

Introduction: The Center for Family Life and Its Programs

Introduction

This book tells the story of the first twenty-two years in the life of an outstanding community institution: the Center for Family Life. The Center was established in 1978 with the mission of helping the families and children of Sunset Park, Brooklyn, a community of many immigrants struggling with poverty and unemployment. It is also the story of the two professional women -- Sister Mary Paul Janchill and the late Sister Geraldine Tobia -- who served as midwives at the Center's birth and tenaciously guided and protected the Center while nurturing both those who receive its services and those who provide them.

We present a narrative about development -- the development of one organization and its innovative programs, of the thousands of families who have participated in its programs and activities, of the community to which it belongs, and of the staff who place their compassion, energy, and expertise at the service of the organization, the families, and the community. We have used a narrative approach because we believe it best allows us to convey the complex, multi-dimensional aspects of this unique organization's development over time.

It is an account placed in the context of over two decades of change -- changes in the Sunset Park community, in professional social work practice approaches, in theoretical frameworks, and in social policy. Although some of these changes have shaped the Center's programs, others have been resisted by the Center's leadership and staff. Still others have been inspired by activities at the Center.

Although the story of the Center for Family Life is interesting in its own right, it is also instructive to community-based programs in other urban areas that are attempting to assist families and children with a complex set of challenges. Within the child welfare system, public and voluntary agencies throughout the country are attempting to respond more effectively to the needs of families in particular communities. The Center's unique combination of community-rootedness and clinical sophistication offers the field a programmatic model for preserving and supporting families over time.

Why Focus on the Center for Family Life?

Almost since its inception, the Center for Family Life, technically a satellite program of St. Christopher-Ottillie Services for Children and Families, a large voluntary agency based in Sea Cliff, Long Island, has been recognized as a model program for delivering comprehensive, community-based, family-centered services (McGowan with Kahn, & Kamerman 1990; Rosenblatt 1985,1995; Shapiro 1997, 1999; Sheffer 1992) and as a "successful program" for at-risk children and their families (Schorr with Schorr 1988; Schorr 1997). Its growing reputation has created widespread interest in its mission and philosophy, programs, processes, and results. A constant stream of social work practitioners and administrators, policy-makers, academic researchers, representatives of public and private funding sources, and journalists have visited the Center to observe its activities. In the national news and other publications, they have reported the Center's innovative, often pioneering programs, effective interventions in individuals' and families' lives, and contributions to development and change in the community it serves. Rosenblatt, Schorr, Shapiro, and others writing about the Center for Family Life have emphasized that the Center's programs illustrate what ***can be done*** for at-risk children and their families.

There are two reasons we believe it is especially important to tell the story of the Center of Family Life now and in greater depth than it has been reported previously. First, in the past generation the child welfare field moved from what had traditionally been a focus on child saving to the adoption of what Schuerman (1997) has described as the three principles governing child welfare policy in the U.S. today: 1) reasonable efforts to prevent foster placement; 2) permanency planning for children in foster care; and 3) placement in the least detrimental alternative. This policy shift reflects increasing community and professional recognition of the negative consequences of over-reliance on parent-child separation and foster care placement as the primary means of helping children whose parents are unable to provide adequate care. The evolution in public policy also represents increasing recognition of the potential for growth and change in high-risk families who receive services designed to enhance parental functioning

and child well being while children remain in their own families and communities.

Unfortunately, this family-centered orientation to the provision of services has come under increasing criticism in recent years (Murphy, 1993; MacDonald, 1994, 1999; Weisman, 1994) in the context of the resurgence of conservative political forces eager to dismantle federal entitlement and service programs for low-income families. This has resulted not only in the adoption of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Act of 1996 (P.L.104-193), commonly known as the "welfare reform" bill, but also the passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (P.L.105-89). The latter bill, which makes the safety of children the priority in all child welfare decision making, essentially reverses the pro-family stance implied in the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 and the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. This reversal was justified on the basis of a nationwide rise in child maltreatment reports, widely publicized research findings regarding the limited success of the "Homebuilders" model of family preservation services, and a dramatic increase in kinship foster care placements (McGowan & Walsh, 2000).

In the rush to "do something" about the continuing problems in the child welfare system and to prevent the occasional child fatalities that may result from poorly informed decision making by untrained and unskilled workers, the positive results that can be achieved with high-risk families and children when they are given the services and supports necessary to enable them to achieve their full potential were largely ignored. Our hope is that this book will provide policy makers, program administrators, and practitioners some of the evidence and conviction required to halt this effort to turn back the clock and "rescue" children from the family and community life in which they are most likely to thrive. Universally accessible, comprehensive, community-centered family-focused services provided by competent practitioners can make a real difference for low-income families and children.

The second important reason for telling the story of the Center of Family Life now is that there exists a strong sense of demoralization among child welfare practitioners, precipitated in large measure by the extensive public criticism of this service system. It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit highly skilled young social workers to this field of practice (Alwon & Reitz, 2000). What is missing from many of the debates about the family and child service system is informed discussion of the practice interventions that actually help families confronted with multiple problems and of the ways in which practitioners in this difficult field can retain a sense of optimism about their work and about the opportunities they can create for children at risk.

Social work educators frequently refer to the pioneering work of early professional leaders such as Jane Addams, but little attention is given to the successes of the leading practitioners of the day. Our hope is that this book will demonstrate that current practitioners are still able to have a significant impact on the lives of the families and children they serve and that there are role models available for front-line child welfare workers struggling with the complexities of the problems they confront on a daily basis.

This book is designed primarily to provide an in-depth "thick description" (Geertz 1973; 1983) of a single successful service program. We hope our efforts to elucidate the subjugated knowledge (Foucault, 1980; Hartman, 1994a) of the practitioners and clients at the Center for Family Life will provide meaningful guidance to policy makers, program administrators, child welfare practitioners, and social work students.

The Study upon Which This Book is Based

Among those interested in the Center for Family Life's community-centered family-focused model has been The Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Foundation's selection of the Center as a grantee for its Evaluation Grants Program in 1993 provided the opportunity for our study. The Center for Family Life, technically a satellite program of St. Christopher-Ottillie Services for Children and Families, a large voluntary agency based in Sea Cliff, Long Island, was one of several Evaluation Grants Program grantees. The grantees were selected nationally through a competitive process in which leading researchers, policy makers, and practitioners in the field of children's services nominated well-established programs with strong reputations that shared the defining characteristics of the Foundation's own service

initiatives, i.e., they are preventive, collaborative, comprehensive, flexible, and family-focused. The overall objective of the Evaluation Grants Program was to produce studies that could make significant contributions to the field of children's services, the agenda of the Foundation, and the program themselves. The authors were selected as the research team by the Center.

Funded from 1993 to mid-1997, the study was extended informally into 1999 to collect follow-up data. In accord with the Foundation's guidelines, the research focused on the Center's mission and philosophy, historic and community context, program operations, services processes, and service results. Thus, this research has generated detailed information that goes far beyond the articles and monographs about the Center's programs that have been published previously.

We conceptualized the overall study design as a case study (Orum et al. 1991; Stake 1994, 1995; Yin 1994) of the Center for Family Life in the context of the Sunset Park community. Within this design, we incorporated interrelated multi-phased substudies of specific Center programs. We were committed to designing an illuminative evaluation (Gordon 1991) that would capture the complexity, dynamism, and spirit of this organization. To this end, we collected detailed information from multiple perspectives, including those of program staff (professional and volunteer) and administrators, family members participating in a broad range of Center programs and activities, and community leaders. To explore the interrelationships of the Center's various services and the interventive processes and outcomes of each program component, we conducted multi-phased substudies of each service. We recognized that identifying and describing the "content and manner of the service being delivered" is a critical stage in the development and evaluation of a program (Cheetham 1992:276).

Multiple data sources and methods of collection included in-depth semi-structured interviews with Center administrators and staff, families participating in Center programs, and community leaders; review of Center documents, records, and correspondence; the Center's management information system regarding services to 4,630 families during a twenty-four month period; and standardized case data collected on a prospective sample of 189 families served in the Center's preventive program using the Family Assessment Form (McCroskey et al. 1991; McCroskey & Meezan 1997) and several other instruments. Additional sources of data included participant observation in multiple programs, a telephone survey of 139 families participating in community school programs, focus groups of participants in a community school program as well as staff in the employment program, logs completed by staff in multiple programs, and other standardized instruments completed by program participants and staff. Collection of data from multiple sources, through multiple methods, and by multiple investigators permitted extensive triangulation (Denzin 1978). Greater detail concerning the study design and methodology is provided in an appendix to the book.

As we began to disseminate the findings from our study of the Center for Family Life, it became clear that written words could not fully capture either the Center's dynamic services and programs or the impact of these on the families and children of Sunset Park. Murray Nossel, a research assistant with our study, was inspired by his conversations with staff at the Center and had videotaped a number of his interviews with the Center's co-founders, staff, and program participants. We asked Murray to develop a brief edited video that could serve as a stimulus for discussion with the study's funder about a documentary on the Center that would complement this book. Subsequent to our discussions with The Annie E. Casey Foundation about this option, Roger Weisberg agreed to join Murray as a Co-Director and Co-Producer for one or more documentaries. To be broadcast by PBS Channel 13 (WNET) in New York City and other PBS stations throughout the country, *A BROOKLYN FAMILY TALE* (2001) further elaborates the Center's story by providing an in-depth look at people who use and provide its services. It portrays the intimate personal relationships among the community residents and the Center staff as well as the complexity of the Center's work.

What is the Center for Family Life?

The Center for Family Life is a community center that provides Sunset Park families comprehensive support services and activities at multiple neighborhood sites as well as sophisticated clinical social work

services. The Center is accessible to community residents from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily, and the Co-Director and live-in staff member, Sister Mary Paul, is available for emergency services by telephone from 11:00 p.m. through 8:00 a.m. Funded through New York City and State government agencies, foundation grants, and gifts from corporations and individuals, all Center Services are free to family members. The Center is technically a satellite program of St. Christopher-Ottillie Services for Children and Families, a large voluntary agency based in Long Island.

Since its establishment, the Center's home has been Sunset Park, a community with a growing population and with incoming immigrants, both documented and undocumented, from Central America, South America, China, Hong Kong, and Arab countries in the Middle East. Children and families of the neighborhood are confronted daily by poverty and unemployment, maternal and child health concerns, drug-related difficulties, youth gang activity, a housing shortage, and oversubscribed schools. Almost 30 percent of the community's children and youth participate in one or more Center services over the course of a year.

The Center for Family Life provides extensive community school programs that incorporate after-school childcare, summer camp, creative and performing arts programs, recreation, youth development and parent education, employment programs for adults and youth, comprehensive emergency services to meet families' needs for food, clothing, and financial assistance, individual, family, and group counseling, known as the "preventive program;" and neighborhood foster care. The Center's staff members are also engaged in community development efforts.

Families may use one or more Center services concurrently or sequentially over the course of the children's childhood and adolescence. To illustrate, within one week a family could meet with a preventive program social worker for family treatment. Several individual family members might also meet with the worker for individual counseling and/or participation in a group. Children could attend daily one of the Center's after-school childcare programs; teens could participate daily in the Center's youth development program; parents could participate in a Center parent education group, the employment program, and/or the English as a Second Language program; the family could receive food and clothing from the Center's food pantry and thrift shop. In addition, the family's preventive program social worker might refer family members to other community resources.

But the Center provides much more than formal services to the Sunset Park community. Its staff join the community's children, youth, parents, and grandparents in their lives and in their daily life tasks. Community residents who participate in the Center's programs have described staff members as "like family," "like big brothers and big sisters to me," and "friends."

In our three-year study of the Center and its programs, we found that, although each Center program component has an identifiable purpose, role, and integrity, the "whole (the Center itself) is greater than the sum of its parts" (Hess, McGowan, & Botsko 1997:3). There is a synergy created as family members interact with various program staff and with other Sunset Park children and families using Center services. We believe that the Center for Family Life's mission, philosophy, and program model provide a prototype for delivering comprehensive, integrated, and individualized services to families with a broad continuum of needs and complex problems, often significantly reflective of the effects of poverty.

Sunset Park: The Center's Home

Located within sight of Manhattan, Sunset Park, Brooklyn, is a neighborhood with a distinct set of sights, sounds, and activities, as described below by Yvonne Johnson, a research assistant with the study:

If you take the downtown N subway from Manhattan, you will, some half-hour later, arrive in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. On this particular April day, I get off at the 45th Street/4th Avenue station. As I climb the stairs to the street, I hear the noisy traffic, and subsequently see the busy 4th Avenue. The monotony of the fast moving vehicles on the thoroughfare is in contrast with the sidewalk with its small shops that I walk past: a laundromat, a deli, a fast-food store -- all with their doors open on this unusually warm and sunny spring

afternoon. There are toddlers running in and out of the stores and adults chatting in Spanish as they stroll by.

I turn west, down 43rd Street and pass the Center for Family Life, a social service family agency. Typically the Center is my destination. Instead I walk on till I reach the Gowanus Expressway at the end of the block. This monstrous, thunderous motorway is on stilts, making 3rd Avenue dark beneath. There are a few pedestrians in view but they are quickly out of sight. Within a few minutes hundreds of motor vehicles pass overhead on the Expressway, and in its shadows, I see that 3rd Avenue has its own share of voluminous traffic, but, on foot, one feels alone and vulnerable in this space.

I retrace my steps, glad to leave the Gowanus Expressway and pass the occupied brownstones again. It's after five o'clock. Elderly couples are sitting in their small front yards, and younger adults sit on the stoops of their large two-or three-family homes. Children are riding bikes and a couple of teens are sweeping their paved front yard. I am struck by the activity -- the stoops are being used more than they are in Greenwich Village. Unlike other neighborhoods where people's lives appear to be centered inside the house, rather than on the neighborhood or the community, private and public spaces are being used for social interaction. It seems that there is a feeling of community.

I reach 5th Avenue where there is a rising green mound: Sunset Park. Mounting the steps, I look down on 5th Avenue and see a little beyond. I continue up the hill, where there are families picnicking, having their early evening meal in the sunshine, and couples dating. At the summit, the second highest in Brooklyn, a magnificent view is revealed. To the north is Manhattan -- the World Trade Center appearing nearby -- and ahead, to the west, is the New York Bay, with angular shapes by the water, no doubt the unused piers. . . . Atop Sunset Park, the confusing contrasts experienced below recede and the neighborhood becomes an orderly part of this great city of New York. – (Johnson 1997:3-4)

A Growing and Diverse Community

The only unchanging dimension of Sunset Park is its demographic changeability. It is one of the fastest growing communities in New York City, with incoming immigrants. The 1990 United States Census indicated that Sunset Park, a geographic area of less than three square miles, was a neighborhood of 102,565 people, 4 percent more than in 1980 (Sheffer 1992, p. 78). In 1997, 28,075 children and youth under the age of eighteen lived in Sunset Park (Citizens' Committee for Children of New York 1999:156). Twenty-nine percent were under five years of age; 28.6 percent were five to nine years old; 24.5 percent were ten to fourteen years old; 18.3 percent were ages fifteen to eighteen.

Almost one-third (29 percent) of community residents are foreign born, and two-thirds (65.9 percent) of foreign-born residents are not naturalized U.S. citizens (City of New York, Department of City Planning 1993). Recent immigrants entering the community are primarily from China (28.9 percent, the Dominican Republic (20.3 percent), the former Soviet Union (6.8 percent), Poland (6.0 percent), Ecuador (4.8 percent), the Philippines (2.5 percent), India (2.3 percent), Guyana (2.2 percent), Bangladesh (1.8 percent), Trinidad and Tobago (1.8 percent), and other countries (22.6 percent) (City of New York, Department of City Planning, 1996). The City of New York Department of City Planning further reports that Sunset Park is one of the few New York City neighborhoods that absorbs immigrants from *all* the top forty countries of origin for immigrants to New York City (ibid.)

The neighborhood has been broken down into ten ethnic groups: Hispanic, Italian, Irish, Scandinavian, Polish, Chinese, Greek, Other Asian, Middle Eastern, and other European (Winnick 1990:132). Specifically, 61 percent of the community's population is Hispanic, 16 percent white non-Hispanic, 18 percent of Asian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian descent, and 5 percent African American (Center for Family Life, 2000:2-12). Inter-ethnic rivalries and attendant political fractionization have troubled the community (Sheffer 1992).

In attempting to identify a New York City neighborhood similar to Sunset Park for comparative purposes, one of the research team members consulted with a statistician from the New York Department of City Planning: Population Division. According to the statistician, there is no comparable neighborhood in the

city. Sunset Park is "unique" in its blend of Hispanic and Asian residents. The current Hispanic community is highly diverse. It is composed of persons whose families have come from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Ecuador, Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, and Peru. The countries of origin of most Asian and Asian American residents are China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and India (Winnick 1990:144). Zhou reports (2001) that "Today, most of Sunset Park's Chinese immigrants are Cantonese from the mainland and Hong Kong . . . Immigrant Chinese now call Sunset Park 'Bat Dai Do,' a Cantonese translation of 'Eighth Avenue,' which means the road to good fortune and prosperity" (p. 163).

Sunset Park's changing demography has impacted the Center's program development and staffing patterns significantly. For example, as more Chinese residents have immigrated to Sunset Park, greater attention has been paid to the language, culture, and family dynamics of the different Chinese groups (China, Taiwan, Hong Kong) participating in programs. The changing nature of Sunset Park's Latino population has required that staff recognize the distinctions among national groups in its clinical and school-based interventions. In addition, recruitment of staff members who are bilingual, i.e. English/Spanish, English/Chinese, is a high priority.

The Families and Children of Sunset Park: Challenges

The specific nature of the services provided by the Center for Family Life over the past two decades has been significantly influenced by the needs of the community's families and children. The penetrating presence of poverty and unemployment has required continuing access to emergency services (i.e., food, clothing, financial assistance). The challenges facing immigrant parents in locating and retaining employment, including the need for job skills, English as a second language skills, and childcare, prompted the creation of an employment program and shaped the services provided through the Center's community school programs. Problems faced by the community's youth -- gangs, drugs, and violence -- reinforce the staff's strong commitment to providing educational, socialization, youth development, recreational, and employment programs for children and teens. The need for services to youth is underlined by an important finding of a survey of eighty-eight Sunset Park youth, conducted by students in an after-school ESL class at Dewey Junior High School, that 68 percent of the respondents were worried they might die before their twenty-fifth birthday (Crawford 1995).

Although Sunset Park is not as depressed as several other Brooklyn neighborhoods, it has continued to have serious problems that affect these children and their families. To illustrate, as reported by the Citizens' Committee for Children (1999), when Sunset Park is compared to seventeen other Brooklyn community districts with regard to the rate of adult unemployment, Sunset Park's rate of 8.0 percent is slightly lower than the Brooklyn mean of 9.2 percent. Sunset Park's percentage of households with incomes under \$10,000 also compares favorably with other Brooklyn community districts, ranking fifth lowest. Yet when ranked according to the percentage of children born into poor families, Sunset Park fares less well, ranking third highest at 70.8 percent, much higher than the Brooklyn mean percentage of 54.2 percent and the New York City mean of 55.8 percent. The percentage of children receiving public assistance in 1998 was 27.9 percent, slightly higher than Brooklyn as a whole (mean=26.2 percent). Approximately nine out of ten of the children in the two elementary schools in which the Center has programs were eligible for the free lunch program (*New York News Day*, 1996).

Births to teens (13.2 percent of Sunset Park births in 1996) and low-birth-weight infants (7.9 percent of infants born in 1996) are another cluster of problems confronting families. Child abuse and neglect reports for Sunset Park in 1996 totaled 676, or 25 reports per 1,000 children, and active cases in Sunset Park identified as receiving city funded placement prevention services for 1996 totaled 324. However, despite the high percentage of Sunset Park's children born into poverty (70.8 percent), the rate of placement in foster care is 9 per 1000 children compared to 22 for Brooklyn as a whole and 25 for New York City. It is highly probable that this statistic reflects the Center's presence in the lives of neighborhood children at risk for foster care placement.

Drug abuse and drug dealing also challenge Sunset Park's families. Heroin, crack, and cocaine are sold and used. In a recent survey of 266 Sunset Park residents, respondents identified drugs as the worst

thing about raising a family in Sunset Park (Metis Associates 1999).

Overcrowded housing and schools are also serious community issues. In 1996, 43.4 percent of Sunset Park's rental housing was rated fair to poor (Citizens Committee for Children of New York 1999:162); almost a third (32 percent) of rental housing is over-crowded. Severely overcrowded schools are another problem confronting the community's children. Johnson reported that the rapid growth in the proportion of Hispanic children in Sunset Park, from 2 percent of the population in the 1950's to 70 percent twenty years later and to 85 percent in 1980 "has placed enormous pressure on teachers, both in terms of assisting students for whom English is a foreign language and of coping with teaching in environments that are operating beyond capacity" (1997:26).

Thus, poverty and unemployment, maternal and child health concerns, drug-related difficulties, youth gang activity, housing shortage, and over-crowded schools confront the neighborhood's children and families daily and test the skills and persistence of the Center's staff members and volunteers.

The Families and Children of Sunset Park: Resources

Despite the community's depressed economic status, it has many resources. For example, Sunset Park has many small family-owned and operated businesses, most owned by immigrants (Winnick 1990:149-150). Such businesses include groceries, delicatessens, travel agencies, newspaper and stationery stores, laundries, butcher shops, fish stores, fruit and vegetable stores, restaurants, bars, clothing stores, and hardware dealers. In their ownership, staff, commodities, and store signs, street-level businesses reflect the immediate ethnic mixture of the surrounding few blocks. Thus, local retailers provide the vast majority of jobs and services in the community. The few larger employers in Sunset Park include the Lutheran Medical Center, garment factories, and the light manufacturers and goods assemblers of the industrial zone along the waterfront (ibid:156-160).

Sunset Park's strengths also include the remarkable diversity of its population and cultures, the connectedness of residents to the neighborhood, and the demonstrated commitment of a significant number of its residents to making the neighborhood a good place to live, work, and raise children. In the 1999 neighborhood survey cited above (Metis Associates), Sunset Park residents most frequently identified the social networks as the best thing about raising a family in Sunset Park (22.2 percent of respondents). Seventy percent of the respondents indicated they know most of the adults who live in or near their block, and 72 percent indicated they know most of the children who live in or near their block. Almost 20 percent indicated the best thing about the neighborhood was that services are nearby and good. Such services are strengthened by the thousands of hours of work provided each year voluntarily by parents, grandparents, teenagers, and neighbors at schools, churches, and organizations such as the Center for Family Life.

It is also a strength of Sunset Park's families and children that they are willing to use the neighborhood services available. To illustrate, data in the Center's management information system indicate that 8,408 children -- almost 30 percent of the children in the community -- in 4,630 families used at least one Center service in the twenty-four months of 1994 and 1995. During the 12-month period of fiscal year 1999, 4,465 families were identified as using at least one Center service (Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, 2000:2-20). We are certain that a greater number than identified actually accessed Center services, with undercounts particularly likely in the recreation, youth development, emergency services, and advocacy programs.

In the neighborhood survey described above, Sunset Park residents were asked "Have you ever heard of the Center for Family Life?" and "If yes, how important is CFL to the neighborhood?" Over six in ten residents (63.2 percent) responded yes to the first question, and, of those, eighty-eight indicated that the Center is very important to the neighborhood.

Thus, despite the economic and social problems challenging Sunset Park's families and children, there are visible community strengths and resources. Not the least of these are residents' connections with each other and their connection to the community. The Center for Family Life is among these resources,

and it is a more powerful resource because parents, grandparents, and youth volunteer their time and talents to expand and support the Center's programs. Thus, families are connected with the Center not only in their need for services, but also as resources for other families in the community.

Entering the Third Decade of Service

Over the past two decades, the Center for Family Life and the community of Sunset Park have shaped each other's development through an ongoing iterative process. As a dynamic organization, the Center for Family Life has sought input from its immediate and broader environments and actively gathered information about community residents' needs and interests. The Directors and staff critically and collectively have weighed changes in the community against the Center's mission and primary purposes, integrating what supports and enhances these purposes and setting aside or actively disregarding that which would undermine its work with Sunset Park's families and children. The Center has thus enacted its deep commitment to the community that is its home.

Sister Geraldine and Sister Mary Paul, professional social workers and the Center's founding Co-Directors, established the Center with a "blueprint" based upon their earlier professional experiences. This blueprint included emergency services, counseling, and community school services, with family life education, socialization, and learning to be provided at the schools. Sister Geraldine spent six months in the community prior to the Center's opening, determining the needs that were present. Since that time, the staff members have regularly identified the needs they hear from the community and the resources to be developed in response. Through this process, activities and services have been designed and implemented.

As the Center enters its third decade of service to the Sunset Park community, its paid and volunteer staff members continue to provide a rich array of programs and activities. Center programs are located at six sites, including the main office, and employ sixty-two full-time and seventy part-time staff. A large number of volunteers, including many parents and youth, help in the various component programs. Its budget (2000-2001) is \$4,230,156, \$2,708,020 of which comes from three New York City agencies: the Administration for Children's Services (formerly the Child Welfare Administration) for the preventive services program, the Department of Employment for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and the Department of Youth and Community Development for the community school programs. The balance comes from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

In just over two decades, the Center for Family Life has grown from a small community-based program focusing initially on family counseling, information and referral services, and collaborative community service planning, to a complex organization that integrates comprehensive family support services and activities at multiple neighborhood sites as well as sophisticated clinical and community development efforts. Since 1978 the Center has served thousands of Sunset Park residents.

Other Areas Described in the Introduction to *Nurturing the One, Supporting the Many*

Areas presented in the book's Introduction that are not excerpted here include a description of the development of the Center's services chronologically over time and an extensive review of the many previously published reports regarding the Center's mission and philosophy, programs, processes and results.