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Pre-Professional Training in Mental Retardation. Final Report.

Arizona Children's Colony, Coolidge.

Spons Agency-Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.

Bureau No-BR-8-0805

Grant-OEG-0-8-080805-4484(032)

Note-24p.

EDRS Price MF-\$0.25 HC-\$1.30

Descriptors-\*Career Opportunities, Changing Attitudes, College Students, Custodial Mentally Handicapped, \*Exceptional Child Research, Health Services, Institutionalized (Persons), \*Mentally Handicapped, Physical Therapy, Program Evaluation, Recreational Activities, \*Recruitment, Reinforcement, Student Interests, Summer Programs, \*Work Experience Programs

Identifiers-Student Work Experience and Training, SWEAT

To interest students in mental retardation health services careers, 10 eligible prebaccalaureate students were selected to participate in a 10-week summer training program. The first 2 weeks involved orientation to informational and training aspects of mental retardation and exposure to the health services related disciplines of recreational and physical therapy. For the remaining 8 weeks, the students, five in physical and five in recreational therapy, were assigned to an area where no extensive programming of this kind was previously administered. Two cottages consisting of 126 female profoundly retarded residents received an intensive systematic stimulation and training program with supervision by professional representatives. Results indicated that the residents showed improvement in self care abilities, motor behavior and more mature social responsiveness. Evaluation of the students, involving an informational test on mental retardation and a 500-word essay offering a critique and subjective report of the work experience's effect on the students' career intentions, indicated involvement on the part of the students, a sense of professional identification, and acquisition of appropriate skills and attitudes. (Author/JD)

BR-8-8025

PA-40

OE-BR

ED029447

FINAL REPORT  
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September 1968

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education  
Bureau of Research

EC 004 015E

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**Final Report**

**Project No. 8-0805  
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**PRE-PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN MENTAL RETARDATION**

**Irving C. Lown Jr.**

**THE ARIZONA CHILDREN'S COLONY**

**COOLIDGE, ARIZONA**

**September 26, 1968**

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| Summary .....   | 1    |
| Introduction .....  | 2    |
| Method of Approach .....  | 2    |
| Results and Findings .....                                      | 8    |
| Conclusions and Recommendations .....                           | 11   |
| Appendix .....  | 13   |
| <br>  |      |
| Table I - Characteristics of S.W.E.A.T. Personnel .....         | 4    |
| Table II - Factors Describing Residents in Program .....        | 4    |
| Table III - Comparison of Scores on an M.R. Information Test .. | 9    |

## Summary

A short term grant awarded by the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare was applied at a Residential Center for the Mentally Retarded. The Student Work Experience and Training project (S.W.E.A.T.) entitled "Pre-Professional Training in Mental Retardation" was implemented during a 10 week period in the summer of 1968.

The first two weeks involved selection of eligible pre-baccalaureate candidates, orientation to various informational and training aspects of M. R. and a broad exposure to a number of Health Services related disciplines - Recreational Therapy (R.T.), Physical Therapy (P.T.), Psychology and Nursing. The remaining 8 weeks, the intensive work experience in Physical and Recreational Therapy, were implemented by 10 students and 3 professionally representative supervisors. Two residential cottages of profoundly retarded females were programmed along the lines of the respective professional disciplines.

Results indicated the residents improved in motor, self-care, and social abilities. These improvements fed-back to the students, seemed to elicit intense involvement and a sense of professional identification. It was concluded that the Arizona Children's Colony could provide an excellent training experience to cope with manpower shortages in Mental Retardation Health Services.

## Introduction

This report is about the S.W.E.A.T. program granted the Arizona Children's Colony for the primary purpose of interesting prospective professionals in the field of Mental Retardation as Health Services oriented workers. This Health orientation suggested a program in which eligible students would have a work experience rich in opportunities for service to the profoundly retarded. The profoundly retarded represent a large percentage of institutional populations. Professionals with knowledge or even interest in this particular group seem to be rare. Special education and vocational rehabilitation come in little or no contact with this level retardate. Traditionally custodial care has been accorded them and under the best possible conditions high caliber medical services have aimed at keeping them healthy and happy. It is now apparent to many workers with this group that if health and happiness are to succeed, stimulation and training are necessary. Health Service is then a stimulation and training service for this group. It is in this context that the S.W.E.A.T. program was conceptualized. How would young students respond to the challenge of Mental Retardation generally and specifically service to an extremely exceptional group traditionally left to institutions for basic care responsibility?

The responsiveness of this student group was no mere academic question. People choose professions for various reasons not the least of which is a sense of meaningfulness and purposefulness. In competing for high level personnel, Health Services must utilize the most attractive elements of the subject with which it deals. Dedication, enthusiasm and other humanistically charged concepts are an integral part of whatever appeal there is to be made to the job market. It was therefore hypothesized that the student engaged in a clinical pursuit, helping human beings to a better life and succeeding in a tangible manner acquires the greatest positive incentive to future job selection.

## Method of Approach

### Selection

The selection procedure constituted the first phase of the grant. In the proposal a period from mid March to the end of April was assigned for this purpose since it corresponds roughly to the time students seek commitments for summer employment. It was anticipated that placement officers in utilizing educational records, preliminary interviews, etc., would accumulate a population of eligible candidates from which the S.W.E.A.T. Program Director would make the final selection.

March 24, 1969

BUREAU OF EDUCATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

Final Report Number: 8-0805

Title: Pre-Professional Training in Mental Retardation

Principal Investigator: Irving C. Lown Jr.

Institution: The Arizona Children's Colony

OE Coordinator: Melville J. Appell

Recommendation: Approval

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SUMMARY OF REVIEWS

All formal aspects of this final report were checked and approved by the Management Section, DR. It is to be noted that the report was due Sept. 30, 1968 and received October 1, 1968.

The SWEAT project was implemented during a 10 week summer period in 1968.

The primary objective was to attract "high school seniors and college undergraduate students" to pre-professional involvement in mental retardation. The emphasis was to be on Recreational and Physical Therapy. Time being so short the first two phases which were essentially for tooling up purposes were eliminated. Some of the evaluation procedures, particularly the pre and post administration of the knowledge in LR questionnaire and its subsequent evaluation were omitted.

Skills acquired by students were said to be considerable and their activities with residents, produced a higher level of participation within the institution.

As with most SWEAT programs many of the students appeared to develop an interest in the profoundly retarded (see anecdotal reports). It is unfortunate that the evaluation procedures were curtailed as the interest and ability generated in these eight weeks might have far-reaching effects for training of students to work with handicaps.

Final Report Received and Accepted

Approved: *J. W. Moss (Appell)*

Director, Division of Research, BEH

Date: *April 2, 1969*

The actual grant period was to have commenced mid May with Phase II, an orientation period scheduled to extend to the end of the first week in June. In addition, Phase III the actual work experience period involved, as stated in the original proposal, rotating students through a number of areas - Nursing, Psychology, Recreational Therapy and Physical Therapy for an initially broad exposure to M. R. as it relates to Health Services. This was to have taken three weeks and would have extended the program to the end of June.

The implementation of the actual grant departed markedly from the time schedule as stipulated in the proposal. The reason for this was simply that the grantee was not notified of the award until mid June 1968 and then only tentatively. The grant proposal was submitted prior to December 1, 1967. From then to the definite awarding of the project in late June 1968 things were uncertain. For most of that time all indications pessimistically pointed to a non-acceptance of the proposal. Consequently, no action was taken to implement Phase I, Phase II and the first three weeks of Phase III. When the actual grant began, June 24, 1968, it was clear that a considerable degree of telescoping would be necessary.

At the risk of "jumping the gun" recruitment of the candidates began immediately following the tentative notification of award in mid June. The number of qualified individuals without job commitments at this late a date was surprising. When the final selection of ten was made some fifteen other apparently eligible candidates had to be turned away.

Eligibility was determined by reviewing the Colony files on young people who had made inquiries for employment over the previous year. In addition, contact was made with various M. R. programs utilizing volunteers. This was a departure from the proposal's plan but necessary to assure the selection of good prospects considering the short amount of time available. The final group was composed of students described in Table I.



Table I  
CHARACTERISTICS OF S.W.E.A.T. PERSONNEL

| STUDENT<br>&<br>AREA | AGE | SEX | RESIDENCE   | EDUCATION | M. R.<br>EXPERIENCE | PRESENT<br>POSITION |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 - P.T.             | 17  | F   | Casa Grande | 11 yrs.   | Youth<br>Corps      | High<br>School      |
| 2 - P.T.             | 18  | F   | Tucson      | 12 yrs.   | NONE                | U of A              |
| 3 - R.T.             | 18  | F   | Maricopa    | 12 yrs.   | NONE                | Jr.<br>College      |
| 4 - R.T.             | 18  | M   | Coolidge    | 13½ yrs.  | NONE                | A S U               |
| 5 - P.T.             | 23  | F   | Casa Grande | 15 yrs.   | NONE                | A S U               |
| 6 - R.T.             | 18  | F   | Tucson      | 12 yrs.   | Volunteer           | H.I.P.<br>Employee  |
| 7 - P.T.             | 18  | F   | Coolidge    | 12 yrs.   | NONE                | U of A              |
| 8 - R.T.             | 18  | M   | Globe       | 12 yrs.   | NONE                | U of A              |
| 9 - P.T.             | 19  | F   | Tucson      | 13 yrs.   | NONE                | U of A              |
| 10 - R.T.            | 19  | F   | Tucson      | 12½ yrs.  | NONE                | H.I.P.<br>Employee  |

In retrospect the telescoping of the selection phase, orientation phase, and broad preliminary work exposure did not detract significantly from the success of the program. The proposal allowed for approximations extending the limits of possible contingencies and permitting flexibility. The result was that considerably less time and money were utilized to execute the program than was thought necessary in the grant proposal.

#### Orientation and Multidiscipline Rotation

The allocation of time was modified so that the orientation program consisting of tour of grounds and facilities, information and ethics relating to M. R., the clinical unit system and a description of the Health Services related disciplines of Recreational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Psychology and Nursing were condensed into a four day period. On the fifth day residents from the cottages where the S.W.E.A.T. program would be operating were taken and the students trained the residents in simple imitative behaviors using various rewards to demonstrate the feasibility of training this level retardate.

The second week of the introductory period involved the telescoping of the proposed three week multidiscipline rotation into a four day period. One day was provided in each discipline so that the students spent their time with representative professionals from the areas of Physical Therapy, Recreational Therapy, Psychology and Nursing. The students were for the most part observers. They were demonstrated to rather than actual participants which was a weakness of this part of the program.

All the students experienced some measure although greatly abbreviated, of what it was like to function in the different areas. The fifth day of the second week tried to tie the previous two weeks together. There was an explanation of characteristics of the population they would be working with and a choice of area, Physical Therapy or Recreational Therapy (some students showed clear preferences, others were equally attracted to both areas and some would not consider any alternative choice).

### Work Experience

The largest part of the program, approximately 80% of the time was applied to the work experience. For eight of the total ten weeks of the S.W.E.A.T. program the students were assigned to two cottages for the profoundly retarded. Some characteristics of the population of these cottages may be noted from Table II.

Table II  
FACTORS DESCRIBING RESIDENTS IN PROGRAM

| FACTORS                  | COTTAGE 8   | COTTAGE 9  |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------|
| ENROLLMENT               | 64          | 62         |
| MEAN AGE                 | 23.0        | 14.4       |
| AGE RANGE                | 13.1 - 34.0 | 7.7 - 20.0 |
| MEAN S.Q.                | 6.0         | 10.0       |
| NON-AMBULATORY (APPROX.) | 34%         | 32%        |

The cottages had three supervisors assigned to the students. Supervision consisted of two Recreational Therapist who devoted 100% of their time and one Physical Therapist who divided 75% of her time between the two cottages and the remaining amount for her other responsibilities. The five students in Physical Therapy and the five in Recreational Therapy worked an 8 hour day, 5 days per week, 8 to 4:30, with one-half hour off for lunch and two 10 minute coffee breaks.

The Recreational Therapists and the Physical Therapists were new to these cottages. The cottages were chosen because very little work had been attempted with these residents. The rationale was twofold. Firstly, the meaningfulness of the student's work would be enhanced because they were told that no previous program was applied to these areas and consequently their service was not an irrelevant educational exercise. Secondly, the program they participated in would not end with its termination. On the contrary, it would function as a pilot study to set the foundation for a more elaborate Hospital Improvement Project program which would be a continuation of their meaningful service.

The programs operated directly in the cottage home areas. Equipment and materials were borrowed from several institutional departments e.g., the School, H.I.P. and Recreation. It consisted of items like exercise mats, record players, arts and crafts materials, perceptual-motor materials (puzzles, pop-beads, etc.), balls, bean bags, wagons, tricycles and other recreational materials, poker chips (to use as tokens) ice (for ice baths), sensory stimulation materials (feathers, balloons, bubbles, color wheels, etc.) and nicer clothing for going to dress-up places like parties and on outings.

The typical day of a Physical Therapist student involved setting up mats and commencing therapy for residents scheduled by the RPT and under her supervision. Students were instructed in the treatment rationale appropriate to the specific case. Residents were evaluated in terms of their level of motor ability. Therapy consisted of passive and active exercises, posturing in various prosthetic furniture, administering ice baths for those with severe spasticity, training in the use of wheelchairs and ambulation and other similar physical therapeutic procedures.

An interesting program, termed handicapped swimming was carried on by the Physical Therapy students. This involved taking spastic, visually impaired, or multiply handicapped residents swimming. Due to the previous difficulty in mechanically transporting these residents some of them participated in this type of therapy for the first time.

In general the student worker in Physical Therapy envisioned his goals as improving the physical abilities of the resident, motivating him through social and more tangible rewards and providing an environment conducive towards physical growth and development.

The Recreational Therapy student worker had the goals of stimulating the resident through activities, training him in aspects of self-care like self-feeding and self-grooming, modifying the environment and providing new and pleasurable experiences which would enhance the health and well being of the resident.

A typical day involved walking the residents (during which training in commands, identification of objects and simple imitative behaviors, occurred), use of playground and other recreational equipment, music stimulation, large muscle coordination exercises like rolling tires, tumbling and rolling on mats and fine muscle coordination exercises like bubble blowing, balloons, puzzles and beads. In addition, arts and crafts, swimming, cooperative play activities (pulling each other in wagons, circle games, simple ball games) and other similar activities were part of the daily program.

A very significant part of the Recreational Therapist student's duties was the establishing of developmentally advanced patterns of social behavior. Residents were worked with on self-dressing and self-grooming as a function antecedent to the various activities. Ten residents were chosen because of no self-feeding ability and worked with to establish this skill as well as improved table manners.

In addition to the daily program, weekly events were frequent. These included co-educational parties during which the female profound residents had an opportunity to dance and socialize with comparable age male profound residents. There were bus rides and outings to wooded areas where many of the residents had their first experience with this type of terrain.

There was a concentrated effort to modify the environment in which the residents lived. All the S.W.E.A.T. personnel participated in decorating the cottages with colorful wall designs, mobiles and other sources of visual stimulation. Most significantly the environment was to be changed from a dispenser of rewards indiscriminate of the needs of the resident. It was postulated that many resources were being literally wasted from a developmental enrichment point of view. Consequently, rewards like giving juice, fruit, candy, etc., were given when some positive behavior was in evidence or at the least when the resident was not engaging in maladaptive behaviors. Positive behaviors were stipulated and involved basics such as sitting, lining up and forming a circle. Since the residents had very limited concepts, only gross approximations to these behaviors were initially required. Therefore all residents were rewarded but with some therapeutic purpose.

A token reward program was initiated and appeared to be feasible even with this type of resident. The residents themselves moved tables and chairs from the dining room to the dayroom (an area where only fixed benches situated around the periphery were available). The presence of tables and chairs set the occasion for a great number of learning experiences appropriate to more mature functioning.

### Results and Findings

The results indicate a very successful implementation of the grant's intent with some interesting implications for further programming in the area of student work and training.

The validation of the hypothesis that meaningfulness of the work experience is directly related to the enthusiasm and dedication of the students' efforts was apparent to even casual observers who came in contact with these people. That this will have an important affect on job selection in the area of Health Services and specifically Physical and Recreational Therapy though a reasonable assertion is unsubstantiated and only follow up of the students future will answer this question .

Results may conveniently be analyzed separately in terms of the effect on the students and on the residents representing their population. That these are postulated to be interdependent variables has been stated above.

The effect of the informational segment of the program which took place during the orientation period can be seen in Table III. This data represents the raw scores on a 140 item test entitled "Statements about Mental Retardation".<sup>1</sup> This test is in current use at the Children's Colony in the Inservice Training Program as a measure of improvement by attendants in knowledgeableness about M. R. Unfortunately no pre-test was administered to the students that would function as a baseline. The students' scores are compared with the post-test scores of attendants. An assumption is made that data from attendants who completed an extensive inservice Training Program offer some basis for comparison to new personnel. The data suggest that at least a basic knowledge of M. R. as measured by the test was acquired by the students.

<sup>1</sup>Distributed by the Southern Regional Education Board

Table III  
COMPARISON OF SCORES ON AN M.R. INFORMATION TEST

|                 | ATTENDANT | S.W.E.A.T. <sup>1</sup> |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| N =             | 45        | 9                       |
| MEAN SCORE =    | 84.9      | 102.0                   |
| LOWEST SCORE =  | 53.0      | 79.0                    |
| HIGHEST SCORE = | 125.0     | 116.0                   |

The second source of information as stipulated in Phase IV of the proposal's evaluation section involves the essay entitled "Working with the Mentally Retarded: A Summer Experience."<sup>2</sup> Instructions were as follows: "After participating in the Student Work Experience and Training project you can be very helpful in supplying information that will make any future programs better by continuing what was good and getting rid of what was not productive. Please do not use your name. It is important that you tell the truth as you see it. We would like to know your feelings about the orientation, actual work experience, and most important: the affect on your career intentions. The truth as you see it stated in this essay will be of assistance in providing better programs for future trainees as well as the residents themselves. You have 2 hours. The essay calls for a minimum of 500 words but write as little or as much as you want. Thank you."

The essays seem to be valid expressions of the students. Reading them over suggests that this is warranted on the basis of the "feel of the reporting."

In summarizing the students' essays they generally experienced a sense of deep appreciation of the needs of the profoundly retarded.

<sup>1</sup>The number of S.W.E.A.T. personnel who took the test is 9 rather than 10 because the last week of the program one student had an auto accident in which she suffered a brain concussion.

<sup>2</sup>Appendix has the complete, unedited reports of the 9 students. This and the Information Test forms were sent to Dr. Benjamin Allen, Florida State University.

The students grew to realize the residents' potential for growth and the important part they could play as workers. This generalized to their own life and most experienced a sense of personal growth and maturation.

There were some negative comments in regard to the orientation period which pointed to what they felt to be the lack of relevance of the orientation material and the lack of preparation in regard to the cottages themselves. The work experience itself was unanimously valued and for the most part the influence on their careers seemed positively affected in the intended direction of the grant. Some felt they were unchanged since they intended to work in M. R. prior to the training experience. One who was committed now felt uncertain due to the tremendous emotional involvement the experience engendered. In all cases the experience was deep, meaningful and it is quite clear from the essays that the students were "reached."

The skills acquired by the students were considerable. In a general way the identification with a discipline and the resultant role assumption elicited confidence and professionalism. Specifically they acquired abilities to involve withdrawn residents in activities, train them in self-help skills, apply technical exercises, utilize various stimulation techniques from ice to music and to set goals and work systematically towards their fulfillment. Their observational powers were sharpened with the result that they were better able to identify and record specific behaviors and behavioral changes. They learned about institutional services and the role institutions can play in providing care and training for the profoundly retarded.

The effects on the residents can be summarized as follows:

1. One cottage maintained an open dayroom for the first time (previously dayroom doors remained locked 24 hours a day).
2. Six residents learned to feed themselves.
3. Co-educational activities were instituted with this level resident for the first time.
4. A poker chip token program was introduced into the cottage wherein the residents were trained in the exchange value and rewarded for expressing interest in activities and improving their social skills.
5. Tables and chairs were introduced into the dayroom and the first steps were taken to make it into a truly living room situation.
6. 38 non-ambulatory residents improved in motor ability some engaging in crawling and walking with minimal assistance.
7. Meaningful vocalizations and verbalizations increased greatly.
8. The residents appeared more peaceful and less agitated.

9. Some residents began making first attempts at grooming and dressing themselves.

10. Some behavior problems were modified, e.g. scratching, anorexia and amount of self-stimulation.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The S.W.E.A.T. program fulfilled its function by providing on the one hand a training opportunity for prospective Health Services related careers and on the other a pilot program for work with female profound retardates. The success of these two variables seem to be related in that enthusiasm was generated by improving the abilities and experiences of the profoundly retarded which in turn is hypothesized to relate to future job choice and career involvement. Training with a direct and meaningful consequence may be of greater significance than training wherein consequences are a mere duplication of service or purely academic in its accomplishments.

The attitudes expressed by the students indicates that they were interested in acquiring knowledge that could be useful and that they had little concern with scholastic information irrelevant to their immediate goals. The "action generation" was apparent in the S.W.E.A.T. population.

In conducting further training programs some changes in its design appear to be recommended by the present information.

1. Instead of lecturing the students for two weeks preparatory to the actual experience one half of the day should be spent in the work experience and the other half in discussions and analysis which would bring in the various academic aspects in a way more related to the subject matter at hand.

2. Although the students observational abilities developed as the program developed it seems that some attempt should have been made to systematically establish this ability preparatory to the work experience. This could have been part of a program to establish baseline measures of the resident's abilities and would have provided indices of change to feedback to the students.

3. A greater degree of interaction between Physical and Recreational Therapy should be programmed. As it was they remained as two virtually isolated areas when much cross-stimulation for both residents and students should have been taking place.

4. Other levels of retardation should have been more of a significant part of the program to provide a means of comparison.



In conclusion it seems that work with the profoundly retarded appears to be a potential area at least as meaningful or rewarding as other levels of retardation. It should be included in S.W.E.A.T. programs as an attractive alternative particularly relevant to Health Services oriented disciplines.

The short term grant herein described provided (with some modification of design but with the basic goals intact) an excellent model for future programs of this type. It could very profitably be included within a more elaborate plan to extend over a 4 or 5 year period during which students would be in training from freshman through senior college. Other areas like Nursing might be added to Recreational and Physical Therapy and carried on in direct interrelationship with the colleges and Universities of Arizona. In this way cojointly, the kind of cross-fertilization necessary for the modification of university programs in the light of the health needs of the community and interesting the community's student population in needed careers can be effected to the mutual benefit of all concerned.

## Appendix

### A

This program was very exciting, informative and benefiting to all involved.

The presents of the program in the cottage was very stimulating for the children. They were exposed to new people that interacted with them. They were trained in many new skills and disciplines. Most important, we have enriched their lives by just doing these things.

Our program trained the girls to co-operate in play and other things, it trained some to eat by themselves, to dress themselves and even groom themselves. We had them play with balls, tricycles, mats, wagons, beanbags, tires, use mirrors and to even play with which is at hand i.e. grass, trees, playground equipment. We also exposed them to swimming, bus rides, going away from the Colony, colors, sounds, lights and designs. All these were designed to stimulate the residents into awariness of themselves and there environment.

Many of the children learned new skills and most learned to follow simple commands (sit, stand, come). These skills and ideas have improved their lives already and do provide an excellent base for any training that is to follow.

I personnaly benefitted from this program in many ways. I have become aware of the pressing problem of the profoundly retarded. I have learned to have compassion and even love for the children I worked with (many I responded to as if they were my own children). I learned patience. I have learned to "lower" myself to these children's level and work from there. I have become hooked!

I have always had an interest in psychology and I will be majoring in it at college. But, until this summer I didn't know what area of psychology I would be going into. Now I know. I shall direct my studies into the field of the retarded and more so at the profounds than upper level retarded.

The reason for my directing my studies to the profounds is that so much needs to be done and so little is. Most people - even those who work with the retarded believe that nothing can be done with the profounds. This is not so. In eight weeks, our group of three ellicit a very favorable response to the program. It showed that these kids can and will learn.

### B

When I entered the program I really wasn't expecting too much. However, I now feel that overall the experience was very favorable and definitely worthwhile.

I don't think that I seriously thought that the profoundly retarded could be helped or that I would see a change in behavior or capabilities.

But after a few weeks, when challenged by people on the "outside", I found myself strongly defending the program and in general working with the retarded.

In offering my opinion of the SWEAT program, I'm of course limited to the area of physical therapy in which I was involved. I think that the children we worked with did profit from the experience. Even with the limited time, we saw changes. Many of the kids became more alert and aware of their surroundings. Girls who had previously been confined to cribs were swimming or wheeling themselves down the hall in wheelchairs. Others were begun on self feeding programs. Just the very fact that they began to react to people I feel is very important. My biggest regret is that we didn't have enough time to help all the kids as much as we would have liked.

As far as supervision is concerned, I feel that Mrs. Perez gave as much as is humanly possible considering the amount of responsibilities she had. She gave us instructions and was willing to help whenever we needed it. She structured our work to a degree, but (thankfully) she did not stifle our own creativity. She allowed us to make decisions on our own and to offer our ideas and opinions. It would have been nice to have had her present the entire 8 hrs., but I don't feel that it was entirely necessary. However, I think it would have been good if she could have spent perhaps  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the day with us for about the first week until we were more familiar with the work. As it is, I think it just took us a little longer to get rolling.

As far as my career in nursing is concerned, it has definitely been effected by my summer experience. When I entered the program, I was undecided about what area of nursing I wanted to go into after graduation. Now, I definitely feel that I would like to work with children - perhaps in M.R. on psychiatric nursing. I have also been offered the idea of obtaining a physical therapy certificate which with my nursing degree, would give me a better background in working with the mentally retarded or in other closely related areas. My goals are now somewhat more directed although not completely or entirely determined.

Aside from my career and at the risk of sounding cornball I feel more like a human being after working with these kids. I began to see them as individuals with personalities emotions, and feelings. I quit feeling sorry for them and started thinking about them as people and what I could do to help them. I found that I had more understanding and patience than I realized. If I gained nothing else than this feeling, I feel that the experience was worthwhile for myself.

Like most young people, I realize that I'm idealistic, but I feel that a lot can be done for the profoundly retarded. A lot of experimenting may be necessary to determine just what should be done. For example, we found swimming, walks, bus rides, and ice baths (aside from actual physical therapy) to be very profitable. I think other people should definitely be engaged in working with the profoundly retarded in a similar program such as SWEAT.

C

My general opinion of the SWEAT program has been (1) the first two weeks were wasted, (2) our supervisors needed more time to set up a program of some kind, (3) I found that all this time I thought the attendants were lazy, irresponsible and stupid. But if they had a little recognition from the top stuff personally their (the attendants) attitudes would change, (4) there is a definite lack of communication between the brass or heads & workers because everyone is ready to criticize and not complimented.

I've enjoyed working with the profoundly mentally retarded. I even think by working with them, they have helped me change my attitude towards everyone - normal and retarded. This summer has been a challenge that I will remember well.

Before I came to work at the Colony I thought I knew what I wanted to make as my career. Now I'm very uncertain. I would like to work with them but for how long I don't know. If I didn't get so emotionally involved with all the children I probably could work with them forever. But if you work with them I believe you can't pity them and feel sorry for them. It doesn't help them or you. I don't really know what my feelings are toward them - pity or just feel sorry. Everyday has been so different & challenging that its like a magnet it draws me to it. I can't seem to get enough and its emotional exhausting.

If I had any of the program to do over again, I probably would have spent more time with the children. Not that we didn't spend a lot of time with them but I mean I would have liked to just sit and play, talk, sing, touch, show them things etc. Because Kathy just sat on the bench when we first went to work and I decided to try to get her to trust me. So I acted very enthusiastic around her and hugged her whenever she would let me. After a while she would pat me without me doing anything to her and later she started saying "hello Bobbie." We took her swimming but at first she wouldn't go in so we threw her in. One day Lou made her float and that's when she started yelling "Mama" then my name, then she would say "Come here Bobbie and help me." That was quite an improvement from just sitting on the bench all day doing nothing. Everytime I'm around her now she always talks & touches me. I also tried this on Neva. At first she wouldn't mind me at all. so when she was good I showered her with affection and when she was bad I completely ignored her. Now she minds me perfectly, or almost. Another girl I was working on was Dorothy. I started sorta late with her so I didn't see very much of a change. But Dorothy's problem to me was she wouldn't talk anymore. She can sing & talk but she just wouldn't. So I started talking to her and trying her to get her to answer me. She would talk loudly enough so I would say things like I couldn't hear her. finally she talked and loud enough for me to hear, she also talks right after I ask her something.

Otherwise I like the program in general and I think for the small amount of time we accomplished a tremendous amount.

During my experience at the Children Colony I came to realize the vast potential of the profoundly retarded. The really shocking aspect of the summer was that I realized that no one really ever bothered to find out if these children were really mentally retarded the children in the nursery of my cottage were constantly amazing me and they were accomplishing things that I had no part in producing. I feel that even tho I was not competent as a Physical Therapist the mere experience of trying to work with the children was a learning experience. The retardation aspect of my was not as significant as the fact that I was shown that children who were supposed to be mentally, physically emotionally culturally and financially deprived could produce. I came into this summer wishing only to have an opportunity to work the "different" type of child in order to broaden some horizons for a future in Special Ed. I never had even considered working with the physically handicapped in any capacity I now would like to combine my work in Physical Therapy with teaching perhaps by teaching C.P.'s. I do wish that I could have had more supervision and education from Pat Perez especially help in seeing just what was and was not important with each child. I had a highly over ideallistic concept of what each child could eventually do and lost track of what had to come first. In other words I found it difficult to lay foundations for other people to work from. Work in an institution such as the colony is no longer attractive to me at all however this is not the colony's fault for I now realize that the kind of children who are institutionalized are better off here than they would be at home but I don't like having to work from grass roots like getting the kids out of cribs and dressing them for stimulation. Work in a day school for nonambulatory profoundly retarded would be much more rewarding for me. Pat Perez showed so much insight and discrimination as to what each kid needed that I feel that if I could have at least been around her more some of it would have worn off. I didn't really learn how to dig into a kid and find out what they could do for instance I found out that Linda can eventually learn to walk because one day I had to move her by myself and I started to drag her and her feet start taking steps with my unintentional assistance. Also Peggy we had believed to have prevented from carrying on intelligent conversations (she was once recorded as having an I.Q. of 120) to simply responding appropriately to emotional tones of voice. Then one day I was asking how to affectively bring her out of this retardation when she angrily said "I'm not retarded" speech is very difficult for this girl physically especially under stress so she had to expend great effort to convey this message to me.

The 2 weeks spent in orientation certainly didn't orient me for what I was going to do and I really can't think of much good they did at all.

This summer has been the most fascinating and educating summer of my life even tho I was greatly disgusted by the way this institution is run - especially the quantity of the personal (not just attendants) and the lack of finances and of course I realize that it is the lack of finances which inflicts the small quantity of personel.

At the beginning of the program my first impressions were deeply taken. Things I saw I didn't like, I wanted to change many things and begin new things. I felt by the end of the program I would like to see a definite marked difference. I had the impression that it would be difficult to change the things I wanted to see changed. Not just with the kids but with the appearance of the cottage also. I felt so deeply a need to change aspects of the cottage as a whole that it made me realize I needed to change my attitude before I would be able to apply myself as I wanted to the program in order to make even a minimal modification. The kids were in the dayroom aimlessly moving around, making noises and in appearance were dressed in shabby clothing that was ultimately unattractive, falling apart, too tight or loose. The dayroom had an odor about it that was most repulsive that had inhibited the rest of the cottage to make it most unappealing to any visitor or worker. There are only a few of the conditions I found a need to adjust to before I could become fully involved in the work. This took about 2 weeks. During those two weeks I also realized a need for stabilization of my thinking in relation of these kids. I've never worked with the retarded before, much less the profoundly or severely retarded. I felt disappointed, let down and unsure by the end of the first week. I needed a definite guide/goal as to what was expected of me, what kind of a performance would be considered inadequate, average and excellent. I wanted to meet the excellent requirements in every aspect of the work, and therefore found myself quite mixed up! I talked with my supervisor which enabled me to realize the program would be a slow moving one and that I needed to slow down my anticipation take it gradual and apply myself through enthusiasm when working with them. As we organized a schedule (in the beginning) we were taking kids on walks in the morning, teaching them to hold hands on these walks, respond to commands such as Stop, Slow down, Move to the side of the road etc. All of these being very basic, but I was realizing they don't know what these words mean - and I found out how to make them realize ... it was really fascinating to teach them even these basic things and over a period of time see a response. Our program was flexible enough so that we could initiate new activities in the dayroom. We taught them the concept of a ball, how to roll it - what to do with it. Some of them had learned, somewhere along the line, one response to the ball. We had to modify the responses so that they could learn more than one particular response, or so they could do something constructive with the ball rather than something maladaptive, - this applies to every physical stimulus we presented to the kids. This is where the challenge comes in. There will never be enough time, to teach these kids enough so they can play games as a group - so they can, in a sense, take initiative and play on their own. These things must be instilled into them and it takes patience, a power of concentrating and an endless amount of time before one can ever begin. As far as the purpose of the program is concerned I felt we were to stimulate the children by our presence, by presenting activities and actively involving the kids as much as possible. In short the purposes are many - I feel it is hard to designate the purposes in paper because they are so wide spread. The program would obviously be a learning experience to the worker, we were to modify the environment as much as time would permit, to stimulate the children, modify maladaptive behaviors in the dayroom and in general apply whatever common knowledge we already attained into benefitting the kids.

As time passed and we became closer associated with the kids, we found they had personalities and were capable of unlimited things so much could be done ... we wanted to do so much, but knew we would only do very little. This is where the disappointments arise. I feel that we have done a superb job of laying a foundation in the dayroom. A foundation for another program to work from. We have achieved more discipline in the cottage, the children respond to commands, they affiliate us with active enjoyment and show the anxiety to learn from us. I could go on continuously generalizing the program but I should state some of my basic over all feelings as to how this experience is applicable to me.

As far as my life is concerned, the continuation of college and general knowledge, I will benefit endlessly. This opportunity has given me an insight to a segment of life I knew so little about. I will never know all there is to know about mental retardation, but from this physical experience I have gained so much that it is hard to say exactly how it all will be applied. Before the program - I was thinking about becoming a social worker, or perhaps a psychologist. But I had an open mind to special education and wanted to find out if this was for me. At this point I am not so sure I will make working with the profounds my profession, but I do know this type of work meets up to everything I could ever want in a job. It permits me to apply myself in an unlimited degree. I can do so much that isn't possible in a "cut and dried" job ... and from all this I will be benefitting at least few kids and myself? ... I know I could never leave this type of work at the end of the day feeling relief to be away. It doesn't strike me that way at all. I don't want to leave, as a matter of fact the only reason I want to leave is because I'm "fairly" fatigued from the day and know I need to relax before the next big day - It's such a rewarding experience. One of the biggest things I've gained is a new outlook on life...

As far as evaluation of the job is concerned I feel we have done as much as we could in a summer program, and that we've excelled what was ever expected from us. There are things that need improvement in the program, but even these distractions can be overlooked when a sincere attitude of attaining progression is present. I feel the kids have gained very much. Individually, some have gained more than others. But as a group I think they have all benefitted. As far as my supervisor criticism is concerned I feel the main factor I noticed was the indecisiveness on her part at the beginning of the program. She knew more about these kids and how to work with them than I do, and she left the decisions up to us too much. I can understand and appreciate the free ground she gave us .. that I like, but at the very beginning a more definite feedback was needed, at least for me. This is where we found slight conflict, because she would leave a certain procedure completely up to my co-worker and me and we didn't really know what to do. This had advantages though, since we were left to decide for ourselves and realize our mistakes or accomplishments we could learn far more than we could if we'd been told what to do. I realize my conflicting opinion, but perhaps more leadership in this respect at the very beginning (at least) would have been beneficial. As the program progressed I noticed a change in her. The three of us coordinated our ideas more, worked together more and consequently achieved more. I'm not sure how that attitude was acquired but we began to accomplish a lot more and were self-rewarded because of it. I couldn't have asked for a more open-minded person to have as a supervisor. My ideas were listened to and applied, usually, at least to show me I was wrong if not to apply for their worth. I feel because she and I are similar in respect to wants or goals for the kids and both have a love for the kids

that regardless of any particular disagreement we could always fall back on that for basis of what was appropriate or inappropriate. One major factor that enabled a good worker/supervisor relationship was the informality of the supervisor. Informality and the feeling of one that is easy to talk to is something that I think is hard to find in a working relationship. Because of this I didn't feel hesitant about speaking my mind or suggesting ideas and this is of major importance in this type of work.

To sum this up, I have attempted to put on paper my overall impressions evaluations, and feelings about the program. I don't know how well I've expressed myself but I would like to say that I really loved working here and feel an endless need to do so much for these children. Because of this have applied and been accepted for a position with H.I.P. I think this year I will gain an even deeper aspect of reality and when I continue with college in a year I will be closer to knowing what I want to give to life. There have been disappointments, discouraging moments and let downs but the reward I have received of working and being with these children exceeds any moment of personal let down I could even contact. I wish I could thank someone or everyone for giving me this special opportunity. I wonder how or what I would think at this moment if I hadn't worked at the Colony this summer.

## F

This summer was 18 times better than any summer in my life and much better 2 months than any in my life. The opportunity of working with people in a program that is unstructured program that was developed as we thought necessary. The challenge was obvious but the paths that lead to the goal were many and often with dead ends (these were not discouraging). The self directing of the program was the most gratifying.

This program made very attractive the career of working with H.R.'s as of yet I am undecided even with SWEAT adding very large weight to the M.R. side of the scales.

The daily labors of walk, swimming, store, bus rides, partys, etc. did not make up the job - while this was where the major portion of the time went. The program was most of moticing, in constant observation of small improvements in the kids. In lieu of a concentrated effort for more monumentous, stupendous advancements. Thinking was the prime element that made the program work, and the contact with the kids the simple part - the contact was important for gathering information to decide what to do. Both are necessary.

Like the leaning tower of Piza. The tower by itself gives use to the construction but the leaning aspect makes it worth nothing. The thinking portion might better be compared to the motor of a car: the appearance is similar but the car has no direction.

So in addition to having to try to make the attendants work with the kids, they must also think. This feat is so huge, that Jesus Christ could not do it. But if it is possible to have the interaction with the kids be done mostly by attendants and have a few thinkers around to think.



My supervision was GREAT lacking in education appliable to the job. Having more knowledge in his head would have help.

Noticable change in about 7 kids out of 35. Not bad. Clara should be transfered to a higher grade Cottage and sent to school.

## G

The whole summer to me was an experience which I truly value. It did not meet exactly with my expectations, but I feel it has truly helped me. To be honest, I think a little more organization was needed. I was lost for such a long time as to what I could and couldn't do. In a 10 week program, also you can't afford to wait five weeks to get something. I feel that we were spread a little to thin, also. If we could have really hit with a little more impact, more could have been achieved. If, however, one is looking only for the education part, it was fine. Since it was a dual-purpose program, though, I feel it should have been more intensified.

The program offered me personally an insight and education which I appreciated. The orientation I feel, should have involved more experience and left the lectures to homework materials. Such things as unit meetings would have benefited us. More time seeing actual teaching at the school would have helped. We needed a broader scope for a generalization. Then we needed to be oriented about our actual working locations - definately. we should have know our areas sooner as well as what we were to do. This way, the mental work would have time to precede our physical labors. The orientation, although extremely well - prepared did not exactly correlate with the purpose of the program. It needs a very good, broad view of the Colony followed by very specific job orientation in addition to the homework - reading all of our information given.

As far as my major in school, I stand at about the same place. It was a very general field, special education, and remains the same. My exact plans are incomplete. I feel I need to get deeper into the area before I am certain. As a permanent field, it would be difficult to say which area I am most interested in. I have, for example, toyed with the idea of the blind M.R. This is really a situation to enter. As you can see, uncertainty is the word for my career plans.

I feel that we were unfair to put rec in strictly the dayroom and PT (Physical Therapy) strictly in the nursery. The services of each should have been more readily available to both areas. This brings up the matter of lack of communication and correlation between the two units. SWEAT needed to hit the cottages unified and not divided into such a drastic framework. For instance, we had four children who were virtually untouched by either group. The potential of some of these was overwhelming. It was not the fault of either group, but lack of communication. The nursery children definately needed much more rec work than they received. As far as difficulties in working with the attendants I found none drastic enough to mention. This seems to me a personality matter, since it shouldn't be so general as "them" vs "us". I enjoyed working with the children and have become painfully attached to some. To find a definite person full of characteristics fascinated and pleased me. Some of them I shall truely always remember. The greatest pleasure was to see them respond cheerfully toward us. To see a child for the first time smile was the

most thrilling experience I could imagine.

I truly feel our children benefited from the program. The majority of them showed a definite difference. Some were cheated because lack of time when a part of the program began late. They have really become to mean a lot to me. Our only difficulty is that when you become so close to people, the advancements are not as noticeable. We have had many physical advancements from crib to walking in the pool and many other examples. The most important change has been their social outlook, to me. They have transformed from "Blah's" to "Awares" in many cases. With sensory stimulation, they encounter things heretofore unknown. Their reactions and the effect to us and our work has been very interesting. To just dress some of the children was such a personal experience it was unbelievable.

Overall, I think the program has been rewarding and very educational. I definitely feel it should be continued with a few modifications.

H

My general impression of the whole program has been very satisfying. I have enjoyed working with the profoundly retarded children here at the Colony. Yes, I do think very positive about this program this past summer. It has stimulated me to think more of what can and I say can be done for children such as in Cottages 8 & 9. But I do think if'n we had had more time with the children and also attendants our program would have been more of a success all around. I think that our orientation period was a complete waste of time that if we had the second week of orientation we could have spent the first week watching, gathering information on the residents. Since there wasn't any gathered all ready. This brings about another idea or problem whatever you might call it. I do think there's a great need for the "brass" to visit the cottages more often. Because not once did I see anyone of the "brass" come out of their offices to see what are the needs of the cottage personally. Not the need written on paper and sent through "channels" but personally see, feel, touch, sense the needs of the cottages. Even you, Mr. Levinsky! Though there are minor, minute little details all-in-all it has been a most gratifying summer which I think I would like to repeat.

As for my career or choosing a career so far this field has been definitely a turning point for me to choose working with Mentally Retarded Children. I have enjoyed the things that the children have taught me. I do know that when I decide to go back to school a year from now I will make Special Education a part of my life. This summer has opened many doors in sight and are there for me to work for. But I do know that my classes or education of mentally retarded will definitely be to better the lives of these children. I find that I could do so in more ways than one as a Recreational Therapist. I know that I definitely do not want to work with Physical Therapy, only to know about it and if any situation arose to know what to do.

Now the hard part of this essay is the evaluation of this job. I do think that the children have gotten something out of this summer during our time in the cottages. Also I noticed that the children responded to us really great. It seemed each morning they anticipated

the time when we came in the mornings. Cuz it seemed that when we walked in, in the morning and those standing at the door watching to see when we would come in there was a sudden sound of happiness, literally yelling. It really sounded wonderful.

Also our self feeding program was really beneficial to both us & the children. I felt really grand with Bidie (Bert) when she started to eat all by herself. A' et pas fini

## I

My general impression of the SWEAT program was definately good, especially after seeing the things that were brought about after only 2 months. The program was good for the kids and after a while was good for the whole morale of the cottage. Most of the kids were stimulated, more aware, and happier because of the program.

I had no definate plans when I first entered into SWEAT and I still don't. But I am thinking of Specail Education, however this program had no effect upon my thoughts there because I was thinking of it before I gct the job and my mind still isn't made up.

I felt the first 2 weeks of class could have been concentrated into one, therefore allowing us to spend a week of training with Pat, (which was needed). This would have allowed us to see a lot more of the finer methods she uses, as it was we did only gross things unless the time was found, for a special reason or such, to improve or learn other methods.

As far as supervision goes we couldn't have possibly had a better person over us than Pat, the only thing is, she wasn't around enough! But under the circumstances that couldn't be helped and everything was dropped if we needed her or had an emergency.

I wouldn't have traded this job for anything, the experience was great and besides the pay was good and I needed the money.