

Mekoryuk Village Starts New Program

The people of Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island started a new program at their school this year—a special education class.

There was some extra room at the school; two special education teachers were hired, and the people of Mekoryuk opened their homes to the students.

Thus, children who would normally be institutionalized for special education were able to live in a foster home in a village much like the one they grew up in.

And the shock that a child often undergoes when placed in this type of program in a larger city was eliminated.

Almost through its first year, the program has been termed a success by close observers. The School Board of Mekoryuk plans to continue the program next year and perhaps expand it to other villages.

The project was begun following a two-day Mental Health Symposium in the village early last fall.

The village council, the school board and most of the village's adults participated as well as representatives from the Public Health Service, the State Department of Schools, the Division of Public Welfare, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.