



LEARNING TO COUNT—A tiny Indian girl at Fort Yukon is learning to count under the instruction of Headstart teacher, Nina Peter. —Photo by Mike Bradner



ATTENTION DIVERTED—Charlotte Alexander, assistant Headstart teacher at Fort Yukon, is having a little trouble keeping her Headstart pupil's attention to the stories she is telling. A photographer has just come into the classroom and most of the tiny tots turned around to watch him. Charlotte Alexander is a council member at Fort Yukon. —Photo by Mike Bradner

Despite Lack of Funds, Ft. Yukon Goes Ahead With Project Headstart

The Yukon River Community of Fort Yukon may well be the only community in Alaska with a full-fledged "Headstart Program" already in full swing.

The program was originally planned to be part of the village's Community Action Program (CAP) under provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act.

However, despite the fact no funds were yet available, Fort Yukon preschoolers began attending headstart classes last fall when school opened. Teaching the four and five-year-old youngsters are three Fort Yukon mothers.

The three women, Mrs. Nina Peter, Mrs. Charlotte Alexander, and Mrs. Addie Shewfelt, have been teaching the classes on a volunteer basis in rooms made available in the Fort Yukon school.

The program is designed to familiarize the pre-schoolers with the classroom and better prepare them to enter their first years of school. Fort Yukon had a regular headstart program last summer operated through the Department of Education.

The community reportedly was so impressed by the program they decided to continue the program under Community Action provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act.

However, more commendably the community didn't wait to be funded—they just launched into the program on a volunteer basis even though nobody knew exactly when the C.A.P. program might be activated and funded.

Mrs. Nina Peter served as a head-

start teacher and last summer, and offered to continue this winter. She was then joined by Mrs. Alexander and Mrs. Shewfelt. Youth Corps workers are also helping in the classes.

Even more to Fort Yukon credit is the fact that the city council is now searching their meager revenue resources for some way to give the teachers at least a token wage.