

The Presbyterian Society for Neglected and Destitute Children

1893 – 1895

Details

The Presbyterian Society for Neglected and Destitute Children was established in 1893, with prominent child rescuer Selina Sutherland as its agent. In late 1894, there was a very public disagreement between Sutherland and the Presbyterian Church over a dictate that the Society would only receive children under legal guardianship, and over preference given to Presbyterian children and Presbyterian foster homes. In 1894, Sutherland resigned from the Presbyterian Society for Neglected and Destitute Children, which continued its activities without Sutherland, until in 1895 it merged with the Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society to form the Presbyterian and Scots' Church Children's Aid Society.

Selina Sutherland had previously been involved with the Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society. The year after the Presbyterian Society was founded, there was a very public disagreement between Sutherland and the Presbyterian Church, when the General Assembly dictated that the Society would only receive children under legal guardianship. Sutherland objected to this practice, preferring a system where 'voluntary' placements were possible for families experiencing hardship. Parents whose circumstances improved found it extremely difficult to reclaim their children once they had come under the legal guardianship of an agency.

Sutherland also objected to the directive that the Society give preference to Presbyterian children and board them out only in Presbyterian foster homes. On 16 November 1894, Sutherland (and the ladies' committee) resigned from the Presbyterian Society. At a public meeting on 7 December 1894, it was resolved to form the new organisation, the Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society.

The Presbyterian Society for Neglected and Destitute Children continued its activities without Sutherland, until in 1895 it merged with the Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society to form the Presbyterian and Scots' Church Children's Aid Society.

More info

Chronology

- **The Presbyterian Society for Neglected and Destitute Children (1893 – 1895)**
 - The Presbyterian and Scots' Church Children's Aid Society (1895 - 1965?)

Related Entries

Ran

- [Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society Receiving Home \(c. 1881 - 1908\)](#)

Related Organisations

- [Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society \(1881 - 1895\)](#)

The Scots' Church Neglected Children's Aid Society and the Presbyterian Society for Neglected and Destitute Children operated simultaneously within the Scots' Church, due to a breach within the congregation. The situation was resolved in 1895 with the two groups combining to form the Presbyterian and Scot's Church Neglected Children's Aid Society.

- [Presbyterian Church of Victoria \(c. 1838 - current\)](#)
- [Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society \(1894 - 1920\)](#)

The Victorian Neglected Children's Aid Society was formed as a result of Selina Sutherland's withdrawal from the Presbyterian Society for Destitute and Neglected Children in November 1894.

Resources

- Swain, Shurlee, *Selina Sutherland, Licensed child rescuer*, Double Time: women in Victoria, 150 years, 1985

Records

Records

- [Kildonan UnitingCare Records \(1881 - 2001\)](#)
-

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/the-presbyterian-society-for-neglected-and-destitute-children/>