Congressional publications contain a surprising variety of unexpected content, including information on the history of social work.

Using congressional information, researchers are able to trace the history of social work through eye-witness accounts, expert testimony, and legislative developments. Read a 1900 Commissioner of Education report summarizing the humanitarian application in England “of university extension in the interests of the lower classes...an outgrowth of the form of socialism represented by Ruskin and William Morris.” Read the 1901 testimony of Graham Taylor, the founder of Chicago Commons, on the “social settlement” movement in Chicago. Read 1935 testimony on a proposal to demolish slums and construct low-rent public housing.

Content includes tables and photographs.

“For thirteen years a record of these Indian students has been carefully kept at Hampton, and after students have returned to their homes correspondence has been conducted... Employees of the institute have visited pupils in their home and thus kept informed of their progress or the reverse.”

Report regarding returned Indian students of Hampton Institute, Serial Set Digital Collection, 2892 S.exdoc.31, February 4, 1892

Search Suggestions: subject terms: social work, child welfare
full text search for social settlement, settlement movement, charity organization societies
"The Conference on Child Welfare will have before it the problem of public provision for maternity and infancy, child hygiene, child labor and industrial problems affecting children, and children in need of special care."

Miss Grace Abbott, Chief of Children’s Bureau United States Department of Labor
Bulletin of the Pan American Union, 8091 H.doc.250, Jan. 1922, Serial Set Digital Collection

"When it is considered that an army of 1,000,000 children leaves school each year and that a large number of them have not completed school beyond the fifth or sixth grade, it is evident that employers must accept responsibility for further education unless these young people with a minimum of education become a handicap to the prosperity of the country."


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