

STATE OF IOWA  
**CHILD WELFARE**

Board of Control of State Institutions.

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## THE REVOLT OF YOUTH

There is nothing new in what has been termed the revolt of youth. If it is more extensive now than formerly it is because the channels of information and expression are more numerous both for old and young.

Many of the older generation are embittered by the collapse of a social system which promised much and then failed. The slump in youthful confidence that followed has seriously impaired home supervision and authority.

Out of the chaos has come a mass of literature which the younger generation reads and applauds. Much of this is written because of rage and rebellion. The trend of it all is to reject the wisdom of experience and depend on instinct alone to bring again a golden age. And now has come the explosion of flaming youth against age and all it stands for. In Germany, Great Britain and Russia more particularly the younger generation is committed to very disquieting theories. This brand new freedom so loudly advertised here by foreign lecturers and home radicals is a very "fleshly" tyranny and subordinates the teacher to the learners.

This directly reduces social restraint and home training. Youth's implicit obedience has been supplanted by a critical and a non-sympathetic attitude. It is vital to insist on the obligations of home discipline.

All of this is tremendously complicated by the economic freedom of girls, the free use of automobiles, the passing of the chaperone, the confusion of morals and the refusal of so many to take life seriously.

We must reduce our speed as parents and children. The strained restlessness

in civilized countries must be seriously censured and replaced by a more restrained and dignified manner of life. Restlessness has taken the place of happiness.

Such explosions of youth as found in some of the recent books would not have added their poison to our social system if the older generation had paused to consider where they were going.

Books which stress the fluidity of morals or the need of experimenting with marriage or that changing circumstances determines right and wrong are found everywhere. With no absolute standards, the explanations of human behavior, making morals an optional matter and denying that the safety and welfare of society are dependent on them, is sweeping the foundation from under the feet of the younger generation.

It is time for the older generation to bring out the old household gods, polish them up and set them in place.

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## RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF CHILD PLACING

Placing children in free foster homes is legally restricted to individuals in the regular employ of a court or of an institution or association which is certified by the state to receive and care for children.

With the constant emphasis on the desirability of providing family life for dependent children who are in need of institutional care the question is frequently asked: Just what is the state doing about it?

Home life is the highest and finest product of civilization. Children should not be deprived of it except for urgent

and compelling reasons. Except in unusual circumstances the home should not be broken up for reasons of poverty, but only for consideration of inefficiency or immorality.

A foster home is the best substitute for a child's own home. When children are normal in mind and body and do not require special training they should be cared for in families whenever practicable. The carefully selected foster home is, for the normal child, the best substitute for the natural home. Such homes should be selected by the most careful process of investigation, carried on by skilled agents through personal investigation and with due regard to the religious faith of the child. After children are placed in homes adequate visitation with careful consideration of the physical, mental and moral training and development of each child on the part of the responsible home finding agency is essential.

Complete records of the child are necessary to a proper understanding of his heredity and personality, and of his development and progress while under the care of the agency.

Before a child is placed in other than a temporary foster home attention should be given to his health, mentality, character, family history and circumstances.

Careful and wise investigation of foster homes is prerequisite to the placing of children.

Adequate standards should be required of the foster families as to character, intelligence, experience, training, ability, income, environment, sympathetic attitude and their ability to give the child proper moral and spiritual training.

A complete record should be kept of each foster home, giving the information upon which the approval was based. The records should show the agency's contacts with the family from time to time, indicating the care given the child entrusted to it.

Supervision of children placed in foster homes should include adequate visits by properly qualified and trained visitors, who should exercise watchfulness over

the child's health, education and moral and spiritual development. Periodic physical examination should be made.

If the conclusion of the National Conference on Child Welfare is to serve as our guide in this tremendous task, we must visualize child placing as a highly developed art. Its possibilities are great. It requires the greatest tact, insight into human nature and patience in handling the many problems of adjustment.

Iowa's laws making it a misdemeanor for any child to be placed in a foster home except by those authorized to do so by the state and who are fitted by training and equipped by sufficient staff to make the necessary supervisions and take care of the follow-up work is a big step forward in Iowa's program of child welfare work.

Who is capable of selecting and supervising the homes for the helpless child who has no one to choose for him?

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## CHILD WELFARE LAWS

As our forty-third General Assembly is preparing to adjourn we begin to take stock of the situation and see wherein Child Welfare has been effected by any new legislation.

A bill for the education of crippled children was introduced, but failed of passing. However, something worth while was accomplished in that eight thousand dollars was appropriated to make a state survey of crippled children with a view to legislation when the reports of the survey is made and facts are known.

A Eugenics bill was introduced and passed with practically no opposition. We have grown into the realization that such a measure is a safe and sane procedure when properly administered. The new Eugenics measure provides a State Board of Eugenics shall be created. Said board shall consist of the medical director of the State Psychopathic Hospital, the Commissioner of Public Health and the Superintendents of the following state institutions:

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Ia.

Order for sterilization is authorized by a majority vote of this board upon the showing that the person in question would produce children having an inherited tendency to feeble mindedness, syphilis, insanity, epilepsy, criminality or degeneracy or who would probably become a social menace and there is no probabilities that the conditions of such person will improve to such an extent as to avoid such consequences. Written consent must be obtained from the person in question

or from nearest relative in case the person to be operated upon is feeble minded or insane. In the absence of consent trial shall be instituted to set forth questions of fact. Such trial may be by jury.

Senate Files No. 174 and No. 175 introduced by the Committee on Child Welfare are companion bills. They make it possible for the Juvenile Court to protect the health of a child without breaking up the home.

The present juvenile code gives six definitions of a dependent or neglected child. Senate File No. 175 adds to these definitions as contained in Section 3618 the following: "Or is living in a home wherein because of carelessness or neglect of a person or persons having a transmissible disease of a serious nature as determined by the local Board of Health, local Health Officer or the State Department of Health, the health of said child may be in danger."

Senate File No. 174 amends the entire juvenile code by the simple device of inserting the words "or dependency" wherever the word "delinquency" occurs in connection with the phrases "contributing to the dependency or neglect of a child."

It is asserted by students of the law and of criminal procedure that this change will make it possible to save the public considerable sums now spent in lengthy and oft-times futile procedures under the felony statutes. It will also serve to speed up the administration of justice—and to simplify it. It further substitutes when desired the flexibility of equity procedure for strictly legal jurisdiction, without in any way abrogating the more drastic legal measures as ultimate resorts.

These general features are of interest both to social workers and taxpayers.

While the law now will apply to all types of juvenile dependency and neglect cases it will as regards health enable the same court that seeks to protect the health of a child under Section 3618 et seq. to exercise control of the adult. For example if a father or any other adult with whom the child may be in contact

is, in the opinion of the health officer, likely to cause the child to become ill, it will not be necessary to remove the child from the home—a process usually disapproved by social workers if there is any other solution. The court can use its power to cause the adult to take proper precautions, or if that proves impossible, it can remove the adult from proximity of the child.

This important pair of laws is the outgrowth of the consideration of a relatively minor question, namely the problem of a compulsory commitment law for the individual popularly known as "careless consumptive." It was felt that legislation relating to compulsory commitment of adults who are a menace to health was inadvisable for several reasons, one being that boards of health at present have ample powers where they wish to assume them and where the courts are willing to sustain them, and another that such process would be difficult to employ and if employed would be embarrassing to the institution receiving the patient. It was seen that consideration of this problem involved the whole question of dealing with children in the home and the maintenance of the intergrity of the home simultaneously with the protection of the child's health. It was decided by the special committee which gave this problem long and careful study that it would be much more effective and would safeguard the interest of children in a more kindly as well as scientific manner to give the juvenile court flexible powers so it might deal with the adult having a communicable disease such as tuberculosis or a venereal complaint.

Under Children's Boarding Homes Defined, the law was amended to read "any person who receives for care and treatment or has in his custody at any one time more than two children under fourteen years unattended by parent or guardian".

This raises the age from three to fourteen years, and while the bill as passed is not as broad as one might wish, it is certainly a step forward. Iowa does not

have the problem of boarding children that many of the eastern states have and probably by the time we have a serious problem here we will have the bill amended to read "one or more children" instead of "more than two children under fourteen years."

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## MAY DAY

May Day—Child Health Day has rolled around again bringing to us a realization of our debt to childhood.

Are we doing all we can to produce an optimal child in our community and our state? How far short of this do we come?

Miss Edith Countryman, State Chairman for May Day, has outlined three things which she urges to be used in celebrating Child Health Day this year:

I. Physical examination of every school child who has not had such examination during the school year.

II. Plans for physical examination during the summer of all children who will start to school for the first time this fall.

III. Immunization of children to diphtheria.

These suggestions may be accomplished by:

Interesting the children and their parents in the "Early Diagnosis Campaign" to be observed any time during the May Day activities and by promoting interest in the prevention of all communicable diseases.

Following this an outline is given of how the school, the pupil, the parents, the physician, the dentist, the public health nurse, the church and men's and women's clubs may do their part in promoting child health and welfare.

This is the week when the child is claiming the attention of the entire country. He is being scrutinized from all angles and he appears in various poses through the ever changing mirrored reflections of his daily life. All the world is thinking of him in terms of the five point child—physical, mental intellectual, moral and spiritual. It takes all these to develop the optimal child.