

# FOCUS ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED

After the special class, then what? With the expansion of special classes this question is being raised by parents as well as educators. The answer hopefully lies somewhere in the wide array of preparation programs being developed for the mentally retarded throughout the country. No single approach for preparing the mentally retarded for gainful employment appears to be the solution. The following two articles illustrate two different approaches to dealing with the common problem of vocational training for the mentally retarded. The first one relates to a training center concept in a large metropolitan area; the second emphasizes a school-community coordinated program in a rural setting.

### VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED IN A METROPOLITAN SETTING

*By Melvin Greenstein and Thomas J. Fangman<sup>1</sup>*

In recent years there have been several articles written which seriously question the efficacy of special classes for the mentally retarded and the advisability of placing students in them. The most comprehensive of these were presented by Kirk (1964) and more recently by Dunn (1968). They have illustrated the fact that children who have been diagnosed as mentally retarded fare better if they are left in the regular classroom with their intellectually superior peers. These results are derived from a comparison of scores on standardized academic achievement tests, anxiety scales, and measures of social adaptation. The question arises as to whether these are valid criteria for evaluating the special class product—the student—in light of vocational success. Many rehabilitation workers question the educators' heavy emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic in the "watered-down curricula" so prevalent in special classes in American schools.

Most follow-up studies of ex-students of special classes for the mentally retarded concern themselves with items such as: "How many are presently employed?", "How many have lost their jobs?", "How many were never employed?", etc. There has seemed to be a hesitancy on the part of the investigators about comparing the degree of academic success as measured by reading and arithmetic levels achieved versus the degree of vocational success of the students. One can only question why such comparisons have not been made, especially with the current availability of electronic computers and their ability to deal with a myriad of variables simultaneously.

The purpose of this paper is to set forth specific variables which are used in one habilitation center for mentally retarded in a metropolitan area to evaluate the

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retardates' potentiality for employment. This is not to say that the following are the only important variables, but they at least help the reader to understand the success that has been achieved in the past few years by the Kennedy Job Training Center, and seem to indicate that these or similar skills are *the* important variables which should be considered when designing a comprehensive educational program for the mentally retarded.

The Kennedy Job Training Center is a vocationally oriented rehabilitation facility located on the campus of the Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. School for Exceptional Children in Palos Park, Illinois. Its stated objectives are as follows:

1. To provide vocational services to handicapped persons, including evaluation, training, and transitional or interim employment, to resolve the problem of unemployment, and to enable clients to obtain competitive employment or further education and/or training leading to employment.
2. To provide renumerative employment for an indefinite period of time to individuals who cannot meet the standards of the competitive labor market.

Although the policy of the Job Training Center is to serve people with a variety of disabling conditions, the current client population consists mainly of mentally retarded persons who may be generally grouped as follows:

1. Full-time trainees from the community at large who are sponsored by the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
2. Half-time trainees who are students in special education programs of local high school districts.
3. Trainees who are in the workshop program for an indefinite period of time since they are not able to function in the regular labor market. This small

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group is composed of individuals who have completed the regular program but are in need of extended workshop services.

4. Students of the Kennedy School who participate in the program of the Job Training Center as a part of the total school program.

Certain aspects of this agency should be pointed out before proceeding further. The Kennedy Job Training Center is located in a suburb of Chicago. This fact changes the picture a bit when it is compared with those centers situated in either rural areas or in high density urban centers. For example, few clients have been severely deprived culturally; virtually none of the clients are limited by having to use standard American English as a "second language"—a problem faced by many teachers of the educable mentally retarded in classes established in the central city areas. It also differs from agencies and centers established in rural areas in that there are many more factories and therefore types of jobs available when the pre-adult retardate is ready for job placement. Too, the availability of Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors seems to be better in metropolitan areas.

Before an attempt is made to diagnose and evaluate the pre-adult mental retardate, one must ask: "What are we trying to accomplish?" Some definition of goals is required. If work has a central place in our society, then the pre-adult mental retardate must be evaluated for his ability to assume the role of a worker. If he can adjust to a work situation, he has taken a long step toward adjustment to the society and the community in which he lives. However, the goal toward which the retardate strives must be *his* goal, based on what is a realistic goal for *him*. The broad goal is maximum adjustment to work and to society, but there are qualifications.

Maximum adjustment to work may be: 1) in the competitive labor market, 2) in a sheltered workshop, 3) in a program of activities, or 4) in upgrading the individual so that he is able to assume more responsibilities in the home, thereby releasing some member of the family from a custodial role.

The retarded person must be evaluated against a background of change; therefore it is imperative that a milieu be provided where he can test reality rather than be measured against static tests. The retarded individual must be observed and diagnosed in action with his peers and with authority figures.

The National Rehabilitation Association (1965, p. 18) defines rehabilitation as "an individualized process in which the disabled person, professionals, and others, through comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated

services, seek to minimize the disability and its handicapping effects and to facilitate the realization of the maximum potential of the handicapped individual." This definition applies to the mentally retarded as well as to persons with other handicapping conditions. It has become accepted to speak of this process as being "habilitation" rather than "rehabilitation" for the retarded so as to eliminate the implication that any former kinds of adequate functioning are being restored. The rehabilitation team devises means to evaluate the individual's vocational potential and to move him toward maximum functioning. The key in diagnosing the pre-adult retardate is function.

#### PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

To diagnose and evaluate, one must examine, analyze, and appraise the needs of the pre-adult mentally retarded with respect to their adjustment to work and to society. From this approach a description of the Kennedy Job Training Center's solution to the problem of evaluation and diagnosing is presented. This is done by building the process around a sheltered workshop setting augmented by the use of a professional habilitation team.

The very paucity of criteria led to the evolution of the sheltered workshop from a setting where the handicapped could simply be kept occupied into a diagnostic and training medium. School performance is the criterion upon which the majority of intelligence tests are predicated and against which they are validated. As stated previously, it is questionable whether present school curricula and psychological tests are related to the conception of work or the role of the factory worker. Schooling and tests do not necessarily yield an adequate picture of a person's ability to adjust ultimately to the setting of the common labor market. Even the interviewing alone cannot be thought of as an adequate method of discovering a client's work potential, since very often the type of work for which the retarded individual is destined may involve non-verbal performance.

The workshop is a milieu in which both the realities and the demands of a work situation can be met. The workshop and the work experience are a situational technique designed to give the client a new environment in which to function, where he can be observed and moved toward increasingly adequate behavior. The workshop adds a new dimension by giving the retardate an opportunity to experience in a simulated work setting true conditions of work. These environmental conditions can be manipulated to expose him to a variety of settings, and through these experiences the client can begin to evaluate his problems with work as well as his

strengths and potential.

In the earlier days of the workshop movement, work samples were used as part of the diagnostic process. These consisted of simulated work tasks such as sorting, counting, and assembling, that were designed to compare clients and provide a baseline for judging their progress. This approach has been generally discarded in favor of assigning the person immediately to one of the ongoing work activities in the workshop and testing him in a more realistic work situation.

There are a number of applicable prognostic devices. These include the gathering of background information about the client's family, medical history, educational history, and service at other agencies. Psychological tests are also used, and the whole combined into an intake report. Observations by the staff of the retarded person's functioning in the workshop are quantified by the use of rating scales; actual productivity is measured against industrial norms.

Since much of the diagnosis is based on the judgment of the people working with the retarded, it is important to know who the people are on the habilitation team and what their professional role is in the diagnostic process. Members of this team include the counselor, the social worker, the psychologist, the production supervisor, the teacher in the case of a school-related program, the parents, and the client himself.

The counselor plays a key role in the diagnostic work-up at the Kennedy Job Training Center. As the evaluation supervisor, he is responsible for coordinating all of the elements of the professional program for the individual client. Out of the information given him by the other members of the team, the counselor designs a plan for the trainee to help him understand his new experiences through counseling sessions.

In the Kennedy Job Training Center, the social worker handles the intake process. He sees the applicant and members of his family for an initial interview and gathers the necessary background materials from other sources. By effective use of casework services, the social worker is able to help the family of the retarded person understand his need for identification as a productive member of society and as someone who is making a meaningful contribution to the family unit.

The consultant psychologist directs the attention of the habilitation team toward the mentally retarded person's intellectual functioning, the emotional make-up which affects his functioning in a work situation, and his adjustment to society. With this diagnosis and assistance, the counselor can introduce the necessary therapeutic elements.

When the client is referred from a public school special education program, the teacher is included as part of the diagnostic team. Close liaison and his presence at staffings help to compare the retardate's functioning in the school setting with that in the workshop.

The client and his parents must be a part of the habilitation team, if one accepts the definition of habilitation previously proposed. The mentally retarded person must be actively involved in the planning, and not just be the object of the efforts of others. His family must understand this plan and supply their cooperation.

Central to the philosophy of the Kennedy Job Training Center is the effect a diagnosis of mental retardation has on the pre-adult retardate. What happens to the retardate's self-image and how does this affect his vocational functioning? Emphasis is placed on development of the self-image and on movement toward the best possible adjustment for the individual. Trainees frequently do not have a very positive view of themselves nor do they have a good understanding of the world of work. The counseling program is geared to helping the mentally retarded person obtain a more realistic view of himself by evaluating his strengths and weaknesses and to accepting his limitations and assets. Even during the diagnostic period, counseling is built around the polarity of experience on the workshop floor. The client is led to realize that he can experience success, and is capable of being a productive individual.

The policy of the Job Training Center is such that diagnostic and evaluation services should be available to as many retardates as possible. The Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation supports this policy by permitting six weeks for evaluation, rather than to rely only on the psychological and academic information received with a referral.

The first significant diagnostic tool with which the client is confronted is a simple application blank which he himself is asked to complete. This reveals the extent to which he can handle himself. Information is later corroborated by the intake worker during an interview with other members of the family and by checking against reference material.

During the initial interview, the intake worker goes through a self-concept check list with the applicant. Instructions are given verbally and are repeated if necessary. Following is the opening statement given by the intake worker: "I want you to know how you feel about some things. I will make a statement, and I want you to tell me how it applies to you. If you think what I say is right, say: 'That's right.' If it's wrong, say: 'That's wrong.' If you are not sure, say: 'I'm not sure.'"

There are six categories on the check list: (1) Physical, e.g., "My appearance is all right," and "I have enough strength"; (2) Learning Ability, e.g., "I can remember things easily"; (3) Attitudes and Adjustments, e.g., "I get along with co-workers"; (4) Socialization, e.g., "I get along well with my father"; and (6) Personal, e.g., "I don't get upset easily."

The last part of the self-concept form has a series of sentences which the applicant is asked to complete. For example:

I like \_\_\_\_\_

When I look into the mirror \_\_\_\_\_

My family treats me like \_\_\_\_\_

Most people are \_\_\_\_\_

Although the form is relatively simple, it provides a profile and a guide to the retarded person's perception of himself for the use of the counselor and the workshop staff.

Once the mentally retarded person has entered the program of the Kennedy Job Training Center, he is given an orientation as to the mechanics of participating in the workshop activity. Use of the time clock, assignment to a locker, time for coffee breaks and lunch, and location of washroom facilities may have to be explained more than one time. Early assignments are likely to be non-demanding jobs so that the trainee may observe what is going on about him.

The major concern of the staff is to relate the evaluation to a specific plan for the individual. In observing the client's performance in this work setting, the foremen concentrate on performance, interpersonal relationships, attitudes toward self and toward work, and how the trainee looks as a worker. The realities and the demands of work are met by carefully checking the client's rate of production and quality of work against industrial norms.

An incentive system has been devised for all eligible trainees during both the evaluation and training periods. It combines the elements of developing good work attitudes with a concern for increasing productivity. There are six levels of pay which relate productivity to a series of sixteen points having to do with appropriate work attitudes. These points are:

1. Talking too much.
2. Failure to be at work station on time.
3. Just not working hard.
4. Not paying attention to the quality of work.
5. Wandering around.
6. Not asking for help when not sure of how to do a job.

7. Annoying others.
8. Arguing with the foreman.
9. Not willing to do a job he doesn't like.
10. Not doing a job exactly as instructed.
11. Daydreaming.
12. Not keeping his mind on his work.
13. Not working steadily.
14. Not sitting up and looking like a worker.
15. Poor grooming.
16. Not being able to get along with co-workers.

All items relate to the concept of the vocational pattern stated by Gellman (1959). It is one means of trying to make concrete to the retarded trainee the abstract factors that go into an adequate vocational pattern.

To systematize the evaluation at the end of the six-week diagnostic period the staff utilized a form which is designed to draw attention to the pertinent factors of behavior which have been discussed. A more detailed description of this schedule follows.

In the section on "Performance," the staff is asked to rate the client's productive ability on: a) repetitious tasks, b) assembly-line operations, c) packing and inspecting, and d) other types of jobs. Also to be rated is the quality of work in these different areas.

"Interpersonal Relations" is concerned with the retardate's relationship to supervisors and co-workers. The foremen make a judgment about the trainee's need for supervision and his need for repeated instruction, encouragement, and emotional support. They ask whether he can handle criticism and whether he learns from correction. They are sensitive to whether he functions best under male or female supervision, and to what extent limits must be set for him to work best. In relations with his peers, the supervisors observe his ability to tolerate annoying co-workers. Also, is he liked and respected? Is he regarded as a leader and active participant in group activities or does he intend to be passive?

The points under "Attitudes" are separated into attitudes toward self and toward work. The staff is asked to rate the client's: a) level of maturity, b) his level of self-confidence, and c) his level of self-esteem. Also to be rated are his level of vocational development, his level of motivation to work, his knowledge of the world of work, his knowledge of the roles of a worker and of a supervisor, whether he views himself as a worker, and whether he sees the workshop as a step toward the future.

Finally, the evaluation schedule draws attention to "the trainee as a worker." A series of judgments must be made on the following characteristics:

1. Can the trainee follow directions?
2. Can he sustain work effort for an entire day?
3. Can he stay with his work assignment?
4. Can he do assignments exactly as instructed?
5. Can the individual learn new assignments readily?
6. Is he able to work without close supervision?
7. Is he able to direct his energies into work?
8. Does he derive satisfaction from being productive?
9. Can he discipline himself to the extent that he returns to work promptly after breaks?
10. Is he able to assume responsibility?
11. Can he work under pressure?
12. Is he able to organize his work in an efficient manner?
13. Is he able to recognize errors and correct them?
14. Does he exhibit resourcefulness?
15. If he runs into difficulty, does he seek assistance?
16. Does he appear to be involved with his work?
17. Is it easy for him to move from job to job?
18. Will he do a job he doesn't like?
19. Will he do any job without complaining?
20. Does he conform to rules and regulations of the workshop?

The evaluation is completed by recording the client's attendance record and by summing up his major strengths and major weaknesses. All of this must result in a plan consistent with the individual's own vocational goals. If his goals are unrealistic, the counseling plan must undertake to effect a better understanding of the retardate's capabilities, but in any case, a diagnosis without a plan for movement is meaningless.

The evaluative process at the Kennedy Job Training Center takes place during a six-week period according to a working agreement with the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. It would be well to point out that diagnosis continues throughout the client's stay. Evaluation and re-evaluation take place whether the trainee's stay is six weeks, six months, or longer. As a result of the 1965 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, the mentally retarded may be kept in a program of rehabilitation potential determination for as long as eighteen months. This provision recognizes that the assessment of the mentally retarded may be a long, slow process.

In reading how the Kennedy Job Training Center approaches the problem of diagnosing the adult mentally retarded, the reader has seen the role of a private voluntary agency in a whole constellation of services. In part, it serves to channel the support of the Federal and State governments into services to the handicapped.

While the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the State of Illinois underwrites the cost of diagnostic work-ups for the handicapped, it is often necessary to keep mentally retarded persons in a workshop long after D.V.R. can continue its assistance. The Illinois Department of Mental Health has made possible through its grants-in-aid, continued diagnostic programming for the very limited.

The private, voluntary agency is on the threshold of an increasing role in diagnosis of the adult mentally retarded through cooperative programs with public schools. Establishment of these relationships has been given impetus by the passage of legislation in the State of Illinois requiring additional educational services for the mentally retarded, thus encouraging a linking of special education and vocational rehabilitation. Rehabilitation workshops are in a position to supplement the diagnostic services of the public schools with their own unique contribution to the process, thereby expediting the movement of the retardate from school into the community.

Although much has been accomplished in recent years in creating techniques for evaluating the mentally retarded, much remains to be done and many questions remain unanswered. Not long ago, a person who pioneered in rehabilitation offered the opinion that the current level of knowledge about the vocational adjustment of the mentally retarded is similar to the state of the medical profession in the days when bloodletting was an accepted form of treatment for disease. What we can do now is raise the questions that perplex us and direct our energies toward clarification of issues.

Your attention is called to matters which are unsatisfactory and which call for greater sophistication on the part of the rehabilitation movement. For example, current diagnostic techniques are inadequate to allow for individual differences. We are approaching the mentally retarded as a homogeneous group rather than as individuals with a similar type of handicapping condition. We are doing less than an adequate job of identifying emotional problems among the pre-adult mentally retarded and in determining to what extent these problems handicap the individual. Could these difficulties, in fact, be more handicapping than the fact of the mental retardation? Up to now, the vocational rehabilitation agency has not stressed the need for differential diagnosis, nor has it seen to it that a plan for remediation becomes an intrinsic part of the evaluative process.

Following the appraisal of the retardate's potential, are we merely going along with the tide and utilizing his minimal talents; or are we really trying to upgrade

him vocationally? We appear to be concerning ourselves with simply placing the retarded in jobs. We may be placing dishwashers rather than training factory workers. In fact, at this time, we do not have adequate criteria for measuring vocational potential. A review of the rehabilitation literature reveals a paucity of standards and baselines against which vocational potential can be measured.

Should new motivation techniques be introduced early in diagnostic programs? Can we evaluate effectively if we do not adequately challenge the mental retardate to reach for a higher level of functioning?

Research will answer questions about effective diagnosis by raising an even greater number of questions. "The key to good research is in asking the right questions and eventually the answers will follow." The philosophy adopted at the Kennedy Job Training Center is to keep asking questions about the clients, to maintain a flexible posture which enables adaption of program to change, and, above all, to keep the needs of the mentally retarded client foremost in planning.

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#### A WORK-STUDY PROGRAM FOR RURAL MENTALLY HANDICAPPED YOUTH

By Eugene C. Pratt and James R. Farr<sup>1</sup>

A basic tenet in the history of American education has been the ever-increasing emphasis on an educational opportunity for literally all children. The response of many states to this basic principle has been to create legislation which ensures an educational program for all their handicapped children. The result of this mandatory special education legislation has been a marked increase in the development of secondary programs for mentally

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handicapped youth. In past years, many rural communities appeared to have discreetly absorbed their adolescent mentally-handicapped youth. These students who "didn't learn well" usually went back to the farm or did periodic odd jobs around town or, at even greater cost, went on the roles of county welfare programs. In today's world of work, such youth have extreme difficulty in obtaining gainful employment in rural communities. No longer can they be easily absorbed by the farms. Agriculture is becoming a highly scientific and mechanized vocation. The "odd jobs around town" are fewer in number and more difficult to obtain.

The response of special education to this critical problem has been the establishment of secondary work-study programs for the mentally handicapped. Traditionally, these programs have been confined to larger metropolitan areas. Until recently, work-study programs have been noticeably absent from the rural special education picture. However, many county boards of education responsible for providing special education services to rural counties have given serious thought to the establishment and implementation of work-study programs for their secondary mentally handicapped youth. Many county boards of education realize that a mentally-handicapped youth residing in a rural county has the same basic right and need to complete a sequential educational program as his counterpart who is enrolled in a metropolitan special education program.

#### PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The work-study program for the three predominately rural Iowa counties of Clayton, Delaware, and Jones has been built on the principle that all children should be given equal opportunity to develop their capabilities. The county boards of education of these three Iowa counties in 1962 recognized the need of providing the older mentally handicapped students enrolled in their special education program with a different kind of meaningful school curriculum which would prepare them to take their places in an adult world of work.

#### CURRICULUM

The primary concern of the work-study program is to prepare the work-study student to live harmoniously and efficiently in his environment. In order to achieve this harmonious relationship, much time and effort must be concentrated upon a practical curriculum which provides experiences necessary to develop adequate personal and social adjustments, habit and skill development, and attitudes necessary to become a successful employee. Thus, it is in the work-study program that an amalgamation

of vocational skills and academic studies necessary to life situations together with a re-enforcement of social attitudes are welded into one unified curriculum. The basic work-study curriculum consists of the following:

1. *Civic* — Knowing the responsibilities of a citizen, respect for law and order, and the obligations of citizens in a democracy.
2. *Vocational* — Learning about the attainment of a position of employment; the correct management of money and homemaking practices.
3. *Physical* — Learning about physical and mental health and proper safety practices.
4. *Social* — Developing healthy attitudes and responsibilities of dating, marriage, parenthood, and interpersonal relationships.
5. *Academic* — Developing the tool subjects and skills to their optimum levels.
6. *Leisure* — Learning the effective use of leisure time, the participation in social activities, the establishment of hobbies, and the joining of social organizations.

The secondary program covers a period of three years. The work-study student may enter the program at age sixteen, where he is classified as a sophomore. Each student's needs are assessed by a school psychologist, a teacher, and a personal interview. Upon entering the work-study program, the student is automatically referred to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Because of differences in intellectual ability, interests, and socio-economic factors, each child is regarded as an individual, and subsequently the teaching units are adopted to fill the needs of the individual student.

#### INTEGRATION INTO REGULAR CLASSES

In some instances, a student's ability level is such that he can derive benefits from integration into a regular high school class. Such flexibility is achieved only when successful competition is felt to be beneficial by a screening committee, which is composed of the work-study teacher, psychologist, guidance counselors, vocational adjustment co-ordinator, and the director of special education.

Included in the curriculum are integrated classes in Agriculture, Homemaking, Industrial Arts, Music, Art, Driver's Training, and other regular classes as deemed appropriate by the screening committee.

#### DIPLOMA AWARDED

The 1966-67 school year marked a milestone for the work-study students in Clayton, Delaware, and Jones counties. It was during this school year that these stu-

dents could participate in regular graduation ceremonies and receive a diploma for completion of the program. Since that time forty-three students have graduated from seven different school districts. More than 60 percent of these students are still permanently employed on full-time jobs in which their tenure is secure so long as they continue their present satisfactory work habits.

#### THE ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR

The vocational adjustment co-ordinator has the major responsibility of finding training opportunities and employment for students. He is also fully responsible for supervising the student, and must work harmoniously with the work-study teacher and the special class teacher. He must co-ordinate the activities of all the various organizations which may benefit the handicapped student. This would include the services of such organizations as vocational rehabilitation, neighborhood youth corps programs, and social welfare.

It is important that the co-ordinator be employed on a year-around basis. It is also important that the work program be extended into the summer and the co-ordinator be available when a problem arises on the job. This enables him to establish part-time jobs during the summer for the students who benefit from being in class full-time during the school year.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS

Since the beginning of the work-study program in 1964, 119 special class students have benefited from work experience. Seventy-four employers have participated in employing these students. In only twelve cases has it been necessary to remove a student from a work experience. The primary reasons for the release of a student from employment are listed in rank order:

1. Poor work habits — not inability to do work.
2. Inability to get along with fellow employees.
3. Loss of driver's license.

The 119 employed students have earned gross salaries of approximately \$100,000.00 since the beginning of the program in 1964. Slightly more than \$10,000.00 have been returned to the state and federal governments in taxes by the employed students.

The number of hours a student works and the wage rate vary from one hour per day to a full forty hour week. Some students begin in a training program at \$.50 per hour, while others have received a maximum of \$3.00 per hour.<sup>2</sup> The mean wage for all students in

2. Wage waivers for below minimum hourly wage rates must be obtained from the U. S. Department of Labor.

the program for the past three years is approximately \$1.10 per hour. Wage rates for each student are determined by the vocational adjustment co-ordinator after an assessment of the individual student's abilities.

#### UNIQUE PROBLEMS OF A RURAL PROGRAM

The vocational adjustment co-ordinators biggest problem is the arranging of transportation for the student working in a non-school setting. Arrangements are made by the co-ordinator to get the student in car pools. School districts have cooperated, and in different cases will let the student off the school bus at his work station. Employers also cooperate in arranging the student's hours to meet transportation schedules. In several cases the student will have a driver's license and a car of his own to provide transportation.

Perhaps the most deterring factor toward the development of more work-study programs in rural Iowa is the prevailing idea that rural settings lack employment facilities for work-study students. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The type of work each student obtains depends upon the qualities of the individual student and the diligence of the vocational adjustment co-ordinator. Many different types of work stations can be found in rural communities for both training purposes and permanent employment if they are actively sought by the vocational adjustment co-ordinator. The following list will demonstrate the different types of work facilities in which students have been trained and employed.

Auto Garage	Hardware Store
Cafe	Hospital
Cheese Factory	Janitorial Services
City Management	Lumber Yard
Creamery	Manufacturing
Egg Produce	Milk Route
Farm	Nursing Home
Feed Mill	Private Home
Forestry Service	School Cafeteria
Furniture Store	Seed Company
Government Program	Soil Service
Grocery Store	Tire Capping

#### GUIDELINES FOR RURAL PROGRAMS

Some guidelines for the establishment of work-study programs for the mentally handicapped are suggested.

1. A full-time vocational adjustment co-ordinator who has had experience in working with the mentally handicapped should be employed and assigned the responsibility of liaison between the school and

employers.

2. The program should be the final phase of a sequential special education program, and be a minimum of three years in duration.
3. When possible, the work-study program should be an integral part of the regular secondary program.
4. The instructional program should be organized on a core basis, with tool subjects being taught by a special class teacher. However, major emphasis should focus upon practical life situations associated with employment.
5. Work-study students should be included in the extra-curricular activities of the school.
6. Close liaison between the special education facility and a vocational rehabilitation office must be established and maintained.
7. A diploma should be awarded upon completion of the program and the student should be allowed to take part in all regular commencement activities.

Today's educators must recognize that if the skills of the retarded are to be fully utilized, the retarded youth must receive the benefits of a sequential training program geared toward preparing him for the world of work, regardless of his environmental setting. With increased automation exerting a significant impact upon the rural setting, the training of rural youth toward employable skills demands an increased investment in educational programming. Vocational and social experiences appropriate to the ability and interests of the mentally handicapped student must be provided.

## **ISSUES & TRENDS**

The need for extending teacher training programs from four to five years is a frequent topic of discussion among educators. Some states are already moving toward a five-year minimum for certification. Presumably a five-year program means better prepared teachers, with the additional time allowing more curriculum flexibility, but it may actually be that the key to better teachers lies in the selection of experienced rather than the length of the training period. A training model which takes advantage of the relevant liberal arts offerings, involves students with children early, and includes intensive supervision and assistance during the first year of teaching may be as effective as a five-year training program.

If one were to examine a typical training program for teachers of the mentally retarded, he would likely find

that the bulk of the student's coursework is taken in the areas of liberal arts and general education. However, early advisement can often help the students to gear their core selections to the areas of sociology and psychology. The rationale for emphasizing general education coursework is typically related to the assumed need for special education teachers to be certified also to teach in elementary education, and the relevancy of elementary methods courses to teaching the mentally retarded. Dual certification allows the teacher more mobility in that he can teach either regular or special classes. At one time this additional job assurance was necessary; sufficient job opportunities exist today, however, to eliminate this as a major reason for dual certification. Also, the question of how relevant elementary methods courses are to teaching the mentally retarded is being challenged. Obviously many of the techniques taught in the elementary sequence are applicable. But whether or not they are sufficiently applicable to warrant adoption of the total sequence in lieu of more special education course-work and practicum experience is doubtful. It becomes a task of determining which experiences from the liberal arts and elementary education are most appropriate and incorporating them into a structure of special education training experiences.

To be critical of what can be accomplished in a five-year program would be foolish. However in view of the growing gap between the demand for and supply of trained teachers it is realistic to encourage consideration of a compromise. More selectivity in the requirement of adjunct courses, earlier contact with handicapped children, greater breadth in special education offerings, and intensive in-service training during the first years of teaching might be a realistic alternative model. This approach retains elements of most proposed five-year plans but does not alter the students' entry into the teaching field at the end of four years. It also holds the possibility of influencing the quality of in-service training for all teachers. This model would require considerable cooperation between the training program and the employing district. In view of the resources of the Instructional Materials Center Network this may be a timely undertaking.

To support a five-year program arbitrarily without evaluating the current four-year model might result in students still being required to take courses which are no longer relevant. We should focus our efforts on what skills and experiences are required to teach the handicapped and structure the program accordingly, rather than to select courses from what is available as we have so often done in the past.