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ANNUAL REPORT



KING COUNTY JUVENILE COURT

SEATTLE · WASHINGTON

Table 1

HOW MANY CHILDREN CAME TO THE COURT IN 1940?

Dependent



Delinquent



Each symbol represents 100 children

Dependent Children			
	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	826	390	436
Official	509	232	277
Unofficial	317	158	159
Delinquent Children			
	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1164	906	258
Official	368	254	114
Unofficial	796	652	144

HOW MANY CHILDREN CAME TO THE COURT IN 1940?

Table I

Children coming into the court, whether dependent or delinquent, may be handled officially or unofficially. An official case is one in which a petition is filed and there is a hearing before the judge. An unofficial case is one which is handled by the probation staff and there is no hearing.

The legal status—that is, whether a case is to be official or unofficial—is determined by what seems the best plan for the protection and welfare of the child. Both official and unofficial cases require careful study, planning, and supervision.







Table I shows that the majority of the cases coming into the court last year were treated unofficially. The situations did not require legal action and could be adjusted better on an individual bases by the probation officer.

Most of the delinquency cases were handled unofficially. Many of the minor difficulties were adjusted in intake. The more serious problems require long-time study and supervision, and official action was taken only when it was a part of the plan of treatment. Official action is required for the placement of a child in an institution for delinquent children. All such commitments must be made by the order of the judge.

Most of the dependency cases required official action. The reason for this is clear when we consider that dependency involves neglect by parents, custody of a child, commitment to institutions for the mentally or physically handicapped, and any other situation where the clarification of the legal status of a child is necessary.

Table 2

WHO BROUGHT THE CHILDREN TO THE COURT?

POLICE	
PROBATION OFFICERS*	
PARENTS AND RELATIVES	
OTHER COURTS, ETC.	
SCHOOL DEPARTMENT	
SOCIAL AGENCIES	

Each symbol represents 100 children

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1990	1296	694
Police	998	776	222
Probation Officers	295	153	142
Parents and Relatives	286	157	129
Other courts, etc.	188	96	92
School department	116	64	52
Social agencies	107	50	57

(Note- Under old statistical system a record was kept only of the person who signed the petition. This is the reason for the apparently large number of children brought to the court by the probation officers.)

WHO BROUGHT THE CHILDREN TO THE COURT?

Table 2

A representative cross-section of the community comes to the court requesting its services in the interest of children.

The Police Department referred the largest number of children in 1940. It is only natural that when a situation arises in which the child or the community needs protection, the matter should be referred to the police. In each precinct there are members of the police force designated as juvenile officers (these officers are in no way connected with the Juvenile Court), and all matters pertaining to children are referred to them. Many situations are adjusted by these officers, while the more serious problems are referred to the Juvenile Court.

Parents and relatives bring many of the children to the court for advice and adjustment of difficulties concerning the behavior of the child, neglect, and custody.

The school, in close contact with all children between the ages of 6 and 16, is in an excellent position to recognize many problems affecting children. Cases of non-attendance, truancy, neglect, and delinquency are referred to the court when there is a need for legal action.

Social agencies bring children to the court when there is a need for the determining of custody or of some plan of care is indicated which can be made only through the court.

An increasing number of children come to the court each year asking for protection in their own behalf. This demonstrates the understanding in the community of the court as a children's court, interested in the welfare of the children in the community.

Table 3
WHY DID THEY COME TO THE COURT?

DELINQUENT CHILDREN _____ 

DEPENDENT CHILDREN _____ 

Each symbol represents 100 children

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1990	1296	684
DELINQUENT	1164	906	258
DEPENDENT	826	390	436

Neglect by Parents (481) (230) (251)

Clarification of legal status (177) (93) (84)

Changes of order (106) (41) (65)

Other services (62) (26) (36)

WHY DID THEY COME TO THE COURT?

Table 3

It is easy to determine the immediate situation which brought the child into the court.

The stealing of a bicycle, truancy, running away—this is delinquency.

Neglect of parent, abandonment, need for medical care—this is dependency.

The underlying causes are not so simple. After a careful analysis, the stealing of a bicycle may prove to be only a symptom of more basic difficulties. The real reason for truancy may lie in unhappiness in the home or the school, bad eyes, inability to fit into a group of his own age—there may be as many reasons as there are children. The reason why a child comes into the court is the interrelation of many factors in the home, the school, and the community. We know the immediate situation which brings all children to the court, but we never know why many of them come. As we become more skilled, we hope to look forward to the day when we will know why each and every child comes to the court.

Legally, a delinquent child is one whose behavior places him in social danger or in conflict with the law. A dependent child is one who needs the protection of the court or where there is need for the clarification of legal status. Under the present Juvenile Court Law it is necessary to consider many children as dependent, though there is no question of economic need. Situations where economic need is the only factor, are referred to other social agencies in the community.

Changes of order, dismissals, and remandations are responsible for many children coming back into the court. Such hearings are part of a plan of supervision, part of the legal action necessary for the changing of a plan or the termination of wardship.

Table 4

FROM WHAT TYPE OF HOME DID THE

DEPENDENT CHILDREN COME?

PARENTS LIVING TOGETHER



PARENTS NOT LIVING TOGETHER



Each symbol represents 100 children

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	826	390	436
Parents living together	251	140	111
Parents not living together	527	227	300
Not reported	48	23	25

FROM WHAT TYPE OF HOME DID THE DEPENDENT CHILD COME?

Table 4

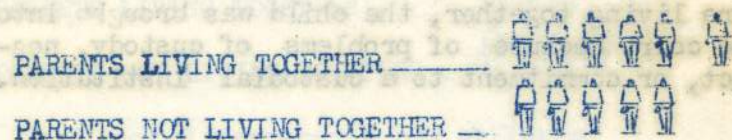
The majority of dependent children come from homes broken by death, desertion, divorce, or illness. In many cases where the parents were living together, the child was brought into the court because of problems of custody, neglect, or commitment to a custodial institution.

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1161	506	655
Parents living together	294	146	148
Parents not living together	730	380	350
Not reported	40	30	10

Table 5

FROM WHAT TYPE OF HOME DID THE

DELINQUENT CHILDREN COME ?



Each symbol represents 100 children

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1164	906	258
Parents living together	594	496	98
Parents not living together	530	380	150
Not reported	40	30	10

FROM WHAT TYPE OF HOME DID THE DELINQUENT CHILD COME?





Table 5

Broken homes are considered to be one of the causative factors in delinquency. Table 5 shows that half the delinquent children were from normal family homes where the parents were living together. It might be well to consider that in many such families there is marital discord and conflict, and the family is broken in all except the physical sense.

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1164	906	258
Parents living together	594	496	98
Parents not living together	530	380	150
Not reported	40	30	10

Table 6

HOW OLD WERE THE DEPENDENT CHILDREN?

LESS THAN 5 YEARS	
5 THROUGH 9 YEARS	
10 THROUGH 14 YEARS	
15 THROUGH 19 YEARS	

Each symbol represents 100 children

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	826	390	436
Less than 5 years	232	128	104
5 through 9 years	201	94	107
10 through 14 years	206	95	111
15 through 19 years	174	66	108
Not reported	13	7	6

HOW OLD WERE THE DEPENDENT CHILDREN?

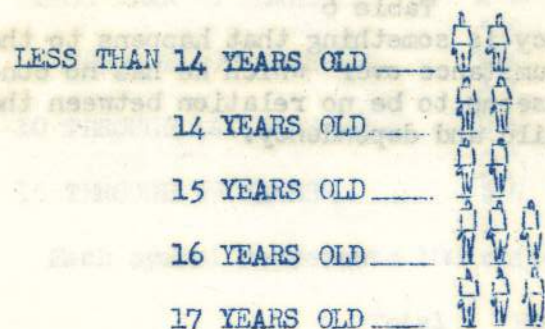
Table 6

Dependency is something that happens to the child, a circumstance over which he has no control. There seems to be no relation between the age of the child and dependency.

Total	Boys	Girls
13	7	6
14	11	3
15	11	4
16	11	5
17	11	6
18	11	7
19	11	8
20	11	9
21	11	10
22	11	11
23	11	12
24	11	13
25	11	14
26	11	15
27	11	16
28	11	17
29	11	18
30	11	19
31	11	20
32	11	21
33	11	22
34	11	23
35	11	24
36	11	25
37	11	26
38	11	27
39	11	28
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41	11	30
42	11	31
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417	11	406</

Table 7

HOW OLD WERE THE DELINQUENT CHILDREN?



Each symbol represents 100 children.

HOW OLD WERE THE DELINQUENT CHILDREN?

Table 7

Delinquency does affect one particular age group, the adolescent. This period in a child's life is recognized as one of unrest, readjustment, and emotional conflict, and it is to be expected that some children will find themselves in conflict with the community and the law.

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1164	905	259
Less than 5 years	0	0	0
5 years	1	0	1
6 years	2	1	1
7 years	6	5	1
8 years	11	11	0
9 years	16	15	1
10 years	14	12	2
11 years	17	14	3
12 years	40	35	5
13 years	57	47	10
14 years	189	151	38
15 years	238	183	55
16 years	285	218	67
17 years	251	203	48
18 years and over	20	9	11
Not reported	17	1	16

Table 8

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHILDREN?

ADJUSTED IN INTAKE _____

SUPERVISION BY THE COURT _____

OTHER DISPOSITIONS _____

INSTITUTIONS _____

SOCIAL AGENCY _____

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE _____

INSTITUTION FOR DELINQUENTS _____



Each symbol represents 100 children

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	1990	1296	694
Adjusted in intake	809	638	171
Supervision by the court	401	226	175
Other dispositions	197	108	89
Institutions	158	89	69
Social agency	154	86	68
Dept. of Public Welfare	119	59	60
Institutions for delinquent children	118	66	52
Not reported	34	24	10

WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

Table 8

INTAKE

Every child who comes to the court talks with the Intake Worker. The court—what it is, its responsibility to the child and to the community—is explained to the child. He is made to feel that this is his court, interested in his welfare and in helping him to work out his problem. The Intake Worker encourages the child to talk about how he feels about the situation which has brought him to the court and to assume as much responsibility as he can for working out his own plans within the limits of the court.

Many problems are adjusted at this point if there are only minor difficulties involved. Many children are referred to other social agencies better able to give each child the service he needs. Those children in need of service of the court are assigned to probation officers for study.

DETENTION HOME

Most of the children coming into the court remain in their own homes while a plan is being made for them, but for those for whom this is impossible or impractical, the Juvenile Detention Home provides temporary care. The child is given a complete physical examination by the staff physician. This is done for the child's protection and because it is recognized that frequently a child's difficulty may be caused or aggravated by physical defects and it is necessary to eliminate this possibility before initiating a plan of supervision for the child.

School work is continued under a public school teacher. There are half-day sessions for both the boys and the girls. The recreational needs of the child are considered—there is a yard sufficient for some outdoor activity under the supervision of a member of the Detention

Home staff, and books and games have been provided for the children through the generous contributions of interested persons.

Well-balanced meals are served under the direction of an experienced dietitian. During the past year the County Commissioners have made possible complete renovation of the Detention Home and quarters are now both comfortable and attractive.

Every effort is made to make the detention period as normal and as constructive an experience as possible for the child. The detention period gives the probation officer an opportunity to talk to the child in a neutral atmosphere—away from the situation in the home or the community which may have been a contributing factor to his difficulties.

STUDY

After the child is placed in the Detention Home or permitted to return to his own home, the case is immediately assigned to a probation officer for study. The probation officer talks with the child to find out how he got along in the home, the neighborhood, and the school. The probation officer needs to know how the child feels about his difficulties. The probation officer talks with the parents, with the neighbors, and with the school so as to secure as nearly as possible a complete picture of the child and his background. He has benefit of the medical report from the Detention Home, psychological reports from the school and other sources, and in particularly difficult cases, from the staff psychiatrist.

All of this information is carefully considered. Why did the child become delinquent? How can the court help the child? Should the child be treated officially or unofficially? These decisions are made by the probation officer in conference with the case work supervisor. If the matter is to be treated unofficially, the child may be returned to his own

home and placed under supervision, he may be placed in the home of a relative, he may be referred to another social agency, or he may be placed in an institution. Effort is made to assure every child the constructive treatment to fit his individual needs.

HEARING

But suppose the situation needs to be treated officially. Effort is made to work out a satisfactory plan before the hearing. This is not always possible. The hearing is very informal. No one is present except the judge, the probation officer, parents, relatives, a representative from the school and any interested social agency—only those persons with a vital concern for the child and his welfare. Very frequently the child does not appear in the courtroom but is interviewed privately by the judge.

The child may be referred to another social agency, to an institution, or placed in his own or his relative's home under supervision. All commitments to correctional or custodial institutions must be made by order of the judge.

SUPERVISION

Supervision is getting to know the child, what he feels, and why he feels that way. Supervision is the changing of attitudes—attitudes towards the home, the community, and himself. It not only helps the child to understand and adjust to his present situation but gives him strengths which will enable him to adjust to future experiences. The probation officer utilizes every resource in the family and the community.

No two children are alike, no two problems are the same. Each child presents a different problem, and each child must be considered on an individual basis. Visits are made to the child and the family as often as it is

necessary. Conferences are had with the school when need arises to consider the child in relation to the school. The probation officer talks with the child, listening to his problems and his plans, and helps him to assume the responsibility for working out his own adjustment. The probation officer talks with the family, helping the family to understand the child and his behavior.

How long does a child remain under supervision? This depends upon how quickly a child is able to understand his difficulties and solve them in a socially acceptable manner. The length of supervision varies from six months to two years.

The probation officer keeps a record of the plan and treatment of each child. This record serves several purposes. The probation officer maintains continuity of treatment, noting progress or failure. The record serves as an invaluable source for research of problems relating to delinquency and dependency and community needs. In those instances where the child feels that such a record stands against him, provision is made by law that after he has responded satisfactorily to probation, he may petition the Court to have the legal record sealed and the social record destroyed.

An increase in the budget has made possible additions to the probation staff. This has meant a reduction in the number of children under the supervision of each officer. This in turn has enabled the officers to give more careful and intensive supervision to the children under their care. In 1935, 93 children were sent to the State Training Schools. In 1940, there were 39 children committed to the State Training Schools for Boys and Girls. From the standpoint of the tax-payer, probation for delinquent children seems cheaper than institution-

al placement. During 1940 it cost \$533 to care for a boy one year in the State Training School, and \$697.96 to care for a girl one year in the State Training School for girls, or an average of \$615.48 per year for both boys and girls. A probation officer's salary is \$1908 per year, less than the cost of care of four children in the State Training School. An effective Juvenile Court is an economical investment to the community financially, but the investment in human values--the conservation of children--cannot be estimated.

On December 31, 1940, each probation officer had an average of 95 children under supervision.

COLLECTION

In those situations where parents or relatives are financially able to pay for the care of a child, an order for support is entered by the Court. These orders place the responsibility for support on the parents and relieve the community of the cost of care. In 1940 \$11,880.35 was collected by the Clerk of the Court for the care of children.

HOW MUCH DID THE JUVENILE COURT COST THE

COMMUNITY?

The Juvenile Court cost the community \$73,332 in 1940. \$20,944 was spent in salaries to the 10 members of the probation and administrative staff. \$8,370 was paid in salaries to 5 members of the clerical staff.

\$7,900 was paid in salaries to the 7 members of the Detention Home Staff.

\$18,000 was spent for the care of 163 delinquent children committed to institutions by the Court.

\$2,707 was spent on office expenses. This includes the cost of supplies, telephone, printing, etc.

\$5,250 was spent on maintenance and operation of cars used by the probation officers in their work.

\$5,900 was the cost of giving temporary care to 1,310 children in the Detention Home. This includes cost of food, clothing, laundry, supplies, etc.

\$1,992 was spent for heat, lights, water, fuel, etc., for both the Detention Home and the Juvenile Court Building.

\$2,269 represents the capital outlay for 1940. This includes the cost of one car, dictaphone, and other equipment.

WHAT IS THE COURT DOING TO IMPROVE THE SERVICES TO DEPENDENT AND DELINQUENT CHILDREN?

The first Juvenile Court law was passed in Illinois in 1899. Washington was among the first states to make possible the establishment of a Juvenile Court to protect its children—its future citizens. The King County Juvenile Court was established in 1907. William G. Long was appointed Juvenile Court Judge in 1934. From the time of the establishment of the court until 1934 many changes had taken place in the Juvenile Court Field. Many questions presented themselves. Had the King County Juvenile Court kept step with the more progressive courts in the country? Was the court functioning as efficiently and effectively as it should? If not, what changes were necessary to put it on the same basis as the most progressive courts elsewhere? In 1939, through the combined efforts of a group of interested socially minded citizens, the National Probation Association, and the judge, a survey was made. Funds for the survey were made available by the contributions of several interested individuals. Mr. Ralph G. Wales, Director of the Western Office, and Mrs. Marjorie Bell, Assistant Director of the National Probation Association, studied and analyzed every department of the Court and submitted recommendations designed to make the court function more effectively and efficiently. During 1940 the court has been able to put into effect all of the recommendations:

1. An Intake Department has been established. This facilitates the work of the court, making it more efficient and assuring each child of immediate attention.

2. Additions to the staff:

A Case Work Supervisor, whose responsibility it is to confer with the probation offi-

cers and to help in improving the case work services to the children coming to the court.

A trained probation officer in the boy's department.

A statistician in charge of the statistical and research department.

Two stenographers to the clerical staff.

3. Establishment of a statistical and research department. Who are these children? Why do they come into the court? What is the court doing for them? Only by keeping accurate statistics and through research can the court answer these questions—questions of vital importance to the court in the study and appraisal of its own work and improving its services for the children. It is only by answers to these questions that the community can be kept aware of the problems with which the court is working, and the community can work towards meeting these problems which are our mutual responsibility.

4. Changes have been made in the recording system, the filing system, and office routine. Monthly reports are being kept on not only the number of children given care but the service being given these children. These changes have worked towards greater efficiency in the court.

5. Improvements to the Detention Home.

The court wishes to take this opportunity to express its deepest appreciation to the County Commissioners for having granted every request the court has made in its plan to carry out the recommendations of the survey.

WHAT IS THE COURT DOING TO PREVENT DELINQUENCY?

The court has a responsibility to the community to act not only in a remedial but in a preventive capacity in the problem of juvenile delinquency. Effort in this direction has been through a Coordinator, who is a member of the staff of the Juvenile Court.

The Coordinator works with groups known as Coordinating Councils. These councils are composed of representatives of social agencies, civic and religious organizations, parent-teacher associations, socially minded citizens, public officials, and others in the community concerned with the problems of children. There are 8 councils in the city and 9 in the county making community inventories of the social assets and liabilities in their own community. The Coordinating Councils, recognizing that many children are delinquent because their community has failed them in some way, are trying to meet the social needs of the children in their communities. This organization is a means by which representatives from the community can unite in studying their problems and try to remove those factors which tend to cause delinquency and at the same time to strengthen those factors which tend to prevent delinquency.

DOES THE JUVENILE COURT FUNCTION INDEPENDENTLY?

Not all of the children coming into the court can be served best by the court. Many of them require specialized services which the court is not equipped to give. The needs of these children are met by referring them to social agencies able to give them the type of service essential to their welfare. The work of the court is strengthened and the best interest of the child is served by the utilization of such community resources as: The Ryther Child Center, Washington Children's Home Society, The Ruth School, The Family Society of Seattle, Seattle Children's Home, Catholic Children's Bureau, Children's Division of the King County Welfare Department, Jewish Welfare, Luther Burbank School for Boys and the Martha Washington School for Girls, Jewish Welfare Society, NYA, the public schools, and many others. The court wishes to express its deepest appreciation to these agencies for their interest and cooperation.

STAFF IN 1940

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