

The Story of the Children's Bureau, The Early Years: 1938-1960

Centennial Historical Webinar Series

August 16, 2012

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Agenda

- Continued role in developing and implementing child labor laws
- White House conferences on children
- Role in wartime
- Discussion & Conclusion



Clearly, if economic waste is reprehensible, waste of child life, whether viewed economically or in terms of common and universal betterment, is more deplorable than iwar." HRANKE HOOVER.

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THE STORY OF THE U. S. CHILDREN'S BUREAU By Eleanor Taylor

Published by the Child Welfare Committee NATIONAL LEADUR OF WOMEN VOTERS 532 17th Steree, N. W. Washington, D. C. Price 25 cents

January, 1930

The Story of The Children's Bureau

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H^E was a nice old gentleman. They were showing him the "sights" of Washington, and finally they took him through the Children's Bureau. Scanning the bare, orderly offices filled with reports bound in drab gray covers, with charts and maps, at last he burst forth with amazement—"But where are the children?"

R

"Not here," his Children's Bureau guide assured him, "but in eity slums and country cabins, in factories and mines, in fatherless homes, in children's courts. Wherever children are, there the Bureau goes. And indeed," she added with a twinkle, "we haven't room for our 43,000,000 * children here!"

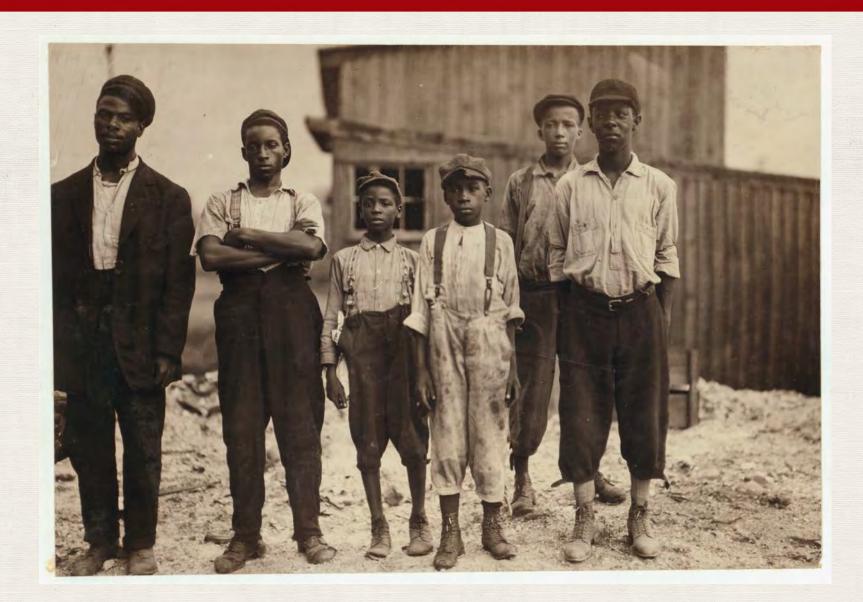
A^T that moment a messenger appeared, carrying a huge mail sack. The old gentleman and his guide followed him to a long room, where a half doen girls took the hundreds of letters from his sack, opened and sorted them. Some went to the doctors in the Bureau, others to the experts in problems of child training, child labor, handicapped children. Letters from mothers, fathers, teach-

* There are 43,000,000 children under 18 years of age in the United States.

The Story of the Children's Bureau, The Early Years: 1912-1937



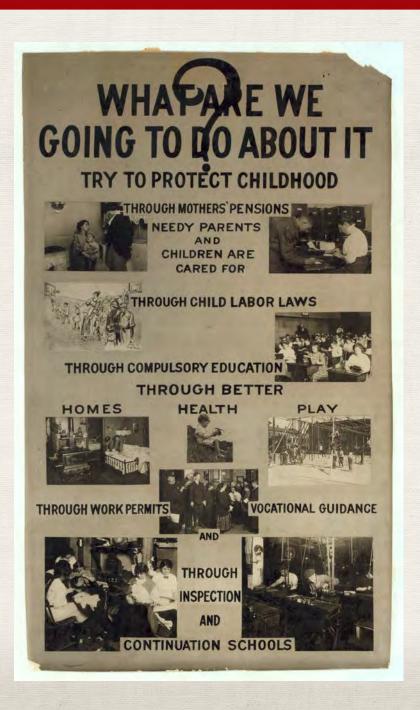




Workers at the Alexandria Glass Factory, ca. 1940.













Children ages 6, 8 and 10 work in a sugar beet field, ca 1915.





From School to Work, published by the Children's Bureau, 1928.

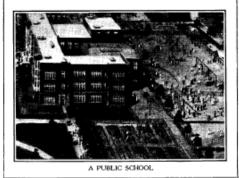




JOHN and ELSIE are a typical American boy and girl. Their story shows what a State and a community can do to protect children from industrial exploitation and to train them for work and for life. The first essential in such training is attendance at schools that provide a rounded education of mind and body.

JOHN and ELSIE attend school at least nine months a year until they are 16 years old.

> Every community should provide educational facilities for all children





A SCHOOL SHOP

AT SCHOOL John and Elsie have the opportunity to work in school shops and laboratories, trying out their abilities and tastes in different kinds of work.

 \P Through school courses and vocational counselors the children learn something about the trades and occupations open to young men and women, and about the requirements for each. While in the junior high school grades John and Elsie consult the school counselor, who helps them to plan for the future.

Every community should provide vocational advice and training







Tobacco sharecropper family, ca. 1939.







South Carolina 1st Grade children participate in a Children's Health Day program, 1939.







Katharine Lenroot, Children's Bureau Chief, 1934 – 1951.







Migrant mother nursing one of her seven children, ca. 1938.







Nursery school and child care center for African American children, ca. 1940.





Children at the Flanner House, an Indianapolis community center, ca. 1940.







Conference Program, Conference on Children in a Democracy, April, 1939.

Conference on Children in a Democracy

PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS at the INITIAL SESSION

April 26, 1939

Children's Bureau

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Collection Went Number 330

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Refugee children living in tents outside Bakersfield, California, ca. 1938.







3 year-olds in a school for refugee children in New York, ca. 1942.







Children's Colony, a home for refugee children in New York, ca. 1942.







Refugee children learn English at a local public school, ca. 1942.







Refugee checkpoint ca. 1945.









A family formed through international adoption, ca. 1950.





Children's Bureau publication, July, 1940.

Care of Children Coming to the United States for Safety Under the Attorney General's Order of July 13, 1940

aQ.

Standards Prescribed by the Children's Bureau

Bureau Publication No. 268

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR CHILDREN'S BUREAU





Children's Bureau publication, ca. 1942, reprinted in 1948.

A Glossary of

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CERTAIN CHILD-WELFARE TERMS

In Spanish, Portuguese, French and English

FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY Social Security Administration U. S. CHILDREN'S BUREAU







20 year-old Annie Tabor, lathe operator in a supercharger plan, ca 1942.







Nursery schools provided care for children while their mothers went to work in the war industry, ca. 1942.





Martha Eliot, ca. 1941.









Visiting nurse meets children living in a defense housing trailer camp, ca. 1942.





We are fighting again for human freedom and especially for the future of our children in a free world. Children must be safeguarded – and they can be safeguarded – in the midst of this total war so they can live and share in that future. They must be nourished, sheltered and protected, even in the stress of war production, so they will be strong to carry forward a just and lasting peace.

A Children's Charter in Wartime, 1942





A mother waves goodbye to her five year-old as she heads off to work in the war industry, ca. 1943.







A child and her new adoptive family, ca. 1940.







A child plays nurse in a school near Oakland, California, ca. 1943.











Children bear the promise of a better world...





A young mother brings her child to the visiting nurse for medical care, ca. 1939.









Children's Bureau Chief Katharine Lenroot and her assistant, Dr. Martha Eliot, with Senator James Murray, 1942.



A military family receives medical care, ca. 1944.







President Harry S. Truman, ca.1946.





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Children's Bureau Chief, Martha Eliot with former Chief Katharine Lenroot, hold a document signed by President Truman, ca. 1951.









Youth delegates to the 1950 conference.







Children's Bureau staff with Chief Martha Eliot.





Transcript of a radio discussion on children and the war, May 24, 1942. ROUND TABLE

CHILDREN AND THE WAR

A Radio Discussion by

MARTHA ELIOT

DANIEL PRESCOTT

• T. V. SMITH

431st BROADCAST IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY . 219

MAY 24, 1942





Celebrating the Children's Bureau's 40th birthday, in 1952.





Program from the 1951 White House Conference on Children and Youth.

A Healthy Personality for Every Child

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Martha Eliot writes on the issue of juvenile delinguency, November, 1952.



 Suppose a community expected its first-year medical students to diagnose and treat all sick children. That the children were committed to the contagion ward of the hospital during diagnosis. And that that hospital had no medicines! Ridiculous, you say? Well consider such facts as these:

1. This year about a million youngsters will be picked up by the police. Some 300,000 of these children will come before the courts. More than half of our counties have no probation service to help judges study the problems behind a child's delinquency and to give them the background information a judge should have in deciding a wise plan for a delinquent child. Even where some such service exists, it is often offered by people who have no training for this work. 2. Between 50,000 and 100,000 children will be held in jails while judges decide what should be done with them. Many of these jails are unfit even for adult criminals.



Children in Trouble

Does your community help them or push them further along the downward path?

Martha M. Eliot, M.D., Chief Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency

3. Some 35,000 children, judged delinquent, will be committed to training schools which often provide only the most meager psychological, health, educational, recreational, and religious programs. Lacking funds and community support to employ skilled workers, too many of our 250 training schools cannot restore socially sick youngsters to health.

No wonder such a high percentage of our adult criminals have behind them a history of juvenile delinquency!

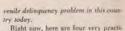
No wonder we spend millions of dollars to protect society against the adult

criminal! Years ago we, as a nation, failed to help such people when they were just "children in trouble."

But beyond the money cost, we cannot afford this waste of human lives. If we want to, we can save the children. Too few of us have given thought to the fate of youngsters who run afoul of the law. Maybe it's been a matter of "out of sight, out of mind." Or maybe our neglect stems from ignorance of what can and should be done.

But even now some excellent examples of good practices can be found-a few splendid courses of training for juvenile police officers; some probation services showing thrilling results in court handling of youngsters; some fine detention homes for youngsters who must await court decisions; here and there training schools with well-run programs.

If we were to raise our handling of juvenile delinquents to the level of the best jobs being done, I am convinced we would change the whole face of our ju-



cal lines of action we can take:

- 1. Train police in handling children. 2. Improve probation service for ju-
- venile courts. 3. Provide good detention facilities
- for children who must be held. 4. Help training schools to get good
- staffs who can conduct full programs for their charges.

On which of these projects will your League work in your community this year? You have an enviable reputation for accomplishment, particularly in behalf of children. Here is a job that really needs you. The Children's Bureau will soon be prepared to give you a study guide to help assess your community's treatment of its juvenile offenders, and plan what might be done to support the people responsible for handling delinquents. We can direct you to experts near at hand with whom to talk over next steps.

You will not be alone in any campaigns you undertake. Indeed, I would hope you would pool your talents and time with those of other organizations in your communities who want to achieve better programs for young delinquents. You can add that bright spark of enthusiasm that has so often in the past fired the imagination and will of citizens to work on projects in which Junior Leagues have believed.

We want to hear from every group that joins this campaign. So when your League gets going, won't you drop me a line?







Martha Eliot writes for the Christian Advocate, September, 1953.



ARTHA M. ELIOT'S interest in broken families and babies was first awakened when she took over for her fahter, a Unitarian clergyman, the task of writing post cards to call a board meeting of a child placement agency. After graduation from Radcliff she became a medical social worker, and in 1018 received her M.D. For 14 years she was a resident in pediatrics at Yale.

Dr. Eliot's work with the Children's Bureau (now a part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfere) began in 1924. In 1951 she was appointed director. This year the bureau's emphasis is on the juvenile delinguency problem.

Juvenile Delinquency Is Everybody's Business

This year some 100,000 young Americans will spend a night

in jail; the end of the story is up to you . . . by MARTHA M. ELIOT

IN John's eyes everything seemed to go wrong the day he threw the rock through the drugstore window. He ran smack into the arms of a policeman, the very one who had warned him about tinkering with cars. There was no squirming or alibing out of this one.

Why wasn't he in school? How could he explain that he hated the place and couldn't face flunking "math" again.

Two weeks later, John was in court with his father and mother, resentful at the thought of what the judge would say this time. He was wondering, too, what they would do with him.

What, indeed, would they do with John, aged 15, who hates school, habitually gets into trouble, and is already a familiar face to the police? Is he a "bad one" slated for a life of adult crime? Is he to be punished? Or is he to be helped, and if so, how?

LAST year about 1,000,000 American youngsters tangled with the law. Some 350,000 came before juvenile courts —an average of almost 1,000 a day.

Their offenses ranged from shop-lifting at the five-andten to stealing cars, from house-breaking to sex offenses. During the first six months of 1952 more serious crimes were committed by boys and girls 18 years old than by persons of any other single age.

Startling as these figures are, they are growing larger. Between 1948 and 1951 the number of youngsters appearing in a representative sampling of juvenile courts increased 17 per cent, while the number of boys and girls

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CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE





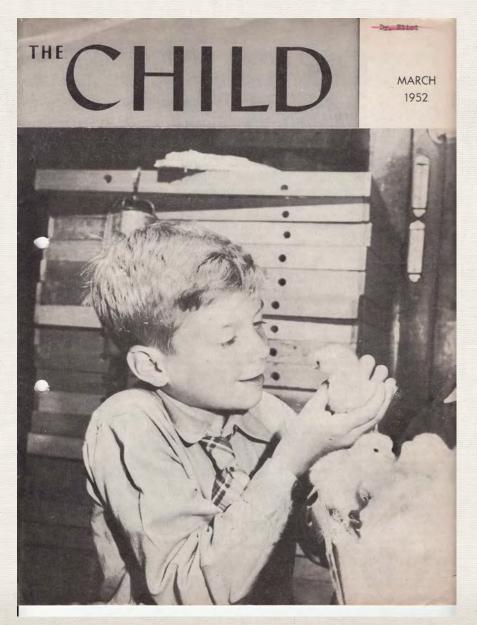
Adoptive parents meet their new baby for the first time, Fulton County, GA, ca. late 1950's.







Cover of *The Child*, March, 1952.







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and writing, he

Little Black Chick," which was are writing for the school patter Through this project, several staff writing and have jourish adult with-

ters and thus gain some collect from ort classes make book posters and fill their part in our treatment plan. They like to read about danger. a story record includes many the

One of the last issues of The Child, March, 1952.







Good Dishes for Children

These dishes are good for children and grown-ups too. The recipes provide enough for a family of five.

MILK-VEGETABLE SOUPS

1 quart milk (skim milk may be used). 2 cups thoroughly cooked vegetable 21/2 tablespoons flour. 2 tablespoons butter or margarine or through a sieve. Spinach, peas, other fat. I teaspoon salt.

finely chopped, mashed or put beans, potatoes, celery, or asparagus make good soups.

U.S. FOOD

ADMINISTRATION

Stir flour into melted fat and mix with the cold milk. Add the cooked vegetable and stir over the fire until thickened. If soup is too thick, add a little water or milk.

RICE PUDDING

1 quart milk. 1/3 cup rice. 1/3 cup sugar. 1/2 cup raisins or chopped dates.

1/2 teaspoon salt. 1/s teaspoon ground nutmeg or cinnamon.

WASHINGTON : OOVERIMENT PRINTING OFFICE + 1817

Wash the rice, mix all together, and bake three hours in a very alow oven, stirring now and then at first. This may be made on top of the stove in a double boiler, or in a fireless cooker. Any coarse cereal may be used in place of rice.

For more suggestions, send to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Farmers' Bulletin 717, "Food for Young Children." It tells more about feeding children and the reasons why right food is so important. It shows every mother how to give her children their chance in life.

United States Food Leaflet No. 7

Food For Your Children

U. S. DEPT. OF

AGRICULTURE

U.S. FOOD

ADMINISTRATION

Give Your Children Their Chance They ought to have it and you want to give it to them.

They Must Have the Right Food

Think how fast the child grows. The new muscles and bones and all the other parts of the body are made from the food which the child eats.

Give him clean, wholesome, simply cooked food-plenty of milk, cereals, vegetables, fruit, an egg or some meat occasionally.

Wrong food-too little, too much, or wrong kinds-hurts the child's chance of being the strong, healthy boy or girl you want.

Right food-may mean

Strong bodies Rosy cheeks 17474 -- 17

Good brains Bright eyes

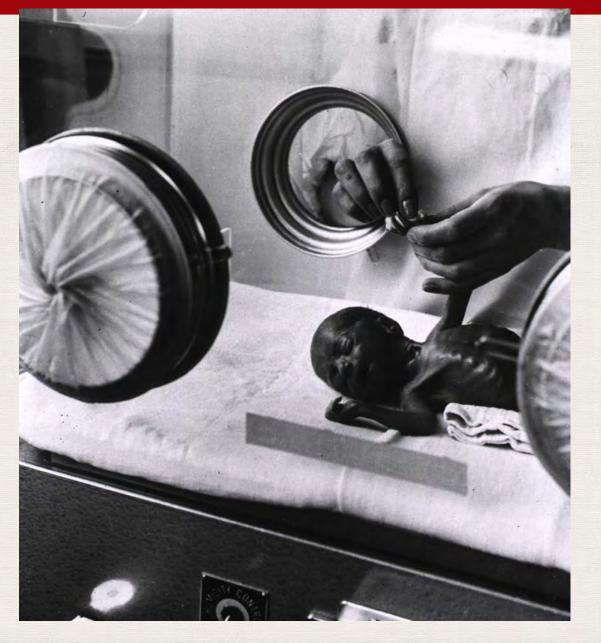


Leaflet describing the proper diet for children.





Nurse caring for a premature infant, ca. late 1950's.







By 1956, maternal and child health programs were providing, annually:

- Prenatal doctor visits to more than 200,000 expectant mothers
- Post-delivery nursing for more than 300,000 mothers
- Well-child clinic visits for more than 1 million babies and pre-school children
- Dental exams for approximately 3 million school-age children
- Medical exams for more than 2.5 million school-age children
- Diptheria and smallpox immunizations for more than 4 million children





Martha Eliot writes on the needs of crippled children and their families.

The Social Security Act And Crippled Children



THE YEAR 1936 deserves to be remembered as a milestone in the progress of effort to provide for the welfare of crippled children in the United States.

A year ago, on August 14, 1935, the President signed the Social Security Act containing, in the ride relating to maternal and child welfare, the first provision for Federal-State cooperation in behalf of crippled children year enacted in this country. Six months later, in February 1936, Congress appropriated the funds necessary to carry out the purposes of the Act. Restucky, Maine, and Michigan were the first States to receive the approval of the Children's Hureau of their plans for crippled children's services under the terms of the Act. To day 36 States, Alaska, and the Distract of Columbia Inve had their plans approved, and a really nation-wide program of great benefit to crippled children is actually under way.

Although the terms of the Act relating to crippled children arc, by now, fuirly well known to the general public, especially to those who are working in this field, it may be well to summarize them briefly in order that the scope and diversity of State plans in operation may be appreciated when considered in relation to the conditions which the Act requires to be mer before approval can be obtained and payment of Federal funds authonized.

T SHOULD be borne in mind that all parts of Title V of the Social Security Act are closely related in their ultimate purpose. Parts 1, 2, and 3, providing for maternal and child-health services, services for crippled children, and child-health services, services constitute three parts of an integrated program under the administration of the Children's Bureau, and Part 4, relating to vocational rehabilitation, under the administration of the Federal Office of Education, will also be of special interest in the development of State plans for crippled children's strvices.

The aim of the Federal program for the weltare of crippled children is set forth in Part 2 of Title V of the Social Security Act as follows:

(zd) Security Act as follows: "For the purpose of multiple each State to extend and improve (especially in rural news and in a new suffering transtevers economic disrem), as for a pretractable mode the anaditions on such State, services for brazing explicit citialization, in the providing molecule anguidal, corrections, and other solvices and ears, and facilities for diagramic hospitalization, in the correct for citializen when are explicit on which are used in the correction of the second second second second berefly amborized to its appropriated for each fixed year, beginning with the fixed year second, june 160, 1969, the same of 32,340,000. The amme mode available under this section only be used for multiple promotes to Strees which have an optimized, and had approved by the Chief of the Children's formers, State plan to sock services."

THE NEXT section of this part of the Act states that the Federal funds are to be allotted by the Secretary of Labor on the basis of \$20,000 to each State and the

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Martha M. Eliot, M. D., Assistant Chief, Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C.

remainder according to the need of each State, based on the number of crippled children in the State in need of services and the cost of furnishing such services to them.

The Act specific further that the plane submitted by the Stats to the Children's Bureau for approval must meet the following conditions: (1) Financial participation by the State; (2) administration or supervision of administration of the plan by a State agency; (3) such methods of administration (other than those relating to selection, tenuce of office, and compensation of personnel) as are necessary for the efficient operation of the plan; (4) such reports by the State agency as the Secretary of Labor may from time to time require; (5) provision for cooperation with medical health, nursing, and welfare groups and organizations and with any agency in such State charged with administering State laws providing for vocational rehabilitation of physically handicapped children.

WITHIN THE framework thus established, how have the States met these conditions and how have they provided for their own particular needs?

Considering the fact that in some States no provision had ever been made under public asspices for assistance to crappled children, the extent to which the States have been able to lay foundations for a coordinated program in a relatively short space of time seems truly remarkable. The interest of the public, the stimulus of private organizations which had experience in this field, and the cooperation of professional groups, especially the medical, nursing, and social work groups, is largely responsible for the results so far achieved. Indeed, this interest and cooperation may be said to represent the outstanding characteristic common to all the State plans approved for crippled children's services up to the present time.

As 18 plans have been approved by the Chief of the Children's Bureau since February 26 of this year—aan average of more than 7 a month—it would be tedious to attempt to describe each one in detail in the space of a single article. But the description of a few of them will indicate that the conditions prescribed by the Act have left the States remarkably free to develop a locuble program which differs from State to State.

The plans of Kentucky, Maina, and Michigan were approved on the same day—February 26. No single State may, therefore, be said to have been the 'frist' to receive approval. Sixteen State plans were approved in March. Other approvals followed in April, May, and Jane, the most recent being those plans submitted by Nebraska, Othio, Pennsylvania, Massechusetts, Utah, and the District of Columbia. At the present writing more than half the States with approved plans have already submitted new plans for the fixed year 1937.



Visiting nurse examines a Native American baby living in a rural area, date unknown.







A child receives preventative dental care, ca. 1960.







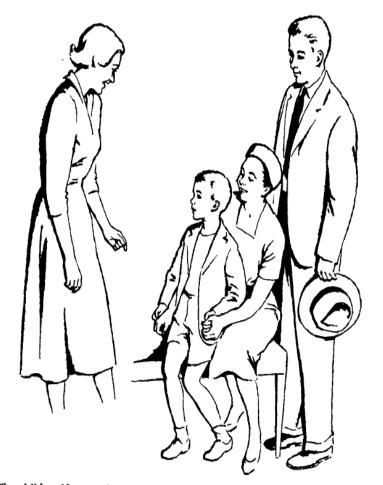


Nursery at Junior Village, Washington, DC ca. 1958.





Illustration from a child welfare worker training manual, date unknown.



The child welfare worker is visited by an adopted child and his new parents.



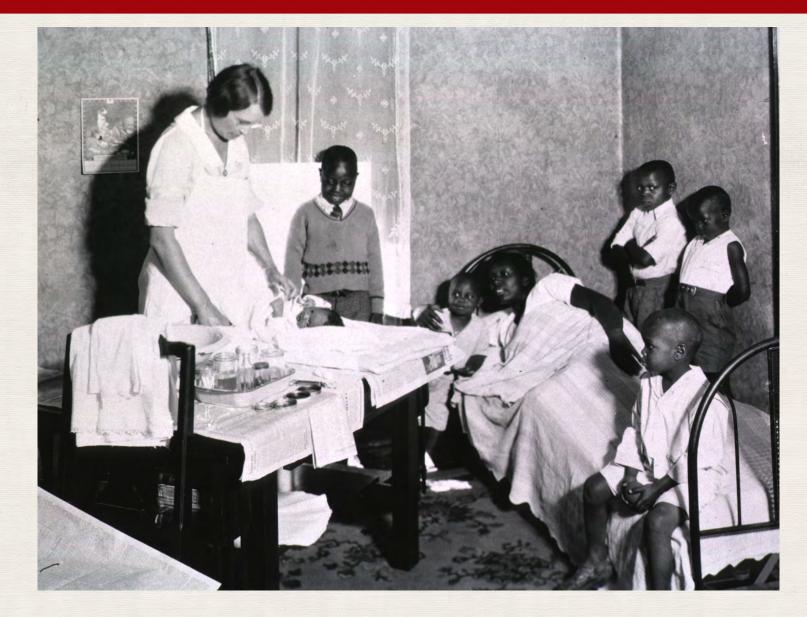


A class in a Denver high school teaches about family life, ca. 1950's.







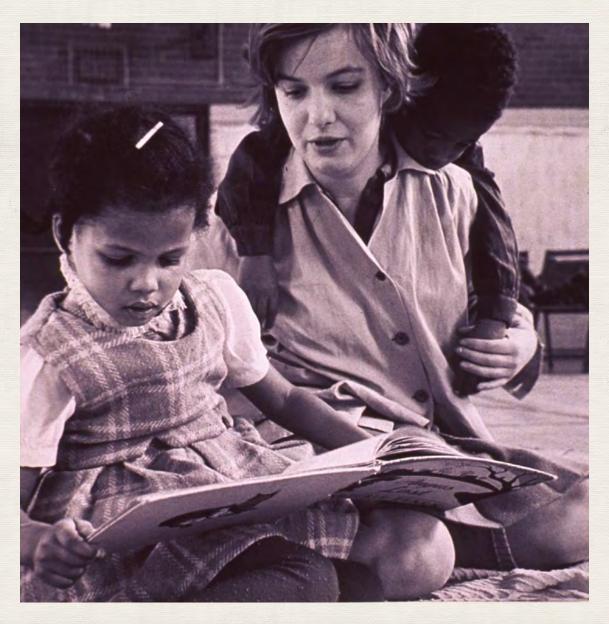


Home visit to mother and children, ca. 1950's.



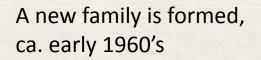


Preschool teacher and children, ca. 1958.





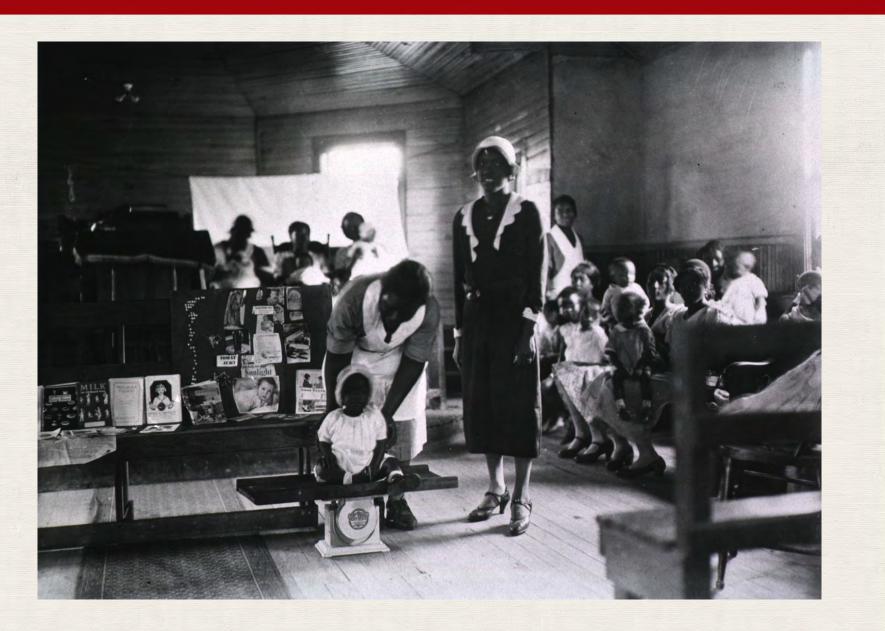












Improvised clinic, ca. 1950's.







Newborn nursery, ca. 1955.





Photographs courtesy of:

Francis Perkins Center Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library Maternal and Child Health Library National Library of Medicine United States Library of Congress University of Minnesota



For a recording of today's presentation and other information about the Children's Bureau's Centennial Webinars, visit <u>http://cb100.acf.hhs.gov/webinars</u>

