



GOVERNOR'S
PLANNING COUNCIL
for
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES

HIGHLIGHTS

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San Antonio Projects

Christopher Trelfa, 3, is one of several children participating in Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities funded programs in San Antonio. Find out more about the programs that help improve the lives of high risk and handicapped children through age three on page 4.

DD Council Joins TRC

The Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities officially ended its close association with the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Jan. 1, 1983 when the Texas Rehabilitation Commission became the council's administering agency.

The change in administration was announced by Gov. William Clements Nov. 19, 1982. As administering agency, TRC will be the council's housekeeping arm.

Council members got a chance to learn about TRC operations and meet key TRC staff personnel during an orientation session Jan. 7 and 8. TRC speakers included Vernon M. Arrell, commissioner; Doyle Wheeler, deputy commissioner for programs; Kaye Beneke, public information officer; Edward Austin, assistant commissioner for legal services; Bob Young, controller; James L. Jackson, deputy commissioner for administrative and support services; and Dave MacCabe, director of internal audit.

The Developmental Disabilities Pro-

gram, which is coordinated by the governor's council, was first funded by the federal government in 1971 as part of the Developmental Disabilities Facilities and Construction Act. Because the Texas Rehabilitation Commission was newly separated from the Texas Education Agency and was going through organizational changes, the administration of the Developmental Disabilities Program was given to the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.

The Developmental Disabilities Program serves people with severe chronic disabilities which are attributable to mental or physical impairments and are manifested before the age of 22. The 22-member governor's planning council and staff members work with a \$2.5 million annual budget which is used to fund demonstration projects.

The Developmental Disabilities Program staff, which is currently housed in a facility on Medical Parkway in Austin, is scheduled to move to the TRC central office at 118 East Riverside Drive in Austin after April 1.

Joellen Simmons to Serve as New Director

Joellen Flores Simmons has been named the new executive director of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities.

A former special education teacher, she has spent the past nine years with the Texas Education Agency. Her most recent position was as a fiscal specialist for special education programs.

Simmons fills the executive director position vacated in June when Kathy Sandusky left to attend law school. Wally Nielson has filled in as acting executive director for the past eight months.

The new executive director spent four years on the Governor's Planning Council as a representative of the TEA.

Simmons, 35, has a Bachelor of Sci-



Joellen Flores Simmons

ence degree in elementary education from Texas Women's University and a master's degree in special education from Texas Tech with additional studies

in the areas of learning disabilities, educational diagnostics and psychology. She has done post graduate work at the University of Texas and has attended as an undergraduate student Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio, Southwestern Louisiana University in Lafayette, La., and the University in Heidelberg in Germany.

Simmons, who spent much of her childhood traveling as the daughter of a U.S. military dependent, is married to Ron Simmons. She has a personal interest in developmental disabilities. Two of her step-children, twin 15-year-old boys, are handicapped, she said.

The new executive director said she is looking forward to working with the council.

Meet the Council

Governor Appoints Two New Council Members

Editor's Note: This column introduces readers to the members of the Governor's Planning Council for Development Disabilities.

Two new members have been named to the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities. They are Pat Shaughnessy and Debbie Francis, both of Dallas.

Shaughnessy is the mother of four children. Her oldest daughter, Liz, 21, has a learning disability and attended special education classes. Shaughnessy is employed as a certified financial planner and stock broker with Alex Brown and Sons. She has her undergraduate degree from Chicago Teachers College and received her master's degree in guidance and counseling from Northwestern University. She also attended the College for Financial Planning in Denver, Colorado.

Shaughnessy is a member of the Texas Association for Children with Learning Disabilities; on the board of



Pat Shaughnessy

directors for the Orton Society in Dallas; treasurer of the Texas Association of Independent Special Education Facilities; and president of the Dallas Academy High School for children with learning disabilities.

The other new member, Francis, is the mother of a severely handicapped 4-year-old, Bo, and Jimmy, 7. She is a volunteer at the Society for Crippled



Debbie Francis

Children and has done some volunteer work at Parkland Hospital through the Dallas Junior League.

Francis is a graduate of the University of South Carolina where she majored in health education. She is married to James B. Francis.

The two new members were appointed to the council by Gov. Clements.

Magazine Features Janie Clements

Janie Clements, former chairman of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, was recently featured in an article in *Pride Magazine*, a publication of the Brownwood Chamber of Commerce.

The story accompanied a four-page section on mental health and mental retardation programs in Brownwood.

Clements helped found a center for mentally retarded and handicapped children and a workshop for retarded adults, named in her honor. In the mid-1970's she was appointed to the National Advisory Mental Health Council of the National Institute of Mental Health and the Texas White House Council on handicapped individuals. She is currently chairperson of the Texas Mental Health Advisory Council and recently completed four years as chairperson of Central Texas MHMR.

Clements was an original member of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities and served until 1981. She was the council's chairman for two years.

Corpus Christi Dentist Heads DD Council

James Cooper, D.D.S., has served as chairman of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities since March when he was elected to the post by the council.

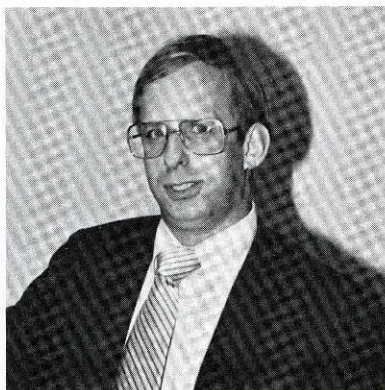
He was appointed to the council in 1978 by Gov. Dolph Briscoe and reappointed by Gov. William Clements in 1982.

Cooper, a dentist, became particularly concerned about Texas' disabled population in 1973 when he worked for the Corpus Christi State School.

His interest continued after he left the school and went into private practice.

"I have felt for the past 10 to 15 years that this is an area that too few people have been involved in. The developmentally disabled cannot really speak out for themselves," Cooper said.

The council's chairman was born in Iowa and came to Texas in 1969 with the



James Cooper

Air Force. After he left the military in 1973, he moved permanently to Texas. He attended Northwestern University and the University of Iowa where he graduated with his D.D.S. degree.

Cooper, who now lives in Corpus Christi, is married to Tracy Cooper and has two children. They are Ayse, 10, and Jack, 3.

Cooper serves as the council's representative on the Governor's Long Range Planning Group for Texans with Disabilities.

Alternate Community Living Emerges as Need

Alternative community living services emerged as the major need of Texans experiencing developmental disabilities in a survey recently compiled by Texas Tech University.

The results of the survey were presented to members of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities during a special planning committee meeting in November. The survey was developed at the request of the council as a way of helping set goals.

"Seven hundred and fifty questionnaires were mailed out Oct. 22 to professionals, agencies and consumers soliciting opinions of people at the grass roots level," said Gerard J. Bensberg, director of the Texas Tech Research and

Training Center in Mental Retardation which conducted the study. Working with him on the project was Dr. Darrell Rutherford.

While only 200 surveys, or about 26 percent of the total, were returned, survey takers got an "idea" of what consumers and professionals perceived as the major needs of those experiencing developmental disabilities, Bensberg said. He said he was "not disturbed" by the low number of survey returns because his "mailing list (for the questionnaire) included many people who are no longer employed by the agencies."

Survey findings showed that:

*The majority of people listed alternative community living services as the

primary need of people with developmental disabilities. Listed second was vocational assessment, training and job placement. Parent training and support services were listed third.

*Many of those who responded did not understand the role of the Developmental Disabilities Council. Only 16 of those who responded said the council should gather information, plan and set goals to meet the needs of the developmentally disabled population of Texas.

*Thirty-four of the people who responded to the survey said that autism was the most difficult developmental disability to serve. Another 33 people named severe cerebral palsy as the most difficult group.

Council Calls for Ceiling End on ICF-MR

A recommendation calling for the elimination of the ceiling on appropriations for intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded received the endorsement of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities during their January meeting.

The recommendation will be forwarded to the Texas Department of Human Resources, which is the program's administering agency, and other appropriate officials.

The call for the elimination of the ceiling is an attempt to maintain services now available to current recipients, who

are mostly retarded citizens, and to extend the program to serve the entire developmentally disabled population.

The intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded program, which is part of Title XIX, Medicaid, funds the majority of community based residential services available to Texans who are mentally retarded. The program is also authorized to serve people with autism, cerebral palsy and epilepsy, but because of lack of adequate funding, does not.

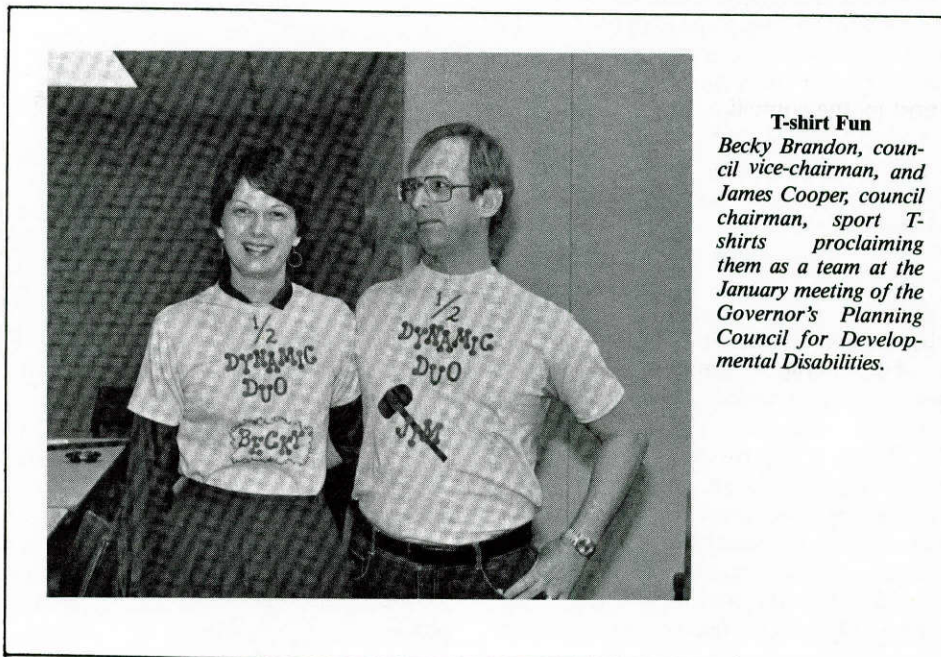
A reduction in funds allocated to the program in Fiscal Year 1982 caused the Legislature to place a freeze on the program. The result is that unless the Legislature takes action, the program will expand modestly over the next two fiscal years, or not at all.

At the federal level, cost containment initiatives in the Medicaid program may limit the availability of future federal funds for the intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded program.

Florence Receives New Appointment

James Florence, member of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, has been named to the Texas Mental Retardation Advisory Committee effective Jan. 1. The appointment was made by Dr. Gary Miller, Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Commissioner.

Besides being a member of the Governor's Planning Council, Florence is a past chairperson and current board member of the Brazos Valley MHMR Authority.



T-shirt Fun
Becky Brandon, council vice-chairman, and James Cooper, council chairman, sport T-shirts proclaiming them as a team at the January meeting of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities.

About Programs

Programs Improve Lives of Disabled Babies

Four San Antonio programs, all funded with Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities seed money, are helping to improve the lives of high risk and handicapped children ages zero to three.

Brighton School, Project Any Baby Can (ABC), Get Ready for Three and Parent Education Early Intervention Program (PEEIP) are providing expertise to parents of children with developmental disabilities.

Initial funds from the DD Council made each program possible.

"We would not exist if the council had not responded to our plea for funding," said Marian Sokol, PhD., director of Project ABC, an information and referral program that matches up high risk and disabled children to programs that suit their needs.

The four DD funded programs in San Antonio vary in services from providing a clearing house of information in Project ABC to at-home and center-based therapy sessions for children in Brighton School, PEEIP and Get Ready for Three.

ANY BABY CAN

Marian Sokol, PhD., became interested in establishing an information clearing house when, as a teacher at San Antonio College in the child development department, she joined the San Antonio Coalition for Children, Youth, and Families. She was appointed to the coalition's Parenting Education Task Force and in the course of a needs study discovered that a better way of linking disabled children to existing programs was needed.

"There were vacancies in programs that should not have existed. I found that parents (of handicapped children) were calling two dozen places to look for help," she said.

The task force began developing a basic book of referrals that expanded into a clearing house of information that needed a full-time staff.

Faced with a problem of funding, the task force began seeking money from United Way and other sources and



Teacher Zaida Yzaguirre, left, and parent Leila Alguacil help 21-month-old Miguel Alguacil learn basic developmental skills at the Get Ready for Three program.

wound up at DD, a council known for its interest in funding innovative programs.

Armed with a \$110,000 grant in June from the DD, ABC was able to obtain smaller grants from the City of San Antonio and the Hogg Foundation. Several months before Sokol thought possible, ABC began making referrals from its new headquarters at the Santa Rosa Children's Hospital.

"We've had 60 referrals between September and December. It kind of amazes us. We weren't supposed to start taking referrals until March," Sokol said.

Many of the calls come from new parents who have just discovered their children have spina bifida, Down's Syndrome, congenital heart defects and other developmental disabilities, Sokol said.

Project ABC is under the umbrella of the coalition but incorporates the joint efforts of nearly 50 social service agencies. Besides serving as a clearing house, the program also works to identify service gaps and advocates to fill them.

GET READY FOR THREE

Children under the age of three who exhibit delays or disabilities involving perceptual/motor, cognitive, language

or self-help development are receiving help from a teacher/hometrainer, physical therapist, speech pathologist and others at the Get Ready for Three Program headquartered at the South Texas Children's Habilitation Center (formerly the Cerebral Palsy Center) in San Antonio. The early assistance is designed to help maintain or improve skills in these children.

Get Ready for Three has a home-based program for children from birth to age 18 months and a center-based program for youngsters 18 to 36 months.

Four children participate in the center program where every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday for two-and-a-half hours a day a teacher-trainer works with them in improving developmental skills. Another 32 youngsters have trainers come to their homes where their parents receive support and training for exercises, feeding and stimulation techniques.

Children served by the program range in level of disability from severely retarded to close to normal, said Chris Sinick, program director.

The DD Council provided the initial money to start the program in 1981 and covered about 70 percent of the budget. This year, DD is funding 50 percent of Get Ready for Three's budget, or about

\$26,215, which pays in part for the hometrainer.

The program also receives funds from the Early Childhood Intervention Council, United Way and fees from parents.

PEEIP

Sonya Gonzalez Masinter's interest in mentally retarded children started when she had one of her own. After the child died, she decided to go to school to become a special education teacher so she could help other disabled children.

"I found that three years was a long time to wait to begin working with these children," Masinter said.

Masinter wrote a proposal calling for a parent-infant home trainer to teach parents techniques that will aid in their infant's overall development. Her request for seed funds was granted by the DD Council a little over a year and a half ago, and she has since been able to receive additional funding from Texas Interagency Council for Early Childhood Intervention and the City of San Antonio. This year, in its second year of funding, PEEIP received \$60,419 from the DD Council.

Working with PEEIP are five parent-infant trainers who go into the home, speech therapist, occupational therapist and physical therapist.

"The program is based on my experiences. When my teachers have problems, I can help because I've been there," Masinter said.

Her program is one of the few that charges no fee to work with the infants and toddlers. Families of all economic backgrounds in Bexar County can receive assistance from PEEIP.

PEEIP also provides a moral support system for parents, many of whom are dealing with a handicapped child for the first time. Masinter started a buddy system for parents which groups parents with others who have children of the same disability.

UP WITH DOWNS

Up with Downs was born when four families in San Antonio with Down Syndrome children got together to start a school that would stimulate the youngsters in the three years before they could be enrolled in public school.

Although the program was awarded a small grant from the James R. Dougherty, Jr., Foundation, it was not until September, 1980, that the DD



Volunteer Cynthia Fears works with students, from the left, Michael Dejesus, Barbara Braund and Melba Garcia on an art lesson at the Up with Downs's program in San Antonio.

Council gave a seed grant, giving Up with Downs its send off. This year, in the third year of funding, Up with Downs is receiving \$27,000 from the DD Council.

Up with Downs operates Brighton School for Down Syndrome infants and pre-schoolers. The program is designed to help children with Down Syndrome achieve to the best of their abilities, said Allyn Anderson, director.

Brighton School offers three educational programs including an infant learning program for babies up to 18 months of age; early preschool program for children 18 months to 24 months; and advanced preschool program for children over 24 months. Thirty youngsters are enrolled in the programs.

The infant learning teacher meets

once a week with each infant and primary case parent individually. Pre-school programs meet four mornings a week.

In each educational program the children are helped to improve their gross and fine motor skills, communication and reasoning skills, social and self-help skills and pre-academic skills, with an overall goal to bring the performance of each child to as close to developmental norms as possible.

Up with Downs provides an integrated therapeutic and educational approach for the education of young children. Through a daily reinforcement of skills, the parents learn methods to carry the educational program back into the home where they can further work with their children.



Laura Neely, home trainer for the Parent Education Early Intervention Program, right, helps 11-month-old Mathew Wolff with stimulation exercises as his mother Candy Wolff watches.

From the Capitol

Nine Priority Areas Listed

Council Sets Priorities for State Legislature

The Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities has set priorities in nine areas for the 68th session of the state Legislature which convened in January.

Council members will be supporting legislation in the areas of residential services, community support services, vocational/employment services, education, early childhood intervention services, guardianship, insurance, autism and developmental disabilities.

Priorities in the area of residential services include:

- *community residential services for the chronically mentally ill.

- *semi-independent supervised apartment programs of community MHMR centers.

- *elimination of the ceiling on intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded appropriations and expansion of the program to serve all developmentally disabled citizens.

Community support service priorities include:

- *funding community MHMR centers at levels established by the state board of Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation for Fiscal Years 1984 and 1985.

- *adult day activity and other community care programs of the Department of Human Resources.

- *alternate forms of community-based care when institutional care is not appropriate.

Vocational and employment service priorities include:

- *increased funding in the day treatment sheltered workshop category to community MHMR centers.

- *increased state appropriations to the Texas Rehabilitation Commission for client services.

- *tax incentives to businesses that employ disabled individuals.

Priorities in the area of education include:

- *continuation of the current state special education law and program.

- *inclusion of TDMHMR state school residents in the minimum foundation fund.

Other priorities set include:

- *ECI — continuation and expansion of funding for early childhood intervention services.

- *guardianship — individual rights in guardianship proceedings and changes to the limited guardian statute.

- *insurance — insurance coverage for mental and developmental disabilities.

- *autism — support the recommendations of the joint committee on autism.

- *developmental disabilities — establishment of state legislation for the Developmental Disabilities Program.

Legislation Recognizes Council as State Program

Legislation that would recognize the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities as a state program is about to be introduced into committee.

To be sponsored in the Texas House of Representatives by Rep. William Messer of Belton, the proposed bill, if passed, would assure that the Development Disabilities Program will continue in the state regardless of the direction taken by the federal government about future funding, said Becky Brandon, council vice-chairman.

Brandon said the council hopes the

legislature approves the initial bill recognizing the Developmental Disabilities Program during the 68th session that began in January and would pass funding legislation during the following session scheduled for 1985.

If the bill becomes law, the council's name would be changed to the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities. The proposed bill outlines the council's function, defines developmental disabilities, lists rights of people with developmental disabilities and designates an administering agency.

Over \$60 Million Reserved

National DD Programs Receive Funding

Developmental disabilities programs nationwide were awarded a total of \$60.5 million as part of a stopgap funding bill approved by Congress Dec. 20 and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan the following day.

The bill, in the form of a continuing resolution, is in effect for the remainder

of Fiscal Year 1983 which ends Sept. 30, 1983.

Texas' share of the nationwide amount is estimated at about \$2.5 million for the fiscal year.

The \$60.5 million reserved for developmental disabilities programs across the nation includes \$50.5 million for ba-

sic state grants and advocacy, \$2.5 million for special projects and \$7.5 million for university affiliated facilities.

The stopgap funding in the continuing resolution is only slightly more than the \$56.6 million reserved in the Fiscal Year 1982 budget.

Council Hires First Public Information Officer

As part of a new public awareness effort, the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities has hired a public information officer.

Chris Petrison, the new employee, is charged with putting out a newsletter, council brochures and coordinating public information for the council. She comes to the council with eight years journalism experience and has previously been employed as an editor with *The Austin Light*, a weekly publication for Austin's Mexican-American com-



Chris Petrison

munity; writer with the *Austin American-Statesman*, a daily paper; and writer with *The Round Rock Leader*, a community paper in Round Rock.

"I am really excited about joining the council and helping with the public awareness effort. The council has funded so many worthwhile projects, and it's time the entire state knows about them," Petrison said.

Petrison works out of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission public information office under the supervision of Kaye Beneke, information specialist.

Computer Gift

Project Any Baby Can, an information and referral program in San Antonio that matches high risk and disabled children to programs that suit their needs, has recently purchased an IBM microcomputer with funds donated by the Myra Stafford Pryor Trust Fund.

The San Antonio program, which receives funds from the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, will use the \$19,000 computer to track disabled babies from the time they are referred until they enter the school system at age 3. It should establish a "good and efficient information system," said Marian Sokol, PhD., project director.

Dart Appointment

Justin W. Dart was recently named vice-chairperson of the National Council on the Handicapped. He was appointed to the committee by President Ronald Reagan.

Dart serves as chairman of the Texas Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and the Governor's Long Range Planning Group for Texans with Disabilities.

Just a Reminder

The next meeting of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities is set for March 4-5 in Austin. Council committee meetings will be held from 1 to 5 p.m., March 4, with the full council meeting scheduled for March 5 from 8 a.m. to noon.



Planning Session

Members of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities planning committee met in November to discuss funding priorities for 1983. In upper photo Michael Twombly, director of the Texas Society for Autistic Citizens tells committee members his major concerns. In bottom photo, front to back, Mary Birnbaum, Cliff Martin, Theda Hoyt and Charlyne Tucker participate in discussions. The council will be making decisions on which programs to fund by May 1.



Five Start Program

Transitional Living Facility Opens for Disabled

The first transitional living facility in Texas for adults with severe physical disabilities opened in January as an Austin Resource Center for Independent Living (ARCIL) project.

Five wheelchair users who have varying disabilities and backgrounds moved into Herndon House in Austin with hopes of leaving in six months to a year as individuals capable of living independently in the community.

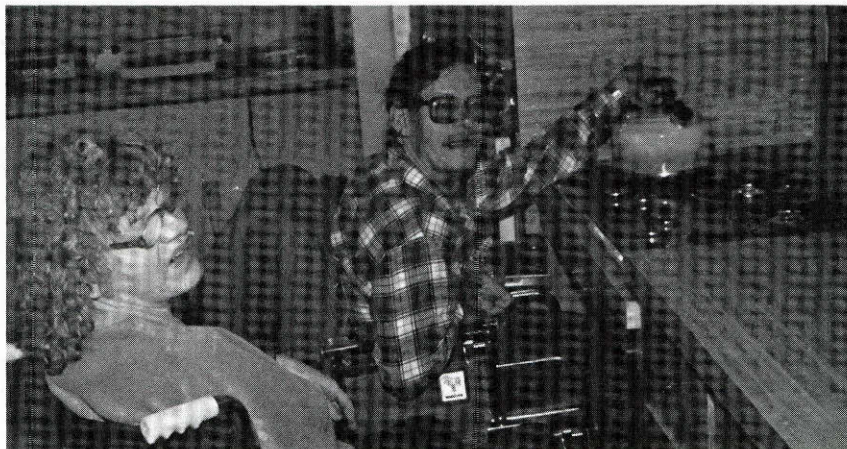
"We had the idea for years of a transitional living facility, but there was no money to fund the project," said Leigh Saunders, director of the new facility and developmental disabilities coordinator for ARCIL.

The new facility will serve as a place where people with severe physical disabilities, who have been in a dependent environment like a nursing home or hospital and have the capabilities of living on their own, can reside temporarily. It is hoped that in a short period of time, no more than a year, the people will learn skills to be able to live in the community with limited assistance.

"We will give them vocational readiness skills such as cooking, laundry, personal care and attendant management," Saunders said.

The five people, including three men and two women, will live together in the house sharing responsibilities. They will be assisted by six attendant-teachers who will work shift schedules.

The attendants will help the five residents when necessary and step back to let them learn to do some things on their own.



Cheri Brock and James Templeton work at the wheelchair level stove and counter at Herndon House, ARCIL's new transitional living facility in south Austin. Brock and Templeton are among the facility's first residents.

"Our focus is that the residents are adults. We will treat them like adults and we expect them to function as adults," Saunders said.

The residents will be required to pay \$110 a month to live in the facility in order to assure that they make a commitment to the project.

The dream of a transitional living facility for disabled adults started to take shape when ARCIL was awarded \$22,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds. ARCIL decided to use the money to rehabilitate an older home at 701 Herndon which they could rent for \$1 a year from the city.

An additional \$24,000 from the city, \$4,000 from the county and \$40,000 from the Developmental Disabilities Council were made available and Herndon House started to become a reality.

don House started to become a reality.

The house was made accessible to the disabled, which involved remodeling the kitchen and two bathrooms. Potential residents were screened. Most of the furnishings for the house were donated. Much of the grant money will be used to pay salaries of the attendants, utilities and other operational expenses.

Saunders said that while the goal of Herndon House is to prepare the residents for an independent life in the community, it doesn't guarantee success.

"Much of it depends on the clients and how hard they work. This is a transition for them from a dependent to a less dependent situation. It doesn't mean they will leave here fully independent," Saunders said.

Highlights

Highlights is printed by the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities for distribution to council members, grantees and other interested persons throughout the state. Inquiries may be addressed to Chris Petrisson, Public Information Office, Texas Rehabilitation Commission, 118 E. Riverside Drive, Austin, Texas 78704; or telephone (512) 445-8249.



Good Eating
Cole Murphy, director of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission's planning section, and Bernie Cantu, member of the Governor's Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities help themselves at the Jan. 7 barbecue held as a planning session for the Feb. 2 Disability Rally Day.