



Island Dolphin Care, Inc., Key Largo, FL

Safe Floors Important to Island Dolphin Care

Island Dolphin Care, Inc. (IDC) is a not-for-profit organization that provides dolphin-assisted therapy to critically ill, disabled and special needs children. Located in Key Largo, FL, the organization was created by Deena Hoagland after witnessing the remarkable recovery of her three-year-old son, Joe, who suffered a stroke during open-heart surgery. Deena and her husband Peter watched as Joe responded physically and psychologically to dolphin therapy.

Deena reasoned that if dolphins could help Joe, they might also help other children. That was in 1990. Today IDC serves approximately 2,000 children annually in a new 5,000 square-foot facility that opened last April. The three-story structure features three therapy classrooms, a family resources library, a meeting room, seven aquatic environments with corresponding educational exhibits and locker/shower rooms.

The inspiring story of Island Dolphin Care has been the focus of numerous television programs, documentaries and magazine articles and tugged at the heartstrings of many who hear it, including Tom and Judy Miller, owners of TJ Miller, Inc., a nora® manufacturer's rep. With the support of nora rubber flooring, the company donated 3,400 square feet of noraplan® mega and norament® 825 round pastille to the new IDC facility.

Deena recognizes and appreciates the safety features the flooring offers. "We work with special children, and I wanted a flooring that was not going to be rough or hard on their falls and one that would offer slip resistance," she said. "I also wanted something that was going to look good and that we didn't have to wax."

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nora fit the bill. Designers used nine colors of nora products to create waves, dolphins, circles and abstract patterns in floors that brighten classrooms, foyers, exhibit areas and stairwells. Wheel chairs pivot easily on the rubber surface and children delight in the color that surrounds them. "It really is an extraordinary floor," said Deena, "and it looks great."