

# Records of Uniting – Connections (adoptions and out-of-home care)

1910 – 2020

**To access these records:** Please contact Catriona Milne, Manager Uniting Heritage Service:

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## Records Location

These records are held by [Uniting \(Victoria and Tasmania\) Limited \(2017 - current\)](#)

## Details

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Records of Uniting – Connections (adoptions and out-of-home care) dates from 1910 to 2020. This collection was previously in the custody of the organisation Uniting – Connections (2017-2020). It includes both adoption and out of home care records from the Methodist Babies' Home, Presbyterian Babies' Home, Presbyterian Sisterhood, Girls' Memorial Home, Canterbury Family Centre, The Presbyterian and Scots' Church Children's Aid Society, Copelen Street and Connections UnitingCare. The types of records include admission books, adoption registers, client files, medical cards, and photographs.

## Access Conditions

Former residents and people affected by adoption (and their families) should contact the Uniting Heritage Service to find information, and access personal files. The Uniting Heritage Service is a free service that helps individuals access information about them or family members, as well as access appropriate support should they choose. Heritage Service staff prefer, where possible, to release records in person to past residents and people affected by adoption, or their family members, in order to give greater meaning and context to the information.

## Records

Records of Uniting – Connections is a large collection of records that includes admission books, adoption records, medical cards, case books, registers and index cards.

These records were catalogued and digitised as part of the Records Access Documentation Grants in 2017. Records in this collection have been indexed and documented as part of the Records Access Documentation Grants in 2019.

More specifically, the collection includes:

## Methodist Babies' Home

- Admission books, 1929-1971  
Contains details of babies admitted to the Home. Details recorded include: Child's name; date and place of birth; admission date; birth parents' names, ages and addresses where available; adoptive parents' initials and surname; placement date; and date of adoption order. Brief details of admission circumstances are usually recorded, and later entries contain descriptions of the birth parents.
- Adoption books, 1929-1971  
Contains details of adoption placements arranged by the Methodist Babies' Home. Details recorded in the book include: Adoptive parents' names and address; referee's names and addresses; child's name and date of birth; placement date; and date of adoption order.
- Masterbooks, 1952-1971  
Monthly listing of admissions, discharges, placements and adoption orders granted. Information recorded includes: Child's name; admission date; placement date; adoptive parents' names and addresses.
- Admission slips, 1959-1968  
Contain the following details about the child and birth parents: Child's name and gender; date and place of birth; birth parents' names; child's grandparents' names if known; birth parents' religion, occupation and number of other children; date of relinquishment counselling; and additional remarks about the birth parents. Each slip usually has other documents attached such as letters, reports and application forms.
- Children's birth details, 1931-1940, 1965-1966  
Contains brief medical observations about babies admitted to the Home, which include: Child's alias used by nurses; date of birth; other birth details including weight and length and observations.
- Admission ledgers, 1929-1974  
Contains details of babies admitted to the Home. The ledgers include: Child's birth name; date and place of birth; birth weight; feeding information; admission date; baby's condition on entry including weight, discharge details; and initials, surname and address of person who admitted the baby.
- Child medical cards, 1929-1974  
Contains medical information on the birth of all babies admitted to the Methodist Babies' Home. The cards include: child's alias used by the nurses at the Methodist Babies' Home; child's date and place of birth; birth weight; height and other measurements; gender; feeding information; and a progress report including any medications and procedures administered. The cards often contain a number of other documents such as anaesthesia consents, birth parents' details and letters from specialists.
- Register of babies and adoptions, 1929-1971  
Contains a register of infants admitted to the Home. The register contains the following: child's birth name; date of birth; admission date; discharge date; transfer date and destination where applicable; placement date; date of adoption order; and adoptive parents' surname. In most cases the register also includes the child's alias used by the nurses at the Methodist Babies' Home.
- Schedule of admissions, discharges and claims for additional child endowments, 1959-1962  
Includes a fortnightly schedule of children admitted to and discharged from the Home. The schedule includes: Child's name; birth parents' names; date and place of birth of child; discharge date; and adoptive parents' names and address if applicable.
- Notes re admission and approval meetings, 1963-1971  
Contains brief notes about admissions and applicant approvals including the date of the meeting, a list of attendees, a list of adoption applications approved, a list of admissions approved and additional brief comments.
- Photographs, c.1930s. These photographs are available online through the Flickr page: 'Methodist Babies Home, South Yarra'.
- Methodist Babies Home images, 1963-1966

## Presbyterian Babies' Home

- Record of admissions, 1928-1972  
Contains the following information about babies admitted: child's name; date and place of birth; admission and discharge dates; child's destination upon discharge (e.g. If returned to birth parents or adopted); birth parents' names and address.
- Adoption book, 1961-1971  
Contains: adoptive parents' names, town of residence, religion, occupations, age of adoptive parents, reason for requesting a child, adoptee's name, date of placement.

- Admission books, 1950-1976  
Details generally include: child's name; date and place of birth; admission and discharge dates; birth parents' names and addresses. Other brief remarks are sometimes included.
- Case book, 1961-1971  
Contains: adoptive parents' names, town of residence, religion, occupations, age of adoptive parents, reason for requesting a child, adoptee's name, date of placement.
- Foster care and adoption applicant register, 1948-1971  
Contains: birth mother's name, birth father's name, child's original name, child's date of birth and birth place, admission date, birth mother's address, reason for admission.
- Register of State Wards, 1954-1976  
Contains a register of children in the Home who were wards of the state. Information contained in the register include child's name and gender, child's date of birth, admission and discharge date, some birth parents' names and addresses, where discharged to, and from 1963, child's ward number.
- Register of infants admitted, 1961-1976  
The register includes: child's name; date of birth; admission and discharge dates. The register also indicates if the baby was born prematurely.
- Register of adoptions, 1970-1975  
The register includes: Child's name; date of birth; hospital where born and treating doctor; admission and discharge dates; and destination at discharge. The register also indicates whether the adoption proceeded or if consent to adoption was revoked.
- Visitors book, 1928-1969  
Contains visitors' names, addresses and comments. It also contains attendance lists of events held at the Home such as the Inaugural Meeting of the Presbyterian Babies' Home Old Girls Association.
- Nurses register, 1925-1952  
Contains information about the nurses working at the Home and the training they undertook. Information about the nurses typically includes: name; address; age; religion; level of education; commencement and finish dates; training undertaken and certificates obtained.
- Ledger of maintenance payments, 1957-1973  
Contains a ledger of Infant Life Protection(ILP) maintenance payments. The information includes: child's name; date of payment; and amount paid.
- Adoption applicants, 1969-1971  
Information on adoption applicants includes: name and address; application date; date of approval decision; gender preference; and placement date.
- Photo album, 1974-1975  
A former mothercraft nurse who trained at the Presbyterian Babies' Home has deposited copies of images from her private photo album at Connections UnitingCare. There are pictures of children, staff and buildings – some of the children are identified.

## Presbyterian Babies' Home and Presbyterian Sisterhood Home

- Birth mother/child index cards, c.1965-c.1978  
Information on the cards include: Mother's name, address, date and place of birth, religion, marital status; name of father if available; date and place of birth of child; baby's gender; consent or revocation date; and brief notes about the outcome for the child. Note: Only records for the letters A-R exist.
- Adoptive parents' index cards, 1966-1970  
Information on the cards include: adoptive parents' names, dates of birth, and address; child's original name; child's date of birth; and placement date. Sometimes included are the child's name upon adoption and the date of the adoption order.
- Intake register, 1970-1979  
Contains details of Presbyterian Social Services' clients including birth parents, adoptive applicants, holiday hosts, counselling recipients, and foster parents. Information about the clients includes: intake date; client's name; marital status; religion; suburb of residence; and service received.
- Particulars of new babies, 1953-1976  
Contains details of birth mothers and babies in the Presbyterian Babies' Home and Sisterhood Home. Information recorded includes: child's name; date and time of birth; hospital where born, weight at birth, birth mother's full name, discharge date, and destination following discharge.

- Record of discharged patients, 1961-1969

Each page in the folder refers to an individual birth mother and her child and the information recorded includes: child's name, date of birth and birth weight; child's immunisation record; labour details; birth mother's name, and additional comments. Each page often has several documents attached containing additional medical information from specialists.

## Presbyterian Sisterhood Home

- Admission books, 1910-1975

Contains the following information about girls and women admitted to the Home: name, age, religion, occupation, brief summary of circumstances, details of nearest relative, child's date of birth, child's gender, and date and destination of discharge. The child's name is not included in these records.

- Ledger of mothers and babies in residence, 1931-1976

Contains a year-by-year record of birth mothers and babies in residence. The ledger includes the following information about the girls and women admitted to the Home: name and admission date, date and destination of discharge, child's name and date and place of birth.

- Admission cards, 1956-1976

Contains the following information about girls and women admitted to the Home: name, date and place of birth, address, occupation, educational standard, religion, admission and discharge dates and brief notes on her circumstances. The birth father's name is provided if known and the name of the child is sometimes included.

- Mary Dickens Wing case books, 1953-1970

Contains birth and neonatal information of the children born to mothers admitted to the Mary Dickens Wing of the Home to give birth. The casebooks includes the following information about the girls and women admitted: name, address, age, labour and neonatal details, baby's gender, time and date of birth, birth and discharge weight, medication administered and discharge date. The child's name is not included in these records.

- Records of mothers and babies, 1953-1967

The records include the following information about mothers and babies who passed through the Home: date and time of birth; mother's name; child's name and weight; whom delivered by; date of discharge; length of hospital stay; and any remarks on both the mother and baby. Hospitals the mothers went through include Mary Dickens hospital wing, Royal Women's Hospital and occasionally through Queen Victoria Hospital.

- Birth mother admission reports, 1971-1972

Information contained in the report includes: name; date of birth; address; physical description; admission circumstances; details about the birth father if applicable; and details of maternal and paternal extended family where known.

## The Presbyterian and Scots' Church Children's Aid Society

- Applications for admissions, 1940-1950

Contains application paperwork relating to the admission of a child or sibling group and associated correspondence. The forms contain the following information: admission reasons; child's birth name, date and place of birth; birth parents' name, address, date and place of birth, religion and employment details; details of siblings; and details of near relatives. The files contain information for children with surnames R-Z only.

## Fairfield Girls' Memorial Home

- Admission forms, 1952

Details contained in the forms include: Birth mother's name and address; date and place of birth; address; admission date; religion and parents' names; child's date of birth; and destination of child following discharge. A two page register relating to the admission slips and photocopies taken from the Girls' Memorial Home annual reports from 1931, 1944, 1954 and 1966 are also contained in the folder.

## Canterbury Family Centre

- Client files, 1979-2000

- Images of Childhood” photo exhibition visitors book, 1991  
Contains the name, address, and comments of visitors to the Canterbury Family Centre’s “Images of Childhood” photo exhibition.

## Copelen Street Family Centre and Copelen Street Child and Family Services

- Client files, 1979-1995
- Post-legal information exchange contact details index cards A-Z, c.1984-c.2000  
Contains index cards with contact details of birth family members and adoptive/permanent care parents. The information contained on the cards typically includes: Child’s name and date of birth; adoptive parents’ names, address and telephone numbers; and birth family member’s names, addresses and telephone numbers.

## Connections UnitingCare

- Adoption and Permanent Care client files, 2000-2017.

## Uniting – Connections

- Adoption and Permanent Care client files, 2017-2020.

## Other Records

As of September 2017, the provenance of some of the following records is not yet known.

- Miscellaneous case registers, 1948-2009  
Contains various registers of cases from the Presbyterian Babies’ Home, and following its closure placements organised by the Copelen Street Family Centre, Copelen Child and Family Services, Copelen and Connections UnitingCare.
- Day Care Incident Ledger, 1981-1995  
Contains incident reports written by staff.
- Sisters shift reports, 1973  
Contains daily reports of the AM and PM shifts at a Babies’ Home. The reports contain brief details about the wellbeing and condition of the children living at the Home, including details of illness, feeding and medication administered. The babies are referred to by first name only.
- Nurses records, 1945-1955  
Contains a record of the nurses working at a children’s Home. Details include nurse’s name, commencement date, completion date, and brief notes referring to training undertaken.
- Visitors Books, 1999  
Contains visitor’s name, address and any comments left. The entries relate to 18 April 1999 and 14 November 1999 only.

## Finding Aids

An in-house developed database can be searched using a number of parameters including names, date of birth, and admission/discharge dates. Scanned images of the records in the collection are stored on the organisation’s server and attached to the relevant case files directly within the database.

## Gallery



## Methodist Babies' Home, South Yarra [photo set]

**Description:** This is an image that is part of Connections UnitingCare's photostream on the Flickr website, containing digital copies of historic photographs from the Methodist Babies' Home. The images were used in presentations to raise funds for the Home.

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## More info

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### Organisations in these records

#### Related Organisations

- [Methodist Church of Victoria and Tasmania \(c. 1851 - 1977\)](#)
- [The Presbyterian and Scots' Church Children's Aid Society \(1895 - 1965?\)](#)
- [Presbyterian Sisterhood Home \(1909 - c. 1978\)](#)
- [Girls' Memorial Home \(1922 - 1973\)](#)
- [Presbyterian Babies' Home \(1928 - 1977\)](#)
- [Methodist Babies' Home \(1929 - c. 1974\)](#)
- [Copelen Street Family Centre \(1974 - 1991\)](#)
- [Canterbury Family Centre \(1977 - 2000\)](#)
- [Copelen Child and Family Services \(1991 - 1998\)](#)
- [Copelen \(1998 - 2000\)](#)
- [Connections UnitingCare \(2000 - 2017\)](#)
- [Uniting - Connections \(2017 - 2020\)](#)

## Resources

- [Presbyterian Babies Home, Camberwell \[photo set\]](#), Connections UnitingCare's photostream, 2011
  - O'Neill, Cate, [The importance of photos](#), Find & Connect web resource blog, 17 June 2015
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You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/records-held-by-uniting-connections/>