

Workshop for Retardate Established Here

Providing an occupational training and sheltered workshop program for the mental retardate when he reaches adulthood is no small task. It is a matter of concern not only to the persons directly involved, but also to the entire community at large.

To begin with there must exist a parent organization which recognizes the need for such a shop and which has the desire to do something about it. In addition there must be sufficient cooperation among parents plus adequate funds and fund-raising ability to take the first step.

And so it was with the Southwest Association for Retarded Children. With the decision to form a workshop, a habilitation committee was formed. The problem of either acquiring land or leasing a site was then reviewed. An extensive study had been conducted already on other workshop operations nationally to determine the economics and problems involved in setting up such a workshop.

At the time SARC was formulating its plans, a fortuitous circumstance presented itself. The Exceptional Children's Foundation of Los Angeles had applied for and had received a three-year federal research grant to develop techniques for operating more economically several independent workshops with the guidance of a central professional team. This was just a year ago. An agreement was drawn up and signed by both SARC and ECF thus creating a national "first" in a cooperative venture between two such organizations. The terms of the agreement made it incumbent upon SARC to provide match-

ing funds to insure the continued operation of the shop during the research study and following its termination.

It now was necessary for SARC to lease a building zoned for light manufacturing. It also was required that the site be centrally located in order to serve conveniently the entire Centinela-South Bay area.

Publicity provided by local newspapers brought a great deal of public response. Upon application each registrant was evaluated at the ECF guidance center to determine if the workshop experience would serve him adequately.

Within the research program three PAR workshops exist. (PAR stands for production and rehabilitation.) The southwest shop was added to the two other workshop programs which were already in operation. Under the terms of the agreement with ECF the Southwest shop is provided with the professional services of a staff of administrative and supervisory personnel, psychologists, social workers, a contract specialist, and a vocational placement counselor.

PAR Workshops-Southwest located at 1725 West 180th Street, Gardena opened its doors in December of 1964 with 9 trainees. At present it employs around 30 trainees and is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is hoped that by the end of the first year the number of trainees employed will increase to 40 or 50.

Contracts from industry throughout Los Angeles County supply the 3 shops with work. SARC is especially interested in offering local industry an oppor-

tunity to farm out work of a routine and light manual nature to the shops. The workshops can perform a real service to industry by relieving its more highly skilled and more highly paid employees from routine tasks. Industry is urged to give the handicapped adults an equal opportunity to obtain work through this means.

At present the type of work performed by the trainees includes such things as replacing ear pieces, sterilizing and repackaging ear sets for inflight entertainment on airplanes, putting metal rings in rubber stoppers, packaging "O" rings, assembling and heat sealing packages of plastic food containers, labeling, and collating advertising throw-away newspapers.

SARC believes, and has proved with the establishment of the workshop, that the mentally retarded CAN be helped. One need only to see the transformation in the lives of many of the boys and girls, especially those who have been out of school for several years, to realize the innate need that all humans have to be recognized, accepted and to be made to feel that their contribution to society is worthwhile. In addition to receiving daily social stimulation, the retarded worker realizes a new degree of independence with the wages he earns, for he is paid according to his ability to produce.

Firms, who are interested in obtaining further information and quotes for work, may contact Al Jacobson, contract specialist, or William Savage, Southwest Workshop manager, both at the PAR Workshops-Southwest, 1725 W. 180th St., Gardena.



Professional Staff

With a constant increase in trainees at the workshop, opened in December 1964 with 9 trainees and presently with an enrollment of 30, the staff of administrative and supervisory personnel is kept busy. Here checking a file are Harriett Lund, case aid worker, and Bill Savage, workshop manager.



Sales Packaging

From one manufacturer comes crates of plastic refrigerator bowls sent to the workshop on contract for sale packaging. Trainees are instructed in the number of bowls to a package to be offered at a special price. Two trainees are shown sorting the bowls in preparation to sealing them in plastic containers, ready for the sales counter.

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SARC --- Its Purpose

Southwest Association for Retarded Children, Inc. is a group of parents, relatives and friends who organized in 1958 to bring expanded services to the mentally retarded—both children and adults—and to provide aid, comfort and knowledge to those in need of guidance.

SARC is dedicated to improving the status of the mentally retarded by:

- Improving his welfare at home, in the school, in the community, and in institutions.
- Helping to provide him with a job opportunity.

- Assisting and supporting his educational, activity, training recreational and social needs.
- Educating the public to better understanding and acceptance of him in the community.
- Advocating improved legislation on his behalf.

- Encouraging medical and educational research.

SARC serves the areas of Inglewood, Lennox, Hawthorne, Lawndale, Torrance, El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa, Redondo, Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills and the Palos Verdes Peninsula.



Sterilization Process

Several phases of work had to be taught when the workshop received the earpiece contract from the airlines. The earpieces have to be repaired, then sterilized, before being placed in the plastic containers to be returned to the airlines. The trainee pictured here is sanitizing the ear plugs prior to repackaging.



Earn Independence

A new degree of independence comes to the retardate as he is taught to work, in this case using pliers to put the rings in sink stoppers. The stoppers arrive in crates from the manufacturer, with the

rings in separate crates. The trainees are taught to insert the rings after which the stoppers are counted and packaged for sale. The worker is paid according to his ability to produce.

Photos
by
Hal Fisher
(Staff Photographer)



Operating Heat Seal Machine

Heat sealing packages of plastic food containers and the plastic containers for the repackaging of ear sets for inflight entertainment on airplanes is one of the jobs necessary for contracts at the workshop. Bill Savage, workshop manager, assists a trainee with the heat sealing process.