

ADAPTATION OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEE
UNACCOMPANIED MINORS
TO THE UNITED STATES:
DEPRESSION; AMERICANIZATION;
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

by
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Abstract

Title: Adaptation of Indochinese Refugee Unaccompanied
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Many Indochinese unaccompanied adolescents have been resettled in the United States without parents. Their recent immigration and adolescent life stage--both potential stressors--may render them vulnerable to psychosocial distress. This study examined effects of placement mode, time in U.S., situation/status of family of origin, displacement, support, and political awareness on their life-satisfaction/depression, Americanization, and academic achievement.

Subjects were 82 Indochinese adolescents, ages 12 to 19. Of 58 unaccompanied minors, 29 were in foster care with Caucasian families, 10 in foster care with Indochinese families, 19 in group homes. Twenty-four Indochinese adolescents living with their own families were also subjects.

A child's version of The Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) measured depression. The investigator's 42-item questionnaire and checklist collected demographics and additional data.

The overall sample was depressed: mean CES-D score, 18.25--two points above clinical depression. But, subjects

in ethnic foster care or their own families had mean scores of 11, compared to 23 for Caucasian foster homes or group homes: $F(3,78)=12.08, p.<.0001$.

Significant benefits for subjects in settings with an Indochinese adult (related or not) were: less depression, higher grade point average, more positive academic attributions, greater likelihood of viewing academic success as a result of own effort and under own control, more positive social attributions, greater frequency when sad of turning to another person for help in feeling better.

Support had strong but differential influences on successful adaptation: beneficial in lowering depression for children in non-ethnic settings, unnecessary for those in ethnic homes. Displacement taking place prior to immigration to the U.S. ceased to have an effect on important outcomes when all variables were taken into account.

There were significant differences in striving for independence (a measure of Americanization) between children in own families and unaccompanied minors, with the former having lower scores.

Academic performance proved stable across groups: mean GPA was 3.05.

These data suggest the importance of promoting (in the following order): foster care with extended family, foster care in ethnic homes, ethnic staff for service programs, Caucasian foster families with cross-cultural experience.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated with gratitude and affection to the eight-two refugee boys and girls who so generously shared their experiences of dislocation and resettlement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since 1975, over 5,000 unaccompanied Indochinese refugee minors have entered this country to be resettled primarily in Caucasian foster homes. For the most part, they are adolescent males 15 - 18, who have parents remaining in Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos. United States federal policy mandates that these young people be encouraged to simultaneously assimilate and to maintain their indigenous ethnic identity. Research is just beginning to emerge indicating the generally successful adaptation of this population to life in the U.S. (e.g., Sokoloff, 1985). In particular, academic achievement has been noted.

In a pilot study (Porte, 1985), this author observed that most unaccompanied minors were doing quite well. They were adopting values characteristic of their American counterparts, while at the same time maintaining manners and practices of their own culture. Yet there were repeated expressions of grief and loss, including instances of clinical depression, in spite of evident success in adapting to new lives.

Both conventional wisdom and empirical research dictate that critical changes in life circumstances--especially when not of one's own making--predispose an individual to psychological distress, notably depression. Rumbaut (1977)

stated that precipitous "migration is the epitome of change,...The kinds of life events that accumulate the stresses of change, loss, and social undesirability weigh most heavily upon the person who moves from one stable cultural niche to another."

As well as undergoing migration, a change of especially profound consequence, unaccompanied minors are dealing with the physiological and social changes inherent in the life stage of adolescence. Because of this abrupt migration superimposed on a life stage of particular vulnerability, unaccompanied minors can be seen to be in double jeopardy and susceptible to severe adjustment difficulties. Complicating their situation is the loss of family and accustomed support systems.

Transition Theory

Schlossberg's theory of transition (1984) is a framework for examining how people react when they are in the process of change. She postulated three component parts to each transition: the event itself, or transition; the environment; and, the individual and his or her coping resources. Within this context, the transition process is marked by changing reactions over time, with differing phases of assimilation and appraisal.

From the perspective of Schlossberg, one could say that unaccompanied minors are undergoing a transition of multiple dimensions with severe pressures being imposed on them in all three domains of event, environment, and individual. In

fact, some mental health practitioners (e.g., Harding and Looney, 1977; Williams and Westermeyer, 1983) have identified unaccompanied minors as especially vulnerable to emotional distress because of the complexity of their social conditions: dislocation, separation from family, age, and resettlement.

Transition theory was formulated specifically in relation to adults and changes in their lives. But, it is likely that the cognitive capabilities of older adolescents are not substantially different from those of adults (Melton, 1982). For that reason it is being proposed here that this theory also can be applied suitably to a more youthful population. When extending transition theory to unaccompanied minors it becomes abundantly clear that the three components of event, environment, and individual are not discrete entities. On the contrary, their interconnectedness is striking.

The Event

For unaccompanied minors, the event of migration is marked by war, fear, flight, and separation from parents; left behind are home, homeland, language, and a familiar culture. Then, a substantial period of time in a refugee camp in Southeast Asia precedes admission to the U.S. Once the newcomer finally arrives in this country, a new foster family, culture, language, school, and friends become part of the resettlement experience.

The Migration Experience

War

Ample evidence has accumulated in the literature from the Holocaust and since, on the long-term effects on children of war and political persecution (e.g., Hoppe, 1968; Lourie, 1985; Rosenblatt, 1984). During World War II, Anna Freud (1943) recorded the reactions of young children who had been separated from their families. She noted "The war acquires comparatively little significance for children so long as it only threatens their lives, disturbs their material comfort or cuts their food rations. It becomes enormously significant the moment it breaks up family life and uproots the first emotional attachments of the child within the family group. London children, therefore, were on the whole much less upset by bombing than by evacuation to the country as a protection against it." More recently, the negative consequences of war on children have been conceptualized as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the American Psychiatric Association's current (since 1980) nomenclature for the collection of symptoms whose etiology is external and overwhelming stress (Arroyo, 1985).

Flight

Migration and uprooting can take many forms, voluntary or not (Pfister-Ammende, 1982). Forced, unplanned mobility, occurring as a result of political upheaval, typically involves high risks for mental health: lingering fear of the persecutor which may be projected onto the new country,

depression, aggression, and apathy. Later, in the next generation, this may be followed by an identity crisis of substantial magnitude: who am I?

Carlin (1979) wrote from clinical experience with Indochinese refugee minors, that in most instances, these children left their homes with neither planning nor preparation. Departure from war-ravaged countries took place amidst fire, shelling, running, and great fear. Many compatriots did not survive the escape on ill-fitted boats which lacked adequate shelter, food, or water. Piracy on the high seas was an ongoing risk. Even cannibalism was not unknown in instances of extreme hunger and despair ("Doomed vessel," 1985).

From their empirical study of 28 adolescent Southeast Asian refugees, Williams and Westermeyer stated many children left their homelands without knowing the fate of their parents or other family members (1983). Some did not know the separation would be permanent; it was not uncommon for unaccompanied children to expect their parents to follow them to the U.S. According to these authors, the refugee exodus was sometimes used as a way of solving a difficult family problem by separating parent and child.

Nidorf (1985) related from extensive clinical observation that some unaccompanied minors did not wish to leave their countries. Parents had arranged their departures in order to give them a better life than could be hoped for under Communist rule. Often to ensure their safety, these

youngsters were unaware of escape plans until the very moment of departure. Many felt rejected by their parents.

Alternately, those who wished to leave were susceptible to self-punishment or survivor's guilt when they learned others had died in flight, or still lived in hardship back home.

Separation and Loss

McMannon (1984) and others stated that loss is the primary experience of all immigrants, especially in the first generation. Sluzki (1978) contended that there are specific stages associated with migration, including decompensation. Conflict and dysfunction connected with the move can be so severe as to span several generations before resolution.

Unaccompanied minors suffer the usual losses connected with migration. Harding and Looney, psychiatric consultants in the Southeast Asian refugee camps, reminded us that these children have been separated from parents and the support afforded by family (1977). Furthermore, many subsequently were disconnected from surrogate family units formed on the road in flight, or in refugee camps. Understandably, many unaccompanied minors suffer more emotional problems than other refugees.

As well as loss of home and family, unaccompanied minors are cut adrift from familiar cultures and practices. The value system into which they were socialized characteristically included an emphasis on family interdependence, filial piety, "face," respect for authority, spiritual beliefs, and stoicism (Nidorf, 1985). Bemak,

however, pointed out that while these youngsters are from another culture, they may have no mastery over that culture (1984). Many emigrated before they had a chance to learn the nature of their native ethnicity. These children must be assisted then in finding their own culture before they can enter the American mainstream. Many arrive in the United States with only a paper bag of possessions and often need guidance in exploring what has been lost before they can become integrated.

The Refugee Camp

After escaping from their homelands, unaccompanied minors are received into refugee camps in countries of first asylum, usually Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia, or the Philippines. Here they await screening for resettlement by the United States or another nation. For some youngsters the camp experience provides a psychosocial moratorium during which they can put their flight into perspective (Nidorf, 1985). But for children who become attached to a substitute family unit in the camp and are then separated from them as the family is resettled, renewed feelings of grief and loss can occur (Harding and Looney, 1977). To a large extent the camp interlude, if adequately structured and not overly protracted, can offer unaccompanied minors an opportunity to begin to learn English and some American customs, receive medical attention, and prepare for resettlement. But for many children it is a time of boredom and lack of structure.

Resettlement

Foster Care

Once an unaccompanied minor is accepted for admission to the United States, he or she becomes the ward of either of the two sectarian agencies receiving jurisdiction of these children--United States Catholic Conference or Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. Foster care in Caucasian homes has been the placement choice for over 90% of these young people (United States Catholic Conference, 1984), in spite of concerns of some mental health practitioners that such cross-cultural placement renders the resettlement process more difficult (Harding and Looney, 1977; Williams and Westermeyer, 1983).

Nidorf advised that regardless of its ethnicity, the foster home can become a focus for projection of the minor's conflicts and anger (1985). For this reason--among others--many unaccompanied minors request constant changes in foster care placement. But, needless to say it sometimes happens that foster parents also request changes.

Carlin cited yet another problem inherent in the present foster care system (1979). In their homelands, many Indochinese children were taught to hate Americans whom they felt deserted their country, causing the loss of the war. Dependence upon these same Americans can be the basis for emotional conflict. In a cross-cultural foster care setting, such ambivalence can exacerbate routine adjustment difficulties.

Carlin (1979) and others (Leutbecker, Note 1) pointed out that many unaccompanied minors were "street kids" in Southeast Asia, with survival depending on guile and cunning. In that milieu, manipulation, cheating, and resourcefulness in appropriating food and money were adaptive and life-saving. But in the culture of the American family, these survival skills are not appropriate and must be unlearned.

Culture

In Asian cultures children are socialized through eliciting shame for significant deviations whereas in Western Judeo-Christian societies, individual behavior is molded through eliciting feelings of guilt (Carlin, 1979). These differences can be sources of confusion to Southeast Asian children in the process of resettlement.

Nor are individual, family, and community responsibilities necessarily viewed in the same manner in the Asian as the American family (Varma, 1984). This is so especially in areas of sexuality, expression of feeling, competition, group versus individual orientation, and values pertaining to conformity and initiative.

Language

The difficulties and vicissitudes of learning a new language have been well-documented in the psychological literature. Since the Supreme Court decision of Lau versus Nichols in 1971 declaring that lack of familiarity with the English language denied children access to an adequate education, there has been a wide diversity of views in this

country as to how to best facilitate the learning of English in young newcomers. Although some unaccompanied minors may have a rudimentary understanding of English from the camps, most arrive with no significant fluency.

Carlin (1979) stated that refugee children in foster homes where no one understands their language must face alone many of the trials of resettlement. Vietnamese children, however, may have an easier time with English than Cambodians or Laotians. Both English and Vietnamese are written with Latin letters, whereas the Cambodian and Laotian languages use script and require the child to study a new alphabet to learn English.

School

Many unaccompanied minors have not attended school for many years and entry into the classroom can be an awkward and frightening transition for them. It is not uncommon for these minors to be both older in years and smaller in physique than American classmates. It is also the case that adolescent peer groups and status groups are already well established by the time an unaccompanied minor enters the school.

Friends

Because the familial support system of the unaccompanied minor is broken up in the migration process, friendships can become vitally important in meeting social needs and promoting resettlement. Charron and Ness (1981) advised from studying 64 Vietnamese adolescents, that those who were not

making friends with American age-mates might be at risk for emotional problems. In her pilot study (Porte, 1985), this researcher observed that unaccompanied minors who reported having few or no American or ethnic friends also tended to be depressed.

The Environment

The environment, or conditions surrounding the new arrival to the U.S., encompasses a range of physical and social influences. The 1983 Grier study of 60 agencies serving new adult arrivals in the Washington, D.C. area, concluded that problems in immigrant adjustment were determined less by an individual's personal characteristics than by situational factors in U.S. society, such as racial prejudice or the state of the economy. Jobs and English fluency were both major factors in level of adjustment.

For unaccompanied minors, U.S. policy is an ever-present force with which all environmental factors interact. Flowing from policy, a support system is provided--or not--for the minor through foster care or other placement mode, service providers, school, ethnic community, media, and peers. Lastly, pressure to integrate or Americanize can be seen as another environmental factor affecting the unaccompanied minor's transition.

Policy

U.S. federal policy pertaining to unaccompanied minors derives from the Refugee Act of 1980 which outlines procedures for admission and resettlement of refugees. This

policy mandates that unaccompanied children be oriented to American society, and at the same time be encouraged to retain indigenous religious and ethnic heritage. Operational details most recently were set out in the Federal Register in the context of grant regulations to states for child welfare services to unaccompanied minors (September 14, 1983). While these dual goals are laudable, they can also be viewed as value-laden, contradictory processes which can work at cross-purposes to one another. To that extent, translation of federal policy into service programs often has resulted in confusing and less than satisfactory outcomes.

Mode of Placement

Foster Care. Federal policy has endorsed the resettlement of unaccompanied minors in foster care, through the vehicle of the two Voluntary Agencies, United States Catholic Conference or Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. More than 90% of these minors have been housed with Caucasian families, a practice some mental health practitioners consider dubious. Furthermore, in the American child welfare system overall, foster care has been largely discarded for adolescents (of any racial heritage) who are brought into care. In recognition of the need for peer contact during this life stage, adolescents are usually placed in group facilities.

In their study of 28 Southeast Asian refugee children, Williams and Westermeyer (1983) found that foster placement was a stressor which contributed to adjustment difficulties

in half of their unaccompanied minor respondents (N = 7). Cultural misunderstandings were frequent occurrences in American foster homes: behaviors considered normal in one culture were perceived as affronts in the other. For instance, as an American child matures, he or she is given commensurate household responsibilities in the form of chores; but an Asian child might see increasing chore assignment as exploitation. They concluded that resettling unaccompanied minors in families of the same ethnicity is preferable.

In 1977, Harding and Looney recommended that whenever possible unaccompanied minors be placed in ethnic homes or group homes run by Vietnamese. If neither of these resources was available, efforts should be made to house these youngsters with Americans who had cross-cultural experience. They noted their suggestions were not implemented by program planners.

In New York State, a program of ethnic placements for 45 Haitian and 45 Indochinese unaccompanied minors has been judged to be quite successful (Adler, 1985). Problems which did arise were due to the children's personalities and idiosyncratic behaviors rather than the sense of frustration and powerlessness often experienced by Caucasian families who are faced with a constellation of cultural difficulties. In the Washington D. C. area unaccompanied minors programs, there have been some tentative efforts to establish ethnic foster homes, but the numbers of such placements remain extremely small.

A descriptive study by United States Catholic Conference of 1,445 unaccompanied minors in 28 of their programs nationwide indicated that 420 minors placed in ethnic family homes experienced a lower rate of depression (as measured by commonly associated depressive symptoms such as appetite and sleep disorders) than those in Caucasian homes (United States Catholic Conference, 1984). At the same time, they were moving as rapidly into employment and the important area of American friendships.

On the other hand, Nidorf cautioned against the over-zealous use of ethnic foster homes as a panacea (1985), citing concerns that refugee foster parents might exploit these youngsters as servants, a custom common in their countries of origin. In her view many of the child's internal frustrations and conflicts are projected onto the foster family who becomes something of a scapegoat for all that has thus far transpired in the minor's life.

Foster families are diverse and vary considerably as to motivation for taking refugee children into their homes. Religious, monetary, civic, and personal factors can all play a part. Foster homes can differ widely along a variety of dimensions: physical structure, space, material amenities, numbers of persons in the household, customs, and values.

Group Homes. Although group homes are usually the placement of choice for adolescents in the U.S. child welfare system, they have not been utilized widely with unaccompanied minors. Of the 120 minors in programs in the metropolitan

Washington area, fewer than 20 reside in group settings (slightly more than the national average). The youngsters who are placed in group homes are often those who are difficult to manage and who require relatively intensive supervision. Group home staff are usually Caucasian. As turnover of personnel may be quite high, continuity of care can be interrupted for children in long-term care. Quality of these facilities can also vary, but at their best they can provide comprehensive, high level care with the opportunity for extensive adult and ethnic peer contact. Similar to the United States, Canada—with the exception of Quebec—has generally favored foster care for its unaccompanied minors. In Australia, unaccompanied minors are initially settled together in hostels, but later dispersed into homes in the Vietnamese community.

In contrast to U.S. practices, European nations utilize different considerations when placing refugee unaccompanied minors into programs ("Indochinese Unaccompanied Minors," 1984). They prefer to keep them with their own ethnic peers, in hostels or small group homes and take into account the minor's placement preference. European arguments favoring group living versus foster care are: (1) mutual support, (2) retention of cultural and ethnic links, (3) collective coping with traumatic experiences, (4) ethnic and cultural differences which are the core of a child's identity can be preserved on his or her terms, not those of the resettlement country, (5) gradual acculturation, (6) preservation of own

language and culture, particularly if family reunification is a possibility, (7) no loyalty conflict between natural and foster family, (8) no pressure to integrate too fast, (9) minors' wishes to live together in groups, especially if they had escaped together.

Ethnic Community

Contact with their ethnic community is regulated for the unaccompanied minor by social realities beyond his or her control, such as location of foster homes, restricted transportation, and school bus schedules. A child placed in a home in Reston, Virginia, would be less likely to encounter ethnic counterparts than one in Arlington, Virginia, or Wheaton, Maryland, where Indochinese populations concentrate.

Bemak has commented (1984) on relations between unaccompanied minors in foster care and other Indochinese youth in the community. Unaccompanied minors in Caucasian foster home placements usually enjoy a much higher material standard of living than refugee peers living with their own families, or in ethnic foster care. And such disparate circumstances can lead to enmity.

School

This major socializing force for refugee children typically begins in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, followed by gradual mainstreaming as English-language proficiency progresses. Most authorities are indicating that refugee minors, regardless of placement setting, are speaking English after about two years in the

U.S. (Adler, 1985). Once integrated into regular classrooms, most unaccompanied minors are older than their classmates. Especially for males, this difference can lead to restlessness, social awkwardness, and defiant behavior with peers (Nidorf, 1985).

Media

As for all children in this country, the media, especially television, appears to be an influential socializing agent with unaccompanied minors. Music, especially as it conveys attitudes, desires, and practices of the peer culture should be included as well. In fact, given the absence for these young people of own family—usually considered to be the primary socializer—the effect of the media as transmitter of customs and values conceivably may be even greater. The media is unquestionably a force in learning the English language, as well as in political socialization. Newspapers, for instance, although not often a focal point of a young person's interests, can be an important source of information in their eventual integration into life as American citizens.

Political Dimensions

It must not be overlooked that these unaccompanied young people were socialized to politics in an authoritarian society whose mores and practices are far different from those of the United States. Important questions arise as to how these future U.S. citizens, from backgrounds so different from the majority, eventually will participate in the

democratic process? How will they deal with issues of allegiance and loyalty? What about initiative and responsibility for self?

Americanization Pressure

Overall successful adaptation of unaccompanied minors to American life was observed in this author's pilot study: they were learning English, achieving in school, and forming friendships with American youngsters. At the same time, however, they were expressing grief, sadness, and in some instances, clinical depression.

Nidorf cautioned that persons working with unaccompanied minors be cognizant of "premature assimilation" (1985). It is important to take a closer look at minors who become outwardly Westernized and well adjusted in less than two years. These children may be at greater risk for emotional disturbance than their slower acculturating peers.

Nidorf also noted that many young refugees feel they "owe it to their parents" to advance successfully in the American system. Unaccompanied minors, in particular, are aware of parental sacrifice involved in sending them to the U.S. and feelings of responsibility and obligation to absent parents are an indelible part of their consciousness. They may become preoccupied with the quest for economic success in order to raise money to send home and eventually sponsor family members to the U.S.

Support Systems

Much recent research has documented the positive

influence of social support as a protector against stress (e.g., Cohen, 1979). Numerous studies suggest that persons with greater social supports enjoy better physical and emotional health than those with fewer supports (Broadhead, et al, 1983; Leavy, 1983; Mitchell, Billings, & Moos, 1982.

The ameliorating effects of the newcomer's social support system were examined in detail by Cohen (1979) in her empirical study of 96 immigrants to Washington, D.C. She concluded that impairing symptoms of stress frequently resulted when an individual's usual supports broke down. Immigrants with families who assisted them in resettlement tasks exhibited significantly lower levels of dysfunction than did unattached newcomers. Young single males, in particular, did quite poorly. Her findings underscored the vital role of family and community networks in maintaining mental health during the stressful period of readjustment.

Cohen and Wills (1985) in a comprehensive, ten-year review of research on support systems and stress postulated two models of support, main or direct, and, buffering. The first was the overall beneficial effect of embeddedness in a support network, the second a process which protects individuals from potentially damaging effects of stressful experiences. They conclude that there is evidence consistent with both models.

Family. Although many unaccompanied minors do not have parents in the U.S., many do have other relatives here. Official State Department policy regarding resettlement of

unaccompanied minors is to accept from refugee camps in Southeast Asia 100 percent of all unaccompanied minors who already have a family "link" or relative here. In addition 50 percent of those who have no family ties in the States are accepted for resettlement (Brendan, 1984).

In a prior study of unaccompanied males in metropolitan Washington, D.C., this author found that over 50 percent of subjects had relatives in the area and about one-third visited them at least monthly (Porte, 1985). Most children wrote to family overseas and there seemed to be evidence of much anxiety associated with receiving--or not receiving--mail from home.

Nidorf stated that "the notion of 'family' and filial piety is the single most important construct binding and organizing Southeast Asian psychological experience and social reality" (1985). She holds that lack of family can bring humiliation and self-denigration to the Asian young person--the feeling of being an outcast, "the dust of life." But, despite family ties to their homeland, unaccompanied minors often feel disconnected and alienated in a meaning quite different from that of American adolescents.

Because of the absence of a well-defined family structure to guide them, unaccompanied minors may be at high risk for suicide and other actions they would normally consider wrong. Behaviors into which a refugee child might be enticed and through which he or she might "lose face" and shame parents might be engaging in premarital sex, not

achieving high grades in school, not keeping a job, or spending money frivolously rather than sending it to relatives.

Service Providers. In lieu of, or, as an adjunct to family and peers, service providers such as social workers, sponsors, and teachers can render meaningful and effective aid to newcomers. In an earlier study (1985), this writer observed that caregivers in unaccompanied minors programs persistently and conscientiously "worked around" policy restrictions when necessary and possible. Staff facilitated same-cultural experiences for minors through social contact in the minor's own ethnic community or by locating part-time jobs in Asian business establishments. Service providers, nonetheless, continued to be largely Caucasian and non-bilingual.

Feurstein (1976) reported on the salutary influence service providers and a supportive structure can provide in the lives of adolescent immigrants. Through Youth Aliyah, Israel's massive and comprehensive resettlement program for children, service providers were able to assist 3,035 emotionally disturbed newcomers to approach national norms in areas of social and cognitive functioning.

Peers. It is known that unaccompanied minors experience intense feelings of loneliness, homesickness, and longing for parents. It remains to be determined the extent to which peer relations can fill some of these youths' needs for belonging and nurturance. Given the age-appropriate task—at

least by Western standards--of developing non-familial relationships, one might expect this to be the case. Empirical evidence has generally substantiated the shift in support sources for adolescents away from adults toward friends. For instance, Fischer's 1981 study of 317 young people, ages 15 - 20, indicated closest relationships were with peers rather than adults: only 12 percent of respondents listed an adult as closest confidant.

Burke and Weir (1978) noted essentially this same phenomenon of peers being preferred as confidant, suggesting the decreased role of parents as a source of emotional support for the developing adolescent. Similarly, Kahn and Antonucci (1980) reported that the presence of one close friend lowered the risk of an individual developing problems subsequent to a stressful life event. Cohen and Mills (1985) also presented consistent evidence of confidant support providing a major buffering effect against stress. Furthermore, as reported by Henderson (1981), there is considerable data suggesting that perceived adequacy of support is as important as its actual availability.

Many unaccompanied youths find it more comfortable to bond to peers in a group, rather than to affiliate with adults in a primary relationship. Males in particular may be at greater risk for gang activity than other children (Nidorf, 1985). In gang membership, boys can become "brothers," and secure an identity thorough a kind of "family", as is the Asian custom. For some boys affiliation

with a gang may be tied to their historical backgrounds: many were interned in labor camps or drafted into the military between the ages of 10 -14. There, they learned through communal experience to rely on peers for survival.

The Individual

Variables characterizing the individual in transition include those of a personal nature: socioeconomic status, health, and life stage. Because of their age, adolescence and the task of forming identity are salient components of the transition for unaccompanied minors. Psychological resources and coping responses are additional factors to be considered.

Adolescence and Identity

There is general consensus among Western theorists regarding the special tasks of adolescence. That these phenomena are universal to all cultures, however, is by no means agreed upon. Although little evidence exists concerning the particular characteristics of adolescence in Southeast Asia, it is likely the developmental experiences of Asian teenagers differ substantially from American. As Varma noted, individual, family, and community responsibilities are not necessarily viewed in the same manner in Asia as in the United States. There exist variations in socialization practices--especially concerning

sexuality, expression of feeling, competition, group versus individual orientation, and values relating to conformity and initiative (1984).

Havighurst (1972) writing from a Western perspective defined the adolescent agenda to include: acceptance of one's body; establishing peer relationships and obtaining emotional independence from parents; preparing for an occupation and economic independence; developing intellectual skills; acquiring socially responsible behavior; preparing for marriage and family, and; building values which are harmonious with one's environment.

Erikson (1968) looked upon identity formation as the principal goal of this period, with its failure leading to identity diffusion. Adolescence was a time in the life cycle when critical determinations were to be reached on issues relating to world view, vocation, and ideology. Identity to Erikson involved maintaining a sense of continuity among experiences of childhood, of present, and future. There is almost certain to have been a break in such continuity for these young people.

Waterman (1982) extended the Eriksonian construct of identity to include progressive developmental changes in identity pathways over time. Positive identity movement involved the following shifts: from identity diffusion into foreclosure or moratorium status; from foreclosure into moratorium status; and from moratorium into identity achievement status. These shifts included specific and

deliberate consideration of identity options or the development of meaningful commitments.

Consistent with Erikson's concept of identity diffusion is Turner's construct of liminality (1975, 1977). This state of liminality can take place when an individual is in transition between known roles and conditions. During this period, he or she may switch from one role to another. As Myerhoff (1984) noted, liminality may be a period of marginal existence that passes, or it may become a role which is extended throughout a lifetime. If the latter is the case, then uncertainty, rebellion, and nonbelonging can characterize the individual.

Ethnic identity. Erikson (1968) contended that ethnic identity was a major component of overall identity. While identity was a process located in the core of the individual, it was also tied to his or her communal culture. Erikson saw ethnicity as a powerful tool in determining and shaping the specific form of one's identity, with strong links between the individual, ethnic group and society. For these reasons, coming to terms with one's cultural identity was an integral part of achieving a workable "psychosocial equilibrium."

In spite of ample separate literatures on identity and on ethnicity, there has been little attempt to extend the identity construct to include ethnic identity. The role of ethnicity in identity would appear especially relevant for any population of newcomers struggling with resocialization

to a new culture. An exception is the work of Connor (1977) who explored tradition and change in three generations of Japanese Americans. He went on to compile for that population an ethnic identity questionnaire measuring both acculturation and retention of ethnic identity.

In his review of research on immigrant children, Aronowitz (1984) also referred to ethnicity as it related to identity. Drawing from the works of Nann (1982), Farrago (1979), and Naditch and Morrissey (1976), he identified dysfunction among adolescent immigrants in the areas of self-concept and identity, suggesting that migration itself may interact negatively with normal development in this age group. He found this to be so particularly in instances where the adolescent newcomer was of a racial minority devalued in the receiving society. He suggested immigrant youths can suffer an acute identity crisis if impelled to make a choice between the values and identities of the old culture and the new.

The majority of unaccompanied refugee minors are older adolescents dealing with the special developmental issues of that life stage. As mentioned earlier, most are placed in foster care with Caucasian American families (United States Catholic Conference, 1984). However, the potential effects of cross-cultural placement upon the refugee youth's identity formation have not been sufficiently recognized by program planners.

According to some researchers, accomplishment of

identity formation presents special difficulties for the young person living with a family of different ethnic background. Brown (1982) proposed that serious problems can result when the process of establishing ethnic identity is interrupted or conflicted. Baker (1982) held such conflicts can be magnified for the adolescent in cross-cultural placement. These youths experience confusion and uncertainty as to whether they are Indochinese or American. Loyalty issues surface. The dilemma can be particularly acute for the young person reared in the close-knit Asian family, with its strong values of filial piety and group loyalty.

Wittkower (1956) observed that minority children who held onto their heritage were likely to encounter rejection from the host country; if they rejected their native culture, they risked alienation from their own subgroup--with no guarantee of acceptance by the new culture. From research with 155 Cuban refugee youths, Naditch and Morrissey (1976) reported that high rates of mental illness in this population may be partially a function of problems resulting from identity formation and conflicting cultural patterns. It has already been mentioned that there is recent evidence implying 420 Indochinese unaccompanied minors placed in ethnic foster homes experienced lower rates of depression than minors in cross-cultural settings (United States Catholic Conference, 1984).

According to de Anda (1984), ethnic identity is a relatively stable construct under normal life circumstances.

But when an individual is subject to the stresses of migration, ethnic identity can be disrupted. She favors a model of dual socialization in which newcomers maintain the old culture while integrating into the new. According to Valentine (1971), to be bicultural, an immigrant must learn to function in his or her own culture while simultaneously mainstreaming. In order for this to take place, the newcomer must be instructed in values and norms of both cultural systems and learn two behavioral repertoires. How well this can be accomplished depends on a variety of factors including the degree to which the value system of the minority culture meshes with that of the host culture. To be truly bicultural also demands bilingualism.

Given the developmental tasks of the adolescent in American society, serious conflicts can arise for a teenage newcomer in connection with ethnic identity—conflicts which might be even more striking if the newcomer is cut off from his or her indigenous culture. As Benak (1984) noted many unaccompanied minors were never socialized in the first instance into their own culture. Although there are many commonalities in the Indochinese and American cultures, there are also many differences to present sources of conflict for an adolescent. Some of these might be the relative demands of individualism in the U.S. society versus interdependence in the Asian, respect for elders, and dating practices. These differences could conceivably create difficulties for the adolescent newcomer in terms of feeling at home in and

being accepted by the peer society of teenagers. And according to de Anda (1984) if the newcomer is physically different from the majority in the host culture, conflict around ethnic identity is more likely to ensue. This would certainly be the case for Indochinese adolescents.

In a related body of studies on transracial adoptees (e.g., Grow and Shapiro, 1974; McRoy et al, 1984; Simon and Alstein, 1977), researchers addressed issues of racial identity inherent in such adoptive placements. Both Black-Caucasian and Asian-Caucasian samples were represented. Findings tended to suggest that as youngsters mature, they experienced identity problems--notably confusion as to which race they belong.

Finally, in the domain of clinical practice, the literature has seen a recent burgeoning of work on ethnic affiliation and its ramifications. McGoldrick in Ethnicity and Family Therapy (1982) defined ethnicity as a sense of commonality transmitted over generations by family and community. It is more than race, religion and native origin--"it involves conscious and unconscious processes that fulfill a deep psychological need for identity and historical continuity." It "patterns out thinking, feeling, and behavior in both obvious and subtle ways...determining what we eat, how we work, how we relax, how we celebrate holidays and rituals,...how we feel about life, death, and illness."

Quality of Family Life in the Homeland

Nidorf (1985) indicated socioeconomic and educational

status of a minor's parents, as well as their urban versus rural background, can affect the young refugee's capacity to cope with extraordinary stress. When there is extreme disparity between prior and present circumstances, confusion in identity formation and anomie can result. For instance, a 16-year-old arriving from a small fishing village, from an illiterate family, is less prepared to meet the demands of an urban, computerized society than is the child from a well-educated, city family. Most often, immigration entails a loss of status and role, at least in the first generation. This may be particularly so for males (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1982).

It was mentioned earlier that some families used the refugee exodus to resolve a troublesome relationship issue with a child, by separating him or her from the family. Williams and Westermeyer (1983) cited the example of one boy's mother who married a Communist soldier after the psychotic breakdown of the child's father. When the stepfather did not approve of her son, the youth decided to flee to Thailand and met little resistance from his mother.

Williams and Westermeyer (1983) also advised that seven unaccompanied minors in their sample of 28 refugees with psychiatric diagnoses had pre-existing conduct or personality disorders in Asia which their parents had found disruptive. Roots for most of their problems could be cited prior to migration and worsened after resettlement. The stress of adjusting to a new society was apparently intolerable for

these youths whose previous adjustment had been marginal at best.

That these disorders persist and become part of their behavior repertoire in a foster home should come as no surprise. Nor should service providers be caught off guard when these young people project their considerable distress onto the environment around them--namely the foster family. For such reasons, training is customarily provided for foster families by responsible resettlement programs.

Survival of the Fittest

Many refugee service providers believe that those individuals who can manage to flee a war-torn country--often against great odds--are uniquely bright and able. Carlin for instance (1979) spoke of "survival of the fittest" among refugees and attributed this in part to their above-average intelligence. Some sociologists such as Vogel (cited in Butterfield, 1986) view the current group of Asian immigrants in the U.S. as part of "a very biased sample, the cream of their own species." Nidorf considers this phenomenon to be a form of Social Darwinism (cited in Butterfield, 1986):

"...the hazards of refugee experience--persecution by the Communists, a mortality rate of 50 percent among boat people and the hardship of life in the camps in Southeast Asia--create a caste of survivors..." Others claimed that because many unaccompanied minors were "street kids," they learned to survive by fighting and rapid movement from one location to another without being detected (Leutbecker, Note 1). Only

the most capable and adroit lived to make the journey to America.

Intellectual Ability

Many unaccompanied minors are doing very well in school, especially in mathematics and subjects which do not depend primarily on English language skills. It is Carlin's (1985) contention that the ready intelligence of Asian minors is helped by early use of the abacus for learning mathematics, making it a concrete, touchable, and visualizable subject rather than merely an abstract one. It is also becoming increasingly recognized that many second and third generation Asians excel in math in school. This excellence was documented recently in Washington area schools, where Asian students had the highest maths scores on national standardized tests: e.g., 92nd percentile for 8th graders, 83rd percentile for 11th graders (Cohn, 1986).

It is Liu's view (cited in Butterfield, 1986) that the behavior of Asian-Americans is highly determined by the Confucian ethic. A basic tenet of Confucianism is that people can always be improved by proper effort and instruction. Family orientation propels the individual to work for the honor of parents and to repay them; an accompanying sense of guilt provides another a compelling motivator.

Stevenson (cited in Butterfield, 1986) feels Asian-Americans work harder because they believe--more than do Americans--in the efficacy of hard work and the malleability

of human nature. For instance, when Stevenson asked parents of 292 subjects what determined success in school, Japanese mothers gave strongest ratings to studying hard, while American mothers attributed success to natural talent. Other data in his report found American mothers consistently gave their children highest ratings for intellectual ability, Japanese mothers the lowest--although the Japanese did much better in maths. This, Stevenson called "an excessively positive attitude" on the part of American parents. Equally striking was the finding American children rated themselves above average, the Asians average or below. Stevenson concluded that "when you are so satisfied with yourself, you don't feel the need to work as hard."

This is consistent with the research of Hess, Holloway, Azuma, and Kashiwagi (1984) examining causal attributions by Japanese and American mothers and children about mathematics performance. The Japanese attributed low performance to lack of effort whereas Americans were more likely to attribute it to lack of ability. In other words, the Japanese tended to view performance as under the control of the child, while Americans did not.

Physical Health

Many immediate health needs of unaccompanied minors such as infectious diseases, malnutrition, and vitamin deficiencies can be attended to in the refugee camps in Southeast Asia. However, internal parasites, skin problems, malaria, and tuberculosis can persist and become active in

the future (Carlin, 1979). In many instances medical symptoms in refugees are stress related and major complaints such as headache, insomnia, fatigue, and poor appetite are frequent.

Mental Health and Coping Strategies

Various refugee workers have cited the increased susceptibility of newcomers to at least transient adjustment and mental health problems, sometimes referred to as culture shock. These phenomena increasingly have been recorded in the literature (e.g., Bales, 1986; Center for Applied Linguistics. 1982; Cohon, 1981; Indochinese Refugee Action Center, 1980; Smither, 1981). The thirteenth month after arrival in this country is cited by several sources as a vulnerable time for depression and other symptomatology (Indochinese Refugee Action center, 1982; Lourie, Note 2).

Some clinical researchers (e.g., Harding and Looney, 1977; Williams and Westernmeyer, 1983) concluded unaccompanied minors suffer more emotional problems than other classes of refugees. Baker (1982) advised that many unaccompanied minors, especially "anchor children" (youngsters sent over by parents to secure a foothold for the family in the U.S.), are victims of survivor's guilt as they encounter enormous obstacles in their efforts to bring over relatives from Asia. According to Baker, it is not uncommon for unaccompanied minors to undergo a period of depression, often of crisis proportions, after about three months in the United States.

Unaccompanied minors thus appear especially vulnerable

to psychological distress. They are essentially coping at once with two major life crises: adolescence and migration. Each is a transition of major proportion. As adolescents, they are dealing with the vagaries of a developmental period which includes identity formation; they must also manage the perplexing adaptation to a new culture in which they are a visible minority. Moreover, as parentless children, they must cope with both transitions, adolescence and migration, while separated from family and the strong support system characteristic of Asian kinship. Indeed, Oda noted that for an Asian, this sense of who you are and the context around you are of especially vital importance (1985). For the unaccompanied minor, these social variables have been interrupted.

How then can we account for the apparent contradiction posed by this group of minors? Their generally successful adaptation to U.S. life flies in the face of what we know about susceptibility to stress and dysfunction. It may be possible that because of culture-specific manifestations of depression (somatic complaints, academic achievement, over-rapid assimilation), that signs of distress have been overlooked by Western service providers. Cross-cultural psychologists have postulated distinct cultural variations in expression of mental dysfunction. Even if certain universal biochemical processes are operative, "...all mental disorders must ultimately be expressed through the filter of cultural experience" (Marsella, 1979).

Marsella and Kinzie (1973) suggested that expression of depression is related to a culture's conditioning of the self structure. Cultures which develop the self in terms of somatic functions will have greater somatic complaints dominating manifestations of depression, while cultures which develop a sense of self in terms of existential functioning will show existential complaints in the depressive picture. Somatic complaints were found to be more typical of the Chinese population.

In her 1978 study on Chinese American conceptualization of well-being, Yee found four major coping responses: (1) endurance, (2) "looking the other way," (3) "don't think too much," and, (4) activity. She remarked that the family unit was of fundamental importance in preventing and ameliorating stressful situations in her sample. Extending this paradigm to unaccompanied minors, one might postulate that their apparently successful adaptation, especially in the academic arena, may be a coping mechanism (albeit a highly productive one). Perhaps we are seeing here a culturally-sanctioned strategy for dealing with depression. As Yee's data suggested: when down do something or be active.

Research Problem and Questions

Although many Indochinese unaccompanied minors have been resettled in this country, their adjustment has not been widely studied. This may be due at least partially to their many observed strengths, as well as rapid demonstration of success in such areas as school, language learning, and

friendships. Nonetheless, there are also indicators that these same youngsters are experiencing psychological difficulties, especially grief and depression, which may have been overlooked by those involved in their care, precisely because of their many positive achievements.

These unaccompanied children concurrently are undergoing several transitions of profound magnitude; for those reasons they can be seen to be at special risk. They are experiencing adolescence, a life stage whose crucial task is identity formation, including ethnic identity; they have just passed through migration, usually involuntarily; they have become separated from parents and their familiar culture. Because of such factors, these refugee youths are likely to be susceptible to psychosocial distress.

Transition theory views the process of change as occurring over time, with shifting phases of assimilation. The component parts of the transition--event, environment, and individual--as well as their interactions, are instrumental in producing outcomes of varying natures. Transition theory served as a model to orient the general conceptualization of this study. It suggested important variables and provided a method of categorization relevant to the situation and experiences of this population.

For unaccompanied minors, salient outcomes of transition were conceptualized as including life satisfaction as opposed to depression, a balance of American and ethnic identities, and satisfactory school achievement. Each outcome was

conceptualized as influenced by elements of the transition, including the event, environment, and individual (see Figure 1). Some levels of transition of especial importance to the well-being of these refugee youths appear to be placement mode (Caucasian foster care, ethnic foster care, or group home) and the availability of support (such as American and ethnic peers, service providers, and relatives).

With the above in mind, this research examined the degree to which aspects of the phenomena suggested by the transition model--event, environment, individual--predicted depression/life satisfaction, Americanization, academic achievement. In particular, it investigated the following:

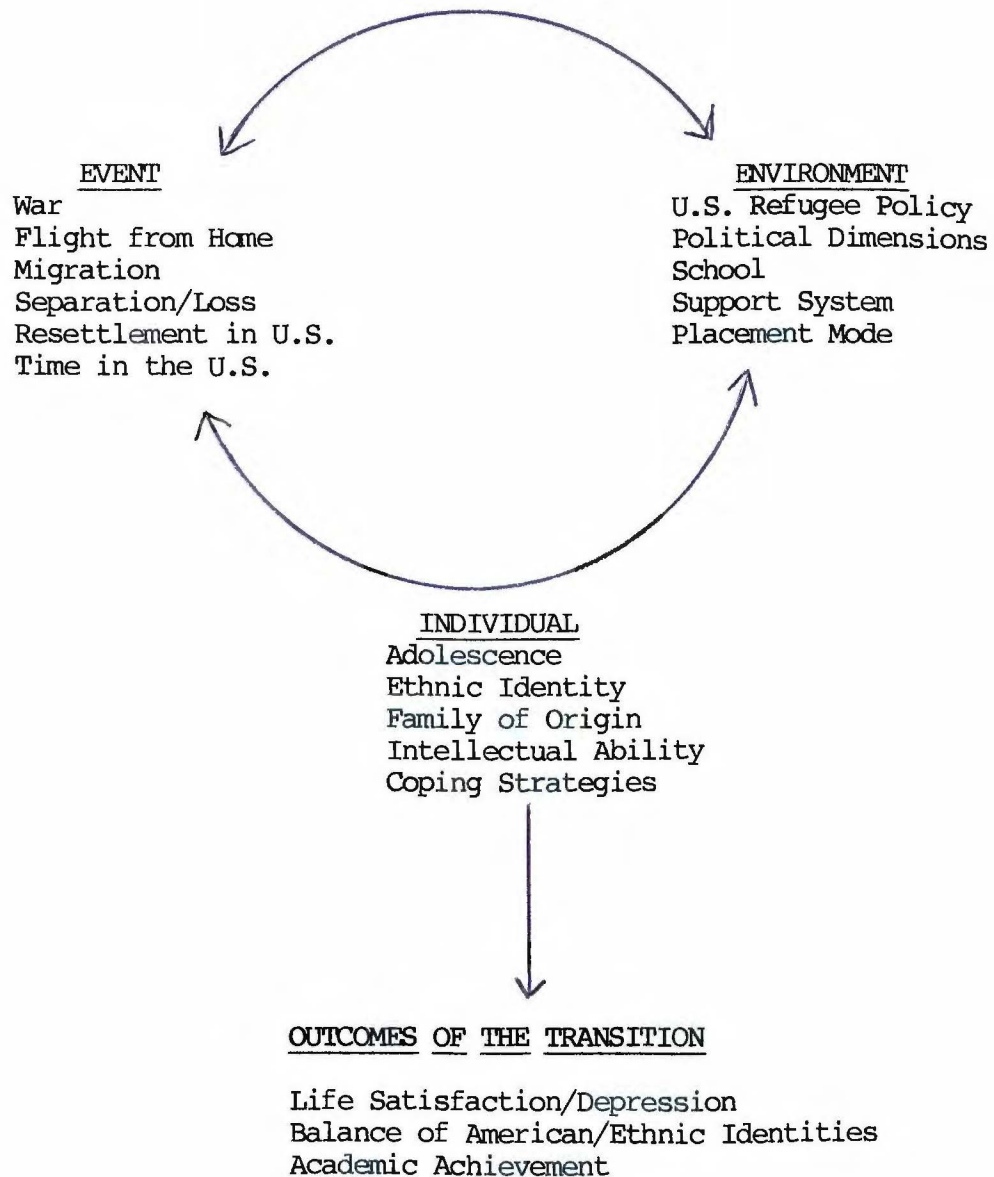
- (1) The extent to which differing placement mode influenced life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement.
- (2) The extent to which time in the U.S. influenced life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement.
- (3) The extent to which status and situation of minor's family of origin influenced life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement.
- (4) The extent to which specifics of the minor's flight from the homeland influenced life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement.
- (5) The extent to which support systems such as

American and ethnic peers, service providers, and relatives influenced life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement.

(6) The extent to which political awareness (of own countries and the U.S.) influenced life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement.

The goal of this research was to take a beginning step in understanding the young refugee's adjustment based on event-environment-individual interaction. In particular, an attempt was made to find predictors of successful resettlement. Such information could be an invaluable aid to policy makers and service providers in delivering more appropriate and timely interventions to this vulnerable and deserving population. It could also serve as a basis of future theoretical work on the meaning of identity formation in individuals who experience childhood in one culture and adolescent/young adulthood in another.

ELEMENTS OF THE TRANSITION



CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Eighty-two subjects were recruited to participate in this research. The available pool of unaccompanied minors was limited by the following factors: finite numbers of potential subjects in unaccompanied minors programs in the District of Columbia, Virginia and suburban Maryland; varying degrees of willingness on the part of administrators to allow access to their unaccompanied clients; decisions on the part of program personnel that some minors had recently been "overexposed" to researchers. At the time of recruitment, one agency manager reported a recent, particularly negative experience with a researcher who she reported had conducted himself in an extremely unethical fashion.

It was stated earlier that all unaccompanied minors in the United States are in the custody of either of two sectarian agencies, United States Catholic Conference or Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. Placement decisions are made at a national, not local, agency level as to where a child will be relocated once he or she is selected to leave the refugee camps in Southeast Asia. It is apparently not uncommon for an individual program to receive virtually no biographical data—other than sex—on a child they are about to resettle. This state of affairs reputedly is due to inadequate collection of biographical information

in the refugee camps.

Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services of the District of Columbia are local branches of United States Catholic Conference and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services respectively. Each of these agencies provided 15 unaccompanied subjects (from a total universe of 60 unaccompanied minors in the District of Columbia). Fourteen children were sponsored by The Refugee Unaccompanied Minors Program of Northern Virginia (associated with United States Catholic Conference), while their sister agency in Richmond, Virginia--Catholic Family and Children's Service--also provided 14 unaccompanied subjects. Of this total sample, 29 were in foster placement with Caucasian families, 10 with ethnic families (at least one Indochinese parent in the home), and 19 in group homes with other Indochinese youngsters.

In addition, 24 youngsters living with their own families (mother and/or father, but in one case each, grandmother, aunt, or adult brother) were recruited. The District of Columbia Refugee Services Center provided nine subjects from their tutorial program with Georgetown University for Indochinese children. Fifteen other subjects living with their families in the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area, were recruited through word-of-mouth by various refugee service providers and by the researcher.

Subjects were primarily Vietnamese, but with some Cambodians and Laotians also represented, reflective of the

Agencies' overall nationality distribution. Demographic data on refugee subjects by country of origin and placement setting are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Data on Refugee Minors
By Country of Origin and Placement Mode
N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

	Cambodia		Laos		Vietnam		TOTAL	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Caucas.	13	44.83	0	0.00	16	55.17	29	100.00
Foster								
Ethnic	0	0.00	1	10.00	9	90.00	10	100.00
Foster								
Group	4	21.05	2	10.53	13	68.42	19	100.00
Home								
Own	7	29.17	8	33.33	9	37.50	82	100.00
Family								
TOTAL	24	29.27	11	13.41	47	57.32	82	100.00

The sample was comprised of 56 males and 17 females, ages 12 to 19, again characteristic of the Agencies' caseloads of unaccompanied minors. The majority of the girls—10 out of 17—were in homes with a relative. Because the number of female subjects was so small, it was infeasible

to look for meaningful sex differences in the data. In addition, it was found that sex did not correlate significantly with the major variables of interest to this study, such as depression, grade point average, or Americanization. It was also not possible to match for time in country as the total pool of subjects available to this study was so limited, although statistical controls for this variable were employed. Full demographic data describing the sample are presented by group in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2
Demographic Data on Refugee Minors
by Placement Mode
N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

	Age in Years		School Grade		G.P.A.		
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Total
Caucasian	17.40	1.33	10.31	1.26	2.90	.60	29
Fost. Care							
Ethnic	16.30	2.54	9.90	2.64	3.40	.36	10
Fost. Care							
Group	17.20	1.34	10.11	1.89	3.00	.47	19
Home							
Own Family	14.60	1.71	7.48	1.37	3.14	1.37	24

Table 3
Demographic Data on Refugee Minors
by Placement Mode

N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

	Time in U.S. in Months		Time in Refugee Camps in Months		Number U.S. Placements		
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Total
Caucasian	32.79	15.10	20.97	17.09	2.10	1.05	29
Fost. Care							
Ethnic	30.20	22.46	14.40	16.98	2.40	1.60	10
Fost. Care							
Group	27.21	17.46	17.16	12.97	2.50	2.04	19
Home							
Own Family	52.54	20.86	22.33	12.97	--	--	24

Data Collection

Data collection began in February 1986 and concluded in June 1986. All subjects who were interviewed in the study have been included in the analyzed sample. A stipend of five

dollars was offered each youngster as remuneration for his or her participation, although six refused to accept it.

The interview schedule and questionnaire took approximately thirty minutes to administer. Instruments were given individually by the investigator to participants, most often in their places of residence. Other sites--such as a subject's workplace, school, public library, or, restaurant --were used on occasions when it was inconvenient to meet in the home. Items were read as well as shown to each child to ensure adequate comprehension. Subjective impressions regarding each child's ability to relate, his or her ease, and evidence of stress were noted. In instances where a subject's command of English was limited, an interpreter assisted in translation.

Consent. Subjects, parents or guardians, foster parents, and participating agencies were advised of the intent of this investigation to provide information to make possible more effective and useful resettlement programs to unaccompanied minors. Benefits of increased knowledge to service providers, as well as possible personal gains to themselves and other refugee minors, were outlined. It was stated that policy-relevant recommendations may potentially be extrapolated from findings of this research. If so, such information would be shared with concerned policy-makers and administrators of unaccompanied minors programs.

At all times, confidentiality was assured. Respondents were directed not to reveal personal identity; code numbers

were assigned to protect subject identity. Participants were advised of their option not to take part in this study and of their right to discontinue involvement at any point. Consent forms were required of all subjects under 18 years of age as well as of parents, guardians, or foster parents. Copies of consent forms are included in Appendix A.

Instruments

Two types of measures were pertinent to this study: those dealing with predictors and those pertaining to outcomes. In each of these domains, efforts were made to obtain appropriate instruments which would provide greatest possible validity and reliability. When suitable instruments were not available, questions were developed in collaboration with experts in the field, with the intent of operationalizing aspects of the processes under scrutiny.

Predictors. (1) Placement Mode: Caucasian foster home; ethnic foster home; group home with ethnic peers; own family. (2) Length of time in country (questionnaire, item #5); (3) Status and situation of family of origin: rural versus urban; education of parents; vocation of parents; minor's own level of education in homeland (questionnaire, items #11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16); (4) Specifics of flight from homeland: planned versus unplanned; nature of escape, solitary or accompanied; time spent in escape; time in refugee camps; significant trauma such as death of close relative or friend, or other violence; unawareness of family's well-being in homeland; no communication with home

(questionnaire, items #3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10); (5) Number of foster and group placements of unaccompanied minor, (questionnaire, item #6); (6) Support systems: American peers; ethnic peers; peers from other foreign countries; own family, in U.S. or elsewhere; foster family, service providers. (questionnaire, items #17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34); (6) Political awareness: of own country; of U.S. (questionnaire items #40, 41, 42 and Americanization check list, items #1, 2, 5, 9, 12).

Outcomes. (1) Life satisfaction/depression (20-item self-report scale discussed in detail below.) (2) Americanization/ethnicity (questionnaire, items #19, 20, 29, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 13-item scale previously developed in pilot study). (3) School achievement (minor's grade point average as reported on last report card).

CES-D Depression Scale

Clinical symptoms of depression were assessed using the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (CES-D) scale, a 20-item self-report instrument designed by the National Institute of Mental Health (see Appendix B). The items on the CES-D scale are symptoms associated with depression which were utilized in previously validated, longer scales. The instrument has demonstrated its validity as a screening tool for detecting general depressive symptoms in psychiatric populations, although it does not differentiate between diagnostic categories. The CES-D scale has been extensively tested, has been found to have very high internal

consistency, and adequate test-retest repeatability. Radloff (1977), for instance, reported high levels of internal consistency in all groups (coefficients alpha about .85; split-halves correlations corrected for attenuation about .87). She also noted that the CES-D's pattern of correlations with other mental health measures gives reasonable evidence of discriminant validity: about .60 with the Bradburn Negative Affect Scale, about -.20 with the Bradburn Positive Affect Scale, about .50 with the Langner 22-item Scale, and about .30 with disability days.

Reliability, validity, and factor structure for the CES-D have been reported to be similar across a wide variety of demographic characteristics in the general population (Comstock & Helsin, 1976; Radloff, 1977; Weissman, et al, 1977). Most recently, the CES-D has been demonstrated to be an effective measure of depression among Asian-Americans (Kuo, 1984). In that latter study, four factors appeared, measuring depressed affect, positive affect, somatic and retarded activity, and interpersonal problems. Kuo found that the factor structure of the CES-D scale on Asians did not differ markedly from Caucasian populations. However, the scale items of depressive affect and somatic complaints tended to cluster together among Asian respondents, in contrast to their separation in results for the white population.

A version of the CES-D has been developed for use with children under 18 (Weissman, et al, 1980; Orvaschel, Note 3).

A copy of that instrument is attached in Appendix C. Because of the age group targeted for this present study, the children's version was chosen. Its simple language, furthermore, was seen as an advantage for new speakers of English.

Questionnaire

A 42-item questionnaire was developed by the researcher to collect demographic data and to measure the processes under investigation (see Appendix D). Each item was included to reflect a specific aspect of the phenomena under study. In particular, questions were clustered in sets around support systems and the balance between Americanization and retention of native ethnicity. A 13-item check list was appended to the questionnaire to examine the qualities these young people saw as important in being a good American. Items centered on two domains: (1) dependence/independence (internal) (2) and customs and practices (external).

The questionnaire and check list were piloted in the spring of 1985 with 24 male unaccompanied Indochinese minors and with 10 male Indochinese minors who immigrated with family. Refinements and modifications in the instrument were made accordingly. For instance, on the basis of responses from the pilot study, it became apparent many refugee minors were socializing with young people who were also newcomers to the U.S., but who were not Indochinese. As a result, questions on peer relations were included in the questionnaire to reflect this (e.g., items number 24 and 25).

Content (face) validity was supported by an extensive literature review dealing with phenomena pertinent to this investigation. To further support content validity of the instrument, collaboration was undertaken with authorities in the field. For example, Dr. Jean Nidorf (Note 4) a clinical psychologist experienced in psychological issues of refugee minors, suggested several questions in her area of expertise relating to Americanization and the assimilation process (items #20, 36, 37). In this manner, suitability of questions in relation to concepts being examined was maximized.

Other items were prompted by diverse sources. An essay by Francis (1976) suggested a framework for describing the newcomer's participation in the host culture through various levels of interaction: *connubism* or readiness to establish affinal ties through intermarriage; *commensalitas* or involvement through visiting, eating, and associating in recreation; and, *commercium* or relations through business transactions denoting a more formal and distant interaction. Questions 22 through 29 concerning support systems and peers relations incorporate these distinctions.

Familial support in the U.S. is measured in item 17, support from the homeland in item 18. Items 11-16 relate to situation and status of subject's family of origin. Minors' social and academic attributions which are assessed in items 28 and 33, draw on attribution theory (Weiner, 1979). Other items concerning the balance of Americanization and ethnicity

were suggested by Oda (1985) and by the work of Connor and his Ethnic Identity Questionnaire (1977). For a more complete justification of questionnaire items, please refer to Appendix E.

Analysis of Data

Two statistical packages for the personal computer were used in analysis of data. Their copyrighted names are STATISTIX and STATA.

Descriptive statistics were first obtained on all variables of interest to this investigation. Demographic characteristics and dependent measures of the sample (CES-D scores, Americanization/ethnicity, school achievement) were compiled by placement mode as well as by entire sample. Frequencies and descriptive statistics of independent variables were obtained, and as appropriate, codes were constructed to assign numerical values to responses: status and situation of family of origin; displacement, support systems. Means and standard deviations of major variables are presented in Appendix E.

Some questions were open-ended in nature, inviting a variety of potential responses from subjects. Examples from the questionnaire were the academic and social attribution items, as well as the one wish and one fear questions. Categories were defined as precisely as possible to optimize coding objectivity and consistency and to ensure inter-rater reliability. In addition to the investigator's coding, a sample (50%) of open-ended items was rated by another social

worker to establish interrater agreement. Percentage of interrater agreement was above 90% for four questions: one wish, 92.4%; social attributions, 90.6%; academic attributions, 95.2%. Because of the high proportion of non-responses to the "one fear" question, it was not included.

As an initial step in data analysis, Pearson correlations were computed for each of the 13 items of the Americanization Check List and for the 20 items of the CES-D scale to determine inter-item and item-total correlations. In addition, correlations were computed for the important variables in this study: depression scores, Americanization check list score, internal items on the check list, external items on the check list, time in the U.S., sex, grade point average, situation and status of family of origin, displacement, number of unaccompanied minor's American placements, and support. In Appendix F a correlation matrix of major variables in this study is presented. To establish instrument reliability a coefficient alpha (Cronbach's alpha) was calculated for the instruments employed in this investigation.

The research questions were addressed in the following ways. Because children with their own families had been in the United States significantly longer and were older than unaccompanied minors, time in country and age were used as covariates in relevant analyses to rule them out as alternative explanations of differences. Significant differences consistently emerged between children in homes

with an ethnic adult (ethnic foster care or own family) and those without (Caucasian foster care or group homes). For this reason, post-hoc contrasts were prompted along this ethnic versus non-ethnic dimension in testing research questions. As a guide to future analyses of group differences in this exploratory study, contrasts were sometimes conducted even in instances where the overall effect for an equation was nonsignificant

Because large numbers of analyses were conducted in this study, the possibility of significant findings occurring by chance were heightened. This was kept in mind as findings were interpreted. However, definite trends emerged in the findings, particularly those clustering around ethnic home and depression score which made it more plausible that large and significant differences did not occur by chance alone.

Research Question #1. What is the extent to which differing placement mode influences life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school performance?

Life satisfaction/depression. To determine if differences in placement mode affected depression, CES-D scores were examined in two one-way analyses of covariance, first holding time in U.S. constant and then age. Because significant differences were revealed between subjects' scores in ethnic versus non-ethnic settings, a further ethnic/non-ethnic contrast was carried out.

American/ethnic identities. A score including internal items on the Americanization Check List (independence scores) was analyzed in two one-way analyses of covariance, holding time in U.S. and then age constant. A post hoc contrast of children living with their own families versus the three groups of unaccompanied minors followed the first analysis of covariance.

School performance. Academic achievement (last grade-point-average as reported by minor) was analysed in two one-way analyses of covariance, first holding time in country and then age constant. The ethnic/non-ethnic comparison was carried out following the first analyses of covariance.

Chi-square values were obtained for the association of attributions regarding academic success with placement mode. Significant group differences in these findings prompted an ethnic versus non-ethnic comparison.

Research Question #2. What is the extent to which time in U.S. influences life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

Life satisfaction/depression. A regression analysis with CES-D score as outcome entered time in U.S. first, followed by ethnic versus non-ethnic setting.

American/ethnic identities. Time in U.S. and group were entered in a regression equation with independence score as criterion, followed by an ethnic versus non-ethnic contrast. Time in U.S. was examined in relation to minors' wishes and fears.

Academic achievement. The relation of time in the U.S. to academic achievement was examined through a regression analysis, entering time in country first, followed by ethnic group.

Research Question #3: What is the extent to which status and situation of minor's family of origin influence life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

After minor's family of origin was requantified (on a scale of 1 - 10) on the basis of parent's occupation, education, and place of residence, this variable was regressed on placement mode. Significant differences prompted further contrasts to test differences within groups.

Depression/life satisfaction. A regression analysis examined the contribution of country of origin to depression. CES-D scores were regressed on situation and status of family of origin.

American/ethnic identity. Situation and status of family of origin were examined in a regression equation with independence score from the Americanization Check List as the dependent variable.

Academic Achievement. GPA was examined in a regression analysis with situation and status of family as predictor.

Research Question #4: What is the extent to which specifics of minor's flight from the homeland influence life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities and school achievement?

Flight from homeland as an independent variable was expanded upon completion of data collection. It was recoded (on a scale of 1 -21) as "displacement" to take note of additional critical variables which appeared to contribute to social dislocation. Displacement included: planned versus unplanned nature of escape; length of time in escape; solitary or accompanied escape; time spent in refugee camps; trauma endured in transition, such as death of close relative or friend, piracy at sea, or violence; unawareness of family's well-being in old country; lack of communication from home; number of grades (for his or her age) behind in school.

Number of foster or group care placements for unaccompanied minors was examined as a separate predictor. Unlike most other components of displacement which took place before a minor came to the U.S., placements are at least partially amenable to the interventions of American service providers.

Depression/life satisfaction. Depression scores were examined in two one-way analyses of covariance first holding time in U.S. and then age constant. Post hoc ethnic versus non-ethnic contrasts were carried out for both these analyses.

American/ethnic identities. Independence scores on the Americanization Check List were examined in two one-way analyses of covariance. Time in the U.S. and then age were held constant. In the first analysis covarying time in

country, a contrast was carried out to test differences between children living with their own families and unaccompanied minors

Academic Achievement. GPA was examined in an analysis of covariance with time in U.S. and then age held constant. In the first analysis, a post hoc ethnic versus non-ethnic contrast was carried out.

Number of Placements. For unaccompanied minors, number of placements was examined at as a separate factor of displacement which might affect the dependent variables. The influence of numbers of placements on CES-D scores was examined in a regression analysis with placements as predictor and depression as criterion.

Research Question #5: What is the extent to which specifics of minor's support systems influence life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

In measuring the influence of differences in support system on depression, American/ethnic balance, and academic performance, substantial recoding was undertaken. For each subject a support systems score was obtained by quantifying the following (on a scale of 1 - 26): father living; mother living; relatives in the U.S., and if yes, frequency of contact; male and female friends from own country, other foreign country, or U.S., and if yes, do they visit in each other's home; other children living in minor's home; siblings in the home; salutary foster care situation; positive

relationship with service provider; minor's perception of self as successful in making friends; minor talks to someone when sad; other subjective impressions of the researcher regarding support.

Six categories of friends were examined, notably in relation to differences among placement groups. The trend in which friends were formed was addressed. The relationship between friendship and depression was examined in an analysis of variance between CES-D scores and numbers of friends. Depression score was then examined in an analysis of covariance with time in country as covariate followed by adult support and no friends versus friends.

Attributions regarding friendships and to whom minors talk when sad were examined. Ethnic versus non-ethnic contrasts were employed in both instances.

Total Support

Depression/life satisfaction. Depression score was analyzed in a regression equation holding time in country and then age constant, followed by total support and living groups. Post-hoc ethnic versus non-ethnic contrasts were conducted.

American/ethnic identities. Independence scores on the Americanization Check List were analyzed in a regression equation holding time in country and then age constant, followed by total support and living groups. Subsequent contrasts were carried out for both analyses between children living in their own families versus unaccompanied minors.

Academic achievement. GPA was regressed in an analysis holding time in country and then age constant, followed in the equations by total support and living groups.

Research Question #6: What is the extent to which political awareness (of own countries and the U.S.) influences life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

Many subjects apparently could not understand the relatively abstract questions concerning political awareness. Thus, presentation of findings is confined to descriptive data.

Predictors of Successful Resettlement

To test the unique relative contribution of each independent variable to depression, independence, and grade point average, a final set of regression analyses was undertaken for each dependent variable. Because number of placements was seen as a critical variable for unaccompanied minors, but was irrelevant to children with their own families, these final analyses were conducted first for the entire sample (not including number of placements), and then for unaccompanied minors solely (including number of placements).

The order of predictors in these equations was established to enter demographic characteristics first, then variables relating to experiences which occurred prior to entry to the U.S., then characteristics of placement (for unaccompanied minors) and support over which service

providers can exercise some influence. For the entire sample of 82, this order was: age, time in the U.S., family of origin, displacement, total support, and ethnic versus non-ethnic setting. For the 58 unaccompanied minors, the order was: age, time in the U.S., family of origin, displacement, total support, ethnic versus non-ethnic setting, and number of placements. Any variation which was not attributable to the identified predictor was assigned to error. That is, it remained as unexplained variance.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The major focus of this research was to examine--based on event-environment-individual interaction--critical factors affecting the adjustment of refugee minors to the United States. Specifically, do placement mode, status and situation of minor's family of origin, displacement, time in the U.S., and support influence life satisfaction/depression, Americanization, and academic achievement? In particular, predictors of successful resettlement were sought. Results of data analyses for this investigation will be presented in this chapter, including demographics, scaling information, zero order relationships among variables, and hypotheses testing with controls as indicated.

Demographics

The following general information emerged on all 82 minors in the study (see Tables 1, 2, 3). The majority in the sample were of Vietnamese origin (47 in number, or 57.3%), with 24 Cambodian (29.3%), and 11 (13.4%) Laotian youths, as indicated in Table 1. Average age was 16.4 years, average grade in school 9.4. Those living in their own families were on the average two or three years younger than those in the other groups. Prior to being admitted to the United States, virtually all subjects had spent some time in one or more refugee camps in Hong Kong, Malaysia, the

Philippines, or Thailand. Average length of stay was 19.7 months, with a wide range in time from several weeks to 60 months.

Over 70 percent of unaccompanied minors reported their natural fathers were still living in their homelands; 89 percent had living mothers. But it was not uncommon for unaccompanied minors to be uncertain if parents were living or dead (20 percent for father, 7 percent for mother). In very few cases were unaccompanied minors actually orphaned. Cambodian youngsters were often the ones who reported that parents were deceased. In one instance, a Cambodian boy was documented as an orphan, and his foster father, a wheelchair-bound, middle-aged bachelor, had initiated legal proceedings to adopt him. This, however, was the exception rather than the rule.

Overall, unaccompanied minors in the sample had lived in 2.3 agency placements since arriving in the United States 30.5 months before. Minors immigrating with relatives generally had remained in more constant living situations, if not in terms of actual locale, at least insofar as consistency of important persons in their lives. They had been here for an average of 52.5 months, compared with 27 to 32 months for the other three groups.

Spanning groups, the average number of children in minors' biological families was quite large, at five. Constellation of family of origin, as reported by minors, often included various members of the extended family and

spanned three generations. This was especially evident during home interviews with children who were living with their own families.

Across all groups, a majority of minors came from urban areas in Indochina (49 in number or 59.8%). Over 45 percent of their biological fathers had served in the military prior to 1975, with no significant differences for group. Groups differed in terms of fathers' education: chi squared (12)=31.0, $p < .002$. Biological fathers of children in foster and group home situations had less education than fathers of children living in own family. In the latter group ($N=24$), nine fathers were college graduates, while another four had post-graduate or professional education. Similarly, mothers differed across groups. In own family group, eight mothers, or one-third, were college graduates: chi squared (15)=32.5, $p < .005$. This indicates that children in more highly educated families are most likely to migrate together. In considering future analyses it will need to be remembered that respondents living in their own families tended to be younger and to have a higher educational background. They had also been in the country the longest.

Across all groups, minors appeared to be doing quite well in school. Their mean grade point average was 3.05.

Americanization Check List

The check list appended to the questionnaire was designed to tap dimensions which might vary between U.S. and Asian cultures, especially attitudes toward dependence,

independence and self-reliance. It also intended to measure perceived importance of adherence to U.S. customs and practices. Items clustered around both these internal and external features of the Americanization processes. A respondent was asked if an item was "very important," "somewhat important," or "not important" in his or her being a good American.

Internal or dependence/independence-related items were: (3) Having an after-school job; (4) Living in your own apartment after age 18; (6) Having American friends, (7) Saying what's on your mind; (10) Supporting yourself financially when you graduate from school; (11) Making your own decisions; (13) Sharing chores at home. Items pertaining to external customs, practices, and citizenship were: (1) Speaking good English; (2) Saluting the American flag; (5) Becoming an American citizen and voting in elections; (8) Reading the newspaper to know what is happening in the U.S. government; (9) Volunteering for the U.S. Army in time to war; (12) Celebrating American holidays such as July 4th. There was overlap, however, with items of very high importance to these newcomers, the most salient example being "Speaking good English." While primarily measuring adherence to American practices this item also related to independence.

Minors felt the most important items in being a good American were "Speaking good English" (81.7%), "Becoming a citizen and voting in elections" (76.8%), and "Supporting

yourself after graduation from school" (76.8%). The importance ascribed by these minors to English proficiency and employment parallels the findings of the Grier survey (1983) of Washington, D.C. adult newcomers. That study cited language capacity and the availability of jobs as overwhelming factors in determining success or failure of resettlement.

Items of least importance to minors were "Having an after-school job" (30.5%), "Speaking what's on your mind" (45.1%) and "Having American friends" (47.6%). Although many subjects advised they felt it was more important to study after school than to work part-time, 63% of the sample were nonetheless employed at least some of the time. This discrepancy may reflected a strong desire for academic excellence conflicting with the financial reality of needing to earn money.

Eleven out of 19 minors (57.8%) who were living in group homes stated it was very important to "Have your own apartment after graduation from school." This is in contrast to 34.5% from Caucasian foster homes, 30.0% from ethnic foster homes, or 4.2% of children with own families: chi squared (6)=28.49, $p < .005$. Evidently the shared living experience disposed minors from group homes to value their own quarters.

Reliability. Coefficient alpha (Cronbach's alpha) for the Americanization check list was established at .42 for the total scale (indicative of moderate to low reliability),

.62 (moderate) for the internal or independence items and .46 (moderate to low) for the external items.

Items were separated into two domains, with internal or independence items having higher reliability at .62. Because of that more satisfactory reliability, it was determined internal or independence items would be the major focus of analysis. Correlations of individual items on the independence scale with total minus that item were:

(3) Having an after-school job --.55; (4) Living in your own apartment after age 18--.55; (6) Having American friends--.59; (7) Saying what's on your mind--.51; (10) Supporting yourself financially when you graduate from school--.55; (11) Making your own decisions--.57 (13) Sharing chores at home--.55.

Individual item correlations and subcategory correlations within the scale were examined. CES-D scores and length of time in the U.S. were included in the analysis. Items on the independence scale were not significantly correlated with the dependent variables of depression score or grade point average. Among the independent variables, independence items correlated significantly with age (.228, $p < .01$), time in the U.S. (.234, $p < .05$), displacement (-.276, $p < .01$), total support (.550, $p < .01$), adult support (.249, $p < .01$), and number of placements (.359, $p < .01$).

CES-D Scale

Reliability. A Cronbach's alpha of .89 was obtained for the CES-D scale. A split-halves (odd-even) reliability on

the scale was .82. Both indicate satisfactory reliability. These levels are consistent with those reported by Radloff (1977) of .85 for coefficients alpha and .87 for split-halves reliability. Pearson correlations were then calculated for each of the 20 items to determine inter-item and item-total correlations. GPA, independence, age, time in the U.S. displacement, total support, adult support, peer support, and placements were included in correlations.

CES-D score was not significantly correlated with the dependent variables of independence and GPA. Of the independent variables, CES-D score was significantly correlated with age (.288, $p < .01$), time in U.S. (-234, $p < .05$), displacement (.276, $p < .05$), total support (-.550, $p < .01$), adult support (-.528, $p < .01$), peer support (-.349, $p < .01$), and number of placements (.359, $p < .01$).

Scoring. The CES-D self-report scale was utilized to assess symptoms associated with depression. Responses were scored on a possible range of 0 to 60, with higher scores indicating greater symptomatology. A score of 16 or greater is cited in the literature as indicative of clinical depression (Kuo, 1984). In a random sample of 499 adult Asian-Americans, mean score on the CES-D scale was 9.38, with a standard deviation of 8.07. In general, scores are higher among people under 30 years of age. Kuo pointed out that mean score was higher in his Asian sample than in Caucasian ones (range from 7.96 to 9.25), as reported by Radloff (1977).

The modified children's CES-D scale (Weissman, et al, 1980) was used in the refugee minors research reported herein. In the children's version, some items are left intact but more difficult and abstract ones are rephrased into clearer, simpler words. In a study by Weissman et al (1980) of 28 children, aged 6 to 17, subjects with psychiatric diagnoses (N = 7) had mean scores of 10.5, while those without psychiatric diagnoses (N = 21) had mean scores of 6.9. About 9 per cent of Weissman's total juvenile sample scored over 16, the cut-off point for clinical depression in the adult version.

In Table 4, raw CES-D scores with group means and standard deviations are presented by refugee minors' living groups. A one way analysis of variance revealed a statistically significant effect for group $F(3,78) = 12.08$, $P. <.0001$. Even when length of time in country was held constant in a later analysis this effect for group remained highly significant with a $p.<.0001$.

Children living in ethnic homes (own family and ethnic foster care) had mean scores well below the cutoff point of 16 for clinical depression in adult populations. On the other hand, in non-ethnic settings, 79 percent of subjects living in Caucasian foster care and 68 percent of those in group homes had mean scores above 16.

Table 4

CES-D Scores

N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>N</u>
Caucasian F.C.	24.03	10.54	50	3	29
Ethnic F.C.	10.50	3.95	20	6	10
Group Home	22.04	10.77	49	5	19
Own Family	11.50	6.55	28	2	24
TOTAL	18.26	8.62	50	2	82

While population figures are not available for adolescents, Radloff (1979) reported in her study of 70 Caucasian adults in a psychiatric inpatient setting that 70 percent of that sample scored above 16 (mean of 24.42) on the CES-D scale. This is in contrast to only 21 percent of the general population which scores above 16. Radloff adds that CES-D scores discriminate well between psychiatric inpatient and general population samples. With that in mind, it is to be noted that unaccompanied minors in Caucasian foster homes scored an average of 8 points above 16, those in group homes 6 above.

Research Question #1: What is the extent to which differing placement mode influences life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

Life satisfaction/depression

In preliminary discussion of the CES-D scale, it was seen that there was a statistically significant effect for differing placement modes, $F(3,78) = 12.08, p < .0001$. The largest differences appeared between children who lived in their own families or in ethnic foster homes versus those in Caucasian foster care or group homes. The first two settings, own family and ethnic foster care, were distinguished from Caucasian foster care and group homes by the consistent presence of an Indochinese adult. A contrast for depression along this ethnic versus non-ethnic dimension also revealed a highly significant difference, $F(1,80) = 36.21, p < .0001$.

However, children in their own families had been in the United States longer (by 22 months) and were younger (by more than two years) than unaccompanied minors. For these reasons, it was important to rule out age and time in country as possible alternative explanations of the large and significant differences which had emerged by placement mode.

Depression score was examined in two one-way analyses of covariance, first holding time in U.S. and then age constant. Neither covariate in the analyses reached significance. Those results, presented in Table 5 indicate extremely large

and significant differences between groups--differences which persisted when time in country and age were held constant.

Table 5

Mean Depression Score

Analyses of Covariance

Differences by Placement Mode

With Time in U.S. as Covariate

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	25.05	2.48
Ethnic Foster Care	11.43	3.32
Group Home	22.89	2.57
Own Family	13.13	3.46

Overall F for Placement Mode: 9.06, df = 4,77, $p < .00001$.

Contrasts significant between Ethnic Foster Care and Own

Family versus Caucasian Foster Care and Group Home:

$t = 5.44$, $p < .0001$.

With Age as Covariate

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	26.10	11.10
Ethnic Foster Care	12.10	10.65
Group Home	24.09	10.99
Own Family	13.23	9.39

Overall F for Placement Mode: 8.96, df = 4,77, $p < .00001$.

Contrasts significant between Ethnic Foster Care and Own

Family versus Caucasian Foster Care and Group Home:

$t = 5.12$, $p < .0001$.

Americanization/Ethnicity

For reasons similar to those outlined in the previous section, independence scores on the Americanization Check list were examined in two one-way analyses of covariance holding time in U.S. and then age constant. These results are presented in Table 6. In the first analysis, time in country was a significant covariate with a t of 3.160, $p < .002$. In the covariate analyses, children who lived with their own families contrasted significantly with the other three groups (the unaccompanied children) in perceiving independence as less important in Americanization (overall $F = 3.97$, $p < .005$, contrast significant at .007 level).

It appears from these results that youngsters having the benefit of their own kin do not perceive the need to become independent so rapidly as unaccompanied children. Perhaps for those who live within the tightly-knit circle of their own families, traditional Asian values of group cohesion and interdependence continue to be transmitted, predominating over more Western values of autonomy and independence. Indeed Nidorf cautioned service providers to be cognizant of "premature assimilation" (1985) in refugee minors. She expressed concern for young newcomers who pushed themselves to quickly integrate into the American mainstream. Those who seem to adapt in less than two years may be at risk for emotional dysfunction more than their apparently slower integrating peers.

In a second analysis of independence score by placement

mode, age was entered as the covariate. It did not reach significance, $t=1.503$, $p<.137$. The group differences were not significant either.

Table 6

Mean Independence Score

Analyses of Covariance

Differences by Placement Mode

With Time in U.S. as Covariate

	<u>Adjusted Mean*</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	14.44	.75
Ethnic Foster Care	14.71	1.00
Group Home	14.35	.78
Own Family	17.22	1.05

Overall F for Placement Mode: 3.97, $df = 4, 77$, $p<.0056$.

Contrasts significant between Own Family versus Caucasian

Foster Care, Ethnic Foster Care and Group Home:

$t = 2.78$, $p<.007$.

* Higher score indicates lower independence

With Age as Covariate

	<u>Adjusted Mean*</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	17.92	3.52
Ethnic Foster Care	17.99	3.38
Group Home	18.04	3.49
Own Family	18.80	2.97

Overall F for Placement Mode: 1.90, $df = 4, 77$, $p>.1183$.

* Higher scores indicate lower independence.

The four placement groups were not different in terms of using an American versus an Indochinese name. Eleven percent of minors had adopted an English-language name since coming to the U.S. There were no differences among groups in desire to return to the homeland, with 42.7 percent of minors responding "yes," 51.2 percent "no," and 6.1 percent uncertain. Across groups there were no significant differences in desire to marry someone from the homeland. There were, however, large numbers of nonrespondents to that item (50 percent). Several youngsters remarked that if they married someone from another country, they would be afforded the opportunity to travel: one Vietnamese girl of 15 advised she would like to marry an Englishman so that she could visit England.

When asked to name "one wish that could come true," it was assumed that refugees retaining strongest ties to the homeland--and who were perhaps less assimilated--would refer to family overseas or to native country. There were, however, no significant difference in reference: chi squared (3)=3.1, $p < .38$. Seventeen minors (11 or 29% of all unaccompanied) wished for reunion with their families. Twenty-five (31.7%) from all groups cited high academic achievement. Controlling for time in country did not affect response patterns for this wish question.

Asking minors to name one fear was evidently too difficult a question for many, with 42.6 percent non-response

to this item. Another item which proved too abstract for respondents was what advice they would give a young person in their homeland who was contemplating coming to the U.S.: 30.0% could not answer. But most minors--82.9 percent--easily replied that the hardest thing for them upon arriving in the U.S. was learning English. And time in the U.S. apparently did not alter this recollection.

Academic Achievement

School achievement was coded in terms of respondents' self-reporting of grades on last report card and from that a grade point average was derived. Seventy-three percent of all respondents reported grade point averages of B or higher. There were no differences in GPA means by situation and status of subjects' families of origin, $F(1,80)=.77$, n.s.

GPA was examined in a one-way analysis of covariance, holding time in U.S. constant. The covariate did not reach significance. The overall F was not significant $F(4,77)=1.69$, $p>.161$. However, as a guide to further analysis for group differences, a comparison of children in ethnic versus non-ethnic homes was made, revealing a significant difference ($p<.017$). Although all children had quite high GPA's, those in both ethnic settings had adjusted mean GPA's that were .23 to .41 points higher than their peers in non-ethnic homes, $t=2.45$, $p<.017$. This was about two-thirds of a standard deviation difference for this sample. It appeared once again that presence of an ethnic adult exerted a salutary influence upon minors in ethnic

foster care and own family settings.

When age was entered as a covariate in a one-way analysis of covariance of GPA scores by placement groups, neither covariate nor the group differences were significant. Table 7 presents GPA analyses of covariance by placement mode.

Table 7

Mean Grade Point Average

Analyses of Covariance

Differences by Placement Mode

With Time in U.S. as Covariate

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	3.05	.14
Ethnic Foster Care	3.46	.19
Group Home	3.09	.15
Own Family	3.32	.19

Overall F for Placement Mode: 1.69, df = 4,77, p.>.16.

Contrasts significant between Ethnic Foster Care and Own

Family versus Caucasian Foster Care and Group Home:

t = 2.45, p.<.017.

With Age as Covariate

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	3.18	.04
Ethnic Foster Care	3.58	.64
Group Home	3.23	.63
Own Family	3.33	.59

Overall F for Placement Mode: 1.42, df = 4,77, p.>.235.

Attributions Regarding Academic Success. Minors were asked whether they considered themselves successful in school, and then to what they attributed their success or non-success. There was a positive correlation between grade point average and perception of success in school ($r = .309$, at the .01 level).

Of 76 minors responding to this question, there was a significant contrast between those who saw themselves as successful in school ($N = 52$, $GPA = 3.17$) and those who did not ($N = 24$, $GPA = 2.83$), with an overall $F(1,74)=7.81$, $p.<.007$. This indicates that these minors are making relatively realistic appraisals of their academic achievement, although their standards of excellence might seem unduly rigorous to those used to dealing with American adolescents.

In spite of their evident academic achievement, about a third of minors reported they did not consider themselves successful in school, with no significant effect for placement group, chi squared (3)=3.46, $p.>.33$. Condensing the contrast to ethnic versus non-ethnic groups revealed 44 percent in Caucasian foster care or group homes saw themselves as unsuccessful in school, compared to 26 percent in ethnic homes, either foster or own. Even so, differences among groups were not statistically significant, chi squared (1) = 2.56, $p.>.11$.

There was little variation among the 82 minors in attributions regarding academic performance: 53 (64.6%) cited effort, 16 (19.5%) ease of task, 5 (6.1%) ability, 1 (1.2%) luck, 4 (4.88%) "other," and 3 (3.66%) did not respond. There were no significant differences among the four placement modes in attributions regarding academic performance, chi squared (9)=11.23, $p > .26$.

When effort, the most frequent response, was contrasted to all other responses ($N=79$), it reached significance, chi squared (3)=10.57, $p < .014$. The ethnic versus non-ethnic home contrast yielded a significant difference, with 84.8 percent of minors in ethnic homes making effort attributions, compared to 59.5 percent in non-ethnic settings, chi squared (1)=5.72, $p < .017$.

Most minors in this sample made effort attributions. This was in keeping with the research findings of Hess and Holloway (1983) and Stevenson (1986), citing predominantly effort attributions among Asian students and mothers. It is of interest to ponder the possible socializing effect for minors in non-ethnic homes who made significantly fewer effort attributions than peers in ethnic homes. It is known that parental attributions regarding a son or daughter's success can have an important influence on the child's attributions. For the child placed in a home without an Asian adult, such an influence might not be present: there might not be a traditional, strong model stressing effort as a viable route to success. Furthermore, there are some child

development theorists, such as Brazelton (cited by Butterfield, 1986) who are of the opinion that Asian children learn through modeling and imitation, to a much greater extent than non-Asian. The current findings support the importance for academic attributions of the presence of an Asian adult.

When these young people were asked to whom they would turn for help if doing poorly in school, 58.5 percent named a teacher. Eight answered, "no one," (four in Caucasian foster care, one in ethnic foster care, three in group homes, but none with own families). Eight youngsters from all four groups indicated they would go to a friend for help, an age-appropriate response.

At the same time minors were diligently applying themselves in school, over 63 percent were also working after school in part-time jobs, most typically in fast food establishments (18.3%), as clerks (11.0%), or in childcare (11.0%). There were no significant differences among groups in employment: chi squared (3) = 7.44, $p > .06$.

College Aspirations. Across groups, there were no significant differences in college aspirations: chi squared (6) = 10.26, $p > .11$. Over 80 percent stated they planned to attend college--a remarkably high proportion given the scarce financial resources of these minors, both unaccompanied or with families. Of those who did not plan on college, 4.9 percent stated they intended to enroll in a trade school or learn a vocation such as printing or auto mechanics.

Summary. In analyzing the effect of placement mode upon depression, enormous differences were revealed. Differences were somewhat less striking, but important in relation to independence. Differences among groups were quite small in academic achievement, but marginally significant if an ethnic versus non-ethnic group contrast was employed. Those minors who lived in homes with an ethnic adult also made significantly more effort attributions regarding their academic achievement than children in non-ethnic homes.

Research Question #2: What is the extent to which time in U.S. influences life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

Some of the analysis relating to this question was covered in the previous section because time in the United States was an important covariate.

Life satisfaction/depression

A regression with CES-D score as criterion entered time in U.S. first, followed by ethnic versus non ethnic setting. Time in country did not reach significance ($t = -.341$, $p > .734$), but ethnic home did ($t = 5.442$, $p < .0001$), with an overall F of 17.96, $df = 2, 79$, $p < .00001$. This again suggests the over-riding power of ethnic setting on depression.

Americanization/ethnicity

When time in U.S. was entered into a regression equation, followed by ethnic group, significance was reached ($t = -2.493$, $p < .015$) for time in country. For each additional month in the U.S., a minor's independence score was enhanced by .04 points. The effect of ethnic setting appeared to be operative once more, with a t of 2.781, $p < .007$. Overall F was 5.12, $df = 2, 79$, $p < .008$.

Academic Achievement

When time in country was entered first into a regression analysis, followed by ethnic group, it did not reach significance ($t = -1.447$, $p < .152$). There was a significant effect for ethnic group ($t = 2.448$, $p < .017$), with an overall F of 3.17, $df = 2, 79$, $p < .047$.

Summary. Time in country was not a significant factor in determining depression or grade point average. It was, however, a significant predictor of increased independence striving as part of Americanization in minors.

Research Question #3: What is the extent to which status and situation of minor's family of origin influence life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

Minors' families of origin were quantified on a scale from 1 - 10 on the basis of parents' education, occupation, and place of residence. The tenuous nature of such judgements needs to be recognized, however, given the

enormous political and social upheaval inflicted by the years of war in Indochina.

Overall mean score for this variable was 4.64 with a standard deviation of 2.69. Children in Caucasian foster homes had means of 3.48, ethnic foster care, 4.40, group homes, 5.05 and those in own family, 5.80. In a regression analysis, with situation and status as criterion, placement mode yielded a significant effect, with $F(3,78)=3.92$, $p<.011$. Those with their own families had higher scores on this family of origin variable, due in large measure to parents' greater education.

Depression/Life Satisfaction

When entered into a regression equation with CES-D scores as criterion, situation and status of family of origin were not significant, with an $F(1,80)=.10$, $p>.70$.

Of the Cambodians in this sample, many had endured especially cruel hardships before leaving their homeland. Thirteen (44.8%) of all children in Caucasian foster homes, and four (21.0%) in group homes were Cambodian. None had been placed in an ethnic foster home. Nonetheless, in a regression analysis the contribution of country of origin to depression was not significant: $F(2,79)=1.32$, $p>.27$.

Americanization/Ethnic Identity

In a regression equation with independence as the dependent variable, situation and status of family of origin were not significant: $F(1,80)=.26$, $p>.614$. When entered in four levels, there was still no significant effect, with an F

(3,78)=.45, $p > .72$.

Academic Achievement

Entering GPA into a regression equation as dependent variable with situation and status of family as predictor demonstrated no significant contribution: $F(1,80)=.04$, $p > .85$. When situation and status were tested at four levels, with GPA as the outcome, there was also no significant effect: $F(3,78)=.21$, $p > .89$.

This is an outcome of particular interest, because in U.S. samples, factors such as parent education (a large component of this score) are strong predictors of GPA. Perhaps in this sample of Indochinese refugees, experiences and conditions of war muted social class as a predictor of academic achievement. It is also possible that parent education is of less help in stimulating a child's achievement when the parent does not speak the language in which the child is studying.

Summary. Situation and status of minors' families of origin were not significant contributors to depression scores, independence, or school achievement.

Research Question #4: What is the extent to which specifics of minor's flight from the homeland influence life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

The story of a refugee is inevitably one of separation and loss--particularly so if that person is a child without family. In order to sufficiently address this phenomenon, flight from homeland was expanded into a variable termed "displacement." The conceptualization of displacement included primarily events taking place before minors immigrated to the United States and therefore not subject to interventions of social service providers.

In quantifying displacement, the following items were included (with scoring indicated): planned versus unplanned escape (1); length of time of escape (1, 2, 3); solitary or accompanied escape (1); time spent in refugee camps (1, 2, 3), trauma suffered in transition, such as the death of a close relative or friend, sea piracy, or other violence (1 per experience); unawareness of family's well-being in country of origin (1); no communication with home (1); number of grades behind in U.S. school for minor's age.

Mean score for displacement was 4.47, standard deviation 3.11. Variation in scores was high, with a range from 1 to 19. Number of foster or group care placements, a constituent of displacement for unaccompanied minors, was examined as a

separate variable. Unlike the elements of displacement just described, placements were seen to be at least partially amenable to the interventions of service providers.

Examples of Displacement

The following two accounts are typical of the kinds and extent of displacement these young Indochinese refugees have undergone in the course of leaving their homelands and resettling in the United States.

"X" is a minor with a low displacement score of 3. He is a 15 year old, tenth grade, Laotian boy living with his own family in a pleasant home they just purchased in suburban Virginia. In 1980, he escaped by boat with his mother, stepfather, grandparents, brother and sister across the Mekong River into a refugee camp to Thailand. After a year in the camps the family was accepted for admission to the United States. Although his own father, a college-educated helicopter pilot, was killed during the war, his picture is still prominently displayed in the family's living room. Mother remarried before the family left Laos and stepfather is a stable head of household, whom the children regard with affection. Both mother and stepfather have college educations, both work long hours as housekeepers in local hotels. "X" too works after school and at night at a neighborhood convenience store. It is not uncommon for him to finish a shift at 2 a.m. at which time he phones his stepfather to transport him home. An affable, outgoing

youth, "X" had several neighborhood American friends visiting in his home at the time of his interview. He plans on a career in computer field; if he were doing poorly in school he would talk to his grandparents for help in doing better; if he could have one wish, it would be to "be a millionaire, so I could buy my parents a home, and take care of them." His score on the CES-D scale was 16, the cutoff point for clinical depression.

"R" is a 16 year old boy with a high displacement score of 9. He lives in a group home in Richmond, Virginia, his fifth placement. The evening of his interview, he had just returned from running away—one in an ongoing series of disruptive behaviors in the group home. "R," who is Cambodian, arrived in the U.S. in April 1984 after five years in a Thai refugee camp. He left his homeland by himself, trekking alone for three days on foot through jungle, narrowly escaping discovery by the Communists. As a young child in Cambodia, he had been forced by the Khmer Rouge into a work camp. When he was finally able to return to his village, he found his home destroyed and his parents burned to death. His father had been a general, a college educated man who spoke many languages; his mother had once been a college teacher. All but one of his siblings are dead. "R" has recently learned one sister is still alive in Cambodia and he dreams of being reunited with her. Because contact with his homeland is virtually impossible, he is unable to keep in touch with anyone in Cambodia. "R" attends a trade

school and is about one year behind grade level for his age. According to a social worker in the group home, his peer relations are very poor, due to his angry and explosive nature. "R" advised he would not volunteer for the U.S. army in wartime, as he had seen too much fighting in his lifetime. He stated unabashedly that his greatest fear was of guns and shooting. Score on the CES-D scale was 49, the second highest of all minors.

Across living groups there were no significant differences in planned versus unplanned departures: chi squared (3)=1.94, $p>.58$. Nor were there substantial variations in length of time of escape, with a mean traveling time of 10.5 days: $F(3,66)=1.01$, $p>.40$. By 7 days, 78% of minors had completed the journey away from their homelands, by 14 days, over 90% had reached a destination of first asylum. Fifty-one (6.2%) left by boat, 23 (28.0%) by foot, and 4 (4.8%) were part of an airlift. One youngster left by horse and buggy, one by bus, and one each by motorcycle and bicycle. There were no significant differences among groups in departure mode: chi squared (18)=21.00, $p>.28$.

The average length of time spent in refugee camps was 19.7 months, with no significant differences among groups, $F(3,78)=.73$, $p>.54$. Although international resettlement policy mandates the earliest possible assignment of unaccompanied minors to a third country, this was apparently not the case with our sample. Unaccompanied minors spent about equal time in camps as children there with families.

Fifty-eight (70.7%) of minors advised their own fathers were living, 16 (19.5%) that they were dead, and 8 (9.7%) that they did not know. Entered into a regression equation, the contribution of father living to depression scores was significant, $F(1,80)=5.41$, $p<.02$.

Life Satisfaction/Depression

Displacement correlated positively with depression scores at the .05 level. For reasons described in previous sections, depression scores were examined in two one-way analyses of covariance first holding time in U.S. and then age constant. In the first analysis, time in country was held constant, followed in the equation by displacement and four living groups. Time as a covariate was not significant, $t=.34$, $p>.74$; neither was displacement a significant contributor to depression, $t=1.49$, $p>.142$. However, the ethnic contrast was significant at the .006 level with these two covariates. The overall F for the equation was 7.80, $p<.00001$.

In the second analysis, age as covariate was nonsignificant, $t=-.198$, $p>.84$ and displacement did not show a significant effect, $t=1.56$, $p>.13$. But once more there was a significant main effect for group. The overall F was 7.78, at the .00001 level, with the ethnic contrast significant at .004.

Americanization/ethnicity

Independence items on the Americanization check list did not correlate significantly with displacement scores. The

effect of displacement on independence was analyzed in an analysis of covariance holding time in U.S. constant, followed by displacement and four placement settings. Time in country was a significant covariate, $t=3.45$, at the .001 level; displacement did not reach significance ($t=-1.89$, $p>.06$; overall $F=3.99$, $p<.003$). Children in their own families contrasted significantly, with a t of 3.45 (at the .0001 level) to unaccompanied minors with these two covariates.

This same analysis was repeated, holding age constant. Neither the covariate of age nor of displacement was significant, with an overall F for the equation = 1.89, $p>.11$.

Academic Achievement

Grade point average was not significantly correlated with displacement score. A preliminary regression indicated no significant effect for displacement on grade point average, $F(1,80)=.02$, $p>.89$. Academic achievement was next examined with time in U.S. and displacement as covariates, followed by four living groups. The same analysis was repeated with age as covariate.

In the first analysis, time in U.S. was not a significant covariate, $t=-.945$, $p>.35$. Nor was displacement a significant predictor, $t=.812$, $p>.42$. However, a post hoc ethnic versus non-ethnic contrast was significant at the .01 level. This finding once more points to the pervasive influence of setting with an ethnic adult, regardless of

other important factors, such as displacement in this case. In the second analysis, neither the covariate of age, $t=.38$, $p>.70$, nor of displacement, $t=.96$, $p>.34$, was significant.

Placements of Unaccompanied Minors

For the unaccompanied minor a crucial aspect of displacement can be the number of foster and group placements he or she has experienced. Many in this sample reported having had multiple placements since arriving in the United States. There are numerous reasons a child might be re-placed into a new setting. Sometimes due to causes beyond their immediate control, a foster family can no longer keep a minor. For example, one exemplary couple, due to a medical crisis with their own son, reluctantly terminated care of four unaccompanied boys who had been with them for several years. This forced the dislocation of the boys into other homes. Because it was highly unusual to find a foster family to accommodate four children, they were placed separately, dispersing their peer group which had grown quite close in its years together and which had served as a substitute family unit.

There are sometimes instances when the negative behavior of youngsters themselves precipitates the move to another setting. There seem to be certain children for whom several placements are necessary before they can comfortably settle down. Often the most difficult children find their ways into group homes, where more intensive supervision and adult care are provided.

Among unaccompanied minors, 19 (23.3%) were in their first placement, 21 (25.6%) their second, and 10 (12.2%) their third. Eight other youngsters reported from 4 to 9 prior placements since arriving in the United States. Mean number of placements was 2.33.

Of the dependent variables in this investigation, number of placements correlated significantly with depression (.359, $p < .01$), but not with GPA (-.068), or independence (-.199). Of the independent variables, number of placements correlated significantly with age (.482, $p < .01$), with displacement (.231, $P < .05$), with overall support (-.441, $p < .01$), and with adult support (-.490, $p < .01$).

Number of placements for unaccompanied minors by three placement groups is displayed in Table 8. Among children in ethnic homes, five were in their first placement, while five had had three or more placements. This was possibly an artifact of age: those children with only one placement were on the average quite young (14.6 years old) compared to the others (18.0 years old). As mentioned earlier, there was a significant positive correlation between age and numbers of placements ($r = .482$ at the .01 level).

When number of placements was entered into a regression equation with living groups it was a significant predictor of depression scores in unaccompanied minors: $F(3,54)=4.32$, $p < .008$. Fifteen percent of the variance in depression scores was explained by knowing how often a minor had been placed. Children who had only one placement were faring

Table 8

Numbers of Placements of Unaccompanied Minors
by Placement Mode

N = 58 (53 males, 5 females)

Number Placement	Cauc.Fost Care	Ethn.Fost Care	Group Home	TOTAL
ONE	7	5	7	19
%	24.14	50.00	36.84	32.76
TWO	16	0	5	21
%	55.17	0.00	26.32	36.21
THREE	4	2	4	10
%	13.79	20.00	21.05	17.24
FOUR OR MORE	2	3	3	8
%	6.90	30.00	15.79	13.79
TOTAL N	29	10	19	58

substantially better than those with more than one. While, the mean CES-D score for all unaccompanied minors was 21.05, it was 16, ($t=6.95$, $p<.0001$) for those in their first placement compared to 26.76 ($t= 12.23$), $p<.0001$ for those with more than one placement. This is without taking into account reasons for multiple placements--originating within the minors themselves, or in circumstances beyond their ability to regulate.

Number of placements emerged as a complex variable. Older minors were more likely than younger ones to have multiple placements, although the length of time a child had been in the U.S. was not related to placement frequency. It is likely that minors who were more depressed and who exhibited disruptive and difficult-to-manage behavior were candidates for multiple placements. Understandably, it is also more difficult for service providers to find suitable placements for depressed children. By the same token, children who had been re-placed in multiple settings might more likely be depressed from being dislocated. Cause and effect cannot so easily be distinguished here. At a later point, further interpretation of the placement phenomenon will be presented in the context of final regression analyses which include all variables of interest to this investigation.

Summary. Although virtually all minors in this study had experienced considerably high levels of disruption and dislocation in the course of migrating to this country, the effect of displacement did not appear to be a significant predictor of depression, independence levels, or grade point average. The effect of placement mode was again influential, particularly the effect of ethnic versus non-ethnic setting. Taking displacement into account, children in ethnic homes had significantly lower depression scores and significantly higher GPA's than their peers in non-ethnic settings. There also was a significant contrast in independence levels. In this instance it was between children in their own families and unaccompanied minors, with those in own family having lower independence scores.

Although overall displacement was not shown to have a significant effect on the dependent variables in this investigation, number of placements was critically related to the well-being of unaccompanied minors. As placements went up, so did depression levels. However, it might be speculated that the angry and seemingly unmanageable behaviors of some youngsters who require re-placement are in themselves after-effects of the experiences of displacement before coming to this country.

Research Question #5. What is the extent to which specifics of minors' support systems influence life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

To arrive at a variable representing support, substantial recoding was undertaken to quantify a final score. Items included were the following, (with possible points a minor could score): father living (1); mother living (1); relatives in the U.S.(1); relatives living nearby (2); frequency of contact with relatives (3); male and female friends from own country (2), other foreign country (2), or U.S.(2); visits friends from own country, other foreign country and U.S. in home (3); unrelated other children living in minor's home (1 per child); siblings in home (1 per sib); quality of foster, group, or home situation (3); nature of relationships with service providers (3); minor's perception of self as successful in making friends (1); minor talks to someone when sad (1); other striking impressions of the interviewer vis-a-vis support (2).

Average support score across groups was 12.07, with a standard deviation of 5.04. Scores ranged from a low of 1 for a multiply-placed unaccompanied Cambodian boy, to a high of 27 for a minor living with his grandmother and extended family, all of whom were being actively sponsored by the Mormon church.

In addition to the investigator's coding, a sample of the support data (N=50) was coded by another social worker.

Percentage of interrater agreement was established at 90.6 percent.

Two primary sources of support for minors were family and friends. These will be considered in turn.

Family. Even among those minors who were unaccompanied, 51.2 percent had relatives in the immediate geographic areas in which they resided. When children living with their own families were removed from the comparisons, there were no significant differences among three placement modes for unaccompanied minors, chi squared (6)=4.11, $p > .66$. Twenty-two (78.5%) of 28 unaccompanied minors with relatives nearby visited with them on a regular basis, with no significant differences in visitation rate among the three placement modes: chi squared (6)=5.85, $p > .44$. Nor were there significant differences among unaccompanied minors regarding desire to live with their relatives. Across all four groups, there were no significant differences in frequency of writing to family in countries of origin, with 68% keeping a monthly contact by letter.

Friends. For purposes of quantification, there were six possible classes of friends: male from country of origin, female from country of origin; male from other foreign countries, female from other foreign countries; male American, female American. No minor reported having a friend from all six categories. Across four placement settings, there were no significant differences in total numbers of friends, $F(3,81)$, $p > .09$, with a mean of 2.36.

Friendships involving mutual home visits were considered to be of a closer nature than those where contact was restricted to school, work, or outside the home. Across all four placement modes, minors with friends visited about equally in both their own and friends' residences. This was true for country of origin, other-foreign-country, and American friends.

Ninety percent of all minors had a friend from their country of origin, with no differences across groups, $F(3,78)=.55$, $p>.65$. Over 71 percent reported a friend from another foreign country: there was a significant difference across groups, $F(3,78)=3.78$, $p<.01$, with children in ethnic homes more likely to report greater numbers of other-foreign-country friends. Sixty-two percent of minors had an American friend, $F(3,78)=2.65$, $p<.05$, with a significant difference for groups.

Minors in the U.S. with their own families contrasted with all others in reporting the highest percentage of American friends (83%), suggesting that the longer one is in the U.S., the more one moves towards American friendships. Because children with their own families had also been in the country longer than unaccompanied minors, time in country was held constant in a regression analysis. Controlling in this way for time in U.S., children in their own homes were not more likely to have American friends than those in other groups, $F(4, 77)=1.94$ $p>.112$. Number and country of friends by group are presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Responses to Three Questions Concerning Friends

Number and Country of Friends by Group

N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

Have a Friend From	Caucasian Fos.Care N = 29	Ethnic Fos.Car N = 10	Group Home N = 19	Own Family N = 29	TOTAL 82
<hr/>					
Own Country					
#	25	10	17	22	74
%	86.21	100	89.47	91.67	90.24
Other Foreign Country					
#	15	9	14	21	59
%	51.72	90.00	73.68	87.50	71.95
United States					
#	14	5	12	20	51
%	48.28	50.00	63.16	83.33	62.20
N	29	10	19	24	82

There was a trend in the order in which friendships were formed. The direction was first with own country friend, next with other-country friend, and lastly, with Americans. Those children with fewer friends were more likely to have country of origin friends; those who had a greater number of friends were more likely to have American friends.

It is likely that order reflects increasing English language capacity over time, as well as the progression of these newcomers from ESL (English as a Second Language) to regular classrooms in school. Minors who had friends from other foreign countries generally reported meeting them in ESL classes. Thirteen (15.8%) of all minors had a male friend from Latin America, 25 (30.5%) from an Indochinese country other than their own, and 12 (14.6%) from elsewhere in Asia. A similar picture emerged for female foreign friends.

A strong negative relationship was revealed between friendship and depression, but it did not have to do with whether a child had own country, other-foreign country or American friends. Rather it was between a child's having at least one friend, as opposed to none. Of six subjects who reported having no friends at all, their unadjusted mean CES-D scores were almost 9 points higher than children who reported at least one friend and 12.57 points higher than the group mean of 18.26. These results are shown in Table 10, following. A one way anova for depression scores and number of friends was significant at the .01 level, with an $F(4,78)$ of 3.37.

Table 10

Minors Unadjusted CES-D Scores and Numbers of Friends

N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

<u>Number of Friends</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>
0	30.83	14.60	6
1	22.00	7.28	13
2	16.27	8.78	26
3 or more	16.33	11.03	37
TOTAL	18.26	8.62	82

Because children with their own family had been in the U.S. the longest, depression score was next examined in a analysis of covariance, with time in country as covariate, followed by adult support (total support minus peer-support), no friend, and friend(s). These results are presented in Table 11. Time in country was not a significant covariate. Adult support was significant, $t=-4.27$, at the .0001 level. The coefficient for adult support of -1.25, indicates the important influence of this variable in substantially decreasing a child's level of depression. Overall F for the equation was 15.30, $p<.00001$. In this analysis, children with no friends contrasted significantly with children having at least one friend, $t=.3.24$, $p<.0017$.

Table 11

Mean Depression Score

Friend/No Friend Differences

With Time in U.S. and Adult Support as Covariates

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
No Friend	43.09	4.56
Friend(s)	28.12	2.56

Overall F for Friend/No friend: 9.21, df = 3,78,
p<.00001.

Contrasts significant between No Friend versus
Friend: t=3.24, p<.0017.

Independence items on the Americanization Check List were next examined in an analysis of covariance, holding time in U.S. constant, followed by adult support, no friend, and friend(s). The covariate of time in U.S. did not reach significance. While adult support was significant in a positive direction, with a t of 2.16 at the .03 level, the overall F for the equation was nonsignificant.

A similar analysis of covariance was undertaken with grade point average as criterion, holding time in country constant, and then entering adult support, no friend, and friend(s) into the equation. Time in country was not a significant covariate. Neither adult support nor the overall F for differences was significant.

Attributions regarding friendships. Minors were asked if they considered themselves good at making friends, and why. With 72 minors responding to this question, there were no significant differences among groups: chi squared $2(3)=5.82$, $p>.121$. But, employing the ethnic versus non-ethnic contrast, 27 (87.1%) minors in ethnic homes saw themselves as successful in making friends, compared to 27 (65.8%) in non-ethnic settings. This was a significant difference, chi squared $(1)=4.25$, $p<.04$. All children about equally attributed their social success to ability, effort, ease of task, or luck: chi squared $2(9)=5.175$, $p>.82$. There was no significant ethnic contrast.

To Whom Minors Speak When Sad. When asked to whom they talked when sad, children in their own families or ethnic foster care were more likely to name a friend than were respondents from the other two groups: chi squared $(18)=31.42$, $p<.04$. Children in their own families did not overwhelmingly choose to talk to parents when sad (only 4, or 16.0%). Nor did unaccompanied minors frequently name social workers as choice of confidant (8 in all, or 13.8%).

Across groups, 34 minors (41.5% of all subjects) advised they seek out no one when sad, chi squared $(3)=8.37$, $p<.04$, with a significant difference for groups. These findings are presented in Table 12. An ethnic versus non-ethnic comparison was significant: 26 (76.5%) minors in ethnic homes talked to someone when sad, as opposed to 22 (45.8%) in non-ethnic settings, chi squared $(1)=7.69$, $p<.01$.

Table 12

Minor Speaks to Someone When Sad

Differences by Placement Mode

N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

	Caucasian Foster Care N=29	Ethnic Foster Care N=10	Group Home N=19	Own Family N=24	TOTAL N=82
Yes	12	8	10	18	48
%	41.38	80.00	52.63	75.00	58.54
No	17	2	9	6	34
%	58.62	20.00	47.37	25.00	41.45

Children who talked to someone when sad were significantly less depressed than those who talked to no one, $F(1,80)=4.42$, $p<.04$. The mean depression scores of the talkers was 16.20, which was 4.9 points lower than the non-talkers. Minors who were non-talkers had been in the U.S. on an average of 5.46 months longer than the talkers, but this was not a significant difference.

From a Western perspective of normative adolescent development, turning to peers for support is regarded as expectable, age appropriate behavior. It was thus of interest that children in ethnic, as opposed to non-ethnic

settings, were more likely to turn to peers when sad--and to suffer less depression.

Although the important adults in their lives were not American, minors in ethnic homes were more frequently engaging in peer-seeking behavior generally viewed as the norm for American teenagers. In this sense, they were becoming Americanized more swiftly. Perhaps these children felt freer to explore the world--and the mainstream of the American youth culture--if they knew a reliable, trustworthy adult was there to provide a secure base of operations. They have endured war and dislocation, possibly rendering them more vulnerable and dependent than other children their age. They, more than other children, may have a need for their homebase to be secure. And an ethnic adult may be the best person to provide this for them.

Total Support

The presence and nature of family, friends, and to whom minors turn for comfort when sad are important components of support, both perceived and real. This total process of support will next be examined in relation to the three dependent variables in this investigation.

Depression/Life Satisfaction

Depression score was negatively correlated with total support score ($p < .01$.) as well as with peer support ($p < .01$). For every point of additional support, a child's CES-D score was lowered accordingly. In an initial regression with CES-D score as criterion and support as

independent variable, a significant effect was revealed:
 $F(1,80)=34.75, p.<.0001$. Support alone explained 30 percent
of the variance in depression scores. When support was
further partitioned on four levels from low to high, highly
significant differences in depression scores emerged:
 $F(3,78)=8.67, p.0001$ (Table 13).

Table 13
CES-D Scores by Levels of Support
N=82 (56 males, 17 females)

Level of Support	Mean	SD
low	25.50	1.98
low-medium	19.21	1.97
medium-high	13.89	2.16
high	11.88	2.29

Controlling for placement groups, support was significant
 $F(1,77)=9.98, p.<.002$. A one point increase in support was
associated with a .8 point decrease in depression score.
Group and support together explained 36 percent of the
variance in depression score. Thus, if support for a child
in Caucasian foster care were equivalent to that of a child
in his or her own home, CES-D scores would be 5.58 and 6.28
respectively.

Depression score next was analyzed holding time in
country constant, followed by support and living groups as

independent variables. Time was not a significant covariate. Support was significant, with a t of 3.09 at the .003 level. Overall F for the equation was 9.96, $p < .00001$. A strong ethnic versus non-ethnic contrast was once again revealed, $t = 3.15$, $p < .002$.

A similar analysis was undertaken holding age constant. Age was not a significant covariate. Support reached significance at the .002 level with a t of -3.13. The overall F for the equation was .00001. A significant ethnic versus non-ethnic contrast emerged, $t = 3.04$, $p < .003$. The results for these two analyses controlling for time in U.S. and age are presented in Table 14.

In both of these analyses time in the U.S. and then age, respectively, were not significant covariates. Support was significant but it did not pick up all of the variance that ethnic group placement contributed. Furthermore, children in ethnic and non-ethnic groups appeared to utilize support differentially. While support was relevant in ameliorating depression among children in non-ethnic settings, it was not influential in lowering CES-D scores for those in ethnic homes. This would provide even further evidence of the unique and sometimes intangible contribution ethnic adults made to the well-being of these minors. Indeed this contribution seemed to overshadow the effects of other supportive factors which are of assistance to children in non-ethnic settings.

In an analysis examining the effect of support on

depression in children in ethnic homes, while holding time in U.S. constant, the covariate of time was not significant.

Table 14

Mean Depression Score

Differences by Placement Mode

With Time in U.S. and Total Support as Covariates

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	31.06	3.05
Ethnic Foster Care	21.53	4.49
Group Home	31.68	3.74
Own Family	25.62	5.21

Overall F: 9.96, df = 5,76, $p < .00001$.

Contrasts significant between Ethnic Foster Care and Own Family versus Caucasian Foster Care and Group Home: $t = 3.15$, $p < .002$.

With Age and Total Support as Covariates

	<u>Adjusted Mean</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	31.18	10.64
Ethnic Foster Care	21.50	10.49
Group Home	31.87	10.70
Own Family	25.52	9.71

Overall F: 9.95, = 5,76, $p < .00001$.

Contrasts significant between Ethnic Foster Care and Own Family versus Caucasian Foster Care and Group Home: $t = 3.04$, $p < .003$.

Neither was support significant, with a t of .454, $p > .961$, and an overall F for the equation of .11, $df = 2, 45$. When age was used as a covariate, it was not significant; support was not significant with a t of .100, $p > .921$, and an overall F of .02, $p > .976$.

In examining the influence of support on depression among subjects in non-ethnic settings, time in U.S. was not a significant covariate. Support was significant with a t of -3.16, $p < .003$. For every unit of support, depression scores diminished by one point. The overall F for the equation was 5.34, $df = 2, 45$. Age was not a significant covariate, but support once again was significant with a t of -3.317, $p < .002$, and an overall F of 5.63, $p < .007$. In this case, for every additional unit of support, depression score was lowered by 1.06 points.

Americanization/Ethnicity

Independence scores were examined holding time in country constant, followed by total support and living groups. Time in country was a significant covariate in this analysis, with a t of -2.95, at the .004 level. Total support was significant with a t of -2.02, at the .05 level, indicating that as support increases, so does average adjusted independence score (overall F for the equation = 4.11, $p < .002$). Yet there was still a significant group contrast, with children in their own families having lower independence scores than the unaccompanied children in Caucasian foster

care, ethnic foster care, and group homes, $t=4.08$, $p<.0001$.

A similar analysis was conducted holding age constant.

Age was not a significant covariate, $t=-1.43$, $p>.16$.

Support was a significant contributor to higher independence scores, with a t of -2.23 at the $.03$ level (overall F for the equation = 2.60 , $p<.03$). Once again there was a significant contrast between minors with their own families and the other three groups, $t=2.01$, $p<.05$, with those in own family showing less independence. The results of these two analyses are presented in Table 15.

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement correlated with neither total support nor peer support. In a regression analysis entering time in country first, followed by total support and living groups, time in country was not significant. Neither was total support a significant contributor to GPA. The overall F for the equation was 1.55 , $p>.19$. There were no differences among or within groups.

In a similar analysis, age was not a significant covariate. Support had no significant effect on GPA. Overall F was 1.37 , $p>.24$. The results of these two analyses indicate that academic achievement of these minors is relatively stable and unaffected by factors of support.

Table 15

Mean Independence ScoreDifferences by Placement Mode

With Time in U.S. and Total Support as Covariates

	<u>Adjusted Mean*</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	15.67	.96
Ethnic Foster Care	16.74	1.41
Group Home	16.15	1.17
Own Family	19.78	1.63

Overall F for placement mode: 4.11, df = 5,76, p.<.002.

Contrasts significant between Own Family versus
Caucasian Foster Care, Ethnic Foster Care and Group
Home, $t = 4.08$, $p < .0001$.

* Higher score indicates lower independence

With Age and Total Support as Covariates

	<u>Adjusted Mean*</u>	<u>Adj. Stn. Error</u>
Caucasian Foster Care	19.10	3.48
Ethnic Foster Care	20.09	3.47
Group Home	19.85	3.50
Own Family	21.66	3.17

Overall F for placement mode: 2.60, df = 5,76, p.<.03.

Contrasts significant between Own Family versus
Caucasian Foster Care, Ethnic Foster Care and Group
Home, $t = 2.01$, $p < .05$.

*Higher score indicates lower independence

Summary. A strong negative relationship was revealed between depression levels and friendships. Children with at least one friend had average CES-D scores 12.57 points lower than youngsters without a friend.

Children in ethnic homes made significantly more positive attributions regarding their ability to make friends than subjects in non-ethnic settings. They significantly more often sought out someone to talk to when sad, compared to those in non-ethnic placements. They were more likely to turn to a friend for help in feeling better when sad. Furthermore, children who talked to someone when sad were significantly less depressed than those who spoke to no one.

Total support contributed to lower average depression scores. However, support did not account for all the variance in scores: ethnic placement once again was demonstrated to be the major predictor of well-being. There was a strong differential ethnic/non-ethnic effect for support in lowering depression levels. While children in non-ethnic settings benefitted from support, those in ethnic homes did not seem to need it so much.

Across groups total support served to increase average independence scores. But again it did not account for all the variance. Even when the effects of support were accounted for, minors who lived with their own families had lower independence scores on the Americanization Check List. This once again suggests that these youngsters are not so

precipitiously compelled to focus on issues of autonomy as their unaccompanied peers.

Research Question #6: What is the extent to which political awareness (of own countries and the U.S.) influences life satisfaction/depression, balance of American/ethnic identities, and school achievement?

Many of the refugee youths who participated in this study were socialized in an authoritarian regime. It was not uncommon for the Cambodian children to report having been inducted into Khmer Rouge work brigades and removed from their homes and families. It was thus of especial interest to investigate their transition to a democratic culture, their adoption of American political attitudes, values and customs.

In discussing the Americanization Check List, it was noted that one group of items related to independence and self-reliance, a second to perceived importance of U.S. customs and citizenship practices. The first set was intended to tap internal aspects of the Americanization process, the second external. This second set of citizenship items included: (#1) Speaking good English; (#2) Saluting the American flag; (#5) Becoming an American citizen and voting in elections; (#8) Reading the newspaper to know what is happening in the U.S. government; (#9) Volunteering for the U.S. Army in time of war; (#12) Celebrating American holidays such as July 4th.

Coefficient alpha (Cronbach's alpha) was established at .46 for these items in the Americanization Check List. There was no significant correlation between citizenship items and CES-D scores or length of time minors had been in the U.S. In a regression analysis with citizenship items as outcome, placement mode and time in U.S. were not significant predictors, $F(4,77)=.96$, $p>.435$.

Question #5 on the Check List, concerned with becoming a U.S. citizen and voting in elections, was the second most important item to minors, coming only after speaking good English. Following in Table 16 is descriptive data by groups, with numbers and percentages of respondents who answered "very important" to each citizenship item. Differences across groups were not significant.

Numerous minors commented that while they attempted to read the newspapers daily to learn what was happening in the U.S. government, this was difficult to do given their relatively limited capacity to read in English. Instead, many added they kept abreast of news from television. Question #9 concerning volunteering for the U.S. army in time of war drew negative commentaries from some minors. After acknowledging the need for military defense, they typically added they had seen enough war and did not wish to become soldiers.

Table 16

Minors Who Responded "Very Important" to
Citizenship Data, Americanization Check List

N = 82 (56 males, 17 females)

Item	Cauc.Fos.	Ethnic.Fos.	GroupHome	OwnFam.	TOTAL
Speak	25	9	15	18	67
English %	86.21	90.00	78.95	75.00	81.71
Salute	13	7	8	14	42
Flag %	44.83	70.00	42.11	58.33	51.22
Citizen &	24	8	12	19	63
Vote %	82.76	80.00	63.16	79.17	76.83
Read Polit.	17	5	12	14	48
News %	58.62	50.00	63.16	58.33	58.54
Enlist in	13	4	9	9	35
Army %	44.83	40.00	47.37	37.50	42.68
Celebrate U.S.					
Holidays	20	7	9	14	50
%	68.97	70.00	47.37	58.33	60.98

In addition to the Americanization Check List, minors were asked several other questions specifically regarding political interest and awareness. When queried on their intentions of becoming U.S. citizens, 69 or 84.1% indicated they did; 4 or 4.8% already were. However, when asked why they wished to be citizens, 36 or 43.9% of minors could not answer. This pattern of non-response to citizenship questions was typical. For relatively new speakers of English the task of understanding these questions was probably too difficult. Non-response levels reached about 50% for the more abstract items. For this reason, only descriptive data is presented here.

Of those 69 minors who did plan on becoming U.S. citizens, they cited as major reasons: being able to visit their homelands and return to the U.S. (12 or 17.4%); liking the freedom and liberty of the U.S. (8 or 11.6%); eligibility for desirable jobs (8 or 11.5%).

Only 59 minors (72.9%) responded when asked if U.S. citizens can do anything if they disagree with their government. There were no significant differences for group. Fifty (60.9%) replied that indeed a U.S. citizen could challenge the government: 19 (23.2%) through voting; 13 (15.9%) by collective action with other citizens; 9 (11%) through active protest such as marching or demonstrating; 9 (10.9%) by speaking out publicly and by communicating with

members of Congress. Clearly these future citizens have been learning their civics lessons.

When asked if citizens of their homeland could do anything if they disagreed with their government, again only 59 (72.0%) minors could reply. Of all minors, 12 (14.6%) said yes, 44 (53.6%) said no, and 2 (2.4%) didn't know; 23 (28.0%) could not answer. Twenty-four (29.3%) minors advised it was entirely too dangerous to protest the Communists' actions, that the government used force to stop all disagreement; 10 (12.2%) pointed out citizens are powerless. One youth advised that when his family in Vietnam wanted to influence a government official, they would invite him to their home, "get him drunk and offer him a bribe."

Predictors of Successful Resettlement

To test the relative contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variables in this study, separate regression equations were constructed for depression, independence, and grade point average. Two series of analyses were conducted. The first included all four groups of minors. Because number of placements had been shown to be an important variable for unaccompanied minors (but not applicable to children with their own families), a second set of analyses for unaccompanied minors only included this additional variable.

Predictors for All Minors

Depression/Life Satisfaction

In this analysis for all subjects the following predictor variable order was established. With depression as criterion, age and time in the U.S. were entered first as predictors, followed by situation and status of family of origin, displacement, total support, and ethnic placement. This order was established to enter first demographic characteristics, followed by variables relating to the young person's experience before coming to the U.S., followed by characteristics of placement and support over which service providers have some control.

Age, time in the country, situation and status of family of origin, and displacement were not significant predictors

of depression scores. Support was a significant, positive predictor of lower depression, with a beta weight of $-.73018$, $F 9.36$, $p < .003$. Ethnic setting made a significant and positive contribution to lower depression score, with a beta weight of -7.9805 , $F 8.21$, $p < .005$. These findings are displayed in Table 17. They indicate that while total support was an important factor in depression level, the presence of an ethnic adult also made a significant contribution to the well-being of these subjects.

Table 17

Ordered Regression Summary Table

Contribution of Age, Time in U.S.,

Situation and Status of Family of Origin,

Displacement, Total Support and Ethnic Setting

to Depression Scores in All Minors

(N = 82)

Variable	Step	R Sq.	Beta	df	MS	F	p > F
Age	1	.083	-.1995	1	8.93	.12	.7263
Time U.S.	2	.123	.0087	1	2.13	.03	.8643
Family of Origin	3	.126	.4663	1	116.89	1.62	.2074
Displacement	4	.170	.4749	1	162.64	2.25	.1378
Total Support	5	.351	-.7301	1	676.27	9.36	.0031
Ethnic Home	6	.415	-7.9805	1	593.06	8.21	.0054
Residual Error				75	72.27		

R = .644

Americanization/Ethnicity

In this analysis independence score on the Americanization Check List was the dependent variable. Predictors in order of entry were: age, time in U.S. situation and status of family of origin, displacement, total support, and living with own family. This last variable of living with own family (versus the unaccompanied minors groups) had been shown to be the predominant contrast for prior Americanization models.

The first variable of age did not reach significance. Time in U.S. was a significant predictor of independence (beta $-.05232$, $F\ 9.63$, $P < .003$). Situation and status of family of origin was not. Displacement before coming to the U.S. was marginally significant (beta $-.199489$, $F\ 4.24$, $p < .043$) as was support (beta $-.149122$, $F\ 4.14$, $p < .045$). As both of these variables increased, so did independence.

Own family group was a highly significant predictor of independence (beta 3.0997 , $F\ 9.26$, $p < .003$). There was on the average a 3.09 point difference in independence scores between children in their own families and unaccompanied minors, with the former manifesting less independence. The results of this analysis (Table 18) indicate that while time in the U.S., displacement, and total support influence independence, living with own family is the predominant contributor. And in this instance, the direction of own family's influence was to lessen independence scores.

Table 18

Ordered Regression Summary Table

Contribution of Age, Time in U.S.,
 Situation and Status of Family of Origin,
 Displacement, Total Support and Ethnic Setting
 to Independence Scores in All Minors

(N = 82)*

Variable	Step	R Sq.	Beta	df	MS	F	p > F
Age	1	.079	-.1706	1	5.97	.86	.3565
Time U.S.	2	.120	-.0523	1	66.80	9.63	.0027
Family of Origin	3	.121	-.0120	1	.07	.01	.9164
Displacement	4	.157	-.1994	1	29.40	4.24	.0429
Total Support	5	.164	-.1491	1	28.71	4.14	.0454
Own Family	6	.256	3.0997	1	64.19	9.26	.0032
Residual Error				75	6.94		

*Lower scores indicate higher independence

R = .506

Children living with their own families differed sharply from all other groups, including ethnic foster care, in regard to to independence. As discussed in several earlier sections, it is likely that children who have the advantage of their own families are not forced into such early autonomy as are parentless, unaccompanied children. Clearly, unaccompanied children have to plan for immediate self-

sufficiency in a way that children in their own homes do not. Unaccompanied minors are acutely aware that their sponsorship will terminate when they finish school. Many of them spoke in poignant terms of their fears for survival and livelihood, once they graduate from the unaccompanied minors programs.

That notwithstanding, it is of interest to speculate the extent to which other factors also might have contributed to independence differences. It may not be just that some of these children live with a family while others do not, that some don't need to become independent while others do. It may also be that the very structure of the Asian families in which some of these minors live is a determinant. It is possible that the socialization practices of the tightly-knit Asian family unit may encourage and value continuing interdependence of its members in a way that Western families do not. For those living with their own relatives, strong bonds of mutual responsibility, filial piety, loyalty, and the vision of a shared future--whether acknowledged or not--may have influenced these outcomes.

Academic Achievement

With grade point average as criterion, age, time in U.S., situation and status of family of origin, displacement, total support, and ethnic group were entered as predictors. The only variable that was a significant predictor of GPA was ethnic home, with a beta of .4117, F 5.86 at the .02 level. Even so, ethnic home accounted for less than nine-and-a-half percent of total variance. With the exception of this modest

ethnic influence, academic achievement seemed relatively impervious to other factors in the lives of these minors and points to the strong intrinsic motivation they bring to their studies. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 19.

Table 19
Ordered Regression Summary Table
 Contribution of Age, Time in U.S.,
 Situation and Status of Family of Origin,
 Displacement, Total Support and Ethnic Setting
 to Grade Point Average in All Minors

(N = 82)

Variable	Step	R Sq.	Beta	df	MS	F	p > F
Age	1	.016	.0004	1	.001	.00	.9906
Time U.S.	2	.022	-.0033	1	.298	1.11	.2959
Family of Origin	3	.023	-.0102	1	.056	.21	.6486
Displacement	4	.024	.0143	1	.146	.54	.4632
Total Support	5	.024	-.0143	1	.258	.96	.3310
Ethnic Home	6	.094	.4117	1	1.578	5.86	.0179
Residual Error		.905		75	.270		

R = .300

Predictors for Unaccompanied Minors

In the following analyses for unaccompanied minors, ethnic home has as its sole reference group children in ethnic foster care. Children living with their own families have been dropped from the analyses. Number of placements is included as the last predictor variable.

Life Satisfaction/Depression

To predict depression among unaccompanied minors, the contribution of these variables was tested: age, time in U.S., situation and status of family of origin, displacement, total support, ethnic group, number of placements.

Age, time in U.S., situation and status of family of origin, and displacement were not significant predictors. Total support was significant with a beta of $-.95117$, $F 9.86$, $p < .003$. Ethnic home was significant with a beta weight of $-.95033$, $F < .0073$. When all other factors were taken into account, number of placements did not significantly influence depression scores. Because of the importance of number of placements, it was also entered simultaneously into a regression equation with the above variables. Even when the variance was divided simultaneously in this latter linear model, number of placement was not significant. These results are presented in Table 20.

Table 20

Ordered Regression Summary Table

Contribution of Age, Time in U.S.,
 Situation and Status of Family of Origin,
 Displacement, Total Support, Ethnic Setting, and Placements
 to Depression Scores in Unaccompanied Minors

(N = 58)

Variable	Step	R Sq.	Beta	df	MS	F	p > F
Age	1	.012	-.2975	1	11.35	.14	.7063
Time U.S.	2	.020	-.1044	1	101.74	1.29	.2620
Family of Origin	3	.034	.6166	1	122.10	1.54	.2197
Displacement	4	.070	.3250	1	65.29	.83	.3678
Total Support	5	.299	-.9512	1	779.76	9.86	.0028
Ethnic Home	6	.384	-9.5029	1	619.58	7.84	.0073
Placement	7	.412	1.6806	1	190.48	2.41	.1269
Residual Error				57	79.05		

R = .642

Americanization/Ethnicity

With independence items on the Americanization Check List as criterion, the following predictors were entered in order: age, time in U.S., situation and status of family of origin, displacement, total support, ethnic home, placements. No variable was significant, and the R for the equation

reached only .361. (Again, number of placements was entered simultaneously in a regression equation, but with no significant contribution to outcome).

Academic Achievement

To test the relative contributions of the following predictors to GPA, these variables were entered in order: age, time in U.S., situation and status of family of origin, displacement, support, ethnic group, placement. (As in the prior analyses, number of placements was entered simultaneously in a regression equation, with the variance for this linear model remaining insignificant).

Time in U.S. reached significance at the .04 level (beta $-.011337$, $F = 4.61$). This finding points to a decrease in grade point average with an increase of time in country, a surprising outcome given the generally high value these young people place on academic excellence. Ethnic group was a significant predictor of GPA at the .02 level (beta $.47277$, $F = 5.90$). These results are demonstrated in Table 21.

Summary. When the entire sample of 82 minors was considered, support and the presence of an ethnic adult were highly significant predictors of lower depression scores. This also held true when only unaccompanied minors were tested. But while support and ethnic placement made a significant difference for unaccompanied minors, when all other factors were taken into account, number of placements

did not.

In an analysis of all minors for independence, time in the country was a significant predictor. Displacement and support were marginally significant. Children who lived with their own families had significantly lower independence scores than unaccompanied minors. When unaccompanied minors were separated out in a separate analysis, no significant predictors of independence emerged.

In the entire sample and in unaccompanied minors, ethnic home had a small predictive power in grade point average. For unaccompanied minors, time in the country also had a small, negative influence on GPA with age taken into account. Overall, however, academic achievement appeared to remain relatively unaffected by the grueling life experiences these youngsters had endured, or by general support.

When considered in the context of other influential predictive variables, number of placements ceased to be a factor in depression, independence, or GPA for unaccompanied minors.

Table 21

Ordered Regression Summary Table

Contribution of Age, Time in U.S.,
 Situation and Status of Family of Origin,
 Displacement, Total Support, Ethnic Setting, and Placements
 to Grade Point Average in Unaccompanied Minors

(N = 58)

Variable	Step	R Sq.	Beta	df	MS	F	p > F
Age	1	.001	.0238	1	.07	.28	.5986
Time U.S.	2	.042	-.0113	1	1.19	4.61	.0366
Family of Origin	3	.073	-.0345	1	.38	1.47	.2316
Displacement	4	.088	.0373	1	.86	3.32	.0743
Total Support	5	.094	.0056	1	.03	.11	.7456
Ethnic Home	6	.177	.4728	1	1.53	5.90	.0188
Placement	7	.214	.0964	1	.63	2.41	.1268
Residual Error				57	.26		

R = .461

Case Presentations

Finally, in order to more graphically illustrate the interplay of this study's variables in the lives of refugee minors, four vignettes will be presented. They are typical of the stories of some of the young people who shared their experiences of dislocation and resettlement with the researcher in the course of this investigation.

"H" is an unaccompanied 19-year old male who now lives

in a group home in Maryland. He related the following harrowing account of his escape from Vietnam by boat. On the sea voyage with 87 others, he said he was witness to his fellow passengers being felled one by one by sunstroke, hunger and thirst—"but my thoughts were not on food, they were on survival." He quietly, much as if it were an afterthought, spoke of an incident of cannibalism which took place in the course of the sea journey. At one point, "H" was thrown overboard and hung on by his nails "for dear life," an experience he says will "stay in my head forever." When the sea voyage finally ended, he went on to spend 18 months in a refugee camp in Malaysia.

"H" still habitually wakes up at night from a dream in which he sees his family: in that dream, he has returned to Vietnam and is captured by the Communists. Prior to his escape in 1984, he was jailed twice for attempting to flee his country. When he finally managed to successfully escape, it was without his widowed mother's knowledge—for her to have known could have jeopardized his plans. Prior to 1975, his father had worked for the Americans in Vietnam and after the Communist takeover was imprisoned; his health deteriorated and he died four years later. "H" described his father as a college-educated man, a talented actor, singer, and mechanic who fluently spoke English and French. He added wistfully these are attributes he and his four brother share. Once his father was incarcerated, "H" was no longer permitted to attend school. He was then in sixth grade and his

education was disrupted until he arrived in the United States at age 17.

"H" is reported by social workers to be well-adjusted, sociable, and a leader in the group home. This is his fourth placement since arriving in the U.S. He is a junior at Bethesda Chevy Chase High School, in Maryland, with a 3.5 GPA, and plans on becoming an engineer. Meanwhile, he works part-time after school at a local bowling alley. "H" reported having many friends, some of them Americans. He was atypical of most minors in this study in that he reported having a serious girlfriend, a young woman from Taiwan whom he regularly visits in her family home.

At the time of this interview, "H" had been in the U.S. 20 months and was speaking English fluently. His score on the CES-D scale was 24, which put him well over the mark of 16 indicative of clinical depression.

"N" and "S." These two unaccompanied Cambodian girls of 18 are living together in a Caucasian foster home in Richmond, Va. The family with whom they are placed is a highly unusual one. Besides "N" and "S," it includes one biological daughter, one adopted Vietnamese, and two adopted Korean children. "N" and "S" who had lived in adjoining villages in their homeland had escaped together in 1980 as the Communists were approaching. They were twelve years old at the time and stated they had been planning their escape since they were eight. When they left Cambodia, "N" was in first grade in school, "S," third. They trekked with a group

through the jungle for over a month; by the time they reached a refugee camp in Thailand, 80 of the original troupe of 100 had died from starvation or exposure.

After two years in the camps, the girls were resettled together in the United States, being placed immediately in their present foster home. Because communications with Cambodia are virtually cutoff, neither knows the fate of her family. Both assume that because their parents were professionals they have been killed: "S's" father was a college professor of mathematics, her mother a nurse; "N's" father was a doctor, her mother a businesswoman.

These young women say they regard themselves as sisters now. At the time of this interview they were in their junior year in high school, speaking English fluently, maintaining 2.5 GPA's, and working as waitresses at the same nearby restaurant. Attractive with long black hair and stylishly dressed, both indicated they have a wide circle of friends, both Asian and American. Each is dating an American boyfriend. When they complete high school, "N" and "S" plan on enrolling in a cosmetology program and eventually opening up their own beauty shop in Richmond. On the CES-D scale, "N" had a score of 17, one point above the 16 which marks clinical depression; "S" had a score of 27.

"B" is a slight, soft-spoken Vietnamese boy of 15 who has been in the United States for over three years. He is now living in his third foster placement--but his first in which there is an ethnic adult in the home. His foster

family consists of a young Caucasian man, a veteran of the war in Vietnam, and his Vietnamese wife. "B" is the only child in the home.

"B" related the terror and loneliness he experienced in his flight by boat from Vietnam. He had escaped with his father from his homeland, sneaking onto a small fishing boat near Ho Chi Minh City, hoping to set sail for Thailand. After their boat broke down halfway through the trip, they drifted at sea for 15 days. The scant provisions of food were reserved for the men who were rowing. On the journey "B" saw 26 people killed and the girls raped by Thai pirates. His father was one of those who was killed in an attack. The survivors managed to find their way to a refugee camp in Thailand, where "B" remained until he was admitted to the U.S. 18 months later.

In 1975, when he was in fourth grade in Vietnam, "B" stopped school to help his parents earn a living and did not resume his education until he arrived in the United States seven years later. He is now in ninth grade at Einstein High School in suburban Maryland, has a 3.00 grade point average, and hopes to go to college to become an electrical engineer. He works on weekends as a clerk at a nearby Asian food market. His foster home is situated in an area in which there is a high concentration of Indochinese refugees and business establishments. "B" advised he has made close friends who are Vietnamese, Pakistani, Iranian, Central American, and American.

"B's" father had worked with the U.S. military in Vietnam prior to 1975 and had studied in the United States as a young man. His mother is a college graduate. As the eldest male in the family, "B's" parents saw little future for him in Vietnam and hoped that by sending him away, he could have a better life. "B's" greatest wish is to bring his mother to this country, his greatest fear that something tragic will happen to her in Vietnam. "B" had a score of 9 on the CES-D scale, about 2 points less than the mean for children in ethnic foster care and more than 9 points lower than the grand mean for all the children in the sample.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Summary and Discussion of Findings

Recommendations for Policy and Research

A principal goal of this research was to further knowledge of the youthful refugee's adjustment process based on an understanding of the event-environment-individual interaction as suggested by Schlossberg's transition theory (1984). Specifically, could we predict life-satisfaction and depression, the balance of American and ethnic identities, and academic achievement based on placement mode, time in the United States, situation and status of family of origin, displacement, support and political awareness? If so, what was the relative contribution of each to the final outcome of resettlement? And finally, could we identify specific factors--in the event, environment, and individual--that might predispose a youngster to a successful and timely adjustment to this country? If so, such knowledge could potentially assist policy makers and care givers in planning the best possible programs and services for these children.

Summary of Principal Findings

Ethnic Setting

As a group this sample of refugee minors was clearly depressed. The average raw score for minors on the

depression (CES-D) scale was over 18. This was 2 points above the level cited in the literature for clinical depression, 9 above norms for Asian adults, 10 above norms for Caucasian adults, and 11 points above norms for Caucasian children without psychiatric diagnoses.

It became abundantly evident from the data that Indochinese children who lived with their own families or in homes with an ethnic adult had substantially lower depression scores than children in Caucasian foster care or in group homes. Because of the importance of this finding, care was taken to assure that it was not simply an artifact of the sample. Children who were living in their own families had been in the U.S. longer and were younger than the others. For these reasons, further analyses were conducted with time in U.S. and age as covariates. In this way, these variables were ruled out as possible alternative explanations of the extremely large and significant differences which emerged in depression for placement mode. It allowed attention to be focused without distraction on the variables of real interest as contributors to successful resettlement.

Placement mode was the critical predictor of depression in this sample, although not in the manner first anticipated. It was originally thought that the ethnic peer group available to unaccompanied minors in group home settings might have a role in mitigating loneliness, depression, and in facilitating the transition into the American culture. This was not the case. The ethnic peer group was not

sufficient to provide protection against depression: children in group homes fared no better than their cohorts in Caucasian foster care. Instead, what came to light were huge differences between children who lived in homes with an Indochinese adult--relative or not--and those who did not.

For children in ethnic homes, benefits seemed to accrue in a host of areas beyond lowered depression score itself. They had higher grade point averages, they made significantly more positive attributions about their academic performance, and they were more likely to regard their success in school as a result of their own effort and thus relatively under their own control. Similarly, children in ethnic homes more often saw themselves as successful in making friends than did minors in non-ethnic settings. In the clinical arena, positive attributions of this nature are customarily viewed as a healthy marker of self esteem and of an individual's sense of being in charge of his or her environment.

Contrasted to peers in non-ethnic environments, children in ethnic homes more frequently indicated that when sad they turned to another person for help in feeling better--as opposed to speaking to no one. The positive effect of a confidant or friend as hedge against depression has been widely discussed in the literature (e.g., Cohen and Mills, 1985; Kahn and Antonucci, 1980) and was corroborated by the findings herein. Those children who reported no friends were significantly more depressed than those with at least one friend. It appeared that minors needed one friend only:

those who had one friend had essentially the same incidence of depression as those with more than one friend. And, in keeping with normal adolescent development and the importance of peer relations to this age group (Burke and Weir, 1978; Fischer, 1981), when sad children in ethnic homes turned to a friend for help in feeling better.

Social Buffer. A picture emerged for children in both types of ethnic home situations of a strong social buffer, either perceived or real, which mitigated against some of the stressors of adaptation, particularly depression and grief. This concurred with Cohen's findings (1984) on adult Hispanic immigrants. That study indicated that persons coming to the U.S. with family, and who received financial and emotional aid from fellow countrypersons, adapted more easily than unconnected newcomers. Young, single male newcomers without attachments in the receiving country were at greatest risk for dysfunction. Within the context of transition theory (Schlossberg, 1984) this support variable would be regarded as a central environmental condition underpinning the individual's ability to function, particularly in times of stress.

There is evidence therefore that the ongoing presence of an ethnic adult similar in background to the refugee child is a highly important ingredient in well-being. The day-to-day influence of this adult may be important in ways far beyond the obvious: in providing guidance, a role model, and a

source of identification which may supercede all other influences.

This would be consistent with Bandura's theory of social learning (1977), which contends that learning is facilitated if the model is similar to the learner. Brazelton (cited in Butterfield, 1986) noted from his research that Asian children--to a far greater extent than Western youngsters--are socialized to a learning style which strongly relies on modeling and imitation. If so, this would reinforce even further the importance of an ethnic adult's being available to these Asian minors on a consistent, ongoing basis.

Ethnic Identity. Bemak (1984) observed that because many unaccompanied minors left their homelands at a very early age, they never had a chance to master their own culture. He added that they must be guided in discovering what is theirs before they truly can enter American society. Perhaps this guidance is being provided minors living in ethnic homes. It may account for the relatively less strenuous transition of these children to American life, compared to their peers in non-ethnic homes. Because psychological security may be provided for in intangible ways if children live with an ethnic adult, it is possible they are better able to venture untroubled into the greater world.

For these reasons, it is also likely that children in Indochinese homes have less conflict with regard to ethnic identity. Erikson (1968) viewed ethnic identity as a vital component of overall identity, the formation of which is the

crucial task of adolescence. It is ethnic identity which links the individual to the communal culture and is an essential part of who one is. But the person who spends childhood in one culture, and adolescence in another, may be confronted with special problems in forming ethnic identity. Areas of potential conflict are present when the young person attempts to balance ways of the old world with those of the new. In particular, adolescents may have to deal with pressures exerted by American peer group society.

Some theorists state that if an immigrant youth is compelled to make choices between the old and the new culture, acute identity crisis can ensue (Aronowitz, 1984). Others are of the view that high rates of mental illness among immigrant youths result in part from difficulties faced in forming a stable ethnic identity (Naditch and Morrissey, 1976).

In face of these hardships, De Anda (1984) proposed an optimal model for socialization, one which is bicultural. In this model, the young person would be fluent in both cultures--its values, customs, and language. In such a way, immigrant adolescents could become comfortable with their origins while entering into the mainstream peer culture at their individual paces. They could avoid what Nidorf (1985) termed "premature assimilation." For the adolescents in this study, this appeared to be best provided for in a setting where an Asian adult was present.

Support

Unlike displacement, which took place before these children came to the United States, support is a component in the minor's life which can at least in part be controlled--and enhanced--by service providers. Support manifested itself in this study as an important factor in providing immunity against depression, although it did not account for all the variance.

Support proved to be differentially relevant: while it appeared to have a minimal influence on depression among children in ethnic settings, it was significant in ameliorating depression for those in Caucasian foster care or group homes. It would appear that when other factors were taken into account children in ethnic homes, unlike those in non-ethnic homes, did not need support to remain relatively depression-free. But in this way, support became something of a second-best solution, applied after the fact in the manner of a cure. In the case of children in ethnic settings, preventive measures up front in the first place may have obviated the need for later palliative measures.

Displacement

Most children in this study had undergone arduous escapes from Indochina, enduring great personal loss and dislocation prior to entering the United States. Even so, when other influences were taken into account, the effects of displacement seemed to be overcome. Displacement experiences ceased to have substantial predictive power in

the context of important variables in this study, such as support and ethnic setting. Displacement did not greatly affect levels of depression or academic achievement, but it did have a marginally significant influence on independence scores. Displacement served to increase independence for the total sample, but not for the unaccompanied minors sample only.

In conceptualizing displacement as a predictor of adjustment, it initially appeared that numbers of placements of unaccompanied minors were critical. In particular, placement frequency seemed associated with increased depression levels. However, in a final regression analysis including all independent variables, placements ceased to be a significant predictor in the face of the strong effects of support and ethnic home.

Family of Origin.

Status and situation of family of origin did not show itself to be a significant influence on the dependent variables in this study. This was a surprising finding in that a substantial portion of this variable was comprised of parents' education and occupational levels. In U.S. samples socio-economic status is customarily predictive of academic achievement. However, it is possible that parental education is of less help in stimulating a child's achievement when the parents do not speak the language in which the child is being taught--or if the parent is absent, as with the unaccompanied minors.

Americanization

From their responses to the Americanization Check List, minors' perceptions of what constituted a good American appeared to be about equal across groups. When all variables were considered for the entire sample, average independence scores were enhanced by time in the U.S., and marginally by displacement and support.

There were however, significant differences in independence levels between children in their own families and the unaccompanied children, with the former showing lower scores. It is likely that children who can depend on the protection and nurturance of their own kin are not propelled into early autonomy in so swift a fashion as those without. They are permitted to undergo a slower, more comfortable transition to American life, in a fashion their unaccompanied peers do not have the luxury of sharing. After all, unaccompanied children have no family: they know they must provide for themselves physically and emotionally when they leave the minors' program. But it may also be the case that the tightly-knit Asian family, with its complex bonds of mutual support, responsibility and filial respect, promotes a kind of interdependence which mitigates against independence in the Western style, no matter how old the child.

Academic Achievement

Grade point average remained impervious to most influences measured by this study. There were small exceptions for ethnic group (whole sample) and for time in

country (unaccompanied minors only). High academic achievement was an esteemed value for most minors and reflected itself in a variety of ways. On the Americanization Check List, for example, the importance of an after-school job was rated very low by most minors. Although many were actually gainfully employed in part-time work, they emphatically stressed it was more important to concentrate on their studies. Minors frequently stated their greatest wish was to succeed in their studies; not surprisingly the greatest fear of many was academic failure.

These refugee children regarded doing well in school as a duty to family, a vehicle for getting ahead in the U.S., and a means of personal fulfillment. They were strongly and intrinsically motivated to succeed in this area of their lives. We may have here a culturally sanctioned, highly adaptive reaction to stress, and one which is perhaps characteristically Asian. These coping mechanisms of directed endurance and activity when down are the ones to which Tina Yee (1978) referred in her study of Chinese-American well-being.

The school setting also provided minors an arena in which to establish friendships. In spite of depression levels which were on the average quite high, most children were making friends and learning English. Their first friends were peers from their own countries, then other foreigners, and finally Americans. All groups were moving about equally through this progression.

That they were cultivating the company of children from other foreign countries—including other Indochinese countries—is a testimony to the positive socialization effects of the ESL classes in which these minors studied. Many were close friends with children from other Indochinese nations—not a minor occurrence considering that Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese have been traditional enemies. Many had close Latin friends, and several minors were learning some Spanish from these new friends.

Apparently these minors were learning more than their academic lessons: they were learning to relate to people from diverse cultures, a fact which bodes well for them in their future roles as responsible U.S. citizens. But all was not rosy. Among a group of nine inner city District of Columbia subjects, signs of racial animosity were evident: many referred in pejorative terms to Black American classmates, whom they perceived as children to stay away from because they "were bullies, skipped school and were not serious in their studies."

Time in the United States

When all factors were taken into account, length of time in the U.S. made a significant contribution to lowering depression scores in the total sample. But when only unaccompanied minors were looked at, time in country ceased to make a significant contribution. It did contribute to a marginally significant decrease in GPA among unaccompanied minors, a surprising finding in light of the generally high

regard these minors demonstrated for academic achievement. It would be unfortunate if with increasing time in the U.S., (and increased English proficiency and integration into the U.S. mainstream), the academic performance of these young people declined. This would indeed be a dysfunctional way for them to enter the dominant American teen culture.

Some Theoretical Considerations on the Adolescent
Unaccompanied Immigrant and Psychosocial Development
Support and Ethnic Setting

This study's findings strongly suggest that ethnic setting provides a strong social buffer for the adolescent thrust into a new social environment--in this instance, new country and culture. If, in fact, elements of the ethnic setting contributing to this salutary effect can be identified, service providers may be better able to set up those precise conditions which make a positive difference.

Some aspects of support provided unaccompanied minors by ethnic setting may be specific to the very nature of this special ethnic group, such as the interactions between Indochinese adult and foster child. But it is also possible that some of what is learned about providing supportive settings for refugee adolescents could be generalized to other young people in trying situations, such as children recovering from traumatic life experiences. Could service providers, for instance, apply some of this information to other needy, at-risk adolescent populations, such those in

the foster care system? Might some of this knowledge also be applicable to situations of cross-racial adoptions?

Several phenomena might be offered to explain the supportive influence of ethnic setting on the adjustment of these adolescent minors. It is possible that ethnic families (1) more effectively link past to future, (2) provide more commonalities, (3) better understand these minors' coping strategies, (4) and offer needed restraints for these adolescents in transition. Each of these will be considered in turn.

Link between Past and Future. Victor Turner (1977) noted that human ritual and customs provide a basic order and continuity, connecting past, present and future. They link participants to wider collectivities, to ancestors, and to those yet unborn. Inherently connective, they provide integration of several kinds: they link the self with itself as it contemplates its movements through biological and historical change, with culture through common symbols and the familiar, and with others through community.

Turner (1975) also spoke of liminality, a state of transition between known roles, environments, and conditions. During this liminal stage, the individual may frequently switch from one role to another. While embedded in one set of roles, he or she is propelled by circumstances or life stage into another.

Myerhoff (1984) remarked that liminality may be a period of marginal existence that passes. Or liminality may become

a role which is extended through a lifetime. If the latter is the case, then an individual's life may be given over entirely to the principles and practice of uncertainty, rebellion and nonbelonging. According to Myerhoff, liminality may be viewed as a phase in the life cycle, as a mere state of mind, or, it may become a full-time role. This construct of liminality bears a striking correspondence to Erikson's adolescent life stage of identity formation. In his formulation, failure to successfully complete this life stage similarly results in anomie, which he terms identity diffusion.

Unaccompanied minors, by virtue of their life stage of adolescence and their status as immigrants are undergoing two transitions of major proportions. They are doubly betwixt and between. It would appear that for these reasons, they would be at especial risk for psychosocial disorder, for identity diffusion, in the Eriksonian sense. Or employing the nomenclature of Turner, they could become embedded in permanent liminality. Ethnic setting may mitigate against just such a state for them by providing a link between past and future.

Provision of Commonalities. As Bandura noted (1977), it is to the advantage of the learner if a model is similar to oneself. For an unaccompanied Indochinese minor, it is likely that a closer bond or alliance can be formed with an ethnic, rather than non-ethnic family, because of commonalities, perceived and real. On a direct and visible

level, there is the commonality of physiognomy. This might be of particular importance to the young person who is of a racial minority in the host society.

The expression of feeling is another similarity. Marsella (1979, 1980) has commented that expression of affect in facial displays differs among cultures. Some societies--the Japanese, for instance--favor a more modulated emotional display. Even language can differ along affective dimensions: Western languages, for example, tend toward more affective expression than Eastern. Marsella proposed that the very biological infrastructure of ethnic groups may differ and be a factor influencing cultural differences in expression. In the instance of a child in a home of his or her own ethnicity, an entire non-verbal style is shared.

Such commonalities, obvious and not, are the very essence of what constitutes a culture. McGoldrick has noted (1982) that ethnicity and culture involve many unconscious--as well as conscious--processes which affect our thinking and perceptions in both subtle and obvious ways.

Convergence of Old and New Cultures. De Anda (1984) suggested that ease of assimilation into a new culture is facilitated if the old and new cultures share common values, beliefs, and norms. There are many ways in which Indochinese cultures converge with that of the United States. In particular, academic achievement and the value of hard work as a means of upward mobility are shared. In this instance, Asian coping style and context within the new society are

well matched. However, disparities between the values of these societies also exist. A notable example is the value of independence for a child, and indeed the proper way for him or her to demonstrate responsibility. It is understandable that conflict can readily be generated by these relatively unshared aspects of two cultures. For such reasons, a family similar to an unaccompanied child may be important in helping him or her weather and adapt to these divergent elements in own and host cultures.

Markus and Nurius's concept of possible selves (1986) speaks to the function of hopes, fears, motives, goals, and threats as incentives for future behavior. This type of self-knowledge relates to how an individual thinks about his or her potential and future. From an Eriksonian perspective this is the major task of the adolescent--forming a personal identity. According to Markus and Nurius, these possible selves derive from representations of past selves. The pool from which they are drawn is derived from the person's unique sociocultural and historical heritage, as well as immediate experience.

Minors in this study overwhelmingly hoped for and were planning on college and careers in the professions. If they achieve these goals, it is likely they will enjoy many material and other opportunities this country can offer. It will also be a means of honoring parents and living up to familial responsibilities and expectations. Their strong desire to achieve such ends--their visions of their possible

selves—may serve as an anchor to the future for them. It may well be a force behind their rapid success in learning English and succeeding in school. This striving is undoubtedly a value which is convergent with the society into which they are being received.

Understanding Coping Strategies. Because of commonalities and shared values, both conscious and unconscious, it is likely that the ethnic family could effectively understand the unaccompanied minor's strategies for handling stress. Indeed, if these families had themselves recently immigrated, the trials and tribulations of those experiences would additionally qualify them to understand their young charges. Not only is cultural background shared, but so is dislocation. Coping strategies of directed endurance and activity when down as proposed by Yee (1980) might more intuitively be comprehended. Stoicism and bearing up under adversity, rather than happiness per se, would more likely be states to which one would aspire. This might help explain the phenomenon of these children's success in school and other areas, in spite of high depression levels.

Restraints and Boundaries. In some important respects, child-rearing practices of these children's countries of origin and the United States are divergent. In particular, the strong bonds of interdependence and responsibility of Asian families can conflict with increasing freedom and independence afforded most American teenagers as they grow

up. The stricter limits and controls imposed on unaccompanied minors living in ethnic families may assure for them a more gradual and trouble-free integration into the mainstream adolescent culture. Although some unaccompanied minors complain about the discipline of such settings, they nonetheless appear to be benefitting from the limits.

Wood (1980) has employed the metaphor of "scaffolding" to illustrate the way an adult can assist a child in achieving success at a task. Scaffolding is conceived as a supportive framework, holding in place whatever the child can manage to accomplish at that point in time. However, as the young learner masters components of a task, the adult can "de-scaffold" those parts which are able to stand firmly on their own. It could be said that ethnic families, in maintaining relatively strict and secure boundaries syntonic with the Asian culture, are providing a temporary scaffold to support these minors as they learn the tasks of socializing into a new culture.

On the other hand, some well-intended Caucasian families may be granting their Asian foster children amounts of freedom they are not yet ready to handle—and which may be culturally dystonic to them. Out of their wish to see these children happy and to make up for their suffering, these families may in effect be casting them adrift in waters they cannot yet navigate. To some extent national guilt concerning the United States' role in the Indochina war may indirectly motivate such behavior by foster families.

Limitations

Because only a limited number of potential participants was available, subjects were not randomly selected for placement mode. Some more difficult to manage children, for instance, are assigned to group settings where trained staff are present on a 24-hour basis to provide direction and supervision. Selection in that way was related to a pre-existing condition and may have affected CES-D scores. In that respect it could be considered a covariate.

Unfortunately, the sample of children in ethnic foster care was extremely limited. This reflected the very small number of ethnic placements being made at this time in the geographic region in which this research was conducted.

In examining the relation of friends to depression, it was difficult to accurately gauge which came first, depression or absence of friends. Children with a friend may be less depressed, but, depressed people may make friends less easily. We may also be dealing with a pre-existing condition here. It is conceivable that the mental or social dysfunction of some of these youngsters may have pre-dated their coming to this country. With the stress of migration and adaptation, their conditions may have worsened. Furthermore, ways in which social support is related to mental health outcomes are still not clear; cause and effect are not necessarily distinct from one another. We probably have a circular, interactive effect here: lack of positive relations with other children can lead to adverse

psychological conditions, negative attributions, and then depression. In turn, these psychological conditions can influence interpersonal relations, health, and so on, in a kind of vicious circle from which it is difficult to extricate oneself from, especially if one is a child.

Status and situation of family of origin were very difficult to quantify because conditions of war and immigration can obscure educational and occupational levels. For example, highly educated adults who are new to the U.S. are quite frequently underemployed. In this study, this was generally found to be true for parents of subjects living with own families. Examples were a Vietnamese physician working as a lab technician in a Virginia nursing home, and, a Laotian college professor who was a maid in a Washington, D. C. hotel.

A number of questions in the instruments were too abstract for new speakers of English. Examples were the wish and fear questions. Political awareness questions were also difficult for many respondents: the large numbers of non-responses made analysis difficult. Varying levels of English proficiency may have meant that comprehension of questions was not constant for all subjects. The use of an interpreter introduced additional complications: how precisely was the interpreter conveying both literal and figurative meaning of questions?

An adapted children's version of the CES-D scale was used and was found overall to be a successful instrument for

the purposes of this research. However, norms for the CES-D scale were derived from studies with adult populations and applicability to this adolescent sample cannot be taken for granted. The one available study using this adapted children's scale had a very limited sample.

Recommendations for Policy

Policy makers would be well advised to take note of the very strong pattern in the data indicating that children in ethnic foster care situations are faring much better than their peers in non-ethnic settings. In particular they are less depressed. These findings are essentially in agreement with those of the United States Catholic Conference survey (1984) showing that children in ethnic placements suffered less depression than children in Caucasian homes. Also concurring with the USCC study was the finding that children placed in ethnic homes were moving into American friendships as rapidly as children in Caucasian homes.

Maintenance of consistent ties with at least one ethnic adult has a highly salutary effect on the well-being of these refugee children. At the same time it does not seem to inhibit their integration into the mainstream of American society—as witnessed by the frequency and nature of friendships these children were forming. In fact, the data in this study suggest it may be precisely this ethnic homebase which facilitates the young person's moving into and becoming part of the larger society. It is likely that it promotes a healthy sense of ethnic identity, so important to

the psychosocial development of these minority adolescents.

In light of this, it may be time to re-examine our prevailing notion of the melting pot as the primary resocialization goal for newcomers to the United States. It now may be more expedient to think in terms of a cultural (and racial) mosaic in which each ethnic group retains its unique characteristics while simultaneously participating in the dominant culture. The latter, in contrast to the United States, generally has been the dominant mode of Canadian as well as Australian resettlement. Similarly, in Israel, a land of immigrants, their customary practice of dispersing national groups throughout the country is gradually being reconsidered. More recent efforts (namely with Ethiopian refugees) are moving towards bloc placement of pre-existing community groups which can provide mutual support and continuity.

Based on the above assumptions, a number of policy-relevant recommendations are offered. First, we may need to reconsider what constitutes real support for these young people. Unlike displacement enroute to the U.S. (which in this study ultimately proved to be of trivial influence), support is at least partially under the control of those whose job it is to plan and direct services for refugees. Support at its best can play a vital role in maintaining the newcomer's mental and physical health during the stressful time of adjustment to a new society. However, the data in this study suggest that many components of support might in

fact be unnecessary if, in the first instance, unaccompanied minors were resettled in homes with an Indochinese adult, the single most critical factor in successful adaptation.

Kinship Foster Care

Family members of an unaccompanied child might be licensed by the State to take minor relatives into their home. It is curious that while State Department guidelines for admission into the U.S. of unaccompanied minors mandate 100% of those with a family (non-parental) link be admitted to the country, most States do not permit or encourage foster care by kin. All the while, it is an integral part of U.S. immigration policy to encourage family reunification and is a stated goal of policy relating to unaccompanied minors.

We saw from our sample that about one-half of unaccompanied children had nearby relatives. All of these young people were in the custody of a social service agency; in each instance, a payment for care was being made to either a foster family or group home. Of those minors in care who had a relative in the immediate vicinity, two-thirds stated would like to live with them. Often, if minors indicated they did not want to live with them, responses were carefully qualified. For instance, family members had cramped living quarters, were on welfare, or had too many children of their own. Sometimes minors said they hoped to live with their relatives when they came of age and were more self sufficient.

From the information gathered in this present research

we do not know whether these family members would be prepared to care for their minor relatives. But general wisdom, and findings from this study, suggest that along multiple dimensions, newcomers experience an easier transition to this country when they are with their own family. Kinship foster care in which a relative's home is licensed to care for an unaccompanied child seems an intuitively sensible approach to providing adequate care.

If willing and able family members were to receive a foster care payment, medical assistance, and agency services (which might include periodic supervision), it is possible that the needs of these young people could be more optimally met. Fifteen States are already involved in this form of care. New York in particular reports a highly successful experience licensing family members. Many States, however, have statutes on their books forbidding licensing of a related person as a foster parent. In those jurisdictions, if family members undertake care of their unaccompanied relative, they must also assume all expenses for his or her care. This can present insurmountable burdens for a family already composed of many dependent members, with few wage earners struggling to meet day-to-day physical needs.

Ethnic Foster Care

Barring availability of own family, one similar to their own in ethnic background seems a reasonable alternative for unaccompanied children. Throughout this study in various ways the ten subjects in ethnic foster homes emerged as

similar to children living with own families. A very strong, positive effect was revealed for the unaccompanied refugee child living with an adult from his or her own culture during transition to this country. Ethnic families provide needed continuity, they serve as a bridge between past and future. Australia has employed this mode of resettlement with success: after an initial, brief period of reception in a hostel, local Indochinese families are encouraged to absorb unaccompanied minors into their community. The State of Michigan is also utilizing a method of resettlements which relies heavily on Indochinese foster care.

Policy makers should direct their energies toward promoting and establishing ethnic foster homes for unaccompanied minors. There has been a large influx of Indochinese families who have migrated to the U.S. since 1978. Although it was not the tradition in Asia for Indochinese to accept unrelated children into their homes, there is much current evidence that these immigrant families are highly flexible and adaptable. Many have successfully adjusted to life in the U.S. and are becoming financially and emotionally stable. Perhaps if leaders of their community were approached by program planners, a viable plan could be devised for recruiting ethnic foster families for unaccompanied minors. Given the relatively small numbers of these children as contrasted to the large Indochinese population in the U.S., the task should not be formidable.

Ethnic Social Service Staff

The majority of social service staff serving refugee children are middle-class and Caucasian. It would be of enormous advantage to recruit, train, and incorporate ethnic staff persons into these programs. These would include program personnel such as social workers, para-professionals, and support staff. Particular effort should be exerted to incorporate ethnic staff into group homes. These residential settings require 24-hour, concentrated staff coverage, and opportunity for contact with clients is extensive. Many group home staff positions are part-time, allowing for innovative, flexible recruitment of diverse personnel.

Some immediate and tangible reasons for recruiting ethnic staff include foreign language translation and interpretation of cultural nuances for both clients and staff. Beyond that, there are the reasons discussed at length in this report, among them the need to provide role models and guidance for these young people, by an adult similar to themselves. For children who are not living with ethnic families, support was shown to be a significant factor in lowering depression levels. With that in mind, it may be of benefit to such youngsters to have as much contact as possible with an Indochinese adult, even if it is not possible to provide that contact on an intense, daily level.

Recommended Models for Resettlement

Given the findings of this present research, two models for successful resettlement suggest themselves. The variables which proved to be of greatest predictor value,

ethnic setting and support, are highlighted. If possible, placement would occur as soon as a child is received from overseas. Minors, if feasible, would be placed in sibling or peer groups, with every effort exerted to preserve surrogate family groups that were formed in the camps.

Ethnic Model

The first, and preferred, model would situate unaccompanied minors in homes with at least one adult of the same ethnic background as the child. In this model support would be directed primarily to the family itself, rather than the minor. It might, for example, take the form of concrete financial aid, help in locating medical care for minors, furniture, or transportation--as well as training, and traditional counseling services. Emphasis would be on providing assistance to families, who without it, would be unlikely to absorb another person into its home. In this model, if the family can be located, trained, and assisted in taking care of an unaccompanied minor, they would be the conduit through which the child is successfully resettled. In other words, support the family and they will support the child.

Non-Ethnic Model

Given that an ample supply of ethnic homes is unlikely to be available imminently, reality dictates a second placement model. This model, however, if adequately executed, would likely require a greater expenditure of agency resources than the first.

Here children would be placed in non-ethnic settings (Caucasian foster care or group homes). Strong support would be provided to both the family and group home staffs and to the unaccompanied minor. For foster family and group home staffs there would be training in cross-cultural awareness. If possible, recruitment would be directed at individuals who had lived overseas, such as returned Peace Corps volunteers.

Support was seen to have a direct bearing on the unaccompanied minor's well-being in non-ethnic settings. Support will thus be specifically directed in an concentrated fashion at the children themselves, in a way not deemed necessary in the prior ethnic model. Service providers would be encouraged to maximize contact with minors. Staff training would focus on signs and symptoms of depression in order to identify and earmark afflicted children for early treatment. Ethnic staff persons would provide as many of these services as possible, especially for the newest arrivals. Efforts would be made to connect children with members of the Indochinese community for social, cultural, and employment activities.

Recommendations for Research

Further studies investigating adjustment outcomes by placement setting should include a substantial sample of children in ethnic foster care. It would be of especial interest to isolate the precise supportive factors in ethnic care which predispose the unaccompanied minor to a successful resettlement. If this can be accomplished, perhaps service

providers could generalize these findings to young people in other settings who are adapting to new situations or recovering from traumatic experiences. Such knowledge might also provide a theoretical base from which to explore identity formation in individuals who spend childhood in one culture and adolescence in another. The State of Michigan with its extensive network of ethnic foster homes would be a logical site for such investigations.

It would be of interest to conduct a study such as the one reported herein with other refugee populations. Were the findings regarding ethnic foster care in some way an artifact of the particular culture of these Indochinese refugees? Would another national group, such as Ethiopian unaccompanied children, demonstrate the same effects from being placed in a family with their countrypersons?

As the conclusion of the Vietnamese war recedes into history, the influx of parentless children from Indochina into the United States will dwindle. But unfortunately, agencies and services for refugee children cannot dismantle their programs. Inevitably, the problem of resettling unaccompanied children will persist; other waves of refugee youngsters uprooted by war or other disasters will need to be resettled by the United States.

We are living in an era marked by extensive worldwide population migrations. On our own doorstep, hostilities in Central America have increased the recent flow of refugees from that region to the United States. Among their numbers

are many teenagers and some children. The generic issues surrounding integration of such young people need to be confronted in a thoughtful, anticipatory fashion which does more than react to international crises. The handling of the unaccompanied 1980 Mariel Cuban and Haitian boatlift children bears witness to how absence of policy and planning can result in chaotic, inadequate social services. Accumulation of a data base, one rich in information about the merits and disadvantages of placement settings and supports, would be a reasonable foundation on which to build a sound policy for refugee children. Ultimately a definitive model to promote successful adjustment could be constructed, one upon which service providers could base truly meaningful and timely interventions.

Appendix A:

Consent Forms

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Participant:

In conjunction with the Institute for Child Study and Department of Human Development at the University of Maryland, a study is being conducted to learn more about how refugee minors are adapting to life in the United States.

Because of your recent experience as a newcomer to this country, we would greatly appreciate your participating in this study and sharing your ideas with us. It is hoped that this study will help child care workers in planning useful programs for young people such as yourself.

Answering the following questions is strictly voluntary. You are free not to take part. If you do take part, you may stop at any time you like. All information is recorded anonymously and is confidential.

I have read the above statement and agree to participate in this study. I have agreed of my own free will and have in no way been forced in this agreement. I understand I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time.

Signature of Participant

Date _____

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Parent:

In conjunction with the Institute for Child Study and Department of Human Development at the University of Maryland, a study is being conducted to learn more about how refugee minors are adapting to life in the United States.

Because of your child's recent experience as a newcomer to this country, we would greatly appreciate his or her participation in this study. It is our hope that this study will help child care workers in planning useful programs for young people such as yours.

Answering the following questions is strictly voluntary. Your child is free not to take part, or to stop at any time. All information is recorded anonymously and is confidential.

I have read the above statement and agree to permit my child _____ to take part.

I understand I have the right to withdraw my child from this study at any time.

Signature of Parent

Date _____

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Project Coordinator:

In conjunction with the Institute for Child Study and Department of Human Development at the University of Maryland, a study is being conducted to learn more about how refugee minors are adapting to life in the United States. Because the children in your program have had recent experiences as newcomers to this country, we would greatly appreciate their participation in this investigation.

It is hoped that this study will help child care workers in planning useful services for young people such as those in your program. Participation is strictly voluntary and any child is free not to take part, or to stop at any time. All information obtained will be recorded anonymously and is absolutely confidential.

I have read the above statement and agree to permit the minors in _____ to participate. I understand that any child has the right to participate, or not, as he or she chooses. Also, any child may discontinue participating at any time.

Signature of Project Coordinator

Date _____

APPENDIX B:

CES-D Scale:
Adult Version

CES-D Scale: Format for self-administered use.

Circle the number for each statement which best describes how often
you felt or behaved this way--DURING THE PAST WEEK.

Rarely A Little Moderately Most of
the time

DURING THE PAST WEEK

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. I felt I could not shake off the blues even with help from family and friends..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. I felt that I was just as good as other people..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. I felt depressed..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. I felt everything I did was an effort..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. I felt hopeful about the future | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. I thought my life had been a failure..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. I felt fearful..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. My sleep was restless..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. I was happy..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13. I talked less than usual..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. I felt lonely..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. People were unfriendly..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. I enjoyed life..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 17. I had crying spells..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 18. I felt sad..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 19. I felt that people dislike me.. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 20. I could not get "going"..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

CES-D Scale Scoring.

Circle the number for each statement which best describes how often you felt or behaved this way--DURING THE PAST WEEK.

Rarely A Little Moderately Most of
the time

DURING THE PAST WEEK

1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.....	0	1	2	3
2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.....	0	1	2	3
3. I felt I could not shake off the blues even with help from family and friends.....	0	1	2	3
4. I felt that I was just as good as other people.....	3	2	1	0
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.....	0	1	2	3
6. I felt depressed.....	0	1	2	3
7. I felt everything I did was an effort.....	0	1	2	0
8. I felt hopeful about the future	3	2	1	0
9. I thought my life had been a failure.....	0	1	2	3
10. I felt fearful.....	0	1	2	3
11. My sleep was restless.....	0	1	2	0
12. I was happy.....	3	2	1	0
13. I talked less than usual.....	0	1	2	3
14. I felt lonely.....	0	1	2	3
15. People were unfriendly.....	0	1	2	0
16. I enjoyed life.....	3	2	1	0
17. I had crying spells.....	0	1	2	3
18. I felt sad.....	0	1	2	3
19. I felt that people dislike me..	0	1	2	3
20. I could not get "going".....	0	1	2	3

Score is sum of 20 endorsed item weights.

Possible range: 0-60.

APPENDIX C:

CES-D Scale:
Child Version

INSTRUCTIONS

BELOW IS A LIST OF THE WAYS YOU MIGHT HAVE FELT OR ACTED.
PLEASE CHECK HOW MUCH YOU HAVE FELT THIS WAY DURING THE PAST WEEK.

DURING THE PAST WEEK:

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	SOME	ALOT
1. I WAS BOTHERED BY THINGS THAT USUALLY DON'T BOTHER ME.	0	1	2	3
2. I DID NOT FEEL LIKE EATING; I WASN'T VERY HUNGRY.	0	1	2	3
3. I WASN'T ABLE TO FEEL HAPPY, EVEN WHEN MY FAMILY OR FRIENDS TRIED TO HELP ME FEEL BETTER.	0	1	2	3
4. I FELT LIKE I WAS JUST AS GOOD AS OTHER KIDS.	3	2	1	0
5. I FELT LIKE I COULDN'T PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT I WAS DOING THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	SOME	ALOT
6. I FELT DOWN AND UNHAPPY THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
7. I FELT LIKE I WAS TOO TIRED TO DO THINGS THIS PAST WEEK.	0	1	2	3
8. I FELT LIKE SOMETHING GOOD WAS GOING TO HAPPEN.	3	2	1	0
9. I FELT LIKE THINGS I DID BEFORE DIDN'T WORK OUT RIGHT.	0	1	2	3

DURING THE PAST WEEK:

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	SOME	ALOT
10. I FELT SCARED THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
11. I DIDN'T SLEEP AS WELL AS I USUALLY SLEEP THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
12. I WAS HAPPY THIS WEEK.	3	2	1	0
13. I WAS MORE QUIET THAN USUAL THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
14. I FELT LONELY, LIKE I DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS.	0	1	2	3
15. I FELT LIKE KIDS I KNEW WERE NOT FRIENDLY OR THAT THEY DIDN'T WANT TO BE WITH ME.	0	1	2	3
	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	SOME	ALOT
16. I HAD A GOOD TIME THIS WEEK.	3	2	1	0
17. I FELT LIKE CRYING THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
18. I FELT SAD.	0	1	2	3
19. I FELT PEOPLE DIDN'T LIKE ME THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3
20. IT WAS HARD TO GET STARTED DOING THINGS THIS WEEK.	0	1	2	3

BLANK (69-76)

7 0 1 2 (77-80)

DUP (1-13)

APPENDIX D:
Questionnaire
and
Check List

Date _____ Code _____

INDOCHINESE REFUGEE MINORS QUESTIONNAIRE

- (1) What is your age? _____.
- (2) What is your sex? Male _____, Female _____.
- (3) What school do you attend? _____, Grade _____.
- (4) What country do you come from? _____.
- (5) When did you arrive in the U. S.? (Month and year)
_____.
- (6) How many placements (foster care, group, etc) have you
had since arriving in the U.S.? _____.
- (7) Did you plan to leave your homeland? Yes _____,
No _____.
- (8) How did you leave your homeland? _____
_____.
- (9) Where were you living just before coming to the U.S.? _____.
- (10) How long did you stay in refugee camps? _____.
- (11) How many brothers in your natural family? _____.
How many sisters in your natural family? _____.
- (12) What is your position among the children? 1 _____,
2 _____, 3 _____, 4 _____, 5 _____, 6 _____, 7 _____, Other _____.
- (13) Is your father living? Yes _____, No _____,
Don't know _____.
Occupation of father _____.
Education of father _____.
- (14) Is your mother living? Yes _____, No _____,
Don't know _____.

Occupation of mother _____.

Education of mother _____.

(15) Where did your family live in your homeland?

City _____, Village _____, Countryside _____.

(16) Did you go to school in your homeland? Yes _____,

Sometimes _____, No _____.

What grade were you in when you left? _____.

(17) Do you have relatives in the U.S.? Yes _____, No _____.

Uncle _____, Aunt _____, Cousin _____, Other _____.

Where do they live? _____

If yes do you see them? At least once a month _____

Less than once a month _____

Never _____

If yes do you phone them? At least once a month _____

Less than once a month _____

Never _____

If yes, do you write them? At least once a month _____

Less than once a month _____

Never _____

If yes, would you like to live with them someday?

Yes _____, Maybe _____, No _____.

(18) Do you have relatives or friends in your homeland to

whom you write? Yes _____, No _____.

(19) Do you use a different name in the U.S. than in your

homeland? Yes _____, Sometimes _____, No _____.

- (20) If it were possible, would you return to your homeland to live? Yes_____, No_____, Don't know_____
- (21) Do you have a job? Yes_____, No_____,
If yes, what kind_____.
- (22) Do you have close male friends from your own country?
Yes_____, No_____
If yes, where do you see them (check any or all)
At my home_____, At their homes_____,
At school_____, At work_____,
At social events_____. Elsewhere (describe)_____
- (23) Do you have close female friends from your own country?
If yes, where do you see them (check any or all)
At my home_____, At their homes_____,
At school_____, At work_____,
At social events_____. Elsewhere (describe)_____
- (24) Do you have close male friends from other foreign countries? (not your homeland) Yes_____, No_____.
If yes, where do you see them (check any or all)
At my home_____, At their homes_____,
At school_____, At work_____,
At social events_____. Elsewhere (describe)_____
- (25) Do you have close female friends from other foreign countries? (not your homeland) Yes_____, No_____.
If yes, where do you see them (check any or all)
At my home_____, At their homes_____.
At school_____, At work_____,
At social events_____, Elsewhere (describe)_____

(26) Do you have close American male friends?

Yes _____, No _____.

If yes, where do you see them? (Check any or all)

At my home _____, At their homes _____,

At school _____, At work _____

At social events _____, Elsewhere (describe) _____

(27) Do you have close American female friends?

Yes _____, No _____.

If yes, where do you see them? (Check any or all)

At my home _____, At their homes _____,

At school _____, At work _____

At social events _____, Elsewhere (describe) _____

(28) Why do you think you are successful or unsuccessful in making friends? _____.

(29) When you marry, do you think you will choose a person

from your own country? Yes _____, No _____,

Don't know _____, Doesn't matter _____.

(30) Do you plan on attending college? Yes _____,

No _____, Don't know _____.

(31) What kind of work would you like to do as an adult?

(32) How were your grades on your last report card? A's _____,

B's _____, C's _____, D's _____, E's _____,

F's _____.

(33) Why do you think you are successful or unsuccessful in your school work? _____

- (34) If you did poorly in a class in school, whom would you talk to about how to do better? _____
- (35) If you felt sad and wanted help in feeling better, whom would you talk to? _____
- (36) If you had one wish that could come true, what would you wish for--and why? _____

- (37) Can you name what you fear most--and why? _____

- (38) What was the hardest thing for you when you came to the U.S.? _____
- (39) What advice would you give a person your age in your homeland about coming to the U.S.? _____

- (40) Do you plan on becoming an American citizen?
Why? _____ Why not? _____
- (41) If a U.S. citizen strongly disagrees with something the government does, can he or she do anything about it?

What? _____
- (42) If a citizen of your homeland strongly disagrees with something the government does, can he or she do anything about it? _____
What? _____

We are interested in knowing how important you think the following are in your being a good American. Please put a circle around the number that best describes your opinion.

	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not</u>
	<u>Important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Important</u>
(1) Speaking good English	1	2	3
(2) Saluting the American flag	1	2	3
(3) Having an after-school job	1	2	3
(4) Living in your own apartment after age 18	1	2	3
(5) Becoming an American citizen and voting in elections	1	2	3
(6) Having American friends	1	2	3
(7) Saying what's on your mind	1	2	3
(8) Reading the newspaper to know what is happening in the U.S. government.	1	2	3
(9) Volunteering for the U.S. Army in time of war.	1	2	3
(10) Supporting yourself financially when you graduate from school	1	2	3
(11) Making your own decisions	1	2	3
(12) Celebrating American holidays such as July 4th	1	2	3
(13) Sharing chores at home	1	2	3

APPENDIX E

Means and Standard Deviations

for Major Variables Tested:

Grade Point Average, CES-D, Independence, Age, Time in U.S.,
Displacement, Support, and Number of Foster/Group Placements

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Grade Point Average	3.05	.52
CES-D	18.26	10.69
Independence	13.29	2.69
Age	16.41	2.01
Time in U.S.	36.96	20.79
Displacement	4.47	3.11
Support	12.07	5.04
Foster/Group Placements	2.30	1.65

APPENDIX F

Pearson Correlation Coefficients

for Major Variables Tested:

Grade Point Average, CES-D, Independence, Age, Time in U.S.,
Displacement, Support, and Number of Foster/Group Placements

	GPA	CES-D	INDEPEND	AGE	XUS	DISPLACE	SUPPORT	PLACEM
GPA	1.000							
CES-D	-0.276*	1.000						
INDEPEND	0.146	-0.058	1.000					
AGE	-0.126	0.288**	-0.280*	1.000				
XUS	-0.063	-0.234*	-0.167	-0.122	1.000			
DISPLACE	-0.015	0.389**	-0.250*	0.297**	-0.250*	1.000		
SUPPORT	0.028	-0.550**	-0.014	-0.367	0.343**	-0.331**	1.000	-.441
PLACEMEN	-0.069	0.459**	-0.199	0.482**	0.230	0.231	-0.441	1.000

*Significant at .05

**Significant at .01

APPENDIX G

Questionnaire: Item Justification

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Provides Information Regarding</u>
1, 2	Demographics
3	Demographics, academic level
4	Demographics
5	Time in United States
6	Nature of migration (planned vs. unplanned)
7, 8, 9, 10	Nature of migration experience
11, 12	Family of origin
13, 14	Status of family of origin
15	Family of origin (rural vs. urban)
16	Minor's own education in homeland
17	Support system (own family in U.S.)
18	Support system (own family in homeland)
19, 20	Americanization/ethnicity
21	Demographics
22, 23	Support systems (peers from own country)
24, 25	Support systems (peers from other countries)
26, 27	Support systems (peers from U.S.)
28	Support systems (attributions)
29	Americanization/ethnicity
30, 31, 32	Academic achievement/aspirations
33, 34	Support systems
35, 36, 37	Americanization/ethnicity
38, 39	Americanization/ethnicity
40, 41	Political awareness (of U.S.)
42	Political awareness (of homeland)

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