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Children bear the promise  
of a better world . . . . .

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Are we helping  
those with special needs?

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## *Our Concern—Every Child*

**S**Ocial SERVICES FOR CHILDREN of all economic levels needing special assistance in dealing with problems of home, school, or community adjustment should be everywhere available. All our rural counties, not merely 500 of them, should have as soon as possible the services of a child-welfare worker, able to give full cooperation to citizens' groups in developing whatever community programs may be necessary to safeguard the health and well-being of children. In every city the public and private resources for safeguarding the health and welfare of children should be reviewed and strengthened with a view to meeting the needs of every child who may require special service.

—*Katharine F. Lenroot.*

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# *Assure to every child*

“**SOCIAL SERVICES** furnish the means by which society helps to meet the special needs of children whose well-being cannot be fully assured by their families and by those community services that are intended for all children alike. The primary objective of child-welfare service is to provide for every child who has some special need whatever assistance and guidance may be required to assure him security and protection, within his own home if possible, and opportunity for his growth and development.”—*White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, General Report.*

From a million and a half to two million children throughout the United States are in special need of assistance because of home conditions or individual difficulties or disabilities. At least a million of these children are deprived of a fair opportunity for normal development because they live in communities that lack the necessary resources for child-welfare services.

Children who have been deprived of normal home life or who are endangered by conditions in their environment, as well as those with mental or physical handicaps or emotional maladjustment, are peculiarly in need of safeguards and assistance which should be afforded by State and community programs. Boys and girls whose bodies and characters are stunted by deprivation and neglect cannot develop into courageous and self-sustaining citizens. Society has an obligation to protect these children,

*With a chance for normal*



## *security and well-being*

both for their sake and its own. Every child, no matter where he may live or what his race or economic or social status may be, should be assured of those services that his individual needs require.

Very few communities have made provision for social services for children which come anywhere near meeting the real needs. In a great many counties or other local units almost the only services available are foster care for children who have had to be removed from their own homes and treatment of juvenile offenders. Deprivation and neglect and maladjustments that might have been prevented or corrected afflict childhood, and the community lays up for itself an ever-increasing load of dependency, mental and physical handicap, and delinquency.

**“Let us come to see what children really are. Each day the world is made anew through its childhood; each day countless opportunities are offered to us through our children. Let us catch their love for the beautiful, their love of sport, of play, of art, of truth and justice, the delicate fineness of all their sensibilities and capabilities, the numerous creative resources they have with them; then let us use their talents for that newer, finer life which is the great objective of social work. . . . America has a very different attitude toward its children from that of almost all other countries. This is fertile soil, and how rich will be the harvest if only we use the soil in the right way.”**

**—J. Prentice Murphy.**

## *growth and development*



# Child-welfare services need

## Study conditions in your locality

THE FIRST STEP in bringing child-welfare services to all who need them is a careful study of conditions in the community. Existing services should be known, and plans made for providing necessary resources, so that aid may be given to all children whose home conditions or individual difficulties demand special attention.

Social-welfare agencies, schools, health agencies, courts, recreational agencies, and representative citizens all should take part in community planning for child-welfare services. Public and private child-welfare agencies should cooperate in developing an effective program.

Some localities make provision for the care of children with certain types of disability, while they entirely overlook other children with equally important needs. Other localities pay very little attention to children who should be the special objects of their concern.

Public and private funds can be used to the greatest advantage only when there is an intelligent plan for giving the kinds of service actually needed. It is a short-sighted policy that ignores the importance of adequate community services for children; saving of tax funds now may mean wastage of funds through greatly multiplied expenditures in future years. Unwise economy will mean a wastage of childhood and a future burden of dependency, neglect, and delinquency.

## Does your community make adequate provision for:

1. Social service for children whose home conditions or individual difficulties or disabilities require special attention?
2. Child-guidance service for the study and treatment of children with special problems of personality behavior?
3. Foster care, in family homes or institutions adapted to the children's individual needs, for children who must be cared for away from their own homes temporarily or over long periods?
4. Service to physically handicapped children, in cooperation with health and educational agencies?
5. Social safeguards for retarded and mentally deficient children?
6. Cooperative effort to remedy community conditions detrimental to the welfare of children and to promote conditions favorable to their health and well-being?



# Need community planning

## *Public responsibility for welfare of children*

ONLY RECENTLY has it been recognized that casework services to children are an important function of public-welfare agencies as well as of organizations privately supported. Under the Social Security Act Federal aid is given the States for extension of child-welfare services in rural areas. This has brought marked development of public social services for children in districts where formerly there was widespread neglect. These demonstrations of the extent of need and of constructive methods of care may well serve as an incentive for State-wide programs.

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The White House Conference of 1940 urges that—  
Social services to children whose home conditions or individual difficulties require special attention should be provided in every county or other appropriate area. An obligation rests upon both public and private agencies for the development of adequate resources and standards of service.

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In most communities the public agency must assume the greater part of the responsibility for the protection and care of children. Local public-welfare departments should be able to provide all essential social services for children, either directly or through utilizing the resources of other agencies. As stated in the report adopted by the White House Conference, "Public child-welfare services should be available to every child in need of such help, without regard to legal residence, economic status, race, or any consideration other than the child's need." To make this possible there must be enough social-service workers in the community, and they must be equipped by training and experience for their difficult task.



*Social services  
must answer  
many forms of need*

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**M**ANY FORMS of social service are needed by children whose well-being cannot be fully assured by their own families. Of first importance are those services that help to afford children security and protection and opportunity for growth and development in their own homes and in their own communities.

Social services should be available for children who are neglected and for those whose health or welfare is endangered by conditions in the home or the community. Unmarried mothers and their children are in special need of care and protection. Children placed for adoption require safeguards which should be afforded by public and private agencies.

For children who are physically handicapped social services must frequently be provided in cooperation with health and educational agencies.

For children who are mentally handicapped social services are needed to assist parents in understanding their limitations and potential abilities, to further their development through community, school, and home activities that bring satisfaction in achievement, and to provide other homes for them if they cannot safely remain with their families.

For children who require care away from their own homes there should be available various types of foster care in family homes or in properly equipped institutions, so that each child may receive the care he really needs. Child-caring agencies and





institutions, whether public or private, should have adequate funds for the maintenance of children and for such services as are necessary to meet their physical, emotional, educational, and religious needs.

Foster care should be preceded by social service to determine whether such care will be in the child's best interest, as well as the type of care needed by the particular child. Unless the child's welfare necessitates permanent severance of family ties, foster care should be accompanied by work for the rehabilitation of the home, so that the child may return to the family group as soon as conditions in the home and his own development make this desirable.



“We are well aware of the greatest structural social movements which slowly must compel a better public service and the abolition of poverty. After all, no one knows how long or how short a time will be required to finish this spadework of our civilization. But this much is sure: We can quicken the pace.”

—*Julia C. Lathrop.*



## *Prevention of juvenile delinquency*

CHILDREN in danger of becoming delinquent must be the concern of those agencies equipped to deal constructively with home and community conditions and with problems of the individual child. Child-guidance services for the study and treatment of children who show personality or behavior problems at home or in school are an essential part of a community program.

Prevention of delinquency and intelligent treatment of young offenders require knowledge of the personal and environmental conditions which may have a bearing upon the delinquent behavior of the individual child. The social and economic factors which contribute to maladjustment must be understood and dealt with, as well as the physical, mental, and emotional characteristics of the child.

Courts dealing with children's cases should have judges who have understanding of children and knowledge of social conditions. Social services should be available to these courts. In the larger communities the court may need to have its own staff, but in less populous areas the court may use the services of child-welfare workers in the public-welfare department.

The conservation and upbuilding of normal home life are preventive measures of the greatest importance. Educational maladjustment resulting from inflexible school programs often leads to personal and social maladjustment, and prevention of this source of behavior problems must be dealt with in a community program. Provision of play facilities and leisure-time activities has long been recognized as a factor in prevention of juvenile delinquency; youthful energies must be directed into useful channels. The development of adequate social services in local public-welfare departments is of very great importance as a measure for the prevention of delinquency.

Prevention of juvenile delinquency and intelligent treatment of young offenders are not problems for juvenile courts, child-guidance clinics, and training schools alone. The church and the school, recreational and group-work organizations, and child-welfare, family-service, and health agencies are all concerned with the prevention and treatment of delinquency. Concerted action in this field is an important part of a comprehensive community program of social services for children.



*Our Nation is mobilizing its resources  
for the welfare of children  
as an important part of national defense:*

To coordinate health, welfare, medical, nutrition, recreation, and related services bearing on the defense emergency, the President of the United States has established by executive order the

*Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services,*  
Paul V. McNutt, Director.

To assure effective coordination of Federal relations with State and local governments engaged in defense activities, to facilitate constructive civilian participation in the defense program, and for other purposes, the President has established the

*Office of Civilian Defense,*  
Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Director.

The *Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor* is responsible for promoting the welfare of children at all times through—

Studies and advisory services	Child-labor administration
Cooperation with State agencies	Bulletins, leaflets, and radio talks

The Chief of the Children's Bureau, Katharine F. Lenroot, has been designated child-welfare consultant to the Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services, and the Assistant to the Chief, Charles I. Schottland, has been made liaison officer with that office. The Associate Chief of the Children's Bureau, Dr. Martha M. Eliot, has been designated liaison officer with the Office of Civilian Defense. Other Federal, State, and local agencies are working for the promotion of child welfare, in cooperation with many privately supported organizations.





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*The Defense of Children Series:*

**“CHILDREN BEAR THE PROMISE OF  
A BETTER WORLD” includes:**

1. What Are We Doing To Defend Them?
  2. Are We Safeguarding Those Whose Mothers Work?
  3. Are They Getting the Right Start in Life?
  4. Have They the Protection of Proper Food?
  5. Are We Defending Their Right to Health?
  6. Their Defense Is the Security They Find at Home.
  7. Their Education Is Democracy's Strength.
  8. Through Play They Learn What Freedom Means.
  9. Our Nation Does Not Need Their Toil.
  10. Are We Helping Those With Special Needs?
  11. Protect Them From Harmful Community Influences.
  12. Is Their Safety in Wartime Assured?
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*“CHILDREN IN WARTIME,” a radio program on defense of children, prepared by the Children's Bureau, is presented every Monday at 11 a. m. E. W. T. over the Blue Network.*

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ● CHILDREN'S BUREAU

*Defense of Children Series No. 10*

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