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ABSTRACT

This document, based on a computer search of the ERIC database, presents a review of the literature on divorce and single parent families. Statistics from the 1980 census are presented which show that 19.7 percent of children under 18 live with a single parent, who in the overwhelming number of cases is the mother. The document presents data on the economic problems, causes, and adjustment issues surrounding divorce. The impact of divorce on children is discussed as well as the particular needs of single parent families stemming from the dissolution of the marriage and the setting up of a new lifestyle. Areas of strain to the mother and to the father are identified. Problems inherent in remarriage are reviewed and intervention strategies are suggested. The helping role of society is explored in the areas of legal services, custody laws, conciliation counseling, mediation counseling, personal counseling, and school programs. References and an annotated bibliography from the computer search of the ERIC database complete the document.

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DIVORCE AND
SINGLE-PARENT
FAMILY COUNSELING

Lynelle C. Hale



Searchlight

Relevant Resources in High Interest Areas

plus

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ERIC COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL SERVICES CLEARINGHOUSE

School of Education
The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109
Published by ERIC/CAPS

DIVORCE AND SINGLE-PARENT FAMILY COUNSELING

Lynelle C. Hale

**Searchlight Plus: Relevant Resources
In High Interest Areas. 26+**

**AN INFORMATION ANALYSIS PAPER
Based on a computer search of the ERIC database
November 1966 through February 1983.**

**ERIC COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL SERVICES CLEARINGHOUSE
1983**

CG 017229

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

First there was the **Searchlight** series--computer searches with abstracts of the ERIC database on topics of major interest and importance to ERIC/CAPS users and helping professionals in the field. Then came the **Searchlight Plus** series, computer searches of the topics in most demand PLUS in-depth analyses of the documents in the search. The opening narrative in each **Searchlight Plus** highlights certain documents, identifies major issues and trends, describes the historical background and existing programs, and points out the implications of the information for the work of human services professionals. For those who need succinct, timely, and practical information but lack the time to examine the total collection of data, the **Searchlight Plus** is the "perfect package." For a complete list of current topics, please contact the ERIC/CAPS Publications Department.

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- I. Developing Self, Self Esteem and Establishing Independence.
- II. Involvement in Tension Releasing Social and Routine Activities and Contacts with Relatives
- III. Investing in Children and Maintaining Family Stability
- IV. Maintaining Social Support Through Religious and Social Activities
- V. Expressing Feelings and Seeking Understanding Through Personal and Professional Relationships (p. 98)

Goetting (1981) and Kitson and Raschke (1983) have reviewed the research literature on the negative consequences of divorce. For adults these are likely to include time and money management difficulties, physical and mental health problems, diminished social and sexual activities initially and diminished satisfaction later, and role definition strain. Role redefinition strain includes difficulties in child management as well as stresses in relationships with extended family members.

Though health correlates with divorce have been heavily documented, the exact cause-effect linkage is unclear. Is divorce a cause or an effect of health disturbances? One study showed that health problems were associated more closely with marital happiness than with marital status (EJ 041 619). Research is beginning to indicate that role redefinition strain may be correlated with the degree of attachment to the former spouse. Many questions about factors facilitating adjustment remain unanswered because of inadequate quantity and/or quality of research (Kitson & Raschke, 1983):

1. Do men or women hurt more?
2. Does having children help or hinder?
3. Do fault-grounds laws make matters worse?
4. Do age and length of marriage make a difference?
5. Do the better educated and the wealthier cope better?
6. Are dating and sexual activity necessary for adjustment?
7. Does counseling really help the pain go away?
8. What psychological traits are positive resources?

Much more research is needed to clarify our understanding of the consequences of divorce on adults and what factors facilitate the adjustment process.

Impact on Children

Interest in the effects of parental divorce on children has been fairly intense, but the research work is far from complete. Goetting (1981) defines the bottom line in research efforts as twofold: (1) little can be said conclusively about the effects of divorce on children because of methodological limitations of the research, and (2) negative effects may well be a consequence of marital discord rather than marital structure.

Goetting reviewed a number of studies which investigated the effect on cognitive performance and school achievement. The conclusions are contradictory and factors are inadequately segregated. If excessive absence is the most evident debilitating factor, what can schools do to facilitate the child's more regular participation? Though there may be some immobilization or regression in school productivity associated with divorce, one could logically conclude that consequence from the definition of a crisis state as being temporarily dysfunctional. The real question is how do school personnel provide the appropriate support which allows the child to move through the crisis trauma as quickly, yet thoroughly, as possible. And how can schools support the parents' efforts to reorganize the family into a functional single-parent structure?

Researchers have also been interested in divorce's impact on the personality development of children. Studies of young children are again inconclusive and contradictory. Recent efforts to control more variables indicate that the conflict atmosphere in the home is more detrimental than the marital status of the parents. Research by Mess and Camara suggests that the relationships among family members seem to affect child behavior more than does marital status (EJ 220 409). Furthermore, maintaining positive relationships with both custodial and non-custodial parents can greatly mitigate the negative behavioral consequences of divorce.

Similar conclusions are drawn from the work of developmental psychologists: "Nurturant, competent, accessible fathers facilitate the psychosocial development of both sons and daughters, whereas hostile, distant, or inaccessible fathers (whether absent or present) inhibit the sociopersonality development" (EJ 177 416, p. 169). Rosenthal agrees.

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November 30, 198**

**Monthly vital statistic
Service, National**

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Print 25/5/1-98

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EJ269943 C0522781

Children of Viet
Approach to Dealing
Drenan, Solly B.;
American Journal of
1982

Available from: Rep

LANGUAGE: English

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EJ259083 CG522099

Custody and Visitation
Program.

Scheiner, Lillian C
Family Relations, v
Available from: Rep

LANGUAGE: English

DIALOG File: ERIC

EJ25 1975 CG521280

The Divorce Myth.

Bernard, Janine M

Personnel and Gu

Available from: R

Language: English

Document Type:

DIALOG File1: ERIC -

EJ245465 CG520898

The Decision to Remar

Garfield, Robert

Journal of Divorce,

Language: English

Document Type: JOUR

Presents a general

which divorced people

DIALOG F1101: ERIC

EJ240131 CG520248

Divorce Counseling
Option.

Lazrus, Arnold A.

Journal of Marital

1981

Available from: Re

Language: English

17 CG519554
Counseling Children of Divorce in the Elementary
s; Understanding Process and Technique.
nshein-Schneider, Mary; Baird, Kay L.
nnel and Guidance Journal, v59 n2 p88-91 Oct 1980
lable from: Reprint: UMI
uage: English
ment Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (O80); PROJECT DESCRIPTION

roduces a reality-based perspective on divorce groups so
ary school counselors may have an advanced cognitive
or and realistic expectation of the counseling group.
g, role playing and rehearsal, and books and puppets can
d to help the child accept divorce through peer support.
r/JAC)
ripts: *Children; *Counseling Techniques; *Divorce;
ary Education; Empathy; *Group Counseling; Group
cs; Peer Acceptance; Program Descriptions; *Role Playing
ool Counseling; School Counselors

00 CG519659
ly Therapy for the "Truncated" Nuclear Family.
Gerald H.
rnational Journal of Family Therapy, v2 n3 p193-99 Fall
80
lable from: Reprint: UMI
uage: English
ment Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (O80); PROJECT DESCRIPTION

truncated nuclear family consists of a two-generation
in which conflict has produced a polarization of values.
ngle-parent family is at special risk. Go-between
s enables the therapist to depolarize sharply conflicted
and reduce pathogenic relating. (Author)
ripts: Counseling Techniques; *Counselor Client
onsh *Family Counseling; Family Problems; *Nuclear
Parent Family; Program Descriptions;
pathology, Systems Approach; Values
tifiers: *Go Between Process

96 CG519655
apy with Siblings in Reorganizing Families.
nberg, Elinor B.; And Others
rnational Journal of Family Therapy, v2 n3 p139-58 Fall
80
lable from: Reprint: UMI
uage: English
ment Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (O80); REVIEW LITERATURE

loss of parenting figures often leaves children without
tent parental support and with increased fears of
nment. Siblings can offer each other a significant
t system. Work with sibling groups can help children
ve conflicts and remove interferences to mutually

supportive relationships. Two Commentaries follow. (Auth
Descriptors: Case Studies; Counseling Techniques;
Divorce; *Family Counseling; Family Problems; *
Relationship; *Group Counseling; One Parent Family; *Sib
State of the Art Reviews
Identifiers: *Support Systems

EJ233886 CG519615
Crisis Group Therapy with the Separated and Divorced.
Hassall, Edward; Madar, Dorothy
Family Relations, v29 n4 p591-97 Oct 1980
Available from: Reprint: UMI
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (O80); GENERAL REPORT
REVIEW LITERATURE (O70)

This description of the steps in the treatment p
begins with cognitive mastery of the normal spect
reaction and continues through the stages of expressin
resolving grief to the restructuring of the individual
situation. (Author)
Descriptors: *Adjustment (to Environment); Cop
Processes; Coping; *Counseling Techniques;
Intervention; Developmental Stages; *Divorce;
Counseling; Individual Development

EJ233796 CG519487
Divorce Counseling Guidelines for the Late Divorced F
Langelier, Regis; Deckert, Pamela
Journal of Divorce, v3 n4 p403-11 Sum 1980
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (O80); NON-CLASSROOM M
(O55)

Offers divorce counseling guidelines for the fem
divorces after 20 years or more of marriage, based on a
study of late divorced female Canadians. Research emp
six major life adjustment areas: emotions; divorce g
finances and budgeting; children; life-style chang
independence. (Author)
Descriptors: *Adjustment (to Environment);
*Counseling Techniques; *Divorce; *Females; Foreign Cou
Guidelines; Older Adults; Skill Development; Social Adj
Identifiers: *Canada

92 CG519483
Decision to Divorce: Perspective.
Schrift, Stan L.; Kunz.
Journal of Divorce, v3 n4 p319-37 sum 1980
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143); LITERATURE (070)
Pages of respondents that ended in divorce were not as many as marriages of other couples they had known nor did they meet expectations held prior to entering into the relationship. The most frequent problem was unfaithfulness.
Descriptors: *Counseling Effectiveness; *Decision Making; *Interpersonal Relationship; *Marital Instability; *Marriage Counseling; *Problems; *Social Exchange Theory;

93 CG519086
Working with Stepfamilies: Principles of Practice.
Hanson, Harriette C.
Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, v25 n4 p304-08 Jul 1980
Available from: Reprint: UMI
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); REVIEW LITERATURE (141)
This article outlines common characteristics of stepfamilies, and discusses relevant principles for social workers when dealing with these families. A fundamental principle is that the therapist's overall approach should be based on an understanding of the economic and sociological context of divorce and remarriage. (Author)
Descriptors: *Counseling Techniques; *Divorce; *Economic Problems; *Family Characteristics; *Family Counseling; *Family Therapy; *Marriage; *Social Workers
Identifiers: *Stepfamilies; *Stepfathers

97 CG519040
Comparative Analysis of the Effectiveness of Conciliation Proceedings on Certain Personality Variables.
Hanson, David D.; Seymour, Warren R.
Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, v6 n3 p269-74 Jul 1980
Available from: Reprint: UMI
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (143)
This study examined differences in the amount, and direction, of personality change. Differences in dissolution rates were found, as well as differences in court-ordered counseling, but court-ordered counseling did appear to have a positive effect with some couples. (Author)
Descriptors: *Comparative Analysis; *Counseling Effectiveness; *Court Litigation; *Divorce; *Marital Instability; *Marriage Counseling; *Personality Change; *Spouses

EJ229706 19039
Towards a Therapeutic Discipline: Commitment: A Divorcee Proposes Attorney-Therapist Marriages or, at the Least, an Affair.
Steinberg, Joseph L.
Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, v6 n3 p259-266 Jul 1980
Available from: Reprint: UMI
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); PROJECT DESCRIPTION (141)
A divorce is less likely to seriously traumatize a dissolving family when both the legal and emotional issues of divorce are addressed. Attorney-therapist teams are proposed as an effective vehicle to help minimize the stress of divorce experience. (Author)
Descriptors: *Counseling Techniques; *Divorce; *Interdisciplinary Approach; *Lawyers; *Legal Problems; *Marital Instability; *Marriage Counseling; *Therapists

EJ227055 AA531773
Johnny: A One-Parent Preschooler.
Salant, Edna G.
Art Education, v33 n4 p22-24 Apr 1980
Available from: Reprint: UMI
Language: English
Document Type: JOURNAL ARTICLE (080); RESEARCH REPORT (141)
Presented is a case study of Johnny, a four-year-old child with his divorced mother, which illustrates the application of art therapy to the basic problems experienced by children in a one-parent family. This article is part of a theme issue on art therapy. (SUL)
Descriptors: *Aggression; *Art Therapy; *Case Studies; *Counseling Techniques; *Emotional Problems; *Fatherless Children; *One Parent Family; *Parent Child Relationship; *Preschool Children; *Preschool Education

DIALOG File1: ERIC -

EJ223420 CG518601

An Analysis and Int

McKinney, Elizabeth

Journal of the Int

Workers, v24 n3 p260-

Available from: Rep

Language: English

Document Type: JOURNAL

RESEARCH REPORTS (1)

DIALOG File#: ERIC

EJ220409 UD507766

Post-Divorce Fam
the Consequences of

Hess, Robert D.; e

Journal of Social

Available from. Re

Language: English

Document Type: JOU

The effects of di

DIALOG File1: ERIC -

EJ210689 CG517060

Counseling the Diver

Dreyfus, Edward A.

Journal of Maritime

1979

Available from: Rep

Language: ENGLISH

Document Type: JOU

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EJ200910 CG516236

Single-Parent Family

Mendes, Helen A.

Social Work, v24 n

Language: ENGLISH

Document Type:

(070)

Presents a beginning

life studies of

DIALOG File1: ERIC - E

EJ199211 CG516013

Transitional Relatio

Taibbi, Robert -

Journal of Divorce,

Language: ENGLISH

Document Type: JOURN

This article focus

different transition

DIALOG F1101: ERIC

EJ192044 CG515318

Professional Inter
of Lawyers, Psychot

Kressel, Kenneth;

Journal of Divorce

Language: ENGLISH

This report sum
groups of lawyers,

divorcing process

DI/ALOG Filet: ERIC - 6

EJ184590 CG514693 .

Conjoint Family Th
Strategy

Baldeme, Sally M.; A

International Journa

Spr 1978

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EJ178148 P5506615

Children of Divorce

Jenkins, Shirley

Children Today, 7,

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Language: ENGLISH

Considers four a
evaluate the needs o

action: economic p

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EJ177223 CG513899

Divorce Mediator: A

Haynes, John M.

Social Work, 23, 1,

Language: ENGLISH

In response to soaring

laws, the author

workers--divorce media

DIALOG File1: ERIC

EJ160192 CG512395

Counseling Divorce

Carter, Dianne K.

Personnel and Gut

Language: ENGLISH

During divorce,

intended or not, t

DIALOG FILE: ERIC

EJ142716 CG510695

Families in Divorced
Children

Hozman, Thomas L.

Family Coordinator

Language: ENGLISH

The Authors Do

EJ041619 CG503150

Health and Marital Experience in an Urban Population

Renne, Karen S.

Journal of Marriage and the Family, 33, 2, 338-350 May 1971

Language: ENGLISH

the findings indicated that (1) physical and psychological health are associated with marital happiness regardless of marital history, and (2) at the same time, divorce and remarriage tend to "select" the healthier members of the unhappy married population. (Author)

Descriptors: *Emotional Adjustment; Emotional Problems;
*Health; Marital Status; *Marriage; *Mental Health;
*Psychological Patterns

Print 27/5/1-24

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ED219145 . PSO12960

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Jewett, Claudia L

1982 156p.

Report No.: ISBN-

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No. 2:

Wolcott, Ilene

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Jul 1981. 16p.;

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Baden, Clifford,
Wheelock Coll., B

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Leavitt, Shelley E

Sep 1980 38p.; P

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Visher, Emily B.;

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Cameron, Catherine

Oct 1977 10p.; P

the National Coun

California, October

due to marginal legit

EDRS-Price - MF01

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ED152834 S0010748

Montgomery County

Montgomery County

Jan 1977 95p. ; A

due to poor type der

EDRS Price - MF04,

Language: ENGLISH

Document Type: RES

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ED131009 CG012209
Counseling Couples
Approach.

Levy, Terry M.; JOHNSON, J.
14 Oct 1977 22p.
of the National Council
California, October
EDRS Price - MF01/1

DIALOG File: ERIC

ED121412 PS008318

Family Development
Report.

Lewis, Judith; And

San Francisco F.

Developmental Center

JUN 1978 148p.;

Sponsoring Agency

DIALOG File: ERIC -

ED095453 CG009092

Helping Mothers in

Wagner, Mary M.; W

[1974 32p.

EDRS Price - MF01/

Language: ENGLISH

Document Type: RES

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