

the child receives when the mother comes home from work can more than compensate for the fact that the child is away during the day.¹⁹

91. Now that there is such a high incidence of separation and divorce in our society, more attention should be paid to the problems of the more than one half million single parents. It is very difficult for one person "to be everything to a youngster and at the same time be able to develop one's own life."²⁰ A single parent is not usually able, for economic reasons, to stay home with the child. The quality of substitute care available in such cases is of crucial importance. The child of a single parent may suffer from a quantitative lack of parenting. "It may be that growing up in a one-parent family exposes a child to the risk of becoming delinquent."²¹ A study of delinquent boys found that their families were more likely to be broken so that they were brought up by a single parent, usually a mother. Thus, "one stage in the development of delinquent behaviour involves insufficient parenting of the boy."²²

92. It seems clear then that in searching early life experiences for causes of criminal behaviour, perhaps the most important factor in the period after birth is the lack of loving care. A study of the personal history of murderers found the primary factor to be "severe emotional deprivation, or overt rejection in childhood. That is today what we call neglect."²³ Such severe neglect has come to be considered as a kind of child abuse.