

# The Beginning of Day Care and Family Support

by George Mueller

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*The Müller Homes established Day Care Centres and Family Support Centres to provide practical help to families in need and address the root causes of societal problems.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 68:5, Matthew 25:40, Galatians 6:2, James 1:27

**Topics:** "Family Support", "Community Care"

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## Description

George Mueller discusses the establishment of Day Care and Family Support Centres in response to the changing needs of families in society during the late 1970s. Recognizing that traditional residential care was no longer sufficient, the initiative aimed to provide practical help and advice to families facing various challenges, such as inadequate housing and single parenthood. The Centres not only cared for children but also supported entire families, addressing issues that often stemmed from financial or social difficulties. Through this work, many families found hope and committed their lives to Christ, demonstrating the impact of faith in overcoming adversity. Mueller emphasizes the importance of following Christ's example in serving those in need.

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## Transcript

In the late 1970s it became apparent to the Directors and Trustees of the Homes that even family group care, as had been practised since the war, was no longer appropriate to meet the ever changing needs of society. Coupled with that, was the fact that children were no longer coming into residential care in sufficient numbers; local authorities and other childcare agencies preferring that the children be fostered with private families.

After much discussion and prayer it was felt that the way forward was in some way to meet the needs of whole families who for one reason or another were finding difficulties and pressures hard to bear.

For that reason, and with a continuing dependence on the guidance of God, a Day Care Centre was established, based at Glandore, one of the former children's homes, a large period house located in a residential area of Weston-super-Mare.

This Centre tried to create an environment where advice and practical help could be given to parents to enable them to maintain a level of family life that brought a sense of security and well being to the whole family. This very practical help once again flowed from the commitment of the staff to follow Christ's example. Any one of three basic problems would make a child eligible for daily care at Glandore.

There was the problem of environment where inadequate housing and limited resources for recreation put a child's health at risk. Or where a child of pre-school age was unable to receive the care needed due to the ill health of a parent. The social problem where a single parent needed to follow employment for economic reasons, or the mother had become emotionally unstable and the child might have been at risk physically.

The Centre could care for up to 30 children in three separate groups, each looked after by two nursery nurses.

In addition to the Day Care Centre several Family Support Centres were opened in and around the district of Bristol.

A Family Support Centres differed from the Day Care Centre in this respect: whole families could be accommodated on a daily basis.

It was (and is today) a well known fact that family life is under attack with the divorce rate nationally affecting one in three families; more and more children and young people being brought before the Courts for antisocial behaviour, etc. It appeared that the source of the problems lay mainly in the homes of such children, and often through no direct fault of parents. The difficulties were sometimes financial, social or perhaps a result of inappropriate environment, or illness - physically or mental, etc.

It was at this point of crisis that the staff of the Müller Homes stepped in and offered support.

The Family Support Centres catered for over 200 families each week meeting the varying levels of their needs. The results confirmed that the change of direction was according to the will of God in that a number of families committed their lives to Christ as a result of the work of the Centres. Also many others were helped with marital relationships and family problems with which they were faced.

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