

# Department for Neglected Children, Colony of Victoria

1887 – 1900

## Details

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The main responsibility of the Department for Neglected Children upon its establishment was the maintenance and management of 'neglected' children including: supervision of State wards in receiving houses and probationary schools, provision of trade apprenticeships programs, 'boarding out' of children in the service of persons willing to take charge of their maintenance and education, provision of assistance to non-wards.

Almost since the introduction of the Neglected and Criminal Children's Act in 1864, the impropriety of dealing with 'neglected' children and 'uncontrollable' children together had been acknowledged. This led in 1887 to the proclamation of two new statutes: the Neglected Children's Act and the Juvenile Offenders' Act. With these new laws, responsibility for 'neglected' children was assumed by a Department for Neglected Children, and a Department for Reformatory Schools assumed responsibility for convicted juveniles.

Although responsibility was statutorily separated in this manner it is evident that both departments continued to be administered jointly within the Chief Secretary's Department.

## More info

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### Chronology

- Department of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, Colony of Victoria (1864 - 1887)
  - **Department for Neglected Children, Colony of Victoria (1887 – 1900)**
    - Department for Neglected Children, State Government of Victoria (1901 - 1924)
    - Children's Welfare Department, State Government of Victoria (1924 - 1960)
      - Social Welfare Branch, State Government of Victoria (1960 - 1970)
      - Social Welfare Department, State Government of Victoria (1970 - 1978)
      - Department of Community Welfare Services, State Government of Victoria (1978 - 1985)

### Related Entries

- Ran**
- [Royal Park Depot \(c. 1880 - 1955\)](#)  
Date: 1887 - 1900
  - [Wandin Yallock Reformatory School \(1886 - 1905\)](#)  
In 1893 the Department for Neglected Children took over supervision of Wandin Yallock Reformatory School.  
Date: 1893 - 1900

### Related Organisations

- [Department for Reformatory Schools, Colony of Victoria \(1887 - 1900\)](#)

In 1887, the Department for Industrial and Reformatory Schools was split into two separate government agencies - the Department for Neglected Children was responsible for neglected children, and the Department for Reformatory Schools was responsible for juvenile offenders.

### Related Legislation

- [The Neglected Children's Act 1887, Victoria \(1888 - 1890\)](#)

With the passage of the Neglected Children's Act 1887, responsibility for neglected children was transferred from the Department of Industrial and Reformatory Schools, to the Department for Neglected Children.

- [Infant Life Protection Act 1907, Victoria \(1907 - 1915\)](#)

Under provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act 1907 the Department assumed responsibility from the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Police in 1907 for the registration of homes providing non-parental care to infants.

## Resources

- Swain, Shurlee, ["The supervision of ... babies is women's work, and cannot be rightly done by men": Victorian women's organisations and female child welfare inspectors 1890-1915](#), Victorian Historical Journal, November 2008
- Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools, [Report of the Secretary and Inspector for the year ... / Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools.](#), 1896 - 1924
- Victoria. Children's Welfare Department and Reformatory Schools, [Report of the Secretary / Department for Neglected Children and Reformatory Schools](#), 1887 - 1895

## Records

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### Records

- [Victorian Government Wardship and/or Out of Home Care Records \(1864 - current\)](#)
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