

History of Child Welfare Policies

1700s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orphans and children's parents who could not care for them were often indentured to work for other families.
1800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private religious and charitable organizations expanded orphanages from 7 in 1700 to 600 in the late 1800s
1850	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about the effects of growing up in orphanages caused private agencies to begin placing with foster families. These families were rarely screened, and placements were not monitored.
1900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first state laws to prevent child abuse and neglect were passed. The first national conference was held. The first Federal Children's Bureau was established. And the first federal grants for child welfare were created, which was the start of child welfare agencies.
1935	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Security Act established Aid to Dependent Children (ADC). ADC provided financial assistance to needy dependent children.
1950	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy makers became aware that many needy children were being denied benefits under regulations regarding "suitable homes" or "man-in-the-house" policies, unwed mothers and accusations of immorality.
1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louisiana had expelled approximately 23,000 children from welfare because parents had a child that was born outside of marriage. While this had happened in other states also, the National Urban League advocated for change. The Fleming Rule was established by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (as they operated the ADC). The Fleming Rule declared that states could not simply ignore the needs of children living in households deemed unsuitable. States were required to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide services to make homes suitable, or 2. Move children to a suitable home and provide them with financial assistance. States were provided with matching federal funds for foster care payments made on behalf of children removed for unsuitable homes. Matching funds were not provided for families that were not otherwise eligible for financial assistance prior to removal.
1962	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public welfare amendments emphasized the importance of delivering services to children whose homes were unsuitable. Amendments also required state agencies to report families to the court system whose children were identified for removal. There was a significant growing number of children entering foster care in the 60's.
1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster care became mandatory for all states.
1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) was established. In exchange for federal funding CAPTA required states to initiate mandated reporting and investigation procedures. By 1975, each state was required to establish a formal child welfare agency. Race neutral approaches centered White normality benchmarks in assessing "appropriate behaviors" and "good parenting."
1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICWA was established without enforcement or oversight. By 1970, 25-30% of all Indigenous American children had been removed from their homes and placed into foster care. "Indian Boarding Schools" had grown to 357 in 30 states housing approximately 60,000 youth over the years totaling 83% of all Indigenous American children (Cho)
1980's & 90's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black women were 10x's more likely to be reported to child welfare. The percentage of children that aged out of the system increased by 41% from 1998-2007.

1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption and Safe Family Act focused on terminating parental rights and promoting adoptions. • In 1994, there were 53,000 children waiting for adoption. • In 2019, there were 122,000 children waiting for adoption. • During this time adoption of Black children decreased by 22% and adoption of White children increased by 41%.
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Civil Rights Gains

1948	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harry Truman ends segregation. Many Black families are migrating from the South to new homes and new communities and seeking new jobs. At that time there was not a stigma against receiving ADC. • Shortly after segregation ends, we see a significant increase in families being denied benefits – primarily Black families.
1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Rights Voting Act was the first civil rights legislation since the end of Reconstruction in 1877. The Voting Act allowed prosecutors to obtain court injunctions against interference with the right to vote. Black men had earned the right to vote in 1870 (87 years earlier). Black men had been legally denied the right to vote with no legal protections since President Rutherford Hayes removed the army from the Confederate South at the end of Reconstruction in 1877. That was followed by the establishment of Black codes, Jim Crow and host of other coercive tactics.
1965	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While women earned the right to vote in 1920, Black women continued to be denied the right to vote in most of the country due to Black codes, literary tests, poll taxes, voter ID requirements and intimidations, as well as acts of violence. The right to vote was not secured for Black women until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. • https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/vote-not-all-women-gained-right-to-vote-in-1920/