

Many deficiencies in Willowbrook

Fifty five thousand towels are not the only items stolen from Willowbrook. The children in my class have had clothing and shoes stolen from them after one or two wearings. I personally brought in some heavy clothing from home, as did several of my colleagues at work, for the children never to see it again. I am sick and tired of seeing these children not dressed properly when I know clothing has been purchased for them.

I feel United Cerebral Palsy took on too much of a responsibility when it gained control of seven buildings at Willowbrook. The U.C.P. staff and state staff have been at each other's throats since before the official takeover (during orientation). I have seen it, and have spoken to many employees, including administrators, who are very disgusted, and discouraged with the takeover.

Nothing has been solved, things are still a mess and several social workers have said they don't even know their children because of their heavy caseload.

Recommendations for treatment of several children have been completed, but because of the takeover the bureaucratic red tape has become even more difficult to cut through. A hearing-impaired girl in my class has not had an audiology test in over eight years. Because of the takeover, I have been told it may take a while longer for the child to be retested because "equipment is not set up." Meanwhile, such a test could have been completed at another agency, but the red tape was incredible. And so on, and so on.

The community doesn't want group homes in its neighborhoods and Willowbrook cannot seem to get proper staffing and programming for the residents.

As a teacher, I can only notify the proper administrators and those parents still in contact with their children of the horrendous conditions in existence. But for many of these children there is absolutely no one to speak for them. And believe me, it is the most frustrating experience not to be able to do anything else for these children.

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not submitted