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Jewish Family 84-85

Single Parent Families at Camp

The Essence of an Experience

Bernard Reisman
and
Gladys Rosen

THE WILLIAM PETSCHKE NATIONAL JEWISH FAMILY CENTER

E. Robert Goodkind, Chairman Yehuda Rosenman, Director

The William Petschek National Jewish Family Center was created by the American Jewish Committee in 1979 as an expression of its commitment to the family as the indispensable social institution for maintaining and enhancing Jewish identity, communal stability and human fulfillment. Its goal is to promote research on family problems, help clarify family values and stimulate the development of innovative programs to help meet the needs of parents, would-be parents and their children. It also strives to encourage an awareness and responsiveness to those needs in the Jewish and general community.

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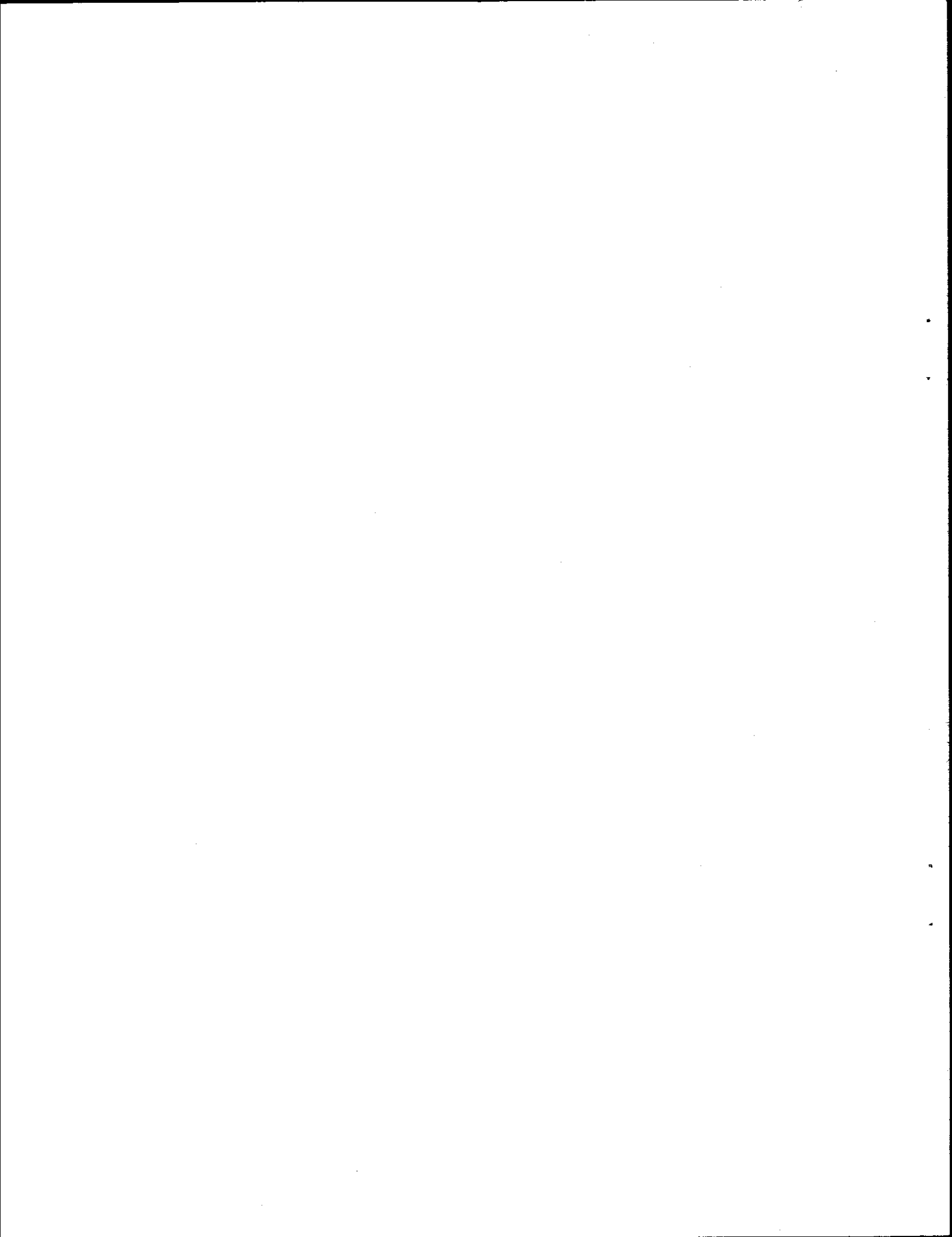
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Introduction

Since its founding in 1979, the William Petschek National Jewish Family Center's concern for the Jewish family has been expressed in a variety of ways. It has encouraged research, issued publications and in general sought to raise the consciousness of the Jewish community to the changing shape of the Jewish family and its new needs. Most recently, the Center has turned its attention to the needs of the growing number of single parent families in the Jewish community.

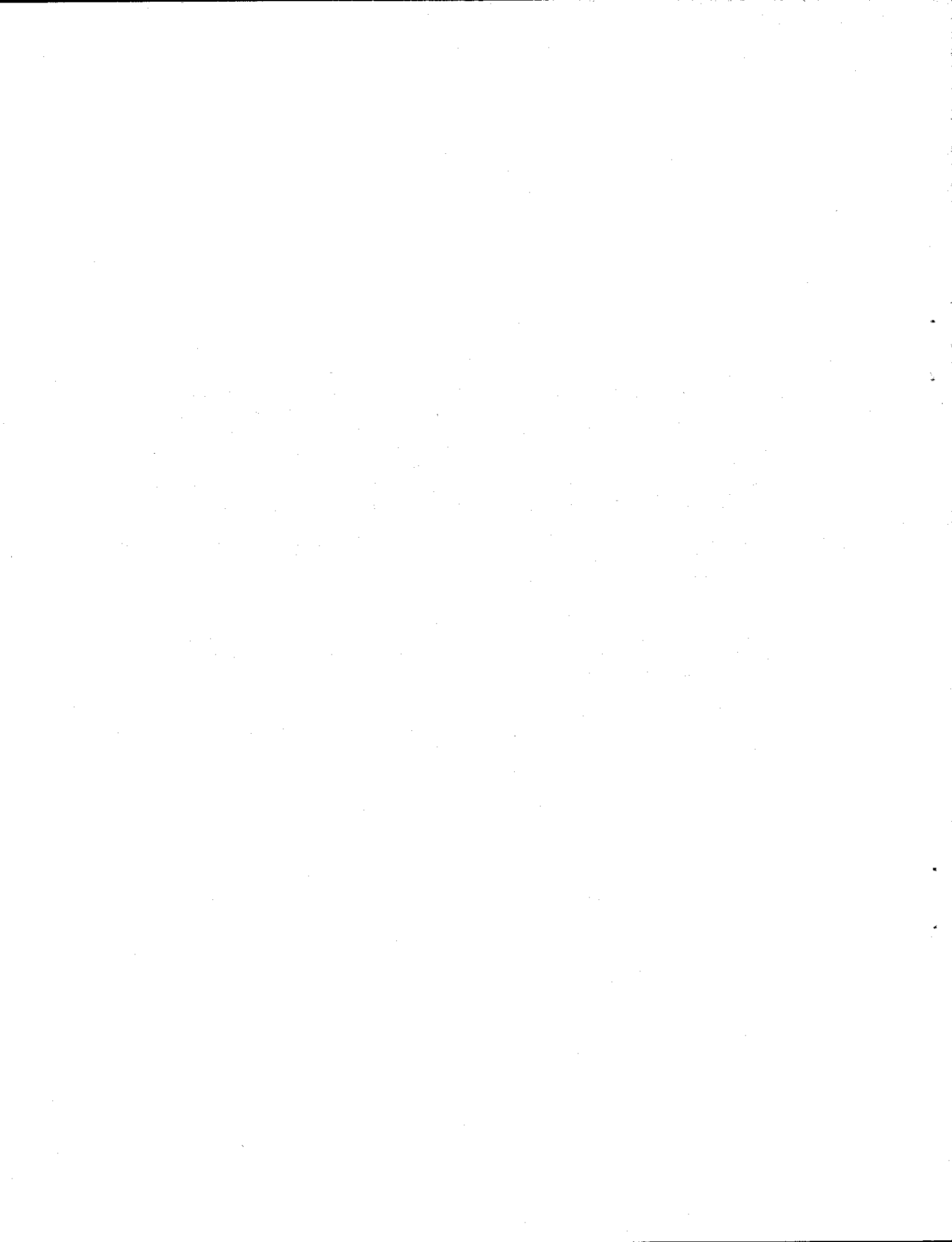
The Summer Camp Seminar for Single Parents and Their Children described in this publication was co-sponsored by The American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith Camps. The Seminar was carefully structured to combine a family vacation in a camp setting with professionally guided exploration of the issues that trouble single parents and their children, and owes much of its success to the creative involvement of Yehuda Rosenman, Director of the Center, and Mr. Sam Skolnick, Director of B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp.

The illumination of shared experiences helped to encourage a sense of community and mutual support among both the parents and the children who participated in the program.

It is our hope that this pilot project will provide a model for other innovative programs to serve single-parent families.

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Session I - Tuesday, August 23, 1983

GETTING STARTED

The opening session of the Camp Seminar was held at 4:00 p.m. on the day of arrival so as to allow participants time to adjust to the facilities and get settled in their living quarters. To help the disparate group of 21 adults and 36 children to get to know one another, Dr. Reisman employed an opening activity, The Family Mural. Supplies consisting of large sheets of newsprint, 50 varicolored magic markers, assorted craft supplies including scotch and masking tape, were made available to the participants. Each family group was asked to use the large sheets of newsprint for illustrating family or individual hobbies, activities, professions, cultural interests, etc. Both adults and children joined in the game which took place in the large lobby of B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp guest house where the entire group was housed. Everyone got into the spirit of the activity including members of the staff. After about twenty minutes of intense application to the task at hand, each family group was asked to choose a spokesperson to explain the drawings thereby providing a quick graphic introduction to the group. Following the presentation, each family mural was affixed to the wall and became part of a large community mural. The murals, which remained in place until the end of the Seminar when most participants took them as souvenirs, enhanced the sense of community which began to emerge even at this early stage. As one of the participants put it: "Usually such programs take a little while to warm up. Not this one; by the first evening, we were off and running." The drawings themselves often reflected the family relationships, not in terms of artistic excellence, but as a reflection of the number and kinds of activities shared by parents and children and the extent to which parents and children revealed themselves in their explanatory remarks.

These graphic and verbal presentations of single parent family life offered the participants a sense of their shared situations and also introduced issues for further exploration in the subsequent group discussions. Two examples from drawings and explanations by children reflect the types of issues which came forth. A six year old boy's picture of his family included a drawing of his father (with whom he was attending the camp) and on the other half of the sheet the letters MOM, which were then scratched out. He explained: "I scratched out

my mom because she and my dad don't live together anymore." In another family mural a young teenage boy drew himself as a hostile, war-like monster, which he explained represented the anger he felt about his family.

Having initiated personal interaction among the participants, Dr. Reisman proceeded to outline and amplify the goals and structure of the Seminar. The program outline had already been distributed (see appendix). In general the program's goal was to combine recreation and learning for single parents and their children and to offer activities on three levels:

- 1) Children meeting with their peers.
- 2) Adults discussing their concerns as parents, as individuals, and as Jews.
- 3) Family groups sharing recreation, learning, and Jewish celebration.

The head of the day camp program for the children, who ranged in age from 4 3/4 - 14 1/2, described planned activities including hikes, sports, swimming, fishing, boating, a family cookout and campfire, a Saturday night show, and other family events. The meal schedule was announced and a Steering Committee of 5 adults and 4 children was appointed to meet daily for evaluation, suggestions and recommendations regarding every aspect of the Seminar. The group was then taken on a pre-dinner tour of the camp grounds.

The opening group program was important in setting a tone conducive to the achievement of the Seminar's goals. First, staff sought to interpret that the camp program would be structured to serve both individual family units and the full community, as the latter came to represent a surrogate extended family. Thus each family and its several members were introduced and all families were introduced to each other. Second, the opening program encouraged emotional expressivity by starting the flow of personal information and feelings. This was abetted by the informal flavor of the "game" and the challenge to be creative in the graphic medium. Finally, the program contributed to the development of a trusting relationship between the participants and staff. This occurred through the direct participation of all staff in the activity coupled with the recognition by the participants that this initial program, planned by staff, effectively moved them from feelings of anxiety and aloneness to a degree of security and connectedness. It was as though the participants could now say: "These staff people know what they are doing; they are sensitive authorities; we can safely follow them in exploring new territory."

Session II - Tuesday, August 23, 1983

A COMMON BACKGROUND

After dinner which opened with a lively Motzi and closed with a rousing Birkat Hamazon in which everyone participated, if only to hum along, the group convened in the lobby of the lodge. The Waterfront Director carefully presented the rules and caveats related to activities at the lake. Both children and adults took his warnings seriously and as a result free time at the lake was enjoyed by all with a minimum of fuss.

The children went off for a short evening activity and refreshments while the adults had their first group discussion with Dr. Reisman. The intent of this first "business" session was to interpret the group as a valuable vehicle for sharing issues and concerns related to the Jewish family life education goals of the Seminar. This entailed helping the group develop trust with one another and with the group leader. The content and format were designed with this objective. The opening activity divided the group of 21 adults into 3 smaller groups of 7 each. To encourage active participation the groups were given a series of simple, non-threatening questions to talk about in rotating pairs or trios. Then the three groups of 7 were asked to share personal experiences about their own Jewish family backgrounds. The choice of this subject was three-fold: first, to open up the issue of Jewish interests and concerns, second, to share personal family experiences, and third, to contribute to the group's sense of cohesion as a result of sharing common Jewish background.

The people were quite responsive to the participatory format and enjoyed the opportunity to talk about their own family experiences. Dr. Reisman concluded the session by outlining the subjects which would be addressed in the subsequent adult discussion sessions (of which there were a total of seven.) The content of these sessions

would address personal concerns related to single parent status and how being Jewish helps or hinders developing a satisfactory personal and family life style.

The discussion at this session made a connection between the participants' own family experiences with those of their children, now growing up in a single parent home. It was clear that some individuals who had had negative or weak Jewish backgrounds were anxious to learn more in order to transmit a strong sense of Jewish identity.

There was a consensus that it is difficult to transmit Jewishness and that involvement by two parents might make it easier. However, it was pointed out that in earlier generations, single person households were often isolated from the rest of the community. Furthermore, fathers often kept aloof from day to day child care. To that extent, today's single parent may be more available to his/her children. Women's liberation and men's liberation are more important factors in family life today than generational differences. The confused children of divorce who yearn for security and continuity are especially anxious for the custodial parent to continue ritual observance. The continuing connection with familiar experiences, such as are afforded by Jewish tradition, helps the child understand who he/she is and develops a sense of belonging.

Session III - August 24, 1983

DEFINING THE AGENDA

In order to address the specific issues which concern single parents and also to help them achieve a more balanced perspective about their situation, a two-part activity was offered at this juncture of the program. First, each of the adults was asked to think about his/her life situation since becoming a single parent and to write down those things which are most troubling. These responses were then discussed in small groups, priorities agreed upon, and then shared with the full group. The second part of the session utilized a similar approach to consider aspects of their life situation which have improved since their separation and divorce.

The following is a listing of the problems as defined by the full group:

Time -

The need to balance home and work
Absence of quality of time due to fatigue
Child care as priority

Financial problems -

Child support
New jobs for women

Influence over children -

Loss of control
Conflicting approaches to childbearing
Role models in absence of non-custodial parent

Burden of responsibility falls on custodial parent -

Sharing emotions
Sadness at abnormality of child's situation and emotional impact of divorce
Concern that child senses self as different

Fear of child-loss to other parent
 Fear that child may be divorce-prone
 Will divorce make child more dependent or more mature?

Personal life challenges -

Dating
 Defining oneself as a single
 Finding someone with whom to share emotions
 Competition
 Uncertainty
 Lack of communication between custodial and non-custodial
 parents

When it began to seem that the lives of single parents were one long litany of problems, Dr. Reisman asked the group to consider ways in which life had improved since separation and divorce. The following list of improvements soon began tumbling forth faster than they could be listed on the board:

Release from tension
 Time spent with children becomes more enjoyable
 New sense of personal freedom
 Growing self-confidence and realization of strength
 Independence and autonomy in decision-making
 Less need to compromise
 Better communication with children
 Personal growth and greater creativity
 Increased social life
 Difference in experience of self as a sexual person
 Survival strengthened in the process of managing one's life and
 developing resources and strengths hitherto unrecognized

The recognition of the extent of improvement in their life situation came as a surprise to most people. As single parents, everyone was well aware of the problems and burdens associated with the lack of support in child rearing and household management, but there was much less recognition of pluses which emerged in their lives. So, while it was useful to share concerns, it was especially helpful to achieve a more balanced perspective about their life situation through the realization that there were also new opportunities and evidences of personal growth and fulfillment. In summary, the point was made that these positive possibilities would not happen automatically. The single person had to mobilize him/herself to take initiatives to redefine former relationships with family and friends, as well as to seek out new relationships and experiences, based on their individual choices and not as part of a couple. The key notion is to take charge of one's life rather than to bemoan one's fate.

Session IV - Wednesday, August 24, 1983

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE

Dr. Gladys Rosen led a discussion on the impact of divorce on the Jewish family and the attitudes and responses of Jewish communal organizations (i.e., family agencies, centers, schools, and synagogues) to divorced families. She noted that the roller coaster rise of divorce in the U.S.A. during the past decade was reflected in the Jewish community. While exact statistics are not available, it is clear that "if the annual divorce rates stay the same in the 1980's and 1990's as they were in 1977, 48% of those who married in 1970 will eventually divorce." (Cherlin, Divorce, Marriage and Remarriage) The fact that there were 1,219,000 divorces in 1982 is certainly cause for alarm in a Jewish community afflicted by low fertility and continuing loss through intermarriage and indifference. Although there is little specific research about the impact of divorce on the Jewish involvement of parents and children, the historically central role of the family in defining and transmitting Jewish identity would seem to indicate that fragmentation of the family is likely to have a negative affect on Jewish commitment. Specific problems have been noted by rabbis in relation to administrative and membership issues, the halachic aspects of personal status which become problematic in the absence of a get, a Jewish divorce, the tension of differences regarding religious upbringing and the blighting of the joy which should surround such life-cycle events as the Bar and Bat Mitzvah and the difficulties of a single parent in assuming responsibility for home-centered celebration-kiddush, seder, candle lighting, etc.

Available research shows that certain situations help children's adjustment, e.g., regular visits by the non-custodial parent, if parents avoid involving children in their disputes and if custodial parents can reestablish an orderly and supportive household routine. Since most divorces are less than amicable, these conditions are not easy to achieve. For Jewish children, parental differences impact upon their perception of their Jewishness and their relationship to it institutionally and personally. A study, Divorce and the Jewish

Child, conducted for the AJC's William Petschek National Jewish Family Center by Dr. Thomas Cottle "pointed up an intricate pattern of relationships connecting divorce and religious identity." Cottle's in-depth interviews with a small group of families of divorce showed a variety of ways in which divorce affects the Jewish identity of children. For some, the dissolution of the marriage made the children feel utterly betrayed by the family which they identified with Jewishness. Others sought a parental surrogate in the rabbi who was preparing them for Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Whatever the outcome, the Jewish community and its agencies must become more sensitive to the new needs of the parents and children in families of divorce.

A study of Providers of Service conducted under WPNJFC auspices by Drs. Nathalie Friedman and Theresa F. Rogers indicated a considerable lag between needs and their recognition by Jewish agencies. Most service providers do not really know the proportion of divorced adults and children in their institutions. Rabbis felt that members did not discuss divorce issues with them because they regarded them as judgmental. Hebrew school personnel tended to be more aware of children of divorce because of behavior problems and patterns of absence (absence on Sunday due to visits to non-custodial parents). The Centers and Y's, which for many Jewish single parents are their only contact with a Jewish organization, seem to be more sensitive and effective in providing programs for single parents and their children. The Friedman-Rogers study made note of several successful program models for single parents:

- * a single parents' workshop geared to holidays under synagogue auspices succeeded as a surrogate family for singles and in raising the profile of single parents in the congregation.
- * the integration of a full time social worker into the educational program of Temple Emanu-El in East Meadow. The social worker is available to single parents and their children for support services and consultation.
- * YMHA model programs for non-custodial parents, parent child groups, holiday celebrations, clinical and referral services.
- * the orthodox Lincoln Square Synagogue offers an outreach Hebrew school for non-affiliated and single parent families.

Based on the presentation and personal experiences, the single parent camp seminar group commented on the services provided by the Jewish community and their own specific needs.

The importance to women of a "get" was new to some members of the group. The description of the procedure and the ceremony involved in obtaining a get by one of the women who had just received one was most

moving and informative. Since a Jewish divorced woman who has not been given a get is barred from remarriage, it was strongly recommended that all lawyers should be informed in advance about this issue. A course might be introduced into law school curriculum regarding divorce requirements of special groups. Some were appalled by the high cost, the reluctance of husbands to give a "get" and the abuses to which it is subjected.

There was a general consensus that synagogues and rabbis should reach out to single parents and offer the option of a special single parents group or integration into synagogal activities. One participant stated that her rabbi handled the divorce well but offered no service or attention beyond that. The lack of sensitivity on the part of rabbis was a general complaint.

Jewish Family Service was criticized for a lag between request for service and its implementation. However, some of the parents have had good results from JFS and from day care provided by the "Y." There is a need for more programs to help children work out their problems -- guilt, fear, anger. Hebrew schools should provide more counseling for troubled children. However, there was some concern about whether and how to inform teachers that children come from divorced families. There was general agreement that parents should deal with teachers on a one-to-one basis. Teachers should know about divorce so that they can help the children deal with their sense of loss and abandonment.

All providers of service -- rabbis, teachers, social workers, should be sensitized to the specific needs of families of divorce during their professional training.

Session V - Wednesday, August 24, 1983

THE EMPTY CHAIR: MOVIE AND DISCUSSION

The first parent-child discussion session centered on "The Empty Chair," a movie which illustrated in a moving and effective way some of the problems faced by single parents in relation to their Jewishness and their position as the only parental presence in the home.

"The Empty Chair" (a film by Eli Spielman and Judd Magilnick) dealt specifically with the problems confronting a female-headed household in celebrating Passover. The story touches on the mother's wish to ignore the holiday, the two sons' desire to make the seder, the ambivalence of a teenage daughter and the insensitivity of a next-door neighbor preparing for the holiday. The ultimate strengthening of the family's internal relationships and the adaptation to their new situation are warmly and convincingly portrayed.

The climax of the movie came when the teenage daughter physically removed the empty chair. This seemed to be a symbolic indication that the family in its current state had accepted itself as a family unit.

After the film, Dr. Reisman asked first for the children's reactions. Although some thought the movie was sad, they were happy about the ending which saw the family celebrating Passover together. They noted that celebration is difficult without a father. One seven year-old in his mother's custody did not think the picture applied to him because his father always spent holidays with his ex-spouse. One teenage girl seemed quite upset by the movie and refused to remain for the discussion. Out of loyalty her friends left with her, much to the consternation of their parents. It became clear the next day at the separate children's group discussion that the children had indeed been emotionally affected by the movie. Each young person tended to identify with the movie child of their sex and approximate age. But it also became clear that it was not so much that the children didn't

want to talk about their feelings, but they didn't want to talk about them with their parents present. In their peer group they were quite expressive.

The adults expressed a variety of opinions, but there was consensus that "the hardest thing is being alone on the holiday." Several connected the insensitivity of the neighbor to the family's needs at Passover to a general insensitivity to the needs of others. This was regarded as contrary to the value which Jewish tradition places on hospitality particularly at Passover.

In view of the discomfort some friends or family may experience in trying to invite newly divorced families, it was suggested that the single parent must somehow reach out and give positive signals. One thing the single parent might do is to invite other single parents to satisfy the need to be with others at holiday time. Another participant urged the synagogue to serve as a catalyst by organizing community sedarim and/or matching up families who could celebrate together.

Session VI - August 25, 1983

RESPONDING TO THE AGENDA

The previous day's discussions generated two areas which called for further exploration: one concerned reactions to the movie, "The Empty Chair" and the other flowed from the agendas of problems and opportunities associated with single parent status.

The adults welcomed the opportunity to evaluate their own, and their children's reactions to the movie, "The Empty Chair." Parents of younger children felt it was too provocative for children under age 7, who may not have been sensitive to the problems of holiday observance in a single parent home. For older children who have already thought about the problem, the film serves as a catalyst for guided discussion. It helps the children to bring out negative feelings and to express them in the presence of a sympathetic listener other than his/her parent. Some of the young teenagers, to avoid expressing their inner feelings, walked out before the discussion, others were moved by the emotional reactions of their parents. One parent, who was moved to tears by the film felt that seeing a parent suffer may serve as an emotional catharsis for older children.

Several people noted the difficulties they faced as single parents in establishing a balance between self-interest and concern for children's needs. Dr. Reisman suggested a useful perspective for thinking about this balance could be gleaned from looking at the different responses of parents to this issue at camp. He called attention to the periods in the camp schedule when day camp coverage ceased and there was free time for all. Some parents were intent upon pursuing their own interests and assumed their children would shift for themselves. Some parents discussed with their children how the free time would be spent, leading either to joint activity or separately planned activities. One guiding principle in pursuing balance is that while parents are entitled to their own individual interests, these must be tempered by the parents' responsibilities for the safety

and emotional well-being of their children. It was also noted that it would be helpful, particularly for single parents, to seek to become part of a network. An example of networking was seen at camp. Several parents evolved the pattern of taking turns caring for each other's children to allow time for individually preferred adult activities - a game of tennis, going to town, or chatting with other adults. The children seemed to like these arrangements since it usually resulted in an interesting activity plus a relationship with a caring adult. Such an arrangement suggests a parenting model for back home: creating networks for mutual support which can help parents achieve a resolution of the tension between their individual needs and their parenting responsibilities and which is responsive to the interests of both adults and children. This example highlights the learning opportunities in family life available in such a guided camp experience. Focusing on these experiences in the group discussions increases the likelihood of these skills or insights being taken for back home use.

An intriguing question arose as to whether children of a single parent family might be challenged by this circumstance to grow and become more independent. The answer seems to rest in the appropriateness of the parent's response. If the parent is sensitive to the child's reactions and capacities and blends support with expectations for independent functioning, it is likely to enhance the child's self-reliance. The caution was noted that sometimes children act independently but may be masking feelings of dependency. Knowing the range of children's reactions to divorce, parents can be more discerning in their response. Especially in the early stages of the divorce children may regress and become more dependent. Younger children are apt to resort to fantasizing and seek to deny the reality of the situation. Some children express hostility to parents whom they regard as responsible for their situation; others feel guilty, thinking they are responsible for the divorce. Change in family living arrangements as a result of divorce can lead to a sense of loss and a fear that the custodial parent may also desert the children. As a result, some children repress their anger and frustration for fear of losing their only remaining parent.

Several parents described how the reaction of children is influenced by the presence of siblings. In some instances, children tend to help one another and join forces in facing up to the single parent. In others, the older child becomes motherly and parts from his/her peers. There is also a tendency for siblings to compete for the remaining parent's attention, or to strive to fill the role of the absent parent.

Time plays an important role in adjustment of adults, as well as children, to divorce. One participant concluded that: "People who are separated the shortest time are most verbal about their problems. People separated longer are more likely to move with the flow."

Another parent pointed out that her initial negative reactions to the children's week-ends with the non-custodial parent disappeared as the situation became routine. She stressed the importance of parents' positive outlook to children's reactions.

In dealing with the special problems faced by single parents of adolescents, Dr. Reisman emphasized the need to recognize that some symptoms are part of the normally erratic behavior of adolescents. Boys, for example, may find it difficult to express their feelings in the presence of parents in intact families as well as in a divorce situation. It is important not to force the issue but to be sensitive to the ups and downs and stresses of normal maturation.

In conclusion, just as parents are called upon to be attentive to the range of emotional reactions of their children to the divorce, parents need to be aware of their own range of emotional reactions. Recognizing their anger, loss, guilt, or other feelings about the divorce will help their adaptation to a new life situation and will also help them be more sensitive parents.

Session VII - Thursday, August 25, 1983

CONFRONTING THE PROBLEMS OF CHILD-REARING

Elaine Reisman opened the discussion by asking the participants to enumerate the child-rearing issues which pose problems for them. The list included bedtime, eating habits, lack of response to requests, homework, neatness, chores and responsibilities, appropriate dress, learning to share, making friends, immediate and delayed gratification, transition from one activity to another, competition with siblings and with parents, companionship, discipline and accepting authority. Three of these subjects -- instant gratification, chores and neatness, and discipline -- were chosen as the themes for impromptu socio-dramas designed and enacted by seminar participants.

The first skit involved a parent and child on a shopping expedition. The child wanted to start with a purchase in the toy shop, was indulged by the mother who became angry when the child wanted more than she could afford. The incident, which resulted in an angry mother and an unhappy child, highlighted the need for parental limits and consistency.

The second vignette featured conflict over the issue of neatness as a father insisted that his daughter clean her room in order to be permitted to go shopping. The child finally agreed but on her own terms.

The third vignette showed the problems emerging from a lack of appropriate parental discipline as a mother failed to control her child's behavior. The child, uncertain as to her limits, got into trouble while the mother suffered from a sense of inadequacy as a parent.

After discussing various facets of the parent-child relationships demonstrated by the skits, the group agreed on the following desiderata for parents in general and for single parents in particular:

- * Agree upon guidelines for appropriate behavior and follow through consistently.
- * Don't try to make up for the loss of a parent by over-compensating and giving in to children's demands. Children ask for things as a demonstration of love, but they should be told about financial or other realistic constraints.
- * Try to establish a balance between consistency and flexibility. Parents can be wrong and children have a need to win some of the time.
- * Setting limits for children helps them to develop inner control. Young children tend to test parents to see how far they can go.
- * Establish spending limitations for children as a step toward setting values and establishing priorities.
- * Discipline the child through rewards and a positive approach.
- * Think ahead and help children anticipate what you expect.

Mrs. Reisman concluded the session noting the importance of helping children learn self-discipline so as to gain a sense of self-worth and accomplishment which comes from controlling one's own behavior. When parental control is lax or punitive or demeaning, the child feels him/herself to be a less worthy person. She offered a series of questions which may help in understanding priorities in discipline-related issues:

1. Is this an issue of physical or psychological health and/or safety?
2. Whose issue is this? Have I checked my child's reasons/feelings regarding the behavior? Am I reacting to my own feelings?
3. Am I concerned that the child won't like me if I make a demand or set a limitation?
4. Is this an issue which requires consistency or can I compromise? Will meeting the child half-way resolve this issue in the best interest of all?
5. Am I arguing on the child's level and has winning the argument become more important than the issue?
6. Have I taken developmental issues into account?

7. Is the issue one of life style and/or pace?

8. Could this issue have been avoided by prior preparation for myself and/or the child?

9. Am I modeling the behavior that I expect?

The discussion and the guidelines to a balanced disciplinary approach offered by Elaine Reisman were designed to help single parents and their children alleviate the inevitable tensions between expectations and behavior.

Session VIII - Friday, August 26, 1983

KIDS AND ADULTS TALK ABOUT DIVORCE AND BEING JEWISH

This session brought together children and adults to explore their views of the two major themes of the Seminar: divorce and being Jewish. Dr. Reisman opened the session by posting responses to a previously distributed questionnaire on personal views regarding divorce and the importance of the Jewish connection. The comparative results of children and adults are indicated below:

VIEWS OF DIVORCE AND BEING JEWISH

A = 20 Adults C = 15 Children

Percentages

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	C	A	C	A	C	A
1. It is appropriate to expect all members of a family to give up personal plans or preferences to be together for special family gatherings	87	75	0	10	13	15
2. Being part of a single parent family is no better or worse than a family where both parents are present	59	11	7	32	33	58
3. Jews should only marry other Jews.	27	65	52	25	20	10
4. Being Jewish is a very important	59	75	33	25	7	0
5. It would be most desirable for a single parent to marry again.	20	70	26	25	53	5
6. Jews should try to be like, and not different from other Americans.	23	20	54	30	23	50
7. To have mostly Jewish friends is not a good idea.	40	25	13	15	46	60
8. Divorce frequently solves more problems than it causes.	20	30	33	35	46	35
9. All Jews should have a special loyalty for the State of Israel.	46	70	20	20	33	10
10. Anti-Semitism is no longer a real problem in America	7	0	26	10	67	90

The first half of the discussion focused on questions dealing with divorce and single family life. Dr. Reisman noted the extraordinarily positive response by the children (87%) to the importance of giving up personal plans to be together as a family (question 1). He felt that the results indicated the high value children placed on working to achieve family unity. Children and adults express different views of what it means to be part of a single parent family (question 2). Fifty-nine percent of the children as compared to only 11% of the adults see this family situation as no better or worse than a 2 parent family. Perhaps this difference is explained by the fact that for most children the single parent family is what they have accepted as their norm. The greatest disparity between children and adults appeared in the response to the desirability of a single parent marrying again (question 5). This prospect elicited a positive response from 70% of the adults but from only 20% of the children. Clearly children are reluctant to have to share either of their parents with a new mate.

In regard to the statement that divorce solves more problems than it causes (question 8), a relatively small percentage of both children (20%) and adults (30%) agreed, indicating considerable confluence between children and adults in their views of the effects of divorce on family life.

The participants, children and adults, were divided into 5 small groups with no children in the same group as their parents. All groups were asked to take 20 minutes to address the issues raised in the questionnaire:

- * What are the expectations of individuals in families for being together and how much freedom must they give up to make a family work?
- * Should parents remarry?
- * What are your feelings about divorce and the extent to which it corrected the situation when parents were together?

In each group one adult was asked to volunteer to serve as moderator to make sure that the discussion rules would be observed: no one talks too long, speakers must stick to the subject, and only one person speaks at a time. To facilitate discussion, groups were advised to have a go-around on names to be sure that adults knew the names of the children in the group.

The discussion produced a general consensus that family gatherings are important. However, there was an awareness of the problems of deciding how to share children at holiday times. One child stated flatly that "it is better to have two parents." Another felt that

things were no worse after divorce than they had been before. One of the teenagers felt that a single parent situation was worse for the children. She resented not having been forewarned of potential separation and was upset by the suddenness of the break. Although she felt her father was happier, she was bothered by the fact that his leaving had saddened her mother and the children.

The newfound post-divorce independence from a demanding and authoritarian husband was regarded by one of the adults as an improvement in her life. To her pleasant surprise she found that she could handle her children and make her own decisions. For the parents, release from an unhappy marriage was an improvement; for the child, the tension in the parent's relationship may be less of a problem than the separation of a parent, unless there is an overt conflict in the relationship. One of the youngsters found that she was now spending more time with her parents than prior to the divorce when they had "not done much together."

The discussion of the issue of remarriage reflected the survey results: more adults than children considered it a good idea, although one young girl thought her mother ought to remarry to avoid loneliness when she and her brother left home. Most of the children did not think remarriage a good idea. One young boy commented on the inadvisability of remarriage for his father who had been twice divorced and would probably be divorced again. Several women in the group thought remarriage to someone who cares would be a good idea for them and their children. And even those men who were not ready for remarriage at this time looked forward to it eventually.

Part of the Seminar design was to apply a Jewish perspective to the needs of single parent families. The discussion moved from issues related directly to divorce to attitudes to Jewishness and its importance in family life. Dr. Reisman offered a summary review of the results of the attitudinal questionnaire dealing with the role of Jewishness in family life. He noted the following general patterns in children and adult responses:

1. Children tend to be more universal; adults tend to be more Jewishly conscious. This difference between children and adults was consistent on every question dealing with Jewish attitudes.

2. Sixty-five percent of adults as compared to 27% of children agree on the importance of marrying Jews. (question 3)

3. Eighty percent of adults as compared to 59% of children say being Jewish is very important to them. (question 4)

4. Children are more open to a variety of friends while their parents tend to be more parochial. Forty percent of the children as compared to 25% of adults agree it is not a good idea to have mostly Jewish friends. (question 7)

5. There was a consensus regarding the importance of Israel, although more adults (70%) than children (46%) valued a special loyalty. (question 9)

6. As to the issue of anti-Semitism, 2/3 of the children and 90% of the adults feel that it will be a continuing problem for American Jews.

The adult-children discussion groups were asked to address the Jewish identity questions raised by the questionnaire. One youngster stated: "Jews should marry only Jews lest they fight a lot." Another felt that while marriage is a matter of choice, children should be raised as Jews and she suggested the subject should be discussed prior to marriage. Several adults stated unequivocally that mixed marriage causes conflicts and should be avoided. One of the adults said she was uncomfortable with her current non-Jewish boyfriend and another whose "ex" was not Jewish expressed her preference for a Jewish spouse should she remarry. Her experience indicated the problem of differing value systems in a family situation.

There was general agreement among adults and children that Israel was central to their Jewishness and should be supported. One of the youngsters who did not regard Israel as an important factor in her life, expressed a desire to go to Israel but "with her Mom."

The discussion of anti-Semitism indicated a virtual unanimous concern about the persistence of anti-Semitism in America by both children and adults. As one of the participants who lived in the mid-West put it, "anti-Semitism is becoming more prevalent and I don't see it going away."

SUMMARY

Following the group discussions Dr. Reisman reconvened the entire group, adults and children, for a review of the main concerns of the session. The group had talked about single parent status, its problems and pitfalls, the role of Jewishness in the lives of single parent families and the interrelationships between the two. He pointed out the choices available to us today which were unknown to our grandparents. Today, we are under no obligation to remain Jewish by government fiat. We can choose freely and while this is to our advantage, it also tends to weaken our attachments. Until modern times most Jews continued to be the same kind of Jews as their fore-

bears. Today they have new opportunities and options. Just as people are no longer obliged to remain Jewish or to follow the Jewish tradition of their parents, they no longer enter into marriage with the expectation of a lifetime relationship. Forty percent of marriages end in divorce.

The problem that confronts us is whether we can learn to live with choices and make marriages work and assure Jewish continuity. It becomes increasingly clear that giving up some individual autonomy plus hard work are in order to maintain family and Jewishness. Unless the Jewishness that we profess has some substance to it, the group's expressed preference to marry a Jew and have Jewish children is without meaning. Being Jewish must have sufficient content to show why and how "we are we" and "they are they."

Finally, all recent research confirms that there is a link between a strong family life and Jewish continuity. By eliminating one source of friction, people with similar backgrounds have a better chance at successful marriage. In addition, Jewishness with its many home celebrations and traditions is emotionally and practically supportive of family life. The Jewish people's determination to survive demands that we have children and thereby assure the continuity of the Jewish people.

Loyalty to our Jewishness does not demand abandonment of universal goals and concern for others. Hillel's famous aphorism: "If I am not for myself, who will be, and if I am only for myself, what am I?" offers a way to effect a balance between being different and relating to others for our time. Until the coming of the Messiah and the advent of the age of universal brotherhood, human kind will survive by assuring each group the possibility of maintaining itself in a tribal fashion while working toward the elimination of intergroup conflict. In sum, learning to blend being different and respecting the rights of others is the goal.

After the children departed, the adults had an opportunity to evaluate this adult-child interaction. Their comments indicated pleasant surprise with the openness of the children concerning their feelings and also the "mature" perspectives the children brought to the discussion. One of the mothers seemed to express the sentiment of the other adults with her comment, "I guess we have to realize that just because our kids don't share all their thoughts and feelings with us, we shouldn't underestimate their thoughts and feelings about being part of a single parent family."

There was overall consensus on the importance of consistency of parents in defining the Jewishness of the family. The concern with this aspect of family life, bore out the goals of the AJC and B'nai B'rith camps, the sponsoring agencies.

August 27, 1983

THE SHABBAT EXPERIENCE

To encourage involvement in Shabbat preparations of all participants in the Seminar, Committees were set up to enhance and dramatize Shabbat observance and the joy of participating. There was no dearth of volunteers to head the committees for Friday night services, the Oneg Shabbat, the Shabbat morning services, Havdallah, the Decorating Committee, the Flower-gathering Committee. Everyone from the youngest child to the most senior adult and all members of the staff became totally immersed in the preparations for Shabbat. Appropriate wall decorations were found in the camp arts and crafts storeroom; flowers were gathered to decorate the tables; Shabbat candlesticks were improvised for each table; the camp supplied wine, challot and a menu that fulfilled everyone's nostalgic expectations. By 4:30, preparations were complete and all the committees disbanded to attend to personal preparations for the occasion. Rabbi Paul Kerbel, a student rabbi from the Jewish Theological Seminary led the Kabbalat Shabbat services as a prelude to the dinner and the Friday night "Oneg Shabbat" which was to follow the meal. Spirits were not in the least dampened by the rain (the first inclement weather of the entire session) which let up just in time to allow the group to move from the dining room to the auditorium building where services took place. After almost a week together, the group was able to participate fully and enthusiastically in the Friday night "Kiddush" and "motsi" as well as the closing "Birkat ha-mazon" in the dining room.

Participation in the services both Friday night and Saturday morning was arranged in advance by Rabbi Kerbel and his committee. Youngsters and adults were assigned specific readings and the response was always enthusiastic, if sometimes inaudible.

On Saturday morning three members of the group spoke movingly and heartwarminglly of the experience at B'nai B'rith Perlman camp. They talked of how their advance trepidations as single parent families in a strange setting were quickly allayed by the warmth of new found

friends, the beauty of the surroundings and the extraordinary spirit of community which quickly developed. The Shabbat celebration lent a special aura of peace and calm to this unique camping program for single parents and their families.*

Shabbat lunch continued in the spirit of joy and celebration which had begun the day before. Afterward, some members of the group opted for activities or the traditional Shabbat nap; others joined Rabbi Kerbel under a large shade tree for an informal, voluntary discussion of issues of current concern to the Jewish community.

The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to preparations and rehearsal for what had been dubbed "The Big Show," a Saturday night extravaganza featuring the talent of parents, children and staff.

*Appendix VI contains the full text of one of the sermonettes.

Session IX - August 27, 1983

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

Since some members of the group had to leave early on Sunday, the final summary and evaluation session was held immediately after dinner on Saturday.

Dr. Reisman opened with a discussion of the main issues which had surfaced during the Seminar. He talked about the insights he had gained regarding single parent status and relationships and sensitivities between parents and children. He noted the way in which the camp had become a conscious paradigm of parental growth and the building of community. Dr. Reisman also highlighted the way in which Jewishness had been woven into the activities and experiences of the week's activities. The full text of his remarks on the special nature of the community which developed, the communication among its constituents, the unique sense of caring and creativity which emerged, the structured nature of the program, the comfortable Jewish connection which imbued the Seminar make up the concluding chapter of this publication. He closed his remarks with a caveat about the culture shock that might be encountered upon re-entry into the real world and the importance of bringing to bear on daily life the sensitivities, the understanding and the insights which came out of the experience at the B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp Seminar.

Each participant was then asked to comment briefly on his/her reaction to the Seminar program and its potential impact. Some of the comments follow:

-- I was concerned that the program might be too structured, but I found it helpful in guiding the discussions and the sense of community.

-- The layout of the lodge was helpful, since it gave the children freedom of movement and allowed for interaction from room to room.

-- The duration of the Seminar and the mix of participants was just right. However, since there is a difference between parenting concerns of those going through divorce and those who have been long divorced, the possibility of splitting for group discussion on this basis should be considered.

-- It is healthy to have the mix, and I benefitted from the experiences of those who have already been divorced.

-- The way questions were structured introduced difficult subjects helpfully without opening a Pandora's box.

-- The Shabbat observance lent a sense of peace.

-- The group was good. Children fell into appropriate groups. They also related to other parents and looked to them for guidance. The pace may have been too much for the youngest kids. There was considerable sharing and caring among the children and the older adolescents took their caring role very seriously.

-- The literature should indicate whether parents will lodge with children or separately. Although the choice was actually optional, the possibilities should be indicated in advance.

-- For me, the experience was a lifeboat and an open door for my daughter.

-- This was one of the greatest weeks of my life. I anticipated just a vacation, but instead have acquired a good sense of myself and the confirmation of the rightness of what I am doing.

-- In three years of separation this was the best run single parent function I have ever attended.

-- The children enjoyed meeting a group of nice, Jewish men who have it all together. It was nice to see the interaction between the children and the father figures in the group. Overall, the week was a very positive and loving experience.

-- It was an incredible experience which helped me and my daughter.

-- The kids approached other parents, took risks and thereby gave a new dimension to their lives. From our experience, it was the leadership which made the Seminar so successful, and future program planners should bear in mind the need for competent leadership.

-- The staff, the sense of caring, the Jewish connection did more than a psychologist.

-- I am grateful for the experience and thrilled that my son has now expressed a desire to go to synagogue.

-- It was most helpful to get a glimpse of what lies ahead and to see how others managed their single parenting. The community support among children and parents made this a totally positive experience.

The consensus among most of the participants was to extend the group relationship as a community and to have a reunion as soon as possible to reinforce and assure continuity.

When Dr. Reisman pointed out that as successful as the Seminar might have been, the staff was open to constructive criticism as well as praise, a few suggestions surfaced. Several participants felt that there should have been more counselors for children's activities. Had there not been a half dozen teenagers to help, supervision might have presented problems. The campfire was too exciting and tiring for the young children. Shorter activity periods for the young children should be considered for future programs of this type. The place of adolescents in the program should be clearly stated in the literature.

Although the limitations of being at camp just prior to closing were understood, it was felt that the administration should make every effort to keep all facilities open and available to participants during the entire period of the Seminar.

The very positive reactions of the participants, while they were still basking in the glow of the camp community, were borne out by responses to a questionnaire distributed weeks after the experience. (See Appendix V)

Saturday Night

HAVDALAH

Immediately following the evaluation session, all of the adults, the children who had been engaged in various activities and the staff gathered together under the stars for one of the most moving moments of the week-end, Havdalah, the service marking the end of the Shabbat and the beginning of a new week. Rabbi Kerbel began the service with a brief explanation of the meaning of Havdalah and several appropriate readings. The ceremony itself involved the children in several ways. One group had made cardboard spice boxes and filled them with whatever sweet smelling spices were available. Others were given the privilege of holding the twisted, multi-wick Havdalah candle. The spice boxes were passed from hand to hand and all joined in the singing of "Shavu'ah Tov," a good week.

The spirit of the closing minutes of the Shabbat accompanied the group to dinner. During the meal the excitement of the impending "Big Show" pervaded the atmosphere. A representative of every age group was involved and the long list of acts included 4 1/2 year olds as well as 14 year olds, adult participants and staff. The chairperson of the evening had managed to enlist cooperation at every level from the creation of props and costumes to the writing and production of warm and funny satirical skits about people and programs. The show which could only have emerged from the special community which had developed, served to strengthen and cement the strong ties of one intensive week of loving and mutually beneficial human relations.

Because some of the Seminar families had to leave early on Sunday, the morning was spent in informal discussion, planning future get togethers, and assuring the continuity of what had become for many an extended family and a desirable support group.

AFTERWORD: THE SUMMARY OF AN EXPERIENCE

When the week at camp for 21 single parent families* ended, everyone - children, adults, staff - agreed they had been part of a significant experience. People had been emotionally affected, learned about themselves as members of single parent families and as Jews, and developed important relationships. What made this experience work as effectively as it did? The answers to this question can be valuable on several levels. First, such insights are important to the participants (and, of course, to others who are part of single parent families.) The participants came to the week at camp seeking both a pleasant vacation - to swim, play tennis, relax and enjoy being with their families, and to learn things which might be helpful in their lives as members of single parent families. On both scores they left us with a sense of fulfillment. To understand why and how this happened makes more likely that the camp experience is not an isolated event, but rather can be applied to people's day to day lives. In a similar vein, the principles underlying the camp program can serve as a model for other Jewish organizations, either for replicating similar programs for single parent families or, in a general sense, for influencing the manner in which they approach their work with the individuals and families who come to them.

This summary addresses three basic components of the camp experience:

- I Single Parent Family Status - the unique issues and challenges of being part of a single parent family.
- II. The Camp Experience as a Paradigm - the goals, values, and style of operation of the camp program as a model for Jewish family and organizational life.

* Throughout this report we have used the designation: "single parent families" to refer to these families. In fact, as divorced couples with children (as distinct from widowed single parent families) there are two parents, although they don't live together. Certainly from the child's perspective there are two parents.

III. Jewishness - the ways Jewish objectives were woven into the camp program.

I. SINGLE PARENT FAMILY STATUS

Both in the formal discussion sessions and in living together at camp for a week, people learned things about themselves as members of single parent families which can be useful to them in enhancing their individual lives and in enriching their family life.

1. Listening: Listening refers to being fully attentive to another individual and open to their ideas, emotions, and perspective. At camp there was an enhancement of listening, as people sharing a common life situation -being part of a single parent family - appreciated how much they could learn from and be nurtured by each other. This happened both in the planned formal group discussions as well as in the many informal conversations over meals, at the waterfront, in the lodge, etc. People listened and learned not only from their peers: adults from adults, children from children, but across age groups. Particularly effective were the interactions between adults and children.

When the opportunity was first offered to the children to have a session with the parents on issues of single parent families, the children were somewhat reluctant. When the children realized that the plan was for them to talk in small groups with adults other than their parents, there was a perceptible change in affect, with considerable enthusiasm registered. From the perspective of both the adults and the children, the exchange proved very valuable. Both came to understand the perspective of the other better. Lacking the complicated emotional involvement of the parent and child relationship, the adults and children were better able to appreciate what it meant to be in the other's position. It was as though the parent (or child) could say, "Oh, now I understand what (my child/parent) is dealing with."

2. Communicating Feelings: Effective listening encourages people to express their feelings. Many emotions were brought forth at camp - anger, sadness, loneliness, fear, being overwhelmed,.....Clearly the events leading up to a divorce, the subsequent separation, and defining new patterns of relationships and life style for the mother, father, children, and other relatives generate considerable emotional tension. The discussions at camp offered the opportunity to express such feelings. Not only was such expressiveness helpful to the person who brought forth their feelings, but others identified with what was

being said. Many times people who were listening would nod knowingly as someone was talking about a particular problem or concern, as though to say, "Wow, that's exactly what I went through. I know just what you are saying." This sympathetic response is particularly reassuring since everyone in the group knows the others have all been through the same experience. That they have shared similar pains - "They have been there," adds to the trustworthiness of their judgment. Sharing similar life experiences, having a common frame of reference enables people to communicate more easily with one another. They speak the same emotional language. One of the women described, in a letter she wrote to the staff after the Seminar, why the Seminar had been so helpful to her and her children.

"It was not always easy to face or deal with our own feelings or problems. I got invaluable feedback and insight from the "pros," the people who were already divorced and adjusted to the single and single-parent life style, as well as from the "rookies," those who were even greener and not as far down the path as I. We all share the mutual bonds of similar, sometimes painful, sometimes funny, and often difficult experiences of divorce and single parenting."

3. Supportive Others: The opportunity for children and adults from several families to be with each other over a period of time and to share deeply felt thoughts and emotions contributes to a quality of relationship resembling an extended family. Earlier, I referred to how these supportive relationships help one better appreciate the perspective of others in one's own family. Also quite important is the additional emotional nourishment these relationships afford to people who often feel isolated and alienated: adults for each other and adults being emotionally available to children other than their own. A good example was seen in the consistent efforts of one of the fathers to teach Billy how to swim. Billy is a 7 year old who lives alone with his mother. When toward the end of the week Billy succeeded in swimming across the crib in the lake, everyone cheered. Billy was thrilled. Not only was he proud of his achievement, but he also enjoyed the recognition he received from everybody.

4. I Am Not Alone: For an individual to know that he or she is not the only person to have a particular problem or concern is quite reassuring. This was dramatically expressed at one of the children's discussion sessions. The children were sharing their feelings about being in single parent families. We had been talking for about an hour, and I indicated that it was time for us to conclude. One of the younger children, Fay, who is quite shy and hadn't spoken previously, raised her hand. She asked, "Can I say one thing?" I nodded encouragingly. Fay said with much feeling, "You know, I never knew there were other divorced kids - I thought I was the only one."

5. Opportunities Also: At one of the adult discussion sessions I asked the group to identify problems and opportunities in their situation as single parents. They began with the problems and there was no shortage of responses. I quickly filled up the blackboard as people reported on their problems. Then, I asked them to write down the opportunities opened to them as single parents. At first people were hesitant, as though the question was being asked only to provide symmetry to the exercise. But slowly, as people thought about the matter, ideas came forth which indicated that their new life situation indeed offered opportunities. Most prominent was the sense of getting out from under a bad marital relationship - a relationship which was unpleasant and restrictive. People spoke of discovering themselves, abilities and interests they either didn't know about or hadn't been able to express. There was the excitement of embarking on a new career, of travelling to new places, and of meeting other men and women. For some, especially those more recently divorced, it was clear that the burdens of adjusting to the new status still dominated their lives. Yet they too could identify with the opportunities articulated by the others and it seemed to be a real and encouraging prospect.

Toward the end of the discussion one of the women aptly captured the essence of what was being said:

"When I was first divorced, I thought I never would be able to make it. I just couldn't keep up with all the demands. I was so dependent upon my husband. I had little confidence in myself. Then, after a while, I realized it just wouldn't work to expect other people to feel sorry for me and to take care of me. If anything was going to be done, I had to do it. So I learned to do what had to be done. I discovered I had a lot more ability than I ever imagined. It felt good. Sure, it's not easy. I'd still rather have a partner to share all the tasks and burdens, but meanwhile, I've been managing a lot better than I ever expected. Above all, I feel a heck of a lot better about myself, and I think I'm doing a better job with my kids. It turned around when I decided to take charge of my life."

II. THE CAMP EXPERIENCE AS PARADIGM

The camp program was designed to achieve its objective of enriching the Jewish and mental health components of family life for single parent families utilizing two educational modes: 1. a formal curriculum of discussion sessions and organized recreational activities for adults, children, and families, and 2. the total camp experience and its style of operation as a paradigm for Jewish family life.

The content of the discussion groups has been presented in the earlier sections of this report. Now we address the manner in which the camp experience itself was directed to serve as an educational model. Five ingredients are basic to this process:

1. Authority - All families have to achieve some definition of authority: how power is to be distributed between parents and children, how decisions are to be reached, how tasks are to be carried out, and how values and standards are to be represented. The role of the camp staff, in particular the role of the director, was viewed not only in its more obvious administrative/coordinative functions, but also as modeling authority for the camp participants. As a good parent, the director had to be consistently emotionally available, assure follow through on camp programs, maintain adherence to the schedule and rules of the camp community, and represent desired values.

To enhance communication and involve the participants in the shaping and carrying out of the activities and procedures of the camp, a Steering Committee was set up the first day. Its members, all of whom volunteered to serve, included 5 adults and 4 children. The Committee met at least once a day with the director. The ideas and suggestions of the Steering Committee allowed for adapting the program to accord with the interests and rhythms of the participants. The presence of the Committee interpreted the notion that the people in the community (family) should have a say in shaping its functioning.

In a family the emotional tone is defined by the parents. In a similar way, the tone of an organization or community is defined by its key staff. These symbols of authority set into motion the characteristic affect of the collective. At camp the ripple effect which we wanted to radiate was that this was a caring community. We would be very attentive to their basic needs: they would be well housed, and well fed. We would be sensitively responsive to their psychic needs. By generating such a caring, safe environment, the expectation was that we would contribute in two ways to achieving our objectives. First, we help people feel safe and secure so they have more psychic energy to invest in exploring the educational messages presented at camp. Second, we offer ourselves as objects of identification, models for both adults and children, in the exercise of authority.

2. Structure - The camp program was heavily structured, that is, the staff assumed initiative for planning the overall program and setting the tone for the experience. The assumption was that such structure would provide a sense of security to people in a difficult new experience and would expedite interaction and learning. People clearly knew what was expected of them, the boundaries within which they could operate. Staff was aware that while they could schedule sessions for people to talk, play, or pursue Jewish traditions, it was up to the people to choose whether and how to utilize these oppor-

tunities. Obviously, the staff expectation was that through sharing their own interest and enthusiasm and by providing a well ordered, caring community, people would respond by active, expressive participation. The favorable response to the program seems to support this expectation.

3. Setting - A rural camp setting goes a long way to getting people in a receptive frame of mind. The lovely natural environment-lake, wooded hills, grassy fields, plus being away from regular routines and responsibilities, combine to put people at ease. The camp's full array of recreation facilities offers many opportunities for parents and children, separately and together, to share fun. The lodge at the camp, in which the people lived, was a particularly useful facility. In this large, rustic building it was possible for family units either to stay together in the same room (especially families with young children) or separately (especially families with older children.) On the main floor there was a comfortable lounge in which the full group could assemble. In the evening, after the younger children had gone to sleep, the adults would come together and enjoy each other's company while, at the same time, being accessible to their children if needed. It was like adults entertaining friends or relatives in the living room while children were sleeping upstairs.

Living together at camp for a week provided many learning situations for Jewish family life education. Here families offered each other different approaches to the range of day to day family management issues: meal time, getting to sleep, dealing with conflict, learning to take turns, and following routines. How Jewishness influences the time together will be addressed in the concluding section.

4. The People - To paraphrase the bumper sticker: "What if you planned a creative program for single parent families and the people were not responsive?" Indeed, we designed a creative program, and we had fine facilities and a skilled staff. But, we also had a compatible group of participants, compatible both with the goals of the camp program and with each other. They shared several common characteristics, the most prominent of which was that everyone was part of a family in which there was at least one young child (age range 4-14) and divorced parents. Both adults and children had many feelings about their family status which they were eager to share. Their responsiveness, in part, is a function of the many real problems endemic to single parent families, and, in part, is a result of insufficient opportunities to deal with these problems in a satisfactory way. Many of the parents and children described feeling isolated and stigmatized. The adults pointed to insensitivity and a lack of responsiveness within the organized Jewish community. They were also critical of the "single parent scene," where activities were frequently under commercial auspices and attracted people who were unappealing.

The presence of 6 men, all of whom appeared to be reasonably well adjusted, added much to the camp community. As several of the women noted, programs for single parent families seldom attracted men, or at least "adequate" men. At the evaluation session one woman seemed to be expressing the sentiment of the others when she said to the men in the group "I want you to know how much it has meant to me to be reminded that there are able, concerned Jewish men out there."

In any event, it was clear these individuals were helpful to each other and liked being together. By the end of the week at camp, they were like an extended family.

Is this group of families typical of Jewish single parent families of this age group? Or are they families with greater stress and, therefore, more likely to attend a special program? Our impression is that they are representatives and that the favorable outcome of the program is not explained by unique qualities of these 21 families. If a similar program were offered in the future, it is reasonable to expect that whoever came would be similarly responsive and helpful to each other.

5. Luck - The factors which have been presented thus far are, in large measure, subject to control by rational planning. But there remain several other elements over which one has little control and which can determine the success or failure of a camp program such as we have been discussing. These elements can be categorized under the rubric: luck. Weather is particularly important in camp, as it affects much of the program: recreation activities, the children's day camp (which occurred while adults were participating in their discussion groups), walking to meals or programs, and, in general, morale. Consider the differential affect on peoples' attitudes of a bleak rainy day as contrasted to a day with sun and blue skies.

Illness and accidents can also adversely affect group morale. As with the weather, we were lucky on both accounts. We had only one day with a brief period of showers. Also, we experienced no problems with health or accidents. One might make the case that good health and absence of accidents, as distinct from weather, is not fully attributable to luck. Some of this can also be explained by good planning: setting up appropriate regulations, careful supervision, and conducting a program in which people enjoy themselves and feel well cared for.

III. Jewishness

Although the Jewish component of the camp experience is being isolated for purposes of analysis, the actual program was integrated in an organic way with the other phases of camp life. We sought to generate a Jewish ambiance which would enrich the basic goals of family life education and recreation.

1. A Shared Jewish Commitment - Despite a wide variance in Jewish back-ground and patterns of Jewish identity of the 21 families, they came to camp with a common interest in their Jewishness. It was not that this Jewish interest was uniformly articulated as a priority expectation, but it was definitely a factor in people choosing to attend a camp program sponsored by The American Jewish Committee and taking place at the B'nai B'rith camp. Their Jewish motivation ranged from a skeptical curiosity to a strong desire for reinforcing the Jewishness of their families. The parents especially were aware that the authority structure of their families had been weakened as a result of their divorce and they seemed to sense that a link to the Jewish heritage might provide additional support. The Jewish interest and receptivity was there but with varying degrees of uncertainty as to whether a Jewish connection could be made to work for them. Accordingly, staff saw as its task bringing to consciousness how Jewishness could indeed be a positive force in the lives of individuals and families.

2. A Jewish Domain - We sought to create a Jewish domain - an environment in which Jewishness was interspersed in a natural and non-intrusive fashion and in ways which enhanced peoples' experiences. One important example was the staff initiated custom of starting and ending all meals with a motzi and birkat hamazon. Meal time with almost 50 adults and children in one large room could be a chaotic, unsettling event. At the first meal we introduced the expectation that people not begin eating until the motzi was said, and further, that people remain in the dining room until we concluded birkat hamazon. Adherence to these customs established that everyone remain together through the meal period, allowing for relatively relaxed interaction among the members of the community and for transmitting important administrative or program information. As the week evolved, the number of people who knew the blessings increased and all came to enjoy the melody and the special flourishes which they created. This tradition became part of, and contributed to, the emerging sense of community. Perhaps there was also some recognition that in deferring their appetites and impulses for a Jewish prayer they were acknowledging a loyalty to something larger than themselves: the Jewish heritage, God,...

3. A Jewish Family Orientation - The content of the family life discussions reflected a Jewish perspective in two ways: first, in the direct application of traditional Jewish attitudes and insights to

divorce, family and parenting. One session featured a lecture on this subject by one of the staff. In other sessions staff would seek to relate Jewish concepts or Jewish metaphors to the issue of family life being explored.

A second realm of Jewish content addressed the Jewish context within which much family life occurs. This focus is of particular value to those Jews, which includes many of our families, who don't think of themselves as "religious." One session addressed the issue of how a single parent family coped with Passover. This session, in which all the children and adults were together, featured a movie, "The Empty Chair," the theme of which was a single parent family approaching their first Passover seder without the husband/ father. All the children and adults in the audience identified with the emotional tensions experienced by the movie family. The reactions of the camp families indicated the strong feelings associated with the absence of the parent. But it was also clear that these feelings were accentuated by the association with the Passover seder. The movie theme symbolized for the adults and children the ways their family life and their Jewishness are intertwined.

4. Shabbat - The timing of Shabbat in the cycle of our week at camp added to its significance. It was the last full day at camp, (we departed at noon Sunday) and was an appropriate and needed day of rest. After a very full week of activities and emotional reactions, when Shabbat arrived, the community was ready to slow down, both to think about and savor the preceding events, and also to contemplate a different order of life experiences - ones more spiritual and transcendent. The natural setting of camp encourages the transition to the realms of spirit and transcendence. Everyone helped to prepare for Shabbat: children and parents gathered flowers and made their own special decorations for the dining room and sanctuary. Friday night, Shabbat morning, and Havdalah services were planned and carried out by groups of parents and children. Havdalah, celebrated in a lovely natural sanctuary among a grove of trees, provided an apt conclusion to a distinctive day. The planning for Shabbat was fun. The ceremonies and services proved to be very meaningful because the planners appreciated how to adapt the traditions to the rhythms and interest of their peers.

Shabbat, the single most important Jewish custom, was observed in ways consonant with the essence of the tradition, and the people perceived the experience as pleasurable and fulfilling.

IV. OPTIONS and PLURALISM - Jews living in America today are confronted with dilemmas which our great grandparents didn't know about. We have options. There is the very basic option of whether we want to continue to be Jews. If we decide affirmatively, we can express our Jewishness in any of the range of options, from just saying, "I'm a Jew," to living a traditionally observant Jewish life.

Our approach at camp was grounded in two assumptions: one, that our people are struggling with these several options; and two, that they are autonomous individuals who, if presented with the relevant data would arrive at thoughtful decisions. So, we conceived of our task, not as exhorting people to be Jews, but rather as clarifying the Jewish options, with their advantages and disadvantages, for American Jews in the 1980's. The impact of this low key approach is reflected in a comment by one of the participants several months after the Seminar. "I was pleasantly surprised to find that I came away from the gentle approach to examining Jewish identity with a very positive attitude toward being involved in a more Jewish life style for myself and my children. I have since rejoined my Temple and attended and enjoyed services."

Finally, we sought to capitalize on the Jewish pluralism of our camp community and the learning opportunities it offered. Not only did individuals have a range of Jewish life styles with which to experiment, but they could also share the excitement whereby this Jewishly heterogeneous group developed into a cohesive community. Such an achievement adds to the appeal of the Jewish option. It also provides a model of Jewish communal life which undoubtedly has utility for back home - one highlighting mutuality rather than divisiveness.

A FINAL CAVEAT

The camp experience for the participants was so ideal and so intense that it raised for staff a concern with the issue of transition back home. This was almost a fairy tale environment, designed especially for single parent families. Here one did not feel marginal or stigmatized. Here one was the majority. Being divorced or living with one parent was normative. Everyone spoke the same language. Everyone shared similar agendas. Further, camp offered everyone an instant surrogate family, with supportive peers and benevolent authorities who shared responsibility for day to day responsibilities. What a contrast to the usual hassles and burdens of family life back home. Would the return to reality be so traumatic as to create a form of emotional bends? Could people bring home the learnings, the enhanced self-image, and the hope generated at camp? Or would these come to be viewed as anomalous, a non-replicable experience, achievable only in the rarefied environment of the camp and, therefore, not accessible back home?

* * * * *

The sponsoring institutions have been pleased to hear reports of reunions and meetings among members of the Seminar. The ripple effect of this one week experience for single parents and their families as well as their enthusiastic reactions and evaluations seem to indicate a clear need which can be met by replication of the Seminar for other single parents in other parts of the country. We hope that this publication will stimulate others to serve the unmet needs of this growing segment of our Jewish community, the parents and children of divorce.

Appendix I

Administrative Guidelines
for
Single Parents Camp Seminar

1. Work out a cooperative relationship with the director of a Jewish camp which can provide an appropriate setting for the program. The dates of the Seminar will be determined by the availability of camp facilities; i.e. before or after the regular camping season. The use of a guest lodge which houses both adults and children and has meeting space is helpful in creating group spirit and minimizing the problem of sitters.

2. Personnel: A top notch group dynamics person should be selected as facilitator for program planning and implementation. To assure a smoothly running seminar, it is essential to have a coordinator who will supervise every aspect of the program from publicity and invitations to on-site smoothing of "ruffled feathers" and hurt feelings. The camp should provide administrative and camping activity personnel including cook, chambermaids, waterfront and children's counselors as well as a religious leader who can lead Shabbat services and all related activities. For maximum effect, an effort should be made to make Shabbat the climactic celebration of the Seminar experience. Its impact is evident in the detailed report.

3. Participants: Reach out to a broad spectrum of single parent families through the use of lists of single parents provided by Federations, YM/YWHA's, young leadership groups, synagogues, schools, family service agencies, etc.

The number of parents and children accepted will be limited by the accommodations provided by the camp chosen. For greatest effectiveness, the group should not exceed 25-30 parents and 50-60 children.

4. Publicity: A descriptive flyer should be widely disseminated to all potentially interested institutions. A press release describing the program should be distributed to the general and the Jewish press. A descriptive letter of invitation (See Appendix II) or a separate brochure should be mailed to interested institutions as well as individuals.

5. The cost of the week's seminar should be held to a minimum in order to serve the needs of the public for which it is intended. Consideration should be given to communal sources for scholarship funds. Some of the family service agencies may wish to fund certain individuals whom they serve.

6. The program should be carefully structured to enable participants to engage in mutually supportive discussion in regard to their specific needs and problems, their Jewish identity and celebration within a Jewish framework while allowing time for recreation and vacation activities for both adults and children. (See Appendix III and detailed description in the report.)

7. The closing session should serve as a summary and on-the-spot evaluation of the experience and should be held while all participants are present.

A degree of flexibility will be required within the structured setting to accommodate special needs of participants. This becomes easier as the sense of community develops.

8. An evaluation form should be prepared and mailed to participants after their return home together with an appropriate note requesting their cooperation and maintaining the relationships which developed during the Seminar. (Appendix V)

Appendix II
Letter of Invitation

May 1983

Dear Friend,

As a single parent, you belong to one of the fastest growing family groups in America today. We believe you deserve attention and support.

As Jewish single parents many of you may be faced with special challenges. Not only must you deal with new parent-child relationships and a shift in social and financial circumstances but you may find it difficult to serve as sole transmitter of Jewish values and culture to you children.

In an effort to respond to your needs, the AJC's William Petschek National Jewish Family Center and B'nai B'rith Camps are jointly sponsoring a Single Parents Seminar, a unique camping experience for single parents and their children from 5-14. The program, which will take place from Tuesday, August 23 to Sunday, August 28, 1983, has been designed to make it possible for you to combine an enjoyable family vacation in a bucolic setting with expertly guided informal discussions of financial, social religious, personal and communal issues which confront you as parents, as Jews and as individuals.

You will enjoy a relaxing program of recreational activities such as swimming, tennis, hiking, softball, folk dancing and just plain walking and talking with friends. In addition a series of experimental programs and in-depth discussions have been planned for adults. Children will enjoy supervised recreation and discussions. Joint programs for adults and children will include a campfire and movies. Special Shabbat services and an exploration of Jewish values and the role that Jewish family experience can play in child rearing will add a special dimension to the Seminar.

...Where? At B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp amid the rolling hills of Starlight, Pennsylvania within easy driving distance of New York, Philadelphia and Washington. All participants will be housed in the Camp's well appointed adult lodge. The camp's extensive recreational and athletic facilities including a private fifteen acre spring-fed lake will be available.

...Who? The discussion leader and guide will be Dr. Bernard Reisman, Associate Professor of American Jewish Communal Studies at Brandeis University and Director of its Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service. Dr. Reisman, the author of The Jewish Experiential Book among many other publications, is a pioneer and innovator in the development of experiential approaches to Jewish identity and informal education. He will be assisted by specially trained personnel from the American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith.

...Fee. The cost of this unusual Single Parents' Seminar will be \$200.00 for one parent and one child. There will be a supplementary payment of \$12.00 per day for each additional child. The all-inclusive fee covers all meals, room with a semi-private bath, regular camp services, all athletic facilities and special events. Arrangements for transportation are made by participants. For those who do not drive, the Short Line Bus Co. goes from the Port Authority Bus Terminal to Hancock, N.Y. where transportation to the camp will be provided.

To assure a place for you and your child(ren), please fill out the enclosed registration form and enclose a deposit of \$25.00. If you wish any additional information, please call either Dr. Gladys Rosen, (212) 751-4000, X442, or Mr. Sam Skolnick, (202) 857-6509.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Yehuda Rosenman, Director
William Petschek
National Jewish Family Center

Samuel B. Skolnick, ACSW
Director, Camping
Services
B'nai B'rith

Gladys Rosen, Ph.D.
Seminar Co-Ordinator

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES SEMINAR

NAME OF PARENT _____

ADDRESS _____
_____PHONE: (HOME)
(WORK)

CHILD'S NAME _____ AGE _____ GRADE

CHILD'S NAME _____ AGE _____ GRADE

SIBLINGS NOT ATTENDING SEMINAR: AGE _____ AGE _____

MARITAL STATUS:

- WIDOWED
 DIVORCED
 REMARRIED

DEPOSIT OF \$ _____ ENCLOSED

SIGNATURE OF PARENT

The cost for the program at the B'nai B'rith Perlman Camp does not include medical care outside of basic first aid as provided by the Camp Nurse. All fees for the program are due on or before June 21 and are refundable based on proper notification before July 10. Parents assume all responsibility for transportation to and from Camp. Additional descriptive and programmatic information will be sent after registration form is received.

APPENDIX III

OUTLINE FAMILY CAMP PROGRAM AT B'NAI B'RITH PERLMAN CAMP - AUGUST 23-28, 1983

	August 23, 1983 Tuesday	August 24, 1983 Wednesday	August 25, 1983 Thursday	August 26, 1983 Friday	August 27, 1983 Saturday	August 28, 1983 Sunday
8:30 AM to 9:15 AM	Arrival and Open Waterfront Recreation	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	9:00 AM Breakfast	8:30 - 9:00 AM Buffet Breakfast
9:30 AM to 11:00 AM		-III- Adult Discussion with B. R. ----- Children's Day Camp	-IV- Adult Discussion with B. R.	-VIII- Adult Discussion with B. R. ----- Children Discussion E.Reisman	Rabbi Paul Kerbel Shabbat Services	Recreation
11:15 AM to 12:30 PM		Family Recreation	Family Recreation	Family Recreation		
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2:15 PM to 3:45 PM		-IV- Adult Discussion G. Rosen ----- Children's Day Camp older children-B.R.	-VII- Adult Discussion E. Reisman ----- Children's Day Camp older children-B.R.	Families Prepare for Shabbat	Optional Informal Study Session ----- Recreation	DEPARTURE
4:00 PM to 6:00 PM	-I- B. Reisman Family/Staff -I- Opening Program ----- Tour Camp	Family Recreation	Family Recreation		Families Prepare for Saturday Night	
6:30 PM to 7:30 PM	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	6:00 - 6:30 PM Rabbi Kerbel Shabbat Service Shabbat Dinner	-IX- Dinner - - - - 7:00 PM Adult Summary and Evaluation - B.R. ...8:15-8:30 PM.... Rabbi Kerbel Havdalah	
7:45 PM to 9:15 PM	-II- B. R. with Adults ----- First Session Day Camp	-V- "The Empty Chair" - B. R. with the families	Family Campfire	Oneg Shabbat Families: Israeli Songs and Dancing	Family Skit Night	
10:15 to 11:30 PM	Adult Recreation and Relaxation	Adult Recreation and Relaxation	Adult Recreation and Relaxation	Adult Recreation and Relaxation	Adult Recreation and Relaxation	

Appendix IV

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PERSONAL VIEWS -- AUGUST 1983

Please answer each question by checking one of the five columns on the right which most closely represents your personal values or beliefs.

A = 20 Adults C = 15 Children Percentages

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	C	A	C	A	C	A
1. It is appropriate to expect all members of a family to give up personal plans or preferences to be together for special family gatherings.						
2. Being part of a single parent family is no better or worse than a family where both parents are present.						
3. Jews should only marry other Jews.						
4. Being Jewish is a very important part of my life.						
5. It would be most desirable for a single parent to marry again.						
6. Jews should try to be like, and not different from, other Americans.						
7. To have mostly Jewish friends is not a good idea.						
8. Divorce frequently solves more problems than it causes.						
9. All Jews should have a special loyalty for the State of Israel.						
10. Anti-Semitism is no longer a real problem in America.						

Appendix V

WILLIAM PETSCHKE NATIONAL JEWISH FAMILY CENTER

Single Parent Camp Seminar

August 23-25, 1983

Evaluation Questionnaire

A. Please evaluate each of the following in terms of its contribution to the success of the program:

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Adequate</u>	<u>Inadequate</u>
1. Day camp program for the children				
a) Activities for young children				
b) Teenage facilities				
c) Number of counselors				
Additional comments:				
2. Parent-child programs				
a) Joint discussions				
b) Preparations for Shabbat				
c) Preparations for Show				
d) Campfire				
e) Movie - "The Empty Chair"				
f) Havdallah Service				
Additional comments:				
3. Camp facilities and activities				
a) Waterfront				
b) Recreational games				
c) Gym				
d) Athletic facilities				
Additional comments:				

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Inadequate
4. Camp setting & arrangements				
a) Food - Meals & snacks				
b) Meal service				
c) Sleeping accommodations				
d) Meeting rooms				
Additional comments:				
5. Jewish dimension				
a) At meals - Motzi and Birkat Hamazon				
b) Shabbat Program				
c) Jewish dimension of discussions				
Additional comments:				

B. Please share your comments and suggestions on how satisfactory the following aspects of the Seminar were and how we might improve them:

- | | Good | Suggestions |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|-------------|
| 1. Time of Seminar | | |
| 2. Location of Seminar | | |
| 3. Proportion of free time and structured program | | |
| 4. Day camp program | | |
| 5. Size of group | | |
| 6. Ages of children | | |
| 7. Pre-Seminar information | | |
| Additional comments: | | |

Good

Suggestions

C. Recommendations

- 1. Reunions and follow up
- 2. Replication of program

For same group	Yes _____	No _____
For new groups	Yes _____	No _____
For other institutions	Yes _____	No _____

Additional comments:

D. For our evaluation we would appreciate your sharing with us the following information. Complete confidentiality will be observed in regard to this as well as responses to the evaluation.

Age	_____
How long divorced	_____
If not divorced, how long separated	_____
Occupation	_____
Education	_____
Number & age of children	_____

Additional comments:

Excerpts from Evaluations

"The children all had a fantastic time because of the camp setting and the 'uniqueness' of the experience. As the week progressed, all children became one big family."

"All activities brought each family unit closer. A total 'unity' was also created and is carried out now after the program has ended."

"Judaism is now becoming more meaningful to me because I now view it as a bond from generation to generation; I see more meaning with each holiday and custom, and I see a positive force of strength in belief and tradition."

"Many of us have met and have been in touch by letter or phone. It is incredible how the strong support and close feeling we had this summer continues. I have made so many beautiful friendships."

"The single parents Seminar was an enriching and rewarding experience. It was a privilege to participate in the seminar."

"How about a model seder as a forum for a reunion. Would build on feeling of being a community of Jews."

"I felt the whole experience for my child and me was one of the most beautiful we ever shared! For the first time since she was born, I felt I was being fair to both of us. We both will always be grateful for this incredible experience. I look forward to many, many more. My life has changed for the better since the Seminar and I think part of this is because of the insights I experienced there. Thank you, thank you very much."

"It is incredible how close everyone really is. I spoke to many people on the phone. The support that exists between us cannot be explained in your questionnaire."

"I have never in my life made so many very close friends so quickly. Surely, it must be timing, situation, and opportunity."

"I hope you continue because we definitely know how many lives you can touch and change. All I can say is thanks for having the program."

Appendix VI

SERMONETTE

Starlight where?? We laughed. Starlight, Pennsylvania -- what's it near?? Hancock, New York -- we laughed some more.

We wandered into camp last Tuesday as individuals and families. We came from Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania -- and Maryland, which turned out to be Missouri.

In arriving at Camp Perlman, we had three things in common. First, we were all single-parent families. Second, we were all Jewish, but even there, much diversity existed. We transcended from one extreme to the other, from those of us who barely practiced Judaism and had little Jewish identity to those of us who were devout Orthodox Jews, with every shade and variation in between represented. But, nonetheless, we were all Jewish. The third thing we had in common was that we all cared or we wouldn't have come to begin with.

The kids ranged from four to fifteen. I call them kids but the maturity and wisdom they displayed amazed us all. Nonetheless, the kids came to Camp Perlman a little scared, not knowing what to expect. I'll let you in on a little secret - the adults were just as scared as the kids.

It didn't take long to find out what this week was to be like. Usually seminars take a little while to warm up. Not this one for Tuesday afternoon and evening, we were off and running. Bernie (Reisman), Gladys (Rosen) and Elaine (Reisman) set the tone which has carried on through to this very moment. The honesty, thoughts, observations and cooperation has just poured out.

The word intense has been used greatly over these last few days, but I really can't think of a better word. Camaraderie developed quickly and easily AT ALL AGE LEVELS -- from four year old Amy swinging back and forth being held by four ten year olds, to great concern by all of us over the great Volvo caper and the whereabouts of Jane and Harriet.

Emotions -- well, tears welled up in some whether it be while watching "The Empty Chair" or listening with admiration to the obstacles that some single-parents and children of single-parents have overcome and mastered.

Is Judaism alive and well? What will happen to the younger Jewish generation? This week made the answer much clearer. Seeing the "Ruach, the spirit" of the Worcester teens and all the other teens here, Judaism is in good hands. Whether leading the Birkat Hamazon or Shabbat services, we can all take a lesson from the teens.

Also, as to Judaism, if, as a by-product of this week, one adult rekindled his or her Jewish identity or if one child was "turned on" to Judaism, this seminar would have been a success for that alone. But, there was so much more -- so very much more.

We arrived at camp as individuals with uncertainties as to what to expect. We leave camp tomorrow having been a huge family, with new friendships formed and to the cries of "do we have to leave," "does it have to end." We have travelled far and intensely this week while in camp. All participated; all contributed. Was this week a success? YES, thanks to Bernie, Gladys, Elaine, every teen and youngster in this room and every single-parent in this room.

Thank you.

Robert Herzog

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Stuart Berson
 Jordan Berson, age 9
 Dana Berson, 5

Susan Boden
 Rachel Boden, 6 1/2

Stella Fertig
 Jesse Fertig, 9 1/2
 Ira Fertig, 7

Jane Fine
 Jordan Fine, 8
 Alicia Fine, 10
 Robin Fine, 15

Judith Flamanbaum
 Amy Flamanbaum, 4 1/2

Harriet Gruber
 Rochelle Gruber, 14
 Sheryl Gruber, 14

Robert Herzog
 Joyce Herzog, 10
 Marc Herzog, 8

Lois S. Kagan
 Billy Kagan, 8 1/2

Gene Klein
 Erez Klein, 7

Fredda Kramer
 Eric Kramer, 9
 Abby Kramer, 6
 Peter Kramer, 4 3/4

Israel Levin
 Robert Levin, 14
 Danny Levin, 13

Dr. Lawrence Liebster
 Joshua Liebster, 12
 Rachel Liebster, 5

Sophia Mantin
 Tammy Mantin, 12

Sara Marks
 Gabrielle Marks, 14
 Amy Marks, 14

Betty Marver
 Benjamin Rosen, 7

Jonathan A. Shevelew
 Aja Suzanne Shevelew, 5

Anita Silberman
 Gail Lynn Silberman, 8 1/2
 Gary Haskel Silberman, 7

Debe Sinha
 Sara Dawn Sinha, 5 3/4

Randi Solomon
 Brad Solomon, 6

Rebecca Tantleff
 Adam Tantleff, 8
 Debra Tantleff, 5

Lucille Weinberg
 Cali Weinberg, 14

Staff

Paul Kerbel, Student Rabbi,
Jewish Theological Seminary of America

Barbara Kleckner, Counselor

Bernard Reisman, Facilitator

Elaine Reisman, Early Childhood Specialist

Gladys Rosen, Coordinator, AJC

Sam Skolnick, B'nai B'rith
Perlman Camp

Part-time counselors and other
support staff of Perlman Camp

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