



A young patient's first day at Willowbrook State School: She arrives with her mother for admission



and is welcomed by a nurse; then she hides her head as a nurse and a doctor take notes to plan her care;



and in the treatment room she gets an injection of an antibiotic. Love and understanding of the retarded child marks every step of the way.



Willowbrook Now Center For Research, Treatment

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In an article which appeared in this paper in April last year the dynamic growth of Willowbrook State School was described. It was the purpose at that time to acquaint Staten Islanders with the work and aims at this institution. This article is to describe the further growth of this institution and to discuss the various programs adapted to the changing views and aspects in the field of mental deficiency.

At present the patient population at Willowbrook State School is over 6,100. Our annex in Manhattan, known as the Convalescent Hospital, Division of Willowbrook State School, houses 200 patients. The employee population grew to almost 2,000.

The character of the institution, under the auspices of the Department of Mental Hygiene of the State of New York, has undergone radical changes. The institution stopped being a place of isolation and segregation and has become more and more a medical center for research and treatment.

There is no field in medicine which is so dependent upon other disciplines as is the field of mental deficiency. Good results can often be achieved only with the mutual cooperation of all disciplines that form the therapeutic team headed by the physicians.

RESEARCH continues to be an integral part of the over-all program of Willowbrook State School. Each discipline has its own research goals. The medical and psychiatric departments have been actively engaged in the evaluation of various treatments used

to improve the patient's condition and mentality. Infectious diseases are difficult to combat on the outside, but they are even more difficult in an institution of this size. Together with the staff of the department of pediatrics of New York University Medical Center, studies in infectious hepatitis, measles and German measles are continuing.

During the recent outbreak of measles in New York City, only a few cases were reported at Willowbrook State School, and this was the result of successful immunization. These were recent reports in medical and non-medical literature that the virus of German measles has been isolated. Willowbrook State School prides itself upon being an active participant in this development.

Research into the mysterious of the cell nucleus, and especially the hereditary substance contained in human chromosomes, is progressing rapidly. The influence of various endocrine glands on the mentality and personality is being studied.

A new impetus in the educational department has been the introduction of the so-called Adult Education Program. As educable retarded pupils reached their terminal point in education, they lost interest in school and looked forward to the time when they could leave school for work.

The experience showed, however, that those pupils were not adequately prepared for independent vocational and social adjustment in the community.

A work experience gained in on-the-job training seemed to offer the best possibilities. A half-time school, half-time work training program for adults between the ages of 17 and 21 was instituted by the end of December, 1961. At present, 112 pupils are to benefit from this program. One session per day is devoted to job information, personal de-

velopment, budgeting, manual and non-manual work skills, social security, job applications and current events. A second session is on-the-job training.

The teacher functions as a job training supervisor and a liaison agent between the school and the training facilities. An increasing number of patients has been placed successfully in the community in various job areas, such as sewing machine operators, porters, day to day housework, construction work, etc. It is hoped that a greater number of employers would become acquainted with the retarded to do unskilled work.

Willowbrook State School considers itself to be a part of the community in which it is situated and is doing everything possible to cooperate with the community agencies. The first Thursday of each month is set aside as a regular day for visits by professional and non-professional groups. Visitors participate in clinical demonstrations and lectures and meet the needs of the schools then four treatment centers and for related children and ultimate buildings where the patients rely to improve the care given to side. Some colleges include these the children in these institutions, trips as a regular field trip for Most of the students in the courses in pediatrics, social sciences, for practical nursing are ces, psychiatry and community

recruited from the state school's resources.



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benefiting from this program.