

Boarding Home Programmers Shine at Youth Games—

ENEP'UT CHILDREN'S CENTER

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in my life, because I was risking my life both times."

"That's right," Mary said. "The only time you might physically restrain a child was when he was about to do dire injury to himself or another. If they're old enough, you explain. We try to be as tender with them, as we hope they will be with others. The only thing we really teach them is how to cooperate and how to respect other's rights."

The children are remarkably gentle with one another, but by no means regimented. They climb on all the furniture, as well as a special climbing structure, toys abound, they sing or beat out music, if they want a story, there is usually someone reading aloud to whoever cares to listen. When they get tired, they simply wander off to a great big mattress, lie down beside a friend, and put themselves to sleep.

Play groups shift constantly, but occasionally a special relationship develops between children. One such case was that of a small Athabaskan boy who had been found to have suffered brain damage and could not or would not talk.

An even smaller two-year old girl began to play with him constantly and as she learned to talk herself, she taught the older child. Doctors feel now that he will recover completely.

The staff at Enepe'ut is another wonder. "As soon as I had verbalized the idea for a day care center, sitting in the Commons, people came out of the woodwork," Mary said. They were apparently just the right people.

Some of the people working at Enepe'ut are: Ron Ponchione, John Barthelmess, Diane Dart, Annie Epstein, Luke Hopkins, Elaine Paul, Ray Pavelsky, Charley Simmons, John Swan, Margaret Steenrod, Paula Brink, Dianne Karmun, Glen Tinker, and assorted friends, not forgetting Pat and Mary Afcan.

This staff, looking deceptively young and casual, are eminently qualified.

Among them are a public health nurse, a former Vietnam medic who previously researched and oversaw a day care program for infants, an illustrator of children's books, teachers who have worked with pre-school retarded, former camp counselors, a music education major who specializes in music for young children, the best cook in Fairbanks, and five parents.

"All of the staff," says Enepe'ut, "are former children."

In a village, where you have small buildings with a lot of people crammed in a minimum of space, gentleness is an essential virtue. Eskimo babies rarely cry. They are given no chance. At the first sign of unhappiness, they are picked up, cuddled, and "spoiled."

"Most people, when they think of permissiveness," said Mary, "think of it in terms of the sort of children they think it produces. The common picture is a demanding, whining, spoiled brat." Looking about her rather proudly, she added, "Obviously this is not the kind of children we're producing here."

Dianne Karmun, a young Eskimo girl, works at the center as a permanent part-time helper. According to Mary, that means she works far more than her allotted time.

Dianne, studying sociology at the University, plans to continue working in early child care, possibly at an orphanage, applying many of the concepts she sees working at Enepe'ut.

A tour of Enepe'ut includes a trip to The Barn, a great large play space for finger painting, running-jumping games, and of course — animals.

The Barn's inhabitants are two goats, Soda Pop and Kuc'uq (Chewing-gum in Eskimo), one hen duck, and two magnificent white geese, one, oddly enough, with a red plastic toy around his neck.

Enepe'ut is looking for a new home, as their lease is about to expire. If their dreams for their own building can be realized, then they will have a place which Enepe'ut can truly call "our home".

The second annual Native Youth Olympics was held April 29th in Anchorage at the Wendler Jr. High School.

Participants came from the Boarding Home Programs and Bureau of Indian Affairs Boarding Schools throughout the State. From the Fairbanks area there were five from Delta, six from Nenana and 19 from Ryan, Lathrop and Monroe making the trip.

Roger Kuniyak, from the University of Alaska, was coach for the Fairbanks group.

Receiving medals for the following events were:

STICK PULL: Jacob Wells, Noorvik Bronze.

STICK PULL: Carol Demientieff, Fairbanks Silver.

SEAL CRAWL: Robert Hadley, Buckland Gold.

HEAD PULL: Amel Carter, Noorvik Gold.

KNEE JUMP: Ronald Ozena, Diomede Bronze.

KNEE JUMP: Jeanette Westlake, Kiana Silver.

TOE KICK: Robert Hadley, Buckland Silver.

TOE KICK: Jeanette Westlake, Kiana Gold.

1 LEG KICK: Robert Hadley, Buckland Gold.

1 LEG KICK: Jeanette Westlake, Kiana Bronze.

2 LEG KICK: Ronald Ozena, Diomede Gold.



RON OZENNA — Gold medal winner at games.

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