

Louisiana Public Health newsletter

LOUISIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Mentally Retarded Children Need Services, Health Survey Reveals

The need for additional services for Louisiana's mentally retarded children is revealed in a survey recently completed by the Louisiana State Department of Health.

According to Dr. Andrew Hedmeg, state health officer, the survey shows that 2611 mentally retarded children are on health unit caseloads. This means that each child has received one or more services from a parish health unit since 1965.

Survey results indicate that 710 children were receiving care in the health department's program for crippled children; 800 were in Special Education programs administered by the State Department of Education; 82 were in institutions; and 1011 of the 2,611 mentally retarded children known to health unit personnel were living at home and receiving no special help in home care or training and education.

Many of the last group could benefit from special services, Dr. Hedmeg said. The Louisiana State Department of Hospitals has estimated that as of October 22, 1968, there were 107,655 mentally retarded people of all ages in Louisiana. They may be classified as mildly retarded and educable (2.6%); moderately retarded and trainable (3%); or severely retarded (1%). There are 3,100 mentally retarded persons in State schools. The number in the Exceptional Childrens Act program is 439. These are not necessarily all mentally retarded, but may have other conditions that would cause abnormal development or make special services desirable.

Approximately 2300 children are waiting for admission to state schools. Many parents, discouraged by the length of time it takes for admittance, do not even attempt to get their children into state institutions.

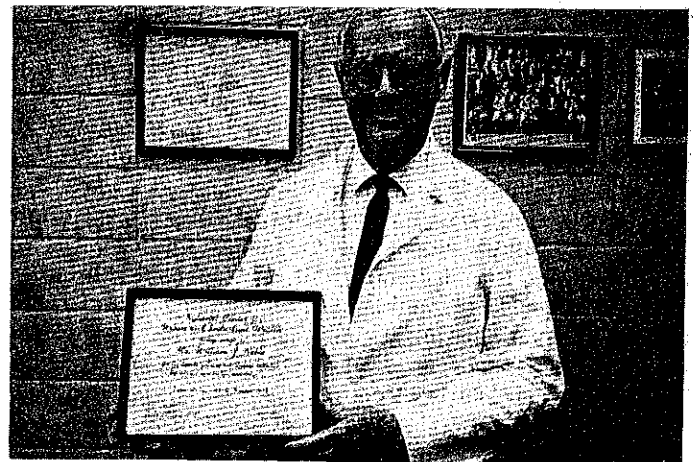
Dr. Hedmeg explained that the 2,611 children on the health department's rolls do not include all of the mentally retarded children receiving local health care, as reporting is better in some parishes than others. Many children are never brought to the health units for services, some because they are under the care of private physicians.

Despite these limitations, the survey is the first of its kind made in the State to assess the need for additional services.

One of the most promising ways to provide additional care is through Home Health Aides who can relieve parents of the problem of 24-hour-a-day supervision of their mentally retarded child. Such a program is in the planning stage, Dr. Hedmeg said. Plans call for Federal funding through Total Community Action.



SMOKING IS MESSY, says Miss Judy Willis, health educator in the smoking and health program, shown holding an ash tray for Smokey Sam. Sam is a 12-year-old boy manikin built to smoke cigarettes through glass jar lungs that filter out tar which can be seen and smelled. Miss Willis will use Sam in a demonstration program to educate Louisiana youth to the health hazards of cigarette smoking.



RECIPIENT of the first certificate presented by the National Center for Urban and Industrial Health "in recognition of twenty years of outstanding initiative in the pursuit of scientific knowledge" is William J. Noble, Shreveport, Assistant Head of Regional Laboratories. Mr. Noble attended the first course organized by the Center in 1948 and has completed at least one course since then. The courses cover the entire field of public health in food, water, and milk.

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Joins Staff

MRS. TOMMIE J. CAMPBELL, PHN, recently joined the staff at Ouachita Parish Health Unit. She trained at Charity Hospital in New Orleans and has worked at St. Francis Hospital, Monroe, and for several private physicians.



Louis P. Ganucheau, Jr., Director of the Bureau of Administrative Services, died January 14 following a brief illness. He joined the health department as Public Health Fiscal Officer in July 1966 and was promoted to Bureau director in the reorganization of July 1967. At the time of his death he was nearing the end of his term as president of the Louisiana Public Health Workers Federal Credit Union. A licensed Certified Public Accountant, he was a faculty member of Tulane University College, member of the Marquette Council No. 1437, Knights of Columbus, and of the Holy Name Society of St. Mary Magdalene Church.



SANITARIANS WILLIAM M. HARRIS, left, and Vance L. Griffiths came to the Ouachita Parish Health Unit as replacements for John R. Newton, promoted to Regional Air Control Technician, and John P. Hicks, promoted to Northeast Regional Sanitarian.

Henrietta (Mrs. Walter) Wedell, accountant in Administrative Services, and Mrs. May Wedell, the widow of her husband's brother Jimmy, were honored guests November 24 at a Texas City, Texas ceremony honoring their late husbands. Both men were famous pilots whose aviation achievements during the 1920's and early '30's were commemorated by a state historical marker.

Dr. Ralph Riggs, State Board of Health member from the 4th District, received the Distinguished Service Award of the Shreveport Medical Society at the group's annual banquet in December. Earlier in 1968 Dr. Riggs was awarded LPHA's Axson-Choppin Memorial Award for distinguished service to public health.

Gordon Roberts, psychologist, MCH, played Santa Claus for another successful Christmas party hosted by the St. Helena Parish Health Unit, and sponsored by practically all parish agencies and businesses for all children in the parish. As usual, the details of the holiday event were capably handled by the nurses, Betty Lee, Lois Miller, and Shirley Perkins.

James A. Russo, Food and Drug Control Officer, a member of the Genealogical Research Society of New Orleans, gave a talk on German genealogical investigation, a subject in which he is a recognized authority.

Gerald D. Healy, Jr., Chief, Solid Wastes and Vector Control Section, was appointed by Gov. McKeithen to the State Health Council for the Interdepartmental Health Policy Commission for Comprehensive Health Planning, as a representative nominated by the Louisiana Public Health Association.

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IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Doris Woods Wise, Typist Clerk II, Section of Handicapped Children Program, December 31, 1968.

Mr. Freddie O. Travis, Sanitarian I, Amite Milk Division, husband of Elvira S. Travis, Laboratory Technologist, Amite Milk Laboratory, December 8, 1968.

SYMPATHY is expressed to Thyria (Mrs. Bill) Broussard, Secretary, Division of Health Education, on the death of her mother, Mrs. Emma Golden, December 18, 1968... to Miss Rose Ann Langham, Chief, Nutrition Section, on the death of her father, the Rev. Dr. Rufus W. Langham, December 20, 1968... to Mrs. Mildred Schoenberger, Typist Clerk II, on the death of her mother, Mrs. Odile Heckmann, December 25, 1968... to Mrs. Edna R. Murray, PHN Lafourche, on the death of her mother, and to Ben Potier, Sanitarian, Lafourche, on the death of his father.

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JOHN J. MCKEITHEN
Governor

ANDREW HEDMEG, M.D., M.P.H.
State Health Officer

M. E. KOSSACK, M.S.P.H.
Head, Division of Public
Health Education

IRIS M. DAY
Editor

Crippled Children Services Cut

Dr. Andrew Hedmeg, state health officer, announces that the Handicapped Children Program of the State Department of Health must curtail by 75 percent the number of hospital days for hospitalizing crippled children and congenital heart disease cases needing operations. Also in effect since January 1, 1969 is a similar restriction in providing crippled children with braces and appliances. Hospitalization, braces and appliances will be furnished only to eligible children who are considered by the staff physician as emergency cases, and for whom postponement of such services would seriously jeopardize their health or life.

Because of increased hospitalization costs and rising costs of appliances, the Louisiana State Department of Health, in the first four months of this fiscal year, has expended about 58 percent of its hospitalization funds, and 44 percent of its braces and appliances funds for handicapped children. Federal funds were reduced by \$180,000 from the original apportionment for Louisiana for this program. Prior to this reduction, Dr. Hedmeg said, an estimated \$400,000 of additional funds was needed to keep the program going at approximately the same level of activity as in the past year. This was one of the requests for additional funds that the health department had submitted to the State Legislature.

These factors leave the care and treatment of our crippled children with an uncertain future, Dr. Hedmeg said. Over 20,000 children are carried on the health department's handicapped children register, of whom some 1,000 are in need of surgery, hospital care, and other treatment each year.

During the past two years the per diem cost of hospitalization rose from \$28.00 to \$60.00. Even higher are per diem costs for heart patients -- now about \$110.00. These rates are based on contractual arrangements with qualified hospitals throughout the State, on a cost reimbursable basis.

New Referral Center Open

The Louisiana Association for Mental Health announced it has opened an information and referral center at its offices, 1528 Jackson Ave., New Orleans, which will operate on a 24-hour basis to direct persons with mental and emotional problems to agencies designed to treat or counsel them. The program is being co-sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Hospitals.

Persons needing services of the center should call 524-8678.

The same telephone number will be used by Tulane University's 24-hour answering service for crisis intervention. Designed to help people in acute distress (depression, loneliness, suicide potential, family troubles) deal with their crisis through counseling over the telephone.

Lay volunteers will man the phones. They will be trained by a professional person who will be available to assist them when need arises.

Dr. Eugene J. Stassi will administer the Eye Anomalies Detection Program during the absence of Walter J. Laborde who is on educational leave.



PROFESSIONAL development of sanitarians was the theme of the meeting of the New Orleans Chapter of the National Association of Sanitarians held at the Training Center in November. Shown in an informal discussion are, from left, Capt. Dale Treusdale, PHS, Washington, D.C.; Kenneth Copes, program administrator, Handicapped Children program; Dr. Frank A. Gohr, University of California Medical Center; Hal Leahman, resident sanitarian at Tulane and U.S. PHS Hospital; Hal D. Exnicios, sanitarian with New Orleans City Health Department; Dr. Ben Freedman, Director, Bureau of Health Conservation; A. Harry Bliss, editor, Journal of Environmental Health; Capt. Francis J. Goldsmith, PHS, Washington, D.C.; Lt. Comdr. T. L. McCasland, director, hospital residency program, PHS; and Charles Gilham, sanitarian, Calcasieu health unit and regional vice-president of the National Association.



MAKING PLANS FOR a state leadership conference on smoking and health to be held in the spring are, from left, Judy Willis, health educator; Dr. Betty Baker, Southeastern Louisiana College; S. Eugene Barnes, State Department of Education; M. E. Kossack, Head, Division of Health Education; and Mrs. Ruth Sherwood, Cancer Association of Greater New Orleans, Inc. Present but not shown were Dr. Robert Blackburn, La. State College; Malcolm Patterson, Louisiana State University, and Leonard D. Ponder, Southeastern Louisiana College. The meeting was held during the LAHPHER convention in November.

Smokers Are Losers, Says DA

TV star William Talman, district attorney on "Perry Mason" show, was a three-pack-a-day smoker all his adult life. He reportedly asked the American Cancer Society for the opportunity to produce TV spots before his death of lung cancer Aug. 30. In the spots he asks his viewers to "take some advice about smoking and losing from someone who's been doing both for years."

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MENTALLY RETARDED

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Since 1967 public health nurses have been visiting Day Care Centers to assist directors and staff with health matters, and give instruction in food handling, first aid, referrals for correction of remedial defects in individual cases, and provide liaison between the home and physicians and other agencies in health matters. In addition, Dr. Hedmeg said, nutrition consultation, poison prevention education, and life-saving demonstrations have been provided by public health personnel. Minimum health standards were established for Day Care Centers, and the centers are inspected regularly by public health sanitarians.

The survey was conducted by Miss Ruth Hofshulte, since 1964 the health department's mental retardation program coordinator. Miss Hofshulte is a member of the state planning council for the mentally retarded.

Philip Howe, Jr., Head of the Division of Fiscal Services, was named acting director of the Bureau of Administrative Services to succeed the late Mr. Louis Ganucheau who died January 14.

Louisiana Public Health Association, Inc.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

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Name _____

Mailing Address _____

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Agency _____

City _____

Section Affiliation - (Check One)

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Are you a Member of The A.P.H.A.? _____

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Send Check to: Madge Kelly, Treasurer

P.O. Box 4460, Monroe, La. 71201

ALL ABOUT US

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That trim new look at the East Baton Rouge Parish Health Unit is due to the smart uniforms recently adopted by all the clerical staff.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mrs. Vera Beyer, Personnel Technician, who became a grandmother for the first time in December. Lucky baby Christine weighed in at 7lb., 11½ oz....to Mrs. Frances Breland, Typist-Clerk II, VD Section, who became Mrs. Alphonse E. Lapes on November 27. Her husband is with the U.S. Corps of Engineersto Sylvia Herbert, Steno-Clerk, Food and Drug Division, who received her engagement ring for Christmas... to Linda Anne Schiro, Secretary, Air Control Section, married November 9 to Mr. George A. Post...to A. S. Kennington, Director Bedding and Upholstered Furniture Inspection Division, and secretary-treasurer of the Association of Bedding and Furniture Law Officials, for his efforts in creating new interest in the Association among non-member states...

WELCOME to Miss Vivian Muller, formerly with the Health Referral Program, now secretary to the Solid Wastes and Vector Control Section.

Miss Theresa Piccione, Lafayette PHN, is publicity chairman for the L'Acadien Charter Chapter of American Business Women's Association.

Homer J. Osborn, Administrative Assistant, TB Control Section, and his staff received a well-deserved pat on the back in a letter from Crown Zellerbach Corp., St. Francisville: "...sincere appreciation in your response to our request for the services for your mobile chest x-ray unit. M. P. Cresap, Jr., and A. S. Rottman, Jr., did a very commendable job, and in the two and one-half days, 579 chest x-rays were administered representing approximately 70% employee participation." In addition, the company's publication "Crown Time" featured the x-ray unit.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery are extended to Miss Rhea King, Typist-Clerk, Amite Milk Laboratory, who underwent surgery in mid-December.

Friends were happy to hear from Lois M. Jund, formerly with the Dallas Regional Office, now with the Public Health Service at Fairbanks, Ala.

Mrs. Linda B. LeRay, Typist-Clerk, Lafourche, flew to Honolulu to meet her husband, Larry, a 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Army, on R&R leave from Vietnam. Oliver Bourgeois, son of Mrs. Claudia Bourgeois, Steno-Clerk, Lafourche, was on leave from the U.S. Navy in January. He recently was promoted to Personnel 3rd Class.

Dr. Sarah Braud, director, Lafourche, just might hold the record for public speaking. Her audiences and themes have included "services of the health department" to the Lockport Women's Club; Thibodaux High School students, for Career Day; guest speaker at installation banquet of officers of the Parish Council Home Demonstration Club; students of Central Lafourche High School; sex education, for parents at St. Joseph and Chackbay elementary schools; a teachers' workshop, and panelist for a sectional meeting of health and physical education teachers.

Cadet Lt. Mike J. Broussard, son of Thyria (Mrs. Bill) Broussard, Health Education division's secretary, was team commander of the St. Aloysius Naval Junior ROTC drill team who were invited to participate in the Inaugural Parade of President Richard M. Nixon.