Act Like Baby, Treated Like Baby

WALLA WALLA, Wash. (AP) — Some Washington State Penitentiary inmates who misbehaved had to wear diapers because it didn't embarrass them.

"The idea is to get him to realize what playing the role of the baby is all the way. In fact, if a patient is acting like a baby, you have to treat him like one," Hunter said in a separate interview.

Hunter said he treated more than 1,000 inmate-patients in his 12 years at the prison. And he said he could not recall any individual in his program who was further restrained after being paroled.

"In 12 months to two years of treatment, I can change their behavior. Right now, I've got some who admit to eight different stabbings while in prison. Here he's been nothing but a perfect gentleman." Hunter added.

But Harold Bradley, director of the state's adult corrections division, said, "We still have a basic commitment in this system to maintaining the dignity and sanctity of human beings."

Legal challenges to Hunter's methods were increasing. The practice of chaining patients was ended by court order.

"There's been an allegation that his attendants had acted in a human way," the psychologist said.

After five days of "think time," the patient decided to act like a baby. The psychologist said, "I can change their behavior. Right now, I've got some who admit to eight different stabbings while in prison. Here he's been nothing but a perfect gentleman." Hunter added.

"We had one man here who burned up his mattress the first night he was here," Hunter said in a separate interview. "I put him on the bed so he couldn't hurt himself or others and because I wanted him there so he would be forced to do nothing but think."

The inmate's feet were chained and his arms hand-cuffed. Hunter said patients thus restrained could still move and think.

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