



Commonwealth Fund records, Child Health Demonstrations, SG 1, Series 9

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Commonwealth Fund
Title:	Commonwealth Fund records, Child Health Demonstrations, SG 1, Series 9
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Date [inclusive]:	1921-1928
Physical Description:	1.14 Cubic Feet 3 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation note

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Biographical/Historical note

The Commonwealth Fund was established in 1918 with an endowment of \$10 million from Mrs. Stephen V. Harkness for "benevolent, religious, educational and like purposes." The early grants supported a variety of programs while generally promoting welfare, especially child welfare. Several grants were made in the field of medical research, but the Board of Directors decided in 1920 that this field was already sufficiently supported by other philanthropic organizations.

Despite this decision, by the mid-1920s the chief interest of the Fund had become public health, including mental hygiene, community health, rural hospitals, medical research, and medical education. Other grant areas included war relief, educational and legal research, child welfare, and international medical fellowships.

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Scope and Contents note

The Commonwealth Fund announced its Child Health Program on June 29, 1922. The goals of the five year program were "safe-guarding the health of the mother-to-be, laying a good health foundation for children in the early sensitive and formative period of their growth and health supervision and the formation of the essential health habits in school children." The responsibility for the conduct of the demonstrations rested with the American Child Health Association, which had been recently formed through the merger of the American Child Hygiene Association and the Child Health Organization of America. The Child Health Demonstration Committee of the Commonwealth Fund oversaw the program, with Barry C. Smith chairman and Courtenay Dinwiddie executive director. Other notable participants in the program include Philip Van Ingen, Richard A. Bolt, L. Emmett Holt, Sally Lucas Jean, Livingston Farrand, Donald B. Armstrong, and Barbara S. Quin.

The initial demonstrations were conducted in a city from the Upper Mississippi Valley, the general qualifications being that the population range between 15,000 and 25,000 and the infant mortality rate be approximately 100 per 1000 live births. Twenty-nine cities applied to host the demonstrations, with Fargo, North Dakota, being chosen. The first director of the Fargo demonstrations was Dr. William J. French, former Director of the Child Welfare Commission of Delaware. Subsequent demonstrations were held in Athens (Clarke County), Georgia; Rutherford County, Tennessee; and Marion County, Oregon.

The records of the Child Health Demonstrations consist of the files of the Child Health Demonstration Committee, and the documents relating to the four series of demonstrations. Included are annual reports and research statistics, on-site investigations regarding possible participants, and final report statistics. In the general files are internal memoranda, committee meeting minutes, correspondence, statistical summaries, and weekly reports concerning field observations of the demonstrations.

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File Plan note

Former Classification: IX; IV 4B 4;

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

- Medicine, Rural
- Medical research
- Mental health
- Medicine -- Scholarships, fellowships, etc.
- Child psychology
- Child welfare
- Education, Rural
- Hygiene
- Law
- Legal issues
- Legal research
- Medical education
- War relief
- United States
- Public welfare

- Public health
- New York (State)
- New York (N.Y.)
- Child mental health

Collection Inventory

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