



Teacher Mrs. Linda Seaberg helps this child improve his gross motor skills by learning to climb over and under a board.

S.I. Advance Photos by Irving Silverstein

known their needs — like hunger and thirst, like pain and happiness. They have a chance to leave Willowbrook and return to the community.

"We can help make these children better human beings," says Mrs. Dolores Mason, supervisor of the federal-state funded program.

"When they just pick up a fork it can just make you so happy," says Rebecca Nicholas, a teacher who has been with the program from its outset two years ago.

In 1972, 12 multi-handicapped

children entered the program. All were 9 years old. None was mobile. Two years later, all 12 were graduated from the program. Seven are scheduled to enter community programs and will be placed with their natural or foster parents.

Two additional children were evaluated and found ready for placement, but could not be accommodated in an appropriate program. Another child has been placed in a day program. Two children did not make sufficient progress to be

placed in more advanced programs.

In effect, 10 of the 12 children made significant — if not remarkable — progress. "You can help all of them," Mrs. Mason says. That may not seem such an important statement, except that for so many years the deaf-blind retarded child was unserved.

According to Dr. Manny Sternlicht, chief clinical psychologist at Willowbrook, all of the children have increased their level of functioning, have