

Idlewood
Res. Care



Allegheny County Chapter

OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN, INC.

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President

Dr. Norman Mulgrave

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Ronald E. Archer

ACC-PARC Residential Care Committee

Idlewood Group Home

Visited November 4, 1973

Visiting Team: Jean Isherwood, Barbara Sistik, Ginny Thornburgh, Bob Nelkin

Census: 5 boys, 3 girls aged 7 to 12 years (licensed to 18 years)

School Placement

1. George - Woolslair (Several staff questioned whether he was appropriately placed at Idlewood. He demands one to one staffing on public excursions.) His family visits him every weekend.
2. Ronnie - I.Q. 48 - attends Regent Square School for the Deaf Mentally Retarded. (Staff suggested that school placement at School for the Deaf in Pittsburgh or another facility in Cannonsburg for Deaf-Retarded would be more appropriate.)
3. Thad - Pioneer School (He is emotionally disturbed - Staff indicated that he needs more and deeper treatment than he is presently receiving.)
4. Lisa - Pioneer School (Very able - wears helmet to prevent self-injury during convulsions.)
5. Sandy
Jeffrey
David West End Center
Ingrid (Ingrid has begun to menstrate and needs more privacy.)

General Staffing Pattern

1. Child Care Workers

JoAnn - B.A.

Cathy - 3 years at Pitt

Vivien - H.S.

Rose - H.S.

2. Child Care Aides - 2 part-time night personnel with associate degrees from Allegheny Community College - Child Development Program.

Whether one is a Child Care Worker or Child Care Aide depends on years of employment not educational level. Salaries and job descriptions are currently under discussion. The need for In-service training is apparent.

3. Staff Ratio - 2 to 8 children during the day and 1 to 8 at night. (Night aides are not to sleep but to clean, wash clothes and take children to the potty.) Three workers are on duty from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, also during certain periods on Monday and Friday.

Other Assorted Facts (suggested by the staff)

1. It is difficult to find clothing that looks well on Ingrid and to keep George, who spits up often, looking neat.
2. Ms. Patty from the Pennsylvania Fellowship Plan will supply three volunteers to Idlewood.
3. The Admissions Committee should stress family involvement in the future. The staff is not sure under what criteria the committee operates. (In the past, the staff viewed Idlewood as a "dumping ground.")
4. The Board of Directors, chaired by Eric Whitman from WSSH, consists of primarily professionals. At least one Idlewood parent is on it.
5. Individual staff are assigned to attend PTA meetings at each school or center.
6. The Pediatrician on call is Sylvia Bartos, who works at the Home for Crippled Children.
7. One staff member said of Idlewood: "This kind of a home seems so natural and logical."

Recurring Concerns

1. Is there any basis for reports from the community (such as other parents from West End Center) that the Idlewood children are frequently shabbily dressed in public?
2. Who is responsible for licensing Group Homes? Is this license renewed yearly? Do unannounced inspections occur by the licensing agent? Under what regulations do the Group Homes in Allegheny County operate?
3. Can a Group Home be licensed when it is in clear violation of safety standards (such as raw boards exposed on bathroom floor, broken glass, exposed plugs and toilets without tops)?

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4. Can a Group Home, which is to be located within and supported by a community (easy access to stores, recreational facilities and volunteers), be located in the wilderness?
5. Does licensing agent for Group Homes give them help (in terms of program development, in-service staff training, coaching in obtaining needed community services) when help is needed or "more time" (i.e. a provisional license)?
6. Who is advocating for (demanding better placement, program and schooling, as well as protecting his rights) each Idlewood child?