Concept-Mapping the Challenges Faced by Foster Parents

Jason Brown
Peter Calder
University of Alberta

The purpose of the study was to describe the challenges faced by foster parents as perceived by foster parents themselves, because they are on the front lines of service delivery. Forty-nine individuals from 30 foster families were asked to describe their challenges in response to the following question: "What would make you consider stopping foster parenting?". Responses to this question were subjected to non-parametric statistical thematic analysis that yielded four themes. The first theme described the challenges of working with the department of Child Welfare and its staff. The second theme described challenges related to indications that foster parents received about their work having low value in the perception of others, most notably, the department of Child Welfare. The third theme was descriptive of threats to family and personal safety, both physical/emotional and legal. The fourth theme described personal/familial and stress-related challenges that could cause thoughts of quitting foster parenting. These themes were consistent with the empirical literature. The results of this study lend credibility to the existing literature on the challenges faced by foster parents.

Common problems affecting the field of foster care across the provinces and territories in Canada imply the need for continued attention in this area (Kendrick, 1990; Sellick, 1992; Walter, 1993). Numerous reports speak of a chronic shortage of foster parents (Chamberlain, Moreland & Reid, 1992; Martin, Altemeier, Hickson, Davis, & Glascoe, 1992; Soliday, McCluskey-Fawcett & Meck, 1994; Walter, 1993). Increasing numbers of older children (Appathurai, Lowrey, & Sullivan, 1996) and children with physical, mental and socio-emotional exceptionalities (Lee, 1991; Sims, 1991) are entering and remaining in care (Schwartz, 1994). Foster care agencies and departments are experiencing difficulties both recruiting and retaining foster parents (Steinhauer, 1988), and advocates claim that this is due largely to inadequate system support (Walter, 1993).

The utility of various supports to foster parents (Sellick, 1992) which are related to increased retention (Chamberlain, Moreland & Reid, 1992; Martin et al., 1993), quality of care provided (Steinhauer, Johnston, Snowden, Santa-Barbara, Kane, Parker, Hornick, 1988), decreased incidence of placement breakdown (Tinney, 1985), and cost savings (Bebbington & Miles, 1990; Bullock, 1990; Knapp & Fenyo, 1989; Knapp, Fenyo & Robertson, 1986) are reported in the literature. However, a noteworthy gap is apparent with the absence of participant-defined issues and constructs in foster parent support research.

Since foster parents are the front line of service delivery, their perceptions are important to determine how best to improve the responsiveness of the system. The present shortage of appropriate placements for children in government care dictates the need for research that can illuminate the qualities that enhance foster parent ability to provide care and those that serve as major challenges to their ability to provide care; these qualities are key to the prevention of further decreases in the number of available foster home placements.

The purpose of the study was to describe the challenges faced by foster parents as perceived by the foster parents themselves. Participants were asked to describe their challenges in response to the following question: "What would make you consider stopping foster parenting?" Responses to this question were subjected to thematic analysis.

Background

In Alberta, in 1985-86, 2800 homes were providing placements for 3100 youth (Walter, 1993). Between 1986 and 1988 the Capital Region reported a net loss of 454 foster homes, opening 6 and closing 18 on average per month (Walter, 1993). Presently in Alberta, there are approximately 3500 foster children residing in 1750 foster homes (Evans, 1997).

Foster Child Characteristics

Children in care have frequently experienced abuse, neglect or abandonment by a biological parent; have been raised in conditions of poverty; have entered care at an older age; are disproportionately aboriginal in heritage; have been in more than one placement since arriving into care;

and display some degree of developmental, physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral problems.

Foster Parent Challenges

Several challenges related to placement breakdown or foster parent turnover are apparent in the literature. Such challenges include: behavioral and emotional problems of foster children (Martin et al., 1992; Berrige & Cleaver, 1987; Rushton, 1989; Rowe, Cain, Hundelby, & Keane, 1984), a lack of agency support (Bebbington & Miles, 1990; Martin et al., 1992; Appathurai, Lowery, & Sullivan, 1986), unprepared or unsupported loss of a foster child (Urquhart, 1989; Berridge & Cleaver, 1987; Martin et al., 1992; Schwartz, 1994; Eastman, 1979; Wells & D'Angelo, 1994), and finally, dealing with the biological family of the foster child (Hampson, 1985; Jacobs, 1980; Jassal, 1981; Simms, 1991; Rushton, 1989).

Method

Initially developed for planning and management applications, concept maps have been used for evaluation, survey design, curriculum development or theory building (Trochim, 1989a). In particular, concept maps are useful to describe constructs for the purposes of research, where statements within the clusters provide direction for the operationalization of a concept.

Components of Concept Mapping

According to Trochim (1989b), there are six major components to the concept mapping process: preparation, representation of statements, generation of statements, structuring of statements, interpretation, and finally, the utilization of a map.

Preparation

Participants were obtained through the membership list of the Alberta Foster Parent Association (AFPA). Alberta Family and Social Services was contacted regarding this study, but there was no interest in partnering

or providing access to current or drop-out foster parents in their system. The AFPA is a non-profit society that acts as "the collective voice and central resource for all foster parents in Alberta" (AFPA, no date). Currently, 274 families are members of the AFPA. Participants were selected at random from the membership list, and contacted by telephone by the researchers.

Data collection continued until no unique responses were being received; 27 females and 22 males from 30 families were interviewed. Participants resided in varying regions of the province including urban, rural and reserve areas. Native and non-Native foster parents of Native and non-Native foster children participated. The number of years fostering among participants varied from less than 1 to 25, the number of current foster children from 0 to 5, and the total number of foster children cared for, from 1 to 200.

Participants verbally consented to a telephone interview that included the open-ended question: "What would make you consider stopping foster parenting?" The telephone interview included additional demographic and open-ended questions; reports of those results are pending final data analysis.

Representation of Statements

The study utilized the Concept System (Trochim, 1987) to perform the statistical analysis and construction of the concept maps. In the first statistical procedure, multidimentional scaling, each statement was placed on a map called a point map (Trochim, 1989a). Statements that were closer together were more likely to be sorted into the same piles more frequently. Statements that were far apart were more likely to be sorted into different piles more frequently. Cluster analysis, the second statistical procedure, utilized the multidimensional scaling X-Y coordinate values for each point, and grouped statements on the map into clusters which were intended to represent underlying themes. The decision regarding the most appropriate number of concepts was based on both a best conceptual and statistical fit between the statements and the concepts.

Generation of Statements

Participants generated responses to the question or focus of discussion. Editing for clarity (e.g. from "I'm scared of allegations" to "I'm scared of being reported as being abusive by my foster children"), essential meaning (e.g. "I'm concerned about being accused of abuse") and redundancy (where two statements essentially report the same meaning) by the authors and a child care professional resulted in a total of 87 statements; 58 and 29 for females and males respectively. Because there appeared to be few apparent gender differences between the responses, the statements were combined for the purposes of analysis, resulting in a total of 37.
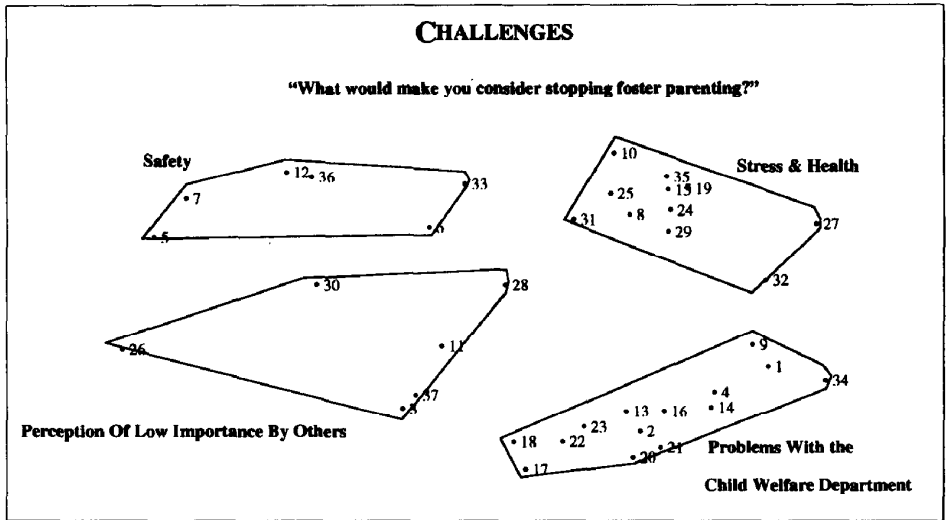
Structuring of Statements

Each statement was printed on a separate card. Two complete sets of cards were given to each sorter in random order. In accordance with Trochim (1989a), sorters were asked to group the cards "in a way that makes sense to you" (p.5.)". A total of 20 individuals consented to participate in the sort process and 15 sorts were returned.

Interpretation and Utilization of Maps

Following the statistical analysis, the clusters were visually inspected and labeled by the researcher to represent the constituent statements of which they were comprised.

Results

Statements in Table 1 were collected from participants, edited, and then returned to them for sorting. The seven cluster default solution produced by the program was judged to be reducible to a smaller number. Solutions with ten, nine, eight, six, four, and three concepts were examined, but the four concept solution was judged to provide the greatest interpretability.

CHALLENGES

"What would make you consider stopping foster parenting?"

Safety   Stress & Health

Perception Of Low Importance By Others

Problems With the
Child Welfare Department

Figure 1: Concept Map of Challenges

Study Results and Their Relationship to Previous Research

Cluster One: Problems with the Child Welfare Department

Cluster one was representative of challenges foster parents reported in their dealings with the department of Child Welfare: "broken promises by department" and "department bureaucracy". Statements in this cluster were oriented around particular difficulties with the department and social work staff. Some statements suggested characteristics of unsatisfactory working relationships with social workers: "worker who didn't explain the actions taken", "worker coming unannounced", and "intimidation by the social worker". Other statements were specific to difficulties experienced with social worker's level of concern, helpfulness and knowledge level: "unconcerned social worker", "social workers who aren't knowledgeable" and "having to train the social worker". The support literature suggests the need for consistent, knowledgeable and accessible department staff (Aldridge & Cautley, 1975; O'Hara, 1986) by foster parents. Information about foster parent rights and responsibilities (Noble & Euster, 1981), the department of child welfare (Hampson, 1985) and interacting with department staff (Noble & Euster, 1981) have been identified as training needs for foster parents.

Table 1.
Cluster Items and Bridging Values for Concept Map

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 - Problems With The Child Welfare Department	0.10
2. unconcerned social worker	0.00
13. social workers who aren't knowledgeable	0.01
21. worker who didn't explain the actions taken	0.01
20. no involvement in case planning	0.02
23. broken promises by department	0.04
16. having to train the social worker	0.05
14. varying interpretations of Child Welfare Act by workers	0.06
22. lack of critical information about kids from department	0.06
4. worker coming unannounced	0.09
17. intimidation by the social worker	0.12
18. department bureaucracy	0.14
1. dealing with Native services	0.22
9. no relief help	0.25
34. political stuff related to Native foster kids with non-Native foster parents	0.32
Cluster #2 - Perception of Low Importance By Others	0.44
28. lack of income	0.20
11. if can't choose which kids to take	0.27
37. treatment like glorified baby-sitter	0.32
3. having foster child pulled from my home with no advance notice	0.34
30. negative response to my work	0.49
26. interference from biological parents of foster children	1.00
Cluster #3 - Safety	0.50
33. when these foster kids with us now turn 18	0.30
6. win a lottery	0.33
12. threats to our family's safety	0.45
36. the turmoil that some kids bring into my home	0.48
7. allegations of abuse	0.66
5. aggressive behavior by foster child	0.77
Cluster #4 - Stress and Health	0.16
24. too busy with other things in my life	0.07
8. personal emotional issues	0.09
25. difficulty in our immediate family	0.11
15. stress	0.11
35. if lost support of friends and family members	0.11
29. the hurt when they leave	0.12
19. my age	0.12
31. unable to make commitment to look after a child	0.13
10. personal medical problems	0.19
32. fatigue from fighting for these kids	0.30
27. overwork	0.39

The statement "no relief help" is echoed in the literature. Respite in the forms of housekeeping services, baby-sitting, weekend breaks, and summer programming (Arkava & Mueller, 1978) have been reported as helpful by foster parents.

Foster parents indicated that they had a "lack of critical information about kids from the department" and "no involvement in case planning". A lack of information to the foster parent about particular difficulties the foster children have may result in inappropriate expectations by the foster parents (Doelling & Johnson, 1990) and become more than what they perceive that they can handle (Cooper, Peterson & Meier, 1987). This is consistent with the need for matching the skills of the foster parent to the needs of the foster child (Doeslling & Johnson, 1990; Simms, 1991).

Some statements suggested that foster parents had some challenging experiences with services for Native children: "political stuff related to Native foster kids with non-Native foster parents" and "dealing with Native services". There is concern in Alberta about the need for Native children to be reconnected or remain connected to their culture (Walter, 1993). The control of services to Aboriginal children by their communities in this province is being sought.

Cluster Two: Perception of Low Importance By Others

Statements in this cluster were related to indications that foster parents received about their work having low value. It was reported that a "negative response to my work" and a "lack of income" would have made one consider quitting foster parenting. Inadequate payment has been likened to a lack of status as a service provider by foster parents (Chamberlain, Moreland, & Reid, 1992), and foster parents have reported the need for adequate payment for the care of foster children (Banks & Jamieson, 1990).

Foster parents described deprecating experiences in the following statements: "treatment like glorified baby-sitter" and "having foster child pulled from my home with no advance notice". The statement "if can't choose which kids to take" suggested the need for matching of foster parent and foster child. The literature on professionalization of foster parenting suggests that foster parents have increasingly come to view themselves as quasi- or para- professionals (Waldock, 1996), that a more collegial relationship with department staff is related to greater work satisfaction by

foster parents (Martin et al., 1992), and is related to better decision-making for the child (Steinhauer et al., 1988).

The statement: "interference from biological parents of foster children" implied that observed interference from biological parents has an effect on the length of placement. Foster parents have reported considerable stress around dealing with biological parents (Hampson, 1985; Simms, 1991) particularly if they do not favor the contact (Wells & D'Angelo, 1994). Potential increases in behavioral symptoms exhibited by children in some cases following contact with a biological parent (Gean, Gillmore, & Dowler, 1985) as well as concerns about the safety of reunification can cause serious concern about the child's welfare once s/he has left the foster home. Recently, in this province, a four-year old boy was killed following his return to a biological parent (Liberals challenge figures, 1988).

Cluster Three: Safety

Statements in this cluster were mostly related to concerns about family safety: "threats to our family's safety", "aggressive behavior by foster child", and "the turmoil that some kids bring into my home". The safety of family members, particularly around the interactions with other children in the home, is identified in the literature (Poland & Groze, 1993). Causes of such safety concerns may be related to a lack of foster parent preparedness perhaps caused by inaccurate or inadequate case information which has been identified as leading to mismatches between foster parent expectations and foster child needs (Cooper, Peterson, & Meier, 1987; Doelling & Johnson, 1990; Rowe, Cain, Hudelby, & Keane, 1984).

The statement "allegations of abuse" suggested that family safety was also threatened by false allegations of inappropriate treatment by a foster child. Allegations of abusive treatment of foster children have been in the news recently with the story of foster parents tried and convicted on two occasions of killing a foster child in their care having been overturned following appeals (Lennys go free, 1988). The importance of this issue is considerable (Hicks & Nixon, 1991; Morrisette, 1993) and has ramifications that are apparent in the balance between unintended damage to foster families while diminishing a resource for vulnerable children in need of care (Carbino, 1991) and acting to protect children from maltreatment while in care (McFadden & Ryan, 1991).

Cluster Four: Stress and Health

Statements in this cluster were generally related to concerns about stress level and health as suggested by the statements: "stress", "personal emotional issues" and "personal medical problems". Fatigue was also stated as a reason for quitting foster parenting: "fatigue from fighting for these kids", and "overwork". Stress concerns are reported in Walter's (1993) review of the Child Welfare system in Alberta; in the report a comment from a foster parent is cited: "foster parents sink or swim on their own; when they have had enough or can't take it anymore, they quit!" (p. 99).

Difficulties in the family and loss of supportive friends were suggested as reasons for stopping foster parenting in the statements: "difficulty in our immediate family" and "if lost support of friends and family members". These difficulties have been described in the literature in terms of biological-foster child relationship quality (Bauer & Heinke, 1976), and at the most negative end, the commission of abuse by one at the hand of another (Poland & Groze, 1993).

The effect on the foster parents of the loss of a foster child from their home was suggested in the following statement: "the hurt when they leave". The impact of an unplanned removal of a foster child from the home of a foster parent can have a serious emotional effect on the foster family (Eastman, 1979; Wells & D'Angelo, 1994) of sufficient magnitude to weigh into the decision about taking in more foster children.

Finally, the level of commitment made to raising foster children and its level of priority were identified as causes for stopping: "unable to make commitment to look after a child" and "too busy with other things in my life". Judging from items in this cluster related to fatigue and overwork as well as lack of time and interest, it may be that the other challenges described elsewhere in this paper are achieving some kind of combined effect in the manifestation of high stress and low motivation for continuing to be a foster parent.

Conclusion

The results of this study lend credibility to the existing literature on the challenges faced by foster parents. There is a basis of knowledge to

address major challenges faced by foster parents despite the clear presence of significant difficulties with the retention of foster parents, foster care drift (Walter, 1993) and recently resurfaced concerns about the safety of children in the care of the Child Welfare system (Liberals challenge figures, 1998). It is also puzzling why many of the foster parent needs identified in this study and the existing literature have not, according to the government's own Children's Advocate (Walter, 1993), been met, given what we know about their prominence. It would indeed be interesting to know the effects on foster parent retention, placement breakdown and care quality if all, or an important few of these challenges were addressed. For example: if good relationships with social workers, based on the characteristic identified by foster parents, were made a priority by the department; if financial support was increased so that expenses incurred by foster parents were more adequately covered; if foster parents were formally included in the professional team working in the best interests of the children in their care; if the roles of foster parents, social workers, support workers, Native services workers, biological parents, extended biological families, and foster parents were explicitly clarified prior to placing a child; if foster parents were given necessary child and family history as well as a plan for support and education to manage anticipated adjustment difficulties for foster children as well as the foster family prior to placement; if foster parents were effectively educated and evaluated on their knowledge and practice of appropriate and effective child behavior management.

References

Alberta Family and Social Services (1989). *Information guide to becoming foster parents or permanency planning parents.* Edmonton: Author.

Alberta Foster Parent Association (no date). Agency description pamphlet. Edmonton: Author.

Aldgate, J., Pratt, R., & Duggan, M. (1989). Using care away from home to prevent family breakdown. *Adoption & Fostering, 10,* 44-49.

Aldridge, M. & Cautley, P. (1975). The importance of worker availability in the functioning of new foster homes. *Child Welfare, 54,* 444-452.

Anderberg, M. R. (1973). *Cluster analysis for applications.* New York: Academic Press.

Appathurai, C., Lowery, G., & Sullivan, T. (1986). An expanded role for foster care? *Canada's Mental Health, 34,* 6-12.

Arkava, M.L. and Mueller, D.N. (1978). Components of foster care for handi-
capped children. *Child Welfare, 57,* 339-345.

Banks, A. & Jamieson, A. (1990). Success in Newcastle. *Foster Care, 64,* 10-
11.

Bauer, E. & Heinke, W. (1976). Treatment family care homes for disturbed
foster children. *Child Welfare, 55,* 478-489.

Bebbington, A. & Miles, J. (1990). The supply of foster families for children in
care. *British Journal of Social Work, 20,* 283-307.

Berridge, D. & Cleaver, H. (1987). *Foster home breakdown.* Oxford: Basil
Blackwell.

Carbino, R. (1991). Child abuse and neglect reports in foster care: The issue
for foster families of "false" allegations. *Child & Youth Services, 15,* 233-247.

Chamberlain, P., Moreland, S., & Reid, K. (1992). Enhanced services and sti-
pends for foster parents: Effects on retention rates and outcomes for children.
Child Welfare, 71, 387-401.

Cooper, C. S., Peterson, N. L., & Meier, J. L. (1987). Variables associated with
disrupted placement in a select sample of abused and neglected children. *Child
Abuse & Neglect, 11,* 75-86.

Crowley, M. (1982). Preparation for foster care practice: A survey. *Social
Work Monographs, 11.*

Daughtry, D., & Kunkel, M. A. (1993). Experience of depression in college
students: A concept map. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 40,* 316-323.

Deby, K. J. (1993). *Concept mapping of the views of abused women.* Unpub-
lished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

DeVizia, J., (1974). Success in a foster home program for mentally retarded
children. *Child Welfare, 53,* 120-125.

Doelling, J. L. & Johnson, J. H. (1990). Predicting success in foster placement:
The contribution of parent-child characteristics. *American Journal of Orthopsy-
chiatry, 60,* 585-593.

Eastman, K. S. (1979). The foster family in a systems theory perspective. *Child
Welfare, 58,* 564-570.

Evans, G. (1997). Personal communication, May 20, 1997.

Everitt, B. (1980). *Cluster analysis* (2nd ed.). New York: Halsted Press.

Fanshel, D., & Shinn, E. B. (1978). *Children in foster care: A longitudinal
investigation.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Federal-Provincial Working Group on Child and Family Services Information.
(1996). *Child and family services annual statistical report.* Ottawa: Author.

Fitzpatrick, A. (1992). *Child poverty and child welfare literature review.* Ed-
monton: Edmonton Social Planning Council.

Foster parents charged in alleged beatings of handicapped boys. (1998, Febru-
ary 11). *Edmonton Journal, A1.*

Frank, G. (1980). Treatment needs of children in foster care. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 50,* 256-263.

Gallaway, B. & Nutter, R. & Hudson, J. (1995). Relationship between discharge outcomes for treatment foster care clients and program characteristics. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 3,* 46-62.

Gean, M. P., Gilmore, J. L., & Dowler, J. K. (1985). Infants and toddlers in supervised custody: A pilot study of visitation. *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry, 24,* 608-612.

Gruber, A. R. (1987). *Children in foster care: Destitute, neglected, betrayed.* New York: Human Sciences Press.

Hampson, R. 8. (1985). Foster parent training: Assessing its role in upgrading foster home care. In M. J. Cox & R. D. Cox (Eds.), *Foster care: Current issues, policies and practices* (pp. 167-205). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Hampson, R. B. (1988). Special foster care for exceptional children: A review of programs and policies. *Children and Youth Services Review, 10,* 19-41.

Hampson, R.B. & Tavormina, J.B. (1980). Feedback from the experts: A study of foster mothers. *Social Work, 25,* 108-113.

Hicks, C. & Nixon, S. (1991). Unfounded allegations of child abuse in the United Kingdom: A survey of foster parents' reactions to investigative procedures. *Child & Youth Services, 15,* 249-260.

Jacobs, M. (1980). Foster parent training: An opportunity for skills enrichment and empowerment. *Child Welfare, 59,* 615-624.

Jassal, B. (1981). *Short-term foster parents: Reactions to foster children leaving their care.* Unpublished master's thesis. University of Birmingham.

Kendrick, M. (1990). *Nobody's children: The foster care crisis in Canada.* Toronto: Macmillan.

Knapp, M. & Fenyo, A. (1989). Efficiency in foster care: Proceeding with caution. In J. Hudson & B. Gallaway (Eds.), *The state as parent* (pp. 93-111). London: Kluer Academic Publishers.

Knapp, M. Fenyo, A., & Robertson, E. (1986). *Children in care: Progress on costs and efficiency.* University of Kent: Personal Social Services Research Unit.

Knish, S. (1994). *Concept mapping the beliefs of chronic low back pain sufferers.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

Lacene, K. (1996). *Concept mapping wives adaptation to husbands with brain injuries.* Unpublished master's thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

Lennys go free as third trial nixed (January 24, 1988). *Edmonton Journal: Journal Extra - On Line.*

Liberals challenge figures on child deaths (February 4, 1998). *Edmonton Journal: Journal Extra - On Line.*

Littner, N. (1975). The importance of natural parents to the child in placement. *Child Welfare, 54,* 175-181.

Ludwig, S. R. (1996). *Abused women's experience with the justice system: Concept mapping.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

MacCallum, R. (1988). Multidimensional scaling. In J. R. Nesselroade and R. B. Cattell (Eds.), *Handbook of multivariate experimental psychology* (pp. 421-445). New York: Plenum.

Martin, E. D., Altemeier, W. A., Hickson, G. B., Davis, A., & Glascoe, F. P. (1992). Improving resources for foster care. *Clinical Pediatrics, 31,* 400-404.

McFadden, E.J. & Ryan, P. (1991). Maltreatment in family foster homes: Dynamics and dimensions. *Child & Youth Services, 15,* 209-231.

Mech, E. V. (1983). Out-of-home placement rates. *Social Service Review, 57,* 659-667.

Morrissette, P. (1993). Towards the prevention of abuse allegations in foster care: Exploring interpersonal dynamics. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal, 10,* 533-540.

National Council of Welfare (1979). *In the best interests of the child.* Ottawa: Author.

Noble, L.S. & Euster, S.D. (1981). Foster parent input: A crucial element in Training. *Child Welfare, 60,* 35-42.

O'Hara, G. (1986). Developing post-placement services in Lothian. *Adoption & Fostering, 10,* 38-42.

Olsen, L. (1982). Services for minority children in out-of-home care. *Social Service Review, 56,* 572-585.

Pardeck, J. T. (1983). Marital status and family source of income: Potential predictors for determining the stability of foster family care? *Adolescence, 18,* 631-635.

Pardeck, J. T. (1984). Multiple placement of children in foster family care: An empirical analysis. *Social Work, 29,* 506-509.

Poland, D. C. & Groze, V. (1993). Effects of foster care placement on biological children in the home. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 10,* 153-164.

Prosser, H. (1978). *Perspectives on foster care: An annotated bibliography.* Windsor: National Foundation for Educational Research, Humanities Press.

Raychaba, B. (1988). *To be on our own with no direction from home.* Toronto: National Youth in Care Network.

Rosenblum, B. (1977). *Foster homes and adolescents: A research report.* Hamilton: Children's Aid Society of Hamilton-Wentworth.

Rowe, J., Cain, H., Hundelby, M. & Keane, A. (1984). *Long-term foster care.* London: Batsford/British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering.

Rushton, A. (1989). Post-placement services for foster and adoptive parents: support, counselling or therapy? *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 30,* 197-204.

Schwartz, L. L. (1994). The challenge of raising one's nonbiological children. *The American Journal of Family Therapy, 22,* 195-207.

Sellick, C. (1992). *Supporting short-term foster carers.* Aldershot: Avebury.

Simms, M. D. (1991). Foster children and the foster care system, part II: Impact on the child. *Current Problems in Pediatrics, 9,* 345-369.

Soliday, E., McCluskey-Fawcett, K., & Meck, N. (1994). Foster mothers' stress, coping, and social support in parenting drug-exposed and other at-risk toddlers. *Childrens Health Care, 23,* 15-32.

Steinhauer, P. D. , Johnson, M., Snowden, M., Santa-Barbara, J., Kane, B., Barker, P., & Hornick, J. P. (1988). The foster care research project: Summary and analysis. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 33,* 509-516.

Stratix (1991). *Foster care program: Quantitative research. Final report.* Edmonton: Author.

The Future of Foster Care (1988). *Residential care research poroject.* Toronto: Darnell Consulting.

Tinney, M. (1985) Role perceptions in foster parent associations in British Columbia. *Child Welfare, 64,* 73-79.

Trochim, W. M. (1987). *The concept system.* Ithasca, NY: Trochim Publishing.

Trochim, W. M. (1989a). Concept mapping: Soft science or hard art? *Evaluation and Program Planning, 12,* 87-110.

Trochim, W. M. (1989ab). An introduction to concept mapping for planning and evaluation. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 12,* 1-16.

Urquhart, L.R. (1989). Separation and loss: Assessing the impacts on foster parent retention. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal, 6,* 193-209.

Waldock, T. (1996). Professionalizing foster care: The welfare of children. *The Social Worker, 64.*

Walter, B. (1993). *In need of protection: Children and youth in Alberta.* Edmonton: Children's Advocate.

Webb, S. & Aldgate, J. (1991). Using respite care to prevent long-term family breakdown. *Adoption & Fostering, 15,* 6-13.

Wells, K. & D'Angelo, L. (1994). Specialized foster care: Voices from the field. *Social Service Review, 68,* 127-144.

Wharf, B. (1985). The challenge of child welfare. In K. Levitt and B. Wharf (Eds.), *The challenge of child welfare* (pp. 292-293). Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Wiehe, V.R. (1983). Foster mothers: Are they unique? *Psychological Reports, 53,* 1215-1218.

Working Committee on Child Native Child Welfare (1987). *In the interests of native child welfare services.* Edmonton: Author.