

History of childcare in the united states

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History of childcare in the United States dates back to the 19th century when the first organizations were established to consider children's plight. During the century, definition of childcare was limited to marginalized groups and included all forms of provisions to economically disadvantaged, minority ethnic groups and immigrant populations. The definition's inclusion of beneficiaries was poor for the 20th century's environment and a reform was necessary. The first initiative towards childcare however occurred New York in the year 1893 with development of a model nursery and establishment of the National Federation of Day Nurseries followed this five years later. The 20th century's developments then led to formation of the U. S. Children's Bureau, in 1912, which developed a pension policy for encouraging mothers to take care of their children at home instead of going to work, a program that was popular until 18 years later when it failed to meet its objectives amidst claims of favoritism. While the Bureau's original scope involved government support for women, its research findings that identified diseases and physical injuries due to children being left alone at home or being carried to their mothers' workplaces led to focus on women's pension and not government support.

Effects of the Great Depression further influenced childcare after the year 1931. Many nursery schools closed down in the decade that followed and the institutions' receivables in grants fell before the government enacted the Work Progress Administration to remedy the consequences. The act's program that also focused on physically and mentally disadvantaged children increased the number of schools and enrolments in more than 40 states but later suffered from high mobility rate among teachers. Effects of <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-childcare-in-the-united-states/>

the Second World War that forced women to work in volatile industries then led to the Lanham act that established facilities in war prone regions for childcare. The facilities however started operating three years later, a time at which Emergency Nursery Schools were changed into childcare facilities that were however scarce and mothers still went with their young children to work, even in night shifts, and left the children to sleep in cars. Care centers also subsidized government initiatives that supported many children during the war but the government funding to childcare stopped after the world war.

Government support however continued in some cities and even though the congress later voted to fund childcare, the decision was reversed. The government then, in 1954, allowed for tax deductions in order to support parents' ability to maintain their jobs and support their children simultaneously. Activists were however skeptical of the tax relief initiative and, in 1958, formed national organizations for childcare, Inter City Committee for Day Care of Children (ICC) being the major one, but sought to incorporate government agencies such as the Children's Bureau and Women's Bureau. The ICC then advocated for a bill to ensure children's welfare but the bill was rejected in 1959. The group then organized for a conference in the following year where the concept of group care was explored. The conference however noted that childcare was too expensive for the private sector. Childcare programs were then implemented with political goodwill and the legislature demonstrated this in the year 1965 by incorporating government support in childcare initiatives. Another legislative effort to facilitate childcare, in collaboration with civil movements, began in 1969 but stalled in 1971 after rejection by the then president. This move

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avored the middle and higher economic classes at the expense of the poor, a trend that continued into the 1980s leading to social efforts to support poor families and a subsequent massive childcare grant in the year 1990.

Legislative amendments in 1996 then consolidated different grant programs and increased available funds for childcare. Care cost however continued to raise among middle income families amidst problems of low quality and high mobility of teachers due to low wages. Economic classes, just like in systems in developed nations, stratify the America's childcare system. The system only provides for children bellow three years but covers maternity and parental leaves.