

Niles Home for Children Collection (AC01)

Introduction:

The Niles Home for Children Collection documents the business activities of the Niles Home for Children in Kansas City, Missouri, from 1923 to 1963.

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: Niles Home for Children

Title: Niles Home for Children Collection

Date Range: 1923-1999

Size: 0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)

Collection Number: AC01

Donor Information:

Niles Home for Children

Citation Note:

Niles Home for Children Collection (AC01), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri.

Administrative Information:

Reproduction Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Access Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Niles Home for Children owns this Collection, and the Black Archives of Mid-America administers it.

Historical Sketch:

The Niles Home for Children has its origins in the Old Folks and Orphans Home Established by African American bricklayer Samuel Eason in 1883. The Old Folks and Orphans Home, located at 1406 Vine Street, provided care for the homeless and orphaned African Americans in Kansas city, Missouri. When it outgrew its facility in 1898, the Home moved into a larger building at 2446 Michigan Avenue purchased by the Colored Peoples' Christian Charity Association.

In 1924, cigar manufacturer and philanthropist Frank C. Niles and his wife donated funds for the construction of a new facility at 1911 E 23rd Street. The F. C. Niles Home for Children was named in his honor and opened December 17, 1924. Edward Ross served as the organization's first director and Alice Grady served as its first superintendent.

The Niles Home for Children was incorporated in September 1940. During the 1960s, the institution opened its services to children of all races and re-focused its attention on children with emotional problems as opposed to custodial care for orphaned children. The original Niles Home for Children served more than 5000 children before being torn down in August 1977. A new building was erected in the same location, and the Niles Home for children continues to serve the needs of children in Kansas City.

Scope and Content Note:

The Niles Home for Children collection primarily consists of typewritten copies of Board of Trustees meeting minutes covering the period 12/14/1923- 11/01/1940 and Board of Directors meeting minutes covering the period 11/01/1940- 06/19/1963. There are some gaps in the coverage. The collection also includes typewritten copies of the articles of incorporation and select committee reports: a 1937 photograph: a 1958 thesis by Lewis Jordan titled "A Study of the History and Development of the Niles Home for Children, 1924- 1956,"; and anniversary invitations and programs.

Collection Inventory

- f. 1 Minute Book of Trustees of Niles for Negro Children, 12/14/1923- 11/01/1940
 - History of Niles Home for Colored Orphan children
 - Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 12/14/1923- 11/01/1940
- f. 2 Niles Home for Negro Children Corporate Records, 09/1940- 12/16/1948
 - Articles of Incorporation, 09/1940
 - Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 11/01/1940- 12/16/1948
- f. 3 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 02/21/1951- 10/20/1954
- f. 4 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 11/17/1954- 09/18/1957

- f. 5 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 5/20/1959
- f. 6 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 12/13/1961
- f. 7 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 05/15/1963
- f. 8 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 06/19/1963
- f. 9 Committee Reports, 10/14/1952; 09/17/1958; 10/21/1959
- f. 10 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 11/12/1954; 10/1959; 07/01/1992; 02/26/1993
- f. 11 Circuit Court Civil Case #678, 518, Niles home for Negro Children v. R. Odell Lewis et. al. – Amended Petition, n.d.
- f. 12 Proposal for a New Niles Home Facility
- f. 13 New Building Report
- f. 14 History of Niles Home for Children, ca. 1925
- f. 15 Lewis Thomas Jordan, “A Study of the History and Development of the Niles Home for Children, 1924- 1956,” 08/1958 [Masters’ Thesis]
- f. 16 Anniversary Invitations ad Programs, 1983, 1993

Processed by Michael Sweeney, Collection Librarian, November 2013. Updated by Laura Darnell, Archivist, April 2024.

Sources:

Coulter, Charles E. *Take Up the Black Man’s Burden: Kansas City’s African American Communities, 1865- 1939*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006.

Niles Home for Children. “History.” Retrieved 10/2013 from www.nileshomekc.org/history.