

The Miami Herald

Broward County Section

WILLIAM BALL FRANK CAPERTON
Managing Editor Editor

WILLIAM F. JACOBSON HEATH MEDWETHERS JOE CRANKSHAW
Deputy Editor City Editor Hollywood Bureau Chief

Bureau Addresses, Telephone Numbers

BROWARD COUNTY		MIAMI		MIAMI BEACH	
ADDRESS	PHONE	ADDRESS	PHONE	ADDRESS	PHONE
FOR EADY (DALL)	353-1111	GENERAL	523-7341		
MIAMI WOOD	353-2011	MIAMI BEACH	523-7341		
MIAMI BEACH	353-2011				

2-BR

Sat., Oct. 14, 1972

EDITORIAL

Seed Is Put In Perspective

Now that the State Drug Abuse Program has released its evaluation of the Seed, perhaps the community can get down to the real business of drug rehabilitation — providing a variety of services to a variety of drug abusers.

This effort has been slowed in recent months by Art Barker and his supporters who have spread the word that The Seed is the only program "saving kids." They have so often repeated the claim — 90 per cent success for the hard core addict — that confidence in the state's 92 other programs was quietly eroded.

Barker and some of his more vocal supporters have made frontal assaults on other programs, calling their efforts a waste of time and money.

The state report begins to put the Seed in proper perspective for it shows the program to be no better than any other drug program using the tried and true devices of peer pressure and group interaction.

Records reviewed by the state reveal that only 41 per cent of the youths who entered the Seed graduated from the program. Further, it showed no follow-up action was done on 90 per cent of the graduates.

If we define success in terms of completing the program, then Barker has exaggerated his success rate by over 100 per cent. But if we see success in terms of continued abstinence from drugs, the state tells us that Barker has no way of knowing who is successful because he has no means of checking on graduates. Indeed Barker could not even report with accuracy whether his graduate Seedlings are

Either way, the Seed's credibility is in need of repair. Barker would do well to begin that repair immediately.

In the meantime however, other parts of the report should not be overlooked.

We quote from the state report:

"In addition to his negative attitude toward other drug programs, (Barker) indicates loss of faith in the school system and law enforcement by suggesting the members of these professions are contributing to the drug dependency problem through providing of drugs to the young people of the community. The committee feels that this is unnecessary for rehabilitation of this young group."

Also noted in the committee report is the need for professional augmentation of the Seed staff. Currently the only professionally trained staff member in the program is Sister Theresa. The task of overseeing the care of hundreds of troubled youths is too big for one person no matter how total her commitment.

While the state made no direct comment about the program's poor record-keeping, the statistics speak for themselves. No information was available on the treatment history on 72 per cent of the records checked. That shortcoming could have disastrous effects on the youth with an unrecorded history of psychological disorder.

The state report said the Seed program's regimen of peer pressure and group interaction has "a great deal to offer" youngsters who have tried several types of drugs.

That promise, however, can only be kept by a Seed program that has sufficient professional staff and keeps adequate records and tells the public the truth about itself.