



City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division

## Guide to the Children's Institutions Department records

Finding aid prepared by Patrick T. Collins

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

With funding from a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)

<b>Repository:</b>	City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division
<b>Title:</b>	Children's Institutions Department records
<b>Collection No.:</b>	8503
<b>Dates:</b>	1898 - 1920
<b>Quantity:</b>	0.5 Cubic feet (19 Reports)

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### Biographical/Historical note

Before 1897, all public institutions existed under the Department of Public Institutions and were overseen in succession by a Board of Directors and then a Board of Commissioners. In 1895, the Board of Commissioners and the Department of Public Institutions were abolished and replaced by a single Institutions Commissioner who oversaw the Institutions Department. Chapter 395 of the Acts of 1897 eliminated the Institutions Commissioner and dispersed control of all institutions by creating a separate department for the various types of institutions. One of these departments was the Children's Institutions Department. The Children's Institutions Department had control of three institutions. These were: The House of Reformation at Rainsford Island (re-named the Suffolk School for Boys in 1906), the Parental School for Truants in West Roxbury, and the Home for Pauper and Neglected Children on Marcella Street in Roxbury (more commonly referred to as the Marcella-street Home). The Children's Institutions Department continued in operation until 1920 when it was consolidated into the Institutions Department as the Child Welfare Division.

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## Scope and Contents note

The records in this collection consist entirely of the annual reports of the Children's Institutions Department. These reports span the dates 1898 through 1920 with gaps for the years 1899-1900 and 1914-1915. The reports provide statistical data for each institution under the control of the Department as well as reports from the individual superintendants for each institution. Included are summaries of the Department's operations for the previous fiscal year, comparison to the fiscal year preceding that one, and narratives for each institution. These narratives often include descriptions of that particular institution's programs, accomplishments and setbacks, updates on the general welfare of those children in their care, as well as proposals for improvements and goals for the future.

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