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Juvenile Welfare Board Annual Report : 1964 - 1965

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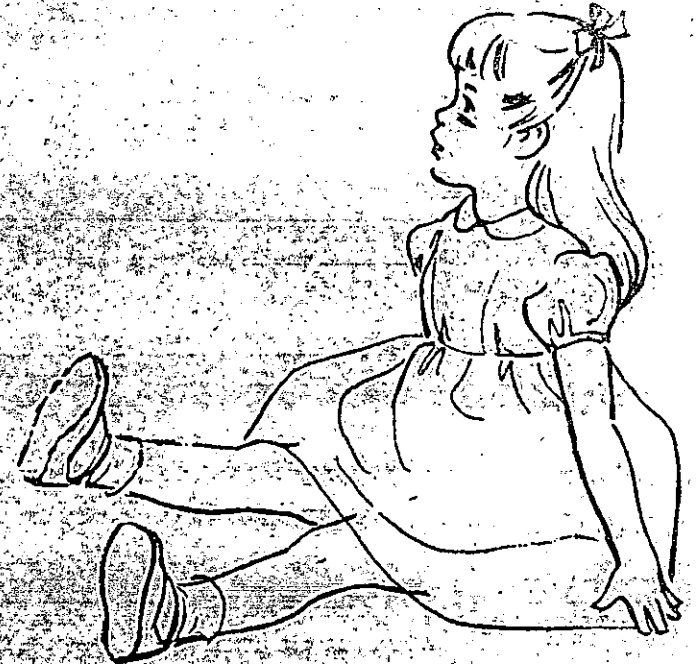
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18th Annual Report

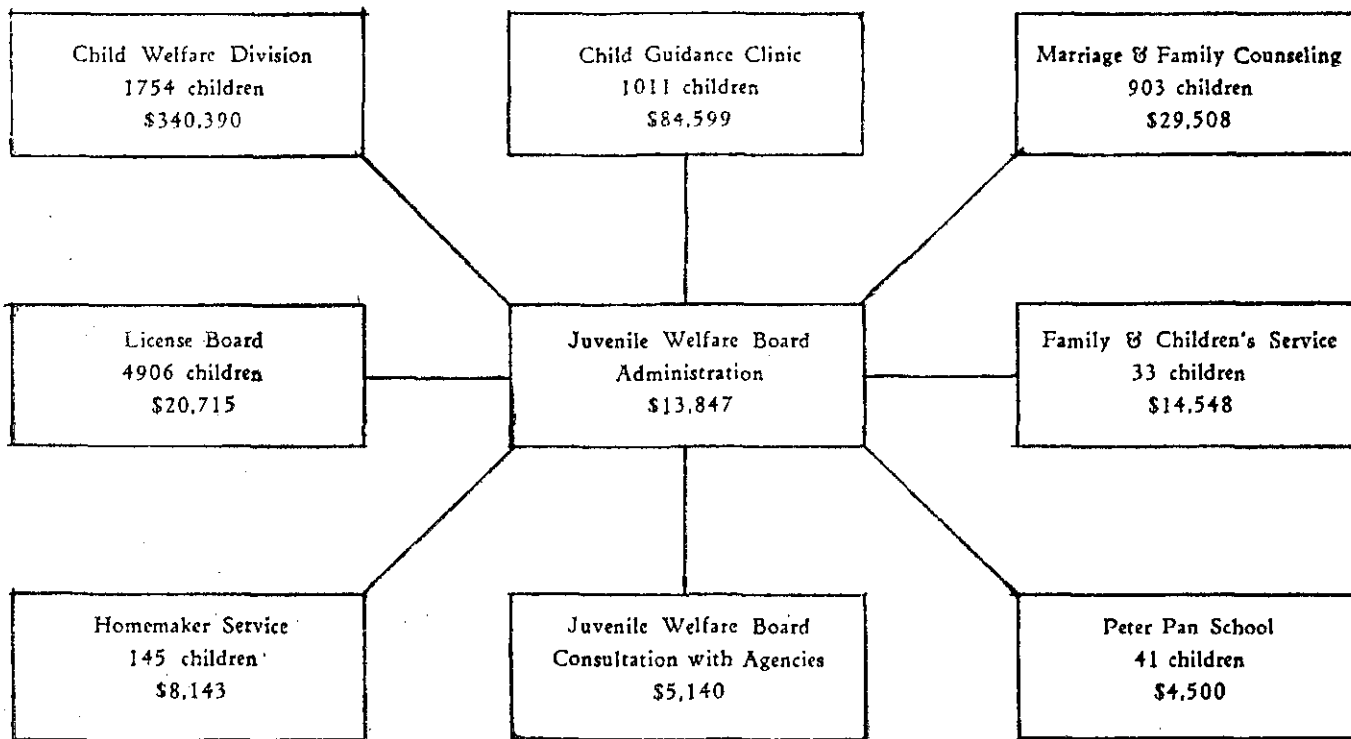
Oct. 1, 1964 - Sept. 30, 1965

PINELLAS COUNTY
JUVENILE WELFARE BOARD

3455 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA



Organizations and Services Financed in Whole or in Part with Juvenile Welfare Board Funds



Totals — Children 8793
Expenditures \$521,390

One out of Eleven

In 1964-65, 8793 children were helped by the Juvenile Welfare Board and the agencies financed by the Board in whole or in part. These children represented nearly nine percent of the population of Pinellas County under 17 years of age, or one child out of every 11. This total of 8793 represents an increase of 23 percent over 1963-64, yet the expenditures of \$521,390 are only 12 percent greater. Every service or organization maintained by Juvenile Welfare Board funds provided for more children, and consequently cost more than in the previous year.

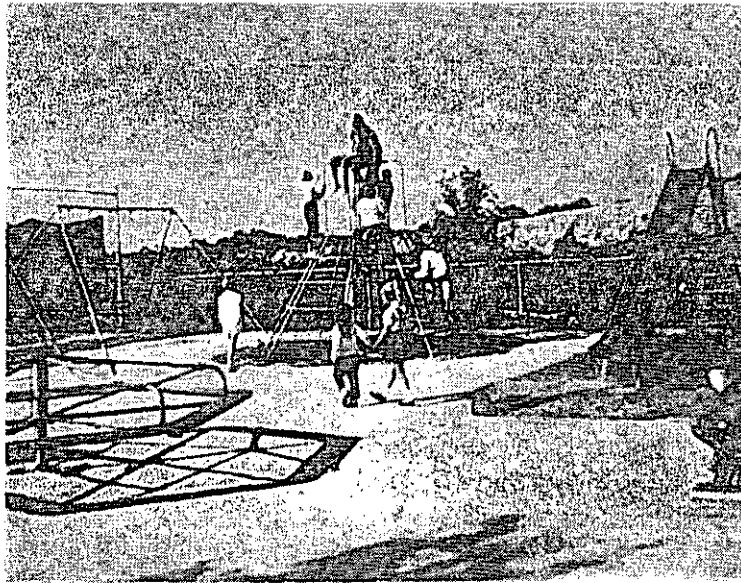
New services were a principal cause for more children under care and increased expenditures. The Protective Service of the State Department of Public Welfare, which is wholly financed by Board funds, helped 1103 children since January 1965. Peter Pan School for Retarded Children, which began receiving assistance on June 1, 1964, received a full year's support from the Board for the first time, and the number of retarded children in day care increased from 16 to 41. The Visiting Nurse and Homemaker Association, which first received funds September 1, 1964, helped 145 children, or 133 more than in the previous year.

The greatest increase was in foster care — a total of 77

more children than in 1963-64. But the number of children in care reached a peak of 431 in May and then declined significantly to 341 in September. There is reason to believe that this decline indicates the effect of the new Protective Service which investigates complaints of neglect and abuse. Early investigation enables the Service to begin immediate plans for the protection of children — foster care, placement with relatives, or work with parents toward improvement of conditions in the home. Consequently, the rise in expenditures for foster care has been checked and is at present under control.

More children under care, new services to meet community needs, and efficient, economical programs for the protection of children are possible because the 1965 Legislature wisely decided to restore the Board's fiscal independence which had been jeopardized by the Attorney General's opinion of July 1964. Now the Board is once again entrusted to provide, within the Juvenile Welfare Board Law and the limits of the half-mill levy, those services needed for the children of Pinellas County. With this independence goes a tremendous responsibility for making wise decisions divorced from political expediency. We accept this responsibility and this trust.

Child Welfare Division, State Department of Public Welfare



Foster care was provided for 651 children with Juvenile Welfare Board funds administered by the Child Welfare Division of District No. 4, State Department of Public Welfare. In addition, the Board paid the salaries and mileage of a supervisor, six social workers, and three secretaries employed for foster care and for the Protective Services Unit.

This Unit is an outgrowth of the survey conducted by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency which recommended that all dependent children become the responsibility of the Child Welfare Division. Protective Services began operation on January 4, 1965 as a specialized casework service in behalf of children who are neglected, abused, exploited, or abandoned. Although the Protective Services Unit is child-centered, the focus is on the family to facilitate the rehabilitation of the home and treatment of underlying factors. Since the service usually begins with a referral from outside the family, helping the family requires aggressive casework. The authority of the Juvenile Court may be invoked if needed to secure adequate protection, care, and treatment of children.

In the first nine months of operation, the Protective Services Unit received referrals or complaints on 1103 children. Prompt investigation and aggressive casework reaching out to the family make possible the formulation of early diagnosis and treatment plans. Often the relief of acute family pressures alleviates the emergency need for the actual placement of children. Sometimes temporary or permanent care by relatives affords the necessary protection for children in jeopardy. The practical result of the Protective Service has been a *decrease* in the number of children in foster care, but even more important is the prompt, careful investigation of all responsible complaints that children are in present danger.

Child Guidance Clinic of Pinellas County, Inc.



HELP TO HAPPINESS . . . that's the motto of the Child Guidance Clinic of Pinellas County. Here we see a young mother entering the Clinic with an infant in her arms accompanying a teen-age girl and a young boy. Although models were used in the picture, this scene is accurate in that it depicts the wide age-range of children whom the Clinic

"helps to happiness" through professional diagnosis and treatment.

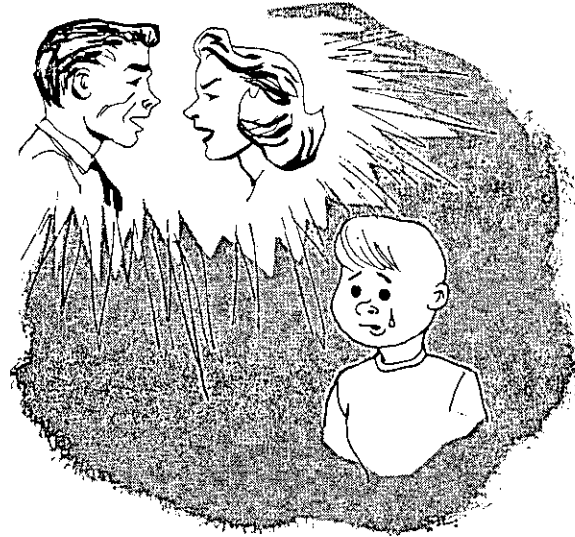
In 1964-65, 1011 children were seen at the Clinic in 7381 contacts with the children or their parents: 38 percent because the parents themselves recognized that all was not well with their children; 24 percent were referred by the schools; 18 percent by other agencies; 11 percent by physicians; 8 percent by courts; and 1 percent by others. Some children were temporarily upset by factors in their environment; other youngsters were seriously disturbed and required extended treatment.

A child who is not doing well in school, who is withdrawn and fearful, angry and irritable, is not a happy child. Frequently these symptoms are his way of saying that something is wrong with his world . . . that he needs help! That help must be forthcoming if the child is to grow into a creative, productive adult.

To help worried parents help their children grow up to be happy, well-adjusted adults, the Clinic has a two-fold program: direct services to patients; and mental health education for parents and others who work with children.

Financial support is received from a variety of sources. The Juvenile Welfare Board provides 61 percent of the total budget; the United Funds of South Pinellas and Central Pinellas, 20 percent; state health department, 9 percent; fees based on ability to pay, 9 percent; and contributions, 1 percent. No child has been, or ever will be, refused treatment because his parents cannot pay for service.

Marriage and Family Counseling, Juvenile Welfare Board



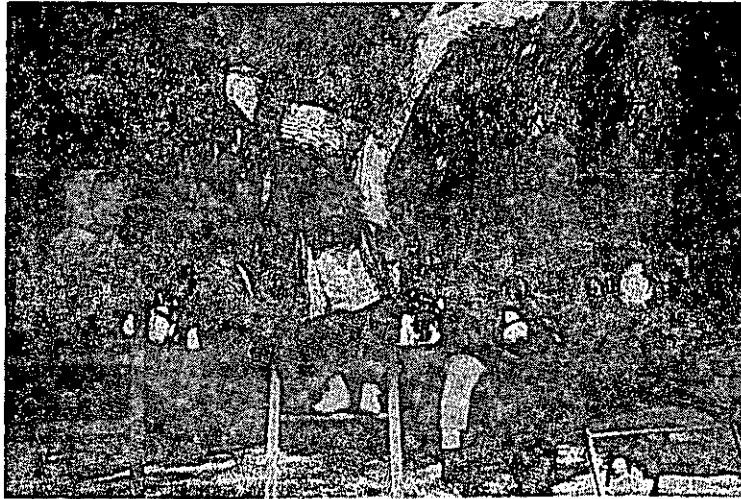
Staff members of the Juvenile Welfare Board offer marriage and family counseling to residents of the County who are parents of young children. During 1964-65, this service was offered in behalf of 903 children who came from 413 families. Six hundred forty-seven of their parents were in-

volved in a total of 3733 interviews. In addition, there were 69 group counseling sessions including 51 different persons in three different groups with a total attendance of 370. The number of children involved increased by 11 percent over the previous year.

Recent research has confirmed the necessity for marriage counseling as a service in behalf of children. A study of the relationship between the stresses of living and mental health, based on the histories of 1600 adults, has established that the younger a child is when his parents divorce, the more apt he is to be harmed by the break-up of the marriage. Homes broken before children reach the age of seven involve the greatest risk. Remarriage is particularly harmful to the older child. To prevent by marriage counseling the break-up of homes is to insure the child's mental health as an adult.

The professional development of the staff during the past year has included the preparation of research papers read at the annual meetings of the National Council on Family Relations and the American Orthopsychiatric Association. Studies by the staff appeared in *Journal of Marriage and the Family* and *family life coordinator*. An article in *Parents' Magazine*, "How Marriage Counseling Helps Children," described the Board's program. Members of the staff conducted eight training institutes for professional staff members of other agencies; four of these were in Florida. All members of the staff who work directly with people are members of the Academy of Certified Social Workers and the American Association of Marriage Counselors.

License Board for Children's Centers and Family Day Care Homes



Eighty-four children's centers and 230 family day care homes, an increase of 65 over last year, were licensed by the Pinellas County License Board for Children's Centers and Family Day Care Homes. A capacity for 4140 children in centers and 766 in family homes totaled 4906 preschoolers who could be cared for away from their homes in Pinellas County.

Although the number of licensed children's centers has decreased by five since last year, substantially more preschool children benefit from an educational group experience because

the public schools this year have opened 71 half-day kindergartens capable of serving 1775 five year olds.

Chapter 61-2681, State Laws of Florida, is designed to protect the health, safety, and mental development of all children in family day care homes and children's centers (day nurseries, nursery schools, and kindergartens except those in the public school system) by requiring that the facilities meet the minimum licensing standards set forth in the law. Compliance with the education requirements has meant that the nine college and university courses scheduled since October, 1964 have been well attended.

This law also establishes a seven member License Board which meets quarterly. A three member staff administers licensing responsibilities and is supported by funds provided by the Juvenile Welfare Board.

The Board and staff cooperate with other agencies and organizations (Community Welfare Council, State Department of Public Welfare, U. S. Office of Economic Opportunity, preschool associations, and church groups) in helping interpret children's needs, providing better services, and avoiding duplication of effort. The staff participated in the development and training of staff for the Head Start program which included national conferences and consultations in other states.

Family and Children's Service, Inc.



The adoption program of Family and Children's Service was supported by the Juvenile Welfare Board to the extent of \$14,548 during 1964-65. This sum was reimbursement to the agency for the cost of 6021 days of foster family care for 33 children. All these children were considered "hard to place for adoption." Some were Negro children, some were groups of brothers and sisters, some

were children with medical or emotional handicaps making adoption placement difficult. The youngster pictured is typical of the children for whom adoptive parents are difficult to find.

The financial assistance of the Juvenile Welfare Board enabled Family and Children's Service to place 14 "hard to place" children in permanent adoption homes this last year. Without this help the agency could not have provided this service,

It cost Juvenile Welfare Board an average of \$2.37 per day per child to reimburse Family and Children's Service for foster care. The 14 children placed for adoption in 1964-65, and the 16 placed in the two previous years this written inter-agency agreement has been in effect, will save Pinellas County \$29,950 in 1965-66. This amount does not include savings effected during the three years from the inception of the program in October, 1962 until the present. Nor does it convey the magnitude of future savings over the next 17 years or more when these children might have been supported by public tax funds in foster homes.

Saving public money is important; equally important is salvaging the lives of these children who might otherwise have been denied permanent homes. The end result will be children developing into mature, productive, responsible adults because the Juvenile Welfare Board provided financial help at exactly the time it was vitally needed.

Peter Pan School for Retarded Children



Peter Pan School has had a peak enrollment of 35 students in 1964-65. Service has been improved to the children to the extent that the school had the largest graduating class in ten years. Five children progressed to the Parkland School, two children to Nina Harris School, and two children to ordinary nursery schools. In the case of the ordinary nursery schools, the evaluation of these two children indicated that a "slow learner" path of progress might be possible for them.

Casework services are available at the School with a professionally trained social worker handling intake, auxiliary services, records, and placement of the students. These services have contributed to the large number of children progressing to other programs. The State Department of Public Welfare administers Federal funds that enable Peter Pan School to have a casework department.

Children in all stages of development in the program are taught toilet training, walking, self-feeding, speech, and motor coordination by a competent staff of seven persons aided by volunteers whose service is invaluable. Medical and dental examinations and regular staff progress evaluations are part of the program. The staff has been gratified by the increased community acceptance of mental retardation and the progress that so many of our children have made.

Peter Pan School is frequently able to keep children in the community who would otherwise be placed in terminal institutionalization. While the service is directly to the children, the School indirectly serves the parent who is relieved of the intensive attention and care of a retarded child and who profits from a better trained child at home. Without the tuition assistance of the Juvenile Welfare Board, it would not be possible to provide this program for children whose parents are unable to pay, in whole or in part, for their day care.

Visiting Nurse and Homemaker Association



Homemaker (Home Health Aide) Service is a community service sponsored by the Visiting Nurse and Homemaker Association of Greater St. Petersburg. It provides part-time help to individuals and families to assist them in the maintenance of household routines in time of stress. At present, the service is available only in the southern part of Pinellas County.

The main purposes of the service are to assist the aged, disabled, or ill adults who live alone or with one other per-

son; to hold families together in times of the short-term illness, hospitalization, desertion or death of the mother until a permanent plan can be formulated; and to provide service to the chronically ill and disabled in the home. Approximately one-quarter of the service is for families with children; three-quarters for aged, disabled, or ill adults.

The Homemaker (Home Health Aide) Service is supported through fees paid by the family, and through funds provided by the Juvenile Welfare Board and United Fund of South Pinellas. Through Juvenile Welfare Board funds, a homemaker can be placed in the homes of needy families with children to enable the father to work, the older children to remain in school, and the younger ones to receive care and supervision in their own homes. When families can afford to pay, they are expected to reimburse, in whole or in part.

In 1964-65, Juvenile Welfare Board support enabled the Visiting Nurse and Homemaker Association to provide home help to 42 families involving a total of 145 children. The major reason for providing help was in homes where the mother needed surgery and hospitalization. With the placement of a dependable, reliable and supervised homemaker, the mother and father could be away from the home, secure in the knowledge that the children were under adequate care.

Consultation with Other Agencies, Juvenile Welfare Board



The Act of the Florida Legislature, which created the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, requires the Board as one of its powers and duties "to consult with other agencies dedicated to the welfare of juveniles to the end that the overlapping of services will be prevented." To achieve this aim the Board works with agencies and organizations, rather than with individual children. Consequently, the exact number of children affected by this function cannot be measured. Nevertheless, the community organization of services to children is of the utmost importance and requires continuing and systematic consultations.

There is no spontaneous generation of community planning and cooperation, but rather the nursing of tiny sparks of interest and concern. For example, the long, slow process of developing the Homemaker Service began when the Board requested the Community Welfare Council of South Pinellas to study the need for a county-wide service for persons of all ages. In this study and in the work-shops and symposia that followed, the County Health Department was an effective leader. The Service became operative September 1, 1964 under the name of the Visiting Nurse and Homemaker Association. The Juvenile Welfare Board provides funds for homemaker service to needy families with children, and in 1965 the United Fund of South Pinellas began to supply some funds for adults. While the Homemaker Service is not yet County-wide and available for all adults in need, progress was possible through sustained effort and continued consultation.

Other methods the Board uses in working with agencies and organizations include: establishing projects to demonstrate the need for programs; serving as an information center and clearing house; making possible a survey by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency of services to children in trouble; serving on boards and committees; working with school and college classes; and presenting speeches and discussions, including radio and television broadcasts.

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*These members are stipulated in the Juvenile Welfare Board Act

Other members are appointed by the Governor