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The Seattle Juvenile Court Report for 1923



JANUARY 1, 1924
KING COUNTY JUVENILE COURT BUILDING
200 BROADWAY
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

THE IVY PRESS, SEATTLE



HONORABLE KING DYKEMAN
JUDGE OF THE JUVENILE COURT

THE
SEATTLE JUVENILE COURT
REPORT *for the* YEAR
1923

COURT SESSIONS
MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS
AT 1:30 P. M.
KING COUNTY JUVENILE COURT BUILDING
200 BROADWAY
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

PERSONNEL OF STAFF

The Court

HONORABLE KING DYKEMAN, *Judge*
DR. LILBURN MERRILL, *Referee*
MRS. FRANCETTE P. MARING, *Assistant to Judge in Girl Cases*
and Superintendent of Detention Home
KATE NYE, *Clerk of the Court*
MARION SOUTHARD, *Investigator*
MRS. MARTHA CASTBERG, *Probation Officer*
JANET DONALDSON, *Probation Officer*
P. V. MILLER, *Probation Officer*
GLADYS SCHUSTER, *Secretary to Referee*
RUTH STOUT, *Stenographer*
DR. LILLIAN C. IRWIN, *Medical Examiner for Girls*
DR. STEVENSON SMITH, *Consulting Psychologist*

Mothers' Pension Department

LENA E. HEMPHILL, *Commissioner*
VIOLET STOUT, *Secretary*
JOSEPHINE PORTER, *Investigator*
MRS. BESSIE MAYNARD, *Visitor*
MRS. EMILY CURRY, *Visitor*

Detention Home

HELEN E. MARING, *Assistant to Superintendent*
MRS. JESSIE BOWKER, *School Teacher*
MRS. ANNA NAERENTS, *Boys' Attendant*
MRS. MINNIE G. MCOMBER, *Girls' Attendant*
MRS. LOUISE MCKEE, *Kitchen Attendant*
C. S. WOOD, *Building Attendant*

THE GIST OF THE REPORT

BY DR. LILBURN MERRILL, *Referee*

Every 75th child in King County was at court during 1923 because of misconduct.

Several times as many other children doubtless were equally delinquent but they had parents with means to take care of them within their families.

The children who get into the juvenile court are not responsible for all of the boy and girl offenses that are committed. The ratio of 1 to 75 tells more about how much family control there is in the community.

* * *

Every 213th child in the county was found to be neglected by vicious environment, abandonment, or some other sort of insufficient guardianship.

* * *

For the care of all these the state functions through the court as a *super-parent*.

The way it meets its duty to bring up its children as good citizens shows better than everything else how much real worth there is in the state's character.

* * *

During the war period, particularly the years 1917, 1918 and 1919, both child neglect and juvenile delinquency decreased. There were plenty of jobs and few idlers. Community enthusiasm kept the young busy and interested in the common welfare. The world was on an adventure. After all that is what youth is mostly seeking.

Since the war waywardness has increased. But there is better social control over children now than

before the war. The social and educational agencies of the city and county are more effective. There is better organization and team work.

* * *

Dishonesty is the greatest anti-social fault of childhood. Coveting what belongs to another is common to all animal nature. The young are more honest, that is to say they are less crafty in expressing their desire for what others possess. That accounts for proportionately more arrests among children for stealing.

* * *

Sexual offenses bring an increasing number of children into court each year. This applies both to adult offenders who beget illicitly and to children in their early teens who find it easy to go astray.

The significant fact is that instinct is stimulated by many public influences which coax children to ape frivolous adults during child years when inhibitions are weak. Child nature is as wholesome as it ever was but it is more exposed to public amusements which make vice look more attractive and respectable than it really is.

Another fact ought to be noted that parents who give social freedom to their 13- to 17-year-old children make it easy for them to share joy rides and other adventures with sexual results.

* * *

Twelve percent of delinquent boys and 43.5 percent of delinquent girls brought to court during the year were committed to institutions.

When girls go wrong they require protection from themselves more than boys do. Usually they are physiologically out of balance. Their emotions are deranged. Fifty-five percent of our delinquent girl group were

arrested as sexual offenders. Perhaps half of the others were equally experienced. These girls require in a very immediate way the development of mental and physical inhibitions. This accounts for the greater need of institutional treatment for girls.

* * *

The average citizen thinks all juvenile court children are delinquents. This false idea may be due to popular interest in what folks should not do. A story in the newspaper about a wayward child is read by twice as many people as an equally conspicuous item regarding a neglected child. And the appeal increases with the luridness of the misbehavior.

* * *

As a matter of fact *child neglect* is the main issue every day at the children's court. If social neglect, vicious influences and abandonment were eliminated from the careers of all the children who appear in court there would remain only a small number of culprits for the court to look after.

* * *

Four hundred twenty little children were in court last year before they became wayward. The pathos of this group ought to overreach the appeal of the delinquents. But it doesn't. Society years hence will still be ignoring the appeal of homeless children. But a neglected child will have attention. All he requires is a little time and freedom to follow the bent of his nature. His inevitable naughtiness soon will disturb someone.

So in due time every neglected child will obtain public notice. The community pays for this foolishness in its futile attempts to handle problems of crime, pauperism and degeneracy.

Today's neglected children forecast the bulk of the crime problem of the next decade.

* * *

There isn't a single publicly maintained home or boarding school in the state of Washington for a good child who is homeless.

If a child over 10 finally, after much searching, is located in a free family home by aid of some privately maintained child-helping agency he generally is welcome only to the degree that he can earn his way.

The court sometimes has to do the disgraceful act of implying that a good boy is delinquent and send him to a school for delinquents so he may have a home and training in a controlled environment.

* * *

When children are temporarily removed from the custody of parents the court secures as much *financial support* as is available from the parents. Last year the clerk of the court collected in such cases \$12,269.07. The money went to the individuals and institutions caring for the children.

STATISTICS

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS OF CHILDREN BROUGHT TO COURT DURING TEN YEARS AND COUNTY SCHOOL POPULATION RATIO

Year	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
Delinq't										
Boys	639	567	536	443	335	503	841	765	913	957
Girls	158	133	81	108	105	115	145	232	225	232
Neg'l'cted										
Boys	230	252	241	149	90	146	221	179	188	193
Girls	220	223	229	122	113	133	224	169	319	227
Totals	1,247	1,184	1,087	822	643	897	1,431	1,345	1,645	1,609
County										
School										
*Census	61,755	65,063	63,936	67,051	77,660	84,760	86,515	86,269	86,622	89,438
Ratio	1:50	1:54	1:58	1:81	1:121	1:94	1:60	1:64	1:53	1:56

*The school census, which includes all children between the ages of four and twenty-one years, nearly parallels the juvenile court jurisdiction which includes all children under eighteen years. The numerical variation of these groups is so slight that the census provides a satisfactory basis for a ratio.

NOTE: Throughout this ten-year period 55 per cent of the cases requiring no change of guardianship were adjusted by the Referee.

COMPARATIVE POPULATION OF DETENTION HOME DURING TEN YEARS

Year	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
Boys	575	610	724	694	935	970	980	755	828	900
Girls	455	426	423	311	440	451	502	509	623	576
Totals	1,030	1,036	1,147	1,005	1,375	1,421	1,482	*1,264	1,451	1,476
Average period of detention (days)	7	6	7	6	6.5	5.2	6.9	6.2	6.1	5.5

*No children received for six weeks in 1921 because of smallpox quarantine.

OFFENSES AND CONDITIONS WHICH BROUGHT CHILDREN TO COURT DURING YEAR 1923

The classification in this table indicates the major behavior fault or neglect revealed by the court investigation.

	Boys	Girls	Totals
CONDUCT			
Dishonesty	321	10	331
Disorderliness	227	4	231
Sex delinquency	50	103	153
Vagrancy and runaways	114	26	140
Insubordination	71	65	136
Traffic violation	90	.....	90
Truancy	64	24	88
Curfew violation	20	.....	20
Total (conduct cases)	957	232	1,189
NEGLECT			
Inadequate moral guardianship	151	192	343
Abandonment	19	23	42
Feeble-mindedness*	20	12	32
Poverty	3	.....	3
Total (neglect cases)	193	227	420
Grand total	1,150	459	1,609

*Commitments to the State Custodial School are made through the Juvenile Court.

NUMBER OF APPEARANCES DURING CURRENT AND PRECEDING YEARS OF CHILDREN BROUGHT TO COURT DURING YEAR 1923

	DELINQUENT		NEGLECTED		Totals
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
First time	702	180	165	193	1,240
Second time	146	37	16	17	216
Third time	54	3	6	9	72
Fourth time	27	7	2	6	42
Fifth time	15	3	2	2	22
Sixth time	7	1	.....	.....	8
Seventh time	3	1	2	.....	6
Eighth time	3	.....	.....	.....	3
Totals	957	232	193	227	1,609

DISPOSITION OF CHILDREN BROUGHT TO COURT DURING YEAR 1923

	Boys	Girls	Totals
Parents and children advised	786	108	894
Probationary supervision	73	103	176
Boys' Parental School	89	.....	89
Girls' Parental School .....	.....	32	32
Washington Children's Home Society	37	24	61
State Custodial School	21	13	34
State Training School	27	.....	27
State School for Girls .....	.....	12	12
Ruth School for Girls .....	.....	35	35
House of the Good Shepherd .....	.....	20	20
Seattle Children's Home	9	8	17
Y. W. C. A. Everett Smith Cottage .....	.....	9	9
Briscoe School for Orphan Boys	6	.....	6
Sacred Heart Orphanage .....	.....	5	5
Florence Crittenden Home .....	.....	4	4
Ryther Home .....	.....	3	3
Firland Sanatorium .....	.....	2	2
Lebanon Home .....	.....	2	2
Orthopedic Hospital .....	.....	1	1
St. Ann's School for Boys	1	.....	1
Committed to individuals	30	37	67
Sent to other jurisdictions	27	20	47
Continued indefinitely	16	11	27
Dismissed	7	9	16
Motor vehicle drivers' licenses withheld	11	.....	11
Absconded	5	1	6
Referred for criminal prosecution	5	.....	5
Totals	1,150	459	1,609

PARENTAL RELATION TABLE FOR THE YEAR 1923

	DELINQUENT		NEGLECTED		Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Parents living together	569	94	38	46	747
Parents not living together, due to death, divorce, separation or desertion	388	138	155	181	862
Totals	957	232	193	227	1,609

TABLE OF AGES OF CHILDEN BROUGHT TO COURT
DURING 1923

	DELINQUENT		NEGLECTED		Totals
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
1 year and under	-----	-----	21	18	39
2 years	-----	-----	14	12	26
3 years	-----	-----	7	11	18
4 years	-----	-----	15	6	21
5 years	-----	-----	13	12	25
6 years	-----	-----	13	9	22
7 years	6	-----	12	16	34
8 years	11	-----	10	11	32
9 years	30	2	12	10	54
10 years	32	2	8	13	55
11 years	51	3	14	12	80
12 years	63	10	12	12	97
13 years	100	13	16	16	145
14 years	136	20	9	19	184
15 years	191	57	7	22	277
16 years	172	61	5	18	256
17 years	164	56	5	10	235
18 years*	-----	7	-----	-----	7
19 years*	1	1	-----	-----	2
Totals	957	232	193	227	1,609

*Children made wards of Court prior to 18th birthday.

SOURCE OF COMPLAINTS LEADING TO COURT HEARINGS
DURING 1923

Police Department	833
Citizens	182
School Attendance Department	175
Parents	148
Probation Officers	83
King County Public Welfare Department	24
Social Welfare League	21
Children in their own behalf	13
Washington Children's Home Society	13
Transcripts from Justice Courts	10
Seattle Hebrew Benevolent Society	5
Seattle Council of Catholic Women	2
Total	1,609

WASHINGTON MOTHERS' PENSION LAW

SECTION 1. In every county it shall be the duty of the county commissioners to provide out of the moneys of the county treasury an amount sufficient to meet the purposes of this law for the support of mothers who, by reason of destitution, insufficient property or income, or lack of earning capacity, are unable to support their children under the age of fifteen years.

SECTION 2. The allowance to such mother shall not exceed fifteen (\$15) dollars per month when she has but one child under the age of fifteen years, and if she has more than one child under the age of fifteen years, it shall not exceed the sum of fifteen dollars per month for the first child, and five dollars per month for each of the other children under the age of fifteen years.

SECTION 3. Such allowance shall be made by the juvenile court in the counties where such court is held and elsewhere by the superior court, and only upon the following conditions: (1) The child or children for whose benefit the allowance is made must be living with the mother of such child or children; (2) When by means of such allowance the mother will be able to maintain a home for her child or children; (3) The mother must in the judgment of the court, be a proper person, morally, physically and mentally, for the bringing up of her children; (4) No person shall receive the benefit of this act who shall not have been a resident of the state for three (3) years and of the county in which such application is made for at least one year next before the making of such application for such allowance.

SECTION 4. Whenever any child shall reach the age of fifteen years any allowance made to the mother of such child for the benefit of such child shall cease. The court may in its discretion at any time before such child reaches the age of fifteen years, discontinue or modify the allowance to any mother and for any child.

SECTION 5. Any person procuring fraudulently any allowance for a person, not entitled thereto, shall be deemed guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

SECTION 6. In each case where an allowance is made to any woman under the provisions of this act, an order to that effect shall be entered upon the records of the court, making such allowance. Proceedings to obtain the benefit of this act shall be instituted and maintained in the same manner as proceedings are instituted and maintained in the juvenile court, and the prosecuting attorney shall render all necessary assistance to applicants under this act and shall appear in every such proceeding and through the probation officer, the charity commissioner or any person having knowledge of the facts, shall carefully investigate the merits of every application

to the end that this act may be fairly administered and no person granted relief hereunder except those justly entitled thereto, and no officer of the court or county officer shall receive any fees for any service rendered in carrying out the provisions of this Act. A certified copy of said order shall be filed with the county auditor of the county in which such child's mother is resident, and thereupon and thereafter and so long as such order remains in force and unmodified it shall be the duty of the county auditor each month to draw his warrant on the current expense fund of the county in favor of the mother for the amount specified in such order, which warrant shall be by the auditor delivered to the mother upon her executing duplicate receipts therefor, one to be retained by the auditor and the other to be filed by the clerk with the other records in the proceedings relating to such child or children. It shall be the duty of the county treasurer to pay such warrant out of funds in the current expense fund of the county.

SECTION 7. That section 8385-1, 8385-2, 8385-3, 8385-4, 8385-5 and 8385-6 of Remington & Ballinger's Annotated Codes and Statutes of Washington be, and the same are hereby repealed.

MOTHERS' PENSION DEPARTMENT

STATISTICS PREPARED BY LENA E. HEMPHILL, COMMISSIONER

MAJOR REASONS FOR GRANTING RELIEF

	1923
Widows	281
Divorced	52
Deserted	67
Husbands incapacitated at home	33
Husbands incapacitated at hospitals	19
Husbands in penal institutions	5
Total	457

ALLOWANCES

	1923
\$ 7.50	1
10.00	22
15.00	137
20.00	160
25.00	77
30.00	35
40.00	16
40.00	8
45.00	1
Total	457

REASONS FOR REVOCATIONS

	1923
Children reached the age of 15 years	16
Children living away from the home	2
Deaths	1
Disregarded requirements of the Court	6
Fathers returned to the home	13
Left jurisdiction of the Court	19
Married	30
Mothers received insurance by death of husband	3
Self-supporting	12
Total	102

NATIONALITY OF MOTHERS

	1923
American	273
American Negress	2
Canadian	14
Canadian Negress	1
Austrian	6
Bohemian	1
Danish	3
English	12
Finnish	12
French	1
German	7
Holland Dutch	1
Irish	8

Italian	12
Jewish	9
Norwegian	51
Polish	2
Roumanian	1
Scotch	7
Swedish	27
Sephardic Jew	3
Serbian	1
Syrian	2
Welsh	1
Total	457

RELIGION OF MOTHERS

	1923
Baptist	23
Catholic	72
Christian	14
Christian Science	50
Congregational	18
Church of Nazarene	1
Church of God	1
Episcopal	18
Friends' Church	4
Jewish	13
Latter Day Saints	5
Lutheran	63
Methodist	60
Miscellaneous	7
New Thought	2
No Faith	9
Pentecostal Faith	1
Presbyterian	55
Protestant	34
Salvation Army	4
Theosophy	1
Truth	1
Unitarian	1
Total	457

SOURCES OF MOTHERS' VOCATIONAL INCOME

	1923
Agents	4
Boarders (children)	14
Bookbinders	2
Beauty parlor	2
Chambermaid	7
Cannery	8
Clerks	24
Cook	3
Dance hall	1
Day work	72
Elevator operator	6
Factory	29
Farm	17
Furrier	1
Housework	11
Information clerk	1
Janitress	26
Kitchen help	3
Laundry	36
Millinery	2
Mothers at home	91
Music teacher	1
Nursing	5
Office work	10
Printer	3
Photography	1
Restaurant work	28
Roomers	11
Store	3
Sewing and needle work	26
Telephone operator	9
Total	457

HOMES OF MOTHERS

	1923
Buying on contract or mortgaged	80
Boarding	8
Free rent	7
Homes owned, free of debt	116
Renting	196
With relatives	50
Total	457

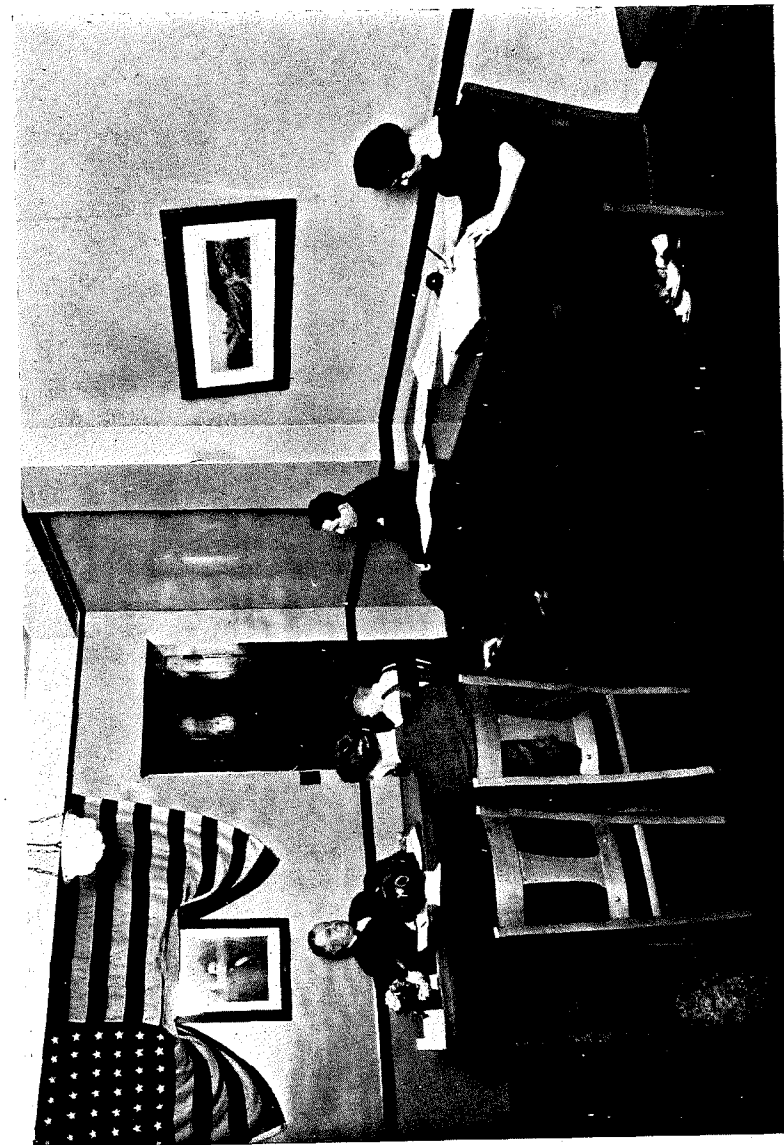
RENTALS BEING PAID BY 196 MOTHERS

	1923
\$ 5.00	4
7.00	1
7.50	4
8.00	1
9.00	1
10.00	22
12.00	16
12.50	4
13.00	3
14.00	1
15.00	45
16.00	6
17.00	14
18.00	5
20.00	32
22.00	2
25.00	17
27.00	6
30.00	4
35.00	3
40.00	2
45.00	1
50.00	5
Total.....	196

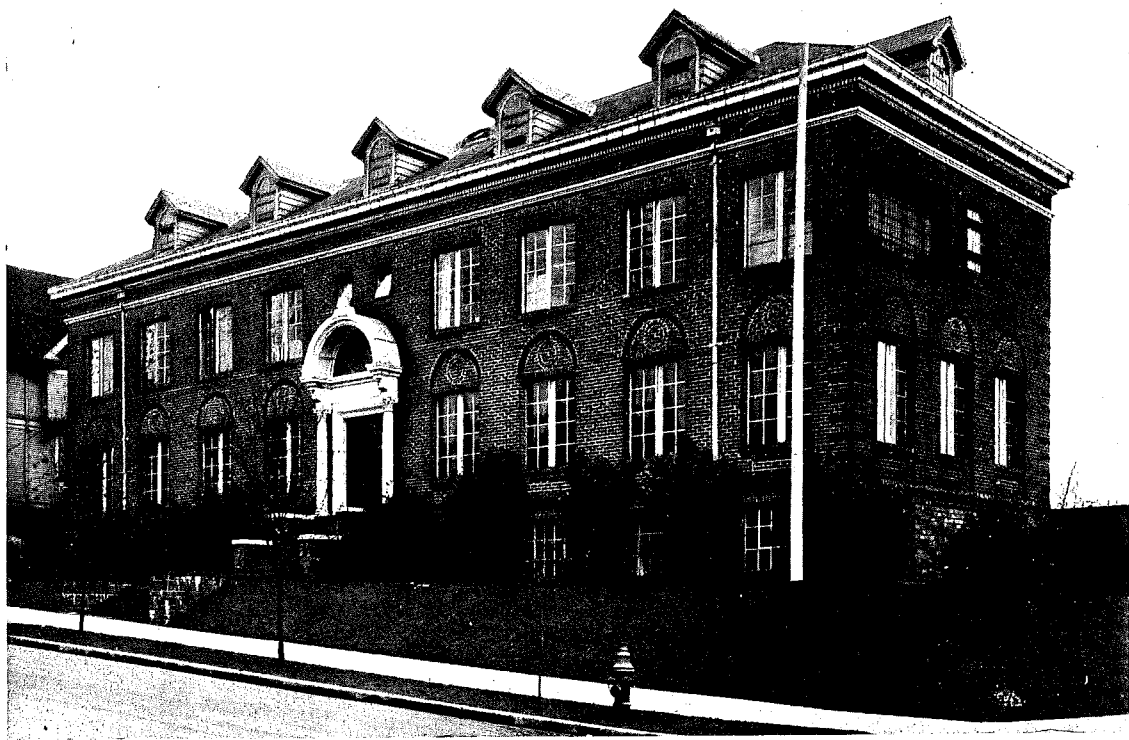
AUDITOR'S REPORT COVERING BUDGET EXPENDITURES AND LIABILITIES FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1923.

	BUDGET		
	Obligations	Appropriat'n	Unexpended
Appointive	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$.....
Employees	6,300.00	6,300.00	.....
Records and Sup.	212.93	200.00	12.93*
Postage	2.00	50.00	48.00
Relief Fund	108,147.50	89,000.00	19,147.50*
Transportation	635.53	600.00	35.53*
Office Rugs	100.50	100.00	.50*
	\$117,798.46	\$ 98,650.00	\$ 19,244.46

* Amount expended in excess of budget appropriation.



CHARACTERISTIC JUVENILE COURT SCENE



KING COUNTY JUVENILE COURT BUILDING
(ERECTED 1914)