

## **State near accord with anti-drug group**

**COLUMBIA — A controversial drug program known for its hard-hitting approach won conditional permission to operate here after it was ordered closed for violating state laws.**

**State health officials ordered Straight Inc. closed Sept. 6 and placed the center on probation for a year because it did not provide on-site education for clients. The center also had no child placement license, officials said.**

**But state Health Secretary Nelson J. Sabatini said if the center complies with state laws, it will receive full certification. The center was expected to begin an education program today with instruction provided by the county school system.**

**The Columbia center has 52 clients and is one of eight centers providing drug treatment to 1,000 youngsters nationwide.**

**It opened in late July after being forced out of Virginia in a battle with state regulators who said the center used physical restraints and provided no education for school-age clients. The program also has been accused of using beatings and starvation.**