

Space now available

Fun has purpose at TimRoNanGo center

By VIVIAN SCHWARTZ
Five-year-old Hank held out slim fingers for the picks, strummed on the banjo, grinned and looked for approval from John Enslein, an Antioch College student on a work-study program at TimRoNanGo Children's Center.

Hank is one of 11 students at TimRoNanGo, a year-round center for children age 3 to 18 who, because of perceptual, emotional and social factors, do not fit into public school programs.

Named for its first four students — Timothy, Roberta, Nancy and Gordon — the center now has staff and space for an additional six students.

The center's main location is a three-room wing of Birmingham Unitarian Church, Woodward and Pine, Bloomfield Hills. Space is also rented from the Congregational Church of Birmingham, Woodward and Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills, and the North Hills Christian Reformed Church on Adams Road, Troy.

TimRoNanGo, now in its sev-

enth year, accepts children from the Wayne-Oakland County areas.

"SEED MONEY" of \$1,000 for the center was originally granted by the Public Welfare Foundation in Washington, D.C. The Junior League of Birmingham also contributed funds.

Tuition is funded by the Jaycees, Michigan Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children and Wayne County Mental Health Association. The difference between the \$2,100 tuition and the \$3,500 actual cost per child comes from board of directors' annual giving, women's auxiliary activities and foundations.

"All the children are different so we have a large staff and try to meet the needs of each child," said Elsie F. Archer, director of the center, said. "Health lies in the relationship between the staff person and the child."

Consulting psychiatrist Dr. Joseph Fischhoff of Children's Hospital of Michigan, is in charge of evaluations, admissions and consultations for the center.

At the North Hills Christian Reformed Church, where small group and individual tutoring is conducted, Kim, 9, made a pegboard design from a diagram in a perceptual training exercise with tutor Evelyn Murphy.

MISS ARCHER explained, "Kim was expelled from public school for being aggressive. Here she is safe; she can cope and grow."

In an atmosphere closely resembling a nursery school, the older students are taught individually and in groups at the Congregational Church. All the children in that group have been diagnosed as autistic or having autistic tendencies.

"All of these children are deficient in language so there is a heavy emphasis on language development, which requires much individual help," said staff member Sharon Shucard.

Brian, 8, likes stringing beads but in order to get them from staff member Tom Faulkner, he must repeat certain sounds. In this manner, Brian has grown from a repertoire of four to 30 sounds in a few months.

"A relationship such as Brian

and Tom have is essential to getting the child to work," Mrs. Shucard emphasized. "All the children have one major person to work with. At first Brian could not sit for more than 30 seconds; he has now been sitting for 40 minutes. The difference in him is astounding."

MICHAEL, 9, earned pennies doing language, reading and arithmetic work, which he used to "buy" a favorite puzzle. He put it together quickly on his own.

At first the children work for food, cereal or candy and later for special toys. Mrs. Shucard said, "The use of a food reward is behavioristic, however; here firm relationships are the most important element for progress."

Punishment is avoided except where safety is involved or aggressive behavior such as biting another child, "which must be stopped," Mrs. Shucard said. "Many negative behaviors decrease when ignored."

Strongly supportive of the teachers, the parents meet twice monthly to discuss problems and receive information and advice on handling their children at home. Graduate and undergraduate students from Wayne State University, Oakland University and Antioch College work at the center for practical experience under supervision.

"Even though a relationship has been built, it doesn't seem to matter to the child when the student-teacher leaves, as long as the environment stays the same," the director said.

IN A GROUP exercise, two staff members sat in a circle with five students, singing a familiar song. "There was a farmer had a dog, Bingo was his name. Each child who sang was rewarded with a bit of cereal."

A small doll was held up. "What is this?" the group was asked. Michael, the most responsive of the group, knew immediately. Brian, who had worked so hard on sounds earlier that morning, managed "Ba-by" with difficulty, but certainly understandable.

Then standing, holding hands, running around the circle at the

command "go!" braking at "stop!" and creeping along at "lo-o-w," the children laugh, giggle, enjoying the game, the activity.

All that fun had a purpose:

teaching responsiveness and interaction with the use of some gross motor activity, and always working toward the center goal of "fostering normal development."

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Camp Fire Girls begin candy sale

The theme for Camp Fire Girls' 1975 candy sale is "Say Yes to Camp Fire Candy." The sale continues through Feb. 15, with about 5,000 members selling peanut crunch and chocolate covered mints throughout the tri-county area.

The candy comes in red, white and

blue package and costs \$1.25 a box. Camp Fire Girls, in their red, white and blue service costumes, will be selling the product in banks, supermarkets, car washes and shopping malls in some communities the girls, with their parents, will be selling door-to-door.



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