

In Farmington

Special ed. program needs kids

There are three children in the school program and Fred W. Parker is sure there are more in the area.

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who could benefit from the program. Parker is principal of Cloverdale Development Center and district supervisor for orthopedic and mentally handicapped programs.

The Farmington center is one of five in Oakland County which offer a preschool program. All suffer a lack of students, possibly, Parker said, because physicians and health departments aren't aware of the center's services.

In response to the Michigan Mandatory Special Education Act, Cloverdale organized a nursery and preschool for children who demonstrate a "significant developmental lag."

The nursery, for children one month to three years, and the preschool, for children aged three to five, are strictly developmental, for those who have some kind of handicapping condition, Parker said.

"WE'RE NOT REALLY concerned with labels at that age. By the time they're school age, we know where they should be," he said.

Educational programs are individualized to meet the assessed developmental and behavioral levels of each student. The four-point program includes gross motor training, fine motor training, communication skills and activities of daily living.

Sitting, crawling, standing and balance are taught in the gross motor portion of the program. Supplementing this is the motor training of hand-eye coordination and grasping and releasing.

Communication skills begin with basic sounds and progress to words and then sentences, according to an individualized program prescribed by the Cloverdale speech pathologist.

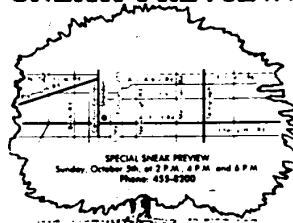
Dressing and independent feeding, toilet training and personal hygiene are developed in the daily living portion of the program.

To assess the level and consequent needs of each child, the Cloverdale Center has developed a diagnostic evaluation service which includes testing by a physical therapist, an occupational therapist and a speech pathologist. A nurse, social worker and psychologist also are on the center's staff.

Besides the Cloverdale Developmental Training Center at 33000 Freedom Road, Farmington, there are five other centers. These include Hawthorne Center in Pontiac, Wing Lake Center in Bloomfield Hills, Waterford Center and Oak Park Center.

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