

Final Report of an Evaluation of the AVANCE
Parent-Child Education and Family Support
Program

Volume 2: Process Evaluation

April 1992

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FINAL REPORT OF AN EVALUATION OF
THE AVANCE PARENT-CHILD EDUCATION PROGRAM
VOLUME II: PROCESS EVALUATION

April, 1992

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation of the Avance Parent Education and Family Support Program was divided into two parts. Part one, the outcome evaluation, dealt with the degree to which program goals were attained. The present volume reports on the process or formative evaluation. In this, three questions were asked: (1) Was there a program? (2) Was the program delivered to the participants? and (3) What was the quality of the program?

1. The question of whether a well-defined program existed was carried out by reviewing program records that were available during the course of the evaluation and by interviewing key Avance staff. The Work Environment Scale was used to describe qualitative features of the work environment. The documentation of the program was extended to include a description of the participants. This included standard demographic data and a sample of participant life histories.

That a program did exist was shown by the presence of a planned curriculum, program schedules, trained staff, a clear agency organizational structure and functioning, and the presence of physical facilities for providing training. The only substantial gap in the existing program was that some of the curriculum elements had not been prepared in written form at the beginning of the evaluation. The contents of these curriculum elements were known to experienced parent educators, but had not been prepared in written form. These materials were available in written form by the end of the evaluation.

The program had clearly reached its expected population. Participants were typically young mothers of children under the age of two. Most had more than one child, had relatively low educational attainment, had low incomes, and lived with high levels of economic and social stress. The Participant Life Stories provide dramatic evidence of the need for family support for young mothers coping with many difficult problems.

2. Program schedules and attendance records provided the principal data for answering the question of whether the program was delivered to the participants. There were scheduled activities and these were presented as scheduled. Fifty-three percent of the program enrollees (attended a minimum of 3 classes) successfully completed the criteria for graduation. The participant drop out was typical of parent education and family support programs.

3. Quality of the program was assessed by sampling certain key program elements: a) classes for mothers, b) day care for children. In addition participants were asked to share their experiences with the program.

Observations of one program element, lectures on a variety of parent education, indicated that a classroom format was utilized with material presented verbally by a teacher and with a moderate amount of discussion of the material by participants. It was noted that much of the discussion of presentations was carried out in the toy making sessions following the lectures.

The day care provided children of the participants was warm, nurturing, and safe. Limitations were noted in the area of

language development and questions were raised about the cultural context of the day care centers.

The program participants were very satisfied with the program. They commented that they had received a great deal of love and support from the staff. In addition, they felt that the program had given them a better understanding of how to interact with their children.

In conclusion, the process evaluation found that: 1) a well-defined program was in existence when the evaluation began and was improved upon during the course of the evaluation, 2) the program was delivered to the participants as planned, and 3) the program was of generally high quality.

AVANCE PROCESS EVALUATION

Avance Process Procedures

The process evaluation focussed on three questions:

1. What was the Avance program?
2. Was the program delivered to participants?
3. What was the quality of the program as delivered to the participants?

The first question asks for a detailed description of the Avance program. Put in the context of experimental psychology, as far as the outcome evaluation was concerned in which an experiment was carried out and replicated once, what was the independent variable? A thorough description of the independent variable is always essential in experimental research and is no less important in program evaluation research. In this case, the "program" that was presented was quite complex and was carried out in two sites and at two times. A major goal of the Process evaluation was to define this "program" in terms of identifying its essential features. It is expected that if a parent education and family support program was set up in a place different from the original place, this replication would differ in some ways. Different people would be presenting the program with different talents and training, and the physical facilities would also most likely differ. Nevertheless, to be called an Avance Family Support and Education Program there would have to be certain basic, essential elements of the program and these would have to be configured in a certain way. The first process evaluation question was whether these essential features could be identified.

A related question is whether the program was set up to serve the clientele that was intended; that is, low-income mothers of infants and young children.

The second question asks whether the program was delivered as scheduled and who was there to receive it. This question also asks about the criteria for certification for graduation; that is, how much of the program must a participant complete to be regarded as a graduate?

The third question deals with the elusive, but important question of quality. To what extent did the program, as presented, meet the standards of quality expected by the program developers?

**PART I
THE AVANCE PROGRAM**

History

The original concept for the Avance Family Support and Education Program was developed by two doctoral students, Ann Willig and Bonnie Parks, at Cornell University under the supervision of Urie Bronfenbrenner. Modeled in part after the Parent Child Development Centers which were funded by the Office of Child Development in the early 1970's, the program was designed to help the mother assist the child in the areas of cognitive, social, physical and emotional development. In response to a proposal, the Zale Foundation provided the original funding for a program in Dallas. The following year funding was provided by the Zale Foundation to establish an Avance program in San Antonio. Whereas the Dallas-based Avance program was phased out in 1976, the San Antonio Avance is currently prospering in its nineteenth year with 6 service sites. The Avance program was expanded to Houston in 1988 with a grant from the General Foods Fund and is in the process of establishing a second expansion site in the lower Rio Grande Valley.

When Avance was founded in San Antonio, the original site for the program was located at the Mirasol Public Housing Project on the Westside of the city. Historically a Hispanic barrio, families of Mexican descent had lived here for generations. Included among these households was the one in which the founding director of Avance in San Antonio, Gloria Rodriguez, spent her childhood years. After obtaining a degree in elementary

education and a teaching certificate, Rodriguez spent several years working as a frustrated first grade teacher in the Northside Independent School District. She frequently found herself working with children who were entering school unprepared to understand and to take advantage of what was being taught. Oftentimes the children's parents had experienced failure in the school system and, subsequently, were unsure of how to best prepare their children to avoid the same pitfalls. Disillusioned from watching hundreds of six year old children enter this formal educational setting without the prerequisite knowledge and skills demanded by the system, she chose a different approach. She decided to work with the families before the children entered formal schooling. Thus her affinity to the Avance approach began and has continued through the years. This belief in how positive change should occur early on substantially contributes to her drive to maintain the program.

Description

The Avance Parent-Child Education Program which was evaluated for the research presented here is a nine-month, comprehensive center-based program with a home visiting component offering parenting education and family support to low income mothers and their birth to twenty-four month old children. (See Figure 1 for an outline of the major elements of the program.)

The mothers and children are transported to weekly three-hour classes held at the facility closest to them. The two Centers included in this project were located on the Westside (WS) and the Southside (SS) of San Antonio. While the parents are participating in the classes, their children are supervised in the Avance Day Care which is located in the same facility. At the Avance Center, the weekly classes are divided into 3 one-hour sessions. During one session, participants receive lessons on child growth and development. The lessons are presented to the participants by a parent educator and are based on a parenting curriculum that the staff at Avance have prepared. Figure 2 lists the curriculum lessons which were presented in the classes during the evaluation. The curriculum has been in a state of flux, constantly developing and evolving with each passing year. Many of the lessons presented during the tenure of the evaluation have been revised since.

The second hour consists of a toy-making class during which parents learn to make educational toys for their children from inexpensive materials which are readily available. Toy-making instructors provide the participants with "possibility sheets"

which list activities that the parents can use to engage their children with the toys. The suggested activities are designed to stimulate the child's interest and to instruct the parent on developmentally appropriate types of play.

The final hour is devoted to outside speakers. During this hour, participants learn about the many social services located in the community and how they can access those that they need.

In addition to the center-based classes, parents are visited once a month at home. During the home visit, the parent-child dyad is observed in a play situation often with a toy that the mother made in class. The home visitor emphasizes to the parent the importance of her role as a teacher and effective caregiver. The visit is also used to provide the mother with individual assistance and support.

Field trips and enriching experiences for the family are also provided. All of the Avance services are delivered by an understanding staff who are from the community; the majority of whom are previous Avance participants.

Some mothers choose to continue with the Avance program for a second year. During this time they may attend basic literacy classes or English as a second language classes, prepare to take the high school equivalency exam (GED), take junior college courses or otherwise develop their vocational skills. Avance assists those women who continue in the program through the provision of child care for their infant and preschool-aged children during class and transportation to and from classes.

Figure 2
Avance Curriculum

Title of Lesson
1. Key Concepts
2. Follow Child's Interest-Basic Skills
3. Mothers Make a Difference I
4. Ages/Stages-Home Health Survey I
5. Physical Growth and Development I
6. Physical Growth and Development II
7. Safety and Supervision I
8. Safety and Supervision II
9. Safety and Supervision III
10. Trauma and First Aid I
11. Trauma and First Aid II
12. Trauma and First Aid III
13. Childhood Illnesses I
14. Childhood Illnesses II
15. Childhood Illnesses III
16. Childhood Illnesses IV
17. Childhood Illnesses V
18. Childhood Illnesses VI
19. Good Diets for Children-Nutrition I
20. Love and Understanding
21. Belong/Success and Attention
22. Stages of Parenting/Social Needs-Individual
23. Social Needs-The Group
24. What is Behavior? I
25. Discipline Techniques I
26. Child/Abuse/Neglect
27. Importance of Learning
28. How Children Learn
29. Mastering the Environment
30. Importance of Language I
31. Analysis of Past Relationships
32. Relaxation Techniques
33. Fifth Basic Need/Spirituality
34. Sexuality and Responsibility I
35. Cleanliness
36. Nutrition II
37. Discipline Techniques II
38. Importance of Language II
39. Goal Setting
40. Ages and Stages II
41. Mothers Make a Difference II
42. Nutrition III
43. Trauma and First Aid IV
44. What is Behavior II
45. Sexuality and Responsibility II

Note: Not all lessons were offered each year.

Figure 1

Major Elements of the Avance Program

First Year

Child age birth to two
Classes for mothers at Avance centers one morning a week for
3 hours for 9 months
Lectures on language and cognitive development of the child,
discipline, child care, health and safety in the home,
nutrition, etc. - one hour
Toy making - one hour
Lecture/discussion of community resources - one hour
Home visits - 9 times

Second Year

Assistance in enrolling in and taking classes in:
High School Equivalency Exam (GED)
Community College Courses
English as a Second Language (ESL)
Citizenship Courses

Both Years

Day care provided
Transportation provided to and from center

Theoretical Basis for the Program

The Avance program is conceptualized as an intervention model for low income parents and children that strives to break the cycle of poverty by strengthening and stabilizing the family. Through the provision of parenting, adult literacy and continuing education classes, parents are encouraged to continue their own academic development. At the same time, the Avance program encourages the parents to become partners in the education of their children and assists them in the development of the skills needed to realize this goal.

The Avance model is governed by a certain philosophy regarding the desired nature of the intervention. According to these principles, the intervention must be community-based, comprehensive in scope, preventive in nature, have a child age birth to three as the entry point and provide sequential services for both child and parents.

In her doctoral dissertation, Dr. Gloria Rodriguez highlighted the theory behind the model by contrasting the Avance approach with more traditional methods of providing human services:

Traditional service delivery approaches have been child-centered, where the child is separated from the family and the environment in which he lives. A child is part of a family that is responsible for meeting his needs. The family is embedded in a social, educational, cultural and economic environment that affects child rearing practices, attitudes, values,

child development and child and parent functioning. Therefore, any intervention program must include supportive services to the parents and family members with an attempt to improve the quality of the child's environment and the enhancement of child, parent and family functioning.

Conventional practices in service delivery to families have emphasized treating the symptoms rather than preventing the problems; are concerned over the number of people served and on the cost per unit rather than on responding to family/individual needs and on achieving desirable outcome measures. The funding tends to be categorical rather than allowing the pooling of adequate resources to provide an integration of services. Individuals from different disciplines do not communicate or cooperate to facilitate coordination and enhancement of services. Therefore, services tend to be fragmented, band-aid approaches which are insufficient (too-little, too-late).

Health, mental health, education and social services do exist for low-income high-risk families. However, many families either do not know about the services or they are inaccessible. If the services are familiar to the parent, many refuse to utilize them because they tend to be bureaucratic, threatening and demeaning.

New practices need to be established if we want

low-income high-risk children to grow up to become healthy, competent, productive and contributing members of society.

Programs and services that have been found to effectively support low-income high-risk families are characterized as being family-centered, neighborhood-based, multidisciplinary, empowering and utilizing an approach that is preventive, comprehensive, holistic, sequential, integrative and culturally relevant. The programs create a warm, encouraging and caring atmosphere where that parents are treated with respect and dignity. This climate affects the "soul and spirit" of the person and is the catalyst that sets the wheel in motion. The parents become receptive to the services, which include the promotion, enhancement and strengthening of information and support which improves parental knowledge, skills, attitudes, self-esteem and personal empowerment. The parents get to the point where they feel confident, capable and competent to make decisions and to take action. They become motivated to continue to utilize available resources to meet child/parent/family needs and desires which eventually lead to changing and improving child/family and community functioning. (Rodriguez, 1991, pp. 81, 83-84)

An assessment of the attainment of all goals was not attempted, but goals rated as having high priority and being

measurable within the time frame of the evaluation were assessed. The results of the assessment of goal attainment were part of the outcome evaluation (See Volume I: Outcome Evaluation). The goals outlined by the program can be found in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Avance Program Goals and Priorities

Educational Stimulation Provided in the Home

- Mother's positive interaction with her child (H)
- Mother's greater responsiveness to child (H)
- Mother's nurturance with child (H)

Mothers Knowledge About Community Resources

- Mother's increased knowledge of community resources (A)
- Mother's increased usage of community social services resources (H)

Mothers Knowledge About Child-Rearing

- Increased knowledge about child-rearing (H)

Mothers Attitudes and Beliefs About Child-Rearing

- Decreased attitudes toward severity of punishment (H)

Mothers Attitudes Toward Education and The Mothers Role As Teacher

- Mother perceives herself as a teacher of her children (H)
- Mother's receptivity to adopting positive attitudes toward education (H)

Mothers Motivation for Achievement

- Mother's higher aspiration level (M)

Mothers Attitudes Toward Self

- Mother's increased self-esteem (M)
- Mother's greater self-confidence (M)
- Mother's increased sense of parenting efficacy (A)
- Mother's decreased depression (A)
- Mother becomes more hopeful (M)
- Mother's greater energy levels (M)

Social Support

- Increased social support network (H)
- Increased social support network of friends (A)

Coping Skills

- Mother's more effective coping behaviors (M)

Family Harmony

- Strengthened and stabilized personal family functioning (long-range goal) (H)
-

Priority: H - High; M - Medium; L - Low;
A - set by evaluation staff

Figure 3 con't

Effects On Children

- Child's increased cognitive competence (H)
- Child's increased social competence (L)
- Child's developmentally appropriate verbal skills (H)
- Child's developmentally appropriate physical development (H)
- Child's good health (H)

Mothers Improved Employment Prospects

- Mother's enhanced employability (long-term) (H)
- Mother's increased educational attainment (long-term) (H)

Participant Satisfaction

- Mothers should like the program (A)
-

Priority: H - High; M - Medium; L - Low;
A - set by evaluation staff

Agency Expansion

During the tenure of the present evaluation project from 1987 to 1991, Avance grew dramatically. After 14 years of regulated and steady growth, the agency burst into prominence on the national scene aided both by the research grant provided by the Carnegie Corporation and the concomitant exposure which such support creates as well as by the appearance of two editorials in the New York Times at the beginning of 1988. This increased visibility resulted in a deluge of requests for information as well as a stream of visitors from different parts of the country. Over the course of the next three years, the agency opened a project in Houston with funding provided by General Foods Fund and was awarded four federal demonstration grants including: a Comprehensive Child Development Project from the Head Start Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), a Chronic Neglect Project from the U.S. DHHS, and an Even Start project and a Project FIRST from the U.S. Department of Education.

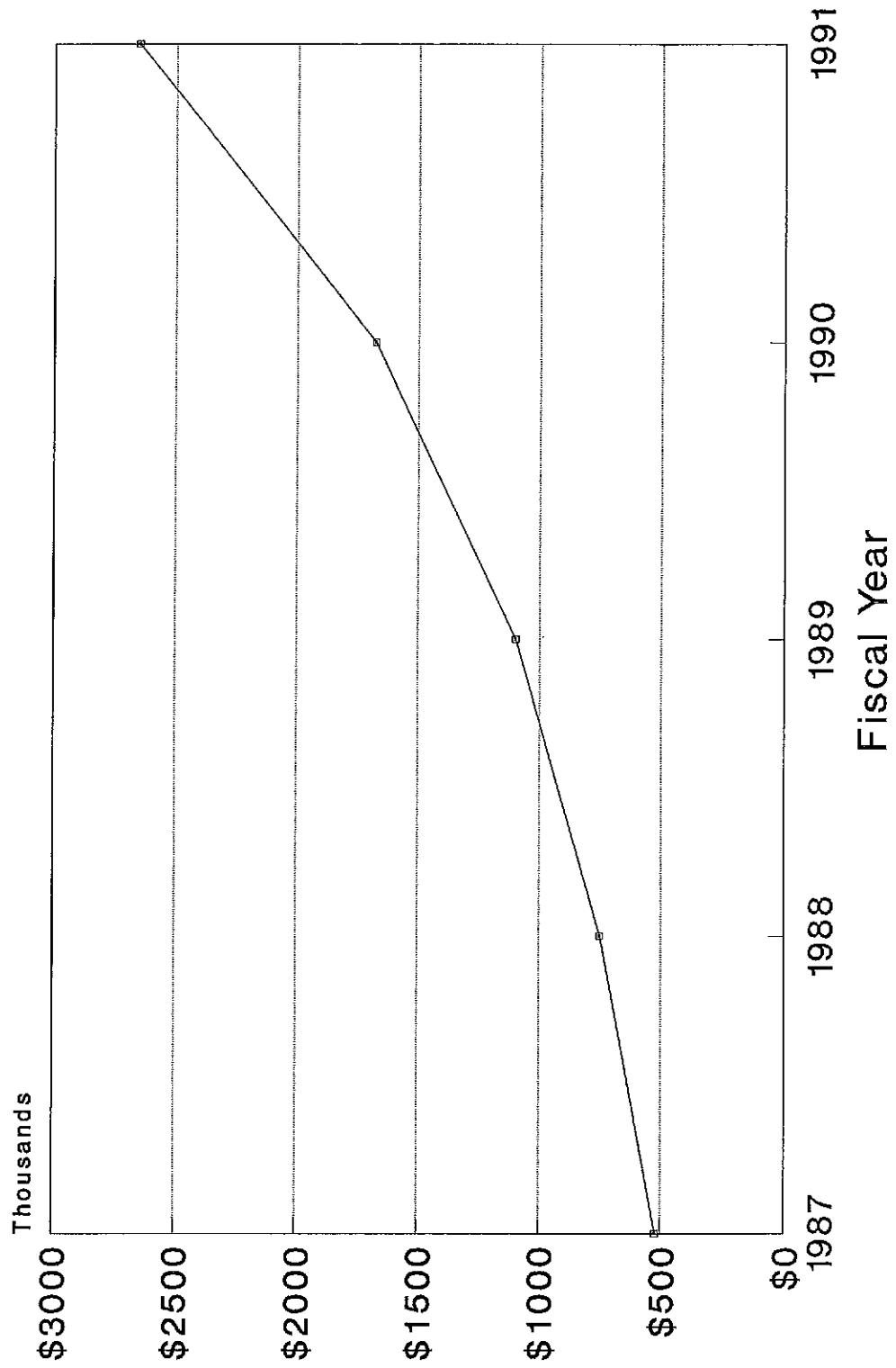
As a result of this growth activity, the budget of the agency increased five-fold during the five year span beginning with fiscal year 1987 and continuing through fiscal year 1991 (see Figure 4). Fiscal year 1987 is the year prior to the full stage implementation of the present evaluation project. The Carnegie Corporation provided funds for the planning stage and initial start-up costs of the evaluation in fiscal year 1987.

Figure 5 provides a comparison in the proportional breakdown of the agency's sources of revenue in fiscal years 1987 and 1991. During that span a relative shift in revenue source occurred from

local and state levels to the national level. Whereas local and state funding rose slightly during the five-year period, there was a large increase in the amount of revenue received from the federal government to fund the new projects. In 1987, 63% of the agency's funds came from the city and state governments and the United Way while 14% was received from the federal government. Those percentages were nearly reversed by 1991 when the local and state governments and the United Way accounted for only 15% of the agency's revenue. The federal government's proportion had risen to 54%. In addition, the agency currently receives relatively more support from the private sector. Funds from private foundations rose from 15% to 25% of the agency's budget during the five year period.

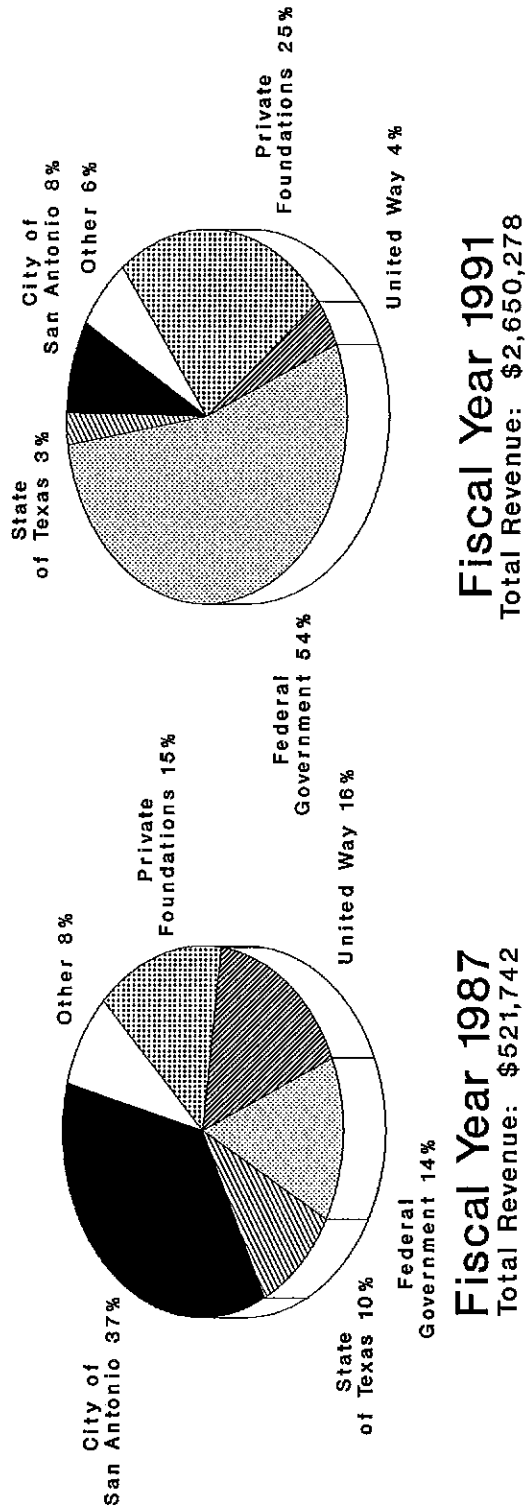
At same time the agency was rapidly expanding, requests for training and technical assistance increased greatly. Groups from other areas expressed interest in replicating the Avance program (see Appendix A for a discussion on replication training). The Hasbro Children's Foundation provided funding for the establishment of the Avance-Hasbro National Family Resource Center in order to enable the agency to respond to requests for training and information.

Figure 4
Annual Support and Revenue
Fiscal Years 1987 - 1991



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Figure 5
Sources of Revenue and Support
Fiscal Years 1987 and 1991



Organizational Structure

This type of growth has necessitated a constant reorganization of an agency which had operated for years on a fairly constant budget. In 1987 the agency was located in San Antonio with services provided at three sites by a staff of approximately 35 people. In 1991, Avance provided services at seven sites in San Antonio and Houston with a staff of approximately 100. Additionally a national office was established in San Antonio by the Board of Directors to oversee the growth of the agency, effect state and national policy, continue the development of the parenting curriculum, provide professional training and technical assistance to other agencies around the country and implement a program of research and evaluation. Presently the national office houses 15 staff. Figures 6 and 7 present organizational schematics of the agency as it operated in 1987 and in 1991, respectively. A schematic representation of the operational chain of command from the national board to the area offices can be found in Figure 8.

Figure 6
Avance Organizational Schematic: 1987

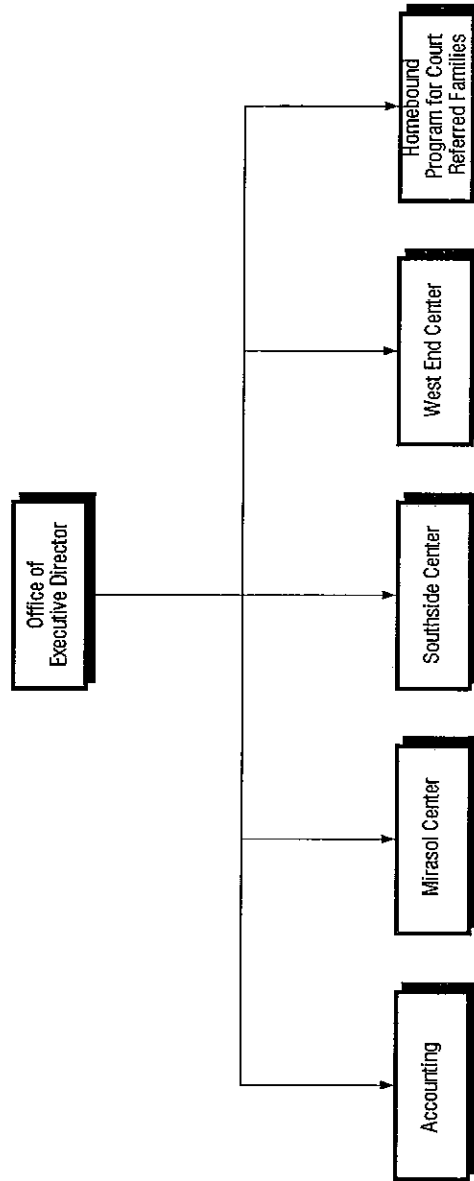


Figure 7
Avance Organizational Schematic: 1991

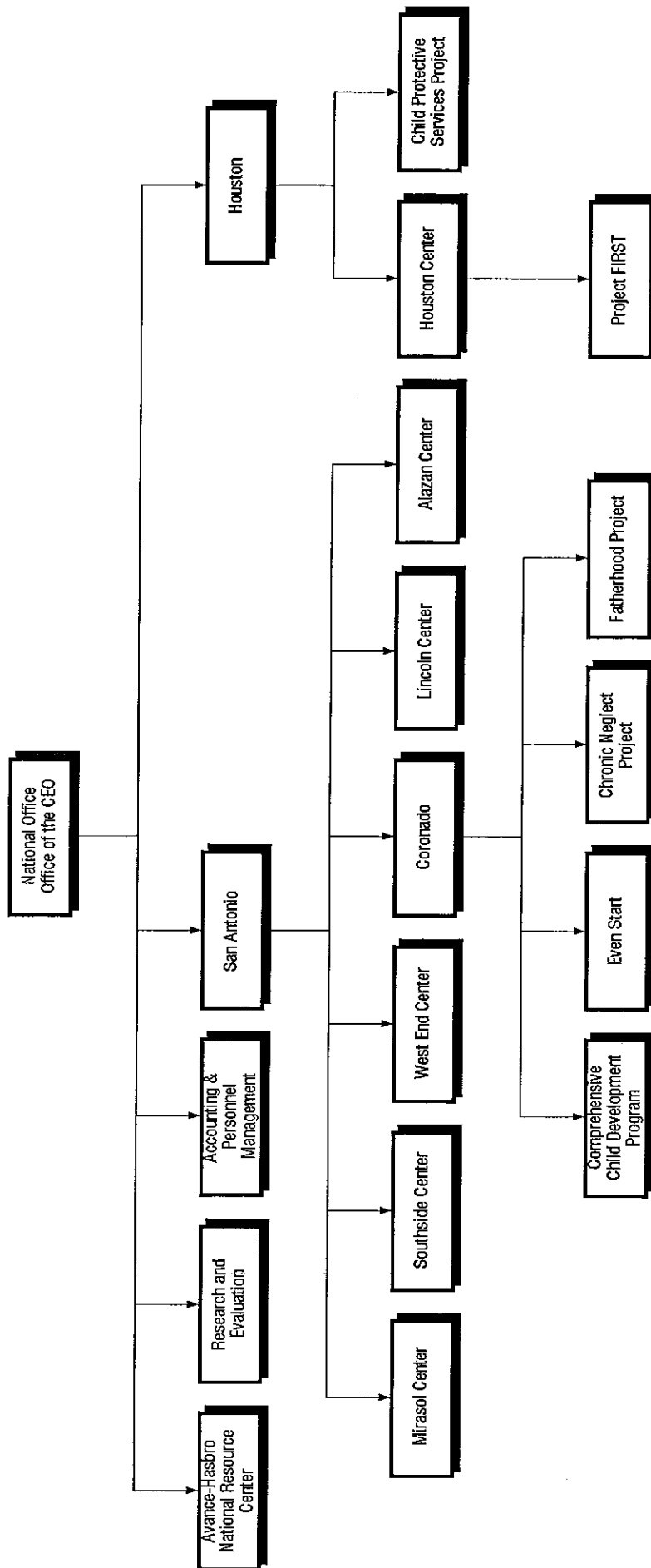
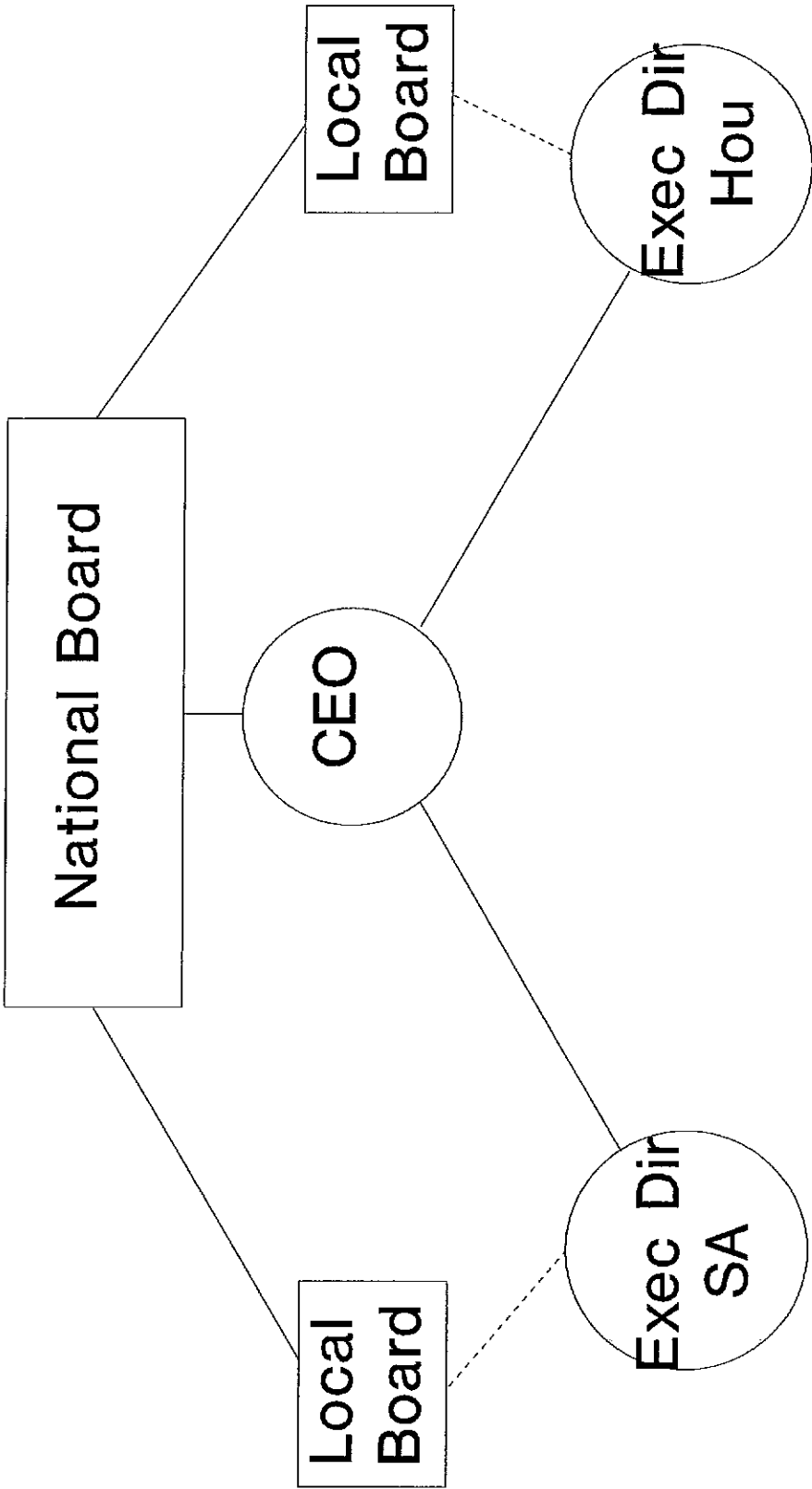


Figure 8
Schematic of Operational Chain of Command



staff**Characteristics**

The staff at Avance is composed predominantly of bilingual Hispanic women. They are a group of caring and concerned individuals who are devoted to reaching and effecting those families who are so often ignored by other programs. A guiding principle often emphasized by program staff is that all parents be treated with respect and dignity. A conscious effort is made to make the participants feel important and welcome. These principles lend themselves to the development of an atmosphere of warmth and acceptance in which parents are given the support which is so important for human development.

It is felt by the agency administration that hiring individuals from the community is a vital component of the program. The services are community-based and are provided by residents of the community. In order both to secure a staff who can understand and empathize with the agency's participants and to provide continuing opportunities for program graduates, Avance gives previous participants priority when staff vacancies occur. Over the course of the evaluation, 75% to 80% of all staff had been program participants.

Job Descriptions

The basic staff located at each Center during the years of the evaluation consisted of a parent educator, a toy-making instructor, a home visitor, a lead day care teacher, several day care aides, a van driver and a cook.

In response to depleting operating funds, the role of a

Center Manager who supervised the center daily operations varied from Center to Center and year to year. The Center Manager responsibilities were assumed by individuals who also performed other roles. At SS during the first year, the toy-making instructor functioned as the Center Manager. At WS, the Center Manager was only responsible for center operations. In the subsequent two years, the parent educators at both centers also performed the functions of the Center Manager.

Initially the only position which required a bachelor's degree was that of parent educator. A bachelor's degree became a prerequisite for the Center Manager position during the tenure of the evaluation. The other positions had minimal formal education requirements. Most paraprofessional staff had completed high school or a GED or were working to complete their GED. Staff who had neither obtained a high school diploma nor a GED were encouraged to work towards those goals. Some staff who had a high school degree or their GED were continuing their education at the local colleges, and other staff were encouraged to do the same.

The basic job descriptions for the center-based staff are provided in Appendix B. It should be noted that although the chief function of the center-based program was to provide parenting classes and literacy, ESL, GED and basic college classes while furnishing the essential support services of child care and transportation, the intimate and frequent contact with families exposed staff to other crucial familial needs which they strove to address. Different staff members, regardless of

position, were often called on to provide additional services to the participants. These included the provision of supplemental food and disposable diapers, transportation to and from appointments, advocating for needed services with other service providers, intervening with utility companies when the family's service was going to be cut off and assisting the families to find adequate housing. The philosophy of the agency is to provide comprehensive services to the families, and staff strive to do this whenever possible. Participants often related to the research staff that they felt comfortable going to the program staff with any issue that arose and were confident that they would receive assistance.

Training

The practice of hiring program graduates generally has provided the agency with staff who have little or no job experience. Therefore, staff training represented a need that was both continuous and demanding. As the agency has grown over the last five years, the provision of sufficient in-house training for staff members has been a challenge. The staff who were most qualified to conduct training were typically those who were asked to assume the additional responsibilities that a burgeoning program necessitates, therefore reducing the amount of time available to plan and conduct training. Parent educators were provided training in the use of the Avance parenting curriculum by the curriculum development and technical assistance department.

Most of the home visitors and the child care staff have

completed the nine month Avance parenting curriculum. Although this experience provided them with some background in child development issues, they required additional on-the-job training. Therefore, extensive training for the area of child care and child development was solicited from outside the organization.

At the recommendation of Sheila Smith, then the project officer for the Carnegie Corporation of New York, aggressive efforts were initiated to intensify child training in 1988. In the spring of that year, a series of training workshops covering early childhood education were conducted with the child care staff by a local consultant group, the Teacherworks Division of Niños Group. Over the course of 6 weeks, 9 two-hour workshops were provided (see Figure 9 for a description of the workshops). The workshop series was developed to meet the particular needs of the Avance child care. They were participatory in nature and included the development of policies and procedures which could be implemented in child care.

In addition, 12 four-hour observation and feedback sessions were conducted concurrently with the workshops by the same consultant group, 6 at each the SS and WS centers. These prescriptive training sessions focused on providing individualized instruction to each teaching team once weekly for six weeks. Techniques and procedures developed in the previous workshop were implemented by staff with the assistance of the consultant. Classrooms were rearranged to provide an environment which was more conducive to learning.

When asked, the lead day care teachers felt that they and

their staff benefitted greatly from attending the workshops and training sessions. They expressed particular pleasure in the creation of new interest centers in their classrooms including areas for story-telling, science and art.

The following year a nine-month course in child development and early childhood education was taught by Dr. John Holloman, Professor of Education at the University of Texas at San Antonio. These training programs were attended by the home visiting and child care staff, as well as the parent educators.

Figure 9**Training Sessions For Staff Provided by Teacherworks Center**

Working Effectively with Volunteers - Participants will be able to identify volunteer tasks, establish roles of adults at the Center, resolve conflicts, define procedures and develop work patterns for incorporating volunteers into classroom operations.

Goodies, Baddies and Uglies - Participants will practice utilizing alternative guidance techniques including modeling, reinforcement, giving choices, etc.

Clap! Clap! Clap Your Hands! - Participants will explore opportunities for incorporating music and dance into the daily schedule, including singing songs in both English and Spanish, introducing rhythm instruments, movement activities, etc.

Spaces and Places - Participants will rearrange their classrooms, taking into account traffic patterns, available furniture, desired learning centers, classroom management techniques, cueing and labeling, transitions and age grouping.

Planing and Scheduling - Participants will identify all tasks required of staff and volunteers, write step by step task cards, generate daily schedules for posting and begin development of a volunteer handbook.

Go in and out the Window - Participants will review child growth and development principles and will be able to provide a variety of equipment, activities and opportunities to promote the physical development of children.

Making Materials to Stimulate Cognitive Development - Participants will design and make at least 2 learning materials which can be used for the classroom, the skills to be developed must be identified for each game.

Health and Safety for Children - Participants will develop procedures for handling emergencies including choking, fire, injuries, hostage situations, severe storms and required evacuation. Participants will also review health standards including sanitation, caring for sick children, diapering techniques and the importance of hand washing to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

Organizing a Program - Participants will prepare all handbooks, procedure lists, lesson plans, supply lists and class schedules necessary to begin the new school year in September.

Work Environment

Purpose

The Avance program as a work environment was described with the Work Environment Scale (WES) (Moos, 1986). The measure was used in the Avance evaluation in three ways. First, this measure was used to capture some aspects of the subjective work environment. In a sense, the WES was used to describe stylistic features of the Avance program from the point of view of employees.

Secondly, the WES was used to document the essential similarity of the two Avance sites, WS and SS. It was assumed that even in neighborhoods that differ greatly, and buildings that are quite different, the program would provide a similar work environment.

Thirdly, the WES was used to identify change in work environment resulting from a change in program site. The SS program was moved from one location to another between 1987 and 1988.

Description

The Work Environment Scale consists of 90 items which are answered as either true or false by the worker-respondent. The 10 scales, 9 items each, are Involvement, Peer Cohesion, Supervisor Support, Autonomy, Task Orientation, Work Pressure, Clarity, Control, Innovation and Physical Comfort.

Reliability

Analyses of normative data reported by Moos (1986) revealed internal consistency coefficients for the scales ranging from .69 to .86 with a sample population of 1045. Test-retest correlations (1 month) ranged from .69 to .82.

Validity

The WES has been used in many studies of work environments. Most of the studies have been in military, health service and business settings, but there has been some research with early childhood programs. An evaluation of child abuse and neglect programs found that staff burnout was lower in projects which were seen as high on peer cohesion, staff support, task orientation and autonomy, and in which rules and policies were clear and explicit (Berkeley Planning Associates, 1977). Numerous studies have demonstrated that worker satisfaction is related to high involvement, autonomy, supervisor support, task orientation and clarity (e.g., Hunnicutt & MacMillan, 1983).

Fuqua (1979) demonstrated the use of the WES in program evaluation where it is important to demonstrate that two elements of the program are essentially equivalent.

Administration

The WES was administered in mid-program year, in late January and early February in 1988 and again in 1989. All personnel at the WS and SS centers were asked to complete the forms anonymously. In 1988 there were 9 staff at WS and 10 at SS. In 1989 there were 12 staff at WS and 10 at SS.

Results

Documentation of the subjective aspect of Avance as a work environment was carried out by determining the means and standard deviations for all scales at each of the Avance sites.

The results appear in Table 1. Three analyses were conducted with the WES data. In the first, the Avance results were compared with normative data. Differences were noted if the mean scores differed by 0.5 standard deviation. In 1988, WS was lower on Autonomy and higher on Involvement, Innovation and Work Pressure. SS was lower on Physical Comfort and Supervisor Support and higher on Involvement, Innovation and Work Pressure. The higher scores for both sites on Involvement, Innovation and Work Pressure suggest that these were characteristic and distinctive features of the Avance work environment, and may be typical of this type of work environment. Personal staff involvement is expected to be high. Work pressures are also high, and there is an on-going need for innovative effort. In 1989, WS was lower on Supervisor Support and higher on Control, Involvement, Innovation, Peer Cohesion and Physical Comfort. SS was lower on Clarity and Work Pressure.

The second analysis compared the two Avance sites. In 1988, WS was higher on Physical Comfort, Supervisor Support and Clarity, but lower on Autonomy. In 1989, WS was higher on Work Pressure, Involvement, Physical Comfort and Control, and lower on Supervisor Support.

A third analysis examined changes in Avance site scores between 1988 and 1989. For the WS site, 1989 scores were higher

on Autonomy, Physical Comfort and Task Orientation and lower on Control. SS was higher on Physical Comfort and Supervisor Support and lower on Involvement and Work Pressure.

Discussion

Qualitative descriptive characteristics of the Avance work environments were obtained from Avance staff with the Work Environment Scale. Some differences were noted between the two work sites, SS and WS, and between 1988 and 1989. Some of the differences noted were understandable in view of objective differences between work sites; e.g., the SS site in 1988 was more crowded than the WS site or the new SS site available in 1989. Crowding seemed to be responsible for the lower Physical Comfort score given the SS site in 1988.

The most important finding in the WES is that both sites showed an emphasis on Involvement, Innovation and Work Pressure. These features seem to reflect a feeling, shared by many of the staff, that in working at Avance they are involved in a worthwhile activity that is demanding of personal energy and creativity. The work is hard, but there is an intrinsic sense that it must be done for the good of the women and children who are participants. It may be recalled that many of the staff are program graduates and so are likely to have a special feeling of ownership and empowerment in their roles as members of the staff.

Table 1
Work Environment Scale Descriptive Statistics

	1988		1989	
	WS	SS	WS	SS
n	9	10	12	10
Autonomy				
Mean	4.44	6.00	5.67	5.60
SD	1.51	1.89	1.93	1.28
Clarity				
Mean	5.56	4.60	5.17	4.40
SD	1.59	1.35	1.82	1.50
Control				
Mean	4.89	5.10	6.00	5.10
SD	2.52	1.91	1.68	2.07
Involvement				
Mean	7.22	6.90	7.75	6.00
SD	1.79	1.66	1.30	1.95
Innovation				
Mean	5.67	5.70	5.42	5.20
SD	1.80	2.00	1.66	1.54
Peer Cohesion				
Mean	6.11	6.60	6.92	6.30
SD	1.36	1.26	1.50	1.19
Physical Comfort				
Mean	4.78	2.40	6.25	4.80
SD	2.17	1.51	1.96	1.78
Supervisor Support				
Mean	5.33	3.90	4.42	5.70
SD	1.22	2.23	1.80	1.79
Task Orientation				
Mean	6.11	6.30	7.00	6.30
SD	2.09	1.83	1.96	1.27
Work Pressure				
Mean	5.44	5.20	5.50	3.40
SD	2.46	1.32	2.14	2.20

Participants

Recruitment

The current evaluation began in the summer of 1987. At that time Avance provided parenting education services at two program sites. One of the centers was located in the Westside (WS) of San Antonio while the second was in the Southside (SS) of the city. Four additional program sites have been established in San Antonio since the inception of the evaluation. These were not included in the present evaluation.

It was decided during the planning stage, that the two sites would need to be treated separately. Recognizing that random assignment to experimental and control groups is the most scientifically desirable and valid method, that methodology was designated for the SS sample. After recruitment into the project, participants were assigned randomly to experimental condition utilizing a computer generated random number table.

As a result of the location of the WS center in a densely populated housing project, it was deemed implausible to assume that a clean control group could be maintained. Implausible because it was believed that information about the Avance program and the services it provides would be well known within the housing project and the surrounding community. Additional diffusion of information regarding the program was thought to be inevitable. In addition it was considered inadvisable to attempt to assign families from a neighborhood which had historically been served by the agency to a no services control group. A matched group design was used for the WS sample using a second

housing project and surrounding neighborhood with similar sociodemographic characteristics. The control group for the WS site was selected from a comparable housing project, Casiano Homes.

Participants for the Avance program have always been recruited through a door-to-door canvass of the catchment area. In 1987 the WS catchment area consisted of the Mirasol Housing Project and the surrounding neighborhood on the Westside. The catchment area was bounded by Barclay Street on the east, 36th on the west, Elmendorf Creek on the north and Jewell on the south.

The control group for the WS sample was recruited from a second public housing project, Casiano Homes, and the surrounding neighborhood. Casiano is located approximately 1 mile southeast of Mirasol. For recruitment purposes, the catchment area was defined by Cibolo Street on the east, Barclay Street on the west, Cavalier Street on the south and Commerce Street on the north. For the purposes of this report, the Mirasol and Casiano areas will be referred to collectively as the Westside (WS).

The SS center was located in a low income residential neighborhood. As a result of uncorrected structural problems and a desire by the owner to sell the property, the SS center was relocated just prior the commencement of parenting classes for cohort B. The new Center was located about 1.5 miles east of the original site in what could also be described as a low income residential neighborhood. The recruitment area for cohort A was bounded by South Pan Am Access Road on the east, Quintana Road on the west, Military Drive on the south and West Glen Street on the

north.

The site relocation was unexpected, and recruitment activities for cohort B had been completed using cohort A's catchment area. As a result of the venue change and the subsequent one month delay in the commencement of the classes, additional families were recruited in the neighborhood surrounding the new Center to replace families lost through attrition. These families were recruited in an area bounded by Roosevelt on the east, Commercial Avenue on the west, Petaluma on the south and Hart on the north.

The aim of the research was to conduct an evaluation of the Avance Parent Child Education Program as it is normally conducted. This was kept foremost in mind as the evaluation was being designed and carried out. One area where the scientific methodology utilized imposed some restraints on the program staff was in the area of recruitment. The general practice at Avance had been to recruit participants by going from house to house advertising the program and eliciting participants. For this practice to be effective, the recruiters were instructed to give a very enthusiastic presentation to the families. Word of mouth communication was an important aspect of the recruitment effort. Families told friends and neighbors about the program and often brought someone else with them.

The evaluation impacted recruitment differently at the two sites. At WS, recruitment was done as normal with one exception. Only families who were recruited face to face at their homes were included in the study sample. Families who came to the Center

without being recruited were invited to participate, but they were not included in the study sample. This was done to control for motivational differences between a group of participants who were all recruited at home and a group which also included individuals who were motivated enough to come looking for the services. The control group only included individuals who were recruited in their homes.

In view of the random assignment design used at SS, the recruiters enthusiasm for the program had to be tempered so that they could present control group participation as an attractive alternative.

The presence of the research project altered normal recruitment practices at both sites in one other way. In view of the need to conduct extensive pretest interviews with all program participants, recruitment was begun one month earlier than normal. This imposed additional pressure on program staff to continue communication with the recruited program participants until the program began in September.

Recruitment was conducted by program staff during the months of July and August of 1987 for cohort A and 1988 for cohort B. The recruiters were bilingual, paraprofessional staff who normally had summers off. All were Mexican American and were bilingual in Spanish and English. Training on the research design and the recruitment strategy was provided by the Research Coordinator during the two full-day sessions which were held prior to each recruitment effort. Additional training was provided once recruitment began as the need arose. Recruitment

scripts in English and Spanish were provided so that the presentation would be standardized for all prospective participants (see Appendix C for English versions).

Recruitment of research participants was carried out through a door-to-door canvass of the respective neighborhoods. Families were sought who met the following criteria: 1) a child under the age of two, 2) mother not employed full-time or during Avance hours, and 3) mother had not attended the program previously.

On the SS, potential participants were given a verbal explanation of the two research conditions (the control group was referred as the Family Development Study group) and what their participation would entail. The method of assignment was described to them, and they were asked if they would like to participate regardless of the group to which they were assigned. Assignment was conducted with computer generated random numbers.

Once assignment was completed, mothers were recontacted and informed of their group assignment. At this time they were also reminded of the participation requirements of their group. They were informed that program participants would be expected to participate in the nine month parenting classes at the Avance center. This participation would include the weekly 3-hour class, monthly home visits and family social gatherings. In addition, they would participate in the research component which would include interviews in their home, questionnaire sessions at a center and possibly videotaping sessions with the focus child. If selected for the control group, they were told that they would only be involved in the research component. In view of the fact

that they would not be eligible to receive any services from Avance, control participants were provided a \$10 stipend for each research contact.

On the WS, recruitment of participants for both the program and control groups was more straight forward. The recruiters were able to inform potential participants of their group assignment during the first contact since assignment was determined by geographic area. The mothers contacted were given an explanation of the research condition for which they were being recruited and what would be required of them.

Before mothers were interviewed in the home, they were informed of what their role in the research would entail and that their participation was completely voluntary. At this time a consent form was read to the mothers, and if they were in agreement, they were asked to sign two copies of the consent form (See Appendix D). One copy was left with the mother, and the second was kept for the research files.

Characteristics

Considering the different sampling methodologies used at the two sites, the data have been treated separately in all analyses and descriptions. Therefore, the following description of the participants will include separate demographics for the WS and the SS. The data presented here were collected during an intake interview which was conducted either prior to participation in the program or during the first month of participation.

Although they differ in regard to some pertinent demographic characteristics, the sample populations at the two sites were

quite similar in other ways. A breakdown of demographic statistics can be found in Table 2. The data were calculated for all participants (program and control) from both cohorts for each site. The major site differences found were in marital status, family income related variables and housing. On the SS, 74% of the primary caregivers lived with a husband or partner. Only 45% of the WS participants reported that they were "coupled". This difference in marital status accounted for the difference in family yearly income (WS - \$4990; SS - \$8300), family SES as measured by the Hollingshead four-factor scale (WS - 16.5; SS - 20.1) and use of public income support programs. On the WS, 52% of families reported receiving AFDC and 71% received food stamps. By contrast, only 19% of the SS families were receiving AFDC and 41% were participating in the food stamp program.

The difference in the type of housing used by the families is an artifact of the site locations (see Figure 10). Both the WS service center and the focus point for recruitment of the matched control group are located in public housing projects. As a result, 35% of the participants were living in public housing. The remaining 65% of the participants were living in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. On the SS only 1 family was living in the public housing project to which they moved after being recruited into the project. The majority of the other families were either renting or living with relatives. Home ownership was rare on the WS with 7% living in homes which they owned. The percentage was more than twice that on the SS where 19% of the families owned their homes.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics at Pretest: All Participants

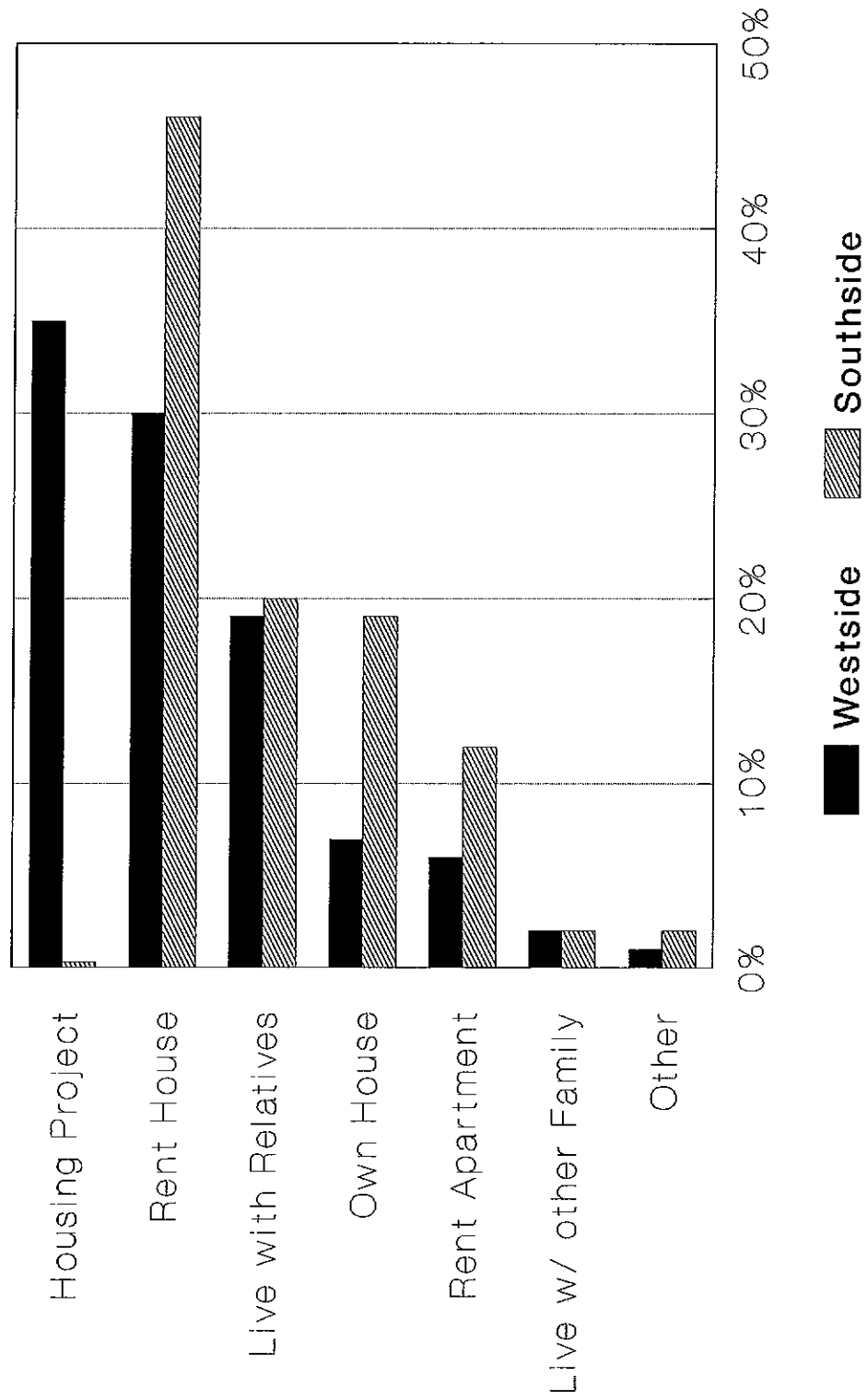
Characteristics	Westside	Southside
Number of Families	303	325
Sex of Child (%)		
Female	49.0	48.9
Male	51.0	51.1
Mother Information		
Age	24.2 (5.9)	25.2 (6.2)
Place of Birth (%)		
U.S.	82.1	74.5
Mexico or other country	17.9	25.5
Years in U.S. if Foreign Born	12.0 (7.4)	9.6 (6.6)
Hispanic Ethnicity (%)	97.6	97.5
Language Preference (%)		
English	39.7	44.1
Spanish	24.1	24.2
Both	36.2	31.7
High School Dropout (%)	79.4	63.4
Years of Education	9.2 (2.4)	9.8 (2.5)
Employment Status (%)		
employed	4.1	10.3
not employed	95.9	89.7
Employed in past year (%)		
Yes	27.9	31.1
No	72.1	68.9
Marital Status (%)		
single	27.1	12.8
married	39.9	66.7
separated	21.0	9.3
divorced	6.2	3.4
widowed	0.3	0.3
living with partner	5.5	7.5

Table 2 con't

Characteristics	Westside	Southside
Husband/Partner Information		
Number	132	238
Age	27.4 (6.2)	28.5 (7.4)
Place of Birth (%)		
U.S.	60.3	63.2
Mexico or other country	39.7	36.8
Language Preference (%)		
English	39.4	26.7
Spanish	57.6	73.3
High School Dropout (%)	68.8	62.7
Years of Education	9.6 (2.8)	9.7 (3.0)
Employment Status (%)		
employed	78.2	82.0
not employed	22.8	18.0
Family Information		
Annual Income	4990 (4534)	8302 (6191)
Income Support Programs		
AFDC (%)	52.4	18.6
Food Stamps (%)	70.8	41.3
Public Housing (%)	35.1	0.3
Socioeconomic Status ¹	16.5 (7.3)	20.1 (8.3)
Number of Children	2.7 (1.7)	2.5 (1.5)
Number of People	5.4 (2.3)	5.3 (1.9)
Number of Rooms	4.7 (1.3)	4.3 (1.3)
Crowding people/# of rooms	1.2 (0.3)	1.3 (0.3)

¹ - Hollingshead 4-factor score

Figure 10
Type of Housing by Site



The other descriptive information on the families was very comparable for the two sites. In view of this similarity, a description of the WS will be presented with data for the SS sample provided in parentheses.

The focus population of the Avance program was mothers with infants and toddlers with an average age of 1 year. Therefore, the participants tended to be younger parents who averaged 24 years of age and ranged from 14 to 46 (SS - 25; 16 - 49). Additionally, the program was comprised of a fair number of adolescent mothers with 24% being under the age of 20 at intake (SS - 20%). The young ages do not necessarily imply that these were inexperienced parents. The average number of children was 2.7, and 75% of the mothers had more than 1 child (SS - 2.5; 71%).

The neighborhoods in which Avance operates are largely Hispanic. This ethnic make-up was reflected in the participant population as well. At both sites, 98% of the participants were Hispanic, almost entirely of Mexican heritage. Most were born and reared in the United States with immigrants accounting for 18% of the participant population (SS - 25%). Mothers who had immigrated had lived in the United States for an average of 12 years (SS - 9.6). Spanish was still spoken in many of the households of second and later generation families. Twenty-four percent of the mothers at both sites reported that their preferred language was Spanish. An additional 36% of the mothers reported no preference between the two languages (SS - 32%).

National figures on school dropouts have provided evidence

regarding the difficulty which the educational system has had in meeting the needs of the Hispanic population. The U.S. Census Bureau reporting on data from a 1989 survey, disclosed that only 50.9% of adults of Hispanic origin over the age of 24 had completed high school. In addition, San Antonio ranked at the bottom of metropolitan areas with an overall high school completion rate of 68.5% (High-School Attainment, November 20, 1991). The Avance program has focussed efforts on many of those who left school before obtaining a high school diploma. The average number of years of formal schooling by participants was 9.2 (SS - 9.8). The proportion of mothers who dropped out was 79% (SS - 63%).

Further inquiry revealed the reasons for leaving school before obtaining a diploma (see Table 3). Almost half of the mothers, 47%, at each site stated that their relationship with a member of the opposite sex was directly related to their decision to drop out. When asked why they had left school, 44% disclosed that they had become pregnant, married or both (SS - 45%). Three percent cited other involvement with a boy as the reason (SS - 2%). An additional 20% stated that they had simply lost interest in school (SS - 17%). A variety of other reasons were given by the remaining mothers including some which were related to the economic conditions of the family such as needing to work or a lack of money.

Owing to the morning schedule of the parenting classes, most of the mothers who participated were not employed at the time the program commenced. Classes were held five mornings a week.

Table 3
Reasons Cited for Dropping Out of High School

	Westside		Southside	
	Mother	Partner	Mother	Partner
Why did you (your husband/partner) leave school?				
Marriage	20%	14%	23%	11%
Pregnancy	24	-	22	-
Boy/Girlfriend	3	0	2	4
Lost interest	20	18	17	16
Went to work	7	26	9	33
Lack of money	4	9	7	9
Needed at home	5	3	5	6
Immigrated	0	5	4	3
Other	17	26	12	18

Note: Question was open-ended. The answers were coded post hoc.

Therefore, mothers who were regularly at work during this time would not have been able to attend the program. At the WS, 4% of the mothers were employed at the time of intake, while 10% were working at the SS. Of those who were employed, 75% of the WS participants and 70% of the SS participants worked less than 40 hours per week. Many more of the women had been active in the work force during the previous year. Twenty-eight percent of the WS participants had held employment during the twelve months

prior to their participation in the Avance program (SS - 31%).

As mentioned previously, less than half of the WS mothers were coupled while almost three quarters of the SS mothers were living with a husband or live-in. These men tended to be U.S. born (WS - 60%; SS - 63%) and under-educated. With an overall average of 9.6 years of education, 69% had dropped out before completing the 12th grade (SS - 9.7 & 63%). The most frequently cited reason by the mothers for their partners' dropping out was that they were employed (see Table 3). Those born outside the U.S. had resided in this country for 10.2 years (SS - 12.7). Seventy-eight percent of the WS men were employed while this figure was 82% at the SS.

Childhood Family Experiences

A few questions concerning the display of affection, the use of severe corporal punishment, the presence of spousal abuse and the frequency of paternal drunkenness during the mother's childhood were also posed during the intake interview. These questions were included to obtain a cursory look at the emotional atmosphere in which the mothers had been raised. Participants were asked to rate the frequency with which each event occurred into one of three categories: never, sometimes and often. The questions posed and the results are listed in Table 4.

The overt expression of positive emotion (hugs and kisses) by the participants' mothers is remembered by the vast majority of the mothers. However 9 percent of the participants could not remember ever being hugged or kissed by their mothers. In so far

Table 4
Childhood Experiences

	Westside			Southside		
	Never	Some- times	Often	Never	Some- times	Often
When you were young how often did:						
- your mother hug & kiss you?	9%	44%	47%	8%	44%	47%
- your father hug & kiss you?	31	35	33	26	33	40
Were you beaten when you were young by:						
- your mother?	84	13	3	86	11	3
- your father?	88	9	4	85	10	5
How often did your father get drunk?	32	37	32	37	34	29
How often did your father hit your mother?	67	18	15	70	17	13
Did you ever run away from home?	65	31	4	70	27	3

as no probes were included to establish if their mother was present during their childhood, it is not possible to determine to what extent this result is due to their absence from the home.

The extent of reported family violence and paternal alcohol use is unsettling. Overall, 54% of the WS participants and 50% of the SS participants reported that at least one of the following was true of their childhoods: 1) they had been beaten

sometimes or often by one of their parents, 2) their father had hit their mother sometimes or often or 3) their fathers got drunk often. In other words, it appears that a full one half of all the participants either lived with an alcohol abusing father, experienced physical abuse or were a witness to it.

If participants who responded that their father got drunk sometimes are included in the above group, the percentage of participants rises to 75% at the WS and 72% at the SS. A large proportion of the participants' families seemed to have had difficulty coping with the extremely stressful conditions which are brought on by economic poverty. Although cursory in nature, these results portray turbulent childhood family environments for many of these mothers.

Life Stories

The hardships which many of these mothers have endured can be more clearly illustrated with some life stories which were elicited from a subgroup of participants from both the program and the control groups. What the outcome evaluation measures did not provide was a sufficient context for understanding the lives of the women participating in the project. They did not provide information on what it is like to be a Mexican American woman living with little money in San Antonio today. The life story interviews are autobiographical sketches and were designed to give this information. It was hoped that the anecdotal information would inject life into the results of the pre-post assessments.

A second purpose for conducting these interviews was to give

the participants an opportunity to choose the direction of the discussion. The pre-post interview sessions in which they participated were structured and permitted them little latitude to choose topics which they considered important.

Upon reviewing the life story interviews, it quickly became apparent that the information which they contained was much richer than anticipated. With the simple request that they tell their life stories in 30 minutes, these women laid out a history of persistence in extremely difficult circumstances that is rarely documented.

The interview was conducted in the participant's home and followed a format utilized by Bruner (1987) in his recent work on psychological studies of biographies. He has asked subjects to tell the story of their lives in 30 minutes. This procedure was modeled with the following introduction:

I am going to ask you to do something that only you can do. I would like you to tell me the story of your life in about thirty minutes. That really isn't very long for anyone to try to tell their entire life history so I would like you to pull together your thoughts on your life and to do it in your own way. With your permission I will make a tape recording of this which will be confidential. It will be identified only by an identification number, not by your name. Taping your story will make sure we don't miss any part. I will simply sit and listen and will try to stay out of your story. Please feel free to start wherever you wish and to tell the story in any way you want.

Two members of the research team were selected to conduct the interviews. All of the interviews were audiotaped, therefore freeing the interviewer to concentrate on the mother's story. The tapes were later transcribed at the research office. The interviewers were instructed to talk as little as possible and to

refrain from asking specific questions during this interview. The substance and direction of the story was to be determined solely by the participant. However, limited paraphrasing of what the mother related was permitted in order to facilitate the interview and put the mother at ease. Other acceptable conversation encouragers included the following types of non-directive reflections: "That must have been very hard for you." or "You really felt lonely." Clarifications were allowed in instances where the information was so ambiguous that it was difficult to understand the flow of the story. For example, if the subject was talking about two older women and calling them both "mother", the interviewer may say, "I don't think I understand which of the two is your mother."

The interviewers noted the beginning time for each session. If the participant asked if the time was up yet, the interviewer was instructed to tell her how long she had talked. If the time was not up, the interviewer would gently prompt her to continue or to go back and fill in gaps.

After the 30 minute life story was completed, the interviewer was encouraged to discuss what the participant had related. It was important to convey to the participant that she was being listened to with interest and understanding. We wanted the women to feel understood and to feel that whatever they said was acceptable.

A second interview was conducted with the participants later during the same year. The format for this interview was more structured. A list of topics to be discussed, including

educational experiences, future plans and views of the Avance program (with program participants), and a set of probes were developed for this round of interviews. As with the first, this session was audiotaped.

Four of the life histories were selected for inclusion in this report; 2 of the women were from the program group and 2 were from the control group. These accounts were drawn primarily from the first interview although some excerpts from the second interview were included. It is noted if the information was presented during the second interview. In as much as the primary purpose of conducting these interviews was to allow the mothers to tell their story in their own way, the following excerpts from their accounts are presented in their own words. Editing was kept to a minimum, mainly directed at removing repetitive verbiage. Deletion of any major sections of text is indicated by four dots - In order to disguise the participants' identities, all the names of both people and places mentioned in the stories have been changed. Although the names provided are fictitious, their stories are real.

MARIA'S STORY

Maria is a 21 year old mother of two children aged one and two. When she was married in March of her senior year to a man six years her senior, she dropped out of high school. Her husband would not allow her to return to school to graduate. At the time of the first interview, Maria was separated from her husband of four years. She had been living in a public housing project since the time of her separation six months prior to the first interview. The first interview with Maria was conducted in November of 1987 with the second occurring 5 months later. Maria was a program participant.

As were many of participants, Maria was somewhat unsure of how to begin. Maria queried the interviewer on what she wanted her to say. The interviewer put her at ease by explaining that she wanted Maria to do the talking, while she (the interviewer) tried to refrain from conversing which, she explained, is very hard for her to do. Maria laughed and became more comfortable.

Taking the plunge she began, "Ah, that I've, well I've been suffering a lot." She then proceeded with a 30 minute narration on life with her husband, referring to him occasionally as her ex-husband although they had not divorced. The following are excerpts from Maria's story as she related it to the interviewer.

Maria: When I was pregnant from him (*indicates youngest child*), we used to live in a garage. And he (*Maria's husband*) used to drink a lot, and he used to beat me a lot. He beat me a lot. And his family don't like me, cause I used to hit him back. They used to tell him for him not to let me hit him back. See, and they wouldn't understand, because they used to see me all bruised up and everything. And they would say, you needed it and this and that. And like I told them, don't butt into my life when I, you know, throw him out

or something. Cause every time I would throw him out they would come to me. He's paying the rent, this and that. And he's buying the food, and he's taking care of the baby when he was born. And I go, no, he didn't pay nothing. I was the one that was making money, I was the one who would babysit and clean the house. I would take care of him. He would come every other day. . . . And then we used to fight a lot. We used to argue, and then I gave him another chance. He, se compuso (*straightened out*) for a while, and then til I had heard, I had heard se compuso (*he straightened out*). And then about, about five, six months ago he was in jail, because he was in prison. When he got out, he skipped parole. . . . And then, ah, he was arrested. He just got out recently, about a month ago. And he comes visits the kids y todo (*and everything*). Pero (*But*), you know, he's still necio (*bothersome*). He comes, and he broke the windows. And like I told him, you can't be doing that. Act like a man. And I go - if you want to get back together with me, you gotta work, you gotta show me that you really want to get back together. You know, show me a lot of things. He don't want to. He wants to be drunk, be with his friends. His friends are more important than the kids. And I don't even know what to do with him no more. I told him to leave, and he won't. I have to be calling the police to come and pick him up, you know. They just picked him up twice and that's it. They let him go, and I don't know.

It's real difficult, and then he wants to beat me up again. No, that I don't want. I don't want that. I suffered a lot with him. Even my parents even told me, don't go back to him. Don't go back to him. Don't let him in. Just call the cops, and they'll take him. I still do that, but he still comes back. And now, he hasn't seen the kids lately. He hasn't. Since he broke the window. He just broke it about two weeks ago. . . . Because he was all drunk, and he wanted to see the kids, and I told him no. He wanted to take them with him. So, I go, no, you can't. They're asleep. It was about three in the morning. And, I go, I ain't gonna wake them up just cause you want to. And I go, no, go to your mom's. Cause he's staying at his mom's. Go to your mom's and stay there. Some other time you come and see them. When they're awake. And he goes, no, I wanna see them now. No, I'm gonna go to sleep. You just close the door. And he broke the windows. He broke this one (*living room window*), and he broke the one in the kitchen. And then I called the cops. And they went looking for him, and then they didn't, they didn't find him. Until the next day, he came again. Came again all drunk and him banging the doors, the windows and everything.

I get scared, cause this is the first time I've ever been here in these courts (*public housing project*). And, you know, that's the first time I'm on welfare and everything, and I get scared. Like I tell my mom, I'm not used to it. I'm used to working. And like my mom says, you can't work because of the kids. Because they're too small. Let em grow up, and then you'll work. . . . I've been here only 6 months. And I'm really scared and everything. . . . It's quiet and everything, but I'm still scared. I'm scared a lot. My neighbor, she helps me out and everything. Whenever my husband comes, she calls the cops. I tell her, and she calls them. And sometimes if I want to go out, she takes care of the kids.

I gotta be watching behind my shoulder. My husband comes, or I'm scared. I'm scared of him. Because he'll. Like he told me, if he sees me somewhere he'll beat me up. And that's why I can't go nowhere. Can't go to the movies. I can't go to the mall, can't go nowhere by myself. So, I always gotta be with somebody. He'll still do it. He'll still beat me up.

Interviewer: You think he'll do it, even in public?

Maria: Ah huh. He tried to do it once, when I was with my brother. But my brother got in, and they had a big fight. And I started crying, and I ran to the car, and I locked myself up in the car. I don't know. They were going to take my brother to jail. And then my mom got after me. It's because it's your fault. You should have never gotten involved with him. She made me miserable, and I was so hurt.

Like she was telling me, I warned you. Everybody warned you, this and that. But, he changed for a year. He was doing just fine. Then he started all over again. Like I tell my mom, and I go, he's doing just fine. I don't know what happened. I guess, his friends, they're not married, and he was the only one married. And like I told him, your friends are not married. You are. Think about it. I go, they do anything they want. I go, they don't got a wife. You got a wife and kids. He still wanted to be with his friends. He choosed his friends. I let him stay with them. And, ah, I'm just scared, I'm scared from him. And that's why I always have the doors closed. I don't like having them open. So he could think, she's not here, and he'll just leave, leave me alone. But he still comes back at night. And I don't let him in. In the weekends, my brother stays here with me. Because, that's when he gets more drunk, and he comes bothering me more.

He's 28. And like at home, he beats up on his mom and

his sisters. And, like I tell him, how come your sister wants you there? You don't work. You're always beating up on your mom. You're always drunk. I don't know what's wrong with you. I go, I wish you were back in prison. I go, you were better back there.

Interviewer: He beats up on his mother?

Maria: He beats up his mother. And I don't know why his mother used to tell me. She used to tell me a lot of things. She hated me. And I don't know. Now that his brother is coming back from Tennessee, he's gonna have to move out. Because his brother don't want him there. Like, ah, his, ah, sister-in-law was telling me. That he had called, and he was coming back, and he didn't want him there. You know. Cause he knows the way he is. See, his brother don't drink or anything. So he works over there in Tennessee. And he told him that he had to leave. That he don't want him there. And like I told my sister-in-law, when he leaves he's gonna come over here. And I don't want him here. She goes, well I don't know what we're going to do. (*Eyes start watering*).

Interviewer: You don't have to do anything you don't want to do. You don't. Remember that.

Maria: Yeah. (*Sobs briefly*). And, ah, like I tell her, I go, I can't go nowhere. I can't go nowhere. I can't go to the store. I can't go nowhere. She comes picks up the kids, but she don't let them see him, either. When he's drunk, she won't cause he wants to take them.

Interviewer: That's his sister?

Maria: Uh hum. But like I tell them, gah, I'm tired. I'm really tired.

Like I told my mom, I want to move. I want to move where he don't know where I live. And I don't know how he found out I was staying here. I don't know how, cause his sister-in-law, my sister-in-law lives in (*name of nearby street*). I guess she's the one that told him, but I don't want him to come over here. And I want to move. I already tried to commit suicide twice because of him. I was so tired. And then when my mom found me, she took me to the hospital. And then I started thinking about my little boy.

Interviewer: When did you try to commit suicide?

Maria: When he was about 2 months old, my little boy. And, ah, I tried to commit suicide. And, you know, then I started thinking, where is my little boy gonna stay. With who? And then a couple, a year ago, about

two years ago, this is when I tried to commit suicide again. Then I got pregnant of her, my little girl.

Interviewer: When did you do it the second time?

Maria: Ah ha. About two years ago. After that I was miserable. You just. I didn't even know what to do with him no more. I'm so tired. And then I finally left him. I finally left him. But he still comes back.

Interviewer: So how long have you been separated from him?

Maria: About six, seven months been separated from him.

Interviewer: Has it made a difference for you, since you've been separated? Do you feel a bit better about yourself and your children?

Maria: I feel better, yeh.

Interviewer: Any ideas about wanting to commit suicide since you separated from him?

Maria: No. No. I've been doing alright with my kids here and everything. But the problem is, I can't go out with nobody. Nobody can come over because he's always watching. His friends are always, cause he has friends around here. They're always telling him, she's over there, she went over there, and there's somebody there. I can't go nowhere. I can't live with nobody. Like I tell him, I go, I want to have a boyfriend. I want him to come over. I want him to be with the kids. No. The last time he saw me with the kids and some friend of mine, he used to go to school with me. He started throwing rocks at him, at his car. I got so embarrassed. And I go, Gah! And I go, and I told that to my friend. I go, I'm sorry, this and that. And since then I haven't talked to him. Because I was so embarrassed. And, gah, and I go, and I thought. I was hanging the clothes right now, and I go, I hope it's not him. I hope it's not him. Then when I looked through the window, it was you. Cause I get scared. I get scared. The last time he stole clothes from my (line). I can't even hang clothes outside cause he stole em.

Interviewer: What for?

Maria: I don't know why. And I told him, I go, why do you steal my clothes? And I go you're gonna wear them or what? No (husband' name). But they're brand new. So (husband's name). Well, gah, how could you? And I go

they're not gonna fit your mom. They're not gonna fit your sister, so why do you do it? And I go do you give them to your girlfriend. Buy her some clothes. No, he just steals them, and I guess he throws them in a dumpster or something.

Interviewer: Just cause he's angry?

Maria: Cause he's angry. I tell him, I go, you're so childish. Grow up. And I go, you're so ... I don't know what to do. I feel like hitting him. But I can't open the door.

Interviewer: He'll overpower you?

Maria: Uh hum. I get real scared of him. *PAUSE*. I feel, I'm doing fine, I think. I'm doing OK. But like I tell you, I want to move out. I wanna go somewhere where he don't know where I'm living at. And I wanna start working when she grows up. When she's about a year, I'm gonna start working. I'm gonna start working. I wanna get out of welfare. I wanna start a new life. *PAUSE*. I wanna buy, I wanna have everything for my kids.

Interviewer: You certainly have a good attitude. Wanting to work and wanting to do these things that you want to accomplish.

Maria: Like I told my mom, she tells me and I go, just find a babysitter for the baby if you can. But she cries if she goes with somebody she don't know. You see, I can't leave her by herself. I can't leave her with no babysitter.

My little boy don't cry with nobody. He loves staying with anybody but. Like I get scared. Like I've been hearing in TV about people molesting little kids. I get scared. So, like my mom goes, I'm not gonna do that. And I go, I know mom. But I get scared. Sometimes I think about it. Like fathers and grandfathers, like that. And I go, I know you all won't do that. But I just get scared, I get paranoid. I, I leave them with my mom just to go to the store or something. I keep on calling. You just left right now. And I go, I know. But I have to check on the kids. I gotta check on them. And I gotta check on them. Everywhere I go I gotta be calling. Checking them up. Like I told my mom, they're my first two babies.

They're my two little babies. They're my mom's first two grandchildren. . . . She loves them a lot. Y aquel, (*And that one*) cause it's the first grandson. Oh, lo tienen bien chiflado (*they spoil him*). . . . They

have them real spoiled. I don't even know. I get tired sometimes being with them and I go, be quiet, when they start crying. And I go, be quiet, be quiet, be quiet! He goes to his, when he knows that I'm mad, he goes to his room. Like my mom told, she was here a week ago, and I was mad, and I go, "You behave." And he did his faces, he went upstairs. OK, he understands. He understands. He goes plays in his room, and he don't come out. And I go, he looks like he's been grow, he's growing up too fast for me.

Interviewer: He understands

Maria: He understands too much. . . .

She looks exactly like my mother-in-law. And I go, you (*mother-in-law*) didn't like her, look. She's exactly the same. Put'em face to face. My mother-in-law hasn't seen'em. She hasn't seen her since she was born. I didn't let her because when I was pregnant from my first baby, she kept on saying that it wasn't my husband's, that it wasn't my husband's. Gah! and I go, it's not my husband's, this and that. She only saw him three times. Since then she hasn't seen him at all. And her, she hasn't seen her since she was born. And now my husband comes and goes, my mom wants to see the baby. She goes, No, tell her to see herself in the mirror and it's her. He goes, but no, she wants to carry her and this and that. And I go, No. And I don't let him take em. No, like I told him. Your mom said that they weren't yours, this and that. She don't have no grounds to them. I go, no, forget it. And I go, she has some more. No, he goes, she wants them. I said no. Since then she hasn't seen them, so far. My mom tells me que (*that*) I'm mean. I should let em see her. And like I told her, how come she don't come here and see'em? She wants me to take'em over there. No, but what for. So she could tell me a lot of things. She'll tell me a lot of bad words, then I can't answer her back. I won't tell her nothing back. She's already old. And I go, no, I won't tell her nothing back. Inside me, I wanna, hijo, tell her off, but I can't. Like I tell my mom, if she wants to see'em let her come over here cause I ain't gonna take'em over there. And if she tells me something, I can tell her back cause I'm in my house. I don't tell her nothing cause I'm at her house. But if she comes out here, uh, look out. I'll tell her something. Ah, pues (*well*), them my sisters-in-law will come in and this and that. It's not worth fighting over. *PAUSE*.

I don't know what else to say.

Interviewer: Anything that comes to your mind concerning your life story.

Maria: Boring life story.

Interviewer: No it's not boring. It hasn't been boring so far.

Maria: Suffer, it's suffering. I suffered a lot. Like my mom tells me, you're not supposed to suffer.

Interviewer: Do you feel that you've suffered for most of your life or just since you've been married or?

Maria: Since I've been married. I've been suffering a lot.

Interviewer: But before then?

Maria: No, before then, Oh, I had everything. I had everything in my house. I used to have my own room, my own phone, my own TV, my own stereo. I had everything. Until I got married, I lost everything. I didn't have nothing. My husband steal from me. He used to steal my rings. He lost, he stole my wedding band. He stole everything. He stole my jewelry. I can't believe it. Like my mom said, I can't let you take the stereo, I can't let you take the TV, because he's gonna steal it. And I go, yeah. I can't buy anything because he'll steal it. Can't buy nothing. I don't know why. Like I told him, and I said, if he was back on drugs? He don't wanna answer, but I know he is because the way his eyes look. I know he's back in drugs. I get more scared, and I don't wanna open the door. I just. Yeah, right, and I get scared. I get scared. And I go, OK, I'll see you cause I gotta go. I gotta go check on the kids. Let me see the kids. No, I can't. He goes, do you have somebody in there. And I go, I'm smart to tell him no, I don't have nobody. Cause I know the way he is. He'll start banging the windows. He'll break the windows. He'll try to come in. I know he will. Knowing him, he probably will. No. I get scared, like he tried to break, when he broke the window. I got scared cause and then, he goes, I'm gonna break the rest of the windows if you don't open the door. And I go, get out of here or I'm gonna call the cops. And then she (*neighbor*) heard me. She tells me every time I have a problem or something, she's right next to me.

Interviewer: Right next door?

Maria: Uh hum. She tells me to bang on the wall, and she'll call the cops. And I always do that, and she calls them. And when he broke the windows, he had just left. He ran, and then the cops came.

Interviewer: Did they catch him?

Maria: No they didn't. They didn't find him.

Interviewer: Have they caught him any of the times that you've called?

Maria: Uh hum.

Interviewer: And what did they do?

Maria: They just took him. Ah, I put charges on him on assault. Cause he had hit me once, and I told him that he never was gonna do that again. He had slapped me in a park. And then he came after me over here. And then I don't know, the door was open. He came in, and he was hitting me and everything. He abused me real hard, real bad. And he beat me up.

Interviewer: When was that?

Maria: Uhm, when he came out of jail. I don't remember, a couple of months ago. He beat me up real bad. I put charges on him on assault, assault and battery. And he kept on calling for me to drop the charges, but I told him I couldn't. Because it was, you know, it's hard.

Interviewer: Your life is at stake.

Maria: Yeah, and I go, it's hard for me to put charges on him cause he is the father of my kids. I love him. But to get together with him, I can't. Yeah, I go, I love you and everything, but I can't drop the charges. I'm sorry. And I go, you deserve to be there. Because one of these days you're gonna kill me. You're gonna kill me. And I go, if you don't kill me, you're gonna kill somebody else. Some other woman in your life. And I go, gah, and I go, don't you understand? He goes, no. And I go, how come you always abuse me? Because he says he always used to see his dad abuse his mom. And I go, that's the way when I grow up, I kept on seeing that and seeing that. And I don't know, it stayed in my mind, and I get angry. I get angry. And I go, well you're not supposed to take it out on me. Take it out on somebody else. A man but not a woman. You could kill her. And he goes, well, I'm sorry. You know, come and drop the... He tries to, you know, what's the word? Convince me, tell me I'm sorry babe and this and that. I love you. It don't work. And I go, it don't work no more. And he tells me, he's crying. And I go, don't give me that please. I ain't gonna fall for it. He pretends that he's crying. And I go, no, no I don't believe you. And I start laughing. And he goes, why are you laughing? And I

go, because I know the way you are. Just lying. I said, you just want me to drop the charges. You're gonna come back, and next time you're gonna kill me. And he goes, I'm not gonna do it. I'm not gonna get near your house. And I go, no, ah ah, not no more. And, ah, he went to court and I guess his charges, they're still on him. Cause they told him he had to go to court again. And he has a warrant of arrest cause they came over here. They told me if he lived here, and I go, no, he don't live here. He lives with his mom. And I gave them the address over there. And they went over there. I don't know if they picked him up or not.

. . . .

He got out (*of prison after 5 or 6 years*) at the '83 or '84. He got out. He's been there (*ever*), since. He used to be in juvenile all his life. All his life. His mom, she didn't care about him. She used to leave him there. You know, like I told my husband, it's your mom's fault, and it's your dad's fault. Cause they never put any attention to him. They used to ignore him. They used to abuse him. And, he wants to do the same with my kids. No, ah ah, no, my kids are doing just fine. Leave them alone. I don't want them to be like him. They used to catch him shoplifting. They used to catch him doing a lot of things. And his mom used to leave him there. And then when he used to get out, she used to take him out about two months later. She used to abuse him, and he'll go back again. They used to catch him with drugs. He's in juvenile. They'd call his mom, no. Then a couple of months later, she'll take him out. She'll abuse him again, and he'll go back. All his life, since he was thirteen, he's been in juvenile. Then finally, he went to prison. And I go, I'm glad.

Interviewer: From '78 to '83 you said. And then did he go back again?

Maria: No.

Interviewer: Cause you said he was just out six months ago.

Maria: Cause he was in county jail. Cause then he got in trouble and went to the county jail. Cause he skipped parole. And then from parole they caught him, and they put him in jail. So he stayed there. Cause they couldn't take him to prison cause it was packed. They've always been packed, so they dropped the charges and everything. He just stayed a couple of months, and they dropped the charges. He's free. He don't have no warrant of arrest no more. And then until he beat me

up, now he has another warrant of arrest. He says that he don't like it there. And I go, it's your problem, you should a thought about it. I don't know what his mom's gonna do with him anymore. When his brother gets home. I don't want him here. I don't want him looking for the kids.

Five months after the first interview was conducted, Maria was visited again. Near the end of this interview, she discusses her current situation with her husband and her plans for the future.

Maria: I used to call the police a lot. They used to take him in but the next day he'd be out and it keep on going like that until one day, I guess I had a long talk with him when I was at my mom's house. He couldn't do me anything, like my brothers were outside. Everybody was outside so ...

Interviewer: You talked?

Maria: Yeah, we talked and I talked to him and well and then I encouraged him to work, you know, that I would give him a whole year. And if, you know, he gets better I'll probably go back to him. If he gets, starts working, if he changes and he's going to AA Program. And "emot", ah, he's going to ah, emotionaling counseling. He's going to, you know, a lot of programs.

Interviewer: That's the first step, you know, recognizing that they need help and actually being able to get that help.

Maria: And I took him to register and he registered at. I call once in a while to make sure he's still going and making it still could be done. And, you know, like I told my mom. She was here about two days ago. She says that he's doing pretty good. That she saw him and he was working. Now he's doing better.

. . . .

Interviewer: So let us talk about the future. Let's look ahead. And take about five minutes or so to tell me what you see yourself doing ten years from now. Where do you see yourself living and with who?

. . . .

Maria: Well, I'll probably have more kids. Have more

kids. And then I'll, by that time I'll be moved out a here.

Interviewer: O.K., so you mentioned, how many kids do you think you'll see yourself with?

Maria: Four, four total.

Interviewer: You want two more?

Maria: Um hum. And I'll be moved out a here by that time. And I wanna work.

Interviewer: You see yourself working?

Maria: I see myself working with my diploma. Ooh! Have a lot of money and my cars and my kids have everything they need.

Interviewer: And who do you see yourself with ten years from now?

Maria: With my husband.

Interviewer: You see yourself with your husband and two more children.

Maria: Yes and him working and us doing pretty good. I think about that a lot.

Interviewer: And when you say living somewhere else, moving away from here where, where would this be?

Maria: Well moving, you know, far, far away. Like a ranch or somewhere peaceful, somewhere where we're alone. Like me and my husband talk about moving to a ranch. You know, he wants to raise chickens and like a farmer and. Sometimes I think about it and if I feel like doing that. Getting away from everybody, us being alone.

ANA'S STORY

Ana is a 16 year old single mother. She lives alone with her two children in a small house which sits in the back yard of her mother's home. Her children are aged 3 and 15 months. Ana dropped out of high school after the ninth grade. The first interview with Ana was conducted in January of 1988. She was contacted again in April of the same year. After briefly questioning the interviewer about what she should say, Ana started right in.

Ana: My name is Ana. I have two kids, two boys, Michael and Louis. And I enjoy having them around, taking care of them. I also have a boyfriend named Victor. He helps me a lot with them, and I enjoy having him around--taking care of them and all that. OK, as I said I enjoy having him around. (*The boyfriend was within hearing distance.*) I like to teach them things especially the one that is about a year and three months.

And I was living on B Street on my own with my boyfriend, but we didn't make it, because it was too much for us. So I decided to move next door to my mother. She lives in the big house. Well, I am doing fine here. She helps me a lot with my kids. When I have to go to appointments and all that.

And usually what I do all day is: OK, I wake up in the morning, and I take care of them. I bathe them and everything. I put them to sleep for a while--their nap time. Louis, I let him play around with his bike and things like that. It is kind of hard taking care of Louis because he is big. I have to watch him and all that. Michael, he is only three months. He usually sleeps all day, but all night he won't let me sleep. Well, all I do is wash bottles, things like that.

I enjoy having them because--well I have somebody to love me back. You know, to have them around and to... They make me smile. They make me laugh. I don't know. It's just kind of fun in a way. But in a way it is hard for me, because I have two, and they are still small. I really like having them around. They make me smile every day. Louis does something new every day. It just makes me happy sometimes. He is very into the thing. Like right now I am teaching him to go to the

bathroom and stuff. Sometimes he'll do, and sometimes he won't. And when he does, it makes me feel good about myself, because I am teaching him something.

And, well, he falls down a lot. Right now he has a cut right here, but I try my best to take care of them.

I give them almost everything they need. And when I have, and when I don't have, I get a way to get money to get what they need.

And Michael, I can't say much because he is real small and there's nothing. Well, I teach him to play. He plays in the crib with those toys and all that.

Sometimes I just like to have them around to love them, hug them and kiss them. They just make me smile every day. Because I teach them things. They won't learn right away, but you know. Then suddenly I hear him one day, like sometimes instead of calling me "mom", he will call my mother "mom", and he will call me by my nickname which is Olivia. He cares a lot for my mother. He loves her a lot. It would be like that was his mom.

Well, my boyfriend he helps me a lot with them. He tries to do his best. Usually he takes care of Louis, and I take care of Michael. So it just fun with them, just playing tickling them and all that. Like right now it is cold. I am usually inside. Outside it is too cold for Louis.

And when they are sick, oh--oh

This is my boyfriend. He is small. *(Interviewer Note: He indeed is small. This interviewer thought he was her younger brother--maybe fourteen years old, but he is older just has a small frame.)* He helps me a lot. Right now he doesn't have a job, but he is looking for one. So I gotta--every time I need something he goes to his mom and ask her for money or something.

(Boyfriend left some time around here. He signaled her that he was leaving.)

Well, he is kind of impatient with Louis cause sometimes we don't know what to do with him. Because he doesn't know what to do himself. So we just try our best to take care of them in any way we can. And just have fun with them, you know.

Interviewer: So he is the father of your.....

Ana: Of my two kids.

Interviewer: Of your two children?

Ana: Yea

Ana: What else?

Interviewer: Talk about whatever you want.

Ana: OK, well I feed Louis a lot. I mean he eats a lot. And I just cook here. Cause I have my little house. It is real good cause my mom is right there next door, and any time I need something, I just go over there and talk to her.

Well, I guess that it. I can't say more. Just that I enjoy having them.

Interviewer: And how old are you?

Ana: I'm going to be seventeen.

Interviewer: You are sixteen?

Ana: Um hum, in a month I am going to be seventeen--
(gives date of birthday).

Ana: What else do I say.

Interviewer: You are doing fine. Whatever you want.

Ana: Oh and there is this. What do you call it - a padrino (*godfather*) of mine, and he brings me a lot of things too. Like he brought this crib for Louis. Now he brought that one for the other one.

And I am planning to move into the (*a public housing project*). I trying to put an application to see if they would give me. Cause I want to have my own house. I don't have to depend on anybody. I want to depend on myself. I am going to apply for them in March, when I am seventeen. If they give me one, so I can have my own house; my own things and everything. And I try to buy a lot of things for my house, so I won't look, you know. I try my best with my kids and everything. Get them everything I can. I don't have a lot of money or anything. But every month when I get my check, I buy them their clothes, things like that--pampers. Well, I dress them up and everything. Not real pretty but I try my best.

And I go to all my appointments; take them to the doctors and all that.

Like, Michael when he was born, he was four days old and had a heart operation, cause he had a heart murmur. I went through a hard time with that. I mean, I had

never gone through any thing like that especially with my own child. And then they told me that Michael can die during the operation, after the operation or even before they operate him. So they told me that the day he was born. The next day, they told me that he had a heart murmur. They told me, "don't worry Ana. It's nothing." And no, it turned out to be an operation and everything. I went through a hard time when I was having Michael.

Then I couldn't listen (*referring to Louis*). I mean I could listen to him, but my mind was not really on him. It was always on Michael. I would go see him every day in the hospital.

So they told me that on a Thursday, they are going to operate him, but he didn't make it til that day. On a Tuesday that week he got sick. He started... he was breathing real fast and was getting real red. So they told me, "We have to operate right away or he is going to die." So all I did was cry. I said, "You all said it was nothing", and it turned out to be an operation. He almost died and everything.

Ok, before the operation, they baptize him there in the hospital. Well, if he doesn't make it; you can always come see his records of baptism over here. So it was kind of hard for me then. I got to... I have to keep a real close eye on him, because they say that he can suddenly stop breathing. I have to give him a lot of attention.

Mostly my mom has him, Louis, over there, because oh--well, his grandfather takes him. I don't even know where. "We will be right back." He takes him to a friend's house, cousin's house, all that. A lot of people help me with him, because he is big, and they like to play with him. Usually everybody takes him.

And my brother and my sister live with my mom and her husband. Even my brother comes here. He is here all day; helping me with him.

(Louis is rubbing interviewer's nails.)

Ana: It's because you have nails. He never sees nails. Well, he is the one that makes me smile. He is real funny.

Like today, every Tuesday, my brother, his wife, and his little girl come just to get together, because we all live separate now. I have three brothers and one sister. My sister she is the youngest. She is still going to school. She is in the 8th grade. My oldest brother is going to be 20, one is going to be 19, and

the other one is going to be 18. They are usually here on Tuesdays. We all get together. They are over there inside with my mom. And when everybody is here, they usually come in here and visit. Come and see them.

Well Louis, he looks more like my oldest brother. He doesn't look like Victor, my boyfriend. He looks like my mom too.

Interviewer: I think he looks like your mom. That was the lady that came in here?

Ana: Yea.

(Ana talks to Louis. She tells him to say "bye." Louis says, "No." Laugh)

Ana: I don't know what to say no more.

Interviewer: You are doing real well.

Ana: OK, like Michael. His grandmother comes to see him a lot. She helps me a lot with him. She is usually the one who really helps me with him. She brings him the milk and all that.

And about three weeks ago, they were both sick at the same time. They had a cold. I had to take them to the doctor and everything. All they could do is give them cough medicine. Things like that. It's really terrible when they both get sick at the same time, because they are both real cranky, and grouchy. I try to take care of them both.

Like my boyfriend. He doesn't live with me. He just stays at his house and comes all day and takes care of them. Like right now, he left. I don't see him until tomorrow morning. He comes early and helps me. And about three times a week, he goes out to look for work. Like right now there is no work. Where he goes, all they do is give him applications, applications. I tell him there are a lot of applications; they are never going to call. He has been going almost every day trying, looking. He can't. I tell him, "It's real hard if you don't work, we need pampers, milk." Especially for Louis. Usually the milk doesn't last what they give us.

So I am trying to potty train Louis, so I won't have to use pampers. I waste about \$40 in pampers. I buy that big box, but it won't last all month.

I get Social Security. I get \$236 a month and food stamps. I don't have Louis on the food stamps, because I didn't have his birth certificate. I just went this week to try to put him in. I am waiting for an

appointment to come by in the mail.

And I help my mother. I give her \$100 for living here, and plus I give her \$60 in food stamps to buy food for her and the rest is for me. But she gets her husband to buy her when it is finished. So when mine finishes before the month, I go over there and eat. Or she will bring food over here. And we really share everything. She tries to do all she can for me. If I have to go to the doctor, and the doctor is just for me or something, she takes care of both of them. Or if it is for one, she takes care of one, and I take the other. She will tell her husband to give me a ride. He is my stepfather.

And my sister, she goes to school. I hope she graduates. None of us graduated from high school. The three boys and me; none of us graduated. One because his girlfriend was going to have a baby, and he had to work. And the other one; he just didn't finish school. He got married, but he didn't have a baby. He just wanted to get married. And he started working. And the other one, he doesn't have kids or a wife, he is just laying there. And I really hope my sister graduates. She is going to be 15 in March. I hope she graduates.

I tell her try not to, you know, have a boyfriend, but don't do anything dumb. Because it's really... it might look fun. Because she comes in here and says its fun being with him and all that. I tell her yea, but it's not that fun. It's hard, cause you have to feed them and bathe them and change them. You know, take care of them when they are teething and all that. I tell her it's not that fun so don't think, "I'm going to have a baby because it's fun." "No, half of it is fun and half of it hard." Especially me, that I have two.

But I am not planning to have kids anymore. I am trying to take care of myself. I had them too close together. They're only a year a part. So I am not going to have any more.

And hopefully they can give me a court (*apartment in the public housing project*), so I can go live on my own and learn. You know, without having my mother to help me with this or that. Learn to depend on myself. Because well, like Victor doesn't work. I tell him it's going to be a long time before you find work. I have to learn to take care of myself and them.

He says, "Well, you are learning, because you have your own house." I tell him, "No, I am not really learning." I am learning. But I know that when a

problem comes up I cannot solve, I can go to my mother and tell her, "Well mom, what can I do?" Like I tell her if I move into the courts and one day I have to go to the doctor with Michael. Now Louis, I can't take him with me. I am going to have to come over here and leave him. I got to learn to, you know, to manage and help myself and help them.

And I hope that when Louis grows up, that he will learn, you know, to have a career--like I didn't have. For him to go to school. I want for him to have a good life.

Because I think... I didn't mess up. I am not saying they are mistakes, but I had them too young. I can't really give them a lot, because I didn't graduate. I can't get a really good job. All I can get is minimum wage, \$3.35 an hour. That's not enough for two kids and myself.

And then, well, the food stamps help a little. I can buy them food and everything, but I wish I could do more for my kids. More--give them everything they need. Have money when they have to go to the doctor. Take them and pay for the medicine, cause sometimes I don't have money for the prescriptions.

Sometimes I just pray to God, that He will help me. Not for me to find a job, because I can't look right now because of them, but for my boyfriend to get a job. For God to help us to get us money; for him to work; to have our own house and everything.

Like we tried when we lived on B Street. But it was too much, cause we had to pay the water, and the rent. The rent was \$115. The water would come out to \$100 and something. And it was too much for us. He was only getting about \$100 a week. They would take too much out for this and that. Then I would buy food, plus the pampers. So we really didn't have for the... No, we would have for the rent, which was my check, but at that time we weren't getting food stamps. It was hard for us. So I tell him maybe now that I am getting food stamps, we can get our own house. And we don't have to depend on anybody but ourselves.

Well, he is trying. I tell him. Like sometimes he says, "I can't." He wants to give up. I tell him, "Don't give up, Victor, I mean we have gone this far; we can go farther to help them." He helps. Without him, I don't know what I would do, because he tries.

Sometimes I do need time for myself. I get irritable, and I tell him, "I can't take care of them right now." I will just come here to the table and sit down for a

while and think or relax just a little bit. He will say, "Ok, lay down. Go to sleep. Take a nap." Like sometimes Michael doesn't let me sleep all night. I tell him the next day, "Michael didn't let me sleep at all." He will tell me, "Take a nap, and I will take care of them." Yea, he'll do that, but he doesn't really know how to care of them. He is kind of funny. Like when they do the restroom, he is all--ooooo, you know.

And sometimes--I don't get tired of them, but I get tired of taking care of them. And he tells me, "Well, I know it is hard. And I know I am not helping you in any way, because I don't work." Sometimes I take it out on him. I tell him, "God, you don't even work or anything." Cause I am mad because I got to change them, or they are crying or something. I tell him, "You don't even help me at all; you should work." And I start telling him things. All he will do is, he'll get all--you know, because I tell him things. And he will tell me, "I know I don't." He will get angry too. I tell him, "I'm sorry. It's just that I need time alone."

I had babies at a young age. So I have patience with them, but it's just that sometimes I need time to be alone. Especially that one. He is just falling down. He is over there grabbing everything; breaking things. And he's crazy, Louis. Right? *(She addresses little boy.)* You are the one that makes me irritable. Right? *(in a laughing, teasing manner).*

And he won't get tired of walking. Like us when we go to the store, and we get tired of walking, he won't. He will keep on walking and walking. He will never go to sleep.

You know we are talking about you. *(Addresses son, again.)*
Right, you know.

He is barely learning to talk, and he is trying to understand what I say sometimes. Sometimes I tell him like, "Pick it up." And he is like, "What is she saying?" I tell him, "P i c k i t u p/ up. Bring it to me." He just looks at me like, "What do you say. I don't understand." Sometimes when he wants to, he will understand what I am saying.

When he was about a year, he would take a nap at 12:00 everyday. Now he won't even close his eyes. He wants to be all day playing and playing. "Right?" "Right, piggy?" *(Addresses child again.)*

I try to take care of him real good, but I am not perfect either. Sometimes I have my ups and downs.

Like I say, sometimes I can't get him what I am suppose to like ... *(She addresses child to get up.)* Get up. Uppie, uppie.

Sometimes he will sit down and watch TV.

That chair; my grandfather gave it to me when I was little, and I passed it on to him. I'll sit him right there and he will watch TV. He doesn't even know what is going on, but he'll say, "oh, oh, oh"--like look what is going on.

And my grandmother, from my mom, and my stepfather; they give him everything too. They try to give him everything. They buy him bikes and toys and cars and a lot of things. He will play with them for a while, and then he will forget about them. He never wants to play with them again.

And I enjoy taking him to McDonald's, because he makes me laugh. He sees the M and get all excited and start saying, "papa papa." I like to take him cause I like for him to win those things in the Happy Meal--toys and all that. I like to see him happy. "Right?"

Sometimes he is a headache. Sometime he is not. Like Saturday or Sunday; he fell off the bike right here on the cement. I got all panic. He had a big bump--like it was going to open. I hate to see him hurt. I feel like crying with him. When I hear him cry, I know it hurts, and I feel like crying too. He only cries for a while, and then he will laugh and say, "oh", like I hit myself.

At first he was jealous, when I first brought Michael home. He would try to poke his eyes and just do things to him. Now, I guess he learned to love him. Now he sees the bottle, and he will try to give it to him. I put him in that cradle, and he will rock him. But there are times when he doesn't like him. He remembers like, he got in my way, so sometimes he will want to hit him. So I tell him, "No, that's your baby brother." and he will go, "Oh, oh." Everything "oh - oh."

I hope he learns to talk real soon. I want to hear him talk real good like, "Hi mom I want this." Maybe I don't, because then he will want everything.

I don't want to spoil him, because I can't give him everything he wants. While he is growing up and when he understands, I want to teach him to not to think like if he sees something to say, "I want it." I want him to learn that I can't give him everything. Only if I have the money; only if I can buy it. I want him to

learn that. I want him to learn that I can't give him everything, but I can give him some things. You know, when it is no, it is no. And when it is yes, it is yes.

He cannot talk yet, but if I have money he will say, "Money, money." And he will go like asking for it.

For Christmas, I enjoyed the presents you all gave him. *(Research participant's children were given toys.)* Cause there was nothing for Michael because he wasn't in it. He liked. He tore it apart and everything. They were little barrels that you put together. He would put them together and undo them. He would roll them and say, "Ball, ball."

And I enjoyed having them at Christmas. I dressed them up with their stockings and little red suits. Michael, I didn't buy him one, but it was his from last year. I dressed them up like Santa Clauses and all that. They gave them presents, and I let him tear them all up and everything. He had fun tearing the paper, because he like tearing paper apart.

And as for Michael, almost every month I take him to his doctor, a pediatric cardiologist. So they see him a lot. I am always having a lot of appointments every month.

And I take him all the time. And he is doing better but for me not to change any activity I do, like throw him up or do anything real harsh with him, because right away I can hurt him. "So you are taking care of him alright, but just because I say that don't change anything that you are doing. You might hurt him."

So they say that maybe when he grows up, that it won't harm him at all. But one day he may overdo it. So when he grows up for me to be careful with him. Teach him that if he is tired, for him to rest, not to keep going because he wants to play. So I will always have to watch him a lot and be careful with things like that.

Like anytime that I take him to the doctor, he will say first I have to talk to his doctor and ask if he can take that medicine or not. He will tell me yes or no, but first he needs to know what medicine. Like I took him to the doctor, because he had diarrhea. And that doctor gave him the medicine. I gave it to him that day. He got real red and was real, real hot. So I took him to the Medical, and they told me that he was allergic to it. But I was lucky, that I took him right away, because it was doing something to his heart. So I got real panic then. I said, "Might as well just

bring him to you." "Yes, that's better." Because not any doctor can see him.

Hopefully he will be alright when he is older--when he can walk and all that. I hope so, because I don't want to think of losing him suddenly one day, when he can run, walk, everything. I don't want to think about that. I am risking something, if he were to run a lot. But I don't want to be too cautious with him. You know, I don't want to make him just sit. "Don't do this; don't run, just walk." I want him to learn to be a boy but not to overdo it. There I am kind of scared, and then I am not.

And Louis, there is nothing wrong with him. He is fine. Hopefully everything will turn out all right for us. I hope God give my boyfriend a job, so we can move by ourselves; depend on our own. "Right, Louis?"

So I am praying that God will help, and hope that later I can get my kids everything they need and want. Especially Michael, since he has to always see a doctor. Hopefully He will help us.

Interviewer: I pray a lot too, when I have a problem. The 30 minutes are up. How did you feel? Were 30 minutes too long? Too short?

Ana: Too short.

Interviewer: Too short?

Ana: Michael, I got to be real careful with him. I hope that I never lose him. What I went through when he was in the hospital was horrible. They would tell that he can die before, after or during, but he recovered real fast. Like they operated him about nine. No, about 7:00. The operation just took about 30 minutes. He was on a breathing machine when he came out. The next day they called me, that he was breathing on his own. By that night, he was eating by bottle.

Interviewer: Oh, he recovered right away?

Ana: Yes, he recovered right away, but he has a big cut right here. It is from here to way over there on his back. It's a big scar, but they didn't put stitches on him. Just like tapes, like that. I was scared to take care of him.

Interviewer: How long did he stay in the hospital?

Ana: A month.

Interviewer: A month.

Ana: So he was born. Then four days later they operate him, and he stayed there. He was born in October, and I didn't get him until November the 2nd.

Interviewer: How are the bills being handled?

Ana: Through the Crippled Children's. They helped me. They are going to help me. They just sent me a letter saying that for me to show that letter every time I take him to the doctor, so they can pay for all the bills, medicine, and things like that. So they are helping me too.

I didn't think I was going to have a baby malito (*sick*). They just told me that every 1% out of one hundred... Well there is 100% right? Well 1% of those get this heart murmur. "Some don't and your baby was just one of them." When I was leaving the hospital, a new baby was coming in. He had a heart murmur too. The doctor goes see this baby. "He gots the same thing that your kid had." Oh, I said the horrible thing his mom is going to go through. Cause there was a chance that--I would say is he going to make it. And that was hard for me, cause I didn't know.

Interviewer: But you survived it very well.

Ana: Thank God.

Interviewer: You did real well.

Ana: And then this woman was poking him. He had an I.V. here and here, on his feet. One on his neck. Oh, I couldn't. I wanted to be there, you know, seeing. But I didn't want to see them poke him. I didn't want him to be alone. Even though he didn't know I was there, I think he could feel me there. So he would cry, and I would cry with him. Then they kept poking him, because they wanted to find a vein. But they couldn't because he was too little. They couldn't. So they told me if they could put one right here on his neck; on the main, biggest vein he had. So every time they need blood, they won't have to poke him. I said, "Yea, if it is the best for him so you won't have to poke him a lot." But he made it. I mean I thought he wasn't going to make, it because he was too little. But no, he made it.

Interviewer: Your boyfriend also dropped out of school?

Ana: Um hum.

Interviewer: When you did?

Ana: No, he dropped out before me, because he couldn't get out of 8th grade. He was there for three years; in the 8th grade. He couldn't get out, and he couldn't get out. He would flunk, and he would flunk. He would say, "Am I ever going to get out?" He goes, "I think the only way I can get out is by leaving school."

Interviewer: And did you meet him at school?

Ana: OK, I met him at school in Junior High. I went with him for a month, then we broke it off. Then I went to Central (*high school*). Then one summer I just saw him, and he saw me, and we started talking and all that. Then we started going around, and we started having kids. So we hadn't seen each other for... OK, when I went to the ninth, he flunked again so he stayed in the 8th. I think I didn't see him for a couple of months. I didn't even remember him, and he didn't remember me. Then his mom came over. She was welcoming us to that neighborhood. He came with her. He said I didn't know it was you who lived here.

Interviewer: She was welcoming you and your mom?

Ana: Yea, our family. We were living at (*another public housing project*). They lived there and told us, that there's a lot of good neighbors and some were not. So that is when I started talking to him again. Then we had Louis and then Michael.

But at first when we had Louis, we were not getting along too well. I think it was mostly because he didn't work, but he found a job. I would tell him that I could support Louis on my own, and "What do I need you for?" He started working, so we got back together. Then we had Michael.

Then he was laid off his job. When I had Michael, he lost his job. And in between there, when Michael was in the hospital, he had about two or three jobs. But they would only need him for a little while. And he would take it just to get money. He worked at Winns, Handy Andy and at another Winns. But they would tell him, "We only need you while this guy is on vacation," or something. He would say, "I don't care. I need the money." So he would just do that. He got references from Winns and all that. But it doesn't seem to help, because they tell him, "We don't have any openings right now. If we do, we will call you." He will tell them, "I have a girlfriend to support. I don't have no school or anything, but I need a job. I have kids, and one of them is sick. I hope you call me", and things like that.

I tell him, "I know you try." But sometimes I get mad because we need the money. Sometimes he wants to give up. I tell him, "No, if we have gone this far, we can go farther."

I know we are suffering, and I know our kids are suffering with us. But I try not to let it get to me. Like say, we don't have any money and start crying. I say maybe next week. He tries to be strong too. He is impatient so sometimes he will say, "I never will find work." But I tell him, "You don't know. You are just saying that because you have not found work." He'll say, "Ok, ok." But I know he wants to give up. He will say, "It is hard for me, because I am the one that is suppose to support you all. And you are supporting both of them."

I understand. No hay trabajo. (*There isn't any work.*) My brother too, he is also looking for work. He went to Sea World, and they want him to go Wednesday to see if they will hire him. Victor was going to go, but he has to be 18 or older. Victor is only 17. Will be 18 in June. I hope it is June.

Three months later, Ana was visited again by the interviewer. At the end of this interview, she was asked what she foresaw in her future ten years down the road.

Ana: I see myself in my own home--like in the courts. I want to see myself in a good area. There is always a good area in the courts (*public housing project*) and there is a bad area. I want to see myself in a good area.

I see myself in a good area with my two kids and hopefully with Victor. He is working already; he helps me take care of them now. He has changed. He grew up. He was childish. He would think about his friends and going out. He grew up. Now he thinks about Louis. Before I even notice, he will say, "We are going to need pampers. or "They are going to need milk." I see myself in the courts living with him and the kids.

I see them going to school. I see myself in PTA meetings and seeing their talents shows. Having their clothing. Some place for them to sit down and sleep. Food. Just enjoying them growing up.

I see myself and Victor having a good relationship loving our children. Hopefully, no more suffering--a smooth ride.

I see myself--I want to work when they are grown up already. I see myself working. Giving them everything they need. I can't give everything but almost everything they would need. I see them making good grades.

Just for us to be happy. I know there will be bad times; hopefully there will not be too many bad times involved.

I want them to grow up to be nice people, kind people (Louis and Michael) to teach them not to be greedy or mean or fighters--to be normal, human beings. I want to bring them up the best way I can. I know that living in the courts is not the best place for them to grow up. But it is the only thing that I know we might have. If not, a home where there is good people.

I want to always have them. I know they are going to grow up and get married, but I don't know why they mean everything to me. Every time there is nothing to eat; I just struggle for them. I don't have to eat today, my kids do. They don't know what it is to not have anything to eat. I can know it but they can't know it because there will always be food in their plates for them.

I just want to be happy.

RITA'S STORY

Rita is 30 years old and has two daughters aged 2 and 6 years. She is a high school graduate and was separated from the father of her youngest daughter at the time of the first interview. Rita lived alone with her daughters, having recently moved out of her mother's house. The first interview with Rita was conducted in February of 1988. The second occurred four months later.

Rita jumped into the heart of her story with no preamble.

Rita: I wish I had never been born.

Interviewer: Okay, that's a very heavy statement. To tell you the truth, at times I feel that life is very difficult. I get very depressed and I have even questioned why are we here, and what is the purpose of all this. So I can understand. Go ahead, you have 30 minutes to tell me the story of your life.

Rita: Starting when? How far back do I go?

Interviewer: Wherever you want. You can start wherever you want.

Rita: Okay. The story of my life, what I can remember, when I was 6 years old, I started getting epilepsy. Ever since then I've had them, I grew up with them. Now I'm 30 years old and I still have epilepsy. I graduated, thanks to my mother, and I never went to college. I just graduated. I had my first child. I didn't make it with the person, and I moved back to my mother's house. Ever since I had my first child, my life completely changed.

I guess because my mother thinks when I brought my child home, that child was hers; she had another baby. She started treating us like both daughters, not like a granddaughter and a daughter. I went like that for four years, life wasn't to happy for me. I didn't have much of a choice. I always thought of doing a lot of things to myself, but my daughter kept me going. So I waited and waited in my mother's house. Until one day I said, "this child's not mine, she never comes up to me to ask me for anything; she always goes to grandma." I've always worked, after graduation, I've always worked. I always helped my mother.

Then I got tired, I got hurt, so it was just something that came to my mind, you know what, I'm gonna have another baby. It was a stupid thing that came to my mind, I think of it now. I met this guy. I moved in with him and his parents, and I came out pregnant. That's the first thing I wanted to do, and thanks to God I came out pregnant. I told my mother, "this time..." She got after me because I was pregnant, she said I didn't even know the person that well. I said "I know I don't know the person that well, but the reason I'm doing this is because this time, I'm gonna keep him or her, whatever it is. You hurt me enough with my first child. So this time I'm prepared for you not to take over as a parent." So I did that, and she was right. That person wasn't the right person for me. I did not make it with him. I left from his parent's house, and there I go back to my mother's.

Okay, now it was a new child, this was two, two children. I had a little girl, so I had two girls. This time it was worse, because my mother had three daughters, not two daughters. I thought she was going to change by being happy with the first daughter. No, things were worse for me and ever since then I've always had a terrible life.

This is my life, I've always felt that my mother's not letting me be the person I want to be. I have seizures, I have epilepsy, yes, but I don't consider myself handicapped. I always try to work. I try to support myself, support my children, but my mother always treating me like I'm not good; like I'm not worth what I'm here for. I've proven to her, I told her, "Mom, I've always worked, since school I've always worked. I have my children. I always try to keep up with my kids, but you don't let me. You don't give me that chance. In order for us not to argue, a daughter and a mother, I just stay away." I have a limit, and I just got tired and I started talking back to her. We started getting into a lot of arguments. I told her "One of these days I'm just gonna leave. By the time you come home I'm gonna be gone." She told me "If you leave, I'm gonna call the policeman, because you're a person that's got seizures, and you cannot leave with those two kids. You can leave with anybody if you want to, but not the children. You cannot take them"

So she always kept me home for the past two years. Like I feel now, like that was a threat. She scared me, I couldn't leave with my children because she'd call the cops. I was afraid. Then one time I said how can she call the policeman and then policeman can take them away, they are my children. I'm not a handicap. I'm not sick from my mind. I just have seizures.

So one day, the time came that I said this is it. She kept making my life miserable, and the time came when she told me she wanted me to leave the house. I said fine, "I'm gonna leave and I'm gonna leave with my kids." She said, "If you leave with my children, I'm gonna call the policeman." I said, "Fine, call them." So she went to the room where there was no phone. I had the phone, and I called the policeman. I told them I wanted a policeman to such and such an address because my mother and I were having a big argument. And I wanted to leave the house and she wouldn't let me go. She wouldn't let me take my two girls. I wanted for her own self to find out for her own self that I could leave with my kids.

They send a policeman there ten minutes after, and she was crying in that other bedroom. My girls were crying because grandma was crying, because I was crying. I explained to the girls I would talk to them about everything later, and that we would come back to see grandma. It is something we had to do, that mama and them have to move out, but that doesn't mean that we would never see her again. They calmed down when the policeman got there. I told them, what's going on. I said my mother doesn't let me take my girls because I have seizures. My mother was there, she started cussing me out in front of the policeman, in front of my brother from California. The policeman told my brother... Cause he was a white cop, the policeman told my brother to tell my mother that there was no way that she could stop me from taking my children. They were my kids, and no matter if I'm handicapped or I'm in a wheel chair, I still could take my children. My brother said that to my mother and she started cussing me out more. She said, "I never tried to take them away from you. You can take them if you want to, just don't ever come back again." She said, "I don't exist for you anymore." I said, "okay." I told my brother, "look what she's saying, that she doesn't exist for me no more, so I won't come by no more. If she tells you'll that I never go visit her, that's why because she said I don't exist for her anymore."

That's been my life, my life is in pain. Not too long ago, we started talking again. I started taking the girls over there. She babysitted for me one night. I don't know what the girls ate, but one of them got real sick. The oldest one, she started vomiting. The way I raised them up is I don't let them eat a lot of junk food, unless they eat their meals they have to eat. My mother, she'll give them anything they want. Of course, kids most of the time they won't ask you for food. My oldest daughter, her system wasn't used to that no more, so when she ate all that, she got sick.

So I told mom what did she eat. She said nothing. We, we're just eating oranges. She got angry, she said, "You think that I've been giving them a lot of junk food. There you go again." "Mother, I'm not saying you're giving them a lot of junk food. I'm just asking what did you give them, and you're saying oranges, fine. Now I'm just trying to figure out why is my oldest daughter sick, if all she's been eating as a snack is an orange."

Okay, I went to far ahead. Four years ago, a brother of mine passed away of an overdose, heroin. Okay that was four years ago. And this other day that I was there with my mother, she told me to leave the house and never come back and that she had preferred me to die instead of my brother. "I would have preferred you to be dead and not my son." I said, "Okay, so from now on, Mom, I'm dead. I don't exist. And if I don't exist my girls don't exist, because if it wasn't for me you wouldn't have met them. So thank you. I won't come back and bother you."

This is my life up to this day now. I have not gone back to bother her. I have not called her and this is one thing... I've always taken a lot from my mother, but not this, not when she tells me that I should have died instead of my brother. That, I can not forgive that. Ever since then, I have not called her and will not call her. To me I don't exist for her. I miss her a lot. I love her, but in my heart I don't have the power to go back and hug and kiss her the way I want to. Because I remember what she told me. And yet it's taken her long enough for her to call me and to say I understand when people get upset they say things that they don't mean. But yet for her being a person with experience, it's taken her more than enough time to call me.

And that's my life, a sad life. It hurts me, I can take any pain from anybody, any insult from anybody, but not from my mother. That's my life, and I'm not too happy.

The only times I'm happy is when I'm with my girls. I'm happy with them and I'm happy for them and I love them very much. That's all I have to say. I'm sorry.

(several moments pass)

Nobody from my family talks to me, nobody from my family. I don't talk to nobody. I don't know what she's told them, or what. I don't talk to nobody from my family, just one cousin, but she's not close to my family. But brothers and sisters, nephews, nieces... I don't talk to nobody. I don't talk to nobody. I don't

call them because I don't know what mom has said to them or what.

The other day I talked to a nephew of mine, he called me over here. He said that every time he goes to my mother's house he asks for me, and mom tells him a lot of things about me. I said, "Yes, but did mom tell you what she told me that hurt me so bad that I couldn't go back again." He said no. I told him, "Well you're grandma said that she would have preferred for me to die, and not your uncle, which is my brother, and that hurt. I said when you're mother says that to you when you're a son or daughter, it's bad."

I'm also scared, cause I'm not afraid to die, I'm not. When the time comes I think I'll be there. I might not even know when it's gonna be there, but I'm ready when God is ready to take me. But not like this. Not for my mother. I think she wants me out of this life so she can keep my two girls. She's also said that I'm never gonna take anything out of that house. I have a lot of things in that house that belong to me, and I've never gone back to ask her for anything, because she told me loud and clear, anything that's in this house nobody, not even you, can take it. So all I brought with me was my clothes, my daughter's clothes and my daughters, and my car.

Now the other day before school ended, I took my daughter to school, and I got a seizure right before I got to school. We got injured real bad. I hit a mailbox. My car is at her house. It needs to be fixed. I still drive. I have to sometimes. She says that I'm scaring my girls a lot, that one of these days something might happen to me, cause their going through so much seeing me get sick. I tell her, "Mom there's nothing I can do, when I get sick at home, or in the mall, at a store, in the car. There's nothing I can do." I said, "If there was something I could do believe me I would've done that a long time ago."

Interviewer: How old are your daughters?

Rita: My oldest daughter is six years old and my youngest daughter is two and a half

Interviewer: Have you talked to your oldest girl about your disease and for her not to get scared that it will come and go away?

Rita: Yes, now that I've moved from my mother's house, I've been able to with my oldest one and talk. She's now understanding that it's just things. Like she says, "I know Mama that it's not your fault. There's nothing you can do." And she told me, "Why did grandma

used to tell me that you were scaring me?" I said, "I don't know."

One day my daughter came up to me, my mother was talking to her on the phone. After she hung up, my daughter came up to me and said "Why did Memo tell me not to love you?" I said what mi hija (*my daughter*). She said, "Why did Memo tell me not to love you?" I said, "She told you that?" Dijo (*she said*), "Yes. Why doesn't she want me to love you?" I just told her "Maybe she meant something else, and you just misunderstood. She doesn't mean that. Grandma wants you to love me. I'm your mother. Just like she's my mother, and I love her very much. I told her all those problems, those misunderstandings we used to have, grandma and I, I still love her. You know right now grandma doesn't want me in her house. I still love her. She doesn't mean it." I did that for her, so she wouldn't hold that against her.

But those are the things that my mother comes up with, for her not to love me. She brings in so many things that I don't understand. She'll ask them if I mistreat them, if I spank them, if I do this or that. This is something like I told her. "Look mom, you already had your children, you already raised them your way. These are my children. I raise them up my way. Believe it or not, a lot of people compliment me on my girls." They're real good girls. They're not spoiled. I don't like for them to be spoiled. And grandma, since it's grandma, she likes to spoil them. I don't think I'll ever go back to that address, to that house.

That's been my life, it's a sad life. When you don't make it with someone that you get married with or move in as common law, in time you just forget. The pain will go away, but when you can't communicate with your mom. That pain is always there. No matter what. No matter if you're laughing everyday. No matter if you can show happiness to your kids. That pain is always there. That pain will always be there, but yet I love her very much. I can't believe she said that about me. She said that she's put up with me so much, with my seizures. She says she's gone through a lot with me with my illness. I said, "Mom I'm sorry it's not my fault that I got them," That nobody will put up with me like she has. She's always putting.., thinking negative, that no other man is gonna love me. He will never accept my illness and my girls. Why does she say that? I think because she wants me back to the house. If she wanted me as a daughter and two granddaughters, I would've gone back, but not as three daughters.

I'm real grateful for my two girls. I'm real proud of them. If I have to go live under a tree with them, I

will. If I have no place to go, thank God I have my car. I'll just put my girls in the car. I'll go park it under a tree, and we'll live there. I was willing to do that, and I'm still willing to do that as soon as I get my car fixed. Until I get myself back on my feet. To me my girls is the world right now. To me my car is my house, our house, my girls house and my house.

That's my life and it's something I try to put on the side. I can't show my daughters sadness. I know how it feels when a parent cries. It hurts them. There's times that I can't stop. My pain will be there more and more. And it gets worse, and I'll just cry. My daughter will ask me, "Mama why are you crying?" I tell her mi hija, "I got a real bad headache. Do you mind if I close my eyes for a little while?" She says, "No, it's alright. I'll take care of my sister." "If your sister needs anything wake me up." But it's not that. It's just that I want to cry so bad. I'm afraid if I keep holding the pain more and more, something worse will happen to me. I care about my girls, I don't want to leave them alone. Their fathers don't care about them. They never worry. I can't depend on my daughter's fathers, so who do they have? They only have me. That's all they have. They only have me. I'm sorry if this sounds stupid, but it's my life.

Interviewer: It doesn't sound stupid.

Rita: I wish I had never been born. I wish I had never been born. The other day a girl was crying on TV, because her father told her, "To me you're nothing but stupid. You cannot do one good thing. You are so stupid." She was crying. She said I couldn't believe my dad told me that. I started crying too. That reminded me of mom. She said exactly what I've always said. She said, "It wouldn't of hurt me if anybody else had told me that. When my dad told me that it hurts me." It hurt me too, and I was crying when I was listening to that program on TV.

I'm under medication and there's been a lot of times that I think of taking my pills all at once. But then I said, "Why, there's somebody here that loves me. There's somebody here that needs me, and that's my two girls."

Of course, something in my heart is missing, that's my mother's love. I told my cousin, if I die there's something you have to do for me. Please, since you're the only one that talks to me, do me a favor. If I get in a real bad accident, or get a real bad seizure sometimes people die from a real strong seizure. If you see mom crying, do me a favor. I'm not gonna be

here no more. Tell her, "Don't cry, your dream came true." Just tell her that I said that. She might hate you. But just remind her that that's what she wanted, so she shouldn't be crying. I don't want her to cry when I die. I don't want her to cry. I heard how she cried when my brother died. I don't want her to cry. As a matter of fact, she doesn't even have to go to my funeral. I love mom. I love her very much, but she hurt me. She hurt real bad. And it's all because she wants the girls there at home. That's why she hates me. She wants the girls to stay with her. That's why I decided to move and make her understand that one day she's gonna have to stay by herself. Things got worse, I thought things would get better if I moved out and I would show her that one day I was gonna have to move out.

I'm thirty years old, I want to depend on somebody and have somebody to depend on me. I want to find a person to take care of me and my girls. I used to talk to her about that, and she used to cuss me out. The first thing she would bring out, "Why are you gonna get married with somebody? Why are you gonna look for somebody. No one's gonna put up with your illness." That hurt too. Unfortunately I got used to it. "Nobody's gonna put up with your illness. No one's gonna put up with you getting sick. What if you get sick and that man does something to one of your daughters?" I told her, "Mom, why are you always thinking negative. Maybe that's why I've never been able to make it with someone. You always think negative." I said, "Why don't you tell me when I say that, 'I hope so, I hope God blesses you.' No, you always think negative." She said, "Do whatever you want, but if you ever mess up in your life don't come telling me this or that." That hurts, but all this I was able to take. I was able to take all those things, but not "I wish you would've died instead of your brother". That I could not take.

That's my life right now. I'm happy for my girls, but I'm not happy for my life.

Interviewer: You said that you realize that sometimes people say things in anger and that you kind of thought of that. How much of it do you think your mother really meant?

Rita: I think she really meant a lot, because if it would've just slipped out of anger, she would've already called me and she hasn't. We all say things, I say things that I don't mean. Everybody. There's not one person in this world that doesn't say something that they don't mean. But then they think back. Mom should've realized that she didn't mean what she said.

And yet she hasn't called. I would've accepted that. I would've accepted her apology saying I'm sorry I didn't mean to say what I said. I would've accepted her apology and started visiting her again. But yet she would be a different mother to me. I still love her, but she's not the mother I loved very, very much. She kind of made things change for both of us. I'll forgive her if she ever calls me, but she won't mean as much to me that she meant before. I would never tell her that. I would never show her that, and I'll never tell anybody that. I'll always be the same person. I mean like mother's day, I'll take her a gift, or her birthday, but I'll always keep in my heart what she told me. It won't be the same any more, but I'll be happy because we'll be talking to each other again.

Interviewer: Right now you're not talking to your mother?

Rita: Right now I'm not talking to her.

Interviewer: The last time you left in disagreement? That was when you took your car?

Rita: Right and my girls, that's when I called the police. I found out a lot from friends and cousins that she was crying a lot for the girls. That's another thing that hurts me that she asks a lot for the girls, and she wants to know about the girls, and she wants to see the girls. So I had someone take them over there to see her, and she was seeing the girls, but not me. She didn't want me there. She only wanted to see the girls, so I did that. So she wouldn't feel bad, I sent the girls over there for a couple of hours. The person that did me the favor brought them back, but not me. My daughter, "Mom how come you don't go with us when we go see Memo?" I couldn't hide it anymore. I said, "Because, mi hija (*my daughter*), Memo doesn't want mama there. She loves you very much, she loves (*other daughter*) very much, but Memo right now doesn't want mama to go to her house. Maybe later she'll think different, but right now your grandma doesn't want me in her house."

Interviewer: When you went to take the car.... When you had the car accident, you took the car yourself over there?

Rita: I drove my daughter to school, and I had an accident close by the house.

Interviewer: You took the car to your mother's house.?

Rita: No the wrecker did.

Interviewer: Did you go to your mother's house?

Rita: Yeah, we were already talking by that time.

Interviewer: How did she treat you?

Rita: Okay, it wasn't the same. I don't feel like the same daughter anymore. I feel like all my nieces, nephew, you know, like she treats them better. I'm not saying that I'm jealous, but I'm not that Rita that I used to be. I'm someone that if you're there fine and if you're not. As long as the girls are there, everything to her is fine. But I think things weren't that well because when I went back and started visiting her, I told her, "Look mom we're gonna be coming over to visit you, but under one condition. You don't give them any junk food. If it's a snack fine like a fruit, but to eat any food. It doesn't have to be three meals. But junk food, no don't give them that. Give them fruit. They're already accustomed to that." She hated me for that. I guess she wanted to spoil them.

When I was there one day, she went to the store in the morning. She brought back two snacks. She left the grocery back on the table and went to the restroom. So I went to get the stuff out of the grocery bag. It was a gallon of milk and those two snacks. I figured those two snacks were for the girls. I went and I hid them. I said to myself she's still trying to do the same thing. There would be times that I would leave them there to go somewhere, and she'd give them all that. I said she doesn't understand me, she doesn't want to listen to me. When my daughter got sick, I asked her, "Are you sure that you didn't give her no junk food?" She started yelling at me. And she said where did I see any junk food in that house. I went and I took out those two snacks. They had been hidden there for two days, I think. "Remember the other day you went to the store. Why did you buy this for? You say you never give them no junk food no more." She said, "Oh they were for me." She's the type of person that doesn't eat none of those things. I know my mother already. I told her, "Mother you know they're not for you. You don't like these. You don't like things that are too sweet. See you're lying to me. You just don't know what to say." That's when she told me, "You know what, why don't you just leave, and I never want to see you and the girls back no more." This was this last time, but when I had the accident. The wrecker took the car over there. We were still talking to each other. I didn't go in the ambulance with my daughter because she was scared of the ambulance. I got hurt real bad, and she got hurt a little bit. I didn't go in the ambulance because she was scared. So from her house we went to the hospital. This was the last time I was at

her house.

I talked to a friend of hers, this lady. She says that my mother's wrong, that she shouldn't do that. That she should let me be a parent just like she was. That she should go by what I say, when it comes to the girls, because they're my daughters. She says "I don't think you're doing anything that's gonna hurt them. As a matter of fact, in the future they're gonna thank you for how you raised them up. Things you give them to eat, that means a lot to children. Your mother, all she wants is to spoil them so they can love her. I tell her you're doing wrong. Sometimes your mother calls me crying, and she tells me that you and her got into another argument. I tell her okay what did you do? I know you did something to the girls that she didn't accept. I always end up finding out that she's wrong." She's one of the persons that make me feel that I'm right and she's wrong. I always thought to myself well maybe I'm wrong, but no. That lady told me no. She loves my mother very much. She says "I love your mother very much. She means a lot to me, but I love you too and you're right. You're raising up these girls real good. They're real good girls. You're not to be yelling at them, telling them over and over. They know what to do and what to eat and what they're not supposed to eat. I've never seen small kids these days like that. All you have to do is tell them once." My mother always told them that I've been like a dog with them. "You're a dog, you're worse than a dog." I would tell her, "What do you mean by that?" She says, "You know dogs even treat their puppies better than what you treat your daughters. They give them more love."

She's always told me a lot of things, but all that I was able to accept. I just carry all that in my heart, but this last thing she said was a bomb. Everything exploded in my heart with what she told me. I'm not gonna talk to her. God forgive me. She's my mother. I love her very much, but as long as she doesn't call me and apologize for what she told me that left me in pain, I'm not gonna talk to her. Not if she wished me death. I think she really meant what she said, because it's taken her so long.

In June of the same year, Rita was contacted again. She was now living with a boyfriend and his family. Halfway through the interview, she discussed her present living arrangement. Then at the end of the session, she is asked about her future plans.

Interviewer: Okay, the next thing is stress. And you have already told me about some of the times that you have had stress. Now I want you think back. And we all have stress, hard times, bad times, we all have to go through them. So I want you think of one experience that you consider pretty stressful.

Rita: Like now in the present too?

Interviewer: Whenever. It can be now or whenever you want to.

Rita: I could say now because right now I am living in a four-wall room, me and my two girls. And to me that is very sad because I am not happy. My girls are not happy. We just have to stay here. That is something that I have to show my girls that I am enjoying living here. That I don't feel sick when I feel a lot of pressure. I just have to show them that nothing bothers me. I play with them, like nothing bothers me. But I feel a lot of stress.

Right now, what I really want is to be my myself with my two girls. I have a boyfriend that I am living with, with him and his mom and his older sister.

But everything was different at the beginning. Like they say, at first they have you on a pedestal. I made this mistake before. But it is no one's fault but mine.

But if I really had my way of moving out on my own, without feeling, without having to see him. Without having to go through so many phases. Cause I don't have a place to go. Sometimes, I feel like I want to walk out.

I would consider my car, as my house. but my car is wrecked. And I have not been able to fix it. That hurts me because I am not happy. And my girls have started to tell me that why can't they have this or that? Eat this or that; do this or that or why can that other person eat this and not me. Why can that person eat that or stay up to watch TV. And they can't. And that hurts.

(Interviewer's Note: Participant's eyes were tearing as she was relating this.)

And I have to go by what they say because it is not my house.

. . . .

Interviewer: Now you are 30 years old. In ten more years, you will be forty. Your little girls will be

older, one sixteen and the other one twelve, what do you see?

Rita: In ten years from now. I will give myself a little more time. And once I get myself going, I am going to get a place for ourselves. And I might try to have everything they need. And I am going to try to please them the right way where we can be happy. So no one can tell us no; only our discipline. I don't mind my boyfriend right now. But in ten years from now, I want to see my girls happy. I don't want them to remember what they are thinking right now. And in ten years from now, God's willing. I am going to make the effort to forget all the things they can remember and just think of happiness.

Interviewer: Do you see yourself by yourself with the girls or with your partner?

Rita: Either or? It has gotten to the point that it really does not matter. I would prefer to live with someone, a boyfriend. If he doesn't want to marry. that's fine. I don't want to have no more children. I am thirty years old. I think my two girls are enough.

Interviewer: Do you see yourself in a house? What kind of house do you see?

Rita: I see a house in a real pretty nice neighborhood. Where they have nice schools there. Where we don't have to worry about having them to walk home from elementary. Where I can stand on the door and see my youngest one walk from school to the house. A safe neighborhood, I see myself in a safe neighborhood. My daughter, I see her going to junior high. And I don't know, if I will or not will stay with my partner. But I would prefer not to stay alone. I don't want to be alone.

Interviewer: What do you see yourself doing?

Rita: In ten years from now, if I decide by myself, I will already have a job. I see myself working at a real nice place. Getting paid enough to support my two daughters and myself.

Interviewer: What kind of place?

Rita: A place like secretarial work. I like bookkeeping, cashier. Work at a bank. Where I can have my forty hours. Where I can say that it is a job to where I can depend on a check to make a house payment and buy groceries and pay my utilities.

Interviewer: Are you planning to buy a house or rent?

Rita: If I save money, I probably will be able to buy. The way I am now. I never can save money. If I were on my own, I would probably have a little over \$150. Now, I cannot save money at all.

And what hurts me is that nothing is going to my girls. They want a swimming pool, I can't buy them. They want to go to Mcdonald's, I can't take them. And worse the money that belongs to me is all gone.

No body sees this here. And if I bring it up, they think I am being too nosey. And that I should be glad that I am here. So I can't say much. And I don't think hiding money is right. I can't put money in the bank.

In ten years, God's knows. The other day I told my partner that if something happens to me. I felt sick, real sick, I told him that if something happens to me for him to do me the favor and take my girls to mom. Both of them.

I don't see any happiness here. I know there is happiness. There could be happiness, but he doesn't want to see things. He doesn't want to realize that he is wrong like he use to. Before he use to say, yeah, I shouldn't have done that. I am sorry. And things would go back to normal. Now he won't talk to me for one, two or three days. I tell him what happened to that understandable person that I met. I said I thought you were the kind of person that you would understand. Whether you are right or wrong, make me see that I am wrong. If I am wrong tell, me it is possible that we don't have to argue. I hate to argue. Make me think that I am doing wrong. He never talks to me.

Interviewer: So in ten years you see yourself with or maybe without that partner. You are not sure yet?

Rita: It is with him or with somebody else. And I hate to say somebody else. But what hurts me more about my partner now is that my girls call him dad. That is what hurts me. That is the reason why it is not so easy for me to leave. Because they call him daddy. Especially the youngest one, she thinks he is her father. So a lot of marriage, you try to hold on to your husband or wife for the kids. And I guess if I do that, I will still be with him. If I am not underground.

BLANCA'S STORY.

Blanca is a 30 year mother of 4 children. She left school during the twelfth grade. Separated from her husband at the time of the first interview, Blanca was living in one of the public housing projects on San Antonio's westside. The first interview was conducted in November of 1988 during which time Blanca was attending the Avance program.

Blanca: Well, I was born in Princeville, Illinois. And I don't remember much of that part of my life, when I was small. I remember we came back to San Antonio cause we were migrant workers. We were going, you know, seasonal work. And I was sent to school over there and over here

And it didn't disrupt my schooling that much. Only when I got into (*junior*) high school. Ah, because we used to go, and then they had different kinds of methods over there, and sometimes it would get me in trouble because of that. Because we were always on the go. From state to state and different schools and a lot of pressures with other children.

And then I remembered my life settled a little bit more when I was about 14. And then my mother said she's in junior high. We better just stay in one place. My father got a job here in San Antonio. And well life was pretty, you know, a lot better than when I remember when I was smaller. We were migrant workers, and then we kind of settled down. Then I went to school. I liked school. I didn't have trouble with school.

But once I got to the age of 17, I was the only child. When I was up to the age of 17, well, like most teenage girls I started, you know, dating and stuff. I got married around that age at 17. And it worked for a few years; and then, well, we've been separated for about a year or so. Ah, but I have all my children with me. And that's what keeps me going.

I'm not at the point where I want to be. Because I don't like to live here at the housing projects because of my children.

I make it day by day. Try to do the best I can with them. And I never had any, you know, memories of having any abuse or anything when I was small. Not that I would say. I know my parents love me. But at

the age, just after I got married, my mother passed away about 3 months after. And, that kind of took me by surprise. Well I was already married.

And, it really, I didn't think it had affected me that much. But in a way it did, because, after around six months I became pregnant. And with all these things going on in my life, I had my, I was pregnant for the first time. I had a miscarriage. The fourth month and a half. And, I took it pretty hard. But I kept on going. Then by the time I knew it, I was pregnant again. And now I have four children and I love them all.

Interviewer: I know that. It shows.

Blanca: Yes. So I'm doing pretty well. Now that I'm here, I've never tried to better myself or anything, because I'm pretty much at home. I get depressed most of the time when it's near Christmas or holidays, because I realize that I can't give my kids what I wish I could give them. But, what's been helping me out now is that since I've been going to Avance. They show us that we do make a difference in their lives. Even though we're single parent. Most of us are just single parents, families. They make us feel important.

They teach us that we do make a difference. Which I didn't. I would get real depressed because I would say, I'm just a caretaker and that's all. So, I'm doing much better now, since I've been going. And I look forward to it. At first I thought, well, I'm just going just to get out of the house, you know. And I said, ah-h-h, now it's Thursday, I gotta go to class, the first two times.

And, now I don't. I get up early in the morning and I look forward to it.

And they teach us a lot about how to understand their growth and all that. I didn't think I would learn, ever. I'd just say, the baby has this or that and I'd call my aunt. What do you think he has? Now I can, you know, symptoms and everything. That's what we've been learning this past week on childhood illnesses. And it's helped me a lot.

I do get depressed, because sometimes I think I don't give my kids the things that they need. But I try my best. But, now at class our teacher tells us, the best thing you can give your children is love. Because a lot of mothers don't even give that to their children. And my kids enjoy me going. And I'm kind of surprised, cause they say, "Mom, I didn't know you could do that." "Who made this?" And it helps the kids in their skills

as they're growing up. And I understand him a little bit better. Cause he used to throw fits when I was sick. What's wrong with him?

And, I, I didn't understand, you know. Sometimes I used to get mad. I'd say, what's wrong with him. I'm trying to do what he, he. I'd give him the ball. He wouldn't want it. But now, they taught us, you know, go through his interests. If I see that he's playing with something, go with him. Try to help him with what he's, let him do what he wants. It's not that he's doing something wrong, that he shouldn't do. It's that he's exploring. And I didn't know that. I used to say, ah, he's just doing it, just to get me mad.

Especially my older kids, because they got a mind of their own now. But I try to, you know. Cause I'm gonna need a lot of help with my oldest. My 12 year old. And they told us that they're gonna be helping us out with that.

I know that if I have a problem, I have somebody to talk to now. So anybody that's staff will help me. Give me the time. All I have to do is just call em, tell them I need somebody to talk to, and they'll come.

. . . .

And I know that if I tell them a problem that I have at home, I won't be criticized. It's very, you know, opportunity that you have because you can tell that person something that's happening in your life, and it's not going to affect you. They're not going to criticize you and say you did this if you do something wrong. They try to give you advice. They don't tell you, you have to do it, but this is for your children's best interests. And they teach us a lot of things that I didn't think. I didn't think I had a brain working up here that I would learn and stuff.

It's very fun. But, most of my life... it's been not exciting or anything. I miss my mother a lot since she passed away, because my dad got remarried. And after two years I knew he had to get remarried again cause he needed a wife. But he don't see the children like if they were his grandchildren. And he can go a year without seeing us.

Interviewer: He lives here in San Antonio?

Blanca: Yes, he lives right here around the corner. And he don't bother to call us to see how the children are or anything. And I don't know if it's because he didn't like my husband, but I don't think he should've taken it out on them. Because they say, "Where's my

grandma?" And I've taken them to the cemetery and explained. And they say they wish they would have met their grandma. And they say why don't their grandpa love them. What did they do? They say what did they do. And I say it's not your fault. It's that your grandpa never liked your dad. And they say well he's not here no more. And they say well they wish their grandpa would show them love. That's why now that I go to Avance I understand that they need the food, the shelter and me helping them with homework and that. But I understand now that they do need, you know, touching and, you know, talking to.

And regular hugging, which I didn't used to do. Really I didn't used to do that. And that's why I like Avance, because it doesn't criticize me. It doesn't criticized my family for the problems that we have at home. They, in turn, try to help us. You know, they ah - through me, they teach us a class. Every Thursday it's a different class. But it has something do with our basic lives of our children. Just to help us improve ourselves.

Interviewer: You mentioned that hugging and touching wasn't something you did very much of.

Blanca: No, uh ah.

Interviewer: Is there a difference now since you've learned?

Blanca: Yes, yes because my children... Like when they get home from school, they say, "What did you do today mom?" like they're interested in what I did. And before, they would come home from school, sit down and watch TV "Is dinner done? What are we gonna eat?" Now, they take time with me. "What did you do today, mom?" And it does make a difference because I can see that the touching and the hugging that I didn't used to do. It's like they're reassured, they're reassured. And it reassures me too.

Interviewer: That's wonderful.

Blanca: Because I know I have somebody that does love me too.

Interviewer: Right. And isn't it a good feeling to hug them and feel that love?

Blanca: Yeah, and before, you know, I was a basic mom. You know, just come home, feed the children have their clothes washed. You know, see that they have what they needed, shelter, their food. But now I know that they need my support, my advice, their constant companion,.

Interviewer: Right.

Blanca: But I also need time for myself, you know. Sometimes, I didn't have time. Not even a couple of minutes to myself. And now that I go to Avance, I know that when I go, I have free time to do anything I can. What they tell us to do.

And I know that he's being taken well cared of. Cause I've been working with the child care downstairs as a volunteer and I see what they're doing. And I'm more reassured when I'm up in class.

Interviewer: Right.

Blanca: Because I know that they're taken care of real good.

And, you know, it's been wonderful. I didn't think it was gonna be this, you know, the classes were gonna be... I thought it was just a... it would be a nuisance.

And when the home visitors come and talk to me here at home, they ask us, you know, well what are we in need of. We know we can rely on somebody.

If there's a problem, they can't help us, they'll refer me to another program or get me help in whatever I need. And before, I used to say, oh, I need this, and Oh, I don't know how to do - what am I going to do? And it doesn't seem like it, but it worries you. Because you don't have what you need for the children.

Interviewer: That's a big worry on a mother.

Blanca: Ah ha. And now if I need something, all I have to do is ask. If they can't get it for me they'll try. They'll refer me to another program or whatever. But it doesn't seem like it, but it's been making differences. A little bit, and a little bit and a little bit at a time, but it does make a difference. The first lesson they taught us is that mothers do make a difference. And I would say, why are they teaching us this lesson? I mean what does it have to do with them growing up? But, now I know that it makes a difference in the way that it makes us feel better. And it makes us know that we do make a difference. Most mothers think that it's like a job, you've gotta do it. They're your children, and you have to do it. But now that I've been going, they teach us that when you love your children you touch them, you laugh with them. Even their silly little jokes. Or you praise them. That's another thing they taught us, praise.

Praise your children whenever you can because it does make them feel better. Even the little ones. Just touching their hands, clapping them together, any little gesture you do. It makes us feel a lot better. And when I was growing up, I was the only one in the family. I was the only child in the family. And it seems to me, my mother and my father, they didn't love me. They never abused me in any way or anything like that. I had what I needed. If I needed something for school, they would get it for me. And my mother was great to me. But my father was very distant. I guess even now that I'm older I don't, can't remember, not even once being kissed on the cheek by him. At first it didn't make a..., now that I know it does make a difference. It seems to me very sad that your own parents can't come up to you and give you, you know, a kiss on the cheek. And now I do that to all my children. Not just the little one. Even the big one. She don't want me to kiss her in front of her friends. I just give her a hug, and she says it makes her feel good. Because I used to take after my dad. Cause when they were growing up, I wouldn't touch them. They were there I knew. Or when they started walking, oh yeah!, you know. But not on a daily basis. And that's what they taught us there.

. . . .

And I'm trying to, even on my oldest. She's twelve, she's gonna be twelve in December. I'm trying to tell her that education is very, it is very important. That's the most important thing she can do right now, finish her education. And like I tell her, you don't wanna wind up being like mom. I tell her because if you do, you'll never get very far. You have to finish your school. And then, maybe when you're bigger you can start your own family. But when you're ready. Right now, some kids are out here. They think they're ready just because they can reproduce. And I tell her because I try to... She tries to copy her friends.

She's starting to say that she wants to wear makeup. And I tell her, no, it's not, to me it's not good. I never wore makeup when I was a teenager. But it doesn't mean that it's wrong, but I tell her she's not ready for it now. She has to be a little bit older. She wants to go to the movies with her friends, you know, stuff like that. That she doesn't get to go on the bus by herself. And I tell her, it's not that I'm mean, I don't want you to do that. But something can happen on the way. Some man can take you and do what he wants and stuff like that. And I tell her, you've got a lot of things to go, you know, a lot of years ahead of you and you can do that. It doesn't mean I just want you here at home. It means that I'm trying

to look after your best interests. And they told us they're going to be helping us with the older children too. Not only the children. They don't just help us with the children we have in the program. They try to work with us like the whole family. In the sense that they, they don't say, well, if you're having trouble with your husband leave him. They don't tell us things like that. They just tell us, you know, they give us different things.

Interviewer: Try to make it work, in other words. Don't give up, try to make it work.

Blanca: Try to make it work. Yeah, keep the family together. Cause some programs do that. They, they say well if you can't, if your husband, your boyfriend, your common-law husband or whatever giving you trouble, throw them out of the house. They say that a family concept is the most important thing for the children. And they try to keep us as a family and they work with us like that.

And now that they give us information on research that has been done. That you didn't, you know, you never read about. Stuff like that and it makes sense. It does make sense. And they're very interesting. We have speakers coming into the program, ah, talk to us about things that, you know, ah, illnesses and stuff like that. That touches in every day life. You know, some problems that we may have or something. And, ah, what else.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that you went to school in Michigan. And was it in Michigan the whole time up until junior high?

Blanca: No, you see, we were migrant workers. We would go to Illinois for about six months or so and then come back for six months. And, you know, they had me up and down, going to and from. I would go to Illinois. All I remember in Michigan, mostly, when I was around six. We used to work out in the fields. I have pictures of when I was working in the fields. And my children say, Mom, you used to do that kind of work, you know. And I tell them, at least, you know, when you're growing up, your school is the first priority. And then they used to take us to school, come back from school, go eat, take a bite to eat, and then go and work in the fields. There wasn't much time for playing around and stuff like that. And I don't blame that for not finishing school, because I had a school opportunity. But once I got into my teenage years that's a whole new life that you start.

Interviewer: What grade did you complete?

Blanca: I completed up to the eleventh grade and I went into the twelfth, I went to the twelfth grade. I had already the cap and gown and my High School ring and everything. And I was married by then. And my husband had a car accident. So mostly then I stayed at home because of him. That's why I never finished school. So now with Avance, they tell us they have a GED. program. And I never thought of even trying. But they give us support there. That's why I like

They give us support and they don't criticize. And, you know, we, they tell us, be good to one another, the mothers. Be good and courteous. We're not here to see who can be better than the other. We're just doing these things we do for our children, for them.

And that's what they tell us. And be courteous to one another. And that's what I, I mean, like where we live here in the housing projects, there's not much of that courtesy, you know. And what I've learned there is that if you're courteous to people, they respond in a good way. And if they don't, you just, you know, not ignore the person but just keep out of their way a little and try to be nice to them a little. Maybe they'll change. And that's what I tell my children to work on at school. Because it is very important, how you're growing up. The different things that, how you respond to other people.

. . . .

I wish I had finished high school. That's what I tell my kids. Maybe we wouldn't live here if I had finished school. But since I haven't, I didn't, I tell my kids I made a big mistake. I should of. And I'm not gonna tell em you do this and, I mean, you'll get out of school earlier and this and that. I try to tell them that, that's the most important thing that they can do now. Is get the education and when they get bigger, they can better themselves.

Interviewer: Isn't that nice? Now you have the opportunity again to get your GED. through Avance. And I'm sure you'll do well.

Blanca: Yeah, I hope so. I mean, I know.

Interviewer: You're a bright lady and I'm sure you'll do really well.

Blanca: It's a challenge but I know I'm not going to be pressured into it, you know.

And it's a good feeling that if I don't pass the test

the first time, I still have opportunity to better my grade and see if I can do it again.

Interviewer: Right.

Blanca: And they don't, they don't tell you, well you have to pass it the first time. You can't do it, try, try again. And that's what makes me feel good.

I'm just doing it, not just because that I wanna a job right away and going to college.

I'm just trying to do it to give my oldest daughter an example. If mom can do it, I'm sure you can do it.

I saw my little girls, because they have a lot of pressure here with other kids. And they say, ah, sometimes they say, "Oh I don't want to go to school today." And I tell her, if you don't go to school today, you're going to miss the lesson of the day and you might not learn something the other kids learned. Try, you know, try your best. If you can't do perfect it doesn't matter. As long as you try your best.

And the most important thing that I think Avance has taught me was how to communicate with my children. But touching and the loving because I know I missed all that with my father. My mother was there all the time and she got me what I needed and all that, but there wasn't that touching, that kissing, that hugging. Even in the simple, just holding hands. I didn't know that was important for children, cause all that stays in their minds. When they're older, they know if their parents loved them or not

. . . .

I didn't do that at first. I mean I was here all the time when they got home from school. I'm always here. But there wasn't that communication there day by day. And I know it makes us feel good. I didn't think it would, you know. And it shows.

Interviewer: You've seen a big difference?

Blanca: It shows in my children. Ah! the nine year old every night before she comes and gives me a kiss.

She never used to do that. She comes here and she says, good night mom, God Bless you and sweet dreams.

And it makes me feel good, too.

Cause I know that if something should happen to me, I know that, that I'll be missed. And before I didn't

think so. That if something happens to me, nobody will care. And I know that at least my children do care. Even though I don't have a companion with me everyday, but I know that I'll be missed in some way.

And before we didn't have that around us, with my kids and my, between us. We didn't have that. And it was like a feeling like, ah, we're all here and that's it, you know, and not now, not anymore.

Interviewer: Real good. OK, we're getting ready to wrap it up. Is there anything you'd like to include before we stop?

Blanca: Well just that, Avance has made the difference. Not only in my life, in my children's. Because we get along a lot better, and I do know that I make a difference. And I don't get as depressed as I used to.

Interviewer: That's really wonderful to hear. It shows in your expression.

Blanca: But it does make a lot of difference because they teach us things that I didn't think I was capable of learning. And they taught me that, that if I try, I can do a little bit better with my own family and in my own life. And I didn't think Avance was going to make a difference. I was just going to show up for class and be counted in and that's it. But it has made a difference in the relationship between me and my children. And I just love it.

The second interview was conducted five months after the first. During the session, Blanca expanded a little on her relationship with her husband, and at the end of the interview she was asked about her future plans.

Interviewer: How about the children's father, does he... I don't know if you have been keeping in touch with him.

Blanca: I do keep in touch with him just because of the children. Because they love their daddy. Because I have told them, "It is not that your daddy doesn't love you, it is that he says can't provide for you." He says it is better for him to be out of the home; then with us. Because if he is with us, he can't provide for us and then we will be in more needs. We will have more needs. He says if you are alone with

the children, you can show them. They know that I love them. He had never abused them. He would never hit them; he would yell a lot. He was one of those yellers, but he would never hit them.

Interviewer: What does he think about you attending Avance?

Blanca: Well, he told me he saw a difference. At first he told me that he didn't want me you to go because you might meet people. They might change your mind about, you know, the stuff at home. And I said, "No, they don't promote that we separate from our spouses, or anything like that." They want us to be a family unit. And that is what he has told me that he has liked. Because they have helped me out a lot. And when they help me out in some way, I let him know. Because he calls the children. He lives here in San Antonio and he lives with his aunt. But he says he doesn't want to be with us because he will hold us back. The same reason because he didn't finish school. He doesn't know how to read; he can't get a job; he has tried but he can't get the job. He can't read a word. He says, "I rather be without you and I know your mother can provide better for you by herself, than as a family unit." Maybe one day when I have a steady job, that I can get something real good, maybe we can be together again.

. . . .

Interviewer: Okay, we have been talking pretty much about the past. Let's talk about the future. Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

Blanca: Well, by then my children will be grown up. I really don't have any special ambition in me. I mean, to do something else. Right now all I think about is trying to be a better parent. Trying to learn from what they are teaching me from Avance. Trying to put effort in myself for them. I try to encourage them for education. I see myself right now as just being here trying to guide them. I know they will need a lot of guidance. Especially my daughter. She is going to be twelve and she is going to go through that stage that she will like music and boys. And I want to be here for her.

Interviewer: That's good. That is for right now, but ten years from now what do you think you will be doing?

Blanca: Ten years from now I will be babysitting with my grandchildren.

I see myself as a grandmother trying to spoil them.

And being there.

Interviewer: Anything else?

Blanca: I think I would like to do something different.

Interviewer: Such as?

Blanca: Not just being a parent or a grandparent. I want to go back to work in someplace, sort of like a daycare helping out children. A job associated with helping children. That is what I have learned more. I know typing and clerical that I could work with too. But maybe I could take some kind of training and try to better myself in that way. But really I would like to work with children.

Interviewer: Okay, where do you see yourself living and with who?

Blanca: Well, I feel that I might be living at my own house where I grew up. Because I am part owner of the house where my mother lived. Right, my father has it. And since he has remarried, you know, my stepmother does not like the idea of me getting the house right now. So they rent it out; they get the rent and they say they pay all the taxes and I am not suppose to be getting any thing from the house. And I think really that at some point when my father pass away. I should be owner of that house and maybe I can get my children out of this neighborhood by then.

Interviewer: Where is that house located?

Blanca: It is near Alamo Courts, but it is in a neighborhood. Like right now, I cannot have my husband living with me. Like he says, if he is with us he can't support us. He says he will be interfering. Maybe by then we will be a family. That way my children can share his dad every day. Because he doesn't want to be with us because he says he will be holding us back instead.

PART II
PROGRAM DELIVERY

Program Schedule

Center-based parenting classes operated for nine months, beginning in September and ending in May. Classes were conducted for three hours every morning. Participants selected the day which best fits their schedule. If at times they were unable to attend on their scheduled class day, the mothers were encouraged to come on an alternate day. During the years included in the present evaluation, the starting hour for classes varied slightly depending on the site and year. Some started at 9:30 while others began at 10:00. Program staff related that this allows the mothers time to send their school-aged children off to class in the morning. The classes were divided into three one-hour periods with one hour devoted to a parenting or child development lesson from the Avance curriculum, a second hour reserved for toy-making activities and the final hour scheduled for special topics which were often presented by speakers from outside agencies. The sequence of the three sessions varied somewhat from Center to Center and year to year, although the parenting lesson was generally presented during the first hour followed by toy-making and the outside speaker. Early arrivals often continued their work on a toy until the regular schedule began.

Over the course of the nine months, several social events and outings were conducted. These included large group social events with sit-down dinners at Thanksgiving and Christmas, in addition to a costume party at Halloween. The participants were

invited to bring their entire families to the events at which time they were served at their tables by staff. Gifts were given to the mothers and children at the Christmas party. Special outings sponsored for the mothers and their children during the program year included trips to the zoo at Easter followed by a picnic, to the circus, to the Instituto Cultural de Mexico (a Mexican Cultural Arts Institute) and to Sea World.

Participants who successfully completed the program received a certificate of graduation. Successful completion was defined as attendance to 75% of the lessons offered that year. In addition the program staff encouraged the participants to volunteer in the day care a minimum of 12 times per year in order to put what they had learned in the classroom into practice under the guidance of a day care teacher. Exceptions were made, especially on the Day Care Volunteer requirement. At the end of the year there was a lavish graduation complete with caps and gowns for the children who crossed the stage with their mothers. The mothers received a certificate of completion. In addition, graduation rings were designed and available for purchase by the graduates to commemorate the event.

Attendance Records

One of the most important Process evaluation measures is a record of the participant's attendance in the various aspects of the program. Attendance by itself does not provide assurance that the participant has been exposed to the formal program because: a) the program may not have been presented in the desired form, and b) the program may have been presented in ideal form, but she may not have been attentive. Nevertheless, if she has not attended sessions, she cannot be expected to have benefitted from the material presented. It is expected that women who participated much would learn more than those who participated little.

Records of the attendance of each participant were kept by project teachers. Participants signed their name to an attendance roster each class day. This information was recorded in a class attendance roll book by the teacher.

The following participation was recorded:

Lecture/Discussion Sessions: These constituted the core of the program. Completion of 75% of these sessions constituted one part of the graduation criteria. A list of the Lecture/Discussion sessions appears in Figure 2.

Make-up Sessions: These provide an opportunity to make up missed Lecture/Discussion sessions. A week or two at the end of the program year was generally devoted to Make-up Sessions. This allowed participants who were a few lessons short to meet the graduation criteria. Typically, these sessions cover a curriculum lesson, but in less time than with the standard format (one hour rather than three owing to the exclusion of the toy-making and outside speaker components). A participant may be able to do two or three make up sessions in a single day.

Non-Lecture/Discussion Sessions: These include orientation to the program and sessions devoted to data collection.

Parties and Special Outings: These sessions include large social gatherings and field trips.

Volunteer Days: Participants were asked to volunteer as aides in the Avance day care 12 times throughout the program year.

Home Visits: Monthly visits to the participant's home were planned for observation of mother-child interactions and videotaping.

Attendance Patterns

Program staff expected that 80% of the recruits would start the program and 25% of those would drop out over the course of the nine month classes. This would result in a graduation rate of 60% of all individuals recruited. Those estimates turned out to be overly optimistic. As can be seen in Table 5, only 48% of the individuals recruited attended a class. That figure dropped to 41% who attended enough classes to become officially enrolled. A participant was not considered enrolled by the agency until they had attended a minimum of 3 classes.

As may be seen by reviewing these results, the patterns of attendance were similar for cohorts and sites. Enrollees can be divided into two major categories and one minor one. The major clusters include those who participated on a relatively limited basis (less than 10 classes) and those who remained throughout

Table 5

Number of Classes Attended by All Individuals Recruited

# of Classes	Westside		Southside		All Individuals Combined
	A	B	A	B	
	n	n	n	n	%
0	61	54	88	59	52%
1 - 2	7	13	2	13	7%
3 or more	55	58	49	45	41%

the year and met the criteria for program graduation. A smaller group (13%) left the program after accumulating at least 10 class appearances, but not enough to graduate.

Table 6 shows a breakdown of class attendance for enrollees. One third of the enrollees (34%) attended inconsistently, leaving the program before completing 10 classes. If a participant attended at least 10 classes, the likelihood of program completion increased significantly. Eighty percent of the participants who were committed enough to attend 10 classes, went on to graduate from the program. Overall, over half of the participants who enrolled (53%) graduated from the program.

Table 6
Number of Classes Attended by Program Enrollees

# of Classes	Westside		Southside		All Enrollees Combined
	A	B	A	B	
	n	n	n	n	%
3 - 9	21	22	12	16	34%
10 - 19	6	9	5	6	13%
20 - 29	19	9	22	23	35%
30 - 39	9	18	10	0	18%
Graduated	28	28	29	25	53%

Home Visits

At the beginning of the evaluation, the expressed purpose of the home visiting component was "to help develop and strengthen parenting skills and the relationship with the child." Monthly home visits were included as a core component of the program. Generally the home visits were not initiated until the second month of the program. This gave the participants an opportunity to become more comfortable with the program and staff and allowed the enrollment to stabilize.

The primary role of the home visitor during the two program cohorts was that of an observer and recorder. The home visitor was instructed to observe the mother at play with her child, preferably with toys which the mother had made herself during the toy-making classes. During the observation, the home visitor completed a checklist which specified certain maternal behaviors which might be expected during a mother-child interaction. It also included possible child responses to the mother's speech and/or actions. A second form included space to record the mother's verbalizations verbatim, the child's response and whether this was an occurrence of positive or negative attention. In addition, periodic home visits were scheduled in order to videotape the mother interacting with her child. These videotapes were later reviewed in class so that the mother could receive some positive feedback and support as well as alternate points of view from fellow participants.

In the field, home visitors were the first line of support for many of the families. In addition to conducting observations of mother-child interactions and videotaping, they were often

called on to lend a sympathetic ear and were required periodically to provide crisis intervention services. The core parenting program at Avance did not have funding for the provision of social services, but oftentimes emergent situations demanded intervention. The pressures on a family lacking sufficient food at the end of the month or on a mother with an ill child but no transportation tended to take precedence over a home visitor's normal routine. Outside the Center, the home visitor was often the staff person who became aware of these pressing issues and provided the services needed. Assistance provided included transportation, child care, advocacy on behalf of the participant with another agency or government entity and a variety of other services.

As is often true with voluntary participation programs, implementation falls slightly short of design. Cancelled appointments abounded, frustrating home visitors' efforts to maintain a timely schedule. Reasons for cancellations ranged from forgetfulness to avoidance. A few participants adamantly refused to allow staff into their homes, requiring observations to be done at the Center. By design, graduates of the program who participated for nine months were to receive eight home visits (excluding the first month). As can be seen in Table 7, this goal was only met at WS during cohort A when the mean number of visits for program graduates was 8.5. At WS for cohort B and at SS for both cohorts, the number of visits was somewhat lower ranging from 5.8 to 6.6 visits. The average length of home visits ranged from 30 to 45 minutes.

Table 7

**Mean Number of Home Visits and Videotaping Visits for
Graduate and Non-Graduate Enrollees**

	Westside		Southside	
	A	B	A	B
Non-graduate Enrollees				
Home Visits	1.0	1.4	1.0	1.4
Videotape Sessions	.1	.5	.5	.6
Total Visits	1.1	1.9	1.5	2.0
Graduates				
Home Visits	5.3	3.3	4.9	3.9
Videotape Sessions	3.2	2.5	1.7	2.0
Total Visits	8.5	5.8	6.6	5.8
Mean Length of Visits in Minutes	37.6	37.4	46.0	30.8

Over the past two years (a period not included in the present evaluation), the role of the home visitor in the Avance program has evolved from that of a relatively passive observer to that of an active participant. The advent of the Comprehensive Child Development Program has provided the agency with the resources necessary to continue the development of the home visiting component. Rather than observing the mother-child dyad, the home visitor is now trained to teach the mother skills which are directly related to the child's developmental level. First,

areas of relative strength and weakness are identified through a developmental assessment conducted by the home visitor. The home visitor then selects activities which address areas of concern for the child and teaches the mother how to implement the activities at home. It is expected by program staff that the participants will benefit from individualized instruction which focuses on specific skills and activities while building on what is taught in the classroom.

Year Two Participation

The program was designed so that mothers could continue with the Avance program for a second year. Opportunities were provided to attend courses for English as a Second Language (ESL), Basic Literacy, preparing for the high school equivalency examination (GED), or they were able to take junior college courses. All of the classes were conducted at the Avance service centers so that participants could attend in a familiar and comfortable environment. In order to make it easier for participants to attend, support services were continued during the second year. Transportation to and from class, as well as, child care at the Center were provided for participants.

When participants from both the program and control groups were contacted at time 3 (2 years subsequent to enrollment in the research), they were queried regarding their participation in continuing education classes. The data shown in Table 8 indicate that the program was successful in promoting enrollment in these classes. Overall, of the program graduates who were found at time 3, 58% of those at WS and 63% at SS had enrolled in a continuing education class. The percentages for the control group were 22% at WS and 33% at SS. The data were analyzed using the Chi Square statistic (group by enrollment status). Program - control differences were significant at the .001 level at both sites for each cohort.

Some of the Avance graduates enrolled in courses outside of Avance. Although the vast majority continued with Avance, 13 of the 61 program graduates who enrolled in continuing education courses, attended classes offered at another location.

Table 8
Second Year Participation

	Westside		Southside	
	P	C	P	C
Cohort A				
Overall n	27	59	27	54
# enrolled	15	15	21	22
% enrolled	56%*	25%	78%*	41%
Cohort B				
Overall n	25	47	22	53
# enrolled	15	8	10	13
% enrolled	60%*	17%	45%*	25%
Combined Cohorts				
Overall n	52	106	49	107
# enrolled	30	23	31	35
% enrolled	58%*	22%	63%*	33%

* $p < .001$ for program - control differences based on Chi Square analysis

**PART III
ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM QUALITY**

The evaluation of program quality calls for a close look at a complex operation. Because of the complexity and extensiveness of a program such as Avance, only certain aspects could be considered in this evaluation. We selected the following to sample: Work Environment, Program Lecture/Discussions, Day Care Environment and Participant Observations. The work environment for staff was described in Part I of this report.

Program Lecture/Discussions

Purpose

This assessment was designed to identify the kind of group interactions that took place in the morning lecture/discussion sessions. It was intended that we be able to describe the balance of lecture to discussion and to note the extent to which individual participants joined in the discussion with comments or questions.

The purpose of this assessment was not to determine whether specific program topics were presented. That could be determined from a review of the schedule and a simple check as to whether that topic had indeed been presented on the date intended. That was done as part of the Attendance assessment.

Method

The observation procedure adopted for use was based on procedures developed by Bales (1950) (see also Eisenstadt & Powell, 1987) for recording small group discussion interaction

patterns.

Two trained observers were situated in classrooms where they could see and hear all program participants and the instructors. Two or three 10 minute observation periods were recorded for each session sampled. During each 10 minute observation period, observers made ratings at each 10 second interval of the source of any message that appeared during that time period, the target of the message and the type of message. Message types included the following:

GPI	Gives personal information
GOI	Gives objective information
GO	Gives opinion
GS	Gives suggestion
API	Asks for personal information
AOI	Asks for objective information
AO	Asks for opinion
AS	Asks for suggestion
A	Agrees
D	Disagrees
RA	Requests action

Sources were coded as follows:

I	Instructor
1-9	Individual participants

Targets were coded as follows:

I	Instructor
G	Group as a whole
1-9	Individual participants

Reliability

Coding reliability was low and efforts to achieve higher levels of reliability were unsuccessful. Problems stemmed from the use of the 10 second observation interval. Observers found it very difficult to synchronize intervals in live coding of interactions. Secondly, the interval system resulted in codes

sometimes appearing for middle of sentence statements. It was not possible to know from the beginning of a sentence whether it would be a command, declaration or a question. Coders disagreed in their interpretation of the proper category for an utterance. In addition, difficulty in knowing the source of comments (the coders were often behind the class participants) and to whom the comment was directed, to an individual or to the group as a whole, also created problems for the coders.

In the absence of satisfactory reliability, the observations become personal impressions of the group interaction.

Results

Table 9 presents a summary of the classroom observations including information regarding the Source and the Target of the interactions and the number of participants who spoke during each observational interval. The topics discussed during each observation are also noted.

An analysis of the observation results revealed that the great majority of observational intervals for Source were of one type: Instructor gives objective information to participants. The second most frequently occurring form of interaction was that of an individual participant giving information to the instructor or to the group. Asking questions and other forms of interaction appeared rarely.

Discussions, as defined by reciprocated communications between participants (e.g., person A to person B with B responding to A) were found in only 1 (2/23/88-12:10) of 15 sessions.

Table 9

Observations of Classroom Interactions by Two Observers

Obs	Date	Time	NP	Source		Target		
				I	P	I	G	P
Safeguarding the Home								
E	1/07/88	11:1	1	45	4	4	45	0
E	1/07/88	11:4	3	37	10	8	37	1
Safety in the Home								
B	1/08/88	11:5	4	45	9	3	51	3
E			5	28	14	11	25	1
B	1/08/88	12:	5	28	29	16	31	3
E			5	21	29	11	36	3
B	1/13/88	12:	3	33	20	13	32	7
E			3	33	13	9	37	0
E	1/13/88	12:1	3	37	5	5	37	0
B	1/14/88	11:5	3	50	10	8	50	2
E			3	41	12	10	36	5
B	1/14/89	12:1	3	52	4	1	52	2
E			1	45	1	1	45	0
B	1/14/88	12:2	2	51	2	2	45	6
E			2	48	2	1	49	0
B	1/15/88	11:4	5	37	17	9	37	3
E			5	30	21	14	33	4
B	1/15/88	12:0	2	41	12	6	46	0
E			4	38	13	11	36	2

Note: Title of curriculum lesson being taught is in bold.

Abbreviations: B, E - Observers (Obs);
 NP - Number of Participants who spoke;
 I - Instructor;
 P - Participant;
 G - Group

Table 9 con't

Obs	Date	Time	NP	Source		Target		
				I	P	I	G	P
B	1/15/88	12:2	3	34	15	7	39	4
E			3	27	16	9	25	7
B	1/21/88	10:4	1	44	11	1	53	0
E			1	51	1	1	51	0
B	1/21/88	11:1	3	47	4	3	47	1
E			4	35	8	6	33	2
B	1/21/88	11:2	2	42	2	2	42	0
E			3	32	4	5	29	0
Fire Prevention								
B	1/22/88	11:4	4	48	5	1	50	0
E			4	45	4	3	42	1
B	1/22/88	11:5	3	52	4	1	54	0
E			2	45	2	3	44	1
B	1/22/88	12:1	2	37	5	1	34	4
E			1	37	3	2	36	1
First Aid								
B	1/26/88	11:3	1	48	3	2	49	0
E			2	45	4	4	44	1
B	1/26/88	11:5	3	43	14	6	45	3
E			5	37	16	10	37	5
B	1/26/88	12:0	4	45	5	3	39	8
E			4	46	7	6	41	6
B	1/27/88	11:3	2	50	2	6	46	0
E			2	47	4	4	46	0
B	1/27/88	11:5	3	45	3	3	44	2
E			2	43	6	2	44	1
B	1/27/88	12:0	4	41	4	2	39	1
E			2	44	2	2	43	1

Table 9 con't

Obs	Date	Time	NP	Source		Target		
				I	P	I	G	P
B	1/28/88	10:4	4	39	5	15	26	5
E			3	37	9	5	40	4
B	1/28/88	10:55	1	47	1	1	47	0
E			1	45	2	2	43	0
B	1/28/88	11:1	3	46	5	3	43	3
E			3	49	4	2	42	4
Emotional Behavior								
B	2/23/88	11:5	4	29	5	0	32	2
E			4	29	7	3	31	2
B	2/23/88	12:1	3	30	8	0	37	1
E			2	32	8	8	29	3
Socialization								
B	2/26/88	11:4	2	36	2	1	33	4
E			2	35	3	3	31	4
B	2/26/88	11:5	2	29	2	3	27	1
E			4	28	6	4	26	4
B	3/1/88	11:5	2	35	2	0	34	3
E			3	35	3	0	37	1
B	3/1/88	12:1	5	30	6	1	35	0
E			4	31	6	8	28	1
Behavior								
B	3/4/88	11:4	2	32	3	1	31	3
B	3/4/88	12:0	3	35	4	4	29	7
B	3/8/88	11:3	3	35	4	0	36	1
E			4	33	4	0	35	0
B	3/8/88	11:5	3	34	3	0	36	1
E			3	31	6	1	35	1
B	3/8/88	12:1	2	34	4	0	36	2
E			3	29	8	6	30	1

Discussion

The observation results indicated that the sessions were characterized by an instructor presenting information to students with some student response. These results were essentially what would be expected of a class lecture educational format.

Instructors presented prepared teaching materials (See list of curriculum topics in Figure 2 for content) to a group of students who listened attentively and made occasional comments, typically drawing on their personal experience, or asked questions, usually for clarification.

Recording the source and type of information at 10 second intervals, as was done here, necessarily results in a large number of tallies for the category "Instructor Source, Information Presented." Other procedures, such as tallying type of topic discussed, would have yielded different results.

The materials describing the Avance program that were available to the evaluation staff prior to the evaluation did not stipulate how the educational sessions were to be conducted. However, the emphasis seemed to be on the presentation of a rather large amount of information to the participants in an oral format within the time available. There was some mention of valuing discussion, but this was not emphasized. The results of the classroom observations, keeping in mind the reliability problems mentioned above, indicate that the goals of the program were achieved: a large amount of information was presented orally to an attentive group of participants. Group discussion was secondary to the presentation of information.

It should be noted that the observations were limited to only one of the three parts of each morning's activities. Participants had an opportunity to continue to discuss information provided in the formal sessions during the Toy Making session prior to the lectures the next week. Sometimes, parents remained after class to discuss a particular point with the parent educator. It was the opinion of the evaluation data collectors that discussion among participants and between participants and staff often continued after formal sessions had ended.

Day Care Environment

While mothers participated in the parent education program, their young children were cared for in the Avance day care facilities located in the same building. Although the primary purpose of these facilities was to provide care for the infants and young children while their mothers were participating in program activities, the Avance program also expected the day care experience to have positive effects on the social, cognitive and language development of the children; that is, it was expected to be an educationally stimulating learning environment. Children attended the day care when their mothers were in classes one day per week.

At the beginning of the program year in September, the day care staff expended much time and energy helping children adjust to the new setting. Owing to the infrequent and often irregular exposure to the day care, the separation anxiety experienced by children new to the day care generally lasted for several weeks.

According to the day care supervisors at the Centers, the staff-child ratios in the individual classes varied from day to day depending on the attendance of the mothers. At the WS, the reported ratio ranged from 2:2 to 2:12 in the infant room, 2:2 to 2:20 in the crawlers room and 3:6 to 3:35 in the toddlers room. The ratio at the SS ranged from 2:1 to 2:8 in the infant room, 3:2 to 3:19 in the crawlers room and 2:5 to 2:10 in the toddlers room.

Method

The day care program was examined in two ways. First, the evaluation staff walked through the facilities and observed the on-going operations. This was done several times at each site without advance warning. Second, a standardized observational procedure was used. At the end of the observation sessions, the Day Care Supervisor was interviewed.

During the tenure of the evaluation project, the Avance day care did not require a license to care for the children. The Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) defined criteria for the licensing of day care facilities. However, the Avance day care provided at the Centers did not fall under the purview of the TDHS Day Care Facilities Standards because the mothers were present in the same facility. As long as a parent of the child was present in the same building, the state licensing requirement did not apply.

General Observations

The facility was crowded in SS, but this improved after the move to a new site in the fall of 1988.

Little culturally relevant material was apparent on the walls or in the toys and reading materials. At WS there was a picture of San Antonio Mayor Cisneros, who is Mexican American, balanced by a picture of President Bush.

Staff reported to evaluation personnel that there was a curriculum for children in day care and that it was in use. The curriculum cited was Small Wonder, developed by Merle B. Karnes (1981). Observation of the day care did not indicate that a

curriculum was being followed, although materials were available and the curriculum plan was posted on walls of the Center. At the time of evaluation observations, inquiries of staff suggested that they were not knowledgeable about the curriculum. As referenced in the section on staff training, these issues were later addressed through staff development activities.

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale

The quality of the day care provided was assessed with the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) (Harms & Clifford, 1980). This system was used because the features of ECERS covered elements relevant for the Avance day care units and because the ECERS had been developed with attention given to reliability and validity.

Description. The ECERS is an observational instrument designed to provide a global assessment of the quality of a child care facility. The 37 individual items are broken into 7 dimensions: 1) Personal Care Routines of Children; 2) Furnishings and Display for Children; 3) Language-Reasoning Experiences; 4) Fine and Gross Motor Activities; 5) Creative Activities; 6) Social Development; and 7) Adult Needs. In addition, an overall quality assessment is obtained by summing the 7 scales.

Scoring. Each of the items is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from inadequate (1) to excellent (7). Detailed descriptions are given for each of the odd numbers on the scale. Scale scores are derived through summation of the individual items.

Reliability. Harms and Clifford (1980) report Cronbach alphas of internal consistency ranging from .32 to .79 for the 7 scales and .83 for the Total Scale. Interrater reliability coefficients of .93 and .94 were obtained at the item level. Classroom level interrater reliability coefficients ranged from .79 to .90.

Validity. The ratings made by expert observers of 18 classrooms using the ECERS were compared to ratings by trainers who had worked in those classrooms (Harms & Clifford, 1980). A rank order correlation of .74 was obtained. When the trainer's ratings were compared to the ratings of less well trained observers, a correlation of .70 was found. In addition, the individual items of a pilot version of the ECERS were rated by 7 "nationally recognized experts" in the field. Only 1 percent were given low importance, while 78 percent were rated as having high importance. Minor modifications were made based on the findings.

Procedure. Ratings for the ECERS were obtained on separate days for each of three age groups (infants, 1-8 months; crawlers, 9-24 months; and toddlers, 24-60 months) at each of the two sites. Observations were carried out by a member of the evaluation research staff.

Results. Mean ECERS scores for the two Avance sites are shown in Table 10. As Harms and Clifford (1980) have not provided normative data, it is difficult to find a frame of reference for judging the Avance programs. However, making use of the anchor-points on the rating scales, a mean score of 4

Table 10
Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Mean Scores

Dimension	Infant		Crawler		Toddler	
	WS	SS	WS	SS	WS	SS
Total Personal Care Routines	4.25	5.00	4.60	4.60	4.20	4.20
Total Furnishings/ Display	3.50	5.00	4.20	3.80	4.40	3.80
Total Language/ Reasoning Exper.	4.00	3.25	3.50	3.25	4.75	4.00
Total Fine/Gross Motor Activities	4.67	4.67	4.50	5.33	4.67	5.33
Total Creative* Activities	-	-	3.43	4.43	4.00	4.86
Total Social Development	3.40	4.00	3.50	3.50	4.33	4.17
Total Adult Needs	5.25	4.75	5.25	4.75	5.00	4.75
Number of Children Present	3	3	4	3	14	7
Number of Adults Present	2	2	2	4	3	2

* The Creative Activities dimension is omitted from the ECERS for infant rooms

would be average and a mean of 7 would be excellent. Using these standards and examining the results in Table 10, it is evident that for the toddler group all of the scores were at least at the average level and were fairly high for Fine/Gross Motor. Scores for the Infants and Crawler groups tended to be lower, and scores for Language/Reasoning and Social Development were below average.

Personal Care and Fine/Gross Motor were above average.

The comments of the observer on each of the areas tapped by the ECERS follow. The comments shown are a complete report of first sets of records. The selection is not necessarily random but is believed to be representative of the total set of comments. They are presented without editing to enliven the mean scores reported in Table 10.

Examples of Comments by the Observer About the Day Care Units.

Greeting/Departing

- I-1 Warm greeting by x and y at the front desk when families arrived. Greeted mothers and children. It is understood that someone is always at the front desk to ensure greeting of parents upon arrival.
- I-2 Choice of entry by mothers unpredictable.
- C-1 Warm greeting by A at front door on arrival. Conversation on arrival. Clothes ready for departure.
- C-2 According to teacher C the entrance used by the mothers is unpredictable. No one is especially assigned to greet mothers.
- T-1 Children greeted warmly upon arrival by staff. At departure, no communication observed between staff and children and minimal to no conversation with mothers.
- T-2 According to staff, no one person is assigned responsibility for greeting and departure of mothers and children. A very warm and friendly greeting was apparent this morning.

Meals/Snacks

- I-1 Baby food consistency: green beans, meat, bananas. Table food: Polish sausage cut up, green beans. Feeding was on schedules suited to children's needs. Infants held while bottle fed.
- I-2 Carrots and applesauce of baby food consistency. Lunch served at 11:20.

- C-1 Lunch served 10:50 a.m. Menu: Polish sausage, string beans, half banana, half slice white bread, 1 cup milk. Children in high chairs. Staff sitting nearby to assist. More verbal and physical assistance provided rather than actual conversation with children.
- C-2 Two fish sticks, mixed vegetables, slice white bread, and milk. Lunch served at 11:15. Hands wiped with wet wipes.
- T-1 Lunch served at 11:00. Polish sausage, creamed corn, 1 tortilla, fruit cocktail, 1 cup of milk. conversation mostly to assist; kind and patient with children.
- T-2 Lunch served at 11:15. Two fish sticks, mixed vegetables, slice white bread, and milk. Children seated at tables in groups of 9, 3 and 2 at a table. One staff person sat with the children, and the other two staff circulated assisting as needed.

Nap/Rest

- I-1 Five portable cribs available. Sheets changed daily and clean. One rocking chair for adults. Z relaxed while rocking baby to sleep. Baby soothed and fell asleep right away.
- I-2 Room chilly (no heating unit). When very cold babies are moved to warmer room.
- C-1 No nap time prior to lunch. Children may nap if needed. Nap in play pen at block area with blanket and pillow.
- C-2 Little space for privacy. The amount of space available is well-used. Child soothed and helped to sleep.
- T-1 Children rest for 10 minutes prior to departure. Space in rug area cramped.
- T-2 According to D, these children usually do not need a nap as this is a half-day program. However, they will accommodate any children who are sleepy. When this happens, a small, washable rug and pillow are used.

Diapering/toileting

- I-1 Provisions convenient, well organized and easy to clean. Sink available nearby. One worker did not wash hands after diapering. The other worker rinsed hands with water but did not use soap.
- I-2 Small table with storage compartment underneath used. Mat sprayed with lysol between diaper changes.

- C-1 Diapering table convenient and well organized. Did not realize that diapering table was behind partition, thus did not observe diaper change.
- C-2 Diaper table set-up somewhat difficult for staff. Wipes fell off the table and into the corner; hard to reach. Paper on pad changed after every diaper change.
- T-1 Regular sized toilets and sinks conveniently located adjacent to room.
- T-2 The restroom is adjacent and 4 regular-sized toilets are available. The bathroom is well-organized and clean.

Personal Grooming

- C-1 Hands washed before lunch. No tooth brushing or hair combing.
- C-2 Wet wipes used instead of hand washing. No toothbrushing or hair combing as part of regular scheduled daily activity. C partially brushed child's hair. Child not cooperative.
- T-1 See above.
- T-2 Handwashing is a regularly scheduled part of the day before lunch and after toileting. Hair combing done by staff only as needed. No toothbrushing.

Furnishings

- I-1 Three high chairs, rug area, appropriate crawl space, two open shelves for toys, mirrors, balls, sorting boxes and other toys available. Rug corner available, but not pillows or soft toys.
- I-2 Room and furnishings well cared for. The room is too small and crowded. It is also usually too cold or too hot. Need more high chairs or infant seats and cubbies. Have accommodated very well to space available.
- C-1 Sufficient number of child-sized tables and chairs. Cots kept in storage room and not used. 1 play pen available. No cupboards for storing children's things. Floors and walls well maintained.
- C-2 No cubbies for children's personal items. Have only one bin for all children's personal items.
- T-1 In addition to child size furniture, also have 17 cubbies (7 used for storing supplies and the rest empty. Cubbies reportedly used more often in the winter for caps, sweaters, etc.

T-2 Floors and walls well maintained. No cubbies. Clothes labeled and stored together on restroom counter. Sufficient number of child-sized tables. Chairs available.

Furnishing (Learning)

I-2 The amount of space available limits the furnishings. Toys are available on open shelves. Limited crawling space. No infant seats. One high chair. No infant tables for pulling to standing.

C-1 Sufficient number of basic learning activity furnishings, plus art table available and used daily.

C-2 Play Doh activity with children.

T-1 Sufficient number of furnishings. Art table used daily.

Furnishings (Relaxation)

I-2 Rug available. No pillows or cushions or soft toys. One stuffed elephant toy.

C-1 Although rug is available, there is no planned cozy area. Lack of "softness" in environment; i.e., no pillows and cushions. 3 pillows in play pen, but not accessible to children.

C-2 Could use adult or child-sized rocker. "Storytelling" label right above cozy areas--nice.

T-1 Although rug is available, there is no planned, cozy area. Lack of softness: no pillows, cushions, upholstered furniture or rockers available.

T-2 Carpeted cozy area with pillows in the story area. No rockers.

Child Related Display

I-1 Disney character, large pictures displayed on child's eye level in rug corner. Mobiles in crib and suspended from ceiling.

C-1 Farm/country scene quilt hanging. No commercial materials or teacher-made displays. Some uniform art projects such as paper balloons with yarn strings attached to construction paper are displayed.

C-2 No mobiles.

- T-1 One big bulletin board with commercial display pictures--pencil, books, girl. On other wall: pictures of 4 food groups. No children's work displayed.
- T-2 Several commercial materials displayed on child's eye level. Some uniform work hanging in dry area. Glued bunny parts on construction paper.

Understanding Language

- I-1 Workers held children and pointed to pictures in book. No story telling or reading. Nursery rhyme tapes played once a month.
- I-2 During taped story, B showed infants pictures in a book. Children enjoyed it and responded well.
- C-1 Good assortment of materials, but not available on a regular basis (stored in closed closet). 10 books in library, 6 of which are baby books. Several books stored in closed closet. Also have picture lotto and other picture card games.
- C-2 Story telling or reading books to children is not a planned daily activity. The "Big Plus" books were readily available to children. Good tapes available. Could encourage more active participation by children with nursery rhymes.
- T-1 Approximately 25 books readily available. 10 children's records. Good assortment of picture lotto and other picture card games. Flannel board materials available and are used two times a month. At least 1 story read daily to children. Story read by C--well done!
- T-2 Many materials present, but books, pegs and puzzles are not accessible to children at all times. Book and puzzle shelves are covered by a curtain and children are not allowed to get them until scheduled. Story telling (or picture painting) scheduled 2 times a week.

Using Language

- I-1 Puppets such as "Cookie Monster" available. Nursery rhyme tapes played monthly. Few singing rhymes. Babbling sounds between child and staff observed toward end of day, but no scheduled activities consistent with language use.
- I-2 Near the end of the day, staff member observed talking to and repeating child's sounds. Children were encouraged to vocalize. However, not observed for most of day.

- C-1 Activities observed included naming animals and colors. Questions to stimulate child's thinking ("What does that say? What is this? Yes, that's a shirt) during puzzle activity. Picture pointing out of books (not story telling) once or twice a week.
- C-2 Tapes of nursery rhymes were played, but children only listened passively. Not encouraged to imitate by repeating gestures and/or words. Encouragement of language usage not observed.
- T-1 During last group activity of story time and singing rhymes, C did a good job of drawing children out. They also participated with nursery rhymes and answering questions during story time.
- T-2 Several opportunities for children to respond expressively. During taped story (e.g., "That's a bear, that's a lion"), group art project, play doh and free play.

Reasoning

- I-1 Shape sorting ball activity, with supervision: "Put it in. Where does the star go?" Sufficient materials available (rings on peg, variety of grasp rattles, other manipulative type toys). Toys not accessible to children, stored on a high, open shelf.
- I-2 B used object constancy game with children: "Put it in. What's this? What do you do with the ball? Ball in here. Where's the ball? Look, look, see the ball."
- C-1 Good variety of picture lotto and other picture card games stored in closet. They are used with older children. Not used with this class.
- C-2 Good assortment of materials available; however, no games or activities with teacher guidance observed. Play with Play Doh and blowing bubbles observed.
- T-1 Lotto and matching card games available. Did not appear to have sequencing or categorizing cards/games.
- T-2 Toy zoo animals available. Three children in a group with a staff person: "Where do alligators live? Yes, that's a zebra, etc." C asked, "Which one is tall? Short? What color is this?"

Informal Language

- I-1 Z sang to a baby while rocking him to sleep. Child's sounds were imitated once. No real consistency during day.

- I-2 Singing to children observed. Imitation of children's sounds observed once toward the end of the day. Good verbal stimulation lesson.
- C-1 Primarily short answer questions asked.
- C-2 Tapes played with sing-along. Not much in the way of repetition of children's sounds or words.
- T-1 For most of the day children are asked questions which require only "yes" or "no" or other short answers. During the latter part of the day children were encouraged to talk more and to give longer answers.
- T-2 "Why-how-what if" questions requiring longer and more complex answers were posed mostly by C.

Fine Motor

- I-1 Good supply of perceptual/fine motor materials. Mobiles in 2 cribs, busy boxes in every crib. 2 mobiles suspended from ceiling. Good variety of grasping rattles/toys.
- I-2 Good variety of age-appropriate toys available. Mobile and/or crib-toy in every crib. Good tactile stimulation. Toys look fairly new and in good repair.
- C-1 Good variety of preschool materials available. Several puzzles, bristle blocks, snap rings, crayons, etc.
- C-2 Many toys available.
- T-1 Very good supply of preschool materials: beads, several puzzles, pegboards, shapeboards, bristle blocks, scissors and crayons. Materials reportedly rotated to maintain interest.
- T-2 Good variety of perceptual/fine motor materials. However, children are not allowed to play with puzzles and pegboards until the curtain is raised when scheduled.

Supervision

- I-1 Help and encouragement given with shape sorting ball and portable mobile. Not that many activities presented that required completion of tasks.
- C-1 Good supervision and assistance to help child complete tasks. Appreciation shown for child's work.
- C-2 Yes, with Play Doh. This was the only supervised play observed.

T-1 Child assisted to complete task and praise given for children's work.

Gross Motor Space

I-1 Spacious playground outdoors. Sand on ground. Sun in winter, most likely shade in summer (leaves on trees just budding). Indoors, sufficient crawling room.

I-2 Cramped crawling space.

C-1 See above

C-2 Limited indoor space.

T-1 More than adequate space outdoors. Sand on ground. Shade in summer and sun in winter. Limited space in rug area indoors.

Gross Motor Equipment

I-1 Indoors: 1 baby swing, and 1 walker. Outdoors: 7 swings, 2 of which are designed for infants. Slides, climbing equipment.

I-2 Stairwell in room. Walker and swing available. No low table to pull up on.

C-1 See above for outdoor equipment.

C-2 Only 2 slides and 1 sandbox available for the entire Center. Both slides have to be set up or moved daily indoors and outdoors. Outdoor play equipment limited because of neighborhood vandalism.

T-1 Sufficient equipment: 5 regular swings, slide, tunnel climbing unit, monkey bars, 2 climbing towers and sandbox with toys.

T-2 Two small portable slides and 3 balls were available. Vandalism precludes permanent placement of outdoor equipment. All outside equipment was demolished two years ago.

Gross Motor Time

I-1 Physical activity time mostly indoors during free play. No outdoor activities today (The day was pleasant). Occasionally go outdoors but not a daily scheduled activity.

I-2 Once daily. Scheduled after lunch for 30 minutes.

C-1 Regularly scheduled physical activity time once daily.

C-2 Daily after lunch. Outdoors, weather permitting.

T-1 Regularly scheduled once daily.

Supervision

I-1 No outdoor activities today. Supervision for gross motor play indoors.

I-2 Chilly day and children did not go outdoors. Did observe on another day. Close supervision provided near children.

C-1 Supervision as well as suggesting activities. Free play also followed and supervised--verbal instructions (i.e., slides, take turns in play).

T-1 Close supervision provided.

Art

C-1 Good supply of assorted materials (e.g., glue, construction paper, crayons, glitter, clay).

C-2 Crayolas and finger painting materials stored in Toddler's room and used several times a month.

T-1 Group activities scheduled. Well-paced, not rushed.
1. Play Doh--free choice; 2. randomly gluing green egg noodles to construction paper; and 3. finger painting. Free choice of painting with brushes on paper. Children enjoyed activity.

T-2 Play Doh used. Bunny art project underway.

Music/Movement

C-1 Phonograph with children's records in toddler room adjacent to this room. Rooms are divided with low shelves).
Reportedly, loud enough to be heard as background music, but not loud enough to sing along or dance to. Tape player along with a variety of tapes available.

C-2 Variety of tapes played: nursery rhymes and mealtime song.

T-1 Singing and rhymes observed in one brief session. Record player and children's records available. Although not observed today, records are played 2-3 times a day most of the time.

T-2 Reportedly staff conduct a music/movement activity daily. Observed children standing on 1 foot and jumping in response to instructions and music from a tape.

Blocks

C-1 Children can play in the block area as long as they like, but they usually stay there 15 minutes at the most.

C-2 Block area also used as nap area. Space sufficient for 2-3 children to play at a time.

T-1 Special block area available.

T-2 Since this is a half-day program, area is available for at least half hour daily.

Sand/Water

C-1 Sandbox outdoors with a good assortment of sand toys. This is used daily. Pool outdoors in the summer used daily for 1 week, 2 times a month.

C-2 Due to weather, sandbox was not set up outdoors. No indoor sand/water play.

T-1 Sandbox outdoors with a variety of sand toys available. Pool outdoors for use in summer. Used several times a week.

T-2 No sand or water play indoors. Due to bad weather, sandbox has not been set up outdoors. Sandbox has to be moved indoors at the end of each day.

Space for Solitary Play

I-1 Children are allowed to find space to be alone. They usually go to the rug corner or are put in their cribs.

C-1 Space to be alone under slide, inside box or in the block corner.

C-2 No space set aside for solitary play, but children observed under slide inside storage box.

T-1 Although space is not especially set aside the children are allowed to find space to be alone, usually in the rug area.

T-2 Story time, cozy area.

Free Play

- I-1 Free play scheduled several times a day.
- I-2 Few soft toys and no dolls.
- C-1 Much time available for free play.
- C-2 Ample time for free play with adult supervision, but not utilized as an educational opportunity.
- T-2 Three free play sessions in a typical half day session.

Cultural Awareness

- I-1 1 black doll, the rest are blonde. 1 book, multi-racial: black, blonde, brown, oriental.
- I-2 Only one book that depicts infants of various races was seen. Only one stuffed elephant toy. No wall decorations.
- C-1 No special materials.
- C-2 Nothing noted.
- T-1 Book, "I'm not so different," (Girl in wheelchair), book of babies of different colors, and 1 book depicting a female police officer were seen. No obvious display items; e.g., art on walls.
- T-2 One Cabbage Patch black baby, 1 book about a female police officer, 1 display poster of an elderly Anglo lady being helped by a little Black boy.

Tone

- I-1 Staff relaxed. Display very caring attitude. Gentle holding, hugging and rocking observed several times. Timely, skillful intervention offered in accord with infant's needs.
- I-2 Warmth and patience displayed by staff toward infants.
- C-1 Warm atmosphere. Holding and hugging observed. Group of 3 in room today appeared easy going and cooperative.
- C-2 Timely intervention by C helping children resolve problems before they became serious.
- T-1 Staff and children appeared relaxed. Holding and hugging observed. Skillful interventions when trouble arose with children encouraged to take turns, stand in line, etc.

T-2 Staff members good about supervising and skillfully intervening to prevent conflicts between children.

Discussion

The ECERS observational method revealed that the Avance day care units have several strengths and weaknesses. The strengths include warmth of caretakers toward the children. There were no instances of harsh or punitive behaviors, and children were treated consistently in a loving, nurturing way. The children responded by showing they felt secure and comfortable in the day care environments.

Another positive feature was that the day care furniture, toys and other equipment were appropriate for the children at different ages. Children found the equipment attractive and available. There was a problem at WS in that there was no outside play equipment. Staff had found it impossible to protect equipment from vandalism from neighborhood youth.

Apparent weaknesses of the program included a lack of emphasis on language interactions between staff and children. Although children were spoken to, staff did not make an effort to help children develop their expressive language skills. It should be noted that the primary purpose of the day care at the time of the evaluation was to provide a safe place for young children so their mothers could participate in the program. Thus, the day care was ancillary to the main program.

Another weakness in staff training resulted in some food care practices that are unacceptable. One worker changed a baby's diapers and went on to lunch preparations without washing hands. In some instances Wet Wipes were used with children instead of washing with soap and water prior to lunch. These

instances of poor hygiene may have been isolated instances; most of the observations reported proper hand-washing and other acceptable sanitary practices.

Observers also noted that there was a rather striking absence of cultural contents reflecting the Mexican heritage of the participants. Most day care or Head Start programs that serve a specific minority ethnic group celebrate that group's cultural background with relevant wall decorations, reading materials and toys. These materials are regarded as important in helping children develop a positive self-concept and pride in their own cultural background. The lack of such materials in the Avance day care centers was in contrast at the Avance Center at WS with the large, colorful murals painted on the endwalls of many of the apartment buildings in the area. These mural were all of Mexican American themes and were pointed to with pride by residents of the apartments. It was of interest to the observers that no graffiti had been painted over the murals. Obviously, they were valued by the local residents.

In general, the main objectives in providing day care were attained in that children were cared for in safe, comfortable surroundings while their mothers participated in the program. During the period of the evaluation, a major study of the quality of the day care environment was conducted by an outside consultant, Rebecca Barrera of Ninos Group, and funds were obtained from the Carnegie Corporation to improve staff training (see section on Staff Training). With the increased emphasis on staff training, the purpose of the day care has been evolving

over the last several years. Due in part to the feedback that program staff has received from the evaluation and from Ninos Group, the training provided for staff has emphasized the educational experience that the children receive while at the day care. The program has been striving to provide a more stimulating learning environment.

Participant Observations

An important factor to consider when evaluating the quality of a program is the assessment of that program by those who participated. Volume I of the Avance Evaluation Report which looked at program impact included a section on Consumer Satisfaction. Summarizing the results from a measure included in the posttest, it was reported that the participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program. The vast majority stated that they planned to attend other classes offered by Avance. In addition, the parents stated universally that they would recommend the program to other mothers.

Participant satisfaction was surveyed in a second way. During the second Life Story Interview (see earlier section on Life Stories) which was conducted during the spring of the program year for cohort A, the subsample of mothers who participated were asked to share their experiences at Avance. Regardless of whether they were still attending the classes, all the mothers expressed very positive sentiments about the parenting education program. Following are a few of the reactions from the mothers when asked about their Avance experience. The comments of the different participants are denoted by the notations P1 to P4.

- P1 Everybody gets along and treats you nice. They love you, and they show it. If you need something, they are there.
- P2 I really like Avance now. At first I was not too happy about it; not too excited about it. Now I love it. But now I have been having a lot of problems. Mostly all of them (*Avance staff*) have been there for me. Not like friends but more like moms. Because they really do care. They have been helping me a lot with my problems and things I needed for the house. They have been helping me a lot. They gave me courage to go to school.

I thought I was the only one who had problems with the kids and my husband and the kids and myself. I was so happy because they were saying things that I am into too. And I go "at least I am not by myself. I am not alone in this world. You all have problems, just like me."

It is great because you get about two hours or two hours and a half, and the ladies are downstairs taking care of your kids. My kids are in good hands. I don't have to worry.

P3 Oh, great experiences. I initially just went for toymaking. That was what motivated me to go. I said, "Well, I will get toys for my kids." I thought I would just get the toys, and that was it. But at Avance they told us no no no. That is not the way to do it. The toy you make is for you and the child, so both of you can learn from it together. And that is what I like. They try to, you know, make us have a better relationship with our children. I loved it. I brag about it all the time. Everybody knows.

I thought I would not need any skills to be a parent, but there were a lot of things I did not know. I thought they just needed water, food, shelter, and that's it. They taught me that they need my love, because I am the most important person in their lives. That I have to show them everyday.

And now the nine year old tells me, "Mom, you don't yell at us so much." Before I used to strike out because of the stress. Now because of Avance I know that I can talk to them about it, and the stress is not there anymore.

P4 Actually it has been real good for me. My grandmother tells me that it has done a lot of good. Because I would not pay much attention to my kids. Now I do. Then I didn't think I had to talk to them. Now, I now talk to them a lot. Then I would just wake up in the morning. Give them their breakfast with not even speaking a word to them. I would hug them and kiss them and this and that, but that I was it. I would tell them I love you, and baby here and baby there. That was it. They taught me a lot. They taught me to talk to my child. They taught me to explain every detail to them. You know talk, to do more with them. Not to just leave them, the way I used to. I would just get up. Give them their breakfast. Do my house work. Lay down. Get up. Just be here watching TV and watching them that they were just running around or just sitting there something. But I would never go up to them and tell, "Get up and let's go take a bath, and let's wash your hair, and rub your skin, and everything. Now let's put on your shoes."

I wish they could have more school instead of going just one day out of the week. I wish we could go more often.

My aunt, my little sister, and my husband; everybody has seen a change. Everybody is proud. They say, "Good, finally you are doing what you think is best for you and your kids." They are all happy for me.

These reactions were very typical of the participants. Many commented on the love and support they received from staff. At social gatherings, participants often expressed similar feelings and experiences to the evaluation staff. It is evident from talking with the mothers that they have enjoyed their time in the program and that they feel the program has made a difference for them and their families.

**PART IV
PROCESS EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS**

The process evaluation was conducted to provide answers to three questions essential for carrying out a general program evaluation: (1) Was there a program? (2) Was the program delivered to the participants? and (3) What was the quality of the program?

The evaluation found that there was a well-defined program with a trained staff and well-equipped facilities. This was, of course, expected because Avance has been in existence for nineteen years. The evaluation did find that not all curriculum topics had been prepared in written form suggesting a certain uncertainty or vagueness about those program elements. Teachers were experienced and knew the contents well, but not having been set in print, there was considerable freedom to change, modify, or omit curriculum materials. Preparation of written materials was in process when the evaluation was begun and was completed by the time the evaluation ended.

Avance was designed to serve low-income mothers of infants or young children. In the present evaluation participants were selected only if they met these criteria. A review of participant demographic characteristics revealed that they had a low family income, had a child under the age of two, and typically had other children. Most had less than a high school education. Life histories told by a sample of the participants revealed that they were coping with many serious economic and social problems and that their lives were highly stressful. We concluded that there was a great need for parent education and

family support for these individuals.

The program was delivered as scheduled to the participants. Center-based parenting education classes were conducted along with a home visiting component. Participants were provided with child care and transportation as well as other social services when requested. During the second year of the program, literacy and adult education classes offered at the centers.

The assessment of program quality is elusive and extraordinarily time-consuming. We sampled program activities and examined one part of the morning program activities, the presentation by a parent educator of curriculum materials, observed the day care for children and received reactions from the participants. Both the parenting classes and the day care were found to be of acceptable quality, in the sense that they did what they were expected by key Avance staff to do. Curriculum contents were presented in a small classroom format with information presented through lectures with a moderate amount of discussion of the contents. We noted that discussion between participants often continued into the toy making activity which followed the curriculum presentations. In addition, participants expressed high levels of satisfaction with the program and staff.

In conclusion, the process evaluation found that: 1) a well-defined program was in existence when the evaluation began and was improved upon during the course of the evaluation, 2) the program was delivered to the participants as planned, and 3) the program was of generally high quality.

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APPENDIX A

REPLICATION TRAINING

REPLICATION TRAINING

The issue of training for groups that are interested in utilizing the Avance curriculum, setting up a similar outreach program or actually establishing an Avance program is discussed in this section. The following questions were posed to the director of the Avance Hasbro Family Resource Center, Carmen Cortez:

Question: Could a person unfamiliar with Avance operate an Avance-like program just from the written curriculum materials?

Response: No. The curriculum is one aspect of the program. It works in conjunction with other critical elements including:

- the theoretical framework of the model
- the philosophy of the intervention
- the mission statement of the agency
- staff attitudes towards the target population
- staff perceptions of the process of change
- strategies utilized in working with the participants
- the affective environment surrounding service delivery
- personal commitment and belief in the "cause."

Question: What specific training would be required?

Response: For staff who are employees of Avance, the agency has specific requisites of skills and experiences that must be evidenced prior to employment and are contingent upon the demands of the position. Employees are hired with the understanding that pre-service and in-service training must be strictly adhered to. The majority of the training is geared towards upgrading skills for their particular position and increasing the knowledge base of the content areas for which they are responsible. In addition, opportunities for personal growth and development are made available as much as possible.

For staff who are not part of the agency, technical assistance and consultation services are available on a

contractual basis. The initial training is participation in a 2 1/2 day institute on the Avance model, philosophy and strategies. Through this intensive orientation, external agencies and organizations are able to determine to what extent they will integrate elements of the Avance concepts in their own local communities. Additional follow-up training is available if requested. Portions of the Avance curriculum can be purchased after participation in an Avance Institute. Although the Institute requirement may have been met and curriculum may have been bought, association and affiliation with the Avance agency is not permitted without the expressed, written consent of the CEO and National Board.

Question: Who would do the training?

Response: For Avance employees, the training is provided by the technical assistance department, local staff and contracted services in the community.

For Institute participants, the training is provided by the national office and local staff. In addition, the San Antonio service sites are used for Institute observations.

Question: Would training be on-site in San Antonio or could other communities request that training be done in their home community?

Response: The training in San Antonio has been mentioned in response to the previous question. In addition to the Institutes, training, workshops and presentations on special topics and issues are available on a consultant basis in communities outside of San Antonio and Houston, Texas.

APPENDIX B

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

**Avance
Job Description
Center Director**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Oversee the development and the implementation of the Center program.
2. Organize programmatic activities bases on program goals, objectives and strategies.
3. Train and supervise Center staff and resolve internal problems.
4. Conduct on-going process evaluation of programmatic activities according to evaluation measures stated in the program description.
5. Conduct weekly staff meetings.
6. Work with staff to adapt and revise the program to meet the needs of the community without modifying the underlying principles and goals of the curriculum.
7. Prepare periodic reports on program activities for the Area Director.
8. Introduce and interpret the program model to interested groups locally and throughout the nation as approved by Area Director and CEO.
9. Assume responsibility of all Center operations.

**Avance
Job Description
Parent Educator**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Prepare class lecture and conduct classes at Centers and other sites as assigned.
2. Work with child caregivers to coordinate parent lessons with children's activities on a weekly basis.
3. Arrange for third hour speakers, discusses with them topics to be presented.
4. Review videos and discuss them in class during 3rd hour.
5. Assist with records of client's intake and attendance and make sure all clients sign class attendance sheet.
6. Responsible for daily sign in sheets, noting date site, lessons, toy third hour activity and videotapes reviewed; these sheets to be submitted to data entry office on a regularly scheduled basis.
7. Administer pre and post tests to entrants.
8. Arrange for parents' class field trips, fund-raising and special large group events.
9. Address special needs or problems of clients on an individual basis, as needed.
10. Enter data on client case history forms on a regular basis.
11. Facilitate scheduling home visits and videos with client and home visitors.
12. Adhere to agency policies and procedures with regard to acceptance, services and evaluation of referrals.
13. Respond to official inquiries regarding referrals.
14. Participate in weekly mandated staff meeting.
15. Submit activities reports on a regularly scheduled basis.
16. Attend staff development training as assigned.
17. Is available for private consultations with parents.
18. Work with Center staff to maintain stable attendance of clients.
19. Do outreach work as needed with special needs clients.

**Avance
Job Description
Home Visitor**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Conduct 1 video film* and 1 home visit per month, per client and record results of each video film in the client file.
2. Schedule appointments with clients for a monthly videofilm and in conjunction with the parent educator and other staff.
3. Address special needs of children, arrange and facilitate services as a result of staff observations of children in the day care.
4. Contribute to client case histories based on direct contact with client.
5. Distribute food bank commodities as needed in the home to clients and record disbursements.
6. Distribute car seats to clients upon request and availability and record disbursements.
7. Assist in recruiting new students as assigned by supervisor.
8. Adhere to agency policies and procedures with regard to acceptance, services and evaluation of referrals.
9. Assist the parent educator in preparing reports responding to official inquiries regarding referrals.
10. Participate with other staff in preparation of special events for parents and children.
11. Attend a weekly mandated staff meeting for the purpose of planning and organizing client services.
12. Attend staff development training as assigned.

*Video is the taping of an interaction in the home or suitable alternate setting, lasting a minimum of 30 minutes.

**Avance
Job Description
Toy Instructor**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Conduct toy making sessions and give out toy use handouts.
2. Sew cut and prepare toy making materials for class.
3. Utilize volunteers and other program staff as assistants for the toy making component.
4. Collect signatures from parents attending class.
5. Maintain client files relevant to toy making.
6. Work with supervisor and home visitor to bring clients back who are missing classes.

**Avance
Job Description
Child Care Supervisor**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Supervise Day Care Staff

1. Prepare written weekly lesson plans to include activities for children ages birth to 5 years.
2. Maintain a healthy, safe, stimulating and attractive physical learning environment.
3. Make assigned staff members aware of planned weekly activities.
4. Consult with Child Development Teacher to plan activities for the children which will serve as practicum for what is taught to the mothers.
5. Maintain records of daily attendance of children and clients and anecdotal notes of special needs and significant progress of individual children.
6. Do follow-up on clients recruited by the Child Development Teacher to do the child care practicum.
7. Maintain a file on all children enrolled in program.
8. Be available for personal consultation with the mothers.
9. Keep inventory of toys.
10. Administer the pre and post test to all children enrolled.
11. Conduct lessons and activities that are developmentally appropriate for young children.
12. Perform other duties as requested by Director.

**Avance
Job Description
Day Care Teacher - Aide**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Under direction of the Lead Day Care Teacher.

1. Present weekly lesson plans to children.
2. Responsible for the care of the children in the day care area and playground.
3. Assist in providing for the children a healthy, safe, stimulating and attractive physical learning environment.
4. Assist in the pre-post testing of all children enrolled in the program.
5. Include the parent volunteers in the presentation of the lesson plans to the children.
6. Greet parents attending class and help them as they leave their children in the day-care.
7. Label all children's' belongings and make sure parents pick up all belongings at end of the day.
8. Identify special problems or needs among the children.
9. Assist the cook in serving the meals to the children and feed the children.
10. Perform other tasks as requested.

**Avance
Job Description
Bus Driver**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Contact parents by phone or in person to schedule weekly pick-up route.
2. Pick up parents and children to attend parenting class and parents to volunteer in day care. After class time return all parents and children to their homes.
3. Pick up parents for GED and ESL classes and return them to their home after class.
4. Assist home visiting staff in doing follow-up contacts of clients.
5. Perform other duties as requested.

**Avance
Job Description
Cook**

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Plan and prepare meals for the children and a snack for the mothers.
2. Purchase all needed food and supplies.
3. Keep record of the number of meals served each day.
4. Maintain cleanliness of the kitchen up to health department standards.
5. Attend training sessions.
6. Keep inventory of supplies

APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT SCRIPTS

7/88
AVANCE

MIRASOL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

I'M ON THE STAFF OF THE AVANCE PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES. WE ARE UNDERTAKING A RESEARCH STUDY OF OUR PARENTING PROGRAMS AND ARE LOOKING FOR FAMILIES THAT WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS IMPORTANT STUDY. DO YOU OR ANYONE ELSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE A CHILD YOUNGER THAN TWO? (If they say **yes**, ask to speak with the mother of the child. If they say **no**, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.)

1. HOW OLD IS YOUR CHILD? _____

If the child is **2 or older**, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.

2. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN AVANCE?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

3. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN ANY OTHER PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

If they say **yes** to either question 2 or 3, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.

(If the child is under 2, read the rest of the script.)

WE'RE DOING A STUDY OF OUR PROGRAM WITH MOTHERS WHO HAVE A CHILD UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE AND WOULD LIKE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR PARENTING PROGRAM. I WILL DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM AND THEN ASK YOU IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE A PART OF IT.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE YOU WILL BE INTERVIEWED IN YOUR HOME. THEN, ON A DIFFERENT DAY, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO FILL OUT SOME QUESTIONNAIRES AT OUR OFFICE WITH TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED TO AND FROM YOUR HOME. EACH OF THE TWO SESSIONS WILL TAKE ABOUT TWO HOURS. THE QUESTIONS WILL COVER A VARIETY OF TOPICS INCLUDING YOUR VIEWS ON PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT. DURING THE INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRE SESSION, YOU MAY REFUSE TO ANSWER A PARTICULAR QUESTION IF YOU SO DESIRE. WE WILL SCHEDULE THE INTERVIEW IN YOUR HOME AT A TIME THAT IS CONVENIENT FOR YOU. FOR THE VISIT TO OUR RESEARCH CENTER, WE WILL PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION

TO AND FROM THE OFFICE. CHILD CARE WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR YOUR CHILDREN. YOU WOULD ALSO PARTICIPATE IN THE AVANCE PARENTING PROGRAM.

TO BE PART OF THE AVANCE PARENTING PROGRAM WILL MEAN THAT YOU WILL COME TO CLASS WITH YOUR CHILDREN ONCE A WEEK FOR THREE HOURS, FROM SEPTEMBER UNTIL MAY. AT THE AVANCE CENTER YOU WILL LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW CHILDREN GROW AND BEHAVE AND ABOUT SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

YOU CAN BRING ALL OF YOUR CHILDREN, WHO ARE NOT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL, AND THEY'LL BE TAKEN CARE OF IN THE DAY CARE WHILE YOU'RE IN CLASS. THERE WILL BE A MEAL SERVED TO THE CHILDREN EVERY TIME THEY COME TO CLASS. THERE ALSO WILL BE FIELD TRIPS FOR BOTH YOU AND THE CHILDREN.

ANOTHER PART OF THE PROGRAM IS HOME VISITS. THERE WILL BE A PERSON VISITING YOU AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH AND TALKING TO YOU ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS. WE ALSO WILL ASK THAT YOU VOLUNTEER SOME TIME IN THE DAY CARE. YOU CAN ALSO BRING YOUR CHILDREN ON THOSE DAYS.

WE WOULD LIKE TO INVOLVE ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY, INCLUDING FATHERS AND YOUR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN. THERE ARE SPECIAL ACTIVITIES SET UP FOR THEM IN THE EVENING AND ON WEEK-ENDS. SOMETIMES THERE WILL BE FAMILY OUTINGS.

THE SERVICES AT AVANCE ARE FREE. THE ONLY THING WE ASK IS THAT YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN ATTEND THE CLASSES REGULARLY.

<p>4. WOULD YOU BE LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AVANCE PARENTING PROGRAM?</p> <p>___ 1. Yes</p> <p>___ 2. No</p>
--

If the mother answers no, thank her for her time and go to the next house.

If the mother answers yes, say: THERE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU. Then complete the survey form.

7/88
AVANCE

CASIANO RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

I'M ON THE STAFF OF THE AVANCE PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES. WE ARE UNDERTAKING A RESEARCH STUDY OF ONE OF OUR PROGRAMS AND ARE LOOKING FOR FAMILIES THAT WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS IMPORTANT STUDY. DO YOU OR ANYONE ELSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE A CHILD YOUNGER THAN TWO? (If they say yes, ask to speak with the mother of the child. If they say no, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.)

1. HOW OLD IS YOUR CHILD? _____

If the child is 2 or older, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.

2. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN AVANCE?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

3. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN ANY OTHER PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

If they say yes to either question 2 or 3, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.

(If the child is under 2, read the rest of the script.)

WE'RE DOING A STUDY OF OUR PROGRAM WITH MOTHERS WHO HAVE A CHILD UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE AND WOULD LIKE YOU TO PARTICIPATE. I WILL DESCRIBE THE STUDY FOR YOU AND THEN WILL ASK YOU IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE.

THE PROGRAM IS CALLED THE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT STUDY. DURING THIS PROGRAM WE WILL OBTAIN INFORMATION ON HOW PARENTS RAISE THEIR CHILDREN AND WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE A PARENT IN SAN ANTONIO THESE DAYS.

IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROGRAM, YOU WILL FIRST BE INTERVIEWED IN YOUR HOME BY ONE OF OUR INTERVIEWERS. THEN, ON A DIFFERENT DAY, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO FILL OUT SOME QUESTIONNAIRES AT OUR OFFICE. EACH OF THE TWO SESSIONS WILL TAKE

ABOUT TWO HOURS. THE QUESTIONS WILL COVER A VARIETY OF TOPICS INCLUDING YOUR VIEWS ON PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT. DURING THE INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRE SESSION, YOU MAY REFUSE TO ANSWER A PARTICULAR QUESTION IF YOU SO DESIRE. WE WILL SCHEDULE THE INTERVIEW IN YOUR HOME AT A TIME THAT IS CONVENIENT FOR YOU. FOR THE VISIT TO OUR PROGRAM CENTER, WE WILL PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE OFFICE. CHILD CARE WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

BOTH THE HOME INTERVIEW AND THE RESEARCH OFFICE VISIT WILL BE DONE SOMETIME DURING THE NEXT 2-1/2 MONTHS. IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION, WE CAN OFFER CONSULTATION AND REFERRAL IN OBTAINING COMMUNITY SERVICES IF YOU REQUEST. WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED BOTH SESSIONS, WE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO PAY YOU \$10.00 AFTER THE INTERVIEW IN YOUR HOME AND ANOTHER \$10.00 AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRES.

A HOME VISITOR WILL VISIT YOUR HOME A COUPLE TIMES DURING THE YEAR TO SEE HOW THINGS ARE GOING. PARTICIPANTS IN THIS PROGRAM WILL BE INTERVIEWED AGAIN IN ONE YEAR. WE WILL PAY YOU \$10.00 EACH TIME.

4. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT STUDY?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

If the mother answers no, thank her for her time and go to the next house.

If the mother answers yes, say: THERE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU. Then complete the survey form.

7/88
AVANCE

SOUTHSIDE RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

I'M ON THE STAFF OF THE AVANCE PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES. WE ARE UNDERTAKING A RESEARCH STUDY OF ONE OF OUR PROGRAMS AND ARE LOOKING FOR FAMILIES THAT WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS IMPORTANT STUDY. DO YOU OR ANYONE ELSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE A CHILD YOUNGER THAN TWO? (If they say **yes**, ask to speak with the mother of the child. If they say **no**, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.)

1. HOW OLD IS YOUR CHILD? _____

If the child is **2 or older**, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.

2. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN AVANCE?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

3. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN ANY OTHER PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

___ 1. Yes

___ 2. No

If they say **yes** to either question 2 or 3, apologize for disturbing them and go on to the next house.

(If the child is under 2, read the rest of the script.)

WE'RE DOING A STUDY OF OUR PROGRAM WITH MOTHERS WHO HAVE A CHILD UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE AND WOULD LIKE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE OR THE OTHER OF TWO GROUPS. IF YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE, YOU WILL BE ASSIGNED TO ONE OF THE TWO GROUPS. IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE STUDY, WE WILL BE ASSIGNING FAMILIES TO THE GROUPS BY PUTTING THE NAMES IN A BOX AND SELECTING NAMES LIKE IN A LOTTERY. HALF OF THE MOTHERS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING WILL BE PART OF ONE GROUP WHILE THE OTHER HALF WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE SECOND GROUP. I WILL DESCRIBE EACH OF THE TWO GROUPS FOR YOU AND THEN WILL ASK YOU IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR STUDY.

THE FIRST GROUP IS CALLED THE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT STUDY. DURING THIS PROGRAM WE WILL ASK FOR INFORMATION ON HOW PARENTS RAISE THEIR CHILDREN AND WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE A PARENT IN SAN

ANTONIO THESE DAYS.

IF YOU ARE SELECTED FOR THIS PROGRAM, YOU WILL FIRST BE INTERVIEWED IN YOUR HOME BY ONE OF OUR INTERVIEWERS. THEN, ON A DIFFERENT DAY, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO FILL OUT SOME QUESTIONNAIRES AT OUR OFFICE. EACH OF THE TWO SESSIONS WILL TAKE ABOUT TWO HOURS. THE QUESTIONS WILL COVER A VARIETY OF TOPICS INCLUDING YOUR VIEWS ON PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT. DURING THE INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRE SESSION, YOU MAY REFUSE TO ANSWER A PARTICULAR QUESTION IF YOU SO DESIRE. WE WILL SCHEDULE THE INTERVIEW IN YOUR HOME AT A TIME THAT IS CONVENIENT FOR YOU. FOR THE VISIT TO OUR RESEARCH CENTER, WE WILL PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE OFFICE. CHILD CARE WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

BOTH THE HOME INTERVIEW AND THE RESEARCH OFFICE VISIT WILL BE DONE SOMETIME DURING THE NEXT 2-1/2 MONTHS. IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION, WE CAN OFFER CONSULTATION AND REFERRAL IN OBTAINING COMMUNITY SERVICES IF YOU REQUEST. UPON COMPLETION OF THE HOME INTERVIEW, WE WILL BE ABLE TO PAY YOU \$10.00 FOR YOUR TIME. WE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO PAY YOU \$10.00 WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRES.

A HOME VISITOR WILL VISIT YOUR HOME A COUPLE TIMES DURING THE YEAR TO SEE HOW THINGS ARE GOING. PARTICIPANTS IN THIS PROGRAM WILL BE INTERVIEWED AGAIN NEXT SUMMER. WE WILL PAY YOU \$10.00 EACH TIME.

THE OTHER PROGRAM IS THE AVANCE PARENTING PROGRAM. IF YOU ARE SELECTED FOR THIS PROGRAM, YOU WILL ALSO BE INTERVIEWED IN YOUR HOME. IN ADDITION, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO FILL OUT SOME QUESTIONNAIRES AT OUR OFFICE WITH TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED TO AND FROM YOUR HOME. CHILD CARE WILL BE PROVIDED FOR YOUR CHILDREN. YOU WOULD ALSO PARTICIPATE IN THE AVANCE PROGRAM.

TO BE PART OF THE AVANCE PROGRAM WILL MEAN THAT YOU WILL COME TO CLASS WITH YOUR CHILDREN ONCE A WEEK FOR THREE HOURS, FROM SEPTEMBER UNTIL MAY. AT THE AVANCE CENTER YOU WILL LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW CHILDREN GROW AND BEHAVE AND ABOUT SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

YOU CAN BRING ALL OF YOUR CHILDREN, WHO ARE NOT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL, AND THEY'LL BE TAKEN CARE OF IN THE DAY CARE WHILE YOU'RE IN CLASS. THERE WILL BE A MEAL SERVED TO THE CHILDREN EVERY TIME THEY COME TO CLASS. THERE ALSO WILL BE FIELD TRIPS FOR BOTH YOU AND THE CHILDREN.

ANOTHER PART OF THE PROGRAM IS HOME VISITS. THERE WILL BE A PERSON VISITING YOU AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH AND TALKING TO YOU ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS. WE ALSO WILL ASK THAT YOU VOLUNTEER SOME TIME IN THE DAY CARE. YOU CAN ALSO BRING YOUR CHILDREN ON THOSE DAYS.

WE WOULD LIKE TO INVOLVE ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY,

INCLUDING FATHERS AND YOUR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN. THERE ARE SPECIAL ACTIVITIES SET UP FOR THEM IN THE EVENING AND ON WEEK-ENDS. SOMETIMES THERE WILL BE FAMILY OUTINGS.

THE SERVICES AT AVANCE ARE FREE. THE ONLY THING WE ASK IS THAT YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN ATTEND THE CLASSES REGULARLY.

<p>4. REGARDLESS OF WHICH GROUP YOU ARE SELECTED FOR, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN <u>EITHER</u> THE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT STUDY OR THE AVANCE PARENTING PROGRAM GROUPS?</p> <p>___ 1. Yes</p> <p>___ 2. No</p>
--

If the mother answers no, thank her for her time and go to the next house.

If the mother answers yes, say: THERE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU. Then complete the survey form.

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORMS

PP - PARENTING PROGRAM
FDS - FAMILY DEVELOPMENT STUDY (CONTROL GROUP)

4/88

ID _____

AVANCE CONSENT FORM (PP)

You are invited to participate in a study dealing with parent-child interactions. Through this study, we hope to explore and learn more about families and the development of children in San Antonio. You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a parent, and we want to know more about families in your community.

If you participate, your involvement with the AVANCE staff will be for approximately 1 1/2 years. During this time you will be asked to participate in interviews, filling out questionnaires, perhaps some videotaping with your child and participate in the Avance Parenting Program.

Any information obtained in the study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Only persons conducting the research will have access to the written information gathered. Following complete data analysis, feedback will be available to you concerning the study's results. You can obtain the results of the study by request at the end of the study. The data collected may be used for the publication of articles or for educational purposes. Videotapes will be stored in the research archives until they are no longer needed, at which time they will be completely erased.

If you have any questions, please ask. If you have any additional questions later, please call 270-4630 and ask for Todd Walker.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you would like to participate, please complete the consent form. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

We thank you for your assistance with this important research to help us understand and support families and children's development.

Sincerely,

Todd Walker
Research Coordinator,
Avance Research and
Evaluation Project

My signature indicates that I understand the attached letter and have decided to participate. I understand that I may withdraw from participation at any time.

Signed _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

This project has been reviewed by the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-749-3412).

4/88

ID _____

AVANCE CONSENT FORM (FDS)

You are invited to participate in a study dealing with parent-child interactions. Through this study, we hope to explore and learn more about families and the development of children in San Antonio. You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a parent, and we want to know more about families in your community.

If you participate, your involvement with the AVANCE staff will be for approximately 1 1/2 years. During this time you will be asked to participate in interviews, filling out questionnaires and perhaps some videotaping with your child. In appreciation for your participation we will be able to pay you \$10 when you have completed the interview and another \$10 when you have completed the questionnaires.

Any information obtained in the study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Only persons conducting the research will have access to the written information gathered. Following complete data analysis, feedback will be available to you concerning the study's results. You can obtain the results of the study by request at the end of the study. The data collected may be used for the publication of articles or for educational purposes. Videotapes will be stored in the research archives until they are no longer needed, at which time they will be completely erased.

If you have any questions, please ask. If you have any additional questions later, please call 270-4630 and ask for Todd Walker.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you would like to participate, please complete the consent form. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

We thank you for your assistance with this important research to help us understand and support families and children's development.

Sincerely,

Todd Walker
Research Coordinator,
Avance Research and
Evaluation Project

My signature indicates that I understand the attached letter and have decided to participate. I understand that I may withdraw from participation at any time.

Signed _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

This project has been reviewed by the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-749-3412).