Guide to the Native American Educational Services Edith E. Johns Papers 1959-1999

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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.NAESJOHNSE
Title  Native American Educational Services. Johns, Edith E. Papers
Date  1959-1999
Size  1 linear foot (2 boxes)
Repository  Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  Edith Emerald Johns (1915-1999), also known as Edith Big Fire Johns, was an advocate of health care and social issues among the Chicago-area Native American community. Johns was one of the founders of the American Indian Center, serving on its Board of Directors from 1960-1971. This collection forms part of the archives of Native American Educational Services, and consists of one linear foot of materials related to Edith Johns' interest in child health care and social issues. The majority of this collection is made up of photocopies or offprints of articles and reports related to medical issues such as vaccinations, child health care and child abuse, and congressional records. The rest of the collection is composed of personal records such as photographs, interviews, and obituaries.

Information on Use

Access  The collection is open for research, with no restrictions.

Citation  When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Native American Educational Services. Johns, Edith E. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note  Edith Emerald Johns was born January 19, 1915, on the Winnebago Indian Reservation in Nebraska. She was given the Winnebago name Patche-Ka-Danga, or "Keeper of the Home Fires," and was also known as Edith Big Fire Johns.

As a child, Johns attended boarding schools far from her family and community, then moved on to nursing school in Ft. Wayne, Indiana where she received an R.N. certificate.
Arriving in Chicago in 1939, Johns worked at several areas hospitals, including Bethany Hospital and Illinois Masonic Medical Center. She soon became active in Chicago’s Native American community, co-founding the Chicago American Indian Center and serving on its Board of Directors from 1960 to 1971. She also worked as a caseworker at St. Augustine’s Center for the American Indian, and was a founding member of the staff of Native American Educational Services College.

Johns was committed to lifelong learning, earning a bachelor’s degree from the College of St. Francis when she was in her sixties. At age 65, she joined the Peace Corps and served for two years as a health care worker in the West Indies. After her retirement, she continued to serve as a volunteer at Pacific Garden Mission, the Cook County Court Watcher Program, and Travelers and Immigrants Aid. She traveled extensively to reservations across the United States, as well as to international locations such as Israel, Australia, new Zealand, Italy, and England.

Johns’ service was recognized by her inductions into the Chicago Women’s Hall of Fame and the Senior Citizens Hall of Fame of the City of Chicago. Edith Johns died on June 10, 1999.

**Scope Note**

This collection consists of the papers of Edith Big Fire Johns, forming part of the archives of Native American Educational Services. The majority of the collection consists of photocopies and offprints of articles on child care and medical information collected by Edith Johns. This collection consists of four series, all of them arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

Series I: Medical and Reference, is composed of articles and reference booklets dealing primarily with child health care issues such as vaccinations and sudden infant death syndrome. It also contains several works specifically about Native Americans.

Series II: Child Health Care, comprises the bulk of the collection, and is composed of articles and brochures relating to child health care, child development and behavior, and child abuse.

Series III: Congressional Records, is composed of copies of records from both the Senate and the House of Representatives dealing primarily with child health care legislation during 1974.

Series IV: Personal, is composed of obituary notices and two photographs of Edith Johns. It also includes a transcript of a personal interview taken in 1981.

**Related Resources**

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:
Subject Headings

- Johns, Edith E.
- NAES College
- Indian universities and colleges -- United States
- Indians of North America
- Indians of North America -- Education (Higher)
- Indians of North America -- Medical care

INVENTORY

Series I: Medical and Reference

Series I contains materials related to vaccinations, sudden infant death syndrome, disease, and genetic and ethnic correlates of health and disease. It also contains reports related to the American Indian Health Project and the misuse of antibiotics. This series reflects Edith Johns’ long interest and profession in medicine. This series has been arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

Box 1
Folder 1

Box 1
Folder 2

Box 1
Folder 3

Box 1
Folder 4
Medical information, "Alcoholism and Birth Defects," photocopy, 1973

Box 1
Folder 5
Medical information, "An American Travesty," photocopy, 1976

Box 1
Folder 6
Medical information, "Chronic Disease Management Introduction," draft, 1974

Box 1
Folder 7

Box 1
Folder 8
Medical information," Determinants of Health Beliefs and Behavior – Psychological Determinants," by Eugene L. Hartley, photocopy, 1959

Box 1
Folder 9  
Medical information, "Determinants of Health Beliefs and Behavior – Sociological Determinants," by Robert Straus, photocopy, 1959

Box 1  
Folder 10  
Medical information, "Determinants of Health Beliefs and Behavior – Cultural Determinants," by Margaret Mead, photocopy, 1959

Box 1  
Folder 11  
Medical information, "Disease as a Way of Life," draft, no date

Box 1  
Folder 12  
Medical information, "Gene Frequencies of Erythrocytic Enzymes of Alaskan Eskimos and Athabaskan Indians," photocopy, 1973

Box 1  
Folder 13  

Box 1  
Folder 14  
Medical Information, "Preventing Birth Defects Caused by Rubella," photocopy, no date

Box 1  
Folder 15  
Medical information, "Recommended Procedures for Immunization," photocopy, 1973

Box 1  
Folder 16  
Medical information, "Restoring Parents’ Equilibrium After Sudden Infant Death," photocopy, 1976

Box 1  
Folder 17  
Medical information, "The More Common Birth Defects," table of information, photocopy, no date

Box 1  
Folder 18  
Medical information, "The Northern and Southeastern Ojibwa – Serum Proteins and Red Cell Enzyme Systems," photocopy, 1974

Box 1  
Folder 19  
Medical information, "Use and Misuse of Antibiotics in Treating Children," photocopy, 1974

Box 1  
Folder 20  
Medical information, "We Can Do More to Prevent the Tragedy of Retarded Children," by Richard Koch and Jean Holt Koch, photocopy, 1976

Series II: Child Health Care
Series II contains information related to birth defects, child abuse, child behavior, and child development. It also contains information related to foster care and childhood illnesses. This series comprises the bulk of this collection and Edith Johns' interest in child care and reform in child health care. It has been arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

Box 1
Folder 21
Birth defects, March of Dimes, packet of information on child birth defects, 1972

Box 1
Folder 22
Child abuse, Caring, volume 3, number 2, published by The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, offprint, 1977

Box 1
Folder 23
Child abuse, "Child Abuse," by Robert Blum, speech draft, 1977

Box 1
Folder 24

Box 1
Folder 25

Box 1
Folder 26

Box 1
Folder 27

Box 1
Folder 28
Child abuse, "For Many Foster Kids, Adoption Never Comes," by Peter Gorner, photocopy, 1975

Box 1
Folder 29

Box 1
Folder 30
Child abuse, "Judge Lisa Richette says Victims of Child Abuse Should Not Be 'Throwaway Children'," photocopy, 1976

Box 1
Folder 31
Child abuse, "Legislative Approaches to Child Abuse – A Pragmatic Approach," by Brian G. Fraser, photocopy, 1974

Box 1
Folder 33
Child abuse, "On Children," from The Prophet, photocopy, 1975

Box 1
Folder 34

Box 1
Folder 35

Box 1
Folder 36
Child abuse, questions and answers on child abuse, newspaper clipping, 1975

Box 1
Folder 37
Child abuse, "Stunted Growth, Low Intelligence Linked to Habitual Child Abuse," by Brenda Stone, photocopy, 1975

Box 1
Folder 38
Child abuse, "Suffer the Little Children," photocopy, 1975

Box 1
Folder 39
Child behavior, "Growth – 45 Crucial Months," by Barbara Wyden, photocopy, 1971

Box 1
Folder 40
Child behavior, "I Won’t! I Won’t!" photocopy, no date

Box 1
Folder 41
Child behavior, "In Praise of 'Invulnerables',' by Maya Pines, photocopy, 1973

Box 2
Folder 1
Child behavior, "Listen to Show if Your Child has a Serious Emotional Problem," draft, no date

Box 2
Folder 2
Child behavior, "Suggestions for Observing Children," guidelines, no date

Box 2
Folder 3
Child behavior, "When Your Child is Contrary," photocopy, 1972

Box 2
Folder 4
Child behavior, "Why Children Don’t Eat and What to Do About It," photocopy, 1971
Box 2
Folder 5
Child behavior, "Your Children and Discipline," photocopy, 1971

Box 2
Folder 6

Box 2
Folder 7

Box 2
Folder 8
Child development, "Developing Toilet Habits," brochure, 1972

Box 2
Folder 9
Child development, "Emotional and Mental Development of Pre-School Children," by Lorraine B. Wallach, questionnaire, 1975

Box 2
Folder 10
Child development, "How a Baby Grows," poster, no date

Box 2
Folder 11

Box 2
Folder 12

Box 2
Folder 13
Child development, "Main Dimensions of Normative Pre-adult Development," chart, no date

Box 2
Folder 14
Child development, "Memorandum From Your Child," draft by International Adlerian Study Group, 1968

Box 2
Folder 15

Box 2
Folder 16
Child development, "Sequences in Human Development," draft, no date

Box 2
Folder 17
Child development, "Solving Learning Disabilities was an Education (and a New Life) in Itself," by Donna Joy Newman, no date

Box 2
Folder 18

Box 2
Folder 19
Child development, "The Subsequent Child," by Carolyn Szybist, brochure, no date

Box 2
Folder 20
Child development, "They Learn the Same Way All Around the World," by Dan I. Slobin, 1972

Box 2
Folder 21
Foster care, "Indian Family Defense," Number 6, photocopy, 1976

Box 2
Folder 22
Foster care, "Indian Family Defense," Number 7, photocopy, 1977

Box 2
Folder 23
Foster care, "Medical Review of Foster Children," draft of report, 1976

Box 2
Folder 24

**Series III: Congressional Records**

Series III contains copies of congressional records. The majority of these records are related to legislation dealing with child health care during 1974. It is separated into records for the House of Representatives and the Senate, and then arranged chronologically.

Box 2
Folder 25
House of Representatives, Congressional Record, copy and photocopy, June 25, 1974

Box 2
Folder 26
House of Representatives, Congressional Record, copy, June 26, 1974

Box 2
Folder 27
House of Representatives, Congressional Record, copy, July 24, 1974

Box 2
Folder 28
House of Representatives, Congressional Record, copy, July 30, 1974
Series IV: Personal

Series IV contains personal materials related to Edith Johns, such as an interview from 1981 and obituary notices in the Chicago Tribune. It also contains photographs of Edith Johns, one of her in her nursing uniform, and one of her around 1999. This series is arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

Box 2
Folder 41
Interview with Edith Johns, "Chicago History," 1981
Box 2
Folder 42
Obituaries, funeral home fliers, 1999

Box 2
Folder 43
Obituaries, Chicago Tribune, photocopy, June 11, 1999

Box 2
Folder 44

Box 2
Folder 45

Box 2
Folder 46
Photographs, Edith Johns in nurse's uniform, Edith Johns circa 1999