

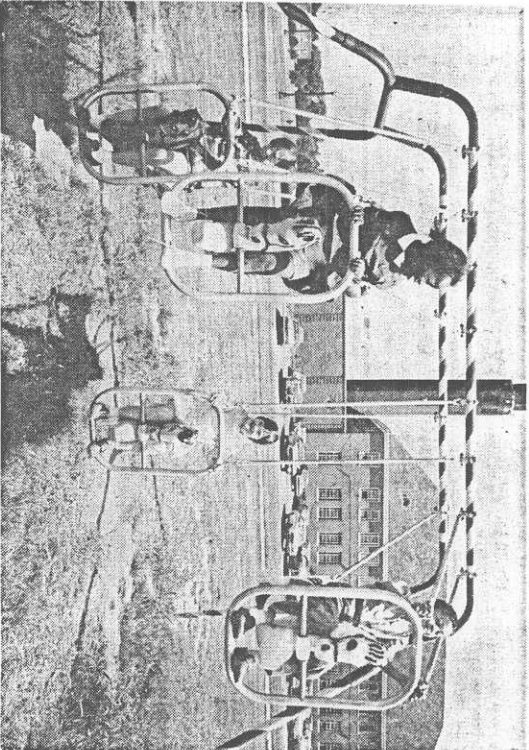
Staten Island Adventure

Staten Island, N.Y.

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Willowbrook children learning new skills

Special program with retarded a 'fantastic success'



Active play helps the youngsters' development.

"The progress of the children has been fantastic!" Those are the words of Dr. Jack Hammond, director of Willowbrook State School, in assessing the personality growth of 95 severely retarded children in the seven-month-old "Country Club" program in Willowbrook's Building 78.

And the self-care abilities of these youngsters, mostly aged 6 through 10, have reached a point where the attendants now say, "We have time to spoil them a little."

"These youngsters, with IQs in the 90's and low 80's, have learned to feed, dress and groom themselves. They are being to school to improve their skills in handling things, talking and getting along with others, and reading simple signs, and reading simple ingredients in the Building 78 program."

● The success of the hospital improvement program (HIP) in stimulating all these children to achieve basic self-care and the development of staff members, also "graduates" of the HIP program, who have recognized their ability to move the children a little further. (Continued on Page 14)



Care and training have made a success of cafeteria-style serving. Miss Elizabeth Linda Bonanno serves food while Mrs. Bernice Boldwin helps with the proper utensils.

plained. Another evaluator, Edward Jennings, a member of the department's downstate program analyst team working out of Albany, said it is "an observable fact that these youngsters are more aware of their environment, are happier, do more and enjoy life more and handle themselves better" than children in large ward situations.

Dr. Milton Jacobs, coordinator of the program, considers it to be "about as good as possible in an institutional setting." The veteran state school psychiatrist reinforced this opinion by adding, "I don't know how it could be improved."

The staffing pattern of Building 78 is unusual because there are teachers and recreation and speech therapists right in the building, working with the youngsters day by day. Also, the staff includes extra attendants for each ward on the late afternoon-evening shift. They help maintain the highly structured, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. program during the after-school hours and in the early evening. Dr. Hammond emphasized that the children are constantly involved in various aspects of the program, including games. "They do not sit around staring at a TV set," he said.

PERSONALITY MATURES

For the most part, members of the staff expect only small advances in the children's abilities to do things. However, the intensive and on-going repetition of learning skills prevents regression and gives the child an opportunity to at least maintain himself while his abilities and personality have an opportunity to mature.

Consequently, the highly structured program for these children is an aid to their security and development. It channels their energies into behavior that maintains a "floor" of abilities on which they can gradually build.

After seeing their progress in brushing their teeth and hair before the polished metal mirrors of the washrooms, the youngsters dress themselves with an occasional assist from a roommate or an attendant.

In the cafeteria, they have been taught to sit at certain tables. Then, one table at a time, they go through the cafeteria line and return to their table. They also empty their trays and place them and their utensils in provided containers.

From 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., the children attend school and occupational and recreational classes, with time out for lunch and a nap.

A key factor in the progress of the children is the work of the speech and hearing therapist, Mrs. Patricia Rose. Depending upon the individual needs of the pupils, she helps each of them—some as often as every day—at least twice a week for 20 minutes. She point-

when they talk together, and other materials. Important as a self-observation tool is a convex mirror before which she and her pupil sit.

Some of the youngsters with poor speech ability "plateau"—reach their best developmental level—fairly soon in the program. However, Mrs. Rose thinks it is necessary to give such youngsters intensive help by seeing them each day and bringing them along as quickly as possible.

She also works with the at-

the work of the successful hospital improvement program at Willowbrook. He, too, pointed out that HIP is another intensive training effort where all the pupils in Building 78 learned their basic self-care skills.

"We are trying to bring out the full potential of each child," Dr. Jacobs said.

MUCH REPETITION

Joshua Carlo, education supervisor, added that the children must be taught in a concrete fashion, intro-

lo said, are to improve the youngsters' abilities to get along with each other, to understand and communicate, to improve their manipulative ability, to recognize things and remember the words for them, to identify colors and shapes, to count, perhaps to ten or more, and to read simple signs. "Today is Thursday," a blackboard proclaims.

In addition to going to assemblies at Willowbrook, the children also have the pleasure and stimulation of taking

vanced level, seem like a good idea.

\$100,000 GRANT

Dr. Jacobs, who also acts as an assistant director of the school, reported that Willowbrook's program, now in its fourth year, has received a \$100,000 federal grant to help the state continue HIP there this year.

Outlining HIP briefly, Dr. Jacobs said that 50 boys and girls, five to nine years of age, make a HIP "class." They must be ambulatory and other-

maintains the pupils new level of progress, step by step, moves them ahead. The same carry-over, teamwork constant attention he essential to the success of Building 78.

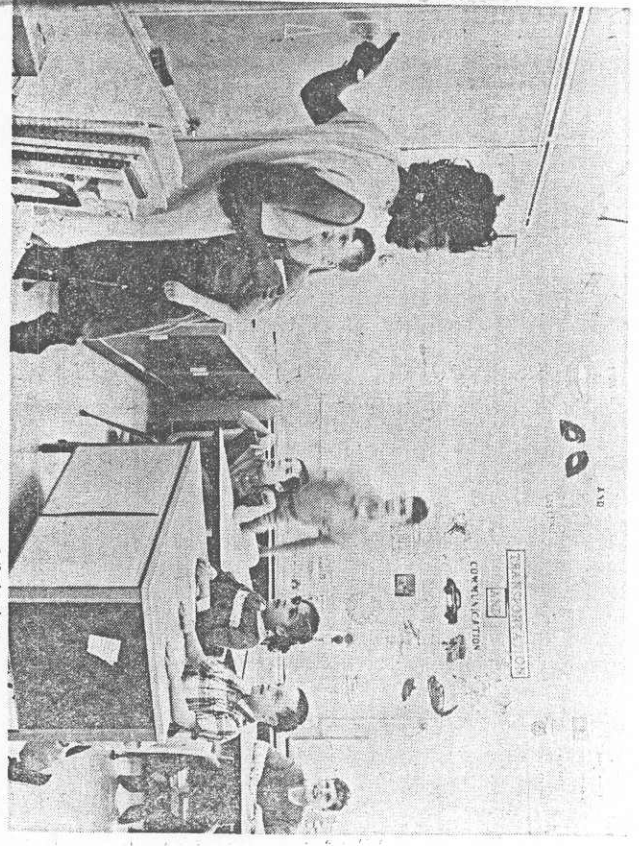
Its supervisor, Mrs. Lamb, R.N., an 11-year member of the staff who called Building 78 "the Country Willowbrook." Explaining her remark, she mentioned a small group living in the bright co-

Advance, July 22, 1971

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A change of clothes to play in. Left to right, attendants Mrs. Sophie Malachowska, Mrs. Madeline Piper and Mrs. Lydia Hatfield.



Mrs. Naomi Pinkney talks about shapes and their sizes.

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(From Page 1)

ter along the path of self-reliance.

Building 78, which includes an eighth-classroom school and a cafeteria, as well as four brightly hued wards which are divided into more homelike units for two to eight children.

These elements have created and where "the whole personality of each child is able to develop more fully." Dr. Hammond ex-

planned.

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pendant and the particular what the staff says to them. And the children. She observes in-

fact, if they are to progress sats- the classrooms and works with equipment and manipulative pic-

games, such as blocks of dif- ferent shapes and colors which have been used in the program. Dr. Jacobs said that if the young-

to such places as Madison Square to learn to care for themselves, pride in their unit.

the Cooney Island Not only do the youngsters child to be allowed to sweep the floor," she said.

They also go on learn, but so do the attendants, child to be allowed to sweep the floor," she said.

Asked about what led to the inception of the Building 78 pro-

ject, Dr. Jacobs said the design of the ward had made the caton and self-care skills if the ward were in-

idea of an intensive follow-up program. Dr. Jacobs said that the ward had made the caton and self-care skills if the ward were in-

through for the successful HIP used, and that intensive team-works are done around the clock not only steps.

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