illowbrook **Seeks Homes** For Children

A number of residents of Willowbrook State School, from toddlers to senior citizens, are ready and eager to return to normal community life.

Some have been prepared for this step for months, but lack of foster homes has kept them waiting.

mil recently, Willowbrook's cial service department could on adequately find and screen ones for residents. But now, the staff more than doubmajor campaign is being

Bobert Gilson, director of the ment, explained the famprogram.

department, which has 35 dents in foster homes now, is beginning an intensive searchfor Island and Brooklyn famillies who would like to accept a Willowbrook resident in their

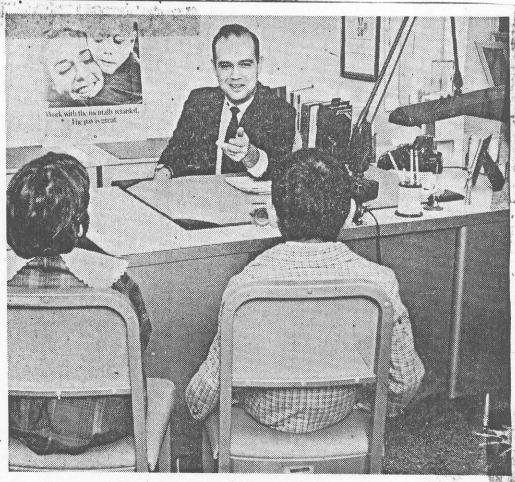
More than 100 residents, from partment. infants to persons in their 60s, workers, and are informed of have been selected and prepar-the entire program before a deed by the staff for the transition cision is made. After a resident to community living. Working is placed, the department much like any adoption or fos-checks periodically into his stater-care agency, Willowbrook tus and offers counseling if necwill "match" the resident to the ssarv. family.

The foster-care arrangement, with monthly compensation to the family by the state, will continue "as long as it meets mutual needs," explained Gilson.

So far, he said, very few res- etarded, if necessary idents have returned to Willow- When the child is older, he brook. In fact, many of the may attend vocational rehabyounger residents grow up call-lilitation or occupational training their foster parents "Mom" ing sessions. and "Pop" and don't leave the The family-care program is home until they married.

nic and denominational back- villowbrook resident to the ground are eligible, added Gil- ommunity. Other activities inson. The only requisite is that lude working in local businessthey "have a genuine human in- s and homes. terest in other people." With only five social work-

dlars and school age children ble to establish potential fosa home atmosphere is far pre er homes on the Island," con-unded Gilson. "Now, with a



homes, said Robert Gilson, the Two young Willowbrook State School residents who are ready for foster homes department's director, talk it over with Robert Gilson, director of the institution's social service de-Staten Island Advance Phete

Besides providing essentials uch as medical, dental and harmaceutical supplies and lothing to residents under 18, he state sees that school-age children are placed in public chool classes for the mentally

ne of several at Willowbrook Families of any age and eth-hich center on returning the

Especially for infants, stod espin the past, we were never per staff, we can expand his 10-year-old program into and active one.