

see, touch and taste. We teach them physical identification—these are your hands, your head, etc. You wear gloves on your hands and a hat on your head." Mrs. Mason explains that this strengthens the child's ability to associate articles with themselves.

Mrs. Mason concludes that the infant therapy program provides the child with their initial experiences. Her examples are: "We teach them the self-help skills such as brushing teeth, toilet training, dressing and un-dressing. The basic words 'please' and 'thank you' and how to clean up behind themselves." "As you can see, we do a thorough job of teaching the children what is expected of them and how they should behave—a socialization—interacting so to speak."

Willowbrook has given the following chronological breakdown for ages 0-12: Under age 5, 193; age 5-11, 1, 179. Dr. Sternlicht, the author of the Hospital Improvement Program (H.I.P.) explains in the section entitled "Overview of the Project" why certain children were picked:

"These toddlers were essentially unable to care for their daily needs, personal, such as feeding, dressing and toileting and they were so overactive, disturbed and destructive as to be unable to participate in any kinds of meaningful, socially acceptable group interactions."

A social worker exclaims, "Just ask the occupational therapists in infant therapy why they get so angry when a child is taken to HIP—I'll give you the answer, they are the ones who have trained the children to do all the things HIP is to do."

This reporter observed 50 children from building 78 as they were taking a walking tour around a helicopter that had landed in front of their building. The majority of the 50 observed had the physical characteristics of retardates with Down's Syndrome (Mongolism).

In making an enormous oversimplification the national figures show that from 10 to 20 percent of moderately and severely retarded children are mongoloid. Willowbrook has statistically noted that 77% of the population was profoundly or severely retarded. Citing this as the reason why there was more custodial care being given and not education.

The HIP program has surely done a magnificent job in rehabilitating the 50 (if the children observed were "severe") profoundly retarded children used in the experiment...in Dr. Sternlicht's words, "it is an enormous effort to rehabilitate this type of individual, IQ's 20 to 49, to change his personality, and to correct all the harmful traits which may have developed."

All of the children observed were alert and able to move about without difficulty. They responded to the commands of the teacher and showed discipline as they lined up in a group.

...the scene suggested the "miracle" of the HIP program was more due to use of more "educable" than "trainable" children for its model program.

According to Dr. Sternlicht, "these residents will always constitute a very costly element in state institutions, costly because of the destruction they cause to inventory, because of the medication they forever require, and most important of all, because of the loss of human dignity and distortion of personality."

Children from Infant Therapy feed into the HIP program. If HIP takes the problem child and habituates them to the degree observed then here lies the answer to educating profound and severely retarded children.

Infant therapy is the key area...here is where the greatest concentration of staff is located, 16 teachers, 16 teacher assistants using 16 classrooms, 8 physical therapy rooms, 10 occupational therapy rooms, 2 speech therapy rooms and 2 large recreation rooms.

What are the problems? How regularly does each student attend class? It has been reported that hepatitis is at the 0.3 percent level per child. Does health keep children away from class? There is a reported shortage of attendants. A former teacher assistant states that on more than one occasion she went to the ward to fetch a child who had not come to class. The attendant would say, "I have no clothes to dress him in." How many miss class because of no clothes, or because they are hungry and in a fit of rage?

At Willowbrook children will fight with another child at little or no provocation. We have been told this over and over again by the director, nurses, teachers and so on. How many children will not make it to class because of an injury in a fight?

These questions have not been answered to date. They are important if children are to be given the opportunity to learn. Infant therapy is that vehicle and placing them in another unit (HIP) to do what has already been done, if true, seems to defeat the very purpose that the program was designed for.

In the words of Ernest Maddock, "Instructional methods are diverse and areas of training are broad so singularly assigning the education and training of residents to an educational department in an institution for retardates, as desirable as it may be, is not permitted."

In Willowbrook responsibility for education comes under the education department, occupational, recreational, and physical therapy units. Each department is understaffed and over-worked. Their needs are dealt with separately in the budget...not as one education department.

...educator, "on what funds will be spent for education and training are usually far removed from the scene and often represent vested interests."

STATUS QUO..... a long time the professional teaching staff at Willowbrook was 85% black. They were fully certified within the state guidelines and flocked to Willowbrook because the City would not certify them—claiming that the southern schools do not meet the standards set by the City.

Just over a year ago most of the black teachers working in Building 3—the main education building—were unilaterally transferred to work in the basement classrooms of the buildings. When the teachers organized and went to Mrs. Glasser asking for justification she was reported as saying:

"It was necessary that the more experienced teachers be placed in the buildings to support the efforts of the supervisors." It was not clear to the teachers then...and, as they state it, is not clear to them now what this statement meant.

To replace the experienced teachers, Mrs. Glasser is using student teachers from Wagner College. It is reported that these same student teachers are hired after training.

A teacher claimed: "This is why Willowbrook is turning out students like the ones now going to the urban league for remedial work. These people do not come here with real concern for the children, they are here to get credits and they mess up the children in doing so."

Dr. Leeseberg of the Wagner College Education Department said, "we have been sending student teachers to Willowbrook for years." When asked if there was a written agreement between the two schools he stated:

"there was none."

Dr. Leeseberg stated that they send around 4 students a year depending on how many there are in the program. The program, he explains, deals with those interested in mental retardation, and other institutions are used. When asked how many remain, and if there is an agreement to keep students when trained, he said there are about 4 as far as he remembers and that there is no such agreement.

During the interview with Mrs. Glasser the question concerning black teachers being transferred to the basements of the buildings came up...

I have been told that all the black teachers that you have on staff work in the buildings and none work in building 3.

Mrs. Glasser: This is not true. Does the question of discrimination ever come up in the education department?

...Mrs. Glasser has never heard... I was never aware of... It was reported that after the black teachers went to Mrs. Glasser with their grievance, with their chief concern discrimination, she confronted a black supervisor stating: "Why did you not report that these teachers were organizing, it is a part of your duties."

Miss Hallohran, a grade 18 supervisor with 14 years at Willowbrook, does the hiring for the Education Department. A teacher claims there is a deliberate attempt to keep away from the department people with long hair and beards. Blacks with afros and anyone who Miss Hallohran feels is "radical."

"Two weeks ago," continues the teacher, "a white fellow with all the proper certification, plus his Masters, applied for a job. He was told that they were not hiring, and we know that they are." To date, Willowbrook has six vacancies, according to Mrs. Glasser.

The problem with the man applying for the job, according to the teacher, was that he had long hair and a beard. When asked why this reporter observed people with long hair and Blacks with afros, he replied, "they have all grown their hair after they were hired."

Every summer, Willowbrook runs a program to motivate the students who are entering school in September. A supervisor reports that before any qualified personnel are hired, Dr. Hammond's children and the children of the administrative staff must get a position.

"Then, we can hire other people. But first, remember, only after their children get in. And, you know, they are not always qualified."

PARENTS AND TEACHERS...When parents have been asked how their children are doing in school at Willowbrook, they respond with "I don't know, every time I ask I get a 'Don't worry' from the school." Mrs. Glasser was asked about a PTA. She would like to have one... but so many of the parents live great distances away. Parents agree that this is a problem and they can not offer any immediate solution.

What does bother parents is the response and attitude shown to them by the Education Department:

CASE 1: "When I asked to visit the classroom of my son—I was told "that it was not a policy of the school. Several times I asked for the name of his teacher... I finally received a name and wrote to her. The letter said that he was well-mannered—easy to get along with. Never about his school work, what he was being taught."

CASE 2: A mother reports that she happened to visit her son on a Monday and found that he was not in school in Building 3. She asked why and received this reply: "Your son was singing in the classroom and disturbing the other children." She does not understand why he was transferred to the building school and no one consulted her.