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THE USE OF THE FAMILY ROOM FOR INDIVIDUAL
AND GROUP ACTIVITIES

by

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A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of
The Consolidated University of North Carolina
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Science in Home Economics

Greensboro
1959

Approved by

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Adviser

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to Mrs. Madeleine B. Street for her untiring efforts in the direction of this study, to Mrs. Savannah S. Day for her assistance and advice, and to Dr. Irvin V. Sperry and Mr. Edward Loewenstein for their assistance as members of the thesis committee. The writer also wishes to express her appreciation to the builders and real estate agents for their cooperation, and to the homemakers for their assistance in making this study possible.

T.L.H.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today's mode of life is often presented as demanding more informal living. Wright, predicts that because a new way of living is growing up which is informal and relaxed, the new American home will be much simpler to live in. Its furnishings and size will be determined by family needs, and living in it will be based on an informal and improvised design rather than a formal, traditional pattern.¹

There is a growing trend toward the creation of a fuller and richer family life with a time and place for everyone's interests within the home which is definitely affecting house planning. These interests which may be individual or collective emerge from the interactions of the individuals within the group, that are representative of the family. It is an accepted fact that family interests, and daily living habits and activities influence the design of a home. Housing authorities suggest that the more effective approach to house planning is by a study of the human beings that occupy the house. According to Wright, a home that is carefully planned around the requirements of the family will give much richer satisfactions.² Gordon states that design for the home can be judged in:

. . . terms of what it offers for the encouragement of individuality, for the development of each one's differences, for

¹Mary and Russel Wright, Guide to Easier Living (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950, 1951), p. 4-5.

²Ibid., p. 9.

the provision of privacy and personal creativity - humanistic values of a democratic age.³

Design interest is leaning toward compact homes, efficiently designed, and furnished with practical and durable materials that require a minimum of care and maintenance. This is further emphasized by Kaufman's statement: "Modern interior design is planning and making rooms suited to our way of life, our abilities, and our ideals."⁴ Wright states that:

Our way of life has changed sharply even from that of the preceding generation. Wives are now more likely to have a business career of their own, to have interests besides management of the home. The home itself is smaller; rooms must serve more than one purpose.⁵

According to architects and builders, prospective home owners are saying, "We need more elbow room." A place is needed where the children can play, and some place to keep the television out of the living room.⁶

Recently the American family has begun centering more attention around a multipurpose room in which the many and varied family interests and activities may be developed. This room is evolving with the inclusion of a kitchen, since the homemaker spends much of her time there, and does most of her work without the services of a maid.

Virtually all of the 301 women attending the "1959 Congress on Better Living" in Washington stated they wanted a more spacious house that included a family room.⁷ A variety of writers suggest that such a

³Elizabeth Gordon, "Does Design Have Social Significance?" House Beautiful, (October, 1953), 142.

⁴Edgar Kaufmann, What is Modern Design? (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959), p. 7.

⁵Wright, op. cit., p. 2.

⁶Howard Grubb, "Family Room: Newest Room in the House," House and Home VIII (October, 1955), 170.

⁷"Congress on Better Living," McCall's (February, 1959), 139.

room tends to make the homemaker's tasks more pleasurable and convenient, and prevents "many wasted steps daily in the serving of meals."⁸ A multi-purpose room also enables her to enjoy the companionship of the family and to supervise the children's activities while she works. Centering the activities around the homemaker in a room known as the family room, according to popular opinion, is a satisfactory way of achieving unity in family activities. Beyer states: "This orientation toward family centrism would encourage planning a 'family room' where all members could commonly be together to enjoy each others jobs and pleasures."⁹

The family or activity room has had increasing popularity. It frequently adjoins or is a part of the kitchen area. It may include family meal service and laundry facilities, depending on the amount and organization of space in the house.¹⁰

Articles written by architects and magazine editors pertaining to house planning and building suggest that the family room belongs to every member of the family, and may accommodate both individual and group activities. Living, playing, eating, and usually food preparation are a part of the activities. Frequently, the family room is used for family or guest sleeping. The furnishings recommended are durable, simple in style, and coordinated to give a versatile, comfortable, and attractive room.

An outstanding characteristic of modern living which is suited to today's family living and is ideal for informal entertaining, according

⁸Wright, op. cit., p. 28.

⁹Glenn H. Beyer, Housing: A Factual Analysis (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), p. 175.

¹⁰Tessie Agan, The House (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1956), p. 11.

to Callender, is to make the living area more spacious, both in fact and appearance. Frequently, the dining room is incorporated with the living area. Sometimes, the kitchen is open or at least partially open to the living area, thus increasing the spaciousness of the area. This has been referred to as the "open plan," and may be achieved in various ways. High sloping ceilings, partitions that do not extend to the ceiling, and glass walls extending from the floor to the ceiling give an illusion of spaciousness.¹¹

Reimer stated some years ago that families have recognized an overcrowding of the living room and feel the need for a "second living room," that would accommodate activities needing more elbow room or privacy than the traditional living room could provide.¹² Architects and builders have implied that this need became most acute when the dining room was merged with the living room. As a result of this need the family room has evolved, and its popularity is increasing. In 1957, House and Home nominated the family room as "Room of the Year" because it provided an opportunity to incorporate more fun, color and new ideas into the house, had proved almost indispensable, and had doubled the sales appeal of homes.¹³

¹¹John H. Callender, Before You Buy A House (New York: Crown Publishers, 1953), p. 38.

¹²Svend Reimer and others, "The Case of the Second Living Room," American Home, XXXII (September, 1944), 244.

¹³"The Family Room - Nominated as Room of the Year," House and Home, XI (February, 1957), 139.

The popularity of the family room is so recent that no studies were located directly related to its use and design. For this reason, the studies and literature reviewed here are related to the living room and have implications for the design or use of the family room.

Dunham and Thalberg state that a living room is "a place where the family can live at ease and receive guests into the intimate household circle."¹⁴ It should provide a place for activities in which all family members may participate singly or collectively.

Much attention has been given to planning work areas in the home in relation to the use of time and energy, but other areas including the living area have seemingly been neglected. Before houses can be designed to meet the needs of families, more information is needed on how families live and the types of activities in which they participate.

Since the living room is the center of social activities, it is important that it be planned and furnished with its uses in mind. A living room that can provide for the social activities of a family, and at the same time give privacy from the outside world can make a real contribution to the social life of the family. The provisions made for shared experiences can promote or limit the companionship within a family.

The social quarters of any home should give each person a sense of security in the family group; provide an opportunity for expressing his feelings and urges, of doing things the way he wants to; and encourage each to play his best role in the making of the family

¹⁴Clarence W. Dunham and Milton B. Thalberg, Planning Your Home for Better Living (Whittlesey House, 1954), p. 55.

pattern. Group living spaces should promote security, self-realization, and socialization of each individual.¹⁵

Various studies have indicated that no two families are likely to use their home in the same way; or that any one family will always use it in the same way. This fact emphasizes the need for designing living rooms that will provide space for leisure activities for both the individual and the group, and space that can be adapted to multiple uses.

A study made in Michigan on the use of homes revealed that in both rural and urban homes, leisure was the principal activity in the living room. The living room was used twice as much by city families as by farm families for studying, and more serving of foods was done in the city living rooms than in the farm living rooms. Both groups used the living room for reading and writing and for the storage of materials related to these activities.¹⁶

According to a study on family leisure made in Rhode Island, it was found that leisure activities of every type took place in the living room, and that they were as varied as the individuals in the families. Activities occurring rated in the order of participation were reading newspapers, reading magazines, listening to the radio, entertaining callers, children's indoor play, reading books, sewing, entertaining with guest meals, watching television, table games, entertaining with refreshments, miscellaneous hobbies, listening to records, entertaining

¹⁵Ray Faulkner, Inside Today's Home (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1954), p. 36.

¹⁶Alice C. Thorpe and Irma H. Gross, How Homes Are Used on Farms and in Small Cities, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 254, (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1955), p. 29.

overnight, and playing games. This study concluded that (1) the arrangement of homes needs to provide for activities that require little motion, such as reading, watching television, and listening to records or the radio; (2) reading centers need to be equipped with comfortable seats and adequate lighting and sufficient storage; and (3) space and equipment needs providing for hobbies, games, and entertaining depending on the family and the amount of participation in the activities.¹⁷

Alvord found in a study of 105 young farm families that the living rooms were used most often for entertainment of informal groups of mixed ages by 96.9 per cent; viewing television by 89.0 per cent; reading by adults 71.2 per cent; and children's play activities by 37.4 per cent. In addition to these and other leisure activities, 8.6 per cent sewed, 12.4 per cent ironed, and 27.2 per cent cared for the sick in the living room. The living room storage was used for books, and reading and writing materials by most of the homemakers.¹⁸

All of these studies have stressed the need for planning and furnishing a room with its uses in mind. A study conducted by Wilson and Blackwell concluded that to insure maximum livability in a home, a designer must not only provide for the efficient use of time and energy in the work areas, but also for the space and equipment needed for using

¹⁷Mrs. Ethyl R. Grady, Grace H. Smith, and Mrs. Blanche M. Kuschke, Rhode Island Rural Housing and Family Leisure, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 315, (Kingston: University of Rhode Island, 1953), pp. 40-44.

¹⁸Phyllis Alvord, "Use of Family Living Areas for Selected Activities by Young Farm Families in Black Hawk County (unpublished Master's thesis, Iowa State College, Ames, 1956), pp. 36, 40, and 75.

leisure time to the best advantage.¹⁹

In a study of houses for farm families with children, Agan and Barnes found that the way families spend their evenings at home affects the size, number, and arrangement of use centers. Some activities require illumination, flat work surfaces, and extra floor space. Others like studying, writing letters, and keeping family records require a degree of privacy.²⁰

The various activities families participate in, according to Carter and Hinchcliff requires:

a relatively large room preferably oblong in shape, arranged to provide several centers of interest and activity. Living rooms in small and moderate-size homes are usually made 12 feet to 13 feet and six inches wide; this width is sufficient to place furniture along the walls and yet leave usable clean space in the center of the room. The living room is usually one and one-half to one and three-fourths times the width for good proportions.²¹

Careful planning of space and careful selection of furnishings with the uses of the room in mind are essential for a living room that gives the family a sense of security, and allows each person to express himself and do the things he likes. The design will vary with the family depending on the activities in which they wish to participate. Wells states, "that successful planning of space involves providing adequate space for family and personal activities and for the storage of essential

¹⁹Maude Wilson and Maurine K. Blackwell, Reading Centers in the Farmhouse and Storage of Reading Materials, Agricultural Experiment Station (Corvallis: Oregon State College, 1950), p. 1.

²⁰Tessie Agan and Jane Wilson Barnes, Houses for Farm Families with Children, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 365 (Manhattan: Kansas State College, 1954), p. 22.

²¹Deane Carter and Keith Hinchcliff, Family Housing (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1949), p. 76.

personal and family possessions."²² "Space Design for Household Storage," reports the results of a study by McCullough on storage requirements for various kinds of household articles and shows how storage units can be incorporated in existing houses and in plans for new homes.²³

An interest in housing and a recognition of the recent inclusion of the family room in house planning, and the fact that research in this area was limited, led to the selection of the problem for study - The Use of the Family Room for Individual and Group Activities.

The purposes of the study were:

1. To determine activities that are carried on in the family room, and facilities used for these activities.
2. To obtain the homemaker's appraisal of the space and facilities provided for these activities.
3. To obtain the homemaker's suggestions for space needs and interior design.

The definition of the term "family room" as used in this study was "A family room is multipurpose and includes space and facilities for leisure activities, meal service, and food preparation." In contrast to the family room, the living room is primarily a place where the family can entertain guests, relax, or participate in quiet activities singly or collectively. The criteria used in selecting the homes were that the family room conforms to the definition, and that the homemaker not be a member of the labor force.

²²Helen Wells, "Space Requirements for a Living-Sleeping Room," (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas), p. 1.

²³Helen McCullough, Space Design for Household Storage, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 557 (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1952), p. iii.

The remainder of this thesis will be organized into four chapters including - the method of procedure followed and the background data pertaining to the families and the homes; an individual study of each family room; the findings pertaining to the family room; and the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE

I. METHODOLOGY

Twelve homes in the city of Greensboro with family rooms that conformed to the definition: "A family room is multipurpose and includes space and facilities for leisure activities, meal service, and food preparation" were studied. To locate the family rooms, eight local residential builders and real estate agents were contacted for the names of families who had recently built or purchased a home with a family room. All homes suggested had been built within the last four years. From the suggested list, the homemakers were contacted one after another until 12 homes had been secured that met the criteria for the study. Figure 1 shows the distribution of these 12 homes in the city of Greensboro.

The data included in this study were obtained by means of a personal interview with the homemakers using a schedule prepared by the writer, and from activity records kept by the homemakers for four days - a Saturday, Sunday, and two weekdays. Before the final schedule was prepared, it was pretested with two homemakers who had family rooms in their homes, and revised.

The interview schedule was used to obtain general information about the family and house, a descriptive design of the family room, the individual and group activities carried on in the room, and the homemaker's appraisal of the family room including her suggestions for changes in the room design and its facilities.

The record form was designed for recording all individual and

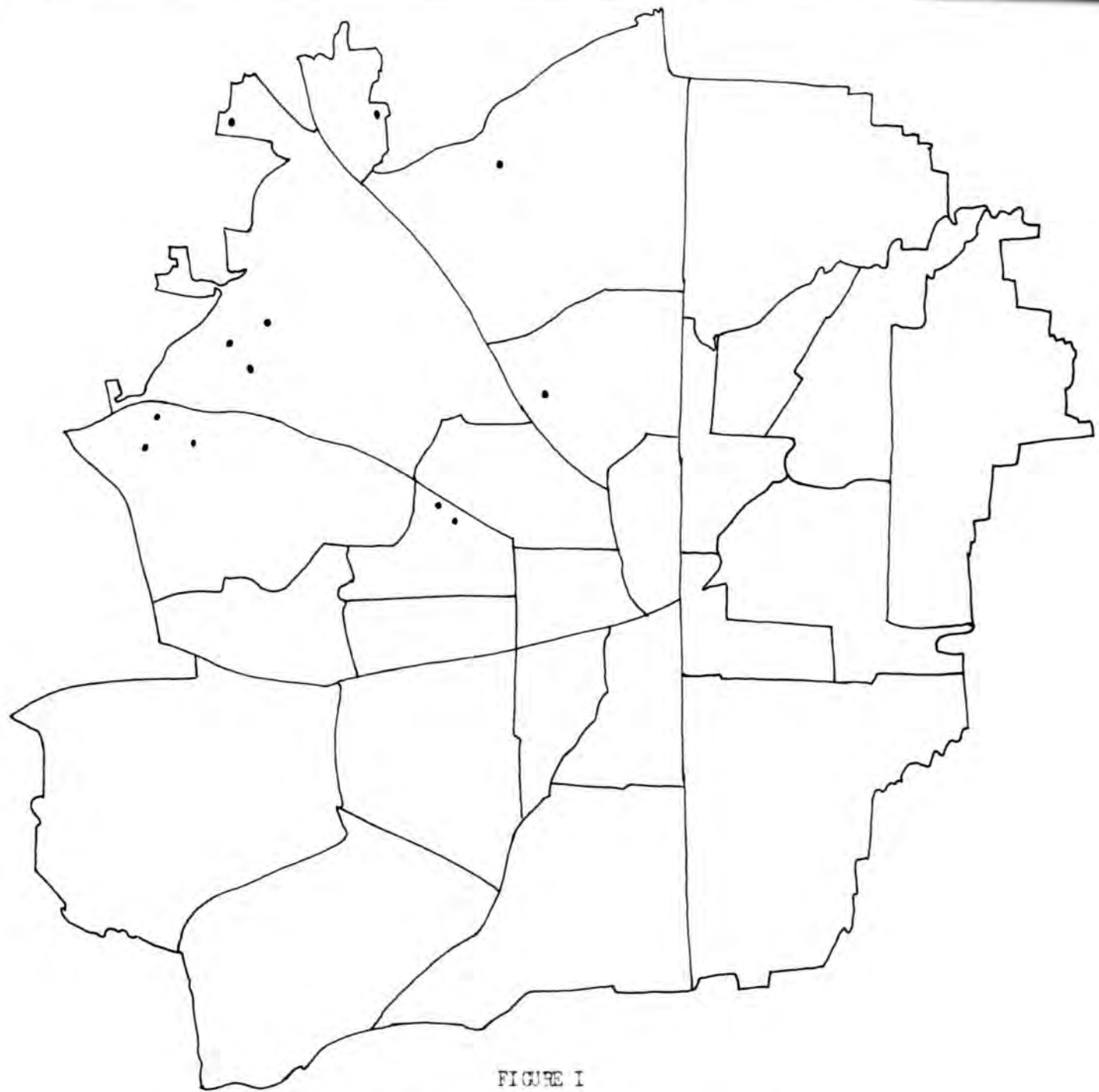


FIGURE I

DISTRIBUTION OF HOMES IN THE CITY OF GREENSBORO

group activities carried on in the family room. For ease in recording, each day was subdivided on the record form into half hour intervals beginning at six o'clock in the morning and extending until midnight. The records were prepared to reveal the activities carried on in the room, the time the activity occurred, the persons who participated, and any additional equipment brought into the room for use in activities recorded during the Saturday, Sunday, and two weekdays.

Recognized limitations of this study include (1) the number of family rooms available was limited and the number studied was small; (2) the families had used their family rooms for a relatively short period of time, ranging from seven months to three and one-half years; and (3) the families lacked the experience of using other family rooms and therefore, had no basis for comparison in appraising the room.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The background information includes the data obtained pertaining to the family, the number of years lived in the house, the types of rooms in the house, and the activities carried on in the living and dining rooms in relation to those provided for in the family room.

The Family Members

All of the 12 families included children. The number of children in the families ranged from one to five. The family members consisted only of the parents and children with one exception - the husband's mother was included in the family with eight members. The size of the families is shown as follows:

<u>Number of family members</u>	<u>Number of families</u>
Three persons	2
Four persons	5
Five persons	4
Eight persons	1

The 12 families included 29 children ranging in age from five weeks to 17 years. Twenty-one of these children were in school - two in high school, four in junior high, and 15 in elementary school. Only three of the eight children under six years of age attended nursery school or kindergarten. The distribution of the number of children according to sex and age groups within the 12 families is as follows:

<u>Age group</u>	<u>Number of families</u>	<u>Number of girls</u>	<u>Number of boys</u>
Under two years	2	2	
Two to five years	5	5	1
Six to twelve years	9	10	5
Thirteen to seventeen years	5	5	1

Twenty-two of the 29 children in the 12 families were girls.

The House

All of the exteriors of the houses were of brick or a combination of brick and wood except one frame structure that used large areas of glass. All of the houses represented in this study had been built within the last four years. The homes had been built by seven families, whereas, the other five families had purchased their homes. The length of time that the families had lived in their homes varied from six months to three and one-half years as follows:

<u>Period of Occupancy</u>	<u>Number of families</u>
Six months to one year	5
Thirteen months to two years	2
Twenty-five months to three years	2
Thirty-seven months to four years	3

The houses were similar in some respects. It was found that most of these houses included in addition to the family room, a living room, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms (Table I).

TABLE I
TYPE OF ROOMS IN THE HOUSES

<u>Type of room</u>	<u>Number of houses</u>
Family room	12
Living room	10
Recreation room	5
Dining room	3
Combination living-dining room	2
Bedrooms	
Three	10
Four	2
Bathrooms	
One and one-half	1
Two	9
Two and one-half	1
Three	1
Utility room	5
Glassed or screened porch	2
Workshop	1

A separate dining room was found in three of the houses, and a living-dining combination in two. Five of the houses contained recreation

rooms, and a like number contained utility rooms. It is interesting to note that only two of the houses included a glassed or screened porch.

The type of rooms in the house influenced the type and number of activities carried on in the different rooms. In many homes, the activities that were carried on in the living room, or the dining room and the family room were similar or overlapping. Nine of the living rooms were used primarily by adults; two were used by adults and teenagers (Table II). One living room which had not been furnished was used by the children for play with large play equipment. The floor was protected by a cotton rug.

TABLE II

ACTIVITIES OCCURRING IN THE LIVING ROOMS

Activities	Number of families
Adult entertaining	9
Listening to records	3
Teenage entertaining	2
Playing card games	2
Reading and conversation (adults)	2
Viewing television	1
Playing piano	1
Group meetings	1
Children's play (unfurnished room)	1

The major use of the living room was for adult entertaining. Most of the families who had record players kept them in the living room because the television which was viewed regularly by some member of the family was in the family room. Only one family had a television set in the living room. This television was used for adult viewing while

teenagers viewed a different program in the family room. In two families, the adults used the living room as a quiet place for reading or conversing. Only two families used the living room for all card playing, other families used the family room for most of the card games. Group meetings were always held in the living room of one home, the others usually used the family room for this purpose.

The three dining rooms were used regularly for guest meals and occasionally for family meals with two being used for all weekend family meals.

A descriptive study of each of the 12 family rooms including the activities carried on therein by the family and the suggestions offered by the homemaker for improvements of the room are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

TWELVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES

Information obtained through personal interviews with the homemakers in their family rooms is presented in 12 descriptive studies. Each study includes the family composition; the type and number of rooms in the house; the size, shape, materials and finishes used in the family room; the activities carried on in the family rooms with the homemaker's appraisal in relation to its advantages, disadvantages, and suggestions for changes. The family is identified by letter.

Family A

Mr. and Mrs. A and their two daughters, aged four and one-half and three years lived in a five room house which consisted of a living room, family room, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a basement. The family bought the home in completed condition, and had lived in it for thirteen months.

The family room was rectangular in shape, 11'-6" x 26'-0", with three doors and two double windows. The doors from the family room provided entrances to the children's bedroom, the entrance hall, and an open porch. The windows in the kitchen and the dining-living areas were treated with sill length draw draperies. The kitchen in the form of a modified U was located at one end of the room, occupying about one-third of the floor area. The dining area was located near the window wall, and the living area furnished with television and comfortable seating furniture was located opposite the kitchen. Heat was provided by a forced

air oil furnace, supplemented by a regularly used stone fireplace that featured a ceramic hearth. The room had a vinyl tile floor, walnut woodwork, walnut paneled walls, and a ceiling of painted plaster. The kitchen cabinets were finished to blend with the walnut paneling. Wallpaper was used on the space between the base and wall cabinets.

Most of the family activities and all entertainment of guests occurred in the family room. The living room which had not been furnished was used for the children's play with large equipment such as tricycles and rocking horses. The family room was used by all family members for viewing television, listening to the radio, and reading or listening to stories. Since there was no desk in the room, the dining table was used for letter writing and family record keeping. Records, stationery supplies, and books were stored in a built-in counter near the dining table. The mother used the room for ironing, cutting out garments, and sewing - both by hand and machine, and occasionally she painted there. The father's hobby of gardening was evidenced by the collection of books which he studied and stored in this room. The daughter's activities were confined to quiet play with small toys, puzzles or books, coloring and finger painting, supervised by the mother. No play center was evident; all toys and play materials were stored in the children's bedroom, adjacent to the family room or in the living room which was used at the time for a play room. Occasionally, children's parties, card parties, and adult meetings were held there. When a child was sick, she frequently occupied the sofa in the family room to be near the mother.

Mrs. A appraised her family room as being essential and said she

would definitely want one in a home. She summarized its advantages as contributing to family life by allowing space for the whole family to be together while the mother worked in the kitchen, and taking the wear and tear of active living off the remainder of the house. The disadvantage stated was that all guest entertaining had to be done in the family room. Mrs. A did not plan her family room and there were several recommendations which she suggested to make it more livable for her family. These recommended changes were that an increase of three feet in the width of the room be added to provide more space for entertaining, that an additional window was needed for light to offset the tendency toward darkness caused by the walnut walls and woodwork, a floor of inlaid linoleum or ceramic tile instead of vinyl because of the maintenance required, a more economical and cleaner heating system, and a storage space for the ironing board.

Family B

Family B consisted of the parents and three daughters - aged sixteen, eleven and eight years, who had lived seven months in a brick home that was planned by the family and built under the father's supervision. The house had seven rooms - a living room, family room, utility room, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a recreation room in the basement.

The family room was rectangular in shape, 14'-0" x 30'-0". Doors provided entrances to the living room, utility room, patio, and into the front entrance hall. The kitchen area which formed a broken U had a double window treated with cafe curtains. The dining table was placed at the top of the "U" thus separating the kitchen and living areas. A triple window with cafe curtains, the patio door, and a built-in desk

unit occupied one side wall of the living area. The opposite wall was composed of a stone fireplace which was used regularly, a built-in television, book and magazine unit, and a coat closet that opened into the hall. Comfortable seating furniture and a cupboard completed the furniture in the room. A cheerful, attractive appearance radiated a friendly atmosphere from the family room. Finishes used included walls, woodwork, built-in units, and kitchen cabinets of natural finished birch, and a partial wall of stone which contained the fireplace and built-in oven. The floor was inlaid linoleum, and the ceiling was a sand finished plaster. The lighting in the kitchen consisted of a flush ceiling and area lights, whereas the living area had ceiling bullet lights, and table and floor lamps. A forced hot air system was used for heating the room.

In this house, the family room was the hub of everyday family activities and interests. The living room was used for formal entertaining, circle meetings, and occasionally for Mr. B's business callers. All active play such as dancing and ping-pong took place in the recreation room in the basement. Family activities occurring in the family room included viewing television, listening to the radio which was on an intercommunication system, reading, serving refreshments, and table games. The mother's individual activities were sewing by hand and machine, cutting out garments using the dining table, writing letters, and record keeping for the family and for civic organizations. All cookbooks, records, and stationery supplies were stored in a built-in desk and storage unit. Occasionally, community meetings were held in the family room. The father's individual activities consisted of occasional

letter writing, receiving business callers, and studying. Many of the daughter's individual activities were carried on in their bedrooms; however, they did write letters, work on community projects, entertain their friends, and serve refreshments in this room.

When asked if she would include a family room if she were building the house again, Mrs. B remarked, "I would leave off my living room before I would leave off the family room." Mrs. B stated further that the family had planned and built two houses with dens or with sitting areas in the kitchen, and that this was the first time the family has been completely satisfied with a multipurpose room.

According to Mrs. B, the family room was satisfying because it was versatile enough to accommodate various activities and provide for both adult and children's entertaining, and made the mother's work more pleasant because she enjoyed the family while she worked. The girls were interested in cooking, and the family room made it easier for the mother to supervise their activities in the kitchen area. No method was provided for closing off the kitchen area because Mrs. B wanted the open space for easy communication with the family. When asked what were the disadvantages of the family room, Mrs. B stated, "none thus far, it's just what we wanted. We spent about five years planning it." Plans for additions to the room included folding wooden shutters for the windows finished to match the walls and woodwork, and an adjustable light placed between the desk unit and sofa.

The homemaker liked the furnishings and finishes of the family room because they provided plenty of comfortable seating for the family and a couple of guests, required a minimum of care, and took hard wear.

Family C

Family C had five members - the parents and three daughters, aged eight, five years, and a baby five weeks old. This family lived in a modern wood and glass combination house with modular walls. The house consisted of seven rooms - living room, dining room, family room, three bedrooms, recreation room, two and one-half bathrooms, and a laundry room.

The spacious family room 24'-0" x 32'-0", was rectangular in shape. Its doors opened into the living room, dining room, into a hall, one bedroom, onto a patio, and onto a porch. Clerestory windows occupied the length of one wall above the refrigerator, freezer, kitchen storage, built-in ovens, and the desk and file units. The opposite wall of the room was entirely of glass with a full glass door that opened onto the patio. The glass wall was treated with a draw drapery, and additional privacy was provided by the use of a wooden fence outside the patio. The kitchen was L shape with an island service counter and storage unit. This island unit was located between the kitchen and living areas and served as a partial divider. Two chairs at the island counter were used by the children for most of their meals. The dining table was placed to the side of the kitchen near the glass wall. The living area, adjacent to the kitchen contained comfortable seating furniture grouped in a unit on a large beige area rug, and a built-in television and radio unit with long, low benches on either side which held magazines and could be used for additional seating space. The wall above the television unit and benches had built-in book shelves that extended the width of the wall, exclusively of the two doors. The room was heated and cooled by a forced

air system. Finishes within the room beside the glass included paneled and brick walls, painted woodwork and cabinets, a ceiling of plaster, and a terrazzo floor. Lighting within the room consisted of eight flush ceiling fixtures and a floor and table lamps.

The living and dining rooms were used for entertaining, and all family activities occurred in the family room. Those occurring regularly included: viewing television, reading, daytime resting, and family record keeping. The mother regularly read aloud to the children, wrote letters, entertained callers, and sewed by hand. Occasionally, she painted, held parties, or cared for a sick child in the family room. The father's individual activities were reading aloud to the children, daytime resting, and on occasion making pictures in the family room. The oldest daughter regularly studied and wrote letters there. The two older girls regularly participated in quiet play in the family room. The service counter with its high chairs was used by the children for coloring, puzzles, finger-painting, and board games. The recreation room, located near the family room was used for active play; therefore, no play center was evident in the family room.

The homemaker was well satisfied with her family room in relation to its size and general design. She felt that its advantages to the family included - providing space and facilities for any activity that the family desired; it allowed the homemaker to be with the family while she worked in the kitchen; it accommodated an overflow of people from the living room when large groups were entertained; it took the wear and tear off the remainder of the house; and it allowed her to answer the front door without having to pass through the living room. Mrs. C liked

the planning center which provided plenty of desk space and convenient storage for the family records and for the children's needs. Other features of the room which she especially liked were the minimum of care required, and the fact that all cabinet units and furniture were above floor level.

After having lived in the home for three years, Mrs. C recommended the following changes: a built-in charcoal grill in the kitchen area; a silent exhaust fan over the built-in ovens; a ceiling of acoustical tile; and magnetic latches on the cabinet doors.

Family D

Mr. and Mrs. D and their three children - a daughter aged twelve, and two sons aged seven and five lived in a five room brick home which consisted of the living room, family room, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms. The family planned the home and had lived in it for one year.

The family room was rectangular in shape, 13'-10" x 25'-9", with the kitchen which formed a modified U located at one end of the room, thus occupying approximately one-fourth of the floor area. The family room had two doors, one opened to the outside and the other to the front entrance hall. A triple window in the living-dining area overlooked a golf course and was treated with draw draperies that extended from the ceiling to the floor. A double window with draw draperies was located in the center of the kitchen wall. The kitchen had two counter height dividers that partially separated it from the living-dining area. The dining table was located in the living area adjacent to one end of the kitchen. One end of the living area consisted of a fireplace that was

used regularly and featured a raised hearth. Built-in units on either side of the fireplace accommodated books, magazines, the television set, and general storage. The finishes in the family room included knotty pine paneled walls in the living-dining area; the kitchen area wall-papered, and the woodwork and cabinets a natural pine to match the paneling. The room had a ceiling of acoustical tile and a floor of inlaid linoleum. A gravity oil system provided heat for the room. Light was provided by two dropped and one flush ceiling fixtures and a wall fixture.

Many family activities including all meal service occurred in the family room. The living room was used only for entertaining and for quiet adult activities. Viewing television, reading, table games, children's games, entertaining callers, holding meetings, and serving refreshments were regular family activities which occurred in the family room. The mother regularly wrote letters and kept family records there, using the dining table as a desk. She read aloud to the children, and occasionally cared for a sick child in this room. The father's chief use of the family room was for daytime resting. Most of the children's individual activities in this room pertained to their play. Storage for toys was provided in one of the built-in units beside the fireplace. The daughter usually wrote letters and studied in the room. The household helper ironed in the family room.

Mrs. D stated that her family room was essential because it provided a place for the family to enjoy their activities together, and protected the remainder of the house from excessive wear. The disadvantage of a family room, according to the homemaker, was that at times it provided for too much activity.

She stated that the room in general was very easy to care for. The only difficulty mentioned was that of cleaning the small spaces between the kitchen cabinets and the appliances. The homemaker stated that this was a tedious task that could have been eliminated with planning. She also mentioned that the linoleum floor dented very easily.

Mrs. D recommended the following changes in her family room: an increase of at least two feet in the width of the kitchen area, a harder floor covering that would not dent easily, an increase in the storage space for kitchen equipment, a larger and more convenient place for the storage of toys, and the inclusion of a desk in one of the built-in units.

Family E

Family E consisted of the parents and two sons, aged eleven and six, who had lived two and one-half years in a five room brick home that had a living room, family room, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms.

The family room 13'-0" x 26'-0", was rectangular with four doors - one leading to the carport, two to the living room, and a double door that opened onto a sun porch. Double and single windows treated with cafe curtains were located in the kitchen area, and a large window extending from the ceiling to the floor with draw draperies was in the living area. The modified U shape kitchen with an island service counter and storage unit occupied one end of the family room. A counter which contained the electric surface units and an overhead storage cabinet served as a partial divider between the kitchen and living-dining areas. The kitchen could be completely closed off by means of a short draw drapery that covered the space between the counter and overhead cabinets. The dining table was located between the kitchen and living areas of the room. The living

area contained a fireplace which was usually used for the grill, a television set, comfortable seating furniture, and built-in book shelves. The woodwork and walls in the living area were of natural birch. A partial brick wall contained the fireplace. The kitchen had walls of painted plaster with painted woodwork and birch cabinets. The ceiling of the family room was of painted plaster; the living-dining area floor was of cork, but the kitchen area had a floor of inlaid linoleum. The lighting consisted of a flush ceiling and two wall fixtures, a floor lamp, and a pulley lamp on a track. A hot air system was used for heating the room.

The family room was used for practically all family activities and for part of the entertaining. The living room was used only for adult entertaining and for listening to the hi-fi record player. Occasionally, the volume on the hi-fi was turned up and the family sat in the family room listening to records or groups danced, opening the doors to the sun porch for additional space. Family activities occurring regularly in the family room included - viewing television, reading, card games, board games, and dancing. The mother's regular activities in the family room were entertaining callers, serving refreshments, and keeping family records. She also frequently wrote letters there, and occasionally read aloud to the boys, painted, sewed by hand, ironed, or held group meetings in this room. The sons played quiet games, and the older boy worked on his airplane models and practiced violin in the family room. The household helper ironed and watched television in the family room.

The homemaker had planned her home and was well satisfied with the family room. She summed up the advantages of a family room as: taking the wear and tear off the other areas of the house, and as providing a

place where the family could be together, relax and enjoy their various activities. She especially liked the finishes and furnishings of the family room because they were easy to care for and took hard wear.

Mrs. E stated that the family room was adequate for most family activities; however she said that the boys needed a place for active play such as darts and basketball during the winter. The carport was used for this purpose in the summer. A second disadvantage stated was that although the living area of the family room was adequate for family activities; it appeared crowded for a large group.

Family F

Mr. and Mrs. F and their two daughters, aged thirteen and eight had lived for eight months in a six room brick house that was planned by the family and consisted of a living-dining room combination, family room, three bedrooms, one and a half bathrooms, and a playroom in the basement.

The family room was rectangular in shape, 10'-6" x 25'-6" with a door to the living-dining room and one to the front entrance hall. A double window treated with cafe curtains was located on the end wall of the kitchen area, and the double window in the living area was covered with vertically drawn bamboo blinds. The U shape kitchen was located at one end of the room. A counter and storage unit partially divided the kitchen area from the living area. There was no dining table in the room, but all family meals except an occasional evening meal were eaten at the counter. The living area contained comfortable seating furniture, a television set, a desk, and a sewing machine. The paneled walls and woodwork in the living area were walnut, the kitchen walls were painted

plaster, and the cabinets were stained to match the walnut paneled walls. The ceiling was of plaster, and the floor was covered with vinyl tile. Lighting in the room consisted of two flush ceiling fixtures, three table lamps, and two floor lamps. A forced air gas furnace was used to heat the room.

The family room was used for quiet family activities. The playroom in the basement equipped with radio and record player accommodated more active play. The living-dining room was used for entertaining and occasionally for family dinners. Regular family activities occurring in the family room included - viewing television, reading, letter writing, table games, daytime resting, and family record keeping. The mother regularly entertained callers, served refreshments, cut out garments, sewed by hand and machine, and ironed in this room. Occasionally, she held group meetings or cared for a sick child there. The father used this room for his hobby which was photography. The older daughter used the wide service counter when working on school projects, and the younger girl sewed for scout projects and for her dolls in this room. The household helper ironed frequently in the family room.

Mrs. F planned her family room and was satisfied with it. She stated that the family room was her favorite room because it allowed her to sew and cook while she entertained or visited with the family. She stated other advantages as permitting the husband and wife to have more time together than they would ordinarily have, and allowing the children to be with the parents for various activities. The homemaker liked the finishes and furnishings of the room because they were so practical and

easy to maintain. One disadvantage stated was that some members of the family often wanted quiet for reading, while others wanted to watch television.

It was also stated that although the storage space was sufficient, shelves would be preferable to cabinets for book storage.

Family G

Family G consisted of the parents and two daughters aged fourteen and nine years, who had lived in their brick home for nine months. The home had eight rooms - a living room, dining room, family room, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and additional rooms in the basement - recreation room, laundry, workshop and a bathroom.

The family room was 17'-0" x 29'-0", with a single window in the kitchen area and a double window in the living-dining area. Both windows were treated with draw draperies. Doors from the family room opened into the dining room, hall, and patio. The broken U shape kitchen occupied one end of the room. A cabinet unit which contained the range and provided storage served as a divider between the kitchen and the living-dining area. A king sized game table with four arm chairs was used for dining. It was placed near the double window in the living-dining area opposite the fireplace. The family enjoyed certain television programs while they ate, and the table was placed both for easy viewing and convenience to the kitchen. The living area featured an end wall which had a built-in unit that included book shelves and the television set, and a side wall which had a large brick fireplace with a raised

hearth. The fireplace was used regularly. The living area had two closets - one used for storing cleaning equipment and the other for excess equipment and supplies from the kitchen. Materials used in the room included paneled walls, woodwork and cabinets of pine, counter tops of ceramic tile, with the tile extending on the wall behind the cabinets, a plastered ceiling, and a rubber tile floor. Three flush ceiling fixtures, two table lamps and one wall lamp provided light for the room. A forced air gas furnace provided heat.

The family room was used regularly for all entertaining. The dining room was used for Sunday meals and an average of three evening meals during the week. The living room was used mainly for practicing the piano. Family activities that occurred regularly in the family room included - watching television, reading, writing letters, table games, entertaining callers and guests, holding group meetings, serving refreshments, and daytime relaxation. The mother used the room regularly for family record keeping, and frequently for crocheting and sewing by hand and machine. The father used the room mainly for relaxing. Both daughters studied regularly in the family room and occasionally played board games. All active play was confined to the recreation room. The older daughter occasionally played the clarinet in the family room. A box of small toys stored on the book shelf were used to entertain small children who visited the family frequently.

Although the homemaker did not plan her family room, she said it was "ideal," and she admired the skill and taste of the former owner who

planned the home. Its advantages were according to Mrs. G to allow more time to be with her husband, to create closer family ties, to promote more cooperative work of family members, and to make the homemaker's work more pleasant because she could be with the family while working.

The only change suggested by the homemaker was the addition of a door to close off the hall which led to the bedrooms. This was needed, she stated, to cut down on the noise heard in the bedrooms.

Family H

Family H was composed of five members - the parents and three daughters, the latter aged five and one-half, three and one-half, and one and one-half years. This family had lived two years in the five room brick home which they had planned. The house consisted of a living-dining room combination, family room, three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a screened porch.

The family room was 17'-0" x 32'-0", and was rectangular in shape. It had three doors; one each - to the living room, to the entrance hall, and to the screened porch. Four single windows had been placed - two in the kitchen area that were left uncurtained, and two in the living area where draw draperies were used for privacy. The kitchen was a modified U shape and included a washer and dryer. The kitchen was located at one end of the room occupying about one-third of the floor area. There was a wide service counter that served as a divider between the kitchen and living areas. The dining table was placed beyond the service counter in the living area. The living area had a large fireplace which was used

occasionally, comfortable seating furniture, and a television set. A large closet with double doors provided space for general storage. The finishes in the family room were varied and interesting. The walls in the living area were of natural fir paneling and the fireplace wall was of sand colored brick; the kitchen walls were wallpapered, and the cabinets were of maple. The kitchen counter surfaces were of red formica and the ceiling in the kitchen area was a smooth plaster painted red. The ceiling in the living area was a neutral sand finished plaster. Vinyl asbestos tile was used for the floor covering. A flush and dropped ceiling fixtures, an adjustable lamp from the ceiling, and one table and two floor lamps, provided light for the room. A forced air oil furnace provided heat.

The family room was "the room" with this family. All regular family activities occurred there. The living-dining room combination was used only for guest entertaining, listening to records, and meals served to large groups. Regular family activities in the family room included watching television, reading, children's games, dancing, singing, entertaining callers, and serving refreshments. The family frequently played table games, and occasionally listened to the radio in the family room. The service counter was used for all breakfasts and lunches, and the dining table for all evening meals. The mother regularly dressed the children, read aloud to the children, wrote letters, crocheted, cut out garments on the service counter, sewed by hand, kept the family records, and took her husband's business calls there. Occasionally, she worked with her stamp collection, studied, and rested in this room. The father regularly read aloud there to the children. The children used the family

room for playing. An area was provided in the service counter for the storage of their toys. They also used the service counter for coloring, drawing, and puzzles. The baby sitter watched television, read and played with the children in the family room. The household helper ironed there.

Mrs. H said her family room was adequate for all activities at the present time, and she definitely thought it was needed more now than it would be when the children were older. According to Mrs. H, the room is advantageous to her family because it brings them together; enables the mother to keep an eye on the children; it is easy to care for and saves much time and energy in relation to the jobs to be done. She stated as disadvantages: that the room looks untidy if visitors come in unexpectedly immediately after meals; that the maid was with the family when she worked; and that the raised hearth was a safety hazard for children.

The only change suggested was the addition of a broom closet large enough to provide storage for the ironing board.

Family I

Family I had only one child, a daughter four years of age. They had lived in their brick home almost a year. The home was purchased from the builder and contained five rooms - a living room, family room, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms.

The family room was 30'-0" long, the kitchen and dining area was 12'-0" wide and the living area was 16'-0" wide. The room had three

doors one of which led to each - the living room, the entrance hall, and the outside porch. There was a single window in the kitchen, and a double and a single window in the living area; all were treated with draw draperies. The kitchen, a modified U shape was located at one end of the room, and occupied about one-third of the floor space. A storage wall partially concealed the kitchen from the remainder of the room. The living area contained a large fireplace which was used occasionally; and comfortable seating furniture was provided and arranged for viewing television and listening to the radio. Materials used in the room were walls and cabinets of natural pine with matching woodwork, and a painted ceiling of plaster. The floor was covered with inlaid linoleum. Two flush and one dropped ceiling fixtures, two wall fixtures and a table lamp provided light. A forced air furnace provided heat for the room.

Regular family activities occurred in the family room; and in addition, dances were held there on special occasions, and the room was used for sleeping when extra space was needed for guests. The living room was used for entertaining and occasionally for card parties. Regular family activities occurring in the family room were viewing television, reading, card games and radio listening. The mother used the room for correspondence. Frequently, she read aloud to the daughter and crocheted in this room. Table games were occasionally played, callers entertained, group meetings held, and refreshments served there. The daughter regularly played in the family room, although many of her toys were kept in the bedroom, a storage space was provided for them in the family room. The baby sitter and household helper viewed television,

played with the child, and ironed in this room.

When asked if she would want another home with a family room, Mrs. I stated, "I would never have another home without a family room." She stated the advantages of the family room to her family were: that it brought the family together and promoted family unity, and that it gave the mother peace of mind because it prevented wear and tear on the remainder of the house.

The homemaker said her family room was very easy to care for, and that she was satisfied with it as it was, without any changes.

Family J

Mr. and Mrs. J, their family of five - three daughters, aged seventeen, ten, and nine; and two sons aged thirteen, and eleven, and Mr. J's mother had lived in their six room brick home for two years. The home when purchased from the builder consisted of seven rooms - a living room, family room, five bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a utility room.

The family room had been remodeled after purchasing to provide for the needs of a family of eight. The family room originally was rectangular in shape and contained 12'-0" x 28'-0" of space; it had a modified U shape kitchen across one end that occupied about 40 per cent of the floor area. Since this area was not large enough to provide space and facilities for the many and varied activities and interests of the family, it had been remodeled providing space for a living area by including the space formerly allotted to a bedroom and the garage. This additional space provided a living area that was 27'-0" long with an average width of 18'-0" and had a floor level three feet below the space

which included the kitchen and dining areas. The living area was separated from the kitchen-dining area by a hall 4'-0" x 5'-0" with a door making it possible to close off the living area. The kitchen-dining area had a door to the outside and one to the entrance hall. Doors from the living area led into the entrance hall, boy's bedroom, utility room, and to the outside. Two single and a double window in the kitchen-dining area and two double and one single window in the living area provided light and ventilation. The windows in both areas were treated with draw draperies. The living area contained comfortable seating furniture, the television set, a piano, an ironer, and a sewing machine. An unusual feature of the living area was a refrigerator and a bar with electrical appliances for quick meals and refreshments. The kitchen-dining area walls were of birch paneling with matching woodwork, and the cabinets were of birch. The living area walls were a combination of pine and birch paneling. The ceilings were plasterboard and the floors were vinyl tile. A forced air furnace was used to heat the room. The artificial lighting consisted of two ceiling fixtures and a direct light over the sink in the kitchen-dining area, and two ceiling fixtures, three table and one floor lamp in the living area.

All family activities occurred in the family room. The living room was used for adult entertaining, listening to records, and occasionally for entertaining teenagers. Regular family activities occurring in the family room included watching television, reading, table games and children's play. It was frequently used for family parties and serving refreshments. Occasionally, games such as ping-

pong, indoor golf putting, and horse shoe pitching were played. The ping-pong table was stored behind the piano, and the equipment for some activities was stored in and behind the bar. The mother regularly read, cut out garments, sewed, ironed, and kept the family records in the room. The father regularly participated in games, and the children used it regularly for their games, entertaining their friends, parties, and dancing. Occasionally, the children studied or wrote letters there, but most of their study was done in their bedrooms.

The homemaker said that her family room accommodated all activities that the family wished to participate in; however, she wished the living area were large enough for a stove and sink, since its floor level was lower than the kitchen-dining area. She said that she thought a family room was essential to her family and would not want to be without one. According to Mrs. J, the advantages of a family room were: a place for group or individual activities; a convenient place for entertaining large groups or for the children and their friends; and that it was versatile enough to accommodate overnight guests. The only disadvantage stated was that the sunken floor of the living area proved to be a problem for Mr. J's mother who was rather old.

When asked about suggestions for changes in relation to the design of the room or its furnishings, Mrs. J suggested a fireplace as a desirable addition.

Family K

Family K consisted of the parents and two children - a boy aged

eleven and a daughter aged five. The K's had lived in their six room brick house for three and one-half years. The house included - a living room, dining room, family room, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms.

The family room was L shape with a total length of 33'-0", and a width of 9'-0" in the living area and 9'-6" in the kitchen area. Doors from the family room provided passage to the dining room, bedroom, entrance hall, and patio. The kitchen had a single window, and one end of the living area contained a glass window unit nine feet wide. Draw draperies were used at the windows. The modified parallel wall kitchen was located in the upper portion of the room, and the living area was horizontal to the kitchen. A wide bar with four stools which was used for most of the family meals also served as a partial divider between the living and kitchen areas. The living area contained comfortable seating furniture and the television set. Walls and woodwork were finished in walnut, and the kitchen cabinets were a light wood finished naturally. Ceramic tile was used on the walls back of the sink and range. Vinyl-asbestos tile covered the floor, and the ceiling was of sheetrock. Two flush ceiling fixtures, a direct light over the range, and a floor lamp were used in the family room. A hot water convector system provided heat for the room.

The family room was used for most family activities except for occasional evening meals which were eaten in the dining room. Most of the family meals were eaten at the bar in the family room. The living room was reported as being used solely for entertaining. Regular family

activities occurring in the family room included - watching television, listening to the radio, reading, children's games, and serving refreshments. Card and board games were frequently played there. Occasionally, the room was used for overnight guests. The mother ironed there regularly. She cut out garments and sewed by hand and machine occasionally, and cared for a sick child in this room. The daughter played regularly with puzzles, paints, and dolls, and the son occasionally practiced violin in the family room. All active play was carried on in a bedroom adjacent to the family room which served as play room until the garage was remodeled. Equipment for the activities as well as coats were stored in a large closet in the family room.

Mrs. K stated that she liked her family room because it brought the family together for relaxation and activities; thereby, creating closer family unity. The disadvantage of the family room she reported was that the proximity of the television set caused the children to want to eat their meals in front of it.

Mrs. K found the finishes of the walls and cabinets to be satisfactory, but she was dissatisfied with the floor which had a white background that was hard to clean and maintain.

The family plans to add a king-size bridge table and chairs to the living area that can be used for meals and quiet games, and for more seating space.

The changes suggested by Mrs. K were an increase of at least two feet in the width of the living area of the room, and a darker colored floor.

Family L

The L family and their fifteen year old daughter had lived in their brick home which consisted of - a living room, family room, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms - for three years.

The family room was a 20'-0" square room with three doors - one led to an inside hall, one to the entrance hall, and one to the outside. The windows - a single one in the kitchen, and a window unit six feet wide in the living area were treated with draw draperies. The kitchen and built-in laundry area was U shape with a round dining table in the center. The kitchen, laundry, and dining areas occupied about sixty percent of the floor area of the room. The living area contained a built-in desk, book and storage unit, a built-in window seat, the television set, and a buffet. Materials used in the room were: walls and cabinets of natural finished knotty pine, pine woodwork, a ceiling of plaster, and an inlaid linoleum floor. Two dropped ceiling fixtures, a panel light over the buffet, and in the kitchen area direct lights were used. A forced hot air system provided heat for the room.

The family room was used for most of the family activities except active play which took place in the game room. The living room was used for entertaining, watching television in the evenings, and card parties. Regular family activities occurring in the family room included: viewing television, listening to the radio, reading, card games, entertaining callers, and serving refreshments. Letters were frequently written there, and occasionally the room was used for day time resting

and sleeping when guests were visiting. The mother's regular activities included: crocheting, cutting out garments and sewing, keeping family records, and laundering. Sewing supplies and records were stored in the built-in desk and storage unit. The father occasionally held group meetings in this room. The daughter regularly worked on school projects, frequently studied, and occasionally held dinner parties in the family room.

Mrs. L had planned the family room and stated she was well satisfied with it. According to Mrs. L, the family room's greatest advantages were - promoting family unity, and allowing the mother to be a part of the family group while she cooked. The only disadvantage stated was that the cooking area was always visible which was undesirable when entertaining.

For changes in the family room, Mrs. L suggested a built-in oven, and the addition of a portable screen to block the view from the dining table to the cooking area.

The findings from the interview schedules and the activity record forms are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE FAMILY ROOMS

This chapter includes the findings pertaining to the finishes and materials, the furniture and equipment, the storage facilities, the activities carried on therein, and the homemaker's appraisal of the family room and her suggestions for improvements.

Finishes and Materials

Nine of the 12 family rooms were planned by the families, assisted by architects or builders. This included the family who had purchased their house, and later remodeled the family room.

The 12 family rooms included eight that were rectangular in shape, three that were L shape, and one that was square. In all of the family rooms, the kitchen was located in one end of the room. The dining area was located between the kitchen and the living area in nine family rooms, adjacent to the living area in two, and adjacent to the kitchen area in one. Service counters, room dividers or storage units, partially or completely separated the kitchen from the living area in 10 family rooms.

The family rooms varied in sizes, ranging in width from 9'-6" to 24'-0", and in length from 20'-0" to 32'-0". Six rooms had a width greater than 15 feet, and 10 rooms had a length greater than 25 feet. All of the family rooms contained at least two doors; the majority of the rooms had three doors. Window units in three rooms and single or double windows in eight of the rooms provided light and ventilation. In one

air conditioned room a full glass wall provided light. All windows and the glass wall were treated with draw draperies or cafe curtains except the windows in one kitchen area which were uncurtained for additional light. Seven family rooms contained fireplaces; four were used regularly and three occasionally. One fireplace was used only for the grill. Five of the seven fireplaces had raised hearths.

Eight family rooms were heated with forced air oil heating systems, two with forced air gas heating systems, and two with hot water systems.

The artificial lighting provided for the family rooms varied as is shown in Table III. All of the family rooms had some type of ceiling

TABLE III
TYPES OF ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Type of lighting	Number of family rooms	Number of lamps or lighting fixtures
Portable lamps	10	23
Ceiling		
Flush	9	14
Dropped	4	6
Recessed	3	11
Adjustable	3	3
Gyromatic bullet	1	3
Wall		
Pin-up lamp	2	2
Panel	1	1
Area		
Over the sink	7	7
Over the range	4	4
Under the wall cabinets	3	3

fixture. Two rooms had counterbalanced lamps over the dining area. One room contained an adjustable lamp on a track so that it could be centered over the table when entertaining large groups. In seven rooms direct light was provided over the sink, in four over the range, and three rooms had additional lights at the cabinets.

A variety of wall materials or combination of materials was used in the family rooms as indicated in Table IV. Some type of wall paneling was used in all family rooms either alone or in combination with other materials. Paneling only was used in two rooms; pine paneling was the most used type of wall material with birch, walnut, and fir in rank order. All paneling had a natural finish. Brick was the most frequently used material in combination with paneling. One room had a wall that was of glass.

TABLE IV
WALL MATERIALS IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Wood paneling	Number of family rooms	Paneling only	Paneling in combination with:			
			Brick or stone	Plaster	Wall-paper	Glass panel
		Number of family rooms*				
Pine paneling	5	2	1	1	1	
Birch paneling	4		3	1		1
Walnut paneling	3		1	1	1	
Fir paneling	1		1		1	

*In two of the family rooms paneling was used in combination with two other wall materials.

The woodwork in 11 family rooms was finished with a natural wood

fixture. Two rooms had counterbalanced lamps over the dining area. One room contained an adjustable lamp on a track so that it could be centered over the table when entertaining large groups. In seven rooms direct light was provided over the sink, in four over the range, and three rooms had additional lights at the cabinets.

A variety of wall materials or combination of materials was used in the family rooms as indicated in Table IV. Some type of wall paneling was used in all family rooms either alone or in combination with other materials. Paneling only was used in two rooms; pine paneling was the most used type of wall material with birch, walnut, and fir in rank order. All paneling had a natural finish. Brick was the most frequently used material in combination with paneling. One room had a wall that was of glass.

TABLE IV
WALL MATERIALS IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Wood paneling	Number of family rooms	Paneling only	Paneling in combination with:			
			Brick or stone	Plaster	Wall-paper	Glass panel
		Number of family rooms*				
Pine paneling	5	2	1	1	1	
Birch paneling	4		3	1		1
Walnut paneling	3		1	1	1	
Fir paneling	1		1		1	

*In two of the family rooms paneling was used in combination with two other wall materials.

The woodwork in 11 family rooms was finished with a natural wood

finish to match the walls. In one room all woodwork was painted the same color as the cabinets and storage units.

The ceilings in nine family rooms were of plaster, two of wall-board, and one of acoustical tile.

A variety of floor coverings were found in the 12 family rooms. Inlaid linoleum was used in one-third of the rooms (Table V). Vinyl asbestos tile rated second in frequency of use. All vinyl tile was used in two rooms. Rubber tile, a combination of cork and linoleum (cork in the living area and linoleum in the kitchen area), and terrazzo each was used in a family room. It is interesting to note that no hardwood flooring was used.

TABLE V
FLOOR COVERINGS IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Type of floor covering	Number of family rooms
Inlaid linoleum	4
Vinyl asbestos tile	3
All vinyl tile	2
Rubber tile	1
Terrazzo	1
Cork and linoleum	1

Natural wood finishes were used on the cabinets in 11 of the 12 family rooms, and paint was used on the cabinets in one room. The types of woods from which the cabinets were made are as follows:

<u>Type of wood</u>	<u>Natural finished cabinets</u>	<u>Painted cabinets</u>
	<u>Number of family rooms</u>	
Pine	4	
Birch	4	
Plywood	2	1
Maple	1	

The colors used in the family rooms were mainly the warm colors which complimented the natural woods used in the paneled walls, woodwork, and cabinets. The one room with painted cabinets and woodwork was accented with warm colors. More solid and textured fabrics had been used in the draperies and upholstery materials, although some pattern had been introduced through the use of wallpaper and drapery fabric. The majority of the floors were covered with materials low in value. Only two rooms used area rugs both of which were beige in color, and there was no wall to wall carpeting.

Furniture and Equipment

The furniture and equipment found in the family rooms are shown in Table VI. All of the 12 family rooms contained comfortable seating furniture, a television set, a telephone, and plants or flower arrangements. A dining table and chairs were found in 10 family rooms, and a service counter only was available for dining in two rooms. Draw draperies were used at all or part of the windows in 10 of the family rooms. Cafe curtains were used at the windows in the kitchen area in four rooms, and in both the kitchen and living areas in one room. One

TABLE VI
FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Type	Number of family rooms	Type	Number of family rooms
Easy chairs	11	Telephones	12
Sofa	10		
Stools	4	Bookcase	7
Benches	3	Magazine rack	4
Child's rocking chair	2	Desk	4
Window seat	1	Typewriter	1
Dining table and chairs	10	Portable lamps	10
Service counter	6		
Counter stools	6	Sewing machine	3
High chair	3	Hobby equipment	2
Cupboard	2		
Serving trays	2	Plants and flower arrangements	12
Youth chair	1	Waste basket	8
		Smoking stand	2
Lamp table	7		
Coffee table	3	Draw draperies	10
Card table	1	Cafe curtains	4
		Bamboo blinds	1
Television	12		
Radio	6	Area rug	2
Record player	2	Scatter rug	2
Piano	1		

room used bamboo blinds at the windows in the living area. Ten rooms used built-ins such as room dividers, counters, or storage units to partially or completely close off the kitchen from the remainder of the room. Three of these 10 rooms provided complete closures. Two rooms made no provision for closing off the kitchen, but one of these homemakers stated a desire for a screen for this purpose. Bookcases were found in seven rooms, and six contained service counters used regularly for

breakfast and lunch and for an occasional evening meal. Three rooms each contained sewing machines and built-in desks, and one room had a portable desk. It is interesting to note that only one family room contained a piano.

Most of the furniture and equipment had specific uses, but the dining table was multipurpose. In most family rooms, in addition to meal service, the dining table was used as a desk and for adult and children's games.

Storage Facilities and Items Stored

A variety of items stored and storage facilities were found in the family rooms (Table VII). The only storage facility common to all family rooms was the kitchen cabinet; consequently the only like items stored in all family rooms were kitchen utensils and equipment for food service. The storage facilities provided in the family rooms included broom closets, bookcases, desks, file cabinets, closets, service counters, a pantry and a window seat. In eight of the rooms hobby materials and cleaning supplies were stored; family records, books and laundry supplies were stored in seven rooms. Other items stored in five of the rooms or less included toys, writing materials, magazines, sewing supplies, iron, ironing board, card tables, seasonal clothes, and a typewriter.

A comparison is made in Table VIII of the family rooms that provided for the storage of specific items used in the room, and those rooms in which the same type of items were brought from another area of

TABLE VII

ITEMS STORED AND STORAGE FACILITIES IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Items stored	Number of families storing	Broom closet	Book Shelves	Desk Unit	Kitchen cabinet	File cabinet	Built-in cabinet	Service counter	Closet	Pantry	Window seat	What-not shelf
Number of families												
Meal preparation and service equipment	12	-	-	-	12	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
Cleaning supplies	8	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Hobby Materials	8	-	5	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
Family records	7	-	-	4	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Books	7	-	5	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Laundry supplies	7	-	-	-	5	-	2	-	1	-	-	-
Toys, puzzles, etc.	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	-
Writing materials	5	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Extra supplies	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	-
Magazines	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iron	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sewing supplies	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Card tables	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Ironing board	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Typewriter	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seasonal clothes	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

TABLE VIII

A COMPARISON OF ITEMS STORED IN THE FAMILY ROOMS
AND ITEMS BROUGHT INTO THE FAMILY ROOMS

Type of items	Item stored	Item brought in
	Number of family rooms	
Hobby materials	8	3
Books	7	3
Family records	7	1
Toys	5	6
Sewing supplies	2	3
Card tables	2	3
Ironing board	1	5
Typewriter	1	3

the house to be used in the family room.

In several instances the items were brought into more of the family rooms than the number that provided storage. Toys were brought into six rooms as compared with five that provided storage. The ironing board was brought into five family rooms, and stored in only one, and typewriters were brought into three rooms and stored in one.

Activities Occurring in the Family Rooms

Data were obtained as to the type and frequency of the activities occurring in the family room, and the persons participating as individuals or groups. Individual participation was classified for the mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, and others. The "others" includes additional family members, baby sitters, and household helpers. The activities were categorized as occurring regularly, frequently, or occasionally (Appendix Table I).

When interviewed, all of the homemakers stated that there were five activities that occurred in the family room - viewing television; playing table or board games; reading newspapers, books, and magazines; entertaining callers; and serving refreshments (Table IX). The most frequently occurring group activities were viewing television, table or board games and reading.

The individual activities varied with the members of the families. The mothers' activities that occurred most frequently in the family rooms were letter writing and family record keeping. Reading and daytime relaxing occurred most frequently for fathers, and play activities and studying for the sons and daughters. The household helpers ironed and the baby sitters played with the children, and viewed television most frequently in the family room.

Activities from the record forms kept by 12 homemakers for two weekdays and a Saturday, and by 11 homemakers for a Sunday revealed that all of the 12 families participated regularly (Figure II) in meal preparation, food service and clearing after meals; viewing television; and reading. In 11 family rooms children's play and serving refreshments were recorded. Eight homemakers recorded room care as an activity. The most frequently occurring activities for the weekdays, in addition to those previously mentioned, were entertaining callers, studying, room care, sewing, laundering, children's play, family record keeping, and pursuing hobbies. Miscellaneous activities such as folding laundry, dressing the children, personal care, repairing television sets, or family conferences were recorded by one or more of nine homemakers.

TABLE IX
STATED ACTIVITIES IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Activities	Number of families	Group	Mother	Father	Daughters (22)	Sons (7)	Others
Watch television	12	12	2	1	22	2	5
Table or board games	12	12	2	3	11	2	-
Read newspapers	12	11	3	3	-	1	2
Read magazines	12	11	3	3	6	-	1
Read books	12	10	2	2	-	-	1
Entertain callers	12	8	5	1	3	1	-
Serve refreshments	12	8	6	1	3	1	-
Write letters	11	3	8	2	3	1	-
Family record keeping	11	2	9	1	-	-	-
Listen to radio	10	9	1	1	2	-	1
Children's play	10	4	-	-	12	4	3
Hold meetings	9	4	5	2	3	1	-
Daytime relaxing	9	3	5	3	1	1	-
Ironing	9	-	4	-	-	-	5
Eating all family meals	8	8	-	-	-	-	-
Studying	8	-	2	2	11	2	-
Cutting out garments	7	-	7	-	2	-	-
Sewing by machine	7	-	7	-	2	-	-
Pursuing hobbies	7	-	6	2	1	1	-
Read aloud	6	-	6	3	-	-	-
Sleeping (guest)	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eating most family meals	4	4	-	-	-	-	-
Dancing	4	3	-	-	1	-	-
Playing mus. instrument	4	-	-	1	4	2	-
Listening to records	2	2	-	-	4	-	-
Singing	1	1	-	-	-	-	-

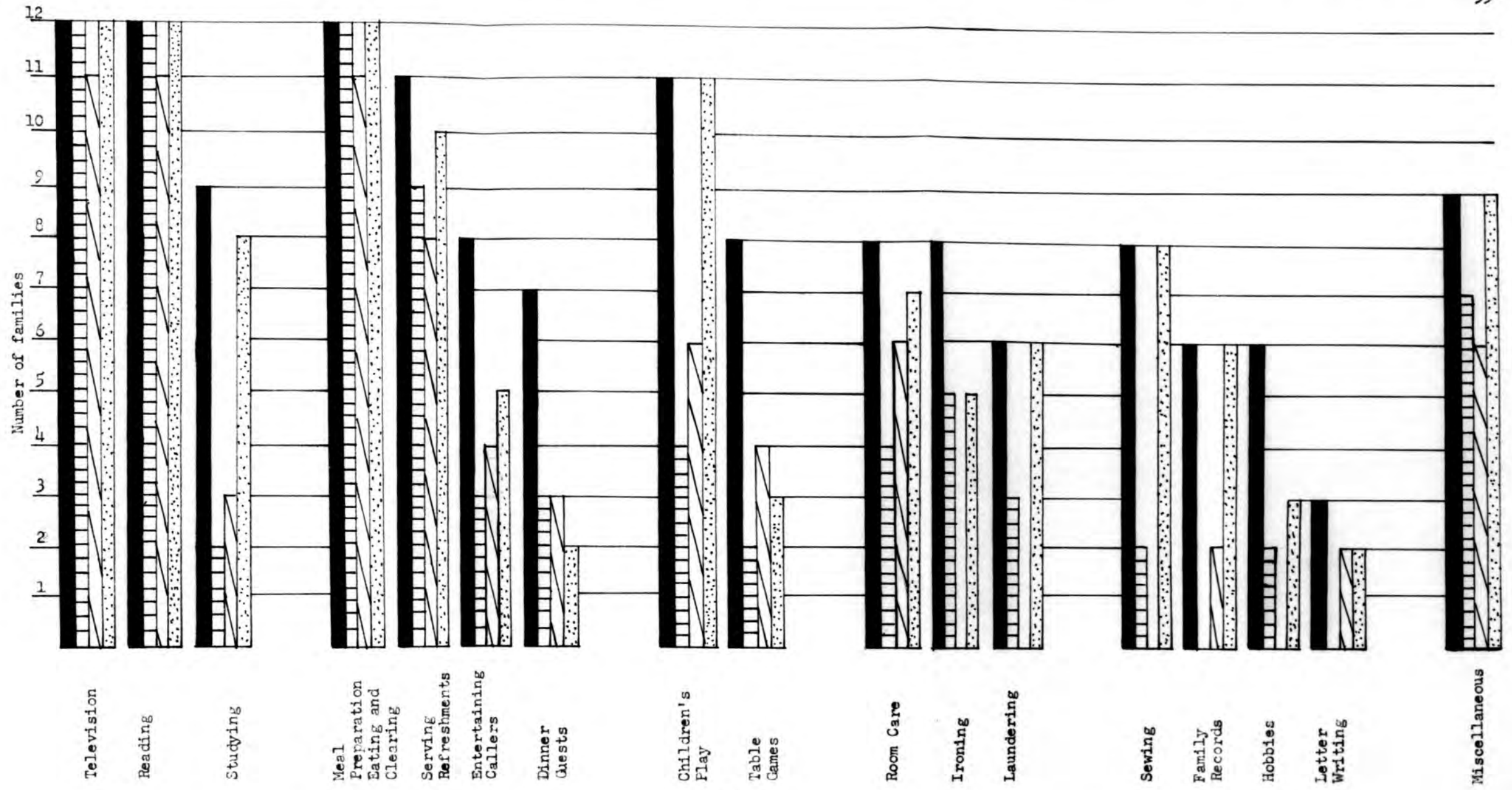


FIGURE II

RECORDED ACTIVITIES IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Number of families participating in activities

Number of families participating on Saturday

Number of families participating on Sunday (11 reporting)

Number of families participating on weekdays

The most frequently occurring activity on Sunday was table games. None of the activities were recorded as occurring more frequently on Saturdays than any other day. Four activities - laundering, sewing, ironing, and pursuing hobbies did not occur on Sunday, and no family records were reported as kept on Saturday.

A comparison of the activities occurring in the family room as obtained from the interview data and from the activities recorded by the homemakers is shown in Table X. Three categories of activities (1) meal preparation, food service, and clearing after meals, (2) viewing television, and (3) reading were common to all family rooms. It is interesting to note that children's play and studying each were recorded as occurring in one more family room than was revealed from the interview data. No guest sleeping or singing were noted in the recorded activities. However, activities such as cleaning the room, reported by eight homemakers, and folding laundry, personal care, dressing the children, and family conferences, and television repairs were reported by one or more of the homemakers in the recorded activities and not in the interview data.

In addition to the family members' activities in the family rooms, the paid helpers participated in certain activities. Ten of the 12 families used paid labor for child care or household help or both (Table XI). Nine of the families used help with the housework and six with childcare. In three families, the household helpers also cared for the children for short periods of time during which the mother was away.

Playing with the children, ironing, and viewing television were

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF ACTIVITIES OCCURRING IN THE FAMILY ROOMS AS
OBTAINED FROM INTERVIEW DATA AND RECORDED ACTIVITIES

Activities	Interview data (12 reporting)	Activity records (12 report- ing)
Meal preparation, service and clearing	12	12
Watching television	12	12
Reading	12	12
Serving refreshments	12	11
Entertaining callers	12	7
Table and board games	12	7
Family record keeping	11	6
Letter writing	11	3
Children's play	10	11
Listening to radio	10	2
Holding meetings	9	2
Daytime relaxing	9	4
Ironing	9	8
Studying	8	9
Cutting garments and sewing	7	7
Laundrying	7	5
Pursuing hobbies	7	6
Reading aloud	6	4
Dancing	4	1
Listening to records	2	2
Music instruments	4	1
Guest sleeping	5	
Singing	1	
Cleaning room		8
Folding laundry		2
Personal care		2
Dressing children		2
Family conferences		2
Television repairing		2

TABLE XI
ACTIVITIES OF PAID HELPERS IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Activities	Household help (nine families)	Help with child care (six families)
	Number of family rooms	
Ironing	5	
Viewing television	1*	4
Playing with children		6
Reading		1
Laundry	1	
Eating lunch	1	

*In one family room the household helper watched television while she ironed.

the major activities of the paid labor in the family rooms. It is very interesting to note that only one household helper was reported as doing the laundry in the family room when laundering was reported as an activity in seven rooms. The activities stated above for the paid household helpers are in addition to her regular cleaning activities in the family rooms.

Homemakers' Appraisal and Suggestions for Improvements

When interviewed all of the 12 homemakers stated that they would want a family room included if they were building or buying another home. Eleven of the homemakers stated the main advantage of the family room was that it promoted family togetherness by providing a place where the members could participate in the various activities (Table XII). According to eight homemakers their work was more pleasant and convenient because they could be with the family while working. Seven stated

as an advantage that the family room would accommodate an overflow of guests from the living room, and provide additional sleeping space. Other advantages stated by the homemakers included enabling the mother "to keep an eye" on the children, took the wear and tear off the remainder of the house, easy to care for, provided a place for individual and group activities and easy entertaining, encouraged more cooperative work from family members, provided a place where children could eat when guests were present for meals, and provided a place where the family could relax.

TABLE XII

ADVANTAGES OF FAMILY ROOMS AS STATED BY HOMEMAKERS

Stated advantages	Number of homemakers
Family togetherness	11
Made mother's work more pleasant and convenient	8
Accommodated overflow of guests	7
Provided additional sleeping space	7
Enabled mother to "keep an eye" on children	4
Took wear and tear off remainder of house	4
Easy to care for	4
Provided center for activities and easy entertaining	2
Provided for both group and individual activities	1
Encouraged more cooperative work from family members	1
Place where children could eat when there are guests	1
Provided place where family could relax	1

A minority of the homemakers stated that the family room offered some disadvantages for their families. These disadvantages are shown in Table XIII. Two homemakers with several children stated that there was too much activity in the family room at times. Two homemakers

with small children stated that the raised hearth at the fireplace was hazardous, however, five of the seven fireplaces had raised hearths. By having the laundry in the family room, one homemaker stated that the maid was with the family a large part of the time while she worked.

TABLE XIII

DISADVANTAGES OF THE FAMILY ROOM AS STATED BY THE HOMEMAKERS

Stated disadvantages	Number of homemakers
Too much activity at times	2
Raised hearth hazardous to small children	2
Having to use for guest meals	1
Unsanitary after meals if guests came in	1
Maid with family while she worked	1
Stairs difficult for elderly person	1*
Cooking area visible to dining and living areas	1
Children eating in front of the television	1

*The homemaker was referring to a family room on two levels.

A variety of changes were suggested by homemakers for improving the family rooms. Three homemakers having family rooms measuring less than 14 feet in width suggested an increase of at least two feet. Two homemakers suggested that additional space be provided for book storage, and two suggested the provision of space in the cleaning closet for the ironing board. Other suggestions were made by an individual homemaker or several suggestions were made by one homemaker. These suggestions for improvements included:

- Additional windows for more light
- Inside shutters for windows
- The omission of windows over storage cabinets
- The addition of a door to close off the family room from hall

Natural wood finished cabinets instead of painted ones
Magnetic latches on cabinet doors
Cabinets built to fit without crevices
Built-in desk unit
Built-in oven with exhaust fan
The addition of a fireplace
Inlaid linoleum as a floor covering as preferable to all vinyl
tile
A floor covering being more desirable with a dark background
The need of an economical and cleaner heating system

Only a few pieces of additional furniture or equipment were desired. One homemaker with a family room that contained only a service counter for dining wanted a table and chairs that could be used for dining or games. Another homemaker wanted a lamp to be placed beside a sofa that would provide a good reading light. A third homemaker wanted a screen to conceal the kitchen area.

A summary of the findings pertaining to the family rooms and the background data which includes the size of family, number and ages of children, and the number and types of rooms in the houses is included in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recently American families have centered more attention around a multipurpose room known as the family room in which many and varied family activities and interests may develop. In reviewing the literature, no research could be located that dealt directly with such a room; but there was evidence that a room known as the family room is being included in modern house plans. There was also evidence that family interests, and daily living habits and activities influence the design of a home; and that design interest is leaning toward compact homes, designed and furnished with practical and durable materials that require a minimum of care and maintenance.

An interest in housing and a recognition of the recent inclusion of the family room in house planning prompted the present study of the use of the family room for individual and group activities.

The purposes of the study were (1) to determine activities that are carried on in the family room, and facilities used for these activities, (2) to obtain the homemaker's appraisal of the space and facilities provided for these activities, and (3) to obtain the homemaker's suggestions for space needs and interior design.

The definition of the term "family room" as used in this study was "A family room is multipurpose and includes space and facilities for leisure activities, meal service, and food preparation." The criteria used in selecting the homes were that the family room conform

to the definition and that the homemaker not be a member of the labor force. Twelve homes in the city of Greensboro with family rooms that met the criteria were obtained from lists furnished by builders and real estate agents.

The data for the study were obtained by means of personal interviews with the homemakers using a pretested schedule prepared by the writer, and from activity records kept by 12 homemakers for a Saturday and two weekdays, and by 11 homemakers for a Sunday.

The writer recognizes that the findings of such a small sample can only be considered as an indication of the preferences and judgments of this group of 12 families in the use of their family rooms for group or individual activities; and for the types of furnishings, equipment and storage facilities; and that the findings would not be indicative of all family rooms.

Background Information

All of the 12 families involved in the study included children. It was found that the majority of the children were girls; and that all but six of the children were under 12 years of age. The sex and ages of the children possibly affected the type of activities as well as the equipment, and furnishings of these particular rooms.

The 12 homes included in the study had been built within the last four years, and the length of time the families had lived in the homes varied. Seven of the families had lived in their homes for less than two years, and five families for less than four years. In addition to

the family room, 10 of the homes included a living room, five a recreation room, three a dining room, and two a living-dining combination room. Ten of the homes contained three bedrooms, and nine contained two bathrooms. The composition of these houses suggested that family rooms are being included in three bedroom or larger houses.

The type of rooms in the house influenced the type and number of activities carried on in the family room. Often the activities in the living, dining, and family rooms were similar or overlapping; however, the findings in this study do not suggest that the family room can take the place of a living room, recreation, or dining room. The major use made of the living room was for adult entertaining; and the dining room was used regularly for guest meals and only occasionally for family meals. In these homes the overall social life of the family took place in the family room.

Description of the Family Rooms

Eight of the family rooms were rectangular in shape; six had a width greater than 15 feet, and 10 had a length greater than 25 feet. Each room contained at least two doors, one of which was an outside entrance. The rooms contained at least one window in the kitchen area and two in the living area. These windows varied in style and size.

Seven rooms contained fireplaces of which five had raised hearths. The majority of rooms were heated with a forced air heating system. Some type of ceiling fixture provided artificial light in each room.

A rectangular family room at least 15 feet wide and 25 feet

long with a ceiling fixture for artificial lighting, forced air heat, and a fireplace was found in more than 50 per cent of the homes.

Finishes and Materials:

The walls in the family rooms were of natural finished wood paneling or paneling used in combination with other materials. The woodwork in one room was painted, but in 11 of the family rooms, it was of natural finished wood. The majority of the rooms had ceilings of plaster. The majority of the floors were covered with hard floor materials low in color value. No wall to wall carpeting was used; however, area rugs were used in two rooms.

The colors used in the family rooms were mainly the warm colors complimenting the natural woods used in the paneled walls, woodwork, and cabinets. Solid and textured fabrics were used for upholstery and some of the draperies. Pattern when incorporated in the decorative scheme was used in drapery fabrics and wallpaper.

The finishes and materials preferred for the family rooms were natural finished woods for the walls, woodwork, and cabinets; plaster for ceilings, and hard floor coverings that were easily maintained. The homemakers' expressed interest was for durable, attractive, and easy to care for finishes and materials.

Furniture and Equipment:

All of the 12 family rooms contained comfortable seating furniture, a television set, a telephone, and plants or flower arrangements. Ten rooms contained a dining table and chairs, and in two rooms service

counters only were available for dining. However, six of the rooms contained a service counter that was used partially for dining, particularly for breakfast and lunch. Service counters were often used for children's play with paints. The dining table was used for multiple purposes - serving as a desk and a game table in seven of the family rooms. The built-in furniture consisted of bookcases, service counters, and desks. Most of the homemakers seemingly were satisfied with the type and amount of furniture in the family rooms.

Storage Facilities and Items Stored:

The storage facility found in all family rooms was the kitchen cabinet, and kitchen utensils and equipment for food service were the only like items found stored in the same general manner. Other storage facilities were provided in the form of closets, bookcases, desks, broom closets, file cabinets, service counters, a pantry, and a window seat. Hobby materials and cleaning supplies, family records, books, and laundry supplies were stored in the majority of the family rooms. In addition some rooms provided storage for toys, writing materials, sewing supplies, irons, card tables, an ironing board, typewriter, and seasonal clothes. The majority of the homemakers stated that the storage in their family rooms was adequate.

Activities Occurring

Through interviews data were collected as to the type and frequency of the activities occurring in the family rooms, and the persons participating as a group or as individuals; and through the

records kept by the homemakers on specific days, data were obtained as to the activities that occurred, the persons that participated, and the equipment brought into the room to use for activities.

The interview data and the activity forms revealed that (1) meal preparation, food service, and clearing after meals; (2) viewing television; and (3) reading occurred regularly in all of the 12 family rooms. The most frequently occurring individual activities were family record keeping and letter writing for the mothers; reading and daytime resting for the fathers; play and studying for the sons and daughters; ironing for the household helpers; and playing with the children and viewing television for the baby sitters.

The activities that occurred most frequently on specific days in addition to the regularly occurring activities were table games on Sunday, and entertaining callers, family record keeping, and pursuing hobbies for the weekdays. A group of miscellaneous activities including the following: folding laundry, dressing the children, personal care, repairing the television sets, and family conferences recorded by one or more of nine homemakers suggest that a wide variety of activities occur in a family room. Data recorded by the homemakers revealed that sufficient storage was not provided for all equipment used in the family room in relation to the activities.

In addition to meal preparation and service the family rooms are used by the family as a group mainly for quiet activities. Individual use of the family room, although for specific interests, tended toward quieter activities. The activities occurring in the family rooms during

the week-ends are similar in type and frequency to those occurring on weekdays.

Homemakers' Appraisal and Suggestions for Improvements

All of the homemakers stated that they would want a family room included in another home. The homemakers were pleased with their family rooms and stated that the room offered many advantages to the family. Following are the advantages listed in order according to frequency of occurrence of statements:

Family togetherness

- Made mother's work more pleasant and convenient
- Accommodated overflow of guests and provided sleeping space
- Enabled mother to "keep an eye" on the children
- Took wear and tear off the remainder of the house
- Easy to care for
- Provided a center for activities and easy entertaining
- Encouraged cooperative work among family members
- Provided for individual and group activities
- Provided place where children could eat when there were guests

Some disadvantages had been recognized, most of which were individual and related to a particular family room. These included the following:

- Too much activity in the family room at times
- Raised hearths hazardous to small children
- Room unsightly after meals if guests came in
- The maid with the family while she worked
- The room with split-level plan was inconvenient for elderly person
- The cooking area visible to the dining and living areas
- Children wishing to eat in front of the television

Suggestions for improvement in the design of the family room were made by the homemakers. Three homemakers with family rooms less than 14 feet in width suggested that an increase of at least two feet be added. Additional book storage and the provision of space for

the ironing board were each suggested by two homemakers. Other suggestions made by individual homemakers were:

- Additional windows for more light
- Inside shutters for the windows
- The omission of small windows over the storage cabinets
- The addition of a door to close off the family room
- Natural wood finish on cabinets
- Magnetic latches on cabinet doors
- Cabinets built to fit without crevices
- Deeper knee space at the counter
- Built-in desk unit
- Built-in charcoal grill
- Built-in oven with exhaust fans
- Inlaid linoleum preferred as a floor covering
- A dark background floor covering preferred
- The addition of a fireplace
- An economical and cleaner heating system

Implications for the Design of a Family Room

The similarities in the design and use of the family rooms in this study and in the respondents' statements imply that in the design of a family room consideration should be given to the following:

- (1) A family room at least 14 feet in width.
- (2) A family room with an outside entrance.
- (3) A wall finish to allow for ease in maintenance such as natural finished woods.
- (4) An acoustical ceiling for the reduction of noise.
- (5) A hard floor covering that is easy to clean, does not show soil readily, and is resistant to marks, dents, and scratches.
- (6) The provision of sufficient natural and artificial lighting to offset the low reflection of natural wood tones when used in the walls and woodwork.
- (7) A fireplace for family pleasure; however, a raised hearth

presents a hazard for small children.

(8) The provision of sufficient and convenient storage space as needed for meal preparation and service equipment, toys, laundry supplies, family records, writing materials, the iron and ironing board, sewing supplies, card tables, and hobby materials.

(9) The provision of built-in and multipurpose furniture.

(10) An acceptable form of room divider that partially or completely conceals the kitchen area from the remainder of the room.

(11) The use of color for a cheerful, cordial atmosphere.

(12) Comfortable, durable and easy to care for furnishings.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the findings of this study, the writer recommends the following for further study:

(1) The size of the room and the space needed in the areas for the various activities that are carried on in the room.

(2) The design arrangement of the kitchen, dining, and living areas in relation to each other, and the location of the family room in relation to the remainder of the house.

(3) The essential and desirable equipment and furnishings needed for the various activities that are desired in family rooms in relation to the types, materials, and finishes.

(4) The type of facility and the space needed for adequate and convenient storage of materials and equipment used in the family room for the various activities.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX TABLE I

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES IN THE FAMILY ROOMS

Activities	Family			Mother			Father			Daughters			Sons			Others		
	R	F	O	R	F	O	R	F	O	R	F	O	R	F	O	R*	F*	O*
Watch television	12	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	2	2	-
Read (books, papers)	12	-	-	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	2	-
Read aloud	-	-	-	3	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Listen to radio	4	2	3	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Listen to records	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Play mus. instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
Write letters	2	1	-	6	1	-	1	-	1	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Pursue hobbies	-	-	-	1	1	4	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Table/board games	8	3	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Children's play	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2	-	2	1	-	3	-	-
Dancing	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Entertain callers	7	1	-	4	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Serve refreshments	7	1	-	4	-	3	1	-	-	2	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Hold meetings	2	2	-	-	1	4	-	2	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Studying	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	1	2	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Sewing	-	-	-	7	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Daytime relaxing	2	-	1	1	-	4	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Sleeping	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Laundry	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Ironing	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-
Family record keeping	2	-	-	9	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Care for sick	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eating all meals	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eating most meals	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Guest meals	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*R - refers to activities occurring daily or each time the activity takes place in the home; F - refers to activities occurring at least every two weeks; and O - refers to the activities that occur less frequently than every two weeks.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Date _____
 Name _____ Address _____

I. Information Concerning the Family:

- A. Children in family Sex Age Grade in School
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
- B. Other persons living in the home. List relationship to homemaker.
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- C. Is paid help used with the housework? _____
 With the care of the children? _____
 What are her activities in the family room? _____

II. Information Concerning the House and the Family Room:

- A. Number of years in the home _____.
- B. Number of rooms in the house _____.
- Bedrooms _____
 A living room _____
 A dining room _____
- C. What major use does the family make of the living room? _____
- D. What major use does the family make of the dining room? _____
- E. Who planned this family room? _____
- F. If the family, what help was received? _____
- G. Type of heat in the family room _____
 If there is a fireplace, is it used? No __, Regularly __, Occasionally __.
- H. What is the material and finish of:
1. Walls _____
 2. Woodwork _____
 3. Ceiling _____
 4. Floors _____

III. Activities That Take Place in the Family Room:

ACTIVITIES	PARTICIPANTS											
	Family			Mother			Father			Daughters		
	R	F	O	R	F	O	R	F	O	R	F	O
Leisure												
Watch television												
Listen to radio												
Listen to records												
Play piano												
Other musical instrument												
Read: Newspapers												
Magazines												
Books												
Aloud												
Write letters												
Hobbies: Knit or Crochet												
Paint												
Collections												
Other												
Recreational												
Table games												
Board games												
Children's play												
Other												
Entertaining												
Callers												
Meetings												
Serve refreshments												
Miscellaneous												
Studying												
Sewing: Hand												
Machine												
Cutting out												
Day-time resting												
Sleeping												
Family record keeping												
Laundering												
Ironing												
Care of sick												
Others:												

* R - refers to activities occurring daily or each time the activity takes place in the home; F - refers to activities occurring at least every two weeks; and O - refers to the activities that occur less frequently than every two weeks.

IV. List of Furnishings and Equipment in the Family Room:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Item</u>
Furniture:		Lighting:	
_____	Sofa	_____	Ceiling
_____	Day bed	_____	Flush
_____	Wall seat	_____	Dropped
_____	Easy chair	_____	Wall
_____	Dining chair	_____	Table lamps
_____	Rocking chair	_____	Floor lamps
_____	Stool	_____	Other (list)
_____	Bench	_____	
_____	Dining table	_____	
_____	Card table	_____	
_____	Coffee table	_____	Window Coverings:
_____	Lamp table	_____	Draw drapery
_____	Radio	_____	Panel drapery
_____	Record player	_____	Curtain
_____	Television	_____	Blind
_____	Piano	_____	Shades
_____	Sewing machine	_____	Other (list)
_____	Desk	_____	
_____	Chest of drawers	_____	
_____	Buffet	_____	
_____	Other (list)	_____	
_____		_____	Accessories:
_____		_____	Screen
_____		_____	Smoking stand
_____		_____	Magazine rack
_____		_____	Small accessories (such as
_____		_____	ash trays, figurines, etc.)
_____		_____	Pictures
_____		_____	Mirror
_____		_____	
_____	Built-ins:	_____	Floor Coverings:
_____	Window seat	_____	Scatter rug
_____	Bookcase	_____	Wall to wall carpet
_____	Service counter	_____	Area
_____	Other (list)	_____	Other (list)
_____		_____	
_____		_____	
_____		_____	
_____	Children's Equipment:	_____	
_____	Table	_____	Hobby Material:
_____	Chair	_____	Collections
_____	Large play equipment	_____	Other (list)
_____	Toy shelf	_____	
_____	Toy box	_____	
_____	Play pen	_____	
_____	High chair	_____	
_____	Desk	_____	Miscellaneous:
_____	Other (list)	_____	Pets
_____		_____	Plants
_____		_____	Other (list)
_____		_____	
_____		_____	
_____		_____	
_____		_____	

V. Storage Facilities Available in the Family Room:

STORAGE FACILITY	ITEMS STORED	FAMILY OR INDIVIDUAL USE	IS SPACE LARGE ENOUGH?

VI. Homemaker's Appraisal of the Family Room:

1. Are there any additional activities that the family would like to carry on in the family room? _____ What are these activities? _____
2. What additional furnishings or item of equipment would you need for these activities? _____
3. Now that you have used the room, what changes, if any, would you suggest in relation to:
 - a. Size of the room _____
 - b. Number and placement of windows _____
 - c. Number and placement of doors _____
 - d. Walls _____
 - e. Floors _____
 - f. Heat _____
 - g. Lighting _____
 - h. Number and placement of electrical outlets _____
4. Is the heat comfortable for the various activities that are carried on in this room? _____
5. Is the room easy to care for? _____ What are the difficulties in caring for:
 - a. Walls _____
 - b. Floors _____

c. Furnishings _____

6. Have you observed any structural details or objects in the room that might be hazardous to those using the room? _____
What are the hazards? _____

7. Is there enough storage space in this room? _____ What additional storage is needed? _____

8. If you were building this home again, would you include a family room? _____

A. What are its advantages for your family?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

B. Any disadvantages? _____

1. _____

2. _____

RECORD FORM: FOR DAILY ACTIVITIES IN THE FAMILY ROOM

Name _____

Day record was kept _____

LENGTH OF TIME OF ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY	WHO PARTICIPATED	ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT OR FURNISHINGS BROUGHT IN
-------------------------------	----------	------------------	---

Example:

9:00-9:30	Iron	Mother	Hangers, clothes
6:00-6:30 a.m.			
6:30-7:00 a.m.			
7:00-7:30 a.m.			
7:30-8:00 a.m.			
8:00-8:30 a.m.			
8:30-9:00 a.m.			
9:00-9:30 a.m.			
9:30-10:00 a.m.			
10:00-10:30 a.m.			
10:30-11:00 a.m.			
11:00-11:30 a.m.			
11:30-12:00 noon			
12:00-12:30 p.m.			
12:30-1:00 p.m.			
1:00-1:30 p.m.			
1:30-2:00 p.m.			
2:00-2:30 p.m.			
2:30-3:00 p.m.			
3:00-3:30 p.m.			
3:30-4:00 p.m.			
4:00-4:30 p.m.			
4:30-5:00 p.m.			
5:00-5:30 p.m.			
5:30-6:00 p.m.			
6:00-6:30 p.m.			
6:30-7:00 p.m.			
7:00-7:30 p.m.			
7:30-8:00 p.m.			
8:00-8:30 p.m.			
8:30-9:00 p.m.			
9:00-9:30 p.m.			
9:30-10:00 p.m.			
10:00-10:30 p.m.			
10:30-11:00 p.m.			
11:00-11:30 p.m.			
11:30-12:00 midnight			