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# Place Is Found for 14 Retardates in Treatment Dispute

**Special to The New York Times**  
**ALBANY, Jan. 9** — New York State plans to start a special program near here to care for severely autistic and retarded children. It hopes to use the program to bring back to New York 14 children it has placed in a Rhode Island school that uses physical punishments and food rewards in its treatments.

State officials said the program, which will eventually care for 100 children, would open its first 24 places at the O. D. Heck Developmental Center in nearby Selford by early next month, the deadline by which Dr. Matthew Israel, who heads the Behavior Research Institute in Providence, has been ordered by New York to stop using the physical punishments or have the New York children removed from his care.

But the officials acknowledge they may have trouble persuading the children's parents, many of whom praise the results Dr. Israel has got as "miracles," to approve moving their children. A few of them met here last night with Louis Grumet, assistant commissioner of education in charge of the handicapped, and their questions showed qualms about the state's plans.



The New York Times  
**Dr. Matthew Israel**

penalties, and to use physical punishment only when there is danger that a child will injure himself or somebody else. It has since been looking for another place to care for the children.

"We've looked all over the nation and there isn't anything like this," said Mr. Grumet of the O. D. Heck center. "I believe this will be a model program." He said it would have higher staffing level than the Behavior Research Institute, where the children had been sent because there was no place in New York State to handle their problems.

Dr. Israel is continuing to take care of the children under an arrangement that allows him to keep using his program of rewards and punishments while new places are found for them. In an interview today he questioned the state's plan, saying it was the method and not the level of staffing that mattered. "You can put 10 staff in front of these kids and they won't necessarily learn," he said, calling the state's plan "just another mental hospital, which is a real step backward in this day and age."

Mr. Grumet said he had told the parents of the 14 children that "we cannot force you to put your children" in the O. D. Heck center, but that if they did not, "we will work with" the state's mental-retardation agency "to get other kids in the program."

Mr. Grumet said that the cost of the new program would be \$54,000 per child, compared with the \$38,000 the state paid to Behavior Research Institute, but that half of the cost would be picked up by the Federal Medicaid program.