

U.S. Department of Labor  
Children's Bureau  
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## THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU AND ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Federal -- State -- Local

Public -- Private

(Prepared on request of individuals interested in the organization and functions of the Children's Bureau.)

### Original Purpose

The Children's Bureau was created by Act of Congress in 1912, "to investigate and report . . . upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people." In his message to Congress of February 15, 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt said:

"It is not only discreditable to us as a people that there is now no recognized and authoritative source of information upon these subjects relating to child life, but in the absence of such information as should be supplied by the Federal Government many abuses have gone unchecked; for public sentiment, with its great corrective power, can only be aroused by full knowledge of the facts. In addition to such information as the Census Bureau and other existing agencies of the Federal Government already provide, there remains much to be ascertained through lines of research not now authorized by law; and there should be correlation and dissemination of the knowledge obtained without any duplication of effort or interference with what is already being done."

In her first annual report as Chief of the Children's Bureau, Julia C. Lathrop said:

"Fifty years ago the field of the Department of Agriculture was defined as 'all information concerning agriculture.' In the same way the field of the Children's Bureau is now defined as 'all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life.' It is obvious that the Bureau is to be a center of information for children of America, to ascertain and set standards for their life and development."

Collection

Document Number 606

In the same report Miss Lathrop defined "the final purpose of the Bureau" as being "to serve all children, to try to work out the standards of care and protection which shall give to every child his fair chance in the world."

The work of the first year included the beginning of the infant-mortality studies and child-labor studies; advisory service to the States on child-welfare legislation; preparation of the first of a series of bulletins for parents, Prenatal Care; and cooperation with the General Federation of Women's Clubs in birth-registration activities and with local communities in conducting baby-saving campaigns.

In her second annual report Miss Lathrop called attention to the close cooperation that had been developed with the United States Bureau of the Census, and stated:

"Other bureaus of the Government which have to do with children have also wide powers ascribed to them by law. Apparently the best method of securing the highest possible degree of effectiveness is by the joint action of various bureaus having common interest in the investigation of a particular subject."

In concluding this report Miss Lathrop said:

"The practical wisdom of those who created a special bureau addressed to the great task of ascertaining true democratic standards for the nurture and protection of the Nation's children is already justified by the public response to the bureau's small performance."

The importance of Federal leadership in promoting the welfare of children was implied in all the annual reports that Grace Abbott wrote as Chief of the Children's Bureau. Miss Abbott concluded her report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1928, with these words:

"If there is any subject endowed with national interest it is the welfare of the Nation's children. The Nation's future existence, the intelligent use of its resources, the role it will play in world affairs depend on its children — whether or not they are physically fit and whether or not they are trained in self-control, in respect for the rights of others, and in understanding of their own rights and obligations. That the first responsibility must rest with the nearest government — the State, the county, and the municipality — is the reason why the role that the Federal Government must play in the training of children is that of an intelligent and interested cooperator, ready to assist but not to control nor hamper."

### Present Functions

Through the years the Children's Bureau has served as a center for research, information, and advice, available to parents, public officials, and representatives of private agencies concerned with children. As legislative action based in large part on Children's Bureau studies was taken, it was natural for the Congress to vest responsibility for its administration in the agency of the Federal Government which already knew the field and had established contacts with State and local agencies. Thus, from 1917 to 1918 the Children's Bureau was entrusted with responsibility for administering the first Federal Child-Labor Law; from 1921 to 1929 for administering the Act for the Promotion of the Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy; from 1935 to date, with administration of the maternal and child-welfare provisions of the Social Security Act; and from 1938 to date, with administration of the child-labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938.

Children's Bureau personnel and appropriations in the current fiscal year are as follows:

Salaries and expenses	Research and administration Fiscal year 1940			
	Appropriations		Positions provided for	
	Dollars	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	<u>1/</u> \$1,008,780	100	378	100
General activities and research .....	364,560	36	145	38
Social security—maternal and child welfare .....	331,500	33	121	32
Child-labor administration.....	312,720	31	112	30

1/ Not including allotments from Department of Labor appropriations as follows: Travel, \$177,900; Printing, \$91,400; Contingent, \$20,850.

Appropriations for grants to the States, fiscal year 1940

Maternal and child-health services .....	\$4,800,000
Services for crippled children .....	3,350,000
Child-welfare services .....	1,505,000

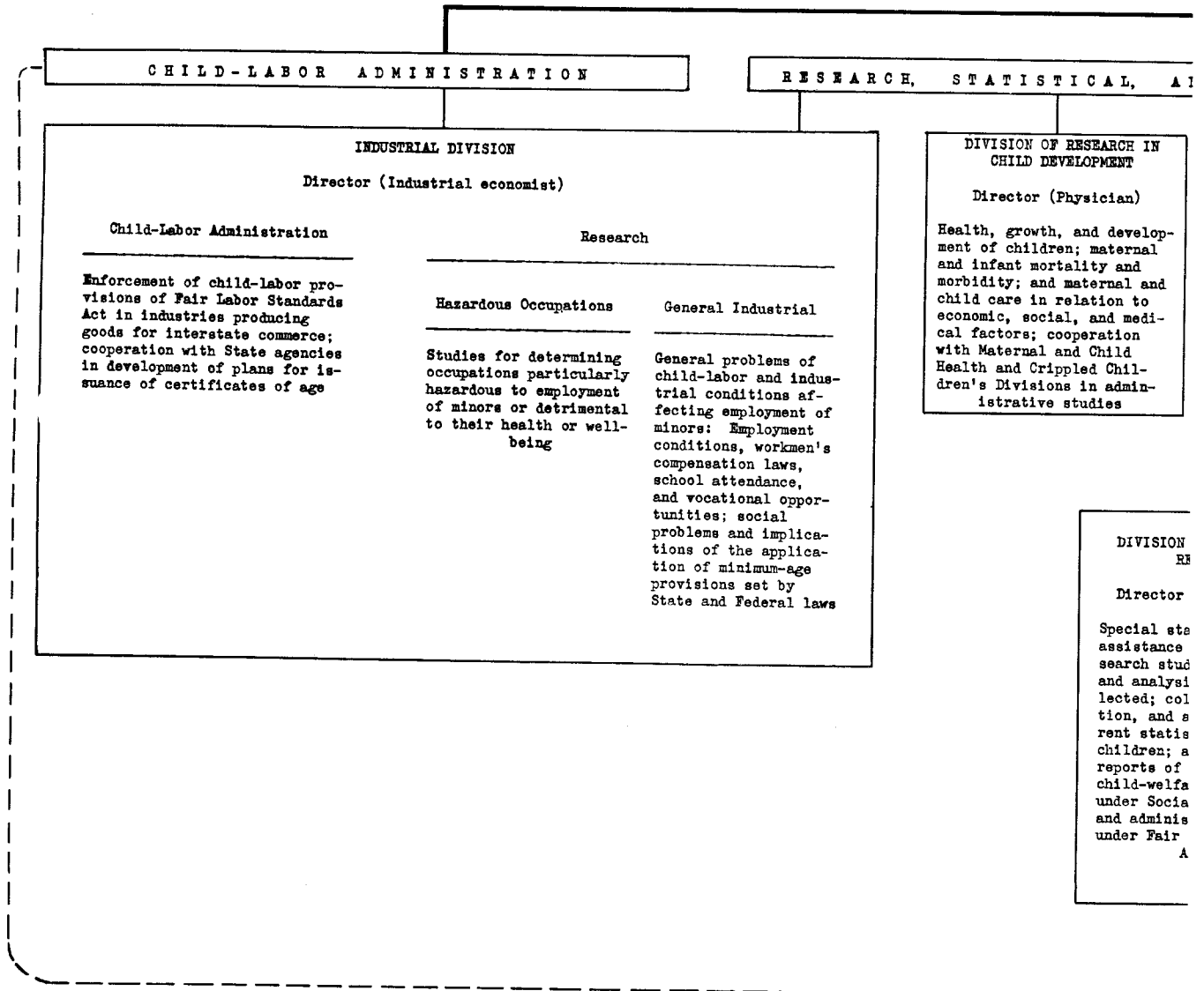
Further analysis of the activities of the Bureau shows the following distribution of activities, appropriations, and personnel:

Activities	Fiscal year 1940	
	Appropriations	Positions provided for
Research and general .....	\$364,560	145
Child health .....	35,930	13
Industrial.....	32,297	13
Social service and delinquency .....	73,544	26
Statistical.....	106,005	47
Administrative and editorial services....	116,784	46
Social-security programs .....	331,500	121
Maternal and child-health services.....	69,705	21
Services for crippled children.....	83,819	27
Child-welfare services.....	52,500	15
State audits .....	45,318	21
Administrative services.....	80,158	37
Child-Labor administration .....	312,720	112

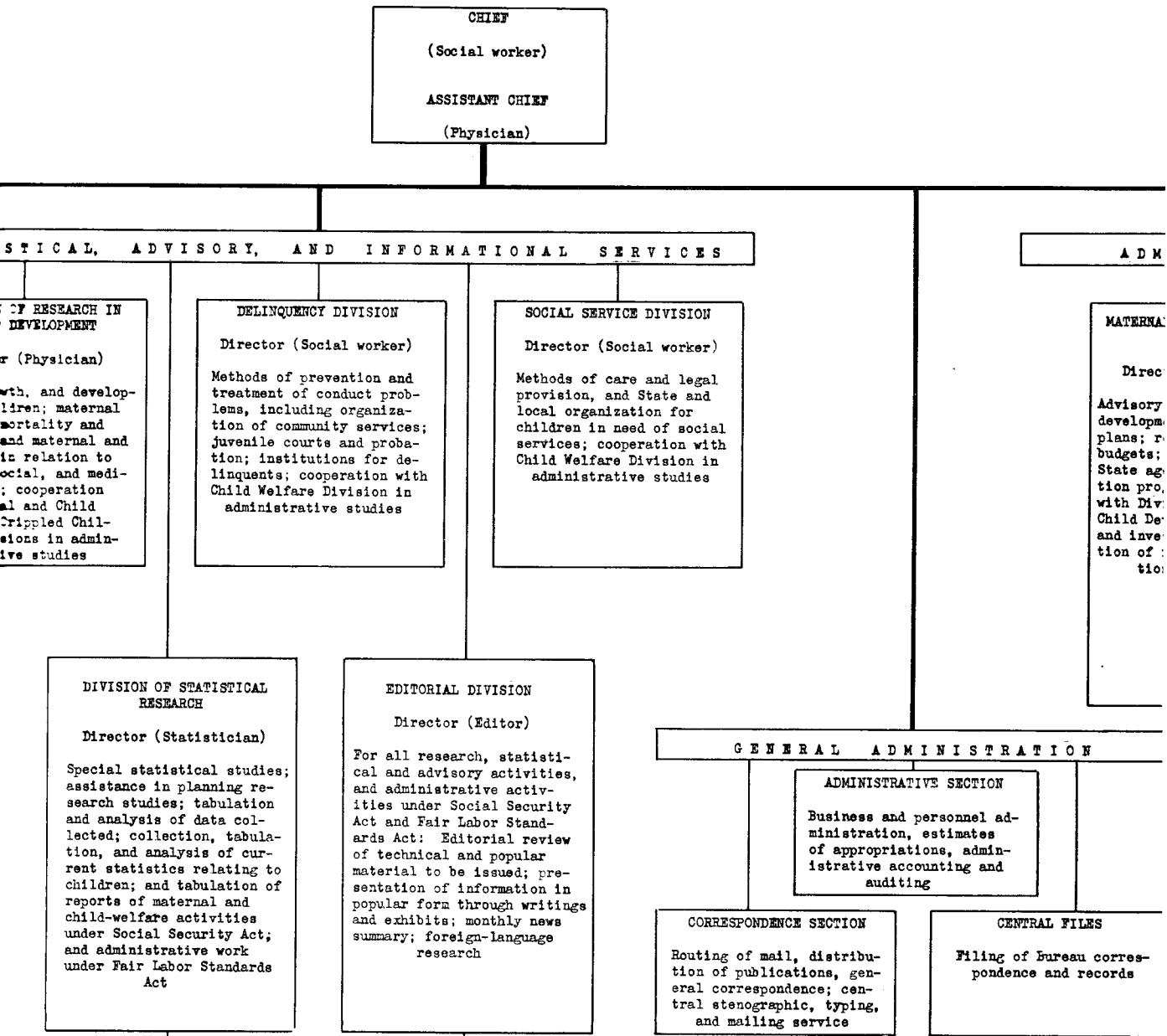
The organization of the Children's Bureau is shown in the accompanying chart. The Chief is a social worker and the Assistant Chief, a physician. The staff includes physicians, public-health nurses, a nutritionist, social workers, industrial economists, statisticians, lawyers, and representatives of other professions.

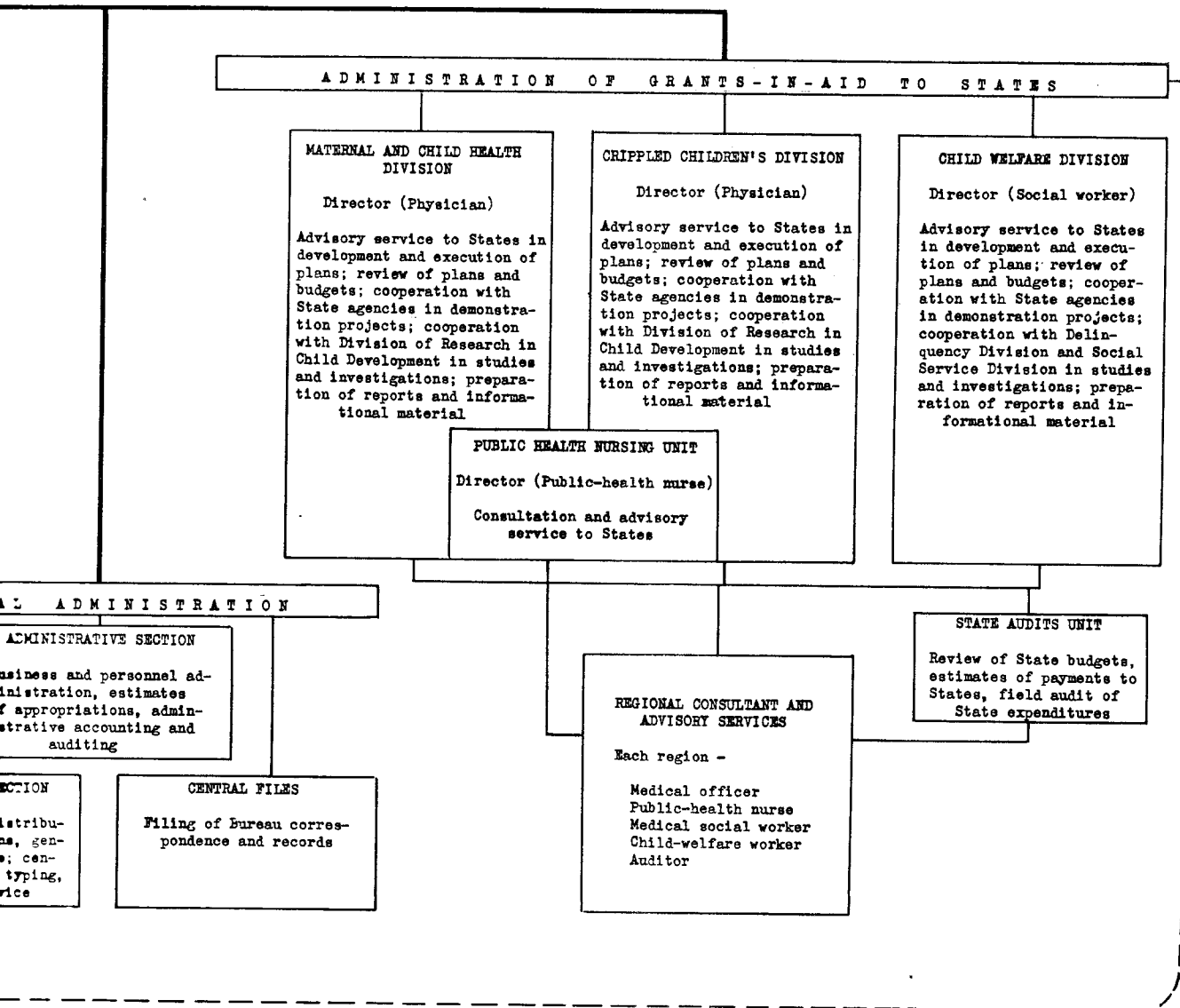
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
CHILDREN'S BUREAU

September 30, 1939



U. S. CHILDREN'S BUREAU







So closely related are the various aspects of the Children's field that it is seldom a Children's Bureau study is carried to completion by a single division, and the cooperation of three or more divisions on a report is not unusual. Maternal and infant morbidity and mortality, always the subject of study by the Division of Research in Child Development and the Division of Statistical Research, now constitute a major concern of the Maternal and Child Health Division also. An extensive study of stillbirths in hospitals is being conducted jointly by the Division of Research in Child Development and the Division of Statistical Research. The Division of Research in Child Development consults the nutritionist in the Maternal and Child Health Division on studies of nutrition. A report on statistics of maternity-home care, originating in the social-statistics unit of the Division of Statistical Research, is referred during the planning stage both to the Social Service Division and to the Division of Research in Child Development. Preparation of an article on foster-home care for crippled children by the Crippled Children's Division requires the cooperation of the Child Welfare Division and the Social Service Division. A report on habit clinics for child guidance for which the Division of Research in Child Development has the major responsibility is referred to the Social Service Division in connection with availability of community social services. The Industrial Division consults with the Division of Research in Child Development in the preparation of material relating to health problems of employed children and to standards of physical fitness for children entering employment.

Studies of special subjects may fall almost equally in several divisions: the needs of children in the families of migrant laborers, for example, concern the Industrial Division, the Social Service Division, the Division of Research in Child Development, and through the operation of State plans and demonstrations, the Social-Security divisions.

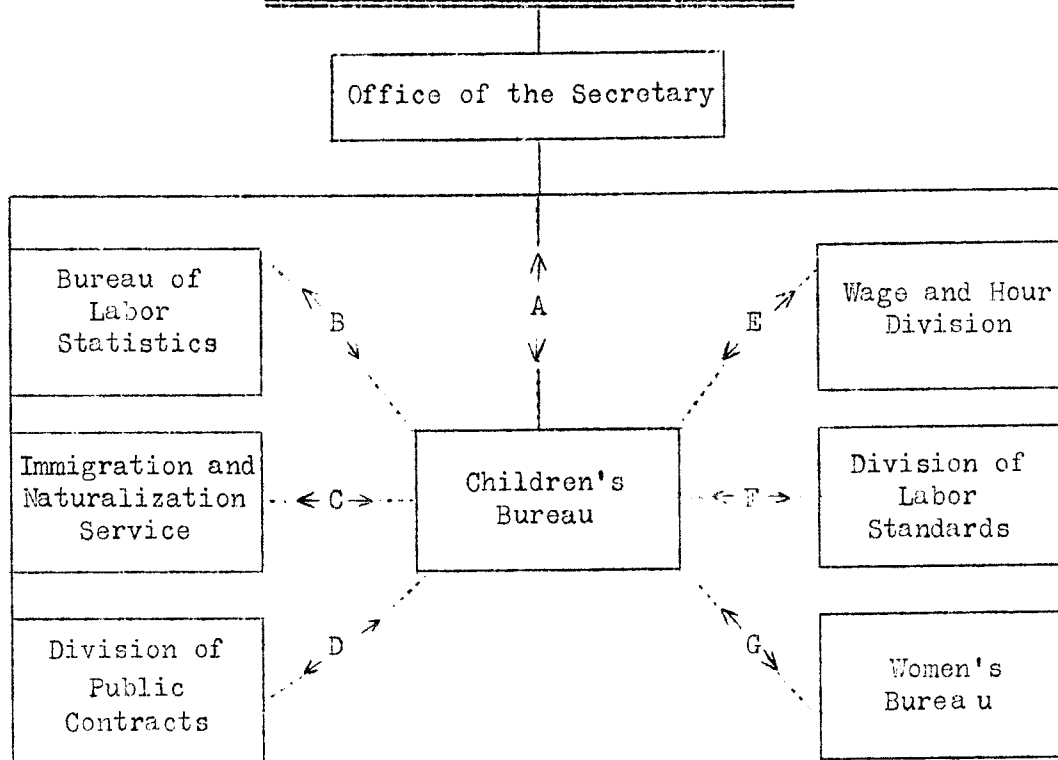
#### Relationships With Other Federal Agencies

The Children's Bureau cooperates with many agencies of the Federal Government. Its direct official relationships are chiefly within the Department of Labor and with the Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities. Its other relationships include close cooperation with Federal research agencies, such as the Bureau of the Census of the Department of Commerce and various bureaus of the Department of Agriculture; and with agencies having administrative functions, for example, the Social Security Board, the Public Health Service, the Vocational Rehabilitation Service of the Office of Education, and the Farm Security Administration of the Department of Agriculture.

Some idea of the range of common interests and cooperative relationships of the Children's Bureau with other Federal agencies may be gained from the following charts.

RELATED INTERESTS OF THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU AND  
OTHER BUREAUS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR 1/

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

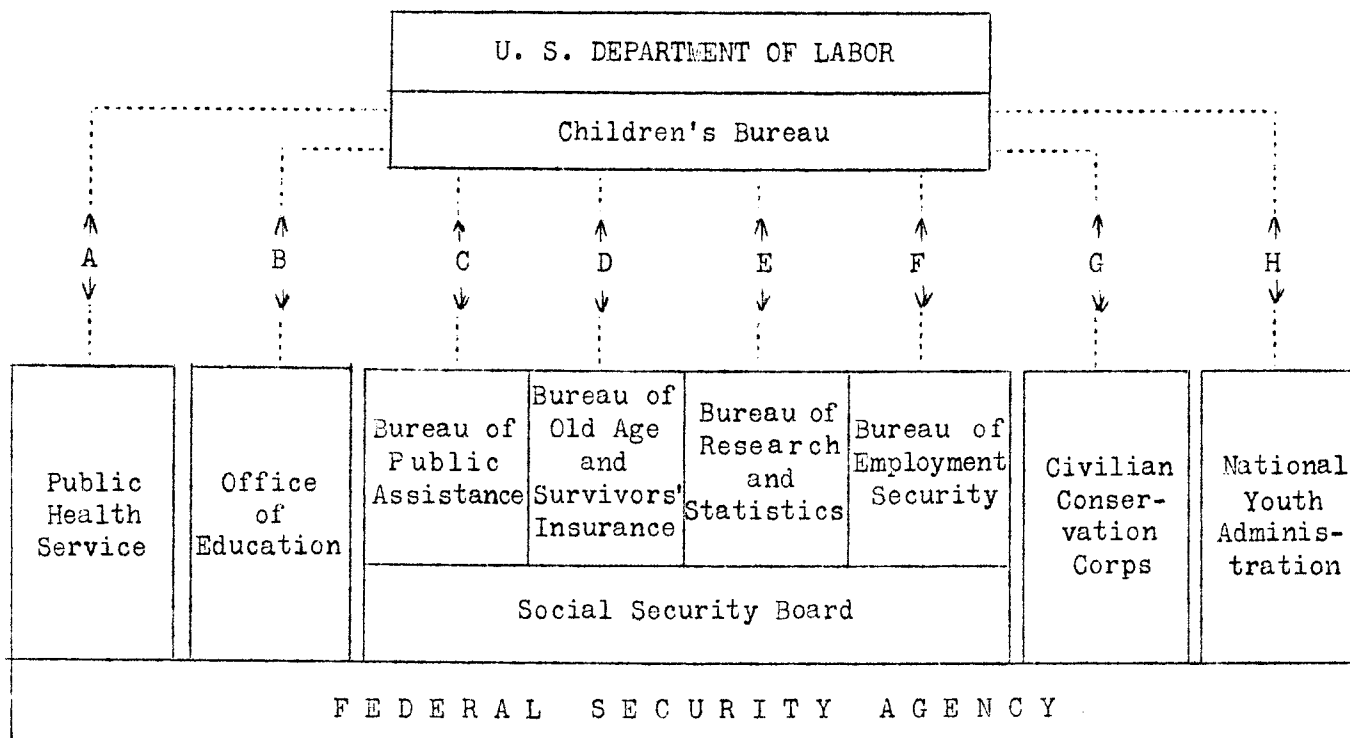


Children's Bureau Divisions:

- A. All divisions: General problems of children in families of wage earners and effect on children of conditions under which wage earners live and work.
- B. All research divisions: Research studies and use of basic research material, e.g., on cost of living, migrant families, industrial hazards.
- C. Social Service Division: Immigration matters affecting children, especially admission of children unaccompanied by parents.
- D. Industrial Division: Advisory service relating to child-labor provisions of the Public Contracts Act.
- E. Industrial Division: Administration of Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 — Children's Bureau administers child-labor provisions.
- F. Industrial Division: Advisory service to States on labor legislation and its administration, and on apprenticeship and industrial safety.
- G. Industrial Division: Cooperation in research and advisory service relating to employment of women and minors.

1/ Only those bureaus are shown with respect to which the Children's Bureau has important fields of mutual concern.

RELATED INTERESTS OF CHILDREN'S BUREAU AND  
ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY <sup>1/</sup>

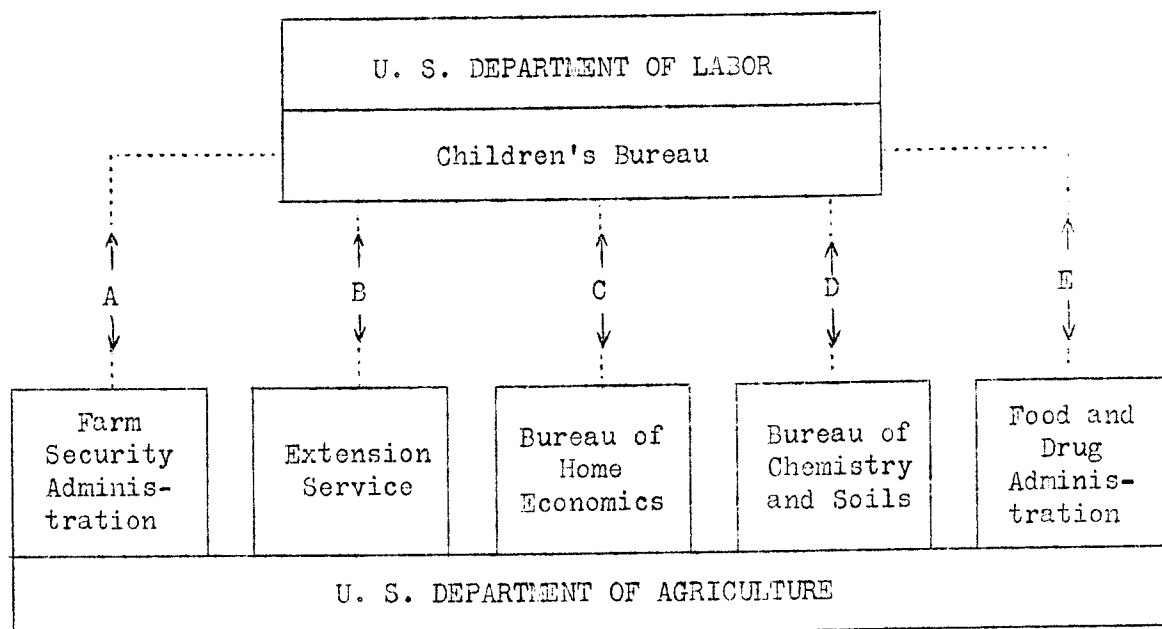


Children's Bureau Divisions:

- A. Maternal and Child Health Division and Crippled Children's Division: Administration of grants to States under Social Security Act. Division of Research in Child Development: Research studies.
- B. Crippled Children's Division: Cooperation with Vocational Rehabilitation Service in grants to States for crippled children's services. All divisions: General cooperation and occasional joint studies.
- C. Child Welfare Division: Administration of grants to States under Social Security Act (aid to dependent children, Social Security Board; child-welfare services, Children's Bureau). Maternal and Child Health Division and Crippled Children's Division: Matters related to health of dependent children.
- D. Social Service Division and Child Welfare Division: Survivors' insurance benefits — widows and orphans (effective January 1, 1940).
- E. Office of Assistant Chief and Division of Statistical Research: Cooperation in assembling factual material on programs of joint concern; cooperation in collecting current social statistics from urban areas.
- F. Industrial Division: Studies of operation of junior-placement services.
- G. Social Service Division and Delinquency Division: General youth problems.
- H. Industrial Division: Employment problems of youth.

<sup>1/</sup> Only those bureaus are shown with respect to which the Children's Bureau has important fields of mutual concern.

RELATED INTERESTS OF CHILDREN'S BUREAU AND  
ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE <sup>1/</sup>

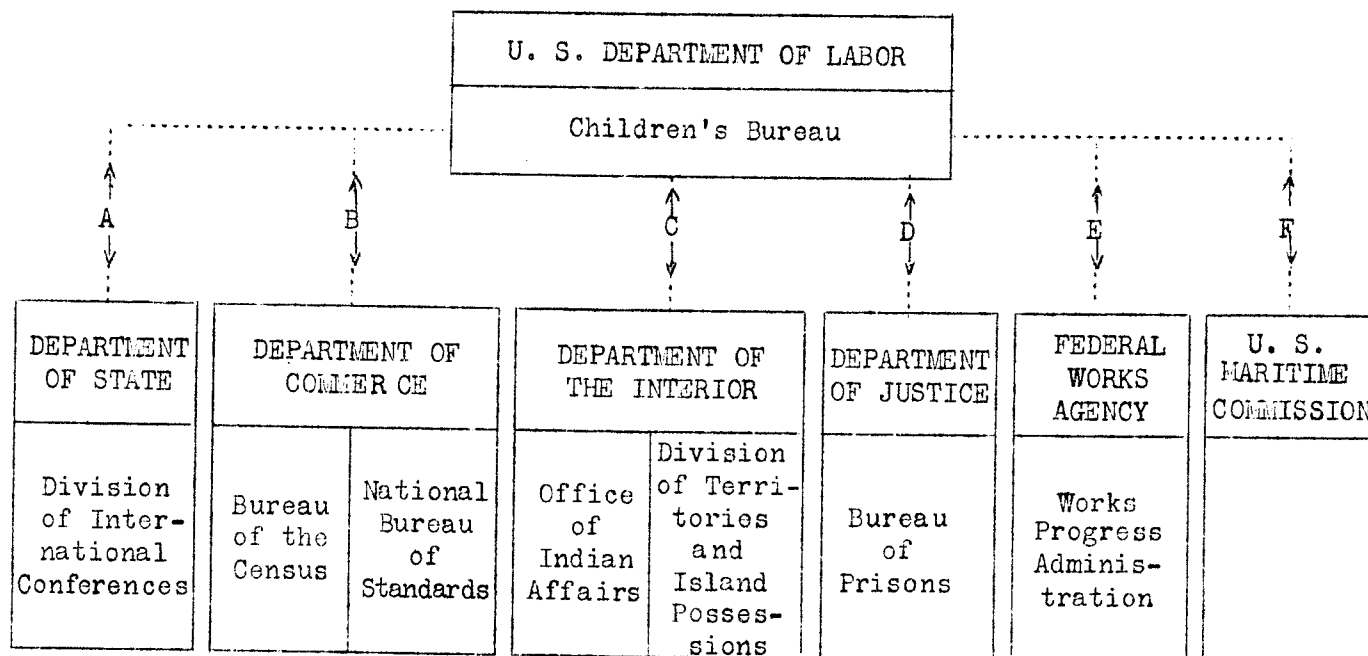


Children's Bureau Divisions:

- A. Industrial Division: Administration of child-labor provisions of Sugar Act of 1937. Maternal and Child Health Division: Nutrition, health and medical services to children in Farm Security families. All other divisions: Matters relating to Farm Security families.
- B. Maternal and Child Health Division, Crippled Children's Division, and Child Welfare Division: Grants-in-aid for maternal and child-welfare services in rural areas. Division of Research in Child Development: Standards of growth and development and nutrition; distribution of popular bulletins in rural areas. All divisions: General welfare of rural children.
- C. Division of Research in Child Development: Studies and bulletins for parents on child care and child management. All divisions: Research studies and use of basic material, e.g., cost of living in rural homes.
- D and E. Division of Research in Child Development: Research in nutrition and growth.

<sup>1/</sup> Only those bureaus are shown with respect to which the Children's Bureau has important fields of mutual concern.

RELATED INTERESTS OF CHILDREN'S BUREAU AND  
FEDERAL AGENCIES NOT SHOWN ELSEWHERE



Children's Bureau Divisions:

- A. All divisions: Planning for international conferences concerned with child welfare.
- B. Division of Research in Child Development and Division of Statistical Research: Cooperation with Bureau of the Census in developing standard birth certificates, studies of birth registration, and analysis of statistics of maternal and infant mortality. Social Service Division and Delinquency Division: Cooperation with the Population Division in censuses of children under care of agencies and institutions and with the Vital Statistics Division in relation to birth registration of children born out of wedlock. Industrial Division and Division of Statistical Research: Plans for decennial census.

Division of Research in Child Development: Cooperation with National Bureau of Standards in research studies.

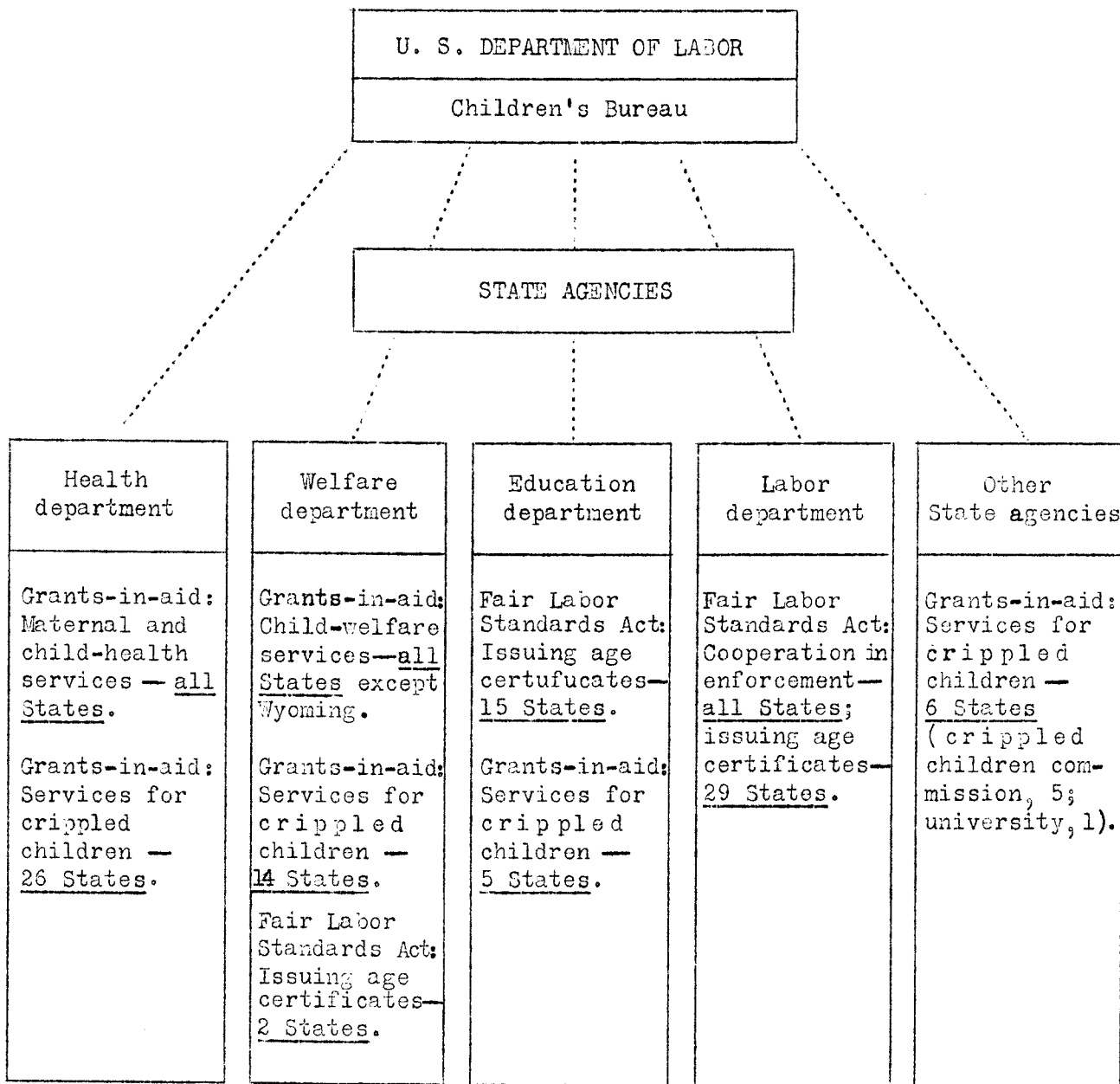
- C. All divisions: Cooperation with Office of Indian Affairs in matters affecting the health and welfare of Indian children and with Division of Territories and Island Possessions in matters affecting the health and welfare of children in Territories and Island Possessions.
- D. Delinquency Division, Child Welfare Division, and Division of Statistical Research: Consultation with Bureau of Prisons in regard to the administration of the Federal Juvenile-Delinquency Act and the National Training School for Boys and cooperation in compiling statistics of Federal juvenile offenders.
- E. All divisions: Review of proposed projects relating to the health and welfare of children; general interest in nursery-school, parent-education, school-lunch, and recreation projects.
- F. Industrial Division: Matters relating to maritime child labor.

Relationships With State Agencies

The Children's Bureau gives advisory and consultation service, including review of proposed legislation and cooperation in special studies on request, to State administrative agencies and organizations concerned with the health and welfare of children and carries out studies in cooperation with State agencies. The Children's Bureau has sponsored each year since 1936 the May Day -- Child Health Day celebration, under Presidential proclamation, in which State and local health and educational agencies join.

The Bureau's direct administrative relationships under the Social Security Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act are shown in the accompanying chart.

RELATIONS OF THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU WITH STATE AGENCIES





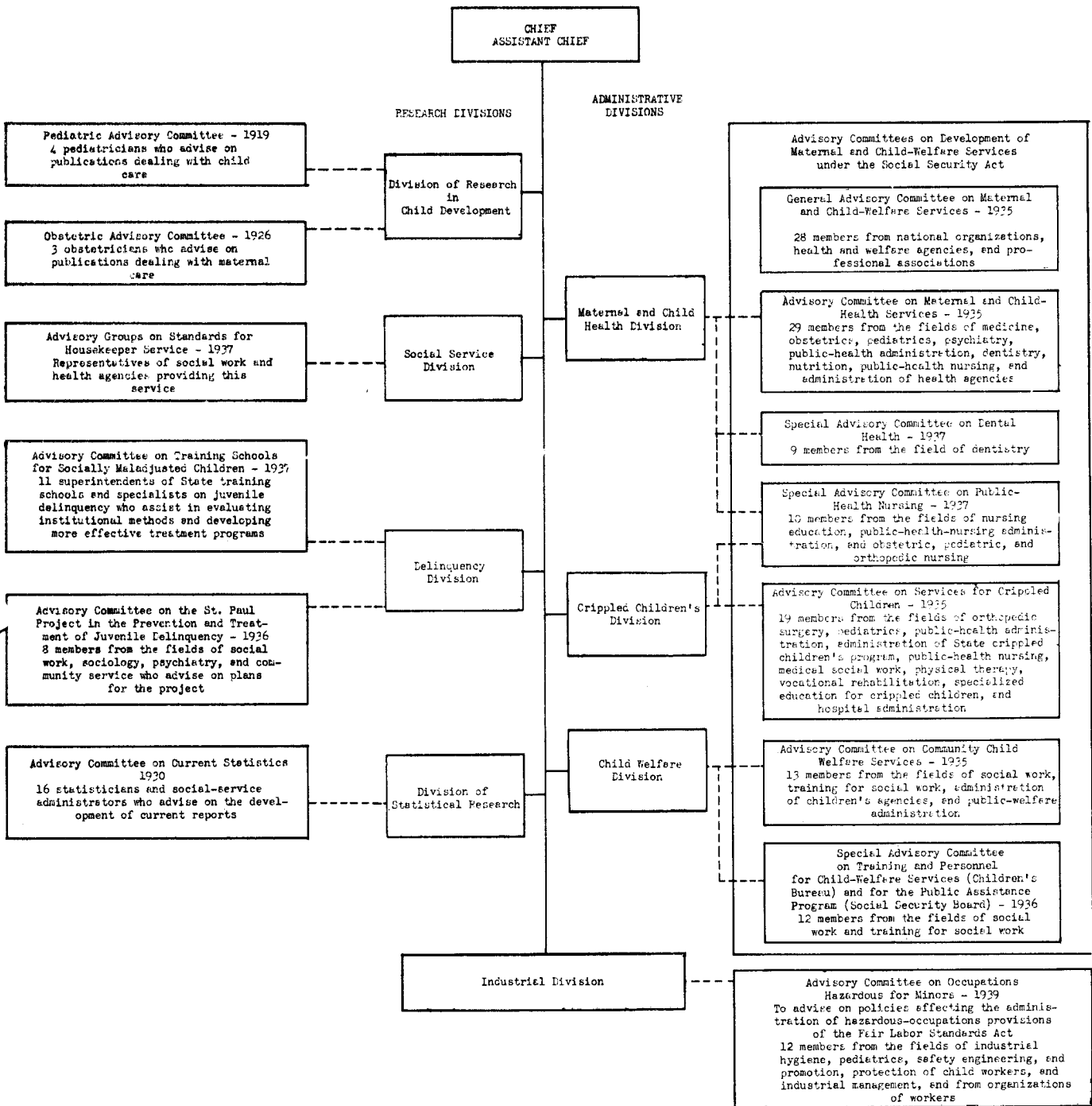
### Relationships With Local Public Departments

The services of the Children's Bureau to local public departments and juvenile courts include studies of child health, labor, and welfare conditions and methods of carrying on work for children; advisory and consultation service; participation in grants-in-aid programs through State agencies; cooperation in issuing employment certificates under the Fair Labor Standards Act through arrangements made with State agencies; collection of current statistics of health and welfare services through cooperative arrangements in which private agencies participate; and collection of juvenile-court statistics. The local agencies with which the Children's Bureau has relationships under grants-in-aid or child-labor administration programs include health and welfare agencies and school departments.

### Relationships With Private Agencies, National, State, and Local

The Children's Bureau maintains relationships with all the major national agencies concerned with the health and welfare of children, including labor and farm organizations, men's and women's organizations, medical, public-health-nursing, and social-work organizations, professional and scientific societies, and specialized child-health, maternal-welfare, and child-welfare organizations. It also cooperates with many State-wide and local private agencies. Officials of many of these organizations serve on advisory committees to the Children's Bureau, shown in the accompanying chart. Information is exchanged, joint projects are undertaken, and advice and assistance in the development of programs are given and received.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF THE CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
 with date of original appointment



COORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

Consultants from Federal agencies are frequently invited to sit with these committees

CONFERENCES OF STATE OFFICIALS

Since 1935 the State and Territorial Health Officers have met annually with the Children's Bureau to advise on the development of the Federal-State programs for maternal and child-health services and services for crippled children

In December 1939 the State and Territorial Public-Welfare Administrators will meet in conference with the Children's Bureau to advise on the development of the Federal-State program for child-welfare services and services for crippled children

### Relationships With International Organizations

Continuing relationships are maintained by the Children's Bureau with the International Labor Organization and with the Health Organization and the Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations (a member of the Children's Bureau staff is a member of this committee); the International American Institute for the Protection of Childhood (the Chief of the Children's Bureau is a member of the Council of the Institute); the Pan American Child Congresses (the Children's Bureau, with the cooperation of the Public Health Service and the Office of Education, is responsible for organizing United States participation in these congresses); the Pan American Union; the Pan American Sanitary Bureau; and other international organizations.

### Relationships With Individual Citizens

The most important single aspect of the work of the Children's Bureau is what it stands for in the minds of individual citizens, especially parents. In a very special way it is their Bureau. Its chief contacts with individuals are the following: (1) Popular bulletins for parents, including Prenatal Care, Infant Care, The Child From One to Six, Child Management, Are You Training Your Child To Be Happy, and Guiding the Adolescent; also folders and leaflets; (2) reports of studies and technical bulletins on subjects relating to child employment and to the health and welfare of mothers and children; (3) individual correspondence; (4) radio talks; and (5) exhibits.

In the fiscal year 1939, 1,233,946 copies of the Children's Bureau popular bulletins were distributed free of charge, and 531,356 were sold through the Superintendent of Documents. Since publication nearly 18,000,000 copies of the popular publications have been distributed free of charge and more than 5,000,000 have been sold.

In the fiscal year 1939 nearly 325,000 letters were received, an increase of 24 percent over the previous year.

Fifty-seven radio talks were given, including the weekly talks over the National Broadcasting Company's blue network under the title "The Child Grows Up," and special talks over the Columbia and Mutual Broadcasting Systems.

There is an extensive and increasing demand for exhibit material for use at international, National, State, and local conferences. New exhibits and posters are prepared each year within the limits of very meager resources for this work and are available for use thereafter. Recently prepared exhibits deal with the health of the preschool child, reduction of maternal and infant mortality, nutrition, and the general program of the Children's Bureau. Posters for May Day—Child Health Day, posters on posture standards and on the nutritional needs of expectant mothers are available for distribution, also maps and charts showing maternal and infant mortality rates and birth rates.

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