



Dan Quilty and Sister Gaye receive a gift of snow from the center's youngest resident.

That's Where the Heart Is

"We try to be consistent," she went on. "All the children and sisters use first names, because of our family, rather than institutional structure."

"There is a daily routine. Some of the families which the children come from have no eating schedule, and sporadic sleeping times. Some take longer than others to adjust, but kids are very flexible and progress or regress very quickly."

Occasionally, the family goes camping in a big van the house owns. Once in awhile they eat out. Three

of the boys attend St. Andrew's School, one goes to School 11 and one to School 6, at the direction of Social Services. Most parents don't have to deal with so many schools at once, but at that, this year is easier than last was, Sister Gaye said. At one time last year, there were six children in five schools, each with its open house and parent-teacher meetings and special appointments.

Sister Gaye has developed an interest in "childhood advocacy" and the opinion that the foster care system needs scrutiny

in the light of the child's rights. Often, she said, a child will be moved from one situation to another, to another, or simply put back into the domestic conditions that had occasioned his removal in the first place.

She sees such a home as Andrew Center as a "visible sign of an alternative to abortion." She hopes the county agency will set up similar homes.

The work has the approval of the parish and the Mercy congregation, she

said, and "because of our success, I know the Department of Social Services is open to exploring the possibility of opening other such homes."

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