



Commonwealth Fund, Program for the Prevention of Delinquency records, SG 1, Series 29

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical/Historical note	3
Scope and Contents note	3
File Plan note	5
Administrative Information	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Collection Inventory	6

Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Commonwealth Fund
Title:	Commonwealth Fund records, Program for the Prevention of Delinquency, SG 1, Series 29
ID:	FA301
Date [inclusive]:	1921-1927
Physical Description:	1.52 Cubic Feet 4 letter document boxes
Language of the Material:	English .

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents note

The Commonwealth Fund officially adopted its "Program for the Prevention of Delinquency" on November 9, 1921. The program consisted of four divisions: Division I, The New York School of Social Work; Division II, The National Committee for Mental Hygiene-Division of the Prevention of

Delinquency; Division III, The National Committee on Visiting Teachers-Public Education Association of New York; and Division IV, The Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (JCMPPD).

The New York School of Social Work established in 1919 a Department of Mental Hygiene, whose didactic objective was to give the school's students a better insight into human nature and conduct in health and disease. In order to give students opportunities for the actual study and management of problems in human maladjustment, in close affiliation with professional psychiatrists, the school maintained a Bureau of Children's Guidance in conjunction with the Neurological Department of Vanderbilt Clinic. The school also granted fellowships to qualified students and professionals to attend classes and seminars in child guidance. Most of the surviving records consist of financial statements and correspondence relating to budgets, and the Annual Reports from the Bureau of Children's Guidance (1922-1927). Division I of the Delinquency Program was created on December 1, 1921 and began operations on February 1, 1922. Division I formally ceased operations on July 30, 1927.

The National Committee for Mental Hygiene was founded in 1909 and incorporated in 1916. Through funding by the Commonwealth Fund, the Committee's Division on the Prevention of Delinquency held Child Guidance Clinics in several cities, most notably Norfolk, Virginia; Dallas, Texas; and St. Louis, Missouri. The National Committee also sponsored a fellowship program. All the documents concern budgetary matters.

Division III of the Commonwealth Fund's program, The National Committee of Visiting Teachers maintained a series of clinics for visiting teachers, held grading demonstrations throughout the United States and furnished visiting teachers to many school districts. The work funded by the Commonwealth Fund was directed through the auspices of the Public Education Association of The City of New York, which was founded in 1895 and incorporated in 1899. After the Delinquency program ended, the Visiting Teachers Program continued under the general guidelines of the mental hygiene program. Demonstrations were maintained and contact and supervision of the permanent work established under the demonstrations was provided. Assistance and advice regarding visiting teaching problems and programs was given to cities requesting the same. The Commonwealth Fund granted money to the Visiting Teachers until June 30, 1930. The records are all of a financial nature and reflect the Committee's activities both as a component of the Delinquency Program and as an independent body. The National Committee on Visiting Teachers disbanded on June 30, 1931.

The Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (JCMPPD) was incorporated on February 22, 1922 under the laws of the State of New York, and served as a coordinating agent for the Juvenile Delinquency Program and its member groups. The publication and dissemination of information and literature on juvenile delinquency and child guidance was a primary function of the JCMPPD. The name of the Committee is misleading since the majority of its work entailed the directing of a program of mental health, child guidance clinics, visiting teachers, and the training of individuals for competency in child guidance. The Committee's documents include minutes of the organization, both before and after the incorporation of the Committee, which transcribe the decisions of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and the corporation as a whole. Financial records and the Committee's newsletter are also found in this collection. After the dissolution of its charter in 1927, many of the Committee's members formed the nucleus of the Commonwealth Fund's new Division of Publications, a not too unlikely move given the Committee's prior active participation in this area.

Individuals associated with the Commonwealth Fund's Program for the Prevention of Delinquency include Barbara S. Quin, Bernard Glueck, Howard W. Nudd, Barry C. Smith, Porter R. Lee, Graham R.

Taylor, Julia C. Lathrop, Frankwood E. Williams, Henry C. Morrison, Thomas W. Salmon, Mildred C. Scoville and Ralph P. Truitt.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

File Plan note

Former Classification: IX; IV 4B 4;

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Mental health
- Medicine -- Scholarships, fellowships, etc.
- Medical education
- Legal research
- Medicine, Rural
- Medical research
- Public health
- New York (State)
- United States
- Public welfare
- War relief
- Law
- Legal issues
- Education, Rural
- Hygiene
- Child psychology
- Child welfare
- New York (N.Y.)
- Child mental health

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Bureau of Children's Guidance - Annual Report, December 1922	box 1	folder 1
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Bureau of Children's Guidance - Annual Report, 1923-1924	box 1	folder 2
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Bureau of Children's Guidance - Annual Report, 1924-1925	box 1	folder 3
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Bureau of Children's Guidance - Annual Report, September 1926	box 1	folder 4
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Bureau of Children's Guidance - Glueck Report, October 1923	box 1	folder 5
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1922-1924	box 1	folder 6
New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1925-1927	box 1	folder 7

New York School for Social Work (Division I) - Preliminary Operating Report, 1921-1927	box 1	folder 8
The National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Division II) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1922-1924	box 1	folder 9
The National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Division II) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, March-December, 1925	box 1	folder 10
The National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Division II) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1926-1927	box 1	folder 11
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Chase Report (Josephine Chase - "Thirty Visiting Teachers in Thirty Counties"), 1930	box 1	folder 12
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Chase Report (Josephine Chase - "Thirty Visiting Teachers in Thirty Counties"), 1930	box 1	folder 13
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume I - "The Work as a Whole, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 1	folder 14
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume II - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 15
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume II - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 16
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume II - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 17
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume III - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 18
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume III - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 19
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume III - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 20
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume III - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 21

National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume IV - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 2	folder 22
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume IV - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 3	folder 23
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Confidential Report - Volume IV - "The Work in Each Demonstration Center, November 9, 1921-June 30, 1927", 1921-1927	box 3	folder 24
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1922-1923	box 3	folder 25
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1924-1925	box 3	folder 26
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1926-1927	box 3	folder 27
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1928-1929	box 3	folder 28
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1930-1931	box 3	folder 29
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Nudd Report (Howard W. Nudd - "A National Program on Visiting Teachers"), 1930	box 3	folder 30
National Committee on Visiting Teachers (Division III) - Nudd Report (Howard W. Nudd - "A National Program on Visiting Teachers"), 1930	box 3	folder 31
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Charter, undated	box 3	folder 32

Scope and Contents note

By-Laws/Incorporation January 23, 1922; Amendment May
24, 1922.

Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Charter - Dissolution, November 28, 1927	box 3	folder 33
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Chronology, 1921-1922	box 3	folder 34
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1922-1923	box 4	folder 35
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1924-1925	box 4	folder 36

Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Financial Statements and Correspondence, 1926-1927	box 4	folder 37
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Minutes, November-December, 1921	box 4	folder 38
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Minutes, January-March, 1922	box 4	folder 39
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Minutes, April-December, 1922	box 4	folder 40
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Minutes, 1923-1924	box 4	folder 41
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Minutes, 1925-1926	box 4	folder 42
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Newsletters (#1-5), June-October, 1922	box 4	folder 43
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Newsletters (#6-10), January-December, 1923	box 4	folder 44
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Newsletters (#11-18), January-December, 1924	box 4	folder 45
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Newsletters (#19-24 and #28), January-September, 1925 and January 1926	box 4	folder 46
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Walter Study (Henriette R. Walter - "The Relation Between Vocational Guidance and Visiting Teaching"), 1925	box 4	folder 47
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency (Division IV) - Walter Study (Henriette R. Walter - "The Relation Between Vocational Guidance and Visiting Teaching"), 1925	box 4	folder 48