

comfort in student-run woodwork program

ems the average kid doesn't
ct with,
he streets you have to be
fing tough, just tough on

re street-wise at seven years
are blown away by glue at
is usually end up working on

u get past the tough exterior,
nal kids."

ed the IASIC program about
, Working with just a few
il of volunteers, and little
up shop in the abandoned
McCauley Center.

Cloutier explains, "the be-
easy." Not being an official
Cloutier had to scrounge
inery, and whatever else he

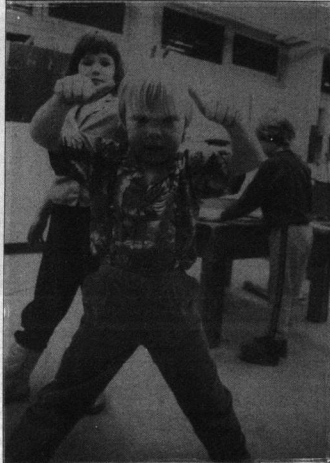
school to school to promote
eventually coaxed kids into
fill up a cabinet following.

ings that for many kids, life in
"is the world." This opens

ese kids are
-wise at seven
ears old."

elped a twelve-year-old boy
elf. He said he was going to
o buy him a book!"

jects that range from "glue-
ed together" to cabinets and
loutier and his twelve to
ity student volunteers teach
ills to about 500 kids between
ril.



Thumbs up for the program

Most of the projects are fairly simple, he explains. "When they come in here, they don't have any sense of commitment; whatever they build they want to take home that night. We have simple kits where the pieces are already cut and all they have to do is put it together. Immediate success. Commitment. It gives them a feeling they can do something."

"I like this place, it's fun. I come every time it's on," said Crystal, a bubbly, paint-speckled ten-year-old, showing off a doll-sized bunk bed she was making.

But sadly, not all projects are a success. While Cloutier's program has built a regular following, many kids wander in for an evening and then return to the streets.

"You're just kidding yourself if you think you can turn everyone around."

"Most of the people who work here have a pretty good idea of what's in store for these kids. You're just kidding yourself if you think you can turn everyone around."

Regardless of the failures, Cloutier is looking to the future of the program. With an eye on replacing and upgrading machinery he

says has become dangerous and outdated. Cloutier is hoping to lobby money from the Students' Union to further the program.

"There is so much potential here for students to get involved," said Cloutier. "Drama students, education students... I would like to see the program expand throughout the University."

Although Cloutier admits that the neighborhood surrounding the McCauley Center

"The goal of the program is... to put the kids in one room without fighting."

is far removed from the cleanly swept sidewalks of the University, he says it provides a rare teaching experience that education students can't get anywhere else.

"Working with these kids is good hands-on experience — it's real. The students who complain that everything at the U of A is so abstract and theoretical can come here and get their hands dirty."

Story by: Jeff Cowley
Photos by: Jeff Cowley



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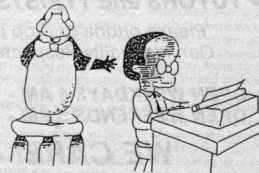
I am a graduate student in Educational Psychology presently completing my doctoral dissertation. I am interested in interviewing individuals who have previously experienced **Anorexia Nervosa**, but now consider themselves recovered from this disorder. If you would be willing to share your unique experience with me, please contact Judy James at 432-0856. **Confidentiality is ensured.**

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