

Child Care in Bahrain

Since the year 1979 has been declared the International Year of the Child by the U.N., the Bahrain State published in no. 16 of its "Periodical Issue" of Jul.-Aug.-Sept. 1978, a report on projects carried out and decisions taken by the ministries in Bahrain aiming at the implementation of the ten principles stated in the "Declaration of the Rights of the Child."

The following is a brief account of this report:

1) Health Program

The Ministry of Health provides health centers where the children of Bahrain receive, without any form of discrimination, adequate hygienic care and spiritual guidance. It provides other centers for expectant mothers and pre-school children. Responsible trainees are in charge of using preventive measures against epidemics and contagious diseases.

2) Education

Free education for children is provided and increase in educational budgets is encouraged to meet new needs. Special grants are given to brilliant children on both the elementary and the secondary level.

3) Right to Protection

Homeless children are entrusted to the care of substitute families.

Needy families receive financial help.

In case of crises, the law gives the child first right to help and protection.

The law decrees a penalty to be inflicted on parents who neglect their children. It also requires the minimum age of 14 for working children, and provides measures for protecting children from all kinds of cruelty and exploitation and from the evils of religious and racial discrimination.

4) Care of the handicapped and delinquents

The "Khamees Reformatory" is considered one of the government institutions accommodating a certain number of juvenile delinquents.

New plans for taking care of this group & the like are the following:

1. Creation of special institutions for delinquents
2. Establishment of rehabilitation centers for the handicapped and the mentally retarded among children and young people.
3. Training leaders in directing children's recreational activities.