

It's your opinion

14-year-old? Grandma may be walking, but is no longer able to manage a child bigger and stronger than she.

Who will take the normal sibs to the movies or ball game or on trips to the city or any place that is fun? Daddy is busy working and we are tired of asking friends and relatives to help. They seldom volunteer.

We are not ashamed to take our children out but cannot. They can knock over shelves of cans with one wave of the hand. My child walked out of a store holding grandma's hand but also carrying a pocketbook whisked off a counter in the other hand.

The Board of Education has no classes suitable, nor has Staten Island Aid whom I consulted years ago and who were most kind and thoughtful.

We mothers have a 24-hour, no time off, no vacation job. Many sleepless nights spent with children who can't sleep. When my child had to be in the hospital, I was told that I or my husband must be with her at all times. That was a long week.

The community offers no help for the children. Whatever therapy they receive is done by the mothers and a few faithful volunteers. There is no relief for the mothers for social life, recreation or illness.

Since the strike at Willowbrook I have been struck by the idea that if mothers who kept their children home were subsidized with the pay of only one attendant, there would be fewer children in state institutions. We could then afford special equipment, the services of therapists or the relief of a trained helper once in a while.

Any positive suggestions will be appreciated. Connecticut has day care in an institution which will also keep the child full time during emergencies or vacations. New York has Willowbrook or nothing. A family with a handicapped child is a handicapped family. Even though the parents and brothers and sisters love these children

and learn compassion and caring from them, there are

many times when resentment is understandably the reaction.

A family can be knit closer together or torn completely apart by a handicapped child but usually it is a mixture and the burden of holding things together generally rests on the wife and mother.

We do need help.
"JOAN DAWSON,"
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