

Child Guidance Clinic

College of Nursing—New Delhi

By

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The Child Guidance Clinic was established by the Ministry of Health in the College of Nursing, New Delhi, in March, 1955. It is the first Government Clinic of its kind in India.

Main Objectives of this Clinic are :

To provide guidance and psycho—therapeutic treatment to children who have any kind of problems, may be behaviour, personality and educational problems. Children with psychosomatic complaints are also helped.

Parents, teachers, social workers, physicians, nurses and other child welfare agencies are given consultation and preventive services through group discussions, individual conferences and lectures.

The B. Sc. students of the College of Nursing have better opportunity for professional training in public health and paediatric nursing.

The Clinic works in close co-operation with the paediatric department of the various institutions as Irwin, Safdarjang and Kalawati Saran hospitals. Days have been fixed for the different hospitals when the director of the clinic and the public health nurse visit those hospitals and make the initial interview with the patient and his parents. The B. Sc. students working in the paediatric wards sometimes have children with problems. The necessary care is given to those children.

After the first contact, the child is registered in the Clinic. When the child is registered in the Clinic, he or she is expected to visit the clinic by appointment once or twice a week, depending on individual conditions. For most of these visits, the parents accompany them.

The public health nurse in the Clinic

goes to the child's home and school, to collect more information, and also to discuss the problems of the child and how home, school and the Clinic have to work collectively to help the child.

Case conferences are held in the College which are attended by the 3rd Year B.Sc. Nursing students and others who are working with or associated with the child.

In these case conferences, one patient is discussed in full detail giving special attention to diagnostic clarification, integration of data collected from all sources, and the plan of treatment. Our 3rd and 4th year students, who have a course in child psychology and mental hygiene, are then able to integrate the theory with the practical work and thus understand the situation better.

The guidance is mainly given through regular interviews with the parents. During these interviews they have to explain to them the mental make-up of the child, its problem, its causes, and the ways by which they can help the child. Work with the child is equally important. This is also done through interviews, play therapy and free drawing and painting. In play-therapy they are sometimes given free play where the child is just allowed to play in the play-room in any way he likes ; a play observation is made through a one-way screen, where the child is not aware of the fact that he is being observed. At other times, different home or school situations are created and a child's reaction to those situations is noted. Very often they are of great diagnostic aid, through this play—they get a chance to give expression to their feelings.

For drawing and painting also, the child sometimes draws whatever he

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