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Late 1946

Arizona Children's Colony  
**The**  
**Children's Colony**  
 for  
**Mentally Deficient**  
**Children**  
 of  
**Arizona**

Submitted by

**The Children's Colony**  
**Board**

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— ARIZONA —

NUMBER 68750

RECEIVED MAY 6 '54

## WHAT IS THE CHILDREN'S COLONY?

A training center dedicated in a service to the mentally handicapped child that "will early discover and diagnose his handicaps, provide care and treatment and so train him that, if possible, he may become an asset to society, rather than a liability."

## THE CHILDREN'S COLONY LAW

54-1401 (Amended) Section 1, *Care of mentally deficient children.* There shall be maintained an institution for the care and education of mentally defective children in the state, to be known as Arizona Children's Colony. The Arizona Children's Colony board is hereby charged with the care and training of mentally deficient children who are susceptible to mental improvement, education and vocational adaptability.

## HOW MANY CHILDREN IN THE STATE NEED THE KIND OF CARE AND TRAINING WHICH THE CHILDREN'S COLONY WILL MAKE AVAILABLE?

According to national surveys it is now a well established fact that approximately two percent of the total population is mentally deficient. School children account for approximately one-sixth of the total population. Arizona's present population is estimated at 600,000, one hundred thousand of whom are children of school age. Two percent of this number would be 2000, which represents the number of mentally deficient children in the state who need care. Approximately forty per cent of all mentally deficient children are not trainable, therefore would not be eligible to enter the Children's Colony according to the present law which says, "The Arizona Children's Colony board is hereby charged with the care and training of mentally deficient children who are susceptible of mental improvement, education and vocational adaptability." This would leave approximately 1200 children eligible for training. Of this number it is estimated 200 would be cared for in private institutions or in homes. This would leave approximately 1000 children in the state who are eligible to enter the Children's Colony.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Colony be built on the 80 acres located three miles south of Mesa which already has been purchased by the state for such a training center.

2. That before any specific plans are drawn up for buildings, a well qualified superintendent and whatever clerical help he might need be employed. That said superintendent work with the Children's Colony Board as professional adviser in the planning of the entire building layout, and in establishing the necessary procedures incident to organizing and administering such a new and large project.

3. That the original plant be built to care for 300 children.

4. That the cottage type dormitory be built, each cottage to provide a home for thirty children.

5. That the original plant consist of the following:

- (1) Administration Quarters
- (2) Receiving ward
- (3) Infirmary
- (4) Central Kitchen
- (5) Central Dining Room
- (6) Laundry
- (7) Heating Plant
- (8) Maintenance Center
- (9) Central Storage
- (10) Staff Quarters for superintendent, nurses, attendants, etc.
- (11) Class Rooms
- (12) Shops, homemaking and various vocational training centers.
- (13) Combined gymnasium and auditorium
- (14) Recreation facilities
- (15) Walks and landscaping
- (16) Dairy barns, chicken coops, hog pens etc. and stock for the farm.
- (17) Necessary farm machinery and equipment.

6. That the policy of the Board be to work slowly and build carefully.

#### COST OF ORIGINAL PLANT

The Board estimates it will cost \$1,200,000.00 to build the original plant as outlined above. It will be good economy to build many of the service buildings, such as kitchen, laundry,

heating plant, etc., large enough to meet the needs of the 1000 children who must eventually be cared for. Additional equipment could be added as expansion becomes necessary. Other buildings, such as classrooms and shops, infirmary, staff quarters, etc. should be built so that extensions could be added as needed without changing the general building plan.

### MAINTENANCE COST

Using as a basis the present per capita cost at the states Fort Grant School and the School for the Deaf and Blind; also considering per capita cost for similar institutions in other states, it is estimated the per capita cost will be approximately \$800.00 per year for each child. Whenever possible families should pay most of the cost of maintaining a child in the colony. However, the experience of all states is that the great majority of those admitted come from homes unable to pay any part of the child's keep.

The Board believes that the Children's Colony program and plant must be so projected and so operated as to merit public confidence in its program of care and training; in its cost of operation and in its general business management.

### WIDE STATE INTEREST IN THE CHILDREN'S COLONY

During the past year more than twenty-five organized groups within the state have written letters to the Board, expressing a desire to help get the Children's Colony built and at the same time asking what they can do to help. The Board deeply appreciates this sincere expression of interest.

The need for such an educational center is well established. This January a Bill will be presented to the Legislature asking for an appropriation to build the Colony. All groups and individuals who want to help should immediately contact members of the Legislature, tell them the facts concerning the need and the proposed plan for meeting that need. The Board believes these men and women will appreciate knowing whether the people of the state want a training center for mentally deficient children. If they do, and show by their interest that they do, *The Colony Will Be Built.*