

Collection #
M 1266

**FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
RECORDS ADDITION
1951-1973**

[Collection Information](#)

[Historical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

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February, 2016

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes

COLLECTION
DATES: 1951-1973

PROVENANCE: Jessica Bonnell for Family Service of Central Indiana, Inc.,
2007

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED
HOLDINGS: M 1220 Family Service of Central Indiana Records, 1911–
1971

ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2007.0359

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Family Service of Central Indiana formed on Thanksgiving Day 1835 under the name Indianapolis Benevolent Society. During the nineteenth century the Society functioned as a relief agency providing services to the city's new arrivals, widows, orphans, and poor. In 1897 the organization's president established the Charity Organization Society to oversee the growing number of new welfare organizations in Indianapolis, including the Society of Friendly Visitors, Social Service Exchange, Dime Savings and Loan, Summer Mission for Sick Children, Fairview Settlement, and Legal Aid Bureau. The Charity Organization Society and Indianapolis Benevolent Society were part of the same organization but each had different responsibilities. The former investigated cases to identify those worthy of aid, while the latter provided assistance to those people approved for aid. In 1922 the Charity Organization Society and Indianapolis Benevolent Society merged with the Children's Aid Association and Mother's Aid Society to form the Family Welfare Society, which aimed to address problems of the family. By 1941, however, two of the organizations had left to join outside agencies. This move prompted the Family Welfare Society to change its name to the Family Service Association (FSA) of Indianapolis in 1945. By the postwar period, the Family Service Association of Indianapolis had ceased to be a relief agency and instead focused most of its efforts on family counseling services. Given the large amount of need for this type of aid, the organization decided to expand its operations. FSA opened its Hancock County branch in 1965, Boone County branch in 1980, Hamilton County branch in 1981, and Morgan County branch in 1983. These additions prompted the agency to change its name to the Family Service Association of Central Indiana in 1993. Ten years later it was changed again to the Family Service of Central Indiana. In 2011 the organization was renamed Families First. Despite these numerous name changes, the agency still has a historical connection to the Indianapolis Benevolent Society. As a result, Families First is the oldest non-profit human services organization in central Indiana.

Sources:

<http://familiesfirstindiana.org/about-families-first/our-history/#>

Information in collection

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains reports and studies, statistics, correspondence, minutes, clippings, and other miscellaneous papers pertaining to the Family Service Association of America in Central Indiana. Most of these items are either administrative records or agency files.

Administrative records include information about the organization's staff and committee members, volunteers, correspondence with other agencies, etcetera. Agency files largely include reports, studies, and statistics on the organization's programs and services. All of these materials are from when the agency was known either as the Indianapolis Benevolent Society, the Family Welfare Society, or the Family Service Association (FSA) of Indianapolis. The bulk of these items, however, are from the 1960s which is when the organization was called the Family Service Association of Indianapolis.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Office Economic Opportunity Programs, 1902-1965	Box 1, Folder 1
Civilian Defense, 1951-1953, N.D.	Box 1, Folder 2
Conference on Social Work, 1958-1970, N.D.	Box 1, Folder 3
Community Service Council, 1941-1961	Box 1, Folder 4
Community Service Council, 1961-1969, N.D.	Box 1, Folder 5
FSA of Indiana, 1946-1966	Box 1, Folder 6
FSA of Indiana, 1966-1967	Box 1, Folder 7
FSA of Indiana, 1968-1970	Box 1, Folder 8
FSAA-Recruitment, 1953-1959	Box 1, Folder 9
Indiana Agencies Mics. Lafayette, 1959-1962	Box 1, Folder 10
Indiana Agencies Department of Public Welfare, 1937-1952, N.D.	Box 1, Folder 11
Indiana Agencies Misc. Bloomington, 1959, N.D.	Box 1, Folder 12
Indiana Agencies Misc. 1959-1970, N.D.	Box 1, Folder 13
Pilot Youth Project, 1957-1962, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 1
FSAA Regional Councils, 1968-1971	Box 2, Folder 2
FSAA Regional Councils, 1971-1972	Box 2, Folder 3
FSAA Regional Councils, 1972-1973	Box 2, Folder 4
Governor's Committee of Family Relations, 1952- 1958, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 5
United Fund, 1930-1968	Box 2, Folder 6

United Fund, 1968-1972, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 7
Indianapolis Urban League, 1965-1968, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 8
YMCA Youth Committee, 1960-1963, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 9
Senior Citizens Center, 1960	Box 2, Folder 10
Social Workers Club, 1952-1967, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 11
Township Trustees, 1930-1959, N.D.	Box 2, Folder 12
Agencies-Other States, 1948-1963	Box 2, Folder 13
Agencies-Other States, 1964-1970	Box 2, Folder 14
FSAA-Regional Consultant, 1952-1955	Box 2, Folder 15
Miami County FSA, 1968	Box 2, Folder 16
Personnel Practices in Agencies, 1938-1948	Box 2, Folder 17
Budget-Travelers Aid Division, 1968-1970	Box 3, Folder 1
Inventory-Travelers Aid Division, 1969-1970, N.D.	Box 3, Folder 2
Correspondence-Travelers Aid Division, 1970-1971	Box 3, Folder 3
Case Review-Travelers Aid Division, 1970	Box 3, Folder 4
Supervisor's Reports-Travelers Aid Division, 1970	Box 3, Folder 5
Advancement of Practice, 1967-1969	Box 3, Folder 6
Indianapolis- Projects Miscellaneous, 1942-1960, N.D.	Box 3, Folder 7
Salary Study Group, 1964	Box 3, Folder 8
Purchase of Service, 1969-1972, N.D.	Box 3, Folder 9
Family Agency Clients- Interim Report, FSAA Census, Correspondence, 1971-1972	Box 3, Folder 10

Considerations in Use of Public Funds, 1960-1972	Box 3, Folder 11
Progress Committees, 1964-1965	Box 3, Folder 12
Progress Committees, 1965	Box 3, Folder 13
Progress Committees, 1966-1967, N.D.	Box 3, Folder 14
Indianapolis- Church Federation, 1956-1968	Box 3, Folder 15
Kokomo Family Service, 1966-1967, N.D.	Box 3, Folder 16
Council on Illegitimacy, 1968	Box 3, Folder 17
Member Agencies Documents, Correspondence, 1970-1972	Box 3, Folder 18
Principles of Personnel Policies and Practices, 1956	Box 3, Folder 19
Daily Contact Reporting, 1968	Box 3, Folder 20
Guide for Physicians and Other Providers of Care, 1971	Box 3, Folder 21
Preliminary Report of the Personnel Committee, 1967	Box 4, Folder 1
Current Challenges to the Traditional Family, 1972	Box 4, Folder 2
Research and Study Projects Reported by FSAA Member Agencies, 1957-1959	Box 4, Folder 3
Research and Study Projects Reported by FSAA Member Agencies, 1960-1962	Box 4, Folder 4
Research and Study Projects Reported by FSAA Member Agencies, 1965	Box 4, Folder 5
Research and Study Projects Reported by FSAA Member Agencies, 1966	Box 4, Folder 6
Research and Study Projects Reported by FSAA Member Agencies, 1967-1968	Box 4, Folder 7

Summary of 1956 Yearly Reports from FSAA Member Agencies, 1956	Box 4, Folder 8
Summary of FSAA Organization and Services, 1953	Box 4, Folder 9
Structure of FSAA Committees, 1953	Box 4, Folder 10
"Practice in the Use of Purchased Psychiatric Orientation," 1953	Box 4, Folder 11
Lawyer-Family Agency Transcript, Committee Report, 1956-1960	Box 4, Folder 12
Reviews of "Method and Scope" and "Review" Committees, 1952-1955	Box 4, Folder 13
Chest-Agency Relations, 1953-1954	Box 4, Folder 14
Quantitative Standards for Caseworkers' Workloads, 1960	Box 4, Folder 15
Study of Telephone Interviews Pt. II, 1955	Box 4, Folder 16
Evaluative Statement: FSAA, 1960	Box 4, Folder 17
Interim Cost Analysis Manual, 1960	Box 4, Folder 18
Survey, Analysis and Plan of Fundraising for FSAA, 1957	Box 4, Folder 19
Proposal Seeking Financial Aid for Family Counselors, 1958	Box 4, Folder 20
Social Security Cooperative Research, 1961	Box 4, Folder 21
Considerations Involved in Use of Public Funds, 1960	Box 4, Folder 22
Patterns in Use of Family Agency Service, 1961	Box 4, Folder 23
FSAA Biennial Session, Pilot Project, NESD, Research, 1963-1967	Box 4, Folder 24