in his behaviour. Ramji was looked down upon by the members of the group and the community as a mischievous character. He did not have friends in the group except for Pandav who shielded him at times from the teasing of the group members. As a member of the group he was very troublesome in the sense that he always disturbed the group in one way or the other.

I tried not to be prejudiced by these reports, and considered Ramji as any other member of the group. After group activity I hold a number of talks with him, to get to know him better and also to create rapport.

I also met his parents, and got to know that the family lived in an overcrowded home, both parents went to work, and found little time to take care of the children. Ramji's older brothers also "did nothing" as the mother said to worker, during the home visit.

Ramji felt that he was rejected and I feel that his reaction to this was destructive behaviour. I gave him recognition in the games and skills where he was good, and this helped in his being better accepted by the other members of the group. Ramji had a good relationship with the worker. This resulted in his coming regularly to the centre, and his participation in the activities has increased, and the quality of his participation has also become more positive.

Ramji was not schooling nor doing any work. Since October, he works in a theatre. Ramji has an immense liking and aptitude for mechanical work. At present I am negotiating for his employment in motor garage as an apprentice.

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## SOME "PERSONAL" COMMENTS

*Introductory Comments :* Only two records are given below showing mainly, the Worker's handling, a few days apart, of the group members' questions regarding sex. The group was composed of eleven boys, 8-10 yrs. old. The agency was a community welfare centre situated in a slum area in the city. The boys came mostly from crowded and economically under-privileged homes. At the time of record the worker had worked with the group for two months.

*5th September :*

Today a good number of boys had come. They decided to play Hututu first. The group was very disorganized today, and the game was not being played properly. I allowed them to play as they wished and just observed for some time. They quarrelled frequently. I then interfered and asked the two captains to see that their teams observed the rules of the game. The game was played with slightly better organization for some time, and then they decided to change the game.

Two teams were formed and the game of "Dog and the Bone" was started. This game got a better response and the teams played enthusiastically. The game was played for quite sometime.

After playing games, we all sat down on the steps of the agency. I asked some of the boys who had not come yesterday where they had been. They replied that since they had a festival they could not come. I asked them what they had done in the festival, and what festival it was. They replied that they had done "Puja to Kali Mata". They said that they had drowned the mud images in the river. I asked them why did they drown the images in the river and who taught them Puja. They replied that they had been taught at home, and did Puja to Kali Mata, because they would not get small-pox, and those who did not do so would get it. They drowned the statues so that the disease may never come to them.

Today Keshav had come, and was acting in a very unusual manner. I realised that he was trying to test my temper, and make me angry with him. The other boys also joined him. He asked me whether I was married. I replied that I was not. Yet he said : "You must be having sexual intercourse with some girl." Then he said that other boys masturbate,

and this he showed with gestures which made the other boys laugh. He also told me that the donkey which was passing by has sexual intercourse with the other donkey for a long time, and that their sexual organs were very large. Keshav also told me that the previous worker said he was married, and that he used to tease the worker about his having sexual intercourse with his wife.

During all this time I was just listening to all their remarks without any signs of uneasiness, I did not say anything. When I was leaving, Keshav came to me and asked, "You must be having a very bad opinion of me." I asked him what he meant. He replied: "You think I am a very bad boy." I replied: "No, I think you are as good as the others. You are in no way bad." Keshav was evidently trying to see what opinion I had formed of him from his behaviour that evening. When I told him what I thought of him, he smiled, although I felt that he was doubting my words.

*Worker's Comments:* The next time the topic of "Sex" comes up during discussion, I plan to give the boys some sex education.

*9th September:*

Usually the group members like to start the activities with a game in which there is a good deal of physical exertion. Today also they wished to do the same, but Tara Singh complained that he had a wound on his leg and thus could not play any active game, and suggested that they sit down and play Antakadi. Pandav said that he was tired and would like to play Antakadi. The other group members agreed to his suggestion.

The game was played well for sometime till Pandav left the group as he was called home. The other team could not carry on without him as it was composed mostly of younger boys. I helped them at times.

While the game was on. Karim pointed out a young man to me who was loitering about and at times interfering with a group of boys playing cricket. He said, "that man is a very bad fellow. He keeps on gambling and betting, and does no work. He also drinks a lot." I asked the group what they thought about gambling, betting and drinking. Tara Singh said: "It is not good to do so." I asked him why he thought so. He said: "By gambling we loose a lot of money and make it a habit. Besides, people also call us bad names." Asfak said: "By drinking we get T.B. and Asthma." I said: "What you are saying is quite correct, and these things should be avoided." Suleman who was sitting quietly

all this time said : " We are caught by the police and put into jail for doing all such things." I told him he was quite correct.

After the game we were just sitting on the grass for a while when Suleman whispered something in Karim's ear. I asked them what was the topic, since we would also like to share it. Karim hesitated but I asked him to speak out if he wished that we should share the joke. Very hesitantly he said : " Suleman is asking me whether you are married." I told him that I wasn't yet. Karim asked, " Will you get married ?" I said that I would do so someday when I have finished my studies and secured a job. I said : " Most men like to get married, I shall also get married and have a wife and children." They became very self-conscious and embarrassed and began to giggle. I asked : " Will you get married when you grow up ?" Suleman and Karim said : " No, we will never get married." I asked them why. Suleman replied, " In marriage you do all dirty and wicked things." I then asked, " what do you mean when you say dirty and wicked things." They did not answer. I told them that they could speak out whatever was in their mind and I would not mind it in the least. Suleman said : " The husband and wife do all wicked things in the night and climb on each other." I knew he meant sexual intercourse between man and woman.

I said, "We are all born as little children. We are taken care of by our parents till we grow up. After we have grown up, we get married. After marriage man and woman come together. By their coming together the woman is able to give birth to a child, and thus it goes on. If people thought of marriage as an evil thing, then there would be no man left on earth. You all are present and living on this earth today because your parents got married and came together, and the result was that you were born. Don't you think so ?" They all agreed. I continued, " therefore there is nothing bad in marriage or when husband and wife come together. It is just as natural as other essential things that are needed for man to survive, such as eating drinking and sleeping." I asked Suleman, " When you have nothing to eat what do you feel ?" He replied : " Hungry." I said, " Similarly, man grows up and gets married to satisfy his need to reproduce. Is it then bad?" Karim replied : " Marriage is not bad and when I grow up I shall get married." Suleman said : " I know now that it is not a bad thing but I will not get married." I said : " It is up to you to choose and make that decision when you grow up. When we think of marriage and reproduction we think of it as a bad

thing because people do not let us know about it when we are young. We thus come to know about it from wrong sources and thus consider it evil." The boys agreed to this.

*Worker's Comments :* The boys in the group are not properly educated in sex knowledge. They thus have a great curiosity about it, and collect malinformation which seems to give them feelings of guilt and anxiety about the subject. During discussion the boys brought out the topic of sex which they considered wicked, bad and abnormal. During the course of the conversation, I explained to them some of the basic natural facts of life, such as marriage and physical union. The group members expected me to get angry with them for bringing up the subject of sex. During the discussion I kept calm as usual.

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## A DRAWING LESSON

*Introductory Comments :* This is a single record of a visit of the drawing teacher to a girl's group in a community welfare centre. The girls were 8-15 years old and many of them indicated their interest in games and songs and other recreational activities. The Drawing teacher, a voluntary worker, came for an hour once a week, for drawing lessons for the children. The worker had worked with this group for seven months at time of record.

*21st February :*

Today the Drawing teacher was to come so all the children were busy drawing the pictures they were given to draw at home. Usually the teacher gives freehand drawing. That is, the paper is divided in two parts. On one side the teacher draws a picture and the same design is to be drawn on the other side by the child.

The girls tried to draw as nicely as possible. Some of them like Veena, Putli and Aruna could draw very well. When the teacher came all of them gathered together. The teacher said that they could draw well but they were very shy. Teacher then asked them to draw some object. He said they could draw any object like pot, kettle, cup and saucer. Some of them drew a pot. Some drew a pot set under the water pipe from which water fell in the pot. All of them took much time in drawing the pictures. Then the teacher saw all their drawings. He said that all of you have very good ideas of drawing various objects. He then showed how to draw such objects easily. He first drew a circle. He then said that from a circle one could draw so many things. He drew two eyes, mouth and hair on the circle and it was the face of a boy. He made another circle and drew two more lines and made it a pot. He made a pot with handles from the same circle. He also drew a kettle from the same circle. Thus he said that from a circle we can draw so many things, and it was also easy.

He then asked the members to draw anything they liked on the board, and there would be a complete scene. He asked Leela to draw whatever she liked. Leela drew a hut. The teacher then drew two other huts on the same line, and one tree in between. He then asked Bhagwanti to draw something. She drew a house. Putli then drew a river. Thus a

picture of huts and houses on the bank of a river was made. Kanta drew a hen near the houses. Amthi drew two girls playing "Phugadi" near the house. The teacher then said that we can also draw something behind the houses. He asked: "What could we draw? Where were these houses situated?" Leela said: Near the mill area. The teacher then said that whatever idea we had could be put in the picture. Thus Leela thought that these huts are for those working in a factory or mill, so she said that we should draw a mill. The teacher then said to the members that we could even draw hills and mountains. And he drew a hill. Then he gave other freehand drawings to the girls to be done for the next week, and took our leave.

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## GANDHI JAYANTI CELEBRATION

*Introductory Comments :* This record has a few instances of work with children in a residential school for the blind. The group members were between 15 to 18 years old and had lived in the institution for a maximum period of six years and minimum of one. The worker had worked with them for three months prior to the time of record.

### Group Members

Jayant	15	Shanti	18
Keshav	19	Manu	15
Ishwar	16	Arun	15
Dinesh	17	Chiman	16

*30th September :*

When I went to the agency I found that only a few boys had come to the games rooms, and were playing a game of chasing each other. I called Jayant and Keshav and asked if they all would like to play Hututu. I asked Jayant if he would like to be the captain of one team. Jayant is rather withdrawn and does not talk much. He is physically strong and good at Hututu. While forming the teams he saw to it that the stronger boys were in the opposite team. However when the game started we found that Jayant was too strong for all the opponents put together. He used to rush into the field and catch two or three boys at a time. He clapped and laughed loudly when he won.

Then we assembled in the music room. I asked Jayant if he would like to tell a story. On other days he had refused, but today he said that he would like to sing instead of telling a story. He sang two songs.

Then was started discussion about the programme on Gandhi Jayanti. I invited their suggestions. Keshav and Ishwar said that on Gandhi Jayanti day let us have Bhajans. I said this was good suggestion. Dinesh suggested that we should have a feast. I said, it would be nice to have good things to eat but what about the expenses. Shanti said that the agency would also have some special dishes prepared for the day, and so it was not necessary to have another feast. They all agreed to this. I asked Dinesh if he still wanted the feast. He smiled and said no.

After a little discussion it was decided to have chorus songs, bhajans and national anthem. We decided to meet in the morning for practice and have the celebration in the evening.

*2nd October :*

I went to the agency in the morning and found the boys waiting for me. We all gathered in the music room. All the items were group-items, which was a change from their previous tendency to prefer solo items. After the practice I asked the boys how they wanted to arrange the programme in the evening. Some of the boys in the group suggested that it would be nice if we garlanded Gandhiji's photo. I said that sounded like a good idea and asked where the photo was. The boys said that they did not have one, and seemed rather disappointed. I asked, would you each like to make a small contribution, so as to buy the photo ? This suggestion was readily taken up by the group members. We thought of the articles we would need in addition to the photograph, and a contribution of three annas per head was agreed upon. Jayant and Chiman were deputed by the group for the purchases; the worker accompanied them. We went to the market and purchased a print of Gandhiji, also garland and agarbatti.

When we returned to the school, the boys were all dressed in clean clothes and looked very smart. Manu said : Today is a birth-day, so we have taken special care to dress up.

When we unwrapped the photograph, they clustered together, and each one took the picture in his hand, and felt it. They were very enthusiastic about having bought the picture. They asked me many questions about the physical appearance of Gandhiji. One of the boys said that he had seen a picture of Mahatma when he had eyes.

Then the boys decided to fix the photograph. A place in their dormitory was chosen, and the group members said that Dinesh would do the garlanding. When the picture was garlanded all the boys clapped. After this the bhajans were sung.

*Worker's Impression :* Today the boys had a positive experience through this celebration. They came together, worked cooperatively, and also gained a sense of independence and achievement through this programme.

Mahatma Gandhi stands for spiritual guidance, strength, sense of oneness and social justice. I plan to encourage discussion regarding this, and help them see the application of these ideas in their own daily living.

*3rd October :*

Towards the end of the hour I asked them how they had liked the programme of yesterday. Keshav and Dinesh immediately said that they had liked it very much. I asked whether they can tell why they liked it. Dinesh said because it was the birth-day of Mahatma Gandhi. Arun said they liked the photo fixed in the dormitory. Ishwar said it would be nice to have more pictures of the national leaders. Manu said: "Well, we could do that. Why not contribute and purchase pictures, at the time of the birthday of the different leaders." I said that seemed a really good idea.

Then I asked the boys if they have decided to take proper care of the photo. Shanti said yes, he was looking after it. I asked if they would like to share the responsibility of taking care of the picture and each person could do it for a fortnight at a time. They liked this idea and Ishwar said he would take care of the picture next.

I said that as we have fixed Gandhiji's photo they should also try to follow the way he has shown. I suggested that when in the morning they get up they can come for a common prayer near the photograph. Manu suggested "Vaishnav Jan ". I said that it was a fine song.

I said that the main principles of Gandhiji's life were truth and non-violence; would the boys like to discuss about this sometime. Shanti and Arun said could we do that on the next meeting, and the other members agreed.

*11th October :*

To-day a lady visitor was invited to meet the boys. The boys were ready. They were neatly dressed, with hair properly combed. First we took the visitor round the agency. The boys had made the sitting arrangements in the music room. They had kept two chairs for us. When we went in the room, I noticed that the boys all sat in a line. I told them that we too will be sitting with them and the chairs were not necessary. Shanti said that they had been specially kept for the guest. She ( guest ) said : I know you like me to sit on the chair, but would you not like me to sit with you, I would like to. The boys seemed pleased and we sat in a circle.

Then there were introductions, this was carried out very well. Each boy told his name, and the place from where he came. This went very smoothly, it seemed as if the boys had prepared themselves. Miss B. said she had heard that they knew some good songs; would they like to sing. The response to this was very enthusiastic, and the group members sang two songs.

Then Miss B. told two stories, one was a fairy tale which the boys liked very much. The other was a fable which suggested that it is better to live with what we have. There was a short vote of thanks given by Shanti, who spoke well.

The boys gave a warm send off to Miss B. when she left.

*17th October :*

When I went to the agency Shanti and Chiman were walking on the verandah hand in hand. They were so engrossed that they did not notice my coming. Jayant was playing train by himself, running fast in a circle and saying : " The Mail has come. " Some of the other boys were wandering around, while Keshav was practising on the harmonium.

I asked them if they would like to play an active game. The boys said let us play Hututu. Jayant was very pleased to play this game as due to his strength he enjoys it. I asked Jayant and Manu to select the teams. As the game was being played with much energy I felt that there was danger of their shirts being torn. I suggested that they remove their shirts during such active games. It was interesting to watch them play. As they cannot see they catch by sound, and their judgement about where the member of the opposite team stood was usually accurate; they also had a good idea of the size of the court.

While attacking I found that only Jayant and Keshav used to go in the field while the others remained behind. I suggested that each person take a chance to go in the field to attack. I appreciated Jayant for his outstanding play, this is the only game which he plays with such skill, in the others he is apt to be criticised by the group members for his lack of skill. This activity also provides an outlet for the stored up energies of the group members.

Then the boys wanted to play " Antakadi ", so that they could rest after Hututu. They kept the same teams and sat facing each other. Jayant was not able to participate in this game as he is not a good singer. I found that only a few who are good in singing and knew songs were taking an

active part, so I suggested a modification in the rules. I said that we should play this in two teams and each member take turn to sing, if he cannot remember the right song then the next person gets the turn. Thus even the slow and shy members got their turn. When Jayant could sing a line, he clapped his hands with joy.

*25th October :*

This was the last day of work as I was to leave for Diwali vacation. The boys seemed a little upset. Shanti said that I should have continued to come upto the 1st. when their vacation would also begin. I said I am sorry I am leaving earlier, but I will be with you again after the vacation.

I then asked them what they would like to do. Arun said as we had decided yesterday let us go to the garden. When we went to the garden, Shanti said that as you are going today we would like to give a "programme" for you. I said it was very kind of them and asked what they had planned. Shanti said let us go and sit near the tree. Then Shanti gave a small speech. He praised me and said that they had all gained a lot from me. He also said that because of me they thought that they were not blind but sighted, as I myself was their eyes. The speech was short but touching. Then they sang songs. The boys asked me about the vacation, where I would be going, about my home, and my family. I answered all their questions briefly. Then I said that I was going for a vacation and would come back when school started. I said it was good of them to praise me, but what had been achieved had been due to their cooperation and effort; what I had done was to help them do what they wished to do. I said all of you have got ability and talent in one field or another, all I tried to do is to make them aware of this and help them develop this ability. I wished them a happy Diwali Vacation.

*Worker's Impression :* From this small incident I came to know how much the boys crave for love and affection, and are also eager to give it to others. When they thought I gave them something they were eager to respond. They had planned the whole programme before I came. A little attention and recognition helps the physically handicapped boys very much.

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## **“PLAYING ” WITH SICK CHILDREN**

*Introductory Comments :* Worker was a medical social worker who worked in a general hospital. His duties included case work, contacts with Doctors & patients at O.P.D., and what for lack of a better terminology was called “ ward-work ”. A fixed time of the week was assigned for all these duties. In the children’s ward, play equipment had been secured from a local works organization. The worker had worked for two months at time of record.

*5th October :*

While I was distributing the toys and showing some of the children how to play Snakes and Ladders, I noticed that a young man, a relative of one of the patients was looking at me continuously. From the expression on his face I thought that he probably wanted to know who I was because in the serious atmosphere of the hospital I was distributing toys and the children seemed to enjoy it.

When I went near him he smiled and asked me to sit. Then he asked me what I did here and I explained my work. I said that I try to meet the children and their family and try to help them as much as I can. Then he said, “ I am very glad to meet you. My sister Amita is ill, she is suffering from continuous high fever, and the doctors do not tell us what is wrong with her. They have taken an X-Ray, but they have not come to any diagnosis yet. My father suffered from fever and afterwards it developed into T.B. so I am sure that my sister is also suffering from T.B. ”

I talked with Amita’s brother about his fear that his sister might also be suffering from T.B. and explained that at times it took time for the doctors to come to a diagnosis, but I felt sure that they would let the family know the diagnosis as soon as they knew it. I also asked if the family had taken B.C.G. after they learnt that the father had T.B. He said they had.

*7th October :*

I went to the ward and saw that some patients had been newly admitted. One was Soli Cama a ten year old boy who had come from the village B. I went near his bed. He said, “ I came to the hospital yesterday. Five months ago I was fine but when I started getting swellings on my face and legs, we consulted our family doctor but he advised that we come to the

hospital. We have a cloth shop in the village. I was studying in the fourth standard, but now that I have been asked to take complete rest. I have left the school. I loved to go to school and meet my friends there, and I find it very lonely here.”

As we were talking, a boy of about ten came crying to the houseman and said : “ Doctor Saheb, I am very hungry. I want food.” The Doctor said he could have food tomorrow, today he could have only liquids. The boy continued to cry.

I found that no body was with the boy ( Hamid ), and so I told Soli that I would come back in a few minutes. I went to the boy and said : “ don’t cry. It is 3.15 and at 3.30 you will get milk, in the meantime let us talk.” I asked him if he would like to play Ludo or Snakes and Ladders. His face became less sad. I think he did not expect this question in a hospital. Then I got Soli and Hamid together and they started to play snakes and ladders, as they both knew the game. Soon it was tea-time and Hamid got a glass of milk, after which they continued to play.

When I was leaving both of them called out : come again, so that we can have some more games.

*9th October :*

Today I went to the ward and found that one new patient had been admitted. He was a boy of 10 years. As I distributed the books and toys to the group members he was looking at me anxiously, I thought he wanted to speak with me, so I went near him and started talking. He held my hand, and asked : “ How do you know me, do you know my place ? ” I said that I knew most of the patients in this ward as I came here to meet them and to try to help them. I asked him when he had come to the hospital. “ Yesterday,” he replied, “ I had much vomiting, and it was not possible for me to take anything. Doctors have taken X-Ray and they said that there is an inflammation in my throat and so I am suffering from vomiting.” I asked him how he felt now. He said that he was feeling much better. “ I get milk twice a day and some fruits and I am feeling very happy here.” He said that his name was Shanti and he had come from the C Village. He had joined the school there and was in the second standard but because of illness he left the school. I asked how he felt about leaving school ? He said he liked the school, but not very much.

Then he asked me if I could give him any books. I gave him a very simple Gujarati story book, I found that he could not read fluently, but was

interested in seeing the pictures. He was very pleased with the hospital, he had come for the first time, and he said that he enjoyed it very much. Then he asked : “ Will you come tomorrow, so that I can talk with you. ” I said that I would be coming.

*13th October :*

I went to the ward and first noticed that Francis an old member of my group was discharged. Damodar saw me and came towards me and said : We all were waiting for you eagerly. Following him came Shankar, Babu, Saraswati, Kapil and Mariam.

Shankar said : “ We will play today the game of post-office, and I know there is one letter box in the cupboard that will be our box, and we will write letters to our family members.” I thought this was a good suggestion. I asked the other members how they liked the idea. All agreed to this.

Shankar was walking today but limping as his right leg had been operated. I thought he needed activity which did not involve much walking. So I said Shankar will be post-master. The group members willingly agreed. Damodar became post-man, Kapil became telegraph man. Shankar asked for a big sheet of paper. I gave it to him, he cut it into smaller pieces and gave a piece each to the members, to write their letters.

Most of the members were very enthusiastic in writing the letters. Damodar said I will write to my elder brother. Shanti said I will write to my mother. Thus all wrote letters. Then I showed them how to address the letters correctly, and asked them to post the letters in the box. I asked them if they knew how letters reached from one place to another. They said no. I explained to them how letters are collected from such boxes which are put on the street by the post offices and branch offices. The letters are collected from that box at a particular time, which is mentioned outside the box. They are then taken to the head office, stamped, address is seen, the letters are sorted according to town and district and then carried to Railway Station, there is a separate compartment or carriage with red colour stripes with a board saying : “ Mail Service. ” Then Damodar asked me why this red colour stripe is there. I said so that we can readily identify the postal carriage. Kapil asked me how the letters are delivered. I said that there are post-men for that for the different areas of the city, and when they read the address they can find out the place, when we change our place of residence we should inform the post office. I also told them we should

take care to write the address correctly, if the address is not traced the letter is kept in the dead letter office for sometime and then destroyed.

All the group members liked the information very much, most of this long explanation came as a result of the questions they asked me. I think the group members can learn from such an activity, and gain something which is useful to them.

*21st November :*

I met some of the patients in the medical ward. Among them was Savita a girl of about four years. Her father was beside her. He told me that he came from a village G., the child was suffering from ( Nephrotic Syndrome ) a kidney disease, she had three attacks of it before and had been treated by the local Vaidyas. This time when she had the attack the local doctor had suggested that she should be taken to the hospital. He said he was a farmer and it was a week since he had brought his daughter to the hospital. He stayed with her during the day and spent the night at a Dharamsala. He said he was incurring considerable financial loss as there was no one to look after his farm. I asked him if there were any women relatives who could stay with Savita. He said that his wife was weak in health and had a small child to take care of, and hence it was not possible for her to stay with Savita. He did not have any other relatives whom he could ask to stay with her. He was wondering if it would not be necessary to take Savita home shortly.

I said that I could understand his difficulty but had he asked the doctor about taking his daughter home ? He said he had asked the doctor yesterday and the doctor had told him that it would not be advisable for him to take the daughter home at present. Then I tried to explain how important it was to keep the child in the hospital and what facilities he could get here. I also said that when the patient has improved and can take outdoor treatment, the Doctor would discharge the patient. He said, " yes it is true, I can understand what you say, there is also some improvement in my daughter's health. I will have to think of some way in which I can arrange to keep her here."

*22nd November :*

While I was distributing the magazines and toys the mother of one of the new patients called me and asked if her son could get a toy. I had a toy bus which I gave to the boy, Saleem about six years old. Saleem played with the toy for some time by moving it on the bed. Both his legs

were covered with a blanket. All of a sudden he said : “ Ma, a car like this was responsible for bringing me to the hospital.” I asked him “ Will you please tell me what happened ? ” Saleem said that he was going to the school, when he had an accident, a car ran over his leg, some people on the street took him to the hospital, and it was much later that his family came to know about it and rushed to the hospital.

His mother said that they did not yet know how seriously the leg bone was damaged. It was three days since the accident and Saleem looked much better now. I said I hoped that he would get well soon, and I would come again and see them. She replied : “ May God bless you.”

*28th November :*

I met Maruti Rajput, a nine years old boy who had an injury on his left thumb which he got while playing with a cracker. His brother was at his bed side, and both of them looked quite cheerful. They had called another patient, Manu a boy of the same age as Maruti and were chatting together. I went and talked to them for some time, about what had brought them to the hospital and how they liked it here.

Then I went to the bed of Tribhuvan, a ten year old boy coming from the village D. He looked very sick. His elder brother was at his bed side and he narrated what had happened to Tribhuvan. He was working in the field as their occupation is farming. He added that they are four brothers who work on the farm. Their father is very old now and their mother is dead. When Tribhuvan was coming home with some load on his head, he fell down and a cart ran over his head. His brother said that there was a lot of loose soil where Tribhuvan fell and therefore luckily he did not have more serious injury, was brought immediately to the hospital.

Tribhuvan had vomited a lot of blood, and he looked very pale. He asked me : “ Can my brother stay here for the whole night, as I find it very lonesome here ? ” I explained to him that as this was the children's ward, only the children and at times their mothers or women relatives were allowed to stay here at night. This was the rule of the hospital and your brother could stay with you during the day. Then I said that if you feel lonely I will introduce you to some of the patients. I called Maruti and Manu and introduced them to him. He seemed very glad. It was the first time Tribhuvan had come from the village to the city, and that too in a hospital setting.

I talked with him for a while and said that if you want anything, or if you are in pain, you can always call the nurse on duty, and you can talk to your new friends. Manu and Maruti very readily agreed. My impression about Tribhuvan is that he is away from the family for the first time and that is adding to his discomfort, he needs help in this respect.

*1st December :*

I went to the ward, Manu and Tribhuvan were waiting for me. Tribhuvan looked much better today I asked him how he was. He replied : "I am much better today although there is still some pain." Then I said that he did look better today. He said I am not finding it as difficult to stay here as I was before. Manu and I have become good friends and my brother also comes here daily to see me. Then he asked how long he would have to stay here. I said that the doctor would be able to tell him that and he should ask the Doctor.

*8th December :*

I went to the ward and Tribhuvan was the first patient to greet me. He immediately told me : "Bhai, Manu got discharged from the hospital". And further added : "I will also go within a day or two, as the doctor said so when he came on the rounds this morning". Tribhuvan looked cheerful today.

I asked Tribhuvan how he felt about the hospital now ? He immediately said : "I do not feel lonely now. I feel quite comfortable, and it is only because of you. You told me everything about the hospital and so I gradually lost my fear." I said, "it is not that I have done any special thing for you, I only tried to clear the misunderstanding you had about the hospital, and when that was cleared, I think you felt more comfortable here." Tribhuvan said; "yes that is true".

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## CHAMPA RAN AWAY

*Introductory Comment :* Worker worked with a group of girls in a correctional institution. The group was composed of eight members ranging in age from 10-15 years. Worker had worked with group for three weeks prior to the record.

Champa one of the older girls ran away today in the afternoon. My group members seemed to be considerably affected by this. The staff was more strict today and there was tension in the atmosphere.

The members of my group were playing “Ghar-Ghar” which I thought was a way of expressing what they felt as it was the first time they played this and it was played in a rather restless manner.

I sat with them and each member in her own way told me about Champa's running away. Each had a different reaction. Savitri seemed more impressed by the way she managed it without letting anyone know. I then asked as to why she might have gone away from the institution. I asked them whether she had liked staying here. Others were silent but Radha said that it was alright here and Champa liked to stay but Kamini hit her in the morning and so she felt bad and ran away. I think that Radha was expressing her own difficulty that she cannot get along well with the girls, she has no friends in the institution. Kamini immediately defended herself and said that they had quarrelled but Champa had hit her first. Ganga just mentioned to me the fact that Champa had run away but made no comment. She seemed frightened by the fact.

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## **“CHOTE BAGBAN” : THE LITTLE GARDENERS**

*Introductory Comments :* This group functioned in a correctional agency. It was an institution for children under fifteen. The members of the group were interested in gardening and worked in the agency garden three times a week. A special piece of land was allotted by the agency to the group. In addition they also looked after the agency garden. The record starts with the first meeting of the group. Excerpts have been taken from the chronological record

### **Group Members**

Ranchhod Devji	14	Lallu Keshav	11
Bachu Govind	14	Daya Rama	13
Gopal Lakhani	13	Narsi Vithal	13
Narayan Laxman	10		

*22nd August :*

This was the first day of the interest group. I noticed that Ranchhod was curious to ask me something. I asked him if he had any questions. He asked on which days they would do “gardening.” I explained the days on which we would meet together to do work in the garden, and on their plot. He then asked me what they would be doing in the gardening group. I said that since all of them had said that they were interested in gardening, I would be interested to know what ideas they had. Ranchhod said after a pause that he would like to plant nice flowers in the agency.

While this talk was going on I observed that the rest of the group members were listening with great attention. I asked Ranchhod if he knew the names of some of the flowers that he would like to grow. He said that he did not know the names of the flowers but would like to know from me. Quickly Narayan said that he knew about the rose flower and would like to have it in the garden. I asked if everyone in the group had seen a rose. Four members had seen it. I asked Narayan if he remembered where he had seen the rose. He at once said that he had seen it in the City Garden, where there were also many other beautiful flowers.

Devji and Narotam who had said that they had not seen a rose, asked if I would allow them and accompany them to go and see the City Garden.

I said we could go after we had obtained permission from the head of the agency. The group members seemed very pleased.

*31st August :*

.....We started the work of digging a plot of flowers. I showed them how the plot was to be dug, and suggested that the work of digging could be done by turns. Everybody seemed eager to participate in the work.

Ranchod said to me that he would not allow Gopal to do the work. I asked him the reason. He said he does not work well. I then said that in the beginning one may not know how to do it well but could learn by actual practice. Then he said that he did not want Gopal in the group. I again asked him the reason. He said that they—Daya, Bachu Narayan and he—do not like him, since he is slow in his work, and was also not very clever. (Gopal was a mentally deficient child.) I calmly asked that supposing one of them was handicapped in such a manner and was looked down upon by others, how they might react to it? The group was quiet for a while then they said they would not like it. Then I asked if Gopal is handicapped then how should they behave with him. They said that he should not be looked down upon and he should be allowed to remain in the group.

*3rd September :*

.....As previously decided the group went to visit the City Gardens. While we were walking down to the garden Ranchod narrated an incident that occurred in the agency on the previous day. He said that Hari had beaten him yesterday while they were playing Hututu. When I asked him the reason he said that boys like Hari were stronger, and unnecessarily beat the younger boys during the games. He said he did not like that. He continued saying that if he beat Gopal or Narayan just because they were weaker they would feel bad. I commented to him, and also to all the other boys who were listening, that it would be better if they did not beat a weaker boy but helped him work and play together, so that everybody could feel happy during their stay in the agency.

Ranchod said very quietly : “ Well, if I felt bad because of Hari, similarly Gopal must have felt bad that day because of me.”

After reaching the City Gardens the boys were happy to see so many different types of flowers and talked enthusiastically about growing some

of them in the agency. The boys also saw some of the animals in the zoo. Gopal who had so far been very quiet seemed very pleased to see the flowers and began speaking with the group members, this was the first time I found Gopal to be so relaxed and happy in the group.

When asked all said that they enjoyed the visit. I noticed that the group members were well disciplined while walking to and from the garden and I did not have to do much to keep them well behaved.

*28th September :*

As decided last time the boys had plans of affixing specimens of flowers in an album and this was to be their contribution for the inter-agency exhibition. I had purchased an album and showed it to the boys. The boys seemed delighted to see the album and asked how much it had cost and who had given the money. I explained that the agency had given the money for it. The boys seemed very excited at the prospect of participating in the exhibition.

They asked me how to put the flowers in the album. I explained that the flowers first had to be pressed under blotting paper in order to make them completely dry. Then they could be fixed either by means of thread or gum-paper especially meant for it. Since the agency did not have many flowers they asked me if I would bring flowers to be affixed in the album. I agreed.

*1st October :*

Then the boys asked me if I had brought the flowers for the album. They seemed eager to get their item for the exhibition ready. I showed them the flowers I had brought. Then I demonstrated the process of drying and fixing them. They seemed interested and were enthusiastic in doing the work.

Daya was on kitchen duty. I requested that he be allowed to come and attend the group for a few minutes so that he could also participate in making the flower album. The members waited for him to join and then started the work.

When the flowers were dry the question arose who would fix the first flower in the album. Bachu said that I should show them. I fixed a few flowers and explained about the place of the flower in relation to the area of the page and how to place it in the most attractive manner. After that I asked who would like to be the first to fix the flower from the group.

Daya and Ranchhod both said that they wished to be the first one. As it was not possible for both of them to fix the flowers simultaneously, I asked if one of them would wait while the other fixed the flower. At first neither of them was willing to be second, but then Ranchhod agreed to give Daya the first chance. All the group members took turns in affixing the flowers. When Gopal's turn came he was hesitant to fix flowers as he is usually afraid to undertake any new activity. I then said that I would help him in fixing the flower.

After a while the work was completed, the boys seemed very proud of it. The boys told me that as it was prepared by their group their names should be written in it. I agreed and the names of the boys were listed on the front page of the book.

*7th November :*

Today there were three new boys in the agency, after being explained about the different interest groups, one boy Kanu agreed to join my group and another joined Mr. N's group. One boy was undecided about joining any of the groups. This boy had a big wound on his leg and could not walk properly. He seemed very quiet. When I asked him again in which group he would like to join he said that he would like to join my group.

At this moment the boys of my group said that they did not want to take this boy in their group. They said let him go to Mr. N's group. The boys of that group who were around said that they would not take him as he is "a cripple" (Langda).

I again explained to the boy Kanti, Ramu, that he could join any group that he liked. After a pause he said that he wanted to join my group. I said to him that he was welcome. The boys of my group seemed quite hostile towards the new comer and said : "We will not take him in our group."

I felt that I had to help the boys understand the situation and accept Kanti as he was. I asked them if they would come out in the garden and tell me why they did not want Kanti Ramu in their group. They all came in the garden and I asked them to sit in a circle. I sat them and Kanti sat beside me.

I asked them patiently why they did not want Kanti to join their group. Ranchhod said that : "He is a cripple and will not be able to do the work." I then asked Ranchhod and other members of the group that

if any of them had a wound on their leg, and were not allowed to join the group how they would have felt ? At this Ranchhod kept quiet. For a little while nobody said anything. Then Narsi said that Ranchhod should not say anything like this, they would take Kanti in the group. Ranchhod said that he had realised his mistake and would not say like that again. He said that if he had been in Kanti's place he would never have tolerated such remarks, and being excluded from a group. He looked at Kanti and said that he was sorry for what he had said. Kanti looked at Ranchhod and Narsi and the other members of the group and smiled shyly. And so Kanti was taken into the group.

After that it was decided to start digging another plot but some of the implements needed repairs and hence this could not be started. The boys said that if the implements were not in working order, they would like to play games, I said that it was alright but how did they like the idea of clearing the garden with the help of sweeping brushes available in the agency. All of them agreed and the brushes were brought. The boys started sweeping the garden. During this time I asked Kanti to sit and rest as he seemed to have pain in his leg. He sat quietly and watched the others' work. I went to him and asked what had happened to his leg. He told me that he had a small boil a month back and now it had become much worse. I asked if he would be going to the hospital for treatment, he said he would be going the next day.

*9th November :*

Today the group members weeded part of their plot and trimmed the hedges. Kanti whose leg was in bandage sat near to watch what they were doing. I could see from the type of the bandage that he had been to the hospital. I asked him how he was. He said that he had been to the hospital for the required treatment and was feeling better. After some time I noticed that he also had started weeding in a small area. Earlier while he was resting, no one had commented that he was idle while they were busy working.

Narsi and Kanu started quarrelling while trimming the hedge. I went and asked what the matter was. Narsi said that Kanu did not know how to cut the hedge symmetrically and when he asked for the scissors Kanu refused. I asked Narsi that if Kanu did not know how to trim the hedge, would he like to show Kanu how to do it, as he had been shown by me in the beginning ? Narsi took up the suggestion readily and showed Kanu, after which they used the scissors by turns.

The boys were called in for dinner at the end of the hour. Before leaving I appreciated the work of the boys. The boys were commenting among themselves that they would continue the work after dinner and complete the work which remained.

*21st November :*

.....Towards the end of the activity I asked the members of the group if they would like to invite some person who would demonstrate and tell them how best they can grow flowers and vegetables. The boys liked the idea and said that they would enjoy having such a person with whom they could talk. I asked if they had any particular person they would like to invite. After a pause Ranchhod said: "Would a gardener from the City Gardens be able to come? They have such nice things there." I agreed to explore.

*23rd November :*

I went to the City Gardens and met Rambhai, one of the gardeners, to ask if he would be free in the evenings to visit the agency, and tell the boys something regarding gardening. He readily agreed. Rambhai asked what time he should come to the agency. I explained that one of the boys would like to come and take him to the agency and I would come with the boy at 3-45 p.m.

*25th November :*

As decided earlier Ranchhod was to go to meet the visitor. The group members had felt that it would be a gesture of courtesy if one of them could go and invite the visitor. We both set out together. On the way Ranchhod told me that on Monday he would be sent to another institution. He was happy to go since this would provide him with training in carpentry which he was eager to learn. Continuing his talk he said that he had a good time in the agency and in the group, and that I had been very kind to him. I listened quietly to what he said. He asked if he could write a letter to me from the other agency and if I would reply. I asked what he would like to write in his letter.

Ranchhod said he would like to tell me what he was doing in the new place. I said that I would be glad to hear from him and would surely reply to his letter.

When we were just near the garden I asked Ranchhod what he would say to the gardener to invite him to the agency. He said: "We, boys in

our gardening group are interested to invite you to tell something about gardening." Then I asked Ranchhod if the visitor is interested to know about the agency what he would say ? He said he would explain that the agency is a place where the children who have no parents, destitutes, wandering in destitute condition and stealing things are brought and looked after.

When we met Rambhai, I introduced Ranchhod who said namaste very politely. Rambhai was ready to accompany us. Before starting Ranchhod said that he on behalf of the boys of the group invited him to visit the place and tell something regarding the work of gardening. Though he blushed while saying this he seemed also to enjoy the experience.

On reaching the agency I introduced the boys. Rambhai seemed glad to meet the group. We took him around to the places where the boys had grown flowers and vegetables. He was interested in the work done by the boys and asked them many questions ; how did you plant this, when do you water it, etc. He gave many suggestions regarding different ways of digging without much physical fatigue, planting and watering.

For some time he saw the boys working in their plots and explained to them some of the ways which would improve their work such as the method of giving water to the plants. He left after an hour. The boys thanked him, walked up to the gate and stood there calling out " Avjo ".

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## SANGEET SABHA—MUSIC GROUP

*Introductory Comments :* This group was held in a correctional agency. It was an institution for children under fifteen. The members of the group, six boys interested in music, were 10-12 year old. The record covers a period of four months.

### Group Members

Kanti	11	Babu	12
Nuru	10	Habib	12
Ranchhod	10	Suman	12

*24th August :*

Kanti was all the time disturbing the group, by sometimes not joining in the song, sometimes singing something different from what the other boys were singing, or bullying them. Despite my repeatedly checking him he became almost unmanageable. I thought he wanted to attract my attention and also wanted a lead in the group. Kanti was dominating and attention seeking. I first of all explained to him that this was absolutely wrong. Sometimes I would ask him to lead and others to follow at such times he felt happy and was quiet; but whenever another member was singing he would not listen quietly.

*31st August :*

When I went to the institution the boys came and asked where “our” group would be sitting that day. I felt that the group feeling was beginning to develop.

Today I first asked Nuru to sing since he had not sung for some time. He was less shy than usual. After singing a few lines however his shyness overpowered him again. I said we both would sing together, at intervals I would lower my voice and thus allow his voice to be heard more clearly.

I asked Ranchhod to sing, with a few words and signs he said that he did not know. I asked whether he would try to sing with me next time. He nodded his head in a very pleased manner.

Kanti wanted to learn an action song. I taught them actions to words they already know. This was enjoyed a great deal by Kanti and all the other boys. They asked me to demonstrate it over and over again. Babu

who had not seemed interested in anything so far but his own song sat up attentively and clapped a little.

After this Habib and Babu also gave one song each. In the meantime a quarrel arose between Habib and Kanti, and they came to blows, Kanti had interrupted when Habib was singing. I separated them and told them that it was bad policy to interrupt anybody who was speaking or singing. Both of them separated but still the situation seemed quite tense. In order to lessen the tension I gave each one of them a Dandia (stick) and asked Kanti and Habib to lead the Ras that they had seen on the 15th August, while all others would follow. This worked quite well since when the Ras was over both of them seemed to have forgotten the quarrel. In this dance Babu could not take part, but watched it with interest. Ranchhod could not dance well but seemed to enjoy himself, and the other boys did not laugh at him.

#### *7th September :*

Today I went to the agency with some ideas regarding programme planning on the basis of their needs and capacities as I had observed for the past few weeks.

In the beginning I started playing tunes on the harmonium as Ranchhod suggested that I should do. Babu although he does not take part in the singing, clapped when the song was over. He no longer sits in a corner. Ranchhod not only clapped at the end of the song but tried to hum the tune.

I asked them today that we would plan for our activity, and invited their suggestions as to what should be included in the programme. Kanti said that he wanted Garba and other active dances. Habib said they could do "Champi Malish Song". Ranchhod said that they should visit the Kamati Garden. Nuru said that we could learn "Bande Matram". I asked Babu in various ways what his preference was. He could not understand but probably thought that I was asking him to sing a Bhajan, so he said he would sing a bhajan. I told him that we would listen to his Bhajan.

Before that I told the group that from what we had discussed I gathered that our programme should include more action songs and dances, bhajans, outings, group songs, listening to the radio. They all agreed to this general outline of programme.

Today I had brought a book of Gujarati songs concerning Mahatma Gandhi, from the Khadi movement to achievement of Independence, in pictures. I kept one clay statue of Mahatma Gandhi before them and asked

Kanti to read the songs and explain the pictures to the others. They enjoyed this very much. Ranchhod would look at the pictures and utter that this was "Takli", "cap" etc. and seemed very pleased. Nuru and Habib asked questions about Gandhiji being arrested and sent to jail. I explained their questions.

*10th September :*

Today I brought with me a big picture of an aeroplane, along with a song about a plane. Ranchhod came up and held the picture and said "Viman" (Plane). Babu saw it but said nothing. I asked him what it was. He said it is a "Jahaj" and it flies in the air. He also showed the two wings with his fingers. I asked something about planes from Nuru and Kanti. They all enjoyed talking about it.

I then taught them the song which made them laugh a lot. Although this activity took about three quarters of an hour the group members were interested in it and did not get restless.

Then we had solos from several members. I asked Nuru if he would like to sing a song today. He sang, only half of the song, but with considerable less shyness than before. Babu, Kanti and Habib gave a song each. Ranchhod was listening to the songs by others attentively and was active in clapping after each song. When I asked him if he would like to sing, he said he would listen to the radio. Others said this was a good idea. We went to listen to the radio. A classical music programme was tuned on. When the tabla or harmonium played, Kanti, Ranchhod and Nuru would comment that such and such an instrument was being played.

They seemed to enjoy the programme. I noted today that Kanti no longer becomes hostile or disruptive when he is not given the first place in the group. He listened with equal patience to Nuru and Babu.

*12th September :*

.....I then took out some new coins as well as old coins from my pocket, and asked them if they knew anything about the new coins. Kanti and Nuru had seen the new coins but did not know much about them. I sang a song which occurs in one of the movies, and which explains the difference between old and new coins of India. They were very curiously watching my movements and seemed quite absorbed. I then briefly explained to the group the introduction of new coins by the 1st of April.

.....I had brought with me a clay pomegranate. I went and brought some red chillies from the kitchen, we sang the song in which there were riddles about these two articles. After the song I explained to them the idea of riddles occurring in songs. I found that such songs accompanied with materials can be very interesting to the group members. Ranchhod was very happy over this song and asked me again and again to repeat the "Mirchiwala Song". Babu passively watched. Habib and Kanti were interested and quiet. After this boys wanted to have dandias. For the first today Babu asked for a pair of dandias. I gave them to him and asked him to stand by my side. He could not strike rhythmically but tried to follow me. I encouraged him and tried to teach him how to use the dandia. Nuru was able to do it better today and was relatively more comfortable, previously he was shy and would at times refuse to participate in group dances.

After the dance I asked Kanti to return the materials to storage. He seemed reluctant to do this. I collected the dandias and started carrying them towards the storage place. All the boys rushed and placed the items in their proper place. Kanti without being asked took the harmonium and kept it in the box. I thanked him. I explained to all that they are all members of one group and the responsibility of keeping the things in order and taking care of the equipment lies with all of them. I said that these materials are brought by the institution for their enjoyment. They all listened quietly, only Kanti said "Yes".

Then I asked if they would like to think about what they would like to do at their next meeting. After some discussion about other items, Kanti asked that since I am a Punjabi, they would like to have a Punjabi song from me. I agreed to prepare a song for the next meeting.

*14th September :*

I decided to give the first chance to Babu. He sang while the other members of the group listened without any disturbance, they clapped at the end of the song and Babu seemed very pleased.

Nuru without the least hesitation sang a song which he said he had prepared that day.

Now Kanti stood up and all others fell in line behind him. Kanti sang a chorus song from one of the films. It was very interesting that all the other members of the group cooperated, forming themselves in a small marching group and with actions, even Babu joined in the waving

of the arm and marching actions of the rest of the group, he looked very happy.

I said that we should plan for our visit to the radio station. They suggested the route, and we arranged about other details of the visit.

I went to the Radio station and met the officer on duty to whom I explained my purpose. He told me that on next Sunday the 22nd the Radio station is having children's programme at 9-30 a.m. and added that another worker from a welfare centre has already been issued one pass for 30 children. He had since learnt that the worker was bringing only twenty children and suggested that my group could be included in that pass. He also told me that the next children's programme at the station would be on the 6th of October.

*17th September :*

The group members were already in the room waiting for me. Babu happily asked if I had brought the air-plane with me. I said no, but today we would be travelling in a train. He laughed. First I explained them about the visit to the Radio station on 22nd, and emphasised that they should be well disciplined during the visit.

Then they pointed to the book I had with me and asked for the new song. I asked them to make a railway train. Now for an engine Babu was placed on the front as he cannot sing, but he can whistle like an engine, others were asked to be the railway compartments. I sang the song, and they performed the actions. When I sang the words of the whistling of the engine, Babu would whistle, and when the words about the running of the train would occur the rest of them would go "chook-chook". Similarly when I called out "the train is going to Delhi, come along, take the ticket and sit in the train" they would at once show the hustle bustle near the window, and by their hand movements it would become clear that they were taking tickets and paying money for them, then rush back and form a train and steam off to Delhi. They enjoyed this very much, Nuru and Kanti wanted a piece of paper and wrote the song down so that they would have it with them.

After that we had some more songs. Then Ranchhod said we should listen to the radio, and they listened quietly to the radio for some time. A flute programme was on, they seemed to enjoy it. They asked me if I could bring a flute some day. I said I would try to get it.

**Worker's Observation :** Today the group seemed to be a little more interested in the activity and there was good organization and minimum of disorder. Even Babu is taking interest, and Ranchhod was trying to speak some of the simple sentences of the songs. Kanti seemed to be losing his restless and dominating attitude. May be it was due to the type of programme, simple action songs, which could be enjoyed by all the members. I plan to learn some more such items.

*19th September :*

They now said that they would again sit in a train, meaning sing the song we had on Wednesday about a train. I asked would they like to sit in a motor car today. They began laughing and jumping. I gave them a Gujarati song "Hamari Motor" with actions of how the motor stopped at the red light, broke down and had to be repaired with speed as it was blocking the traffic, and how in the busy bazar the car had to move slowly taking care that it did not have an accident with other vehicles such as cycle, cart or tanga.

*22nd September :*

The boys were ready and seemed very eager to go to the Radio station, when I reached the institution at 8-30 a.m. Babu asked me where they were going. I told him to see the children singing at the place from where the voice in their radio came. Kanti, Nuru and Habib had seen the station from the outside. This was quite a new experience for all of them. I told them that when they were inside the room they were not to make any noise, otherwise that would also be heard over the radio. They understood and agreed to be quiet seriously. They also decided by themselves that they should walk in an orderly manner to the Radio station, they walked in a line of pairs.

On the way we met the second group from the other welfare centre, this group consisted of small girls. I asked the boys to mix with them after introducing all the children, they seemed quite friendly in their manner.

I overheard Kanti say to Habib who was getting restless that this would look bad in the eyes of the other group and show that their group had lack of discipline. After this Habib and others became more orderly in their behaviour.

Inside the studio their behaviour was praiseworthy, and to me quite surprising. Apart from not making any noise for one and a half hours,

they did not move from their places, or try to touch any of the instruments that were lying in the studio. The studio in charge commented that she was impressed by their good behaviour. After the programme I told the members something about all the instruments in the studio, they were specially interested in the Jaltarang. They asked how the small boys and girls who gave the programme learnt music. I told that they studied in the various music schools in the city, and gave their programme here, for which they were given some money. I went to the studio in charge to thank her.

On the way back, to my questions, Nuru said that he enjoyed the bhajans most. Habib liked the violins, Kanti spoke of tabla vadan, and Ranchhod said he likes "Paniwala Piala", Jaltarang. Later they spontaneously started singing and sang for part of the way back.

*24th September :*

In the last few minutes they desired to listen to the radio. Although the programme on the air did not seem very enjoyable, they talked of their visit to the radio station on Sunday, and told me with much enthusiasm that the voice was coming from the place where they had sat. Nuru and Habib said they would like to go there again. I said that sometime after Diwali we might.

*27th September :*

Now the suggestion came from Nuru and Habib that they wanted to prepare "Kheer" which meant sing one of the songs they knew. Although this song had been done several times, I felt that it was a favourite with them, and so we again started "preparing Kheer" I went and borrowed the pot and the ladle from the kitchen and we had fun pretending to make and eat that very nice sweet kheer.

I plan to bring some more songs for the group dealing with food.

*16th November :*

As previously arranged we had a visitor come and play flute and mouth organ in the group today. He was a second year student from the music college whom I had asked to come to the agency. It was a new experience for both the group and the worker. Besides providing a good deal of recreation for them it also added to their knowledge. Habib asked about the narrow and broad holes in the flute. Nuru and Suman also had many questions about the mouth organ and the flute.

Suman wanted to blow the flute, I told him that one should not put in one's mouth something of another person because it was a way the diseases and the germs spread ; otherwise he could see the instruments. Moreover there was nothing more than the wind blown inside that produced the music. He seemed quite satisfied with the explanation and examined the instruments and returned them. The group was on their best behaviour in the presence of the visitor. If at times Ranchhod did not pay attention or became restless Suman would make signs to him and he would become quiet. I felt that such programmes were of value but should be of shorter duration. Flute or mouth organ music does not have the elements of action that dholak or tabla or dandia have which my group members like so much.

There were several songs played by the visitor on the two instruments. While a song being played, Nuru and Habib seemed to be getting restless ; thinking that they needed something more active. I asked them to sing the words of the chorus.

Another value of such programmes I feel is in terms of creating an interest about the agency and the children in the visitor. I showed him around the institution after taking the permission of the Superintendent and explained him the work of the agency. I introduced him to the Superintendent. Mr. P. said he was very glad to have come, he also played the Banjo and would be glad to come again if needed.

*19th November :*

I had brought two new songs for the group today. Suman and Nuru said that they would like me to dictate it to them while they copied it out. I said that if we write this individually it would use up all our time and we would not have time left for any other activity. I asked them if they could suggest a way whereby we could have time for our activities as well as have songs available for the members of the group. Suman suggested that all the songs could be kept with him and members could take it from him when they wanted. Nuru said the same thing. I asked that they should think of a way whereby the songs could be kept by all since they belonged really to all of them and if they were kept with one person and they got lost then the group would have the loss.

Habib suggested that they should be kept in the cupboard. I asked if they thought they would be safe in the cupboard. Suman said that if they could be kept in a box which they could get from the agency it would be better. I agreed, and it was decided that on Thursday if they did not

get a box from the agency they would make one from card-board. The method of preparing it was discussed.

*21st November :*

Another group of the agency went to see an " Akhada " today. Habib said we should also go. I said it was a good idea, what would they like to see, we had fun when we went to the radio station. Habib said could they go to the Kamati Garden. I said they had seen it several times, would they like to see something they had not seen before ? They were quiet for a few moments. I said I realised that they might not know of many new places. They asked me to suggest. I asked would they like to go and see the music college in the city. This pricked their interest and curiosity and there were a lot of " where " " when " " what " questions from the group. I answered their questions and said I would make the arrangements and let them know about the date Habib and others seemed very happy.

I now reminded them about the box for songs. They said they would be able to get one from the agency and we went and got it. They seemed very enthusiastic and pleased about this. They suggested that they would paste a paper on the box and write their names on it. Nuru said he would collect the songs and put them in. Suman said he would put more songs in it and fill the box up. We put one song in the box that day.

*26th November :*

Today the group said that they would first of all work on their box. Suman said he would cut the cardboard and make the cover for the box. Nuru too wished to do the same. I said that the box belonged to all and we all would prepare it together. I quickly thought of the different materials that would be required : cardboard, paper, gum, scissors, etc. and asked as to who would bring the requirements. Nuru volunteered. I said that Nuru knew where the things were kept and he should go and get them. Ranchhod and Babu seemed to feel a little left out as they had no share in the project. I drew the lines on the paper and asked Ranchhod to cut out the outline. Babu was asked to put the gum on the paper. So everybody had a share in fixing up the box.

I had brought an old copy of the Illustrated Weekly. I showed them the picture of the musicians meeting where different Instruments were played. When I said that this meeting was held in Delhi, Ranchhod cheer-

fully said that he too lived in Delhi. I told them the names of various instruments and how they were played. Suman said that they should see the sitar and the bango. I asked them how they thought they could see those instruments ? Nuru said that we should invite again the person who had played on the flute and mouthorgan. I said I would see if he or any other person would come and pay a visit to our group.

There were also some pictures of the various dances of India. The boys seemed pleased to see the different coloured pictures, and to learn the names of the different dances. They asked the question as to why different dances had different costumes. I explained that they varied according to the style of the dance as well as the places from which the dances originated. In one picture there were a group of musicians sitting facing a number of microphones. They asked me what these things were. I reminded them of their visit to radio station, when they had seen one like that in front of the children who were singing. I said that many were placed in this case to catch the voices of the different men. They showed much curiosity over a picture of a theatre and a large audience. I told them that when they would go to the music college they would be able to see a theatre. They said I should bring more pictures.

*30th November :*

Today Mr. V. came to our group with a Banjo and a mouthorgan. When the group was assembling other workers in the agency asked if the other children could join in the programme. I asked the group members if they would like the other children from the institution come and listen to the music, they agreed.

In the big group it was not possible to observe the individuals nor could they ask questions and be as free as in their small group. All the children enjoyed the music very much. When one of their favourite film song was being played some of the children started dancing. After several songs Mr. V. explained briefly about the working of the Banjo. This programme was held for one hour only.

*3rd December :*

As the group gathered Suman said that their song box had been broken by another boy in the agency, and they wanted to repair it. I said we could do that, but suggested that before we started repairing it we should think of a safe place for keeping it. They all began to suggest different places. Some suggested that it should be kept in the office, some that it

should be kept in the cupboard, while some preferred to keep it in the guard's room. I said that the box was for their use and it should be easily available to them. They came to the conclusion that for the time being they could keep it on the top of the steel cupboard.

While we were preparing the new cover for the box, Ranchhod brought a piece of coloured paper from somewhere and happily asked me to paste it on the lid. Habib and Nuru rejected the idea. I said that pasting the paper as it was would not look nice, but if we gave it another shape it would look very nice. Suman agreed and said he would cut out a flower from it and then paste it. This idea was accepted by Habib and Nuru. Ranchhod seemed pleased. Nuru wanted to paste white paper around the box and Suman did not like the idea. I asked the group whether the box would look better with or without some kind of paper decoration around it. Habib said that the bare box would not look nice besides he wanted to write the names of the members there. I said that was a good idea and asked if they would like to paste on the white paper. Suman said that he would sketch a few flowers on the white paper. When the box was completed they all felt very proud of "their" box. Habib brought a photograph he had and contributed it to the box.

*7th December :*

The boys were eagerly awaiting their trip to the music school. Before starting out I asked what were some of the things we had to keep in mind when we visited such a place in a group. Nuru said "we should go in a line" Habib said "we should say namaste to the elders." Suman said "we will not speak there" I agreed with what they said and added that we wanted to have fun and when we go to places in such a nice way people would be glad to have us visit. They all were feeling cheerful and fell in a line in pairs.

On the way there was a gate which was decorated with flowers with the words welcome written in Hindi. Habib praised it and said they would also prepare it at the Diwali time next year as they had done this year.

On the way the boys came across the Statue of Gandhiji and Buddha; for a while we talked about them. When we passed the High Court, Nuru asked what that building was, Suman answered that like the court for children this was a big court.

Their behaviour in the music school was disciplined. There was little need for me to remind them about their behaviour, as they took care

of this among themselves. When Habib was going to touch a picture frame, Suman and Ranchhod would make gestures to stop him. A guide came with us who took us from room to room and explained about various new as well as old instruments to us, such as Tambura, Tanpura, Sarungi, Veena, Shankar Veena, Dilruba, Electric Guitar. The boys found this very interesting. At one point Habib said "This is wonderful". They had such a surprised look on their face as if they did not realise that there could be so many instruments. They asked many questions.

Then they were taken to the theatre and the stage. The guide explained them the system of red and blue lights and their meaning to the man who pulled the curtains. He showed them the hidden cabin where the curtain puller sat, and the promptor's box. They also saw the green room and the stage properties such as wings and other scenery, made out of card board. They were really intrigued by this. Nuru and Habib said that the scenes looked so realistic from a distance. We later went to the open air theatre. The boys expressed their desire to see a drama in a theatre some day. I told them that I would try. Suman said that we could get some songs for our group from this place. I said I would see if they could give us some. When we reached the agency the boys were still full of the enthusiasm about what they had seen and said they would like to see it again.

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## THE VILLAGE WOMEN MEET

*General Points :* A few excerpts have been taken from the record of six months' work with a group of women in the village. The worker is a second year woman student in a school of social work. The record shows the reaction of the group members to a worker who is younger to them. It also covers a variety of topics around social problems.

*Teaching Points :* This is a record of work with an adult group. This could help the class to discuss establishment of relationship with an adult group. Also suitable programme activities for a group of women; differences in rural and urban groups.

An interesting point for class consideration is the difference in the age of the worker and the group members. Could a younger worker gain the confidence of the group members, or would the age factor constitute an important handicap for the worker ?

Worker uses activity as a means of getting the group members together, she even states this in the record of 7th November. Question could be raised about the advisability of such a direct statement from the worker.

Worker has clear goals in terms of the kind of experiences she feels would be meaningful to the group. Although there is no direct statement to that effect it is clear from the worker's role with the group that she aims to increase the awareness of the members regarding the meaning of customs, the conditions in the village, and help them gain more self-confidence so that they could see their own share in modifying the conditions.

There are several examples of direct verbal hostility towards the worker. The class could discuss the meaning of this: is it a testing of the worker, or could it be seen as a lack of self-confidence on the part of the members, or is it provoked by the worker being "a city dweller" who is so different from them ? The handling of the hostility provides good illustration of a worker who is comfortable enough with the group so that she can accept the hostility and respond in a professional manner.

In attempting to help the group members gain greater social awareness the worker uses both interpretation and challenge. She raises

questions with the group that lead them to think about the meaning of customs.

Students could note the movement in the group's thinking regarding various customs from an apathetic compliance to one of conscious adjustment, and working towards gradual change.

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## JUST FLYING KITES

*General Comments :* This record shows group activity focused around a particular Indian Festival, and the use the worker has made of this occasion as a Social Worker. The recording is clear and detailed and shows the sequence of situations and handling by the worker clearly. The worker was a second term male student in a school of social work.

*Teaching Points :* This record offers a good opportunity for discussion of the use of festivals and national holidays by a group worker. The need for the worker to understand the significance of the day for the group he works with and the difference in his role in the festivities depending on the type of agency in which he works. Some interesting points may be raised in relation to the different role of the worker in different settings, e.g. in a detention institution for children or in a children's hospital as against the setting of a community welfare centre given in this record.

Worker's comments on the record of the 14th give some indication of the meaning of participation in the Utran festival—to the worker. It helped the worker to empathise or “feel-with” the community and the group, in a joyful, sharing, situation.

Points regarding responsibilities of the worker in terms of securing the money from the agency budget, planning the activity in advance, and involving the group in even a small contribution like bringing the sticks for kite-making could be discussed.

This record also gives instances of the meaning to the children of working with their hands and creating things; and also shows the role of the worker in understanding and stimulating it.

The students could be asked to identify the ways in which the worker sets limits in the record and this could stimulate a discussion on the use of limits. The class could also note behaviour of group members which give evidence of a positive worker-group relationship.

The recording of Home Visit to Krishna's parents has possibilities of illustrating in class the importance of tone of voice. The same words could convey concern or criticism on the worker's part depending on tone of voice and facial expression.

Although the Worker does not comment on it directly, the record shows the different meaning of the Worker's home visit, to the various parents. The need of Worker's awareness of this in his response to parents' questions and comments could be emphasised.

Worker's application of the principle of self-determination around the plan of picnic : Does the fact that the Worker changed his own plans to attend the picnic indicate professional responsibility or anxiety on his part ?

Worker takes definite steps in setting limits for the physical safety of the group, would this be considered realistic or overprotective with a group of this age ?

Worker's readiness to enter the discussion on sex, his skill in getting to know the group members' views and fears regarding masturbation and his factual but brief explanation to the group; could be used to stimulate class discussion on a group worker's role in sex education. A controversial point could be raised with the students : Would discussion on sex, which is avoided in family and school create more conflict and anxiety in the group members?

Worker's responsibility to gauge the fatigue level of the group; especially one with varying age levels could be discussed. Should he have allowed the picnic to go on so long ?

Worker is outspoken in his comments regarding his own feelings of anger, doubt, and joy. This could be used to start a discussion with the class regarding the existence of such feelings with most workers, especially beginning workers, and the need for the worker to recognise it.

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## RAMJI : A BAD BOY

*General Comments :* The worker was a first term male student in a school of social work. This record shows worker's response to a child with destructive and defiant behaviour and his effort to understand and work with the child. The record includes many instances which could be discussed with the beginning students in terms of their role in the agency.

*Teaching Points :* Many points suggest themselves for class discussion in Worker's handling of Ramji, his response to the suspicion about him from agency and group members, and his effort to establish positive working relationship with the boy.

This record gives an opportunity for the class to discuss the meaning of behaviour. Worker says to a "tough" boy like Ramji : do not be afraid to be the captain of the game. Tough behaviour as a defence could be discussed. During discussion on the meaning of behaviour, it might be of value to contrast difficult behaviour with the behaviour of the "good child"—one who is afraid to disagree with group members or worker and therefore is only apparently well adjusted in the group.

Worker tries to understand Ramji's behaviour in relation to his family picture. The importance of this could be emphasised. The class could also discuss what clues did the worker gain from this brief talk with Ramji.

( a ) What type of adult male figures are there in Ramji's family, for him to identify with.

( b ) What is the role of the mother in the family.

( c ) What does "learning to drive a car" mean to Ramji. Should worker take it at "face-value" i.e. is it correct to assume as worker seems to feel that Ramji's difficulties will be lessened by employment or apprenticeship in a garage.

Ramji shows hostility towards authority and lack of ability to take responsibility for his own negative behaviour with the previous workers in the agency. Worker secures a more comprehensive picture of the difficulty from Ramji through questions, however he refrains from taking sides. The class could discuss the positives in this handling.

The incident around Ramji's reaction to being called Beta has good material for class discussion. What might be some of the reasons for his negative response to this ? The class could also discuss the verbal and non-verbal ways in which feelings are conveyed and the worker-group member relationship is established.

Positive handling by the worker of the testing by Ramji in asking for the cycle lamp could be discussed. Is it significant that Ramji asked for the Worker's cycle lamp after he had told the worker of how destructive he had been with the previous worker's property ?

The beginning student often has some question around " Individualization within the group ". It is often felt that " all members should be equal to the worker ". This record offers a good opportunity for the class to discuss the difference between " individualization " and worker's subjective preference for a particular child. Would worker's concern for Ramji create problems in his role as a group worker ?

The class could also see the use of individual contacts and interviews with a member, which is an important part of group work practice, and discuss the difference between these individual contacts and case work.

In the summary given by the worker, how aware is he of his own handling ? A question for class discussion could be : Do you agree with the analysis of Ramji's behaviour problems as given by the worker. Do you have anything more to add.

Other points that arise from the record seem to be Worker's use of discussion to get to know the skills and interests of the group members. The class could try to outline what programme suggestions the worker could make on the basis of clues secured from this talk.

Around the incident of letting the little girls sit with the rest of the children; worker shows readiness to discuss question of untouchability with the group. Worker's method of bringing out attitudes and ideas of the group members through questions is positive. The class could also discuss if worker could have done anything to protect Pandav from the attack of the group. Could he have lessened Pandav's embarrassment by commenting that we all have feelings regarding the matter of untouchability and we could all examine it together in the group.

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## SOME "PERSONAL" COMMENTS

*General Points :* In this record the main incident is the group members' questions around sex. This is an area of some difficulty for the beginning student. It is of value to discuss around this topic, the role of the worker in giving sex education, also that workers too have feelings about discussing this topic, as seen in the first record of the worker. The worker was a first year male student in a school of social work.

*Teaching Points :* Worker considers Keshav's questions to be a test of worker's temper ( record of 5th September ) was it so, or was it an indication of the curiosity and need of the group members for information on sex; although they are approaching the subject in a very indirect manner.

The class could discuss the difference in the Worker's role in the two records. On the first day he is very passive and allows the discussion to continue without setting any limits or giving any response to the group's underlying question. It can be emphasised that this permissiveness on the part of the worker is anxiety producing as seen in the comments of Keshav at the end of the session. Keshav who acted as the spokesman of the group—begins to feel guilty. Along with this could be mentioned the difference in the role of the enabling, the authoritarian, and the laissez-faire or permissive worker.

The positive aspect of worker's awareness that he needs to discuss the topic of sex with the group members could be mentioned. This could lead to discussion on how worker could equip himself in this area. Also the importance of comfort on the part of the worker while discussing this topic with the group.

In the record of 5th September, although worker asked a lot of questions about the festival of Kali Mata, he does not give any further lead to this discussion, nor does he tell the group about the illness or treatment of small-pox. This could lead to an interesting discussion in class on what is the role of the worker when the scientific knowledge he has is in opposition to the cultural or religious beliefs of the people with whom he works.

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## A DRAWING LESSON

*General Points :* This is a brief record which shows the drawing lesson offered enjoyment to the children, helped in the development of their skill in drawing, and also provided for imaginative expression. The worker was a first year woman student in a school of social work.

*Teaching Points :* The class could discuss the value of having a resource person come to the agency every week; would it be more meaningful if resource persons were used keeping in mind the varied interests of the group members.

How does the presence of a resource person in this group affect the interaction between the worker and the group members. Worker seems to take a very passive role in the group while the resource person is present. Students could discuss if worker could have used herself more effectively during this period ?

Students could also discuss in this record the difference between an activity which has its focus on the members of the group as against an activity which is an end in itself, although it may have the elements of recreation or enjoyment in it. The record shows that the drawing session offered enjoyment to the children, helped in the development of their skill in drawing, and also gave them opportunity to give expression to their imagination.

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## GANDHI JAYANTI CELEBRATION

*General Points :* This record shows group work with a group of boys in an institution for the care of blind. The use of a national holiday by the worker is well illustrated in this record. The worker was a second year male student of a school in social work.

*Teaching Points :* This record gives an opportunity for the discussion on the meaning of a handicap to a person and the role of the social worker in helping the handicapped person maintain his sense of self-confidence and self-worth. Students could try to study the method by which the worker in this record tried to do so.

There are good instances of “planning-with-the-group” in this record. Also the worker very positively uses achievement in a small area ( purchase of picture ) towards a very meaningful experience for the group. He also shows good ability to follow up with discussions and suggestions at a later time.

The class could also discuss the value of a lady visitor, the difference in the behaviour of the boys in her presence, and the meaning of this visit to the boys. This instance also can be discussed in terms of the different ways in which community persons could be involved in the work of the agency, and various ways in which the needs of the institution can be interpreted to the community.

Worker's observation of the difference in method of play due to the lack of sight, could lead the class to consider the different kinds of activities that may be suitable for the blind. It is also interesting to note modification of the rules of the games, suggested by the worker, to gain greater participation from the members. The worker also efforts to encourage the leadership within the group according to the skill of the different members.

An important point for discussion is the meaning of the worker-group relationship to the group members and the comfortable handling of the worker when he is praised for the work he has done by the group. Although the reply of the worker may seem formal on paper, we can assume that he said them in a warm tone, and he conveyed that he meant what he said.

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## **“PLAYING ” WITH SICK CHILDREN**

*General Points :* This record covers the contacts a worker had with patients and their family members, over a period of ten weeks, in a children's ward of a hospital. Although the worker does not directly comment on his role, the record shows him working as a helping person in a variety of situations. The worker was a first year male student in a school of social work.

*Teaching Points :* One of the major points for discussion from this record is : What is the role of the social worker in “ ward work ”. Question could be raised if the work that the social worker does could be termed Case work or Group work in its strict sense of the ward. However from the record it is sufficiently clear that the worker undertakes a helping enabling task which is very meaningful to the individuals concerned.

Students could be asked to study the record for the helping role of the worker and to discuss if they thought his work to be of value, and whether this work in the wards could with benefit be fitted into the duties of a medical social worker.

This record also illustrates well the different meaning of hospitalization to different persons. The worker seems aware of this and responds appropriately to the feelings of the persons. There are also good instances where the trauma of illness or separation from family is felt; the worker utilises the positives within the hospital setting to help the individual cope with the situation.

The record of 13th October has some interesting points for class consideration : What significance could the letter writing play have for children in a hospital ? Does worker show awareness of this ? How could he have responded to the feeling of homesickness which seems to have started this play.

The class could discuss the importance of taking into account the child's health while conducting activity in a hospital ward. Also the need for close coordination between the Doctor and the Worker, whereby the worker would know which child could be involved in programme, and which others needed quiet.

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## CHAMPA, RAN AWAY

*General Comments :* This is a very brief record around a particular incident of a child running away from an institution, and the effect of that on the other children. This is felt to be a useful record for the beginning student since it represents a crisis situation in which the beginning student is likely to have a lot of questions, as well as difficulty in handling. The worker was a first year woman student in a school of social work.

*Teaching Points :* In this brief record the different reactions of the members of the group is noted and recorded by the worker. However the record does not show clearly what the children tried to express through their play "Ghar-ghar". There is also no mention of how the worker responded to the comments made by the children.

Worker shows awareness of tension both on the part of the group as well as agency.

This record offers opportunity for the class to discuss the meaning of running away; its implications for the individual, the members of the agency, and the agency staff. The class could also try to think through the worker's role in relation to the members when such a tension creating incident takes place. Also in this connection students could consider what is a Group Worker's role in interpreting the rules of the agency and the service of the agency to the group members.

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## **“CHOTE BAGBAN” : THE LITTLE GARDENERS**

*General Comments :* This record covers group work activity over a period of four months. Although there is no direct statement made by the worker of his role or the interaction between the worker and the group or between the group members themselves; the recording gives a clear idea of the atmosphere in the group at different times, and the use the worker makes of it to help the group members to move towards positive experiences. *Worker :* a second year male student in a school of social work.

*Teacher :* The worker's exploration of the level of skill and knowledge of the group members in gardening could be discussed. This could be used as a good illustration of the principle of beginning where the group is; and also of the more important counter part of that principle : begin where the group is but do not leave them there.

Many programme ideas suggest themselves out of the initial discussion with the group. Class could see the ways in which they were put into action by this worker; as also discuss other ways in which the clues seen in the initial exploration could be implemented.

Worker's awareness of the individuals within the group could be noted e.g. making sure that Daya was present at the time of fixing the flowers.

Worker takes a very positive role in handling the matter of weak, low status, less skilled members of the group. His method of helping the group members “to accept them as they are” is gentle and thoughtful; he does not fall in the usual error of taking the side of the weak member. These instances could also be used to start discussion on “scapegoating”, the reasons for it, and a social worker's role in handling it.

Although worker does arouse guilt feelings in the members by pointing up their behaviour which might have hurt another member of the group, he also gives opportunity to channelise the guilt positively. The factor of guilt in modification of behaviour could be discussed in class, emphasising the positive and the negative use of guilt feelings.

Good use is made of resource person. The value of bringing a person from the community to this agency could be discussed both from the point of the meaning of this to the group members as well as the visitor.

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## SANGEET SABHA—MUSIC GROUP

*General Points :* The record covers a period of four months and shows work done with a small group of boys. The worker was a first year male student in a school of social work.

*Teaching Points :* This record offers opportunity for class to think of the value of music as a programme activity. It can't in has consideration of the various possibilities in the use of school of social e variation needed according to the capacity and age for the different r

Increasing skill on the part of the v ded by the worker. situation that arises in the group can be seen e.g. children tried to exp. Kanti in the record of 24th August and 12th September

This record illustrates well the concept of "programme planning with the group" and also the role of the worker in raising the sights of the group. The worker used increasing skill in suggesting and providing new programme experiences for the group. The concept that programme is a tool in social work, a means to an end and not an end in itself is well illustrated in this record.

Worker's observation regarding the participation of various members of the group, is also significant to note. Here too the worker begins to use himself with increasing skill to help the members gain more positive experiences in the group.

The worker uses community resources both in terms of inviting community persons to the agency as well as taking the children to visit various places of interest to them. Class could use these instances to discuss value of this for the members of the group, as well as the suitability of using this as a method of interpretation of agency service and needs of the children in the agency to the community. Further the class could also consider the value of an "outing" to children who lived in an institution.

Students could also be asked to study the movement in the group, as seen through the capacity of the group to maintain discipline and the evidence of good group morale.

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