



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Office of Human Development Services
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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The Children's Bureau at 75

1912 - 1987

The Commitment Continues . . .



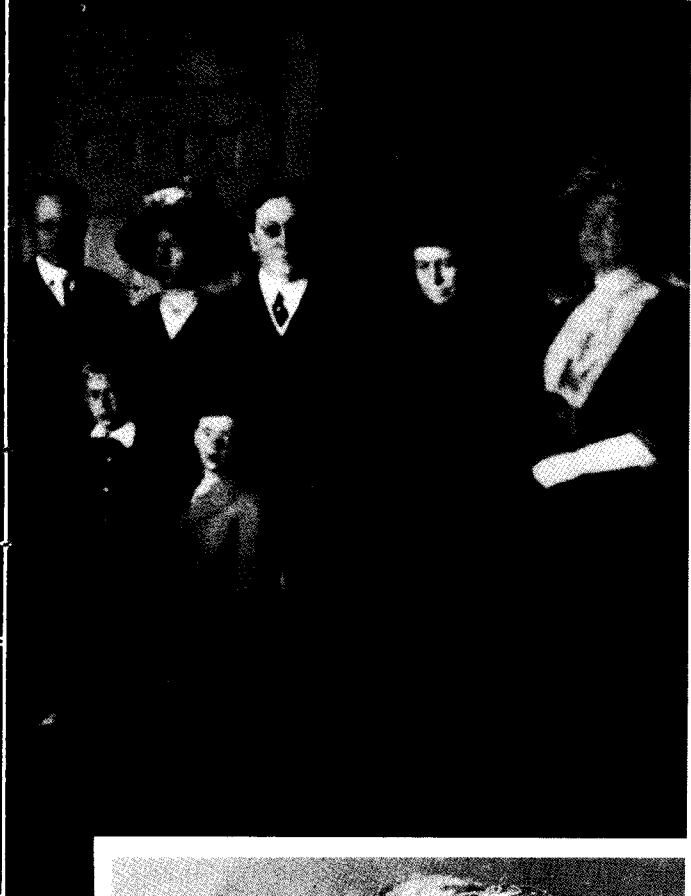
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The Children's Bureau

" In spite of the economic adversity of the Great Depression, the Children's Bureau kept its commitment. It documented the devastating effects of child labor, the shortage and poor quality of day care facilities, the extent of malnutrition and of delinquency in children."



Childhood in America was once hard. At the turn of the century, more laws protected animals than children. Surviving childhood was a major challenge. Thousands of infants died in the first weeks after birth. Children toiled in sweatshops, sacrificing hope for the future. Orphans went without compassionate care.



This was the setting when President William Howard Taft created the Children's Bureau on April 9, 1912. He charged it to investigate and report on infant mortality, birth rates, orphanages, juvenile courts, employment, desertion, dangerous occupations, accidents, and diseases of children.

The Bureau began under the leadership of Julia Lathrop, the first woman to head a Federal agency. She organized the first women's committees to register all births and began a national vital records system. The Bureau then collected information on maternal and child health and made recommendations that resulted in the 1921 passage of the Maternity and Infancy Act which led to a system of public health care for mothers and children.





In 1930, the White House issued the Children's Charter, calling for prenatal, natal and postnatal care for every child; health protection from birth to adolescence; prevention of communicable diseases; and access to pure food, milk and water.

In spite of the economic adversity of the Great Depression, the Children's Bureau kept its commitment. It documented the devastating effects of child labor, the shortage and poor quality of day care facilities and the extent of malnutrition and of delinquency in children. Under the Social Security Act of 1935, the Children's Bureau took over new programs of maternal and child health, services for crippled children and the child welfare program.



FACTS ABOUT
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

ITS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

GOOD POSTURE
IN THE LITTLE CHILD



FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
CHILDREN'S BUREAU Pub. 219

UNIT

The Children's Bureau publications extended to government offices and to average citizens. In the 1930's a parent wrote:

"When people stop me on the street and ask me the whys and wherefores of my so-healthy baby, I always say, 'He's a GOVERNMENT BABY,' giving all say, giving all credit to your bulletin, *Infant Care*."

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Infant Care



Publication No. 8

United States Department of Labor

Children's Bureau

1932

World War II stopped all Federal research except for the war effort. The Children's Bureau studied maternity and infant care for the wives of servicemen, leading to creation in 1943 of the Emergency Maternity and Infant Care Program. The war also saw a resurgence in employment of children under the legal age. The Children's Bureau intensified enforcement of child labor laws and worked to stem the

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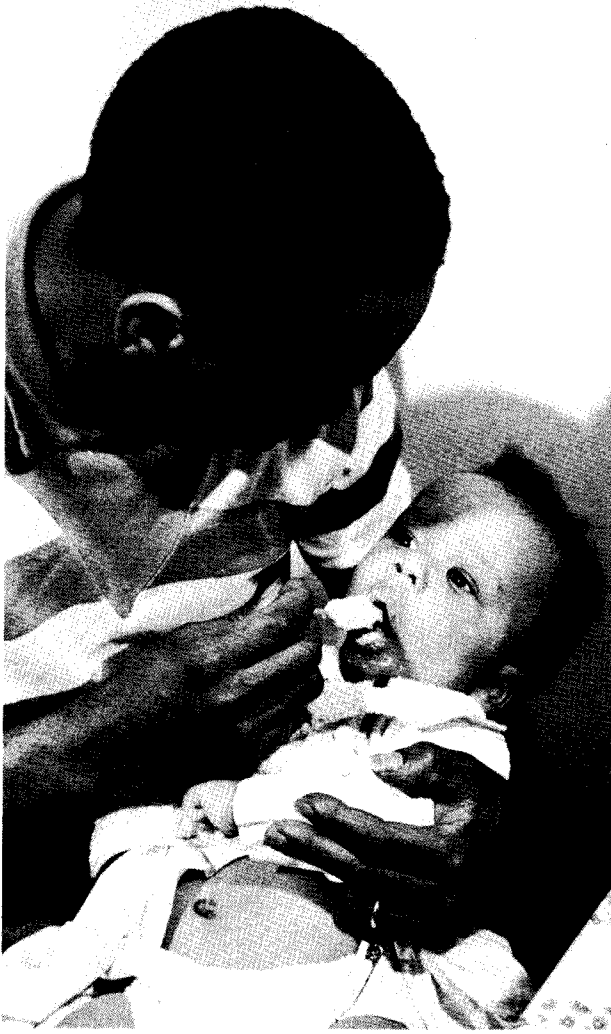
flow of children from school to work through the BACK TO SCHOOL drive.

Peace brought a period of unprecedented economic boom and optimism. However, infant mortality rates and illiteracy were still unacceptably high, especially for minorities and poor children. Once again, the Children's Bureau led reform. One of its reports for the Midcentury White House Conference on Children was cited by the Supreme Court in its 1954 decision which outlawed racial segregation in public schools.

In 1969, maternal and child health and crippled children's services were moved to the Public Health Service. The 1970 White House

Conference on Children and Youth resulted in the creation of the National Center on Child Advocacy in the Bureau, and passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act in 1974 added a National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect.

With the passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act in 1974, the Bureau's earlier work with the States to enact reporting laws and to investigate and follow-up reports of suspected child maltreatment increased. Evidence of child sexual abuse was matched with intensified efforts by the Center, and attention was given to the sensitive handling of children as witnesses in court. In 1984, protective services were extended to



handicapped newborns suspected of medical neglect.

The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect continues to serve as a government catalyst and focal point to protect the Nation's children from maltreatment by their parents and child care providers outside the home.

Congressional attention culminated in The Child Welfare Act of 1980. This landmark legislation provided incentives for the States to inventory the children in foster care, to develop statewide information systems, to review cases





. . . Children will always need safe environments, education, health care, the chance to have fun, the experience of love. And the Children's Bureau's commitment to children continues.

of children in foster care at six month intervals and to provide placement prevention and reunification services for families. The Bureau supported legislation for Federal adoption support for children with special needs. By 1982, 50,000 children were awaiting adoption, down from 102,000 in 1977.

The next 75 years will continue to bring dramatic changes. But certain things never change...

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