Most Fortunate Unfortunates By Marlene Trestman

Siblings

Other than a maximum age for admission, which by the 1920s generally was age 12, the Home did not restrict the number of children it admitted from any one family. In this way, the Home and other child care institutions offered siblings an advantage usually unavailable in foster care or adoption. The vast majority (83%) of the Home's 1623 children were admitted with one or more siblings; these 488 sibling groups ranged in size from 2 children (251 sibling groups) to 9 children (1 family). The Home admitted 24 families consisting of 5 or more siblings. Among the Home's sibling groups were 9 sets of twins.

Size of Sibling Group	# Groups	# Children	
1 child	280	280	
2 children	251	502	
3 children	134	402	
4 children	77	308	
5 children	17	85	
6 children	5	30	
7 children	1	7	
9 children	1	9	
Total		1623	

Combined with birthplace information contained in the Home's registries, the sibling data provides a unique perspective on family mobility. For example, in 1878 the Home admitted four Adler siblings from New Orleans. The siblings places of birth, as reported in the registries, reveal that the family was living in: Cincinnati, Ohio when Isabella was born in 1868; New York when Moses and Israel were born in 1872 and 1874; and Chicago when Louisa was born in 1876. Similarly, the Home admitted three Margolin siblings in 1913 from Memphis, Tennessee, where Jack was born two years earlier. His older sister Dora was born in Russia in 1905 and older sister Bessie was born in Brooklyn, NY in 1909. As for three Schweig siblings, Bennie was born in Russia, while Dora and Isidore were born in Arizona in 1906 and 1908, before their 1913 admission to the Home from San Antonio, Texas.