

with its mother's or father's routine. Its curiosity is dulled, companionship with its parents is damaged, and its injured ego suffers humiliation. Such children can become withdrawn or overly aggressive. They may retreat and build a psychological shell to protect themselves from further abuse. The Committee has been convinced by expert witnesses that much of the violent crime committed by adults can be traced to a breakdown of parenting in the early childhood period.

74. Many witnesses contrasted the relative care with which motor vehicle operators are trained and, if necessary retrained, with the complete lack of training for parenthood. Much of the neglect and abuse from which too many children suffer is the consequence of simple ignorance — ignorance of the very rudiments of coping with a baby such as, feeding schedules, proper diet, diaper changing and toilet training. In the past, this knowledge was imparted by close relatives who were readily available to give the young parent or parents advice and support. Today, high mobility and the evolution of family structure from the extended family, to the nuclear family, and increasingly to the single-parent family means that many parents are attempting to raise children in isolation and under great pressures. Without denying or underestimating the contribution of various associations for the single parent, for parents of children suffering from various physical and mental handicaps, your Committee believes that not only voluntary associations but also the state should fill the gap left by the demise of the extended family.

75. Today, peer pressure has an immense influence on the growing child. Several events have contributed to this influence; the decline of the extended family whose members were a source of information and stimulation for the child when it sought advice to solve problems; the extension of the media — radio and, especially, television; the development of a youth culture that seems at times to dominate the general culture rather than being a constituent part of it.

76. While bonding with its family may not be weakened, peers provide the child with a second window to view the world outside of the family. It learns more easily than its parents and learns to survive by getting along with its peers. The child of twelve today is better informed than its parents were at the same age, and much better than its grandparents were. Many parents today are surprised at the knowledgeable ability of their children.

77. Information is more readily available to the children of today. Educational films, school libraries, encyclopaedia for juniors and TV programs are teaching aids not available when one teacher taught several classes. Television in the home is a most significant influence but at no time should we forget the continuing impact of comic books. The contents of comic books, crime or otherwise, do not have the same influence on all children; the influence depends usually on the quality