

ENCOR

Eastern Nebraska Community Office of Retardation



Vocational Services

ENCOR vocational programs verify that individuals, with any degree of retardation, can successfully engage in community training programs — programs geared toward varying degrees of independence and self-sufficiency.

In meeting this challenge, vocational environments offer training in basic skill development, advanced work skills, and pre-employment preparation.

As each employee acquires a wider range of abilities, he or she progresses from a highly structured work setting to a work site located directly in industry.

Once the employee has mastered the necessary skills and demonstrates the abilities required in a competitive job, placement into the community labor force is initiated.

Follow-along services are provided at this point, until the employee is virtually independent of vocational support.





Educational Services

In 1974, based on right to education legislation, area public schools developed and implemented programs to serve school-age handicapped students previously served by ENCOR. Today, ENCOR's programs for mentally retarded children serve those under five years of age in a variety of settings.

Current programs are flexible to meet the needs of the particular child. The Coordinated Early Education Program serves infants and preschool-age mentally retarded students at home and in regular preschools.

Home Training teachers visit the home to work directly with the children who cannot attend regular preschool.

The Regular Integrated Program involves the integration of the handicapped child into regular preschool activities with the support of a special resource teacher.

The Traveling Resource Teacher Program is for children who can function in regular preschool classes with a small amount of help from a specialized teacher.

It is important for a retarded child to learn to grow with his or her own peer group in an educational environment. Because of this, a multitude of options are available from ENCOR and the area public schools to meet these needs.

The Eastern Nebraska Community Office of Retardation's credo —

to provide mentally retarded citizens with the same setting and resources available to all citizens — is exemplified in every facet of programming.

Less than a decade ago, the ENCOR service system began with a simple premise in mind — all retarded citizens are capable of learning.

Whether it be teaching a handicapped child the alphabet, or informing a retarded citizen on the techniques of riding a city bus, ENCOR staff encourage the skills that will lead to independence.

Programs are instated using the theory of normalization which requires that the conditions and patterns of the everyday life of retarded citizens be as similar as possible to the conditions and patterns of the everyday life experienced by other citizens.

ENCOR's constant aim is to overcome the myths which stereotype mentally retarded citizens. With that in mind, ENCOR strives to maintain a climate of individual growth and understanding through the use of community resources.

ENCOR employs 400 persons, including professional and paraprofessional staff, trained and experienced in the fields of education, psychological services, social work services, physical, speech and occupational therapy, vocational counseling, job training, job placement and staff development and training.



History and Perspective

At the time of its establishment in 1970, ENCOR assumed responsibility for the developmental and residential programs which had been initiated two years earlier by the Greater Omaha Association of Retarded Citizens.

ENCOR is the designated agency for Mental Retardation Region VI of the State of Nebraska. ENCOR serves Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington Counties, which comprise more than a half million people, or one-third of Nebraska's population.

One county board member from each of the five counties serves as a member of the Governing Board — the governing body of ENCOR.

Guidance Services

Guidance advisors are advocates working with mentally retarded individuals — arranging the services they need to fully participate in community life.

Advisors are the main contact point for the retarded individual and his or her family in ENCOR. Along with providing information on services, advisors also personally assist individuals in obtaining services from ENCOR as well as other community agencies.

An Individualized Program Plan is used to coordinate services. Together with the advisor, the mentally retarded individual, his or her families and the service providers write specific objectives and goals that correspond with the individual's interests and needs.

Upon reaching a certain level of independence, the individual may receive follow-along services.

The advisor is a person to turn to with questions, individual needs, changes in routine or personal problems — helping the retarded individual learn to make independent decisions.





Residential Services

Mentally retarded individuals live in every county, community and neighborhood within the region ENCOR serves. The people at ENCOR believe the same environment should be enjoyed by everyone so that resources available to all citizens are readily accessible to the retarded individual as well.

ENCOR residential services provide homes for mentally retarded children and adults, giving to them the same understanding and concern that is exemplified in all ENCOR services.

There are over one hundred residences in the five county area that ENCOR serves. Some individuals who do not need constant care live with a friend. Others live with five or six friends and staff members, sharing the household chores, shopping at the corner store, depositing their paychecks at a nearby bank — they are living in the community.

To the people at ENCOR, that is what residential services are all about — making a house a home, showing some people how to live independently in their community.

Recreation

Mentally retarded adults and children are given a chance to become involved in recreational activities that promote mental, physical and social growth.

Activities like arts and crafts contribute to eye-hand coordination.

Swimming, hiking and other physical sports allow for improved small and large motor development coordination, body movement and control, as well as increased self-awareness and confidence. Cultural awareness is also heightened by trips to the opera, museums and art fairs.

The special needs of the individual are met wherever possible. Classes on weight control and outings for multiply handicapped individuals are some examples.

ENCOR's Recreation Department provides or procures leisure time programming on a year-round basis, thus encouraging the maximum growth of each individual.

Most activities take place in community settings like parks and recreational facilities.

**For more information, contact the
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