

Day Care: A Home Away From Home

Lepha (Marie) Smith and six kids are well known to the Warm Springs Day Care Center. They have been utilizing its services since the beginning of the program eight years ago. Lepha has this to say about day care: "Some people knock it but it's been great for me. As a single parent I've had to work and I couldn't have done it without day care. I especially appreciate their regular hours and regular meals."

There are many other working mothers who confidently leave their children with day care staff from 7:30 to shortly after 5:00 on weekdays. All kinds of families are eligible according to a fee scale but the parents must be employed.

Currently 55 kids from about six weeks to twelve years of age are enrolled in the program. They are given loads of attention by the dedicated staff of 13 teachers, aides, and administrators.

Upon entering the day care center, which is in the former boys' dorm, one is impressed by the lively cheerful atmosphere. Toddlers smile shyly through their gate and colorful artwork decorates the brightly-painted walls. As soon as you get used to the day care set-up you begin to notice how smoothly familiar routine and flexible spontaneity work together to make a unified program.

Children are divided by age among four classrooms: Babies (6 weeks-1 year), Toddlers (1 year olds), Striders (2-3 year olds), and the Kindergarten (4 years and up). Certain 3-5 year olds attend the Head Start Day Care program housed in a modular unit behind the building and funded separately. There are a teacher and teachers aide in each classroom.

Roughly the schedule goes like this: At 7:30 a.m. the kids are dropped off by their parents and a full breakfast is served. The morning is spent carrying out each classroom's daily plan which consists of written and unwritten learning experiences. Lunch begins at 11:30 and kids then rest until about 2:30. There is a snack at 3:00 and the remainder of the afternoon is devoted to informal activities such as supervised outdoor play or watching Sesame Street.

Nutrition is one of the primary concerns of day care. Mealtimes are important for providing social experiences but also to ensure that the

children eat properly and know the value of a good diet. The cook Ella Wewa and her assistant Maida Robertson, apparently do a tremendous job of preparing good balanced meals in an innovative and pleasant manner. Nutritional information is also presented to the kids in fun ways as an integrated part of classroom activities.

The educational philosophy of the program is well thought out but staff does not attempt to provide formal schooling. Dacotah Soules and Pat Nehl, Director and Assistant Director of Early Childhood Education, agree on the shared aims of day care and Head Start: helping children to cope with day-to-day events, to feel good about themselves, to get along with other people and to reach their potential.

Health and social service components are handled primarily by Deborah Allen, the Parent-Health Coordinator. Ms. Allen bridges the gap between parents and their children by familiarizing herself in great depth with every child's physical, mental and emotional condition and keeping communication with the parents open. Parents are invited to visit, volunteer and attend meetings so that they have an ongoing involvement with the program.

Of course the nitty-gritty of working and being with the kids day after day is the responsibility of the teachers and aides. Two requirements for the job are a liking for children and physical and emotional stamina. And the day care teaching staff deserves a great deal of credit for offering tal-



THE STRIDERS, all 2 year olds at the present time, line up for wash-time before lunch. Carol

Wewa is the teachers aide for this very organized room. Photo by Cynthia Stowell

ents such as these and making the program a consistent and stable experience for the kids. The staff includes: Becky Wasson, Carol Wewa, Peggy Poitra, Marlana Estrada, Marie Tom, Vivian Wewa, Florine Davis, and Lucille Teeman.

Staff members are given opportunities to attend training sessions and workshops outside the program. In-service training and regular staff meetings also keep teachers on their toes. As a result, teachers are well-equipped to deal with the needs of different kinds of children.

Administrative Director
Pauline Allen started out as a

teacher at the beginning of the program and therefore brings some classroom experience to her present position. Ms. Allen finds her job consisting of extensive paperwork relating to personnel, funding and intake. It takes a great deal of record-keeping and report-writing to keep a multi-funded program in operation.

Although much of Day Care's funding comes from the state (Children's Services Divi-

sion) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, local support is significant. Parents' fees and tribal contributions comprise a meaningful portion of the funding. The Day Care program feels fortunate to have the assistance of the Tribe, especially at a time when many day care programs are having to close for lack of resources. A program such as this is most effective when it has the support of the community, and Warm Springs Day Care Center has come a long way in becoming a truly community-based program.

The staff, which is almost totally comprised of local women, recognizes the great responsibility they have in guiding and shaping the lives of the participating children. "Our day care kids tend to be the leaders when they go to school," says Deborah Allen. "We are not just a babysitting service. We give personalized attention to the kids through planned activities."

Teachers and aides seem to develop real caring relationships with the children in an effort to provide a positive experience that compliments the home.

Curtis Works Displayed

Edward S. Curtis has left us a legacy of enormous value. Through his life-long work he captured the spirit of the American Indian in the early part of this century and recorded it in words and photographs. His strong images and sensitive text comprise a 20-volume work entitled *The North American Indian*, which also includes 20 portfolios of copper plate photogravures.

A portion of this magnificent collection, of which whole intact sets are rare, was assembled at the Kah-Nee-Ta Lodge for display August 8-18. Photogravures (prints made from an engraving process) from Volume 7 of the portfolios were chosen to represent the work Curtis did among Indians of the Northwest from 1900 to 1910. Curtis' written explanation of the photogravures accompanied the exhibit. Also for the public's benefit, a larger

sampling of prints was offered in a displayed copy of the book *In A Sacred Manner We Live*.

The Art Merchant in Sisters procured the photogravures from the Chicago Art Institute and offered to lend them to Kah-Nee-Ta for display and sale. Many people enjoyed the exhibit but sales were not especially good, perhaps because the value of such original pieces is not widely understood.

Kah-Nee-Ta's Director of Sales Shirley Johansen arranged for the exhibit and will be bringing more Indian and local artwork to Kah-Nee-Ta. "It lends a lot to the lodge to have shows like this," she commented. "And, it gives local artists an opportunity to show their work."

The next display will be sponsored by Artists Associates, Inc. beginning August 20.

About Your Social Security

Working people under 72 getting social security retirement, survivors, or dependents payments should report any changes in their 1976 earnings estimates as soon as possible, according to John Fullerton, social security representative in Central Oregon.

Social security payments to people under 72 are affected by their earnings. "They should report any change in their earnings on the post card sent to people who work and get social security checks," Fullerton said. "If the card is lost, the report can be made by meeting the representative at the Social Services office in the Community Services Building the fourth Thursday of any month from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m."

The Bend social security office is at 39 N.W. Louisiana Avenue and notices can also be sent there any time, or you can phone the office at 382-6922, extension 276 in Bend.

"People who find they are earning less than they originally estimated may get additional social security payments during 1976 if they report the change," Fullerton said. "On the other hand, people who earn more than they originally estimated who do not report the change may get social security payments not due to them and have to pay back some money at the end of the year."

Social security payments are not affected by earnings of \$2,760 or less for the year. Payments are reduced \$1 for each \$2 earned over \$2,760, but a beneficiary is guaranteed a check for any month they neither earn over \$230 nor do substantial work in their own business.