

frequency and/or duration of accessing the child's interests.

The geographical separation of the parent and the child and the availability and cost of transport are powerful influences on frequency of access. Where parents of limited means have to travel long distances on public transport, perhaps making a number of changes of buses or trains, it would be unrealistic to expect very frequent access. Many parents in such circumstances may request very frequent access and might need to be helped to accept this is neither in their interests nor those of the child. However, all possible help should be given to get parents to access. The assistance may be in the form of taxi vouchers, reimbursement of fares, arranging transport through a volunteer or having a worker from the agency transporting the parent or the child, where appropriate.

Very occasionally a parent may be so distressed by access that it is in the parent's interests to reduce the

frequency or duration of access or provide supervision where previously there was none. A parent that the writer worked with some years ago became so upset at her difficulties in communicating with her children that she would begin to self-mutilate during access. The parent's behaviour upset the children greatly. The behaviour disappeared once the length of the access and the demands being made upon her during it, in terms of her responsibilities for managing the children, were reduced.

The child's wishes about access are a further important consideration. The child's wishes must be balanced at all times against considerations of the child's physical safety, emotional security and general well-being.

A final and very important consideration regarding the duration and frequency of access, is the number of people visiting the child. It is important to ensure that the child does not have so many visitors (mother, father, aunt, uncle, siblings, next door neighbour) that they

are constantly unsettled. The child needs to feel as settled and secure within the alternative care setting as possible while maintaining familial and other links.

The child's reaction to access

Children may react in all sorts of ways to access. Their behaviour following access may be the same as usual. More often, however, the child will show some change in his behaviour. Possible responses to access are: withdrawn behaviour; expressions of anger or sadness; aggressive or oppositional behaviour; loss of usual self help skills; being clingy and generally insecure. Where there is a change for the worse in the child's behaviour, then he needs to be given the opportunity to express his feelings, to be treated with warmth, given as much reassurance as possible, and to have firm limits set for him. ♦

CRESWICK FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP IN FAMILY RELATIONS AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

The Creswick Foundation was established in 1952 with a view to facilitating research in Australia into mental and related conditions affecting children or young people and to give guidance to those involved in treating or preventing such conditions.

With the increasing challenges facing children in industrial multi-cultural urban societies, especially those with a disability, many families and other carers are unable to provide adequate nurture for children and as a result, some may grow up with varying degrees of health, education, emotional or social handicaps or a combination of them. Early recognition and support of such families, other carers and children can often do much to prevent the development of these handicaps.

Applications are invited from teachers, nurses, social workers, psychiatrists and psychologists and other professional persons who are experienced and working in this field, for Fellowships to further their knowledge by study in an approved centre overseas for a period of approximately 3 months. One or two short visits to other centres would also be acceptable.

Applicants will be expected to have contributed in some aspect in this field, be able to indicate how they wish to extend their knowledge and how they plan to use this experience in training, teaching or other appropriate practical way on their return.

The Trustees will require the successful candidate to furnish them with a report on their overseas visit shortly after returning to Australia. This ensures dissemination of Fellowship holders' findings to those interested in them.

The Foundation will pay the overseas living expenses of the successful candidate for up to three months, which will cover a budget submitted by the candidate to the Trustees and approved by them, and will pay the return economy fare.

Details of the information which must be supplied by applicants may be obtained from:

The Creswick Foundation
c/ Mr J. Kimpton, Chairman
197 Cotham Road
KEW VIC 3101

Closing Date for Applications: 31 May 1994