



Paul Walker, left, and David Christenson lead Brian Frey through his patterning exercises.

Photo by Martin Toombs

# Center Negotiates For State Certification

By Martin Toombs  
Southern Tier Editor

**Corning** — After three years of struggle to meet financial obligations, the Greenhouse Center is close to getting state recognition for its work with brain-damaged persons.

That recognition will lead to Medicaid and health insurance payments, giving the agency, which uses the sensorimotor approach, a sound financial footing.

But the change from a mostly-volunteer agency accountable to the clients and their families, to a state-funded day treatment center, is a matter of concern to some involved.

Nancy H. Peterson, acting executive director, notes that the state certification will mean 11 additional employees, and other changes in the program. Those changes, she said, should not adversely affect the treatment now being provided.

Instead, it will extend services, she explained. Among the new employees will be a medical director, a physical therapist, and a social worker, she noted, all adding to services now available. State funding should begin April 15, she noted, with said a four-month start-up grant.

Mrs. Peterson also noted that the state funding aid will enable the program to expand from its current 12 clients to about 30 within the next few months. Further growth is possible, she said, mentioning the need for additional space as a new concern.

Located in St. Patrick's School, the Greenhouse Center uses the sensorimotor, or patterning, approach to rehabilitation of brain damage. The clients range from severely affected persons in a near-coma state, to students in the local schools who suffer from learning disabilities.

Patterning was developed at the Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential in Philadelphia.

The theory is based on the concept that undamaged parts of the brain can be taught to perform the functions of the damaged parts. This is done by a return to the physical activities of a baby, such as creeping and crawling, in an attempt to provide the same kind of stimulus that begins learning for small children.

The approach has been controversial, and Mrs. Peterson noted that as far as she knows, the Greenhouse will be the first in the nation using the technique to get government funding. While the concept has many detractors, there also are available many testimonial accounts of great strides achieved by persons who have received the treatment.

The Greenhouse was founded by Joyce Lubold, who had gone to the institute in Philadelphia seeking treatment for her son. She started the Greenhouse so local families could receive the treatment without the trip to Philadelphia.

The program has been supported throughout by many volunteers. Mrs. Peterson noted, many of whom responded to a need for volunteers when Mrs. Lubold first began the program, and have continued to give their time, she noted. The program moved to four rooms in the St. Patrick's School in 1976; since then, the parish has aided the program in various ways, including forgiving

rent payments and co-sponsoring fund-raising events.

The program has been operating during what Mrs. Peterson called an "interim" period while applying for state certification through a grant from the Corning Glass Works Foundation.

The treatment plan for each client is prepared by Charles Buhrns, the center's evaluator, and is then carried out by staff and by volunteers. A variety of equipment is used, most of which is custom-made; each piece is designed to provide a certain kind of physical stimulation.

On a recent morning, a client suffering from brain damage caused by a blood clot was being bounced on a trampoline-like device, and another suffering from cerebral palsy was doing exercises to increase coordination.

The center's board of directors met recently with the clients' families to discuss the upcoming changes. To be considered are the changes required by state regulations, new hours, the implications of the changes to treatment offered, and explanation of the additional staff to be hired. Those are just some of the issues the board must deal with as the program moves from its current "interim" period into its position as a day treatment center for the area.

## Guild Formed to Aid St. Joseph's Villa

A guild has been formed recently to aid St. Joseph's Villa, the diocesan Catholic Charities institution for the care and treatment of dependent, neglected, delinquent and emotionally disturbed children and youth.

The members of the guild are presently conducting a drive for more members.

The guild's first activity has been slated for May 3. A card

party will be held at the Mapledale Party House at 6:15 p.m.

Mrs. Joseph Pilato has been elected president of the group, assisted by the Mesdames Francis Desiderio, Jo Pizutelli, Leo Spezio and Carmella Santomieri.

Coordinating the drive for new guild members is Lucille Zicari, 184 Orchard Park Blvd., Rochester 14609.

### Correction

Mrs. Rita Kramer was incorrectly identified in a photograph last week. She is a member of the team at St. Boniface Church coordinating a parish-wide census.

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