



**Aide Ann Marie Edwards has a smile and a tug of the pants for this Willowbrook youngster who needs a belt and some loving attention to keep up his trousers.**

displayed fewer discipline problems and have developed limited independence.

All of the children know sign language, Dr. Sternlicht reported in an 83-page, detailed description of the training program. One child responds to seven signs; most respond to the sign for "eat" and "give me." All understand the sign for toileting.

Socially, the report said, the children all now relate to adults, and each spontaneously reacts with affection to total strangers, a fact that is obvious watching the children interact with aides Robert Charles, Ann Marie Edwards and Andre Hause and teacher Linda Seaberg.

The children were taught their skills in five-day, classroom-type situations. At 3:30 p.m. each day, however, the children were sent back to their wards.

A lack of carryover training in the wards, Dr. Sternlicht reported and Mrs. Mason agreed, was the big weakness of the program the wards tend to foster a "dependency philosophy," while the classroom supports a more independent outlook for the children.

The lack of carryover slows the progress of the children. It is a minor flaw, however, compared with having no program at all. Mrs. Mason stressed that the ward attendants have tried to cooperate, but that overcrowding in the wards make for a near-impossible situation.

Flaws aside, 12 different deaf-blind retarded children are enrolled in the program today, growing, learning and becoming "better human beings."

Willowbrook Developmental Center gave them that chance.

That, director Forde would say, is good news.