

Collection #
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OM 0123

THE FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF INDIANAPOLIS RECORDS, 1879–1971

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Processed by

Karen Larson

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Revised by Betsy Caldwell

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	9 manuscript boxes; 18 shoe boxes; 88 bound volumes; 1 oversize folder and photographs
COLLECTION	1879–1971

DATES:

PROVENANCE: Records placed on permanent loan by the Family Service Association of Indianapolis, 615 N. Alabama St., Indianapolis IN. 46204, May 1978.

RESTRICTIONS: All case records less than seventy-five years old are closed to researchers. Case records and other materials regarding individuals who obtained service from the Association which are at least seventy-five years old are open to scholarly and genealogical research, pursuant to the regulations of the Indiana Historical Society Library. Permission to publish or make extensive citation to case records or other materials regarding individuals who obtained service from the Association must be obtained in writing from the Executive Director of the Association.

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1978.0509

NOTES: The Family Service Association will deposit additional records in the future.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Family Service Association of Indianapolis has undergone a number of changes both in name and function since its founding as the Indianapolis Benevolent Society in 1835. For most of the nineteenth century, it was one of the principal distributors of private charity in the city, providing an alternative to public relief which usually resulted in the breaking up of needy families. By 1922, when the organization became the Family Welfare Society, it was specifically concerned with the welfare and counseling needs of families rather than individuals. As the development of a strong public relief program reduced the need for private relief agencies, the organization began to concentrate on providing family counseling and education, rather than financial assistance. In 1945, it changed its name to reflect its new function, becoming the Family Service Association.

When the Indianapolis Benevolent Society started in 1835, it was a purely volunteer organization devoted to helping the needy in the rapidly growing city. The Society was only loosely organized, and relied on its members to both identify and assist those in need. Because the Society kept few records, and those it did keep were apparently destroyed in a fire, the collection contains no material from the early period of the organization's existence.

By the late 1870s the Indianapolis Benevolent Society had become a feeble organization with few members and a depleted treasury. In 1879, the remaining members, led by Rev. Oscar C. McCulloch, chose to reorganize the Society rather than disband. The new Indianapolis Benevolent Society (I.B.S.) emphasized investigation to determine the best

means of aiding each person requesting assistance. Its structure was considerably tightened, with a central advisory committee overseeing all operations, a number of district committees to identify the needy, a full-time paid executive officer and the keeping of case records. The following year, the Benevolent Society turned over its administrative and investigative functions to a new organization, the Charity Organization Society (C.O.S.). From 1880 to 1923, the C.O.S. and the I.B.S. maintained separate identities, although they functioned as two arms of the same organization, having the same executive officer and Board of Directors. The Charity Organization Society was responsible for investigating cases to identify those worthy of aid, for referring deserving cases to the appropriate charity, and for keeping detailed records of cases investigated. The sole responsibility of the Indianapolis Benevolent Society was to provide assistance to those people approved by the C.O.S.

The Charity Organization Society started a number of agencies to deal with specific types of problems. Although these agencies began as departments of the C.O.S., many were later transferred to other independent charities. Those agencies whose records are included in the collection are:

1. The Society of Friendly Visitors. This was a volunteer organization whose members handled cases in which the need was more for advice than for material support. Each member was assigned one or two families to visit on a regular basis.
2. The Dime Savings and Loan was organized in 1887 to encourage thrift among the poor. The subscribers deposited ten cents each week, and could withdraw their savings at any time.
3. The Summer Mission for Sick Children was started in 1889 after many infant children of poor families had died during the previous hot summer. Its purpose was to care for sickly infants and new mothers by sending them to summer hospitals on the outskirts of the city. In 1917, the Summer Mission became part of the Children's Aid Association, and in 1922, part of the Family Welfare Society although it retained a separate corporate identity for many years afterward.
4. The Fairview Settlement was started in 1907 to provide housing for widows with children. It included a day nursery where workingwomen could leave their children. It became part of the Mothers Aid Society in 1916, and part of the Summer Mission in 1920. Fairview was disbanded shortly after.
5. The Social Service Exchange operated as a clearinghouse, allowing all of the Indianapolis charities to share their case records. It was originally part of the Charity Organization Society, became part of the Family Welfare Society in 1922, and was transferred to the Council of Social Agencies in 1941.
6. The Legal Aid Bureau was started in 1912 to provide free legal assistance for the poor. It later became the independent Legal Aid Society.

The Charity Organization Society also assisted in the organization of two independent charities. The Children's Aid Association was started in 1905 to provide advice for raising children, to find temporary homes for children whose parents are unable or unwilling to support them, and to distribute milk and medical care to needy children. The Mothers Aid Society was started in 1907 to provide free homes for widows with children.

In 1922, the Charity Organization Society, the Indianapolis Benevolent Society, the Children's Aid Association, and the Mothers Aid Society recognized that much of their work was duplicative, and so agreed to merge into a new organization, the Family Welfare Society, which would address itself to problems of the family. The society was divided into two divisions, each with its own supervisor, staff and methods. The Service and Relief Division was responsible for providing counseling and financial assistance to needy families, and the Children's Bureau was responsible for orphans and children in need of public assistance. In 1934, the Children's Bureau was transferred to the Indianapolis Orphan's Asylum. As government at all levels began taking the primary responsibility for poor relief during the 1930s and 1940s, the Family Welfare Society ceased to be a relief agency, and increasingly emphasized its counseling services.

Sources:

Information in collection.

“Family Service Association of Central Indiana,” in *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 560–561. [F534.I55 E4 1994 \(Reference Room and General Collection\)](#)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Approximately half of the collection is made up of the records of the Charity Organization Society and related agencies from the reorganization of the Indianapolis Benevolent Society in 1879 to the founding of the Family Welfare Society in 1922. The records include minutes for the Indianapolis Benevolent Society, the Charity Organization Society, several district committees of the C.O.S., and the Children's Aid Association; various reports of the Charity Organization Society, the Children's Aid Association, the Mothers Aid Society, the Summer Mission for Sick Children, and the Legal Aid Society; scrapbooks of the Charity Organization Society and the Summer Mission for Sick Children; approximately seven thousand case records, 1879–99; and a graphic drawing of Plymouth Church.

Of the agency's post-1922 records, the collection includes minutes, 1922–52; monthly reports, 1922–53; ledgers, 1924–49; scrapbooks; photographs of Mr. Henry M. Graham; and case records 1927–70. The case records are closed for seventy-five years following the date of creation.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Charity Organization Society Papers, 1882–1928

CONTENTS

CONTAINER

Miscellaneous papers, 1888–1928; includes papers regarding the national conference of Charities and Correction meeting in Indianapolis, May 1916; fund raising letters of the C.O.S. and related organizations; assorted programs and clippings

Box 1, Folder 1

Miscellaneous reports, 1911–22; includes reports recommending organizational changes; a 1913 report regarding care for the insane; and a 1922 audit report

Box 1, Folder 2

Minutes; includes 1893 Executive Committee minute book; 1910–11 minutes and case records; and index to the C.O.S. minutes

Box 1, Folder 3

Reports of the General Secretary; summaries of Annual Reports, 1914–22; Minutes of Annual Meetings, 1917–19; Report, 1920–21

Box 1, Folder 4

Reports of the General Secretary, Nov. 1921–Oct. 1922

Box 1, Folder 5

Minutes of District Meetings, 1882–84; Minutes of the Community Center Committee, 1911–13; Minutes of District Meetings, Dec. 1914–Jan. 1915, Jan.–Feb 1916; Northeast District Survey, ca. 1915

Box 1, Folder 6

Northwest District Meetings minutes, Nov. 1914–Mar. 1915; includes reports on new cases

Box 1, Folder 7

Series 2: Papers of Sub-Agencies and Related Agencies, 1905–1949

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Children's Aid Association. Articles of Incorporation, 1905; Constitution; Applications for Endorsement by the Commercial Club of Indianapolis, Committee on Benevolent Associations, with summaries of annual reports, 1910–17; Annual Reports, 1916, 1917, 1920	Box 1, Folder 8
Children's Aid Association reports and correspondence, 1915–23; includes correspondence regarding the disposal of the Association's property after 1922	Box 1, Folder 9
Summer Mission for Sick Children correspondence, financial papers and minutes, 1917–20	Box 1, Folder 10
Summer Mission for Sick Children papers 1920–27, 1949, includes correspondence, 1923 report, other legal papers and a 1949 letter regarding the history of the Summer Mission	Box 1, Folder 11
Mothers Aid Society reports, 1917–24	Box 1, Folder 12
Legal Aid Society reports and other papers, 1919–37	Box 1, Folder 13
Monthly Financial reports, 1912–13; contribution charts, 1907–12	Box 2, Folder 1
Monthly Financial reports, 1914–16	Box 2, Folder 2
Monthly Reports, Apr. 1921, Feb.–May 1922	Box 2, Folder 3
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Series 3: Fairview Place Legal Papers, 1893–1923

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Guarantee Bond and Fire Insurance Policy, 1919–23	Box 2, Folder 19

Series 4: Family Welfare Society Papers, 1922–60

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Family Welfare Society miscellaneous papers, 1922–27; Articles of Incorporation, Reports, and Financial Papers

Family Welfare Society, papers, 1932–ca.1960; includes reports on agency development; material regarding the Society's role in World War II; floor plans for the Family Services Association offices, ca. 1950; and undated notes

Papers and Correspondence regarding the proposed merger of the Children's Bureau and the Indianapolis Orphan's Asylum, 1931–34; includes numerous letters from Family Welfare organizations in other cities regarding their experiences with children's aid, and a 1942 report regarding the possibility of the Children's Bureau rejoining the Family Welfare Society

Letters and Papers relating to the Social Service Exchange, Indianapolis Council of Social Agencies, 1928–56

Historical and Biographical Material; includes historical sketches of the organization, 1908, 1927, 1936, and 1950; history of the Indianapolis Flower Mission, 1926; and biographical material on Oscar McCulloch, William B. Schiltges, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Sharpe

Four photographs of Mr. Henry M. Graham, 1951

One large photograph of Mr. Henry M. Graham,

CONTAINER

Box 3, Folder 1

Box 3, Folder 2

Box 3, Folder 3

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Photographs, Folder 1

Visual Collections: OVA

1951	Photographs, Folder 1
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Series 5: Pamphlets

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*Programme, Annual Meeting in the Interest of the
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*Annual Reports of the Indianapolis Benevolent
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Indianapolis, 1894–95; Charity Organization
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CONTAINER

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<i>Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis: A Brief Report, 1895–96, 1896–97 (3 copies); Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis, 1897–98, 1898–99 (2 copies); November Report of the Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis, 1898–99; Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis, 1 Nov. 1899–31 Oct. 1900, 1900–01; Report Indianapolis, 1901–02; Annual Report, 1903–04, 1904–05</i>	Box 4, Folder 8
<i>Annual Report, 1905–06, 1907–08, 1908–09; A Year of Social Service, 1911, 1912–13</i>	Box 5, Folder 1
<i>Ten Minute Talks on Phases of Charity, Annual Public Meeting of the Indianapolis Benevolent Society, 29 Nov. 1886?</i>	Box 5, Folder 2
<i>Year Book of Charities, 1886, 1886–87, 1888–89</i>	Box 5, Folder 3
<i>Indianapolis Year Book of Charities, 1889–90, 1890–91, 1891–92; Year Book of Charities Indianapolis, 1892–93</i>	Box 5, Folder 4
<i>McCulloch, Oscar. The Tribe of Ishmael. Diagram (see Box 3 Folder 5 for Oscar McCulloch's The Tribe of Ishmael: A Study in Social Degradation, 1888)</i>	Box 5, Folder 5
<i>The Fifty-third Anniversary of the Indianapolis Benevolent Society, 1889–90</i>	Box 5, Folder 6
<i>The Fifty-fourth Anniversary of the Indianapolis Benevolent Society, 30 Nov. 1890</i>	Box 5, Folder 7
<i>Articles of Association of the Charity Organization Society of the City of Indianapolis, 1900</i>	Box 5, Folder 8
<i>List of Subscribers to the Charity Organization Society, 1 Nov. 1902–1 Jan. 1903</i>	Box 5, Folder 9
<i>Friendly Visiting, 1903</i>	Box 5, Folder 10
<i>Mothers' Aid and Convalescent Work: An Investigation of Fifty-five Mothers Who Support Families By Their Own Labor, 1906–07</i>	Box 5, Folder 11
<i>A Partial Report of Four Months' Work of the Unemployed by the Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis, 1 Dec. 1907–1 Apr. 1908</i>	Box 5, Folder 12
<i>Mothers' Aid Society, 1908–09, 1909–10, 1910–11, 1911–12, 1912–13; First Annual Report of the Mothers' Aid Society, 1908</i>	Box 5, Folder 13
<i>The District Committee of the Charity Organization Society of the City of New York, Dec. 1917</i>	Box 5, Folder 14

Indiana Bulletin of Charity and Correction, No. 179,
Feb. 1930

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Series 6: Family Service Association of Indianapolis

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*Strengthening Family Life, Family Service
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Tomorrow, 1956; Cross Section, 1957; The Legend
of the Wooden Bowl, 1958; Facts and Figures for
1959; Case Closed, 1960; Family Service
Association of Indianapolis, 1961–64; Focus on
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Case Committee Minutes, 1923–54

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Miscellaneous Committee Minutes, 1923–55. Vol. 1
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Miscellaneous Committee Minutes, 1923–55. Vol. 2
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Box 8, Folder 1

Dime Savings and Loan, 1931–45. Accounts and
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Box 8, Folder 2

Press book, 1915–49. Contains newspaper clippings
relating to welfare and the Family Welfare Society

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See Restrictions

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Charity Organization Society Subscription Book, 1889–96, list of subscribers to the Charity Organization's fund drives	BV 1172
Charity Organization Society Diary, 1895–96, daily log of office business and description of cases brought to the office's attention	BV 1173
Charity Organization Society Case Book, 1893–96, daily journal of a case worker in which visitations and other case-related work are described	BV 1174
Charity Organization Society Registrar's Day Book, 1910–18, list of cases brought to the Charity Organization Society	BV 1175
Charity Organization Society Registrar's Day Book, 1919–23	BV 1176
Charity Organization Society District Committee Meetings Minute Book, 1880–83	BV 1177
Indianapolis Benevolent Society Minute Book, 1879–1918, includes clippings, announcements and letters	BV 1178
Indianapolis Benevolent Society Order Book, 1884–86, orders for fuel, clothing, and food for needy families	BV 1179
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Indianapolis Charity Aid Society, Account Book, 1905–15	BV 1188
Indiana Federation of Charity Organizations Secretaries Minute Book, 1912–19	BV 1189
Charity Organization Society Scrapbook, 1886–89	BV 1190
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Indianapolis Benevolent Society Scrapbook, 1891–1909. Clippings, letters, and memorabilia. Includes the report of the General Secretary at the 1921 Annual Meeting	BV 1192
Summer Mission for Sick Children Scrapbook, 1890–99	BV 1193
Summer Mission for Sick Children Scrapbook, 1913	BV 1194
18th National Conference of Charities and Correction Scrapbook, with newspaper clippings about the conference, and programs and memorabilia, Indianapolis, 1891	BV 1195
Indianapolis Benevolent Society Application Book A, 1879. Applications for aid and reports of investigations of the case	BV 1196
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Charity Organization Society Index to Records, name index to the case records	BV 1211
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Series 8: Family Welfare society, Family Service Association Records, 1922–1971

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Family Welfare Society Scrapbook, 1922–41; newspaper clippings	BV 1243
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Family Welfare Society Scrapbook, 1964–68 BV 1249

Family Welfare Society Scrapbook, 1968–71 BV 1245

Series 9: M.A. Theses

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CONTAINER

Thorman, George, *Marriage Counseling and Social Casework*, Indiana University, June 1951

BV 2004

DeVoe, Marcella Lucille et al., *Homemaker Service in the Family Service Association of Indianapolis, Jan. 1, 1952–Dec. 31, 1952*, Indiana University, 1953

BV 2005

Seeley, John R. and others, for Community Surveys, Inc. *Community Chest: A Case Study in Philanthropy*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956 (Volume 1)

BV 2006a

Seeley, John R. and others, for Community Surveys, Inc. *Community Chest: A Case Study in Philanthropy*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956 (Volume 2)

BV 2006b

Boswell, Charles H. *An Analysis of the Co-operation Between a Private Family Welfare Agency and Three Public Agencies*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1940

BV 2007

Brenneman, Myra L. et al. *Brief Service Cases in the Family Service Association of Indianapolis, January 1, 1952–June 30, 1952*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1953

BV 2008

Morgan, Ralph W. *Casework Methods Used in the Treatment of Problems of Parent-Child Relationships in a Family Agency*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1950

BV 2009

Stephenson, Mildred. *A Study of Intake in the Family Service Association of Indianapolis with Special Reference to Rejected Applications*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1950

BV 2010

Kaye, Bernice E. *A study of 114 Brief Service Cases in the Family Service Association of Indianapolis, January 1, 1962–June 30, 1962*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1963

BV 2011

Klinck, Herbert G. *A Study of Practice Under the Referral Agreement Between the Marion County Juvenile Court and the FSA of Indianapolis*, M.A.

BV 2012

thesis, Indiana University, 1951

Beard, Mildred Pauline. *The Needs of and Services Available to the Aged in Indianapolis and Marion County as Indicated by a Study of Selected Voluntary Agencies in Indianapolis*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1955 BV 2013

Bellard, Patricia. *A Study of the Social and Economic Status of a Selected Group of Applicants in Cases Active with the Family Service Association of Indianapolis. August 31, 1949*. M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1951 BV 2014

Moore, Jeanne Anne. *Use of a Research Project in Planning a Family Life Education Program for a Family Agency*, M.A. thesis, Boston University, 1952 BV 2015

Little, Ruby. *History of the Family Service Association of Indianapolis, Indiana, 1835 to 1950*, M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1951 BV 2016

Hosmer, Doris Harpole. *Evaluation of Case Results: A Study of the Evaluation Process in 100 Service Only Cases in the Family Welfare Society of Indianapolis*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1942 BV 2017

Rusterholtz, Hazel. *A Study of the Relief Practices of the Family Service Association of Indianapolis, January–June, 1949*, M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1952 BV 2018

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
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5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.