CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NEED FOR AND PROVISION OF CHILD CARE IN THE LOS ANGELES JEWISH COMMUNITY

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early Childhood Education

by

Andrea S. Cohen

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The thesis of Andrea S. Cohen is approved:

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It is the dedication, perseverance and resourcefulness of these men and women which will continue to assure the viability of Jewish communal life in America.

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ABSTRACT

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NEED FOR AND PROVISION OF
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This paper is based on the premise that the need for child care in the Los Angeles Jewish community is not being met by current services. It also suggests that the Jewish single parent is frequently isolated from both family and Jewish community; therefore, a child care program sponsored by the Jewish community would provide both a source of communal identification to parents and children, as well as a vehicle for transmitting Jewish values and traditions to the children.

In addition to presenting an historical overview of the Jewish family, the paper explores the need for and provision of child care in the Jewish community in Los Angeles. It also provides information and resources for establishing a child care program.

The last chapter contains recommendations for preliminary steps aimed at the improvement of child care services sponsored by the organized Jewish community in Los Angeles.
INTRODUCTION

Two premises upon which this project is based are that 1) the need for child care within the Jewish community in Los Angeles is not being met by current services, and 2) the single parent Jewish family, which represents the majority of child care families, is often in greater need of a Jewishly oriented program than the traditional nuclear Jewish family.

The purposes of this paper are to explore these premises, to put forward proposals for improving the current shortage in provision of child care programs within the Jewish community and to provide basic information and resources which would assist in establishing new programs.

Literature on the single parent Jewish family is almost non-existent, although more resources are being channeled into the study of this population. At this point in the life of the organized Jewish community in Los Angeles, verbal support for this population is far ahead of the actual commitment of financial resources.

The first chapter of this paper presents an historical overview of the Jewish family and Jewish institutions. The purpose of this section is to acquaint the reader with traditional Jewish family roles and values and the ways in which these have changed in recent years. This section also provides a background on the tradition of Jewish organizations for assuming social service-oriented functions for community members.
Chapter II is concerned with the need for child care. Although there is a need for quality child care among all economic groups in the general community, perhaps the most pressing Jewish need is for those Jews whose income is between $4,000 and $10,000.

Chapter III deals with the agencies which currently meet the need for child care in both the general and Jewish communities.

Chapter IV contains some information on the issues involved in establishing a child care program, and the last chapter contains a brief summary and recommendations for improving the provision of this service.

The data used in analyzing and describing certain aspects of Jewish Community Center child care programs was obtained from a first year program at one of the Centers currently offering the service. However, discussions with child care directors at the other Jewish Centers verify that many of the problems and frustrations which accompanied the operation of this particular program were similar, if not identical, to problems which they face.

There are no indications that the economic, psychological and sociological trends responsible for the increasing need for child care will reverse themselves in the near future. Thus, it would seem imperative that the Jewish community begin to put more resources into the study of and actual provision of child care services for its community members.
I. AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE JEWISH FAMILY AND JEWISH INSTITUTIONS

The Jewish family, composed of a group of people with well defined roles bound together by legal ties, ties of blood and the sharing of common goals and common values, has been the mainstay of Jewish life throughout history. Prayers recited in the morning begin with an uttering of praise of the Jewish home, even before singing the praise of God, "How fair are your tents, 0 Jacob, your dwellings, 0 Israel" (Numbers 24:5).

In biblical times, the Jewish family was an enlarged kinship group, or a "clan". This group included parents, offspring and relatives. The biblical family was patriarchal, and the husband exercised complete authority. Ideally, he was also benevolent and was expected to be both loving and devoted. The woman was secondary in importance to her husband, and her primary contribution to the family was in producing children, thus helping her husband to fulfill the Biblical commandment to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28).

It was incumbent upon parents to teach their children and to lead them in the paths of virtue and righteousness. It was expected that the children would honor and respect their parents. It was in the home that Jewish values and traditions were taught.

In the middle ages, each Jewish family was part of a self-governing autonomous community which maintained its own institutions, encompassing various facets of religious, legal, educational, cultural and social life.
The sixteenth century marked the beginning of shtetl (small town) life. Jews in Poland and Lithuania had been invited to settle in private towns owned by the Polish nobility. Although the culture exemplified by the shtetl was not the same as that practiced by Jews in the larger cities of both Eastern Europe and Germany, certain values and patterns were similar. All could be traced back to the same historical past and Biblical tradition. Life in the shtetl centered around the two major values of "Yidishkeyt" (Jewishness) and "Menshlikhkeyt" (humanness). The traditional ideals of piety, learning, communal justice and charity were fused in the warmth and intimacy of shtetl life. The shtetl home was the source of joy, education and protection.

The shtetl home was the basic unit of life. It was the center of religious life, as well as the place where each family member could find nurturance. In addition to being the mainstay of the individual, the home was also part of the community. The family unit became the connection between the home and community institutions. These communal institutions were seen as extensions of Jewish life and thought.

Several factors in European Jewish life in the 18th and 19th centuries contributed to the strengthening of both family and Jewish communal life. Jews often were excluded from the political and economic life of the general community, and anti-Jewish animosity was not uncommon; both conditions contributed to the necessity of the Jewish community being self sustaining.

The first Jews to arrive in North America came in 1654 to the Dutch community of New Amsterdam, an outpost of the Dutch West India
Company on the Hudson River. By 1790, there were no more than 2,500 Jews in the United States, both of Sephardic (Spanish-Portuguese Jews) and Ashkenazic (German and Eastern European Jews) descent. They established tiny Jewish communities on the East Coast, which were religious as well as service-oriented in function. The "shul" (place of worship) was not only a haven for prayer, but also a center for education and social welfare.

The 19th century saw a great German immigration to America, which included many Jews. After 1870, Jews immigrating to America were predominantly Eastern European, the shtetl Jew. By the end of the 19th century, 500,000 Eastern European Jews had arrived in the United States.

In 1920, there were over 3,500,000 Jews in this country, and the community was not a united one. Rivaling factions of varying ethnic origins provided their own religious as well as social services. Currently, there are approximately 6,000,000 Jews in the United States.

The precedent in the Jewish community of providing for the needs of community members is an old one, as the following excerpt from the Shulhan Arukh (Jewish laws codified in the 16th century) illustrates:

How much is to be given to a poor man? Sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth. Thus, if he is hungry, he should be fed; if he needs clothing, he should be clothed; if he lacks household utensils,
they should be purchased for him;...and so each
and every one should be supplied with what he needs.
(Article 250, section 1, p. 8-9, Feinberg translation)

Communal service institutions have been present in Jewish
communities throughout history. During the period immediately
preceding and following the Civil War, some larger American Jewish
communities began to establish their own medical facilities. During
the 1920's in response to anti-Jewish sentiment and the desire to
protect themselves against an often hostile environment, a network
of Jewish organizations was established to provide economic assistance
and social services to members of the community in need. In the
1930's, with the rise of Hitlerism, Jewish fund raising organizations
proliferated and coordinated to provide relief to the afflicted in
Europe. In effect, American Jews have developed a set of parallel
institutions to those provided by secular agencies supported by
government.

The Changing Jewish Family in America

The Jewish immigrant family which arrived in America in the late
1800's and the early 1900's was the product of a number of sociologi-
cal and historical factors which led to the development of a strong
and cohesive family unit. The image of the overprotective Jewish
mother is derived from the immigrant mother who needed to hold her
family together in the face of an alien culture and alien ways.

While they struggled for their own survival, the immigrant
generation lived with the hope that, above all, their children would
succeed in fitting into American life (Bubis, 1971).
Jews banded together in close knit communities in the larger cities during this period. Often, they succeeded in recreating the ghetto-type existence to which they had become accustomed in Eastern Europe.

In an effort to fit into the then celebrated ideal of America as a melting pot, second generation American Jews put their Judaism through a strainer and emerged with a weakened version of Jewish tradition and values. Success and achievement became the overriding goals, while the importance of the teaching of Jewish values and customs to the children was all too often minimized.

The third generation of American Jews, most of whom are in their twenties, is generally highly educated secularly, but almost illiterate Jewishly. It is a mobile generation with weakened family ties. The extended family is the rare exception, rather than the norm. The nuclear family, increasingly alienated from Jewish communal institutions and without the benefit of the extended family, holds the entire responsibility for providing emotional support, as well as for transmitting Jewish identity to the children. As many students of sociology, psychology and other social sciences have written, the 20th century sees man as being increasingly alienated from his fellow man. When alienation, both physical and emotional, occurs among family members, increasing stress is placed upon the family for survival, let alone for providing nurturance for its members.

Traditional family roles have been greatly modified. The role of the woman in Judaism has always been as an auxiliary to her husband. Yet, responsibility for maintaining a Jewish home, in the sense of both transmitting the spirit and values through holiday
celebration and keeping the family unified, has been incumbent almost solely upon the woman.

A combination of several factors has altered the traditional roles maintained within the Jewish family. Men seem to be spending more and more time out of the home and enjoying it less, and women are more highly educated, hoping to find satisfaction outside the home. Children are expected to achieve and to be Jewish, but not too Jewish (Bubis, 1971). The feminist movement, basically a middle class movement many of whose advocates are Jewish, has undoubtedly influenced the fluidity in male-female roles within the family. Women are seeking equality both in the home and on the outside. More women are seeking to strengthen their own identities, separate from or in addition to their identities as wives and mothers, frequently entering into the labor market. Additionally, the exigencies of an inflationary economy are forcing more women of two parent families into the labor force in an effort to maintain a life style which previously required only one salary.

People, in general, are becoming more aware of the choices available to them which shape their lives. The individual is assuming primacy over the broader issues of communal responsibility.

The number of single parent families and families in which both parents work is quickly accelerating due to some factors already mentioned. Consequently, there is an ever increasing number of children needing day care. Although the birth rate is declining, it may well be that because more parents are working, there is no net reduction in the numbers of children in need of day care.
Thus, the issue of child care is likely to be a relevant one in all communities for some time to come.

In most cases, the single parent is a woman, although men are beginning to enter the ranks of the single parent as well. Responsibility for maintaining the traditional Jewish home has centered around the woman. However, the case of the single Jewish parent is often one where the woman or man is so exhausted by her or his role as parent, worker and housekeeper that little energy is left for meeting the emotional needs of the children or for providing a Jewish environment for the children. Florence Kinsler of Jewish Family Service suggests that the single parent family is frequently isolated and alienated from both extended family and community, thus requiring perhaps more support of all kinds than the two parent family.

The Jewish community in Los Angeles is beginning to deal with issues involving the new Jewish family, including the single parent, as evidenced by the establishment within the past year of subcommittees on day care and Jewish family life by the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles.

The Organized Jewish Community

The largest single organized Jewish affiliation is the religious congregation. Although studies on affiliation show statistical constancy of membership, gratifications from this affiliation are declining (American Jewish Committee, 1972).

The constituents of religious congregations are most frequently two parent families with young children of religious school age who can afford synagogue membership fees. Information available on
community affiliation points out that the single parent family frequently is alienated from Jewish communal institutions.

The Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles is an umbrella organization within the community whose constituents are both individual member organizations, such as synagogues, as well as service agencies. The Federation attempts to coordinate distribution of financial resources, as well as to oversee community planning within the Jewish community in Los Angeles.

The group work arm of the Jewish Federation Council is Jewish Centers Association (JCA); consequently, this would be the Jewish communal institution in addition to the synagogue which might be expected to provide child care within the community. JCA constituents are often those who do not wish to identify their cultural and emotional ties of being Jewish with any of the religious movements, and who feel most comfortable in a non-religious environment.

Although much can be said about the ways in which the Jewish community could best meet the challenges of the new Jewish family, the specific issue which will be dealt with in this paper is the provision of day care services to those in need within the community.
II. THE NEED FOR CHILD CARE

Information regarding the need for child care in the general and Jewish communities is presented in this chapter.

The General Community

A 1966 national statistic shows 4,000,000 children under the age of 6 with working mothers (Pines, 1971). A 1972 statistic reveals 6,000,000 children under the age of 6 with working mothers (Keyserling). Approximately one third of all mothers with children under the age of 6 work, most for compelling economic reasons. Half of all mothers with children aged 6-17 are job holders. Statistics such as these have been verified repeatedly. Judging from these figures, it would seem that the numbers of working mothers will probably continue to rise dramatically, thus contributing to the already critical need for additional child care facilities.

In addition to those women who are forced to work to sustain their families, there are growing numbers of women who choose to work for different reasons. These are often middle class mothers who find they need fulfillment outside of the home, using work as another source of role identification. Jewish women are working for both of these reasons.

Concurrent with the growing need for child care, there is an ever growing number of child care facilities, although still insufficient to meet the need.

Assessment of the need for child care in Los Angeles County has been determined via public hearings held by the Los Angeles County
Social Service Commission, the City of Los Angeles and from a study by a United Way Task Force on the need in low income areas of Greater Los Angeles. Present facilities serve only approximately 10% of those in need of child care, and there is widespread recognition of the need for more and improved facilities (Willett, 1973).

The Los Angeles Jewish Community

An effort only recently was made to begin to study the child care situation within the Los Angeles Jewish community via the establishment of a Subcommittee on Day Care under the auspices of the Jewish Federation Council. The subcommittee met once in May, 1974 with the aims of examining the need for day care within the Jewish community and making recommendations to the Committee on Services to Families and Individuals concerning the role of the Jewish Federation Council in the area of day care. The subcommittee is expected to meet again shortly.

Reference to the need for child care within the Jewish community encompasses the needs of two groups. The first is the group of working Jewish parents who either are religiously affiliated or identify themselves culturally as Jews, and who, therefore, would prefer Jewish program content for their children. The second group is the non-affiliated parent, for whom Jewish program content holds little priority in selecting a child care program. This segment of the Jewish population is on the periphery of Jewish communal life. What has emerged from numerous conversations with unaffiliated Jewish parents is the conviction that if all other factors such as cost and convenience were equal, these parents would still choose to send
their children to a Jewish community child care program over a secularly sponsored child care program.

The organized Jewish community, especially the service agencies within the Jewish Federation Council, seeks to reach both sets of Jewish groups.

Although the Jewish community in Los Angeles has over forty nursery schools spanning the religious spectrum, from reform to chasidic, including six sponsored by Jewish Centers, there are very few agencies within the community which provide child care services. The distinction between a nursery school and a day care program must be made. The nursery school program generally begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at noon, whereas a full day child care program begins at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m. The nursery school, therefore, is virtually useless for single and working parents, who would then need to find additional afternoon care for their children.

Group day care programs can be divided into three categories, according to the extent of services provided:

1) programs which are open between the hours of approximately 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., at which the youngest children spend the entire day. School age children may arrive at the Center before school, are transported to and from school back to the Center until the parents pick them up after work;

2) programs which provide only after school care, from approximately noon to 6:00 p.m. Bus transportation from school is provided;
3) programs which provide weekend and evening child care. There are very few programs of this type in the City of Los Angeles. The problem of provision of child care as described in examples one and two above is the subject of inquiry in this paper.

At present there are several methods which might be used to begin to assess the need for child care within the Jewish community in Los Angeles.

**National Jewish Population Study**

One method would be to analyze some of the demographic data collected in a 1970-71 national survey of the American Jewish community, directed by Dr. Fred Massarik, Research Consultant to the Jewish Federation Council of Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles sample in this study consisted of approximately 350 households. Twenty-two of these households contain single parent families with children under 21, and 84 households contain two working parents with children under 21 years of age. Further breakdown into variables of income level, ages of children, attitude toward child care and attitude toward Jewish education is suggested.

Questions have been raised regarding the representativeness of the final sample. Some people refused to participate in the extensive questionnaire and interview, thus creating a sampling bias of unknown dimension.

Of a total Jewish population of 550,000 in Los Angeles, which represents approximately 150,000 households, a sample of 350 households is small. Although generalizing from this data must be undertaken cautiously, it is the most recent data available on the
Jewish population in Los Angeles. It adds some information to the little which has been documented about the need for child care within the Jewish community.

The Task Force on the Jewish Poor used data from the National Jewish Population Study in studying the incidence and characteristics of the Jewish poor in Los Angeles. The income level below which people were classified as poor was $4,000. According to the Task Force report, the majority of Jewish poor are retired or ill, or aged non-working housewives.

Research is currently in process for people having incomes of between $4,000 and $9,999. It is assumed by members of the Task Force on the Jewish Poor that this group will contain large numbers of single parent families with young children, and it is primarily this target population whose need for child care is being examined in this paper.

United States Census Data

A second method of attempting to assess the need for child care within the Jewish community would be to look at the most recent United States Census data (1970) for census tracts in areas of high density of Jewish residents.

A 1970 census map of Jewish population distribution in the Greater Los Angeles area, prepared by the Research Service Bureau of the Jewish Federation Council, shows that Jews are concentrated primarily in the Western half of the City of Los Angeles, including Santa Monica, and in the Southern, Central and Western end of the San Fernando Valley (see Appendix A). According to Robert Blumenthal,
Assistant Area Director for the American Jewish Committee, Jews comprise approximately 14% of the population of the City of Los Angeles, and only 7% of the population of Los Angeles County.

After considering in depth factors such as marital status, work status of both parents, income level and ages of children in census tracts of high Jewish population density, it might then be possible to make additional assumptions about the need for child care within the Jewish community.

Even though a high income family, either single parent or where both parents are working, is more likely than the middle or low income family to be able to afford live-in help to take care of children before and after school, many of these parents might prefer a group care situation to having the child in an environment in which he may be isolated and unable to interact with peers.

Census data was gathered in 1970 and, therefore, it is not current. However, the upward trends which were apparent between the 1960 census and the 1970 census regarding the increase in single parent families and households in which both parents work have continued. Although community child care services have also increased, they are nowhere near meeting current needs.

Agency Inquiries

The third method which can be used in assessing the need for child care within the Jewish community is to contact Jewish organizations and agencies to find out the number of inquiries each has had regarding child care services. This method is the least reliable, in that inquiries are rarely compiled or retained by the agencies.
Nonetheless, it is an additional source of support for the premise on which this project is based.

Among the agencies contacted by this writer were the Bureau of Jewish Education, Jewish Centers Association, National Council of Jewish Women, Jewish Vocational Service, Jewish Family Service and Jewish Storefront referral offices. All agencies which were contacted were unanimous in their assessment that the need for child care is not being met. These agencies reported frequent inquiries regarding child care, with some parents specifying a Jewish content program and others frantically attempting to find any safe and reliable situation, regardless of program content.
III. WHO MEETS THE NEEDS

A description of the kinds of child care programs available in the general and Jewish communities in Los Angeles is contained in this chapter.

The General Community

Needs for provision of child care in the Los Angeles general community are currently being met by the following programs:

- California Children's Centers, which are funded by federal and state money disbursed through the Department of Health and administered by the Los Angeles Unified School District. These centers serve only low income families (income below $4,000) and are open during normal working hours five days a week. There are approximately 30 of these centers in Los Angeles;

- Licensed Family Day Care consists of a home in which a woman cares for up to six children unrelated to her, for less than 24 hours. These homes serve infants, toddlers, pre-school and school-age children, depending upon the family day care mother's preference. It has been estimated that there are approximately 8,000 licensed homes in Los Angeles County, as well as many unlicensed ones (Willett, 1973);

- Non-Profit and Charitable Centers are frequently run by churches, synagogues, and other charitable institutions;

- Head Start programs are funded by the federal government for child development purposes for children of low income
families; frequently, however, the hours during which Head Start programs are open cannot accommodate the working parent; Proprietary Day Care Centers are those which are operated for profit.

Although many of the day care programs mentioned above tend to provide primarily custodial care, there are many children who are in even less desirable situations. There are a large number of young children who are left to fend for themselves at home ("latch-key" children) where no adults are present during the day. Additionally, older children, some of whom are no older than seven or eight themselves, tend younger children. Another commonly found situation is one in which a woman who is unable to communicate in the child's native language is hired to care for him.

The Los Angeles Jewish Community

Although all of the above programs are open to participation by all members of the community, the Jewish parent is most likely to use the services of either the proprietary day care center or the non-profit center.

As data derived from a study of the Jewish poor in Los Angeles reveals, although there is a surprisingly large number of Jews who fall into this category (income of less than $4,000 annually), the overwhelming majority of the poor are among the elderly. The single or working Jewish parent most often has an income of over $4,000 and is not receiving welfare; therefore, he or she is not eligible to participate in either California Children's Centers or Head Start programs.
For reasons which will be mentioned in the discussion of the Home-SAFE program, licensed family day care is not a desirable solution for the Jewish parent.

This leaves the proprietary day care center and non-profit center as the most feasible alternatives in the provision of day care for the Jewish family.

The Jewish community in Los Angeles currently offers four child care programs. One is sponsored by Temple Jeremiah in Westchester, and the other three are sponsored by Jewish Centers Association. Characteristics of these programs are summarized in Table 1. A family day care program initiated in April, 1973 by National Council of Jewish Women is no longer directed under the auspices of this organization.

Temple Jeremiah

The day care program at Temple Jeremiah in Westchester has been in existence for four years and is the only full day child care program currently sponsored by the Jewish Community (see Table 1 "Program hours"). The other programs are specifically geared to the school-age child.

Less than half of the children served are Jewish. After referring to the map of Jewish Population Distribution in Los Angeles, however, it can be seen that Westchester has a low density of Jewish population; therefore, low Jewish participation in the program is not surprising.
Program. Although 68 children participate in the combined nursery school and child care morning program, there are only 35 children who participate in the afternoon child care program. The morning program is staffed by highly qualified teachers certificated in Early Jewish Education by the Bureau of Jewish Education, whereas the afternoon program staff consists of college students and other non-certificated personnel.

Afternoon activities consist of using manipulative toys, riding bicycles and using other outdoor equipment, watching television, and some art. The cost of program materials is very low, since not many materials are used for the afternoon program. The program director feels that since the children are in a structured "academic" environment in the morning, they should be allowed the same freedom as children who go home after school in choosing their own recreational activities.

No scholarships are awarded for the child care program, and the program makes a sizeable profit.

Jewish Centers Association

JCA currently sponsors three child care programs, all of which are geared to the school-age child (see Table 1 for further program descriptions). During 1973-74 child care directors were involved in an on-going attempt to define the goals and program components which they felt embodied the values which they hoped to foster and the services they aimed to provide. According to the two directors involved, the process of meeting and discussing these issues with peers was valuable in clarifying objectives.
The ideals expressed are divided into three sections: program objectives, children's program and parent-oriented program.

**Program objectives.** The program objectives were to:

1) provide a community service to single and working parents and their children;

2) provide a well-rounded program for children which fosters physical, social and emotional growth through providing a warm and responsive environment in which the child can develop significant relations with other adults; encourage positive peer group identity and interaction; provide an environment in which the child is encouraged to develop a positive sense of self; develop the feeling of belonging in a group;

3) provide awareness and enjoyment of Jewish culture and tradition;

4) provide programs for both parents and children whereby they may come to view themselves as important members of the Jewish community.

**Children's program.** The child care programs offered by JCA are all geared to the school age child, primarily because the rooms available to accommodate these children are not available during morning hours due to the Centers' Nursery School programs. As mentioned previously, the nursery school programs end at noon; therefore, they do not meet the day care needs of single and working parents.
Westside Center has the oldest program, while the Valley Cities program is just in the process of opening. Because the Valley Cities program is so new, most of the information which follows applies only to the Westside and Bay Cities programs. Regardless of the age of each program, however, they do share many similarities.

Children served by the JCA child care programs are between the ages of 5 and 12. Centers provide bus pick-up to the Center from various local schools. Once they arrive at the Center, children participate in a variety of activities which differ according to the kinds of facilities available at each of the Centers. Children are divided into groups of between 12 and 18 children, some of which are age level based only and others which are age and sex based. Program hours are noon to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Within each Center there is some variation of both program structure and content. Each program provides for outdoor play, both structured and unstructured, program within the child's "home" group, special interest clubs of the child's choice, out-of-Center trips to places of interest within the community, and swimming (Westside Center only). Some of the special interest clubs include creative dramatics, arts and crafts, science, gardening, sports, to name only a few.

Each Center attempts a meaningful Oneg Shabbat (Sabbath celebration) program.

Parent-oriented program. Among the programs presented, some occurred on a regular, on-going basis, while others represented more sporadic attempts.
- Parent education. This consists of a series of evening programs of either lectures, films or workshops, which bring information to parents on various facets of child rearing and parenthood. The objectives of this program are to disseminate information, to provide a forum for communication and sharing of ideas among child care parents, and to strengthen relationships between parents and child care staff.

- Single parents' rap group. This group meets weekly during the evening. Commitment to attend a specified number of sessions is suggested. The objectives of this group are twofold. The most important goal is to provide a support group for single parents in which they may share feelings, ideas and problems unique to being both single and parents. A secondary goal is to provide social contacts for the often isolated parent.

- Parent meetings. Parent meetings are held periodically throughout the year. The goals of these meetings are to acquaint the parents with program policy and content, to discuss ideas for upcoming special events, to give the parents an opportunity to present questions and concerns about the program, and to recruit members for the Parent Council.

- Parent council. This council consists of a group of parents, ideally two from each child care group, which meets monthly to evaluate and provide input for children's program. They also help in planning fund-raising and special events. The Council attempts to act as liason between staff and parents, as well as to
assist with tasks such as phone calling and hosting special events.

- Family special events. This program consists of activities of a recreational or cultural nature planned by either a special committee or the Parent Council. These activities might include picnics, theatre, weekend outings and family holiday observance. The primary objective of this program is to encourage the establishment of social bonds among those parents and children who may miss the sense of either family or community which often disappears with the disintegration of the traditional nuclear family unit.

With the exception of the Parent Council and the family special events programs, it has been found that the most effective way of insuring parent attendance is to begin these programs shortly after 6:00 p.m., preceded by a dinner supplied by the parent or by the Center. Child care at a nominal fee is also provided.

Statistical information. Statistical information related to various aspects of the child care programs is infrequently maintained, due largely to the fact that keeping records is time-consuming and, therefore, not feasible for the already overburdened secretarial staff at the Centers. The information which has been gathered is the result of rough estimates of the situations in the current 1974-75 programs.

These programs serve 60-75% Jewish children, including children where only one parent is Jewish. The programs serve 65-95% single parent families. Approximately 25% of the children receive some kind of scholarship.
The Home-SAFE program was initiated in April, 1973 by the Los Angeles Section of the National Council of Jewish Women to offer "infants and young children the intimacy of family life and the opportunity for group experience in an unusual program" (Kornfeld, 1974, p. 1). SAFE stands for "services aiding family equilibrium". This program served only infants and other pre-school children in licensed family day care homes which accommodated 3-6 children. Matching between child and home was done primarily according to the needs of the child and only secondarily according to location, hours of employment and available transportation.

The program consisted of the following components: (a) A program for the pre-school children and licensed family day care mothers involved in Home-SAFE was provided by the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Fairfax Community Adult School. Once a week, day care mothers and the children in their home met with a credentialed teacher plus other mothers and children from the community. Activities were provided for the children, while discussions involving issues related to parent education occurred. (b) Council provided day care homes with equipment. (c) Payment to day care homes was made by Council at the prevailing rate for family day care. (d) Professional consultation to the family day care mother was given by the project director, Maurine Kornfeld. (d) Volunteers went into the homes to provide a variety of enrichment activities. (f) Parent rap sessions took place one evening per week.
During the first six months of operation, twenty children and eighteen parents were served. None of those served was Jewish.

In October, 1974 the National Council of Jewish Women turned over responsibility for the Home-SAFE program to the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

Ilene Olansky of the Los Angeles Section of the National Council of Jewish Women was asked why the Home-SAFE program was not subscribed to by Jewish families. The primary reason, she said, was that Jewish parents seemed to be suspect of a program provided in the home, whereas a Center-based program seemed inherently more respectable to them. Since none of the licensed family day care mothers was herself Jewish, the probability of the Jewish parent trusting a family day care situation was perhaps even less.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
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<th>9/70</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in program (11/74)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present capacity (number of children)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a waiting list?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yesb</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program hours</td>
<td>7 a.m.-</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noon to 6 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age of children presently served</td>
<td>2½-8</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>5-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees: Full day</td>
<td>$98 (7-6)</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$92</td>
<td>$85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part dayc</td>
<td>91 (12-6)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td></td>
<td>73 (7-1)</td>
<td>53 (2 or</td>
<td>3-6)</td>
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<td>Fairfax</td>
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<td>Westches-</td>
<td>(Los Angeles)</td>
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<td>Santa</td>
<td>Monica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Nuys</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Are there scholarships available? No Yes Yes Yes

*aDue to late beginning, 90 inquiries materialized into only 14 actual enrollments.

*bThere are 20 children on the waiting list. The openings which do exist are for children of different ages from those on the waiting list.

*cPart day for JCA programs refers to 2 or 3-6 p.m.*
IV. PLANNING A CHILD CARE PROGRAM
WITHIN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

As has been suggested previously, the Jewish need for child care is not being met by current services within the Los Angeles Jewish community.

The four child care programs currently sponsored by the Jewish community in Los Angeles have been described previously, and it appears that directors of these programs have experienced similar feelings regarding various problematic aspects of their program. These directors have expressed a great deal of frustration at the lack of readily available and reliable child care information and resources available to them. A description of the first year in operation of one of these programs written by the child care director of that program provides examples of the range of problems often encountered in the establishment and day-to-day operation of a child care program (see Appendix C).

At the present time, no Jewish agency is equipped with either the manpower or other resources to advise and assist in the planning and implementation of new day care programs. In this section of the project, therefore, an attempt is made to provide a skeleton of information which might at least suggest resources for obtaining more complete information and guidance.
Once the decision has been made to establish a day care program, either full day or after school, the following diagram suggests four interrelated questions relevant to the establishment of a new program.

- What are my resources?
- How much will the program cost?
- What will the program components be?
- Who will the program serve? What are their needs?

Jewish community organizations wishing to provide child care will generally operate out of an already existing agency facility. In the case of the after school child care programs currently in existence within the community, space allotted to these programs is the same as that which is utilized by the nursery school in the morning; therefore, due to space limitations, extending the after school programs to include morning pre-schoolers would be an impossibility.
Because programs provided by the Jewish community operate out of already existing facilities, building safety, zoning and fire regulations have presumably been met.

**Licensing Regulations**

Regulations specifically geared to the approval of a day nursery license in a non-profit organization are governed by the Department of Health in the State of California. Licenses must be renewed annually.

There are four areas of the day care service which the Department of Health attempts to regulate: physical plant, staff, administrative requirements and people served.

It should be noted that State licensing regulations are currently in the process of being revised.

Resources providing further information on all licensing regulations can be found in Appendix B.

**Administrative Responsibilities**

The administrative responsibilities outlined herein are particularly applicable to directors of non-profit or proprietary centers.

**Goal Statement**

A primary administrative responsibility is to determine and provide a statement of goals which would be available to interested community members, such as parents, school administrators and teachers. Ideally, this statement will be the result of a joint effort between parents, Board of Directors and the program administrator.
Billing. The director oversees billing and receipt of money.

Scholarships. Most community-based programs have provision for a limited number of scholarships to be granted throughout the year. In conjunction with previously determined policy, the director oversees to whom and for what amount scholarships will be granted.

Public relations. It is important that the community know of the program's existence and the extent of its services. If the program is well regarded in the community, the number of resources available for program use may be broadened. Additionally, the program director should be aware of the various media available in the community for purposes of advertising the program and special events. School principals, social service agencies, and public places in the community (i.e., the public library) are often good vehicles for disseminating information.

Staff hiring and training. It is the administrator's responsibility to interview and hire program staff. A program for on-going staff training should be provided.

Program

The administrator or program director is responsible for developing good program, both for children and parents. Although the child is the major focus of the day care program, the parent is an integral part of the child's environment; therefore, providing meaningful parent program affects both the parent and the child directly.
The following questionnaire on program goals was sent to parents whose children participated in a Jewish Community Center after school child care program. Although the children in this program were a minimum of 5 years old, the goals evaluated are readily applicable to younger children.

Of a total of 36 possible adult respondents to the questionnaire, 12 actually responded. The parent questionnaire consisted of 15 questions. Respondents were to answer on a scale of 1 to 5 regarding how important the goals mentioned should be in a Jewish community child care program. A response of 1 corresponds to "very important" and a response of 5 corresponds to "not important".
# Parent Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
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<th>% of parents responding</th>
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</table>

1. The child will learn academic subjects to supplement his schooling. 8.3 16.7 16.7 33.3 25.0
2. The child will learn to express himself through creative media (i.e., art, music, dance). 50.0 50.0 - - -
3. The child will enhance his ability to communicate accurately and effectively. 33.3 66.7 - - -
4. The child will have the option of choosing the activities in which he would like to participate. 58.3 33.3 - - 8.3
5. The child will learn effective problem solving (i.e., sharing). 75.0 16.7 - 8.3 -
6. The child will learn to interact successfully with peers. 66.7 33.3 - - -
7. The child will learn to respect other people. 66.7 33.3 - - -
8. The child will learn to respect materials and property. 66.7 33.3 - - -
A great deal has been written on day care environments which encompass the first eleven goals contained in the questionnaire.

As can be seen by the questionnaire results, however, the two program components judged by the parents to be relatively unimportant were provision of Jewish content material and parent-oriented activities. The respondent's religion was insignificant in both of these issues.

Although provision of Jewish content, which encompasses the teaching of Jewish traditions, history and values, is of major significance to this writer, questionnaire results suggest that this may not be a priority to parents. How, then, is a Jewish content program justified?

Although parents' desires hopefully provide significant input for program content, it is equally valid that the sponsoring agency's values and concerns be reflected in its programs. A parent who decides to enroll his child in a particular agency's program should be fully aware of the goals of that agency.

For example, the overall goal of Jewish Centers Association is "To serve the Jewish community...promote the continuity of Jewish peoplehood...and to enhance the quality of life in ways which are responsive to the community as a whole" (JCA Board Manual, 1974, p. 8). The goals of Jewish religious institutions are more directly concerned with Jewish religious teaching.

As has been mentioned earlier, with the increasing assimilation of the Jew into the mainstream of American life, there has been a
decline in the teaching of Jewish tradition and values to the children. Through the provision of Jewish program content, an attempt is made to ensure the transmission and perpetuation of Jewish culture and heritage in America.

Regarding the issue of parent involvement in program, much has been said about the importance of serving the entire family, as opposed to simply serving one member of the family unit.

Ilene Olansky of the National Council of Jewish Women, in her experience with single parents, feels that offering child care without concomitant parent program is meeting only half the need. The parents' internal struggles with personal issues such as guilt and frustration, coupled with external transiency and alienation, are major factors in the lives of both parents and children.

The parent programs suggested in the section describing the Jewish Center child care programs are highly feasible programs whose ultimate benefits could be the strengthening of a healthy parent-child relationship.
V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The need for child care in the general community nationally and in the City of Los Angeles has been well documented. Additionally, many Jewish sources admit to the quickly decreasing gap between the Jewish and general communities in the effect of economic and sociological factors responsible for the increase in single parents and families in which both parents work. Inferring, therefore, from the national and local unmet need for child care, it is logical for reasons outlined above to assume that Jews are also affected by this neglect.

The Jewish community has an historical tradition of assuming responsibility for meeting the needs of community members, especially in areas of social welfare and education. Provision of child care services, therefore, would be a natural and harmonious extension of this responsibility for Jewish communal institutions. Of the four child care programs currently sponsored by Jewish organizations in Los Angeles, there is only one full day child care program and this is in an area of low Jewish population density. All Jewish agencies contacted verify the need for more and quality child care programs within the Jewish community.

Major child care program goals, for both children and parents, include providing a healthy and supportive environment in addition to fostering positive Jewish identity.

A good child care program contains several elements. The social environment should include adults who are skilled and
sensitive in responding to the children's needs. Ideally, there should be a low adult-child ratio, especially with pre-school children (1:4). The physical environment should contain objects which stimulate curiosity and interest. Materials conducive to exploration, artistic expression and imaginative play should be available.

In addition to the child being able to experience his environment at a pace which is consonant with his temperament, he should also spend some time as a member of a group, either engaged in group cooperative play or group problem-solving situations.

Parent involvement in determining program policy and content should be encouraged. Ideally, comprehensive support services supplied by various community service agencies should be available to both parents and children. Discussion groups and workshops for parents and day care personnel, utilizing the skills of community resource persons, could provide an invaluable forum for communication among the various members of the child's environment.

Program possibilities through which a good child care program might be achieved are included in a description of the JCA child care program objectives for both children's and parent's program, as well as in the "Recommendations" section of Appendix C.

The project has not encompassed in depth study of population characteristics in geographic areas of high Jewish density. Further research into those areas is a primary step in eventually providing additional child care services.
A number of recommendations have emerged from this study of childcare within the Jewish community in Los Angeles.

**Subcommittee on Day Care**

At this writing, the Subcommittee on Day Care has had only one meeting in May, 1974. It is strongly recommended that this subcommittee continue to meet on an on-going basis. The first project might be to analyze areas of heavy Jewish population density for incidence of single parent and two parent working families. More concrete proposals for sites and services could emerge from these studies.

**Day Care Coordinator**

Due to the lack of knowledge and resources within the Jewish community in the area of day care, a day care coordinator-consultant position should be established, either under the auspices of Jewish Family Service or the Bureau of Jewish Education, which currently provides this service for Jewish nursery schools. The coordinator would work closely with the Subcommittee on Day Care in determining areas for future study and potential service.

**Provision of More Services**

Many areas of heavy Jewish density are not being served by an existing Jewishly sponsored child care program. Additionally, there is currently only one Jewish day care program serving pre-schoolers, and this program is located in an area of low Jewish population density.

Since synagogues are located throughout the greater Los Angeles area, use of these facilities would provide for more localized sites
in those areas not presently served by Jewish Center programs.

One possibility to consider might be a continuation of some morning Center and synagogue nursery school programs to provide full day care in those geographic areas where the needs are not being met.

**Agency Record Keeping**

It is recommended that service agencies maintain records (including names, location, ages of children) on inquiries for day care. This information could be useful to the Subcommittee on Day Care, as well as any other Jewish institution which is determined to meet the needs for child care within the Los Angeles Jewish community.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Jewish Population Study Areas

<table>
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LOS ANGELES JEWISH POPULATION DISTRIBUTION – 1970
Prepared by the Research Service Bureau
Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles

DENSITY CATEGORIES

less than 5.0%
5.0-9.9%
10.0-19.9%
20.0-49.9%
50% & up
Appendix B

Resources

Licensing Regulations

Publications


"California Administrative Code". (Sacramento: Title 22, Social Security, Division 2, Department of Social Welfare, Subdivision 4)

Agencies

California State Department of Health
107 S. Broadway
Los Angeles, California 90012

California State Department of Education
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, California

Community Care and Development Services
1450 W. Venice Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90006 (213) 383-0080

San Fernando Valley Child Care Resource Center
14410 Sylvan Street, Room 116
Van Nuys, California 91401 (213) 782-6125 ext. 679 or 297
Jewish Social Service Agencies

Jewish Family Service (Central Office)
590 N. Vermont (will move to 6505 Wilshire Blvd. early 1975)
Los Angeles, California (213) 663-8484 ext. 369

Jewish Big Brothers Association
(same address as above) (213) 663-8484 ext. 221

National Council of Jewish Women
543 N. Fairfax Avenue
Los Angeles, California (213) 651-2930

Thalians Family & Child Guidance Unit
8730 Alden Drive
Los Angeles, California (213) 652-5000 ext. 611

Program Resources

Publications


Jewish Publications
Alexman, R. (Ed.) *JCA Day Camp Manual.* Duplicated by Jewish Centers Association of Los Angeles, 5870 W. Olympic Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90036, 1972.
Friedman, A., Gerard, B. S., & Cutter, Rabbi W. (Eds.)


Additional Jewish Resources

Bureau of Jewish Education
590 N. Vermont
Los Angeles, California

Hebrew Union College
3077 University Mall
Los Angeles, California

(The library has an "education" shelf with additional program resources)
Appendix C
Evaluation of a Jewish Community Center
After-School Child Care Program
September 1973 - June 1974

The child care program was undertaken with the aim of providing a greatly needed service to children of single and working parents. The initial stages of the program were very chaotic. There was inadequate staffing, no program structure, insufficient money budgeted for staff and materials, and generally a dearth of foresight as to what problems might occur in a new child care program. For the purpose of clarity, this evaluation will be divided according to three 3-month time periods.

September through December

For the first three months, there was a high turnover of staff. Staff were originally paid $200 per month for 20 hours per week of actual work with the children. This comes to approximately $2.50 per hour with no compensation for staff meetings or preparation time. The staff was inadequately trained, inadequately paid, and there was no time for pre-program training, as the Child Care Director was hired effective the first day of the program.

The Child Care Director received insufficient supervision throughout her employment, as the Center Director was heavily involved with other Center business.

In the initial stages of the program, Child Care children were supposed to be incorporated into another afternoon Center program,
which consisted of a variety of classes which met from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Due to low enrollment, however, several of these classes were cancelled, which left the Child Care program both under-staffed and without program. Six weeks later, permission was granted to alter the structure by hiring additional staff. The staff increased from one counsellor, two aides, a bus driver and the program director to a total of three counsellors, three aides, a bus driver and the director. This brought the teacher-child ratio to one counsellor and one aide per 15 children.

There was little program development in the initial phase of the program. A great deal of energy was consumed just managing to stay above water.

The vehicle used for transportation during this phase of the program was an old limousine, with broken doors, insufficient brakes for the size of the vehicle (inadequate braking speed) which was deemed unsafe by the Child Care Director for use in the transportation of young children. Despite continual protest, this situation was not remedied until mid-December 1973.

There were no parent meetings during this period. On-the-spot parent contact with the director began immediately, with a few early referrals for the more disturbed children.

At this point, parents were totally uninvolved with the Center Board of Directors, and the Board was not terribly well informed about the program. There was neither input nor support from this source.
January through March

During this period, the major breakthrough was in gaining a higher caliber staff, although still underpaid at $230 per month for 20 hours of work per week, with no compensation for preparation or staff meetings. A 16-passenger van was leased which was a great improvement over the limousine. This enabled the children to begin taking out-of-Center trips, which were very important to both children and staff due to the limitations of the physical plant.

With trips, greater staff continuity, higher quality staff, more viable structure, and some growth and wisdom gained from the painful initial stage, the program began to take shape.

Monthly parent meetings began in January and provided good feedback on how parents felt about the program, which was generally positive. Parent meetings also provided a forum for sharing of concerns and questions. Out of this developed the following:

(a) A single parents' rap group led by a social work student. (b) Singling out of parents likely to become more involved (i.e., with fund raising, Board participation). (c) Information on the extent to which it was realistic to expect involvement from the single and working parent, as well as the kind of involvement in which they were interested.

April through June

The third and final stage of the first year's program was the product of six months of pain and growth, and previous efforts finally began to bear fruit.
Although staff morale was still low, continuity of staff was beginning to pay off in several ways. The groups began coalescing, and a sense of peer and group identification became apparent. Positive interpersonal relationships were accompanied by a concomitant solidification of an exciting program, both in structure and content.

Special interest mini-clubs were added one day per week (1½ hours in duration) which allowed both staff and children to choose areas of special interest and skill in which to participate. It also served to break the routine of the daily program, which was an important morale boost for both staff and children. Weekly themes were used during this period to generate program ideas. The staff program planning meetings were a shared and exciting experience.

Exciting group program was interspersed with all-Child Care assemblies, out-of-Center trips and cross-group program. There began to emerge a spirit--an identification with something positive, a joy which had previously been missing.

This period was also strong in parent involvement. There were two fund-raising events (proceeds were approximately $250) in which several parents were active. Two parents also became involved with the Board of Directors. Many parents openly praised the program at this point.

**Summary**

There was a continual positive growth in all aspects of the program, so that by the end of the year there emerged a reasonably
good program.
- Viable structure developed out of unplanned chaos.
- Staff was more skilled and motivated.
- Program content was finally becoming both cohesive and exciting.
- Parents were involved on several different levels.
- The Board of Directors finally began to gain a sense of what the Child Care program was all about.

**Prognosis**

There has been a good beginning. However, there are still many problems to work through. If the following recommendations are taken seriously, the program should run more smoothly in the coming year.

**Recommendations**

**Staff**

- Staff should receive adequate monetary compensation for their time and energy.
- The Child Care Director should be hired a minimum of one month in advance of the start of Fall program.
- A one week staff training session should be held the week before the program begins, and training should include the following: (a) Child Care structure, general schedule, counsellor and aide roles, bus pick-up procedure, familiarization with Center facilities, safety rules, emergency procedures. (b) Discussion of the goals of the program.
(c) Program content--themes, developing community resources, specialized workshops. (d) How to identify and deal with children with special needs. (e) Acquiring materials and resources; setting up rooms. (f) Familiarization with forms--rosters, weekly program evaluations, program planning sheets, etc.

- The Child Care Director should have weekly conferences with each counsellor and periodic conferences with Child Care aides. There should also be monthly program planning meetings.

Structure

There should continue to be three groups of 15 children per group, with the program not to exceed 45 children.

Program Content

Content should be drawn from the following possibilities:
- Themes (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- Counsellors should program with input from the children
- Some all Child Care activities
- Out-of-Center trips
- Choices should be open to the children for quiet areas and activity centers.

Parents

Continued parent involvement should be attempted in the following areas:
- Brunches, pot luck dinners, picnics
- Rap group
- Parent education discussions and workshops
- Board involvement
- Conferencing between counsellor and parent at least once during the school year.

These recommendations are minimal. Hopefully, we will enter the coming year with a bit of wisdom and foresight!