

Mulgrave

VISIT TO CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION CENTER, BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA, JANUARY 1, 1973

Visitors: ACC-PARC: Virginia Thornburgh, Chairman; Bob Nelkin, Staff Member; Lorraine Steffins, Mental Health/Mental Retardation Specialist, Regional DPW Staff

After being refused admission on Friday we called Ralph Meador, Commissioner of Mental Health/Mental Retardation for the Western Region and Norman Taylor, Deputy Secretary of Welfare for this region. Both were sympathetic to our cause and suggested that we attempt to visit again with a DPW staff member. Arrangements were made over the week-end.

Mrs. May, the Director, met us at the facility. She was openly hostile toward Mrs. Thornburgh and myself and our visit. We then took a brief tour observing all the children. We did not take staff away from direct work.

As a result of the strike, the Center is understaffed. The children appear to be receiving adequate care but little programming. Mrs. May suggested that within another month she hopes to have the Center back to 100% staffing. At the present time R.N.'s are directly caring for the children. Most of the children were inactive. The more ambulatory higher functioning children were going outside to play on the playground. Another group sat uninvolved with the blaring television. Most of the physically handicapped children were in their cribs sleeping. The children appeared generally clean.

The exception to our observations was a room for hyper-active children. These children were not clean and were supervised by a staff member busy getting other children dressed to go outside. She was not visually in sight of these children who were more likely to get into difficulty.

A room marked "Examination Room" is actually a space for a candy machine and cigarette machine. Although on Friday we felt the building was very cold, today the temperature seemed adequate. There was a typical yet not overwhelming stench of urine.

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