

*Pending*

December 30, 1974

Mr. Robert Hiltner, Superintendent  
Western State School and Hospital  
333 Curry Hill Road  
Canonsburg, Pa. 15317

Dear Bob,

I am chasing an old idea called "An Hour Off".

A year ago, at a Liaison Committee Meeting, Ginny and I proposed to you and WSSH staff an idea called "An Hour Off". The concept of "An Hour Off" was to structure the child care aides (CCA) out of their maintenance and basic care routine for one hour per shift.

During "An Hour Off", the CCA's supplemented by the unit social worker, recreation workers, volunteers, and even possibly nurses would each lead a small group. The staff member would find a quiet areas of the institution and organize individual or group play for this group. One group might go to the visitor's room to listen to music, another group to the dining room to draw or paint, and another group to go on a walk. Ideally, no one would be left back on the unit during "An Hour Off".

We are still convinced that this program, "An Hour Off", has various merits. And, we still would like to see this or a similar program instituted at Western State School and Hospital.

On a recent unannounced visit to Polk, we found that Polk has initiated a similar activity called "Activity Time". The CCA's who are programming in this time period, describe it as the most interesting, rewarding period of the day.



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If Polk can do it, it's hard to understand why Western cannot. Knowing many of the staff at Western, I am sure that if this program becomes available, it will be more sophisticated and more valuable than the current "Activity Time" at Polk.

A written response certainly isn't necessary. Is there a possibility that this program, "An Hour Off", can be planned at Western?

Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

Robert Nelkin  
Associate Executive Director

RN:cp  
CC: Harry Goldberg  
Reverend Joseph Rodgers  
Virginia Thornburgh

BCC: Sally Hollyfield  
Marlene Burda