Staff can make the difference in group homes

By Dianna Sleigh

Choosing the right staff to work with children can make a difference in helping the children discover how good they can become, Karen DeBrown said Wednesday.

DeBrown, a former counselor and juvenile court probation officer, spoke to about 50 Nebraska Group Home Association members as part of the group's fall conference at the Airport Inn.

The conference, "Making a Difference," provided an opportunity for association members to get together and share ideas, James Arnot said. Arnot is the executive director of the Youth Service System of Lincoln. The conference was on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The purpose of the association is to promote the quality of group-home care for Nebraska's children between the ages of 13 and 19. The Association provides alternate living arrangements for children who are placed in group homes by the Welfare Department and the courts.

Research conducted

Currently, with Selection Research Inc., DeBrown and her associates are doing research that will help people to choose the best possible staff to work with children who are placed in sessions and group

homes, she said.

Certain types of reoccurring thought patterns were found to be common between people who could deal successfully with the development of children, De-Brown said. Selection Research is attempting to write a questionnaire based on the research that will explore the thought patterns so that employers will be better equipped to choose their employees.

DeBrown outlined the 10 behavior characteristics that successful child-care workers seem to possess. They are a sense of mission, favorable relationships, empathy, responsibility, work orientation, organizational skills, activation, courage, objectivity and a sense of satisfaction from the growth and development of the children they work with.

The questionnaire has five questions from each of the characteristics, DeBrown

Help important

Regardless of what method is used, the important thing is that somehow more and better ways will be found to help children to learn, to grow and to feel like real human beings every day of their lives, DeBrown said.

"The best way you can do that is by

finding the right people to work with equipment, money or space, Arnot said.

Other activities at the conference

Association membership is open to included a business meeting and a "new anyone involved with child care, agency game" program dealing with non-competi- or non-agency group homes and foster tive games, which do not require a lot of care. Membership fees vary.

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Police Report

The following calls and complaints were received by UNL police from 7 a.m. Tuesday to 7 a.m. Wednes-

12:51 p.m. - Bicycle reported stolen from Neihardt Residence Center.

1:37 p.m. - Reported hit-and-run accident in Area 24 near the Horse Barn on East Campus.

2:45 p.m. - Wallet reported stolen from a car parked in the College of Dentistry patient parking

3:12 p.m. - Wooden shelving reported stolen from the first floor of Richards Hall.

5:13 p.m. - Loud stereo reported at 16th and S streets. Call settled by offic-

9:05 p.m. - Report of marijuana use in the bowling alley in the Nebraska Union. Parties were gone when officers arrived.

9:32 p.m. - Cash and a calculator were reported stolen from Harper Hall.

9:34 p.m. - Wallet reported stolen from the weight room in the Coliseum.

12:42 a.m. - Mechanical alarm set off at the East Union. Alarm was false.

7:19 a.m. - Unfounded report of theft from rental truck.

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