

**This is a part of the Indiana Disability History Project series:  
From Segregation to Integration, Oral History about the Education of  
Children with Disabilities\*.**

- **Lesson 1: Children with Disabilities in the Age of Institutions**
- **Lesson 2: Educating Children with Disabilities without Public Schools**
- **Lesson 3: Students with Disabilities in Segregated Public Education (1960s and 1970s)**
- **Lesson 4: The Integration of Students with Disabilities into Classrooms (1970s– 2000s)**

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\*The Indiana Disability History Project is funded by the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent positions or policies of the Council.



# Children with Disabilities in the Age of Institutions




INDIANA INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY  
**CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY**




**GOVERNOR'S  
COUNCIL FOR  
PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES**



## Opening: It's a Terrible Place



 **Bonnie Smith**

<https://bit.ly/2Z2cCws>

# Admitting Children to Institutions (Sue Beecher)

## Guiding Question

Sue Beecher remembers having a job where she placed children in institutions.

- **How did she feel about that later in her life?**

## Things to Know

- Before the 1970s, many children with disabilities lived in institutions. Some were called “hospitals”, but the children didn’t get well and go home. They stayed for many years.
- New Castle State Hospital (later known as New Castle State Developmental Center) closed in 1998.
- Otis Bowen was the Governor of Indiana from 1973 to 1981.



## Admitting Children to Institutions (Sue Beecher)

Sue Beecher



<https://bit.ly/3kdU4kT>

## Guiding Question

When Bonnie's son, Brooks, was placed in an institution, she was told she could not visit her son for the first several months.

- **Why wasn't Bonnie able to visit her son?**

## Things to Know

- Brooks entered Madison State Hospital in the 1970s. Later on, children and adults with disabilities were moved out of Indiana institutions and back into their communities. Brooks eventually moved into a group home near his family.
- Madison State Hospital is located in the southeastern part of Indiana.



## It's a Terrible Place (Bonnie Smith)



<https://bit.ly/2PFn7QA>

# School Experiences at Muscatatuck State Developmental Center

## Guiding Question

In this video, we learn what school was like for children placed in Muscatatuck.

- **If children misbehaved in school at the institution, were they allowed to stay in the classroom?**

## Things to Know

- In the 1950s and '60s, many children with disabilities in southern Indiana were sent away from their families to an institution called Muscatatuck State School.
- Children who lived at Muscatatuck often stayed there through adulthood.
- Some children with disabilities attended school at Muscatatuck because the local public schools would not accept them. They lived with their families.





# School Experiences at Muscatatuck State Developmental Center



0:22 / 3:50



<https://bit.ly/3j9DuS2>

## Guiding Question

Paul was young when he had a job at an institution.

- **How did his feelings about the place change over time?**

## Things to Know

- Fort Wayne State Hospital was originally called the Indiana School for Feeble Minded Youth when it opened in 1890.
- Renamed the Fort Wayne State Developmental Center, the institution closed in 2007. It was the last state institution for people with intellectual disabilities to close in Indiana.



# Looking Back is Difficult (Paul Shankland)

Paul Shankland



<https://bit.ly/3IXDw0R>

## Discussion/Debrief

### Admitting Children to Institutions with **Sue Beecher**:

- **In the past, many parents chose to place their children in institutions instead of caring for them at home. What does Sue Beecher say are some of the reasons the parents did that?**

### It's a Terrible Place with **Bonnie Smith**:

- **In the 1970s, Bonnie and her husband found that they couldn't take care of their son Brooks. He was placed in an institution. What happened when they went to visit him there at Thanksgiving? Do you think Brooks was being well taken care of? Why or why not?**



## Discussion/Debrief

### School Experiences at Muscatatuck State Developmental Center

- **One of the speakers described how children who misbehaved were placed in a room by themselves, what they called a “quiet room.” What do you think that was like for the child? How might the experience have affected them and their education?**

### Looking Back is Difficult with **Paul Shankland**

- **Paul says about his job, “I didn’t know a lot that I know now.” What do you think are some of the things he learned later on?**



# Glossary

- **Group home:** a residence where multiple, unrelated people with disabilities live together and receive support from staff 24 hours a day
- **Institution:** a large facility where people with disabilities live and receive care, often in a confined setting and without their consent
- **Intellectual disability:** a lifelong condition related to thinking that can cause a person to develop and learn more slowly or differently
- **Muscatatuck:** the name of the state institution is commonly pronounced "mus-CA-tuh-tuck," saying the middle syllable like you would the word "cat"

