FIND & CONNECT

State Psychological Clinic

1922 – 1964

Details

The State Psychological Clinic, the first in Australia, was set up under the *Mental Deficiency Act* 1920 to diagnose and classify children with what is now known as intellectual disability, research it, and instruct teachers. The Clinic's statutory existence ended in December 1964 following the passage of the *Mental Health Act* 1963 but since its staff were dispersed through the new Division of Psychiatric Services, its influence continued.

The State Psychological Clinic carried out psychological assessments of children who were about to be adopted.

Children diagnosed with an intellectual disability often did not have one. Challenging behaviour, inadequately managed physical disabilities such as deafness, educational disadvantage, an institutional upbringing, and poverty, neglect or abuse could all lead to this diagnosis.

More info

Related Entries

Related Events

- Committee of Inquiry into the State Farm and School for Boys, Deloraine, Tasmania (1925)
  The Chairman of the State Psychological Clinic was a member of the Committee of Inquiry.

Related Organisations

- Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution (1898 - 1987)
  Edmund Morris Miller, the third president of the Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution was also the Director of the State Psychological Clinic.
- New Town Infirmary (1912 - 1934)
  The State Psychological Clinic had classified the children and adults living at the New Town Infirmary who were considered to be 'mentally defective'.
- Mental Deficiency Board (1922 - 1964)
  The Mental Deficiency Board worked closely with the State Psychological Clinic.
- New Town Rest Home (1934 - 1936)
  The State Psychological Clinic certified children and adults diagnosed with intellectual disabilities living at the New Town Rest Home.
- St John's Park (1936 - 1994)
  The State Psychological Clinic had classified children and adults living at St John's Park who were considered to be 'mentally defective'.

Related Legislation

- Mental Deficiency Act, Tasmania (1920 - 1963)

Resources

- Rodwell, Grant, *'If the feeble-minded are to be preserved': special education and eugenics in Tasmania, 1900-1930*, Issues in educational research, 1998
- Select Committee, *'The mental deficiency bill, 1920:' report of Select Committee with minutes of proceedings and evidence*, 1920

Records

Records held by other organisations

- Patients Case Files, Mental Deficiency Board (1922 - 1964)
- Case Files of Persons Examined (1922 - 1978)
- Cards of Patients Examined by the State Psychological Clinic (1920 - 1960)
- Files of Persons Examined Under Sections 7, 8, 23, 24, 26, 27 of the Mental Deficiency Act 1920, State Psychological Clinic (1920 - 1960)

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