

# Destitute Children Act 1866, New South Wales

1866 – 1901

**Other Names:** • Industrial Schools Act Schools Act 1866

**URL:** <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/pdf/asmade/act-1866-13a>

## Details

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The Destitute Children Act [2/1866 (30 Vic. No.2)], also known as the Industrial Schools Act, enabled justices to send vagrant and destitute children under the age of eighteen to work as apprentices or be sent to industrial or reformatory schools. The Act was amended in 1870 to enable boys under the age of six to be cared for by the women superintendents of Female Industrial Schools. The Act was repealed by the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act 1901.

This has been described as the first 'caring' legislation for children in New South Wales, but it is hard to imagine that an act that caused children to be 'charged' with their own neglect, poverty and abuse could be considered caring.

## More info

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### Chronology

- **Destitute Children Act 1866, New South Wales (1866 – 1901)**
  - Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act 1901, New South Wales (1901 - 1905)
    - Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act 1905, New South Wales (1905 - 1923)
      - Child Welfare Act 1923, New South Wales (1923 - 1939)
        - Child Welfare Act 1939, New South Wales (1939 - 1987)
          - Adoption of Children Act 1965, New South Wales (1965 - 2003)

### Related Entries

#### Related Glossary Terms

- [Neglected Child \(c. 1864 - 1970s\)](#)

#### Related Organisations

- [Parramatta Girls Industrial School \(1887 - 1912\)](#)  
Parramatta Girls' Industrial School was created under the *Destitute Children's Act 1866*.
- [Newcastle Industrial School for Females \(6 August 1867 - 20 July 1871\)](#)  
Newcastle Industrial School for Females was established under the *Destitute Children's Act*.  
Date: 1867 - 1871

- [Sobraon Training Ship \(1892 - 1911\)](#)

Boys were committed to the *Sobraon* under the *Destitute Children Act*.

Date: 1892 - 1905

## Resources

- Parliamentary Counsel's Office, [NSW legislation](#), No date

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You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/destitute-children-act-1866-2/>