

Pre-School Testing Gaining Acceptance

By JOAN M. SMITH

Bobby runs in from the backyard sandbox and turns on television cartoons. Down the street, Suzie, another member of the sandbox set races indoors to look at Walt Disney comics.

Parents shake their heads wondering if these carefree four- and five-year-olds will ever be ready for kindergarten let alone the pre-testing requirements.

Apparently educational experts think differently. One of the fastest growing education concepts is the pre-kindergarten testing programs. Many educators stress the use of these programs because of their importance in determining school placement. The professionals maintain that the children (at 4 and 5) are ready for school, but as each child is ready at a different level the "school readiness" tests give the educational facility an insight into the perceptual, and behavioral stage of each child.

Other important objectives of the pre-testing are the early detection of learning disabilities, and the screening of youngsters for their strong and weak points so the school can gear its educational programs to meet the youngsters' individual needs.

"Nationally it (kindergarten pre-testing) is growing," stated Sister Mary Edwardine, coordinator for Diocesan Curriculum.


Dr. Torma Gets Post at St. Bernard's

Joseph A. Torma has been named director of Field Education at St. Bernard's Seminary, succeeding Father William J. Spellecy, who has resigned.

Dr. Torma, a native of Ashtabula, Ohio, holds an M.A. from the University of Detroit and a Ph.D. in Religious Studies from the University of Ottawa. He specialized in Social Mission of the Church Theology. Before coming to Rochester, he was a member of the faculty of Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. For the past four years, he has been director of educational services in the diocesan Office of Human Development. He is married to the former Kathleen Becker. They have one son, Mark Joseph.

As director of Field Education, Dr. Torma will coordinate the field placement experiences which form part of the training program of M.Div. degree candidates. He will also direct the seminars which help students to reflect theologically on these experiences.

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WITH
Father Reinhart**

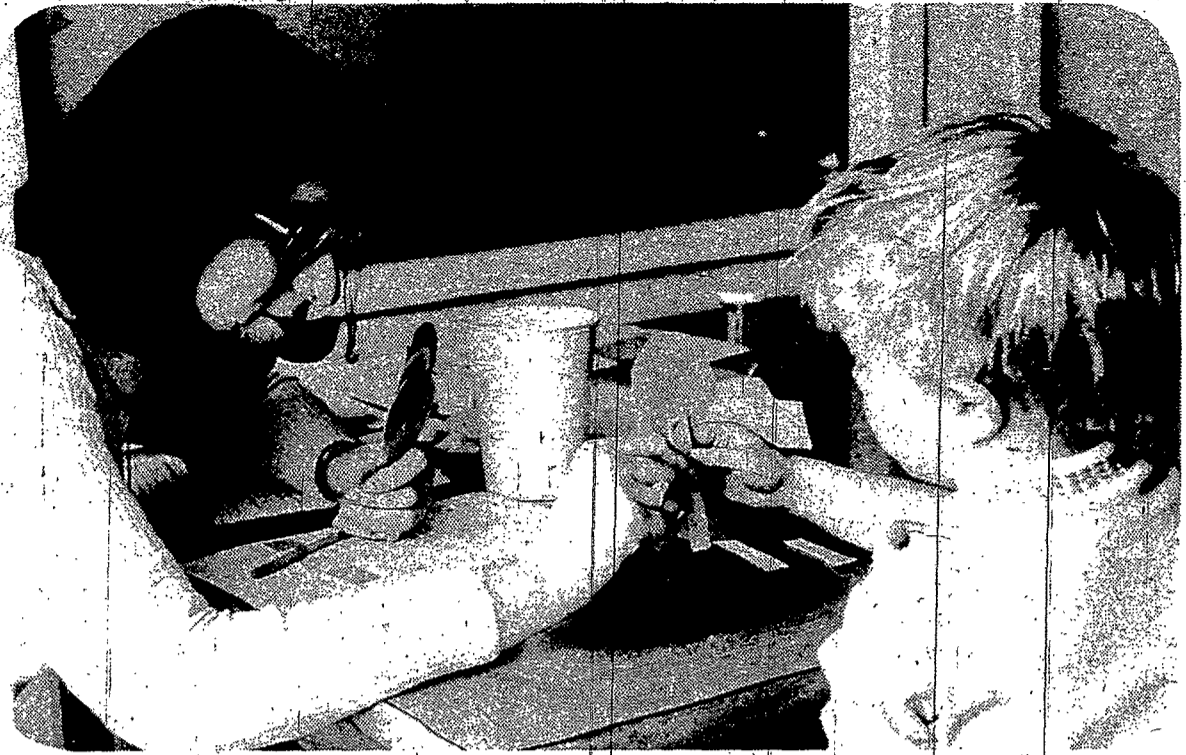


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She explained that statewide, 10 per cent of the school districts have some type of pre-testing for youngsters ready to begin kindergarten, and she noted there were bills before the state legislature which encourage the mandating of such programs. According to sister, 50 per cent of the Rochester diocesan parish schools have kindergartens with pre-testing for applicants.

Generally, the pre-testing consists of parent interviews, a review of the child's medical history, and the examining of his audio-visual abilities. Standardized tests which include number and color placement are given to determine the child's perceptual abilities along with motor skill exercises which indicate muscle development and coordination.

Recently, Our Mother of Sorrows parish which will open its first kindergarten in September, held pre-testing for its 41 enrollees. Two qualified reading



Mrs. Ellen Hagelberg guides Matthew Swingle through pre-school testing program. Matthew will be attending Our Mother of Sorrows new kindergarten in September.

teachers conducted the tests while parents were interviewed by school personnel. Questionnaires were made available to the parents on which they indicated their child's

hobbies, interests, home responsibilities, and health background.

Through this pre-kindergarten guidance and testing not only do

child and school become acquainted long before that traumatic first day of school, but the learning facility is given early direction in the education of that child.

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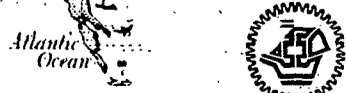
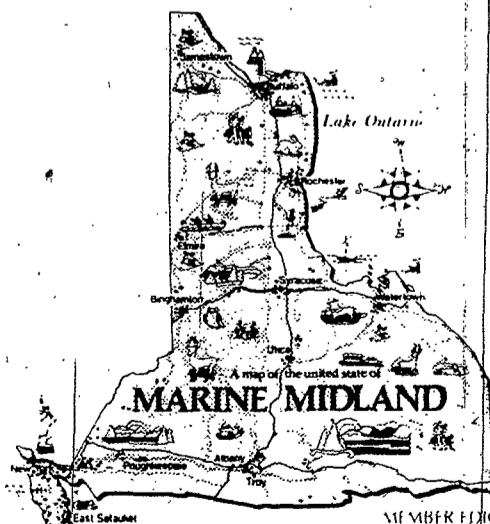
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