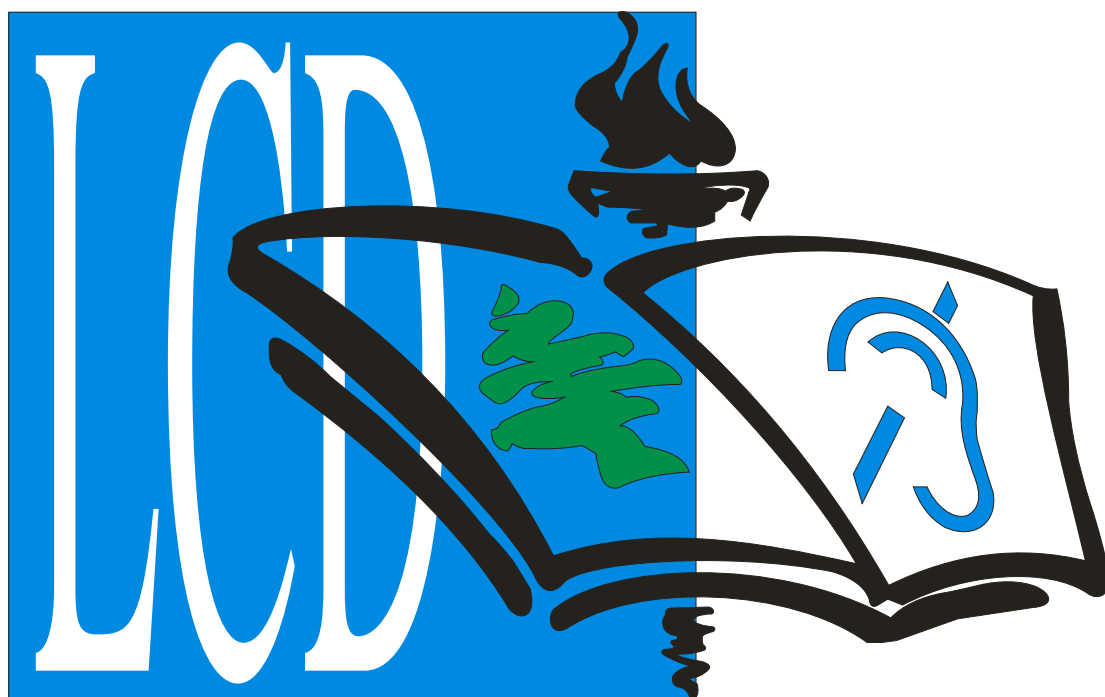


The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut – Lebanon



Annual Report 2004

Prepared by Hussein Ismail, Ed.D.
Director

Annual Report (2004)

Content

1. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf

- Board of Administration
- Staff List
- Organization Chart of the LCD

2. Basic Data about the LCD

- The Mission Statement of the LCD
- Purpose
- Introduction
- Programs offered
 - i. The Early Intervention Program
 - ii. The High School Education for the Deaf
 - iii. The Educational Activities for the Deaf
 - iv. Consultation, Sign Language

3. Statistical Data of the Number of the Beneficiaries

4. Activities of the Learning Center for the Deaf

- Activities of the LCD
 - i. Introduction
 - ii. A dream coming true, Celebration
 - iii. Integrated Nursery
 - iv. English and Computer Classes
 - v. EIP and the focus on the Awareness Program during 2005
 - vi. Lectures in distant areas and the CBR program
 - vii. Hearing Aids from the Stichting Liliane Fonds
 - viii. High School Education for the Deaf
 - ix. The Support Group
 - x. The Sign Language Class
 - xi. The Resource Room

1. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf

Board of Administration (effective as of 24/1/2005)

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Chairman of the Board: | Mr. Mt. Fouad Nassif |
| Treasurer: | Ms. Nouha Sultan |
| Secretary: | Hussein Ismail, Ed.D. |
| Members of the Board: | Ms. Maha Kaddoura Ms. Caroline Haykal |

Staff List

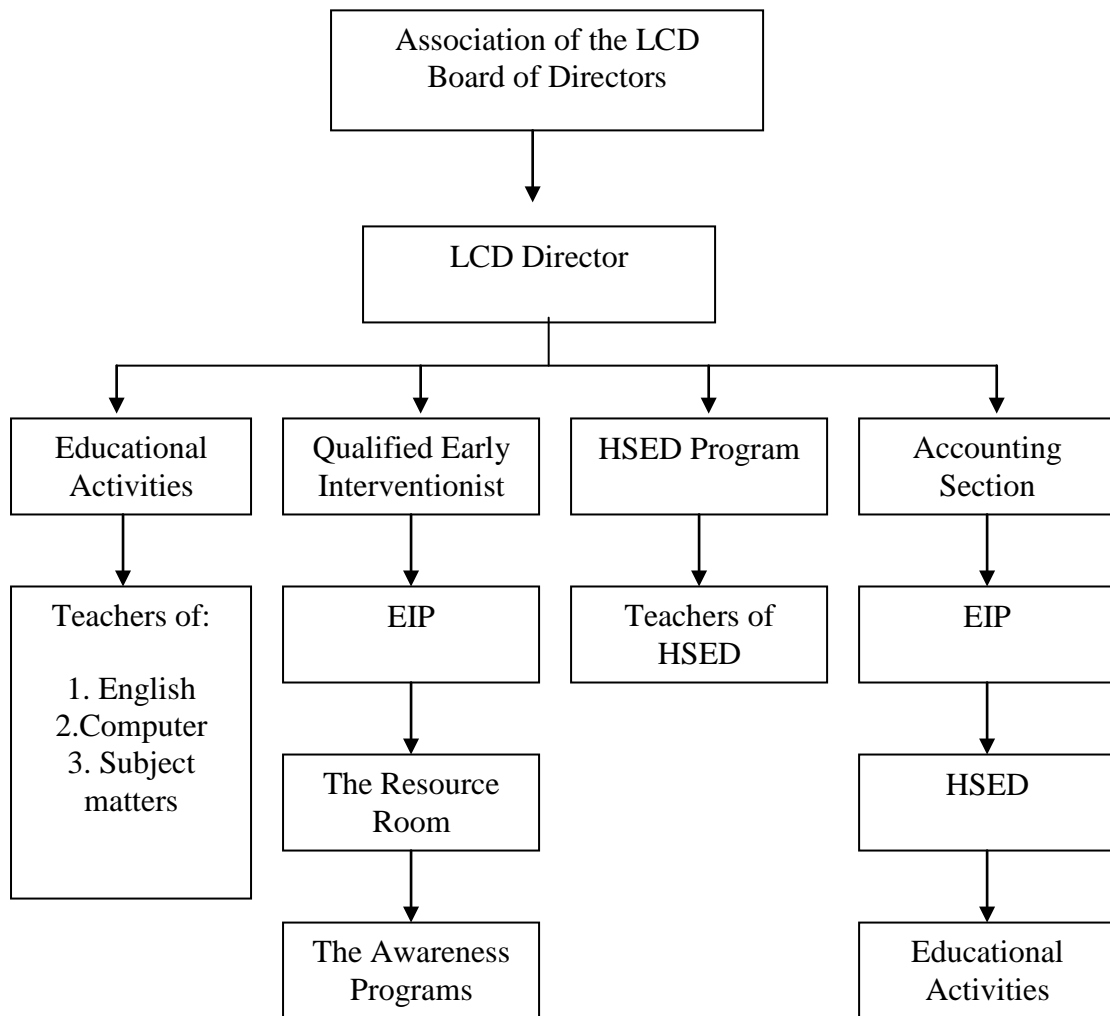
| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Mr. Hussein Ismail, Ed.D. | Director / Instructor |
| Mrs. Nadine Badreddine-Ismail | Early Interventionist |
| Mr. Edmond Nassar | Accountant |
| Mrs. Mary Rizk | Secretary |
| Ms. Sana Richa | Speech Therapist / Assistant EIP specialist |
| Ms. Mirna Mattar | Speech and Language Pathologist |
| Mr. Elias Bou Mansour | Domestic Helper |
| Mrs. Guida Nehmeh | Nursery Teacher |
| Ms. Yoland Rizkallah | Nursery Assistant-Teacher |
| Mr. Mohammad Abboud | Science-Mathematic Teacher |
| Ms. Rita Khalil | Arabic Literature Teacher |
| Mr. Raymond Bou Assi | Social, Economic, and English Teacher |
| Mr. Habib Fawaz | Computer Instructor |

Volunteers

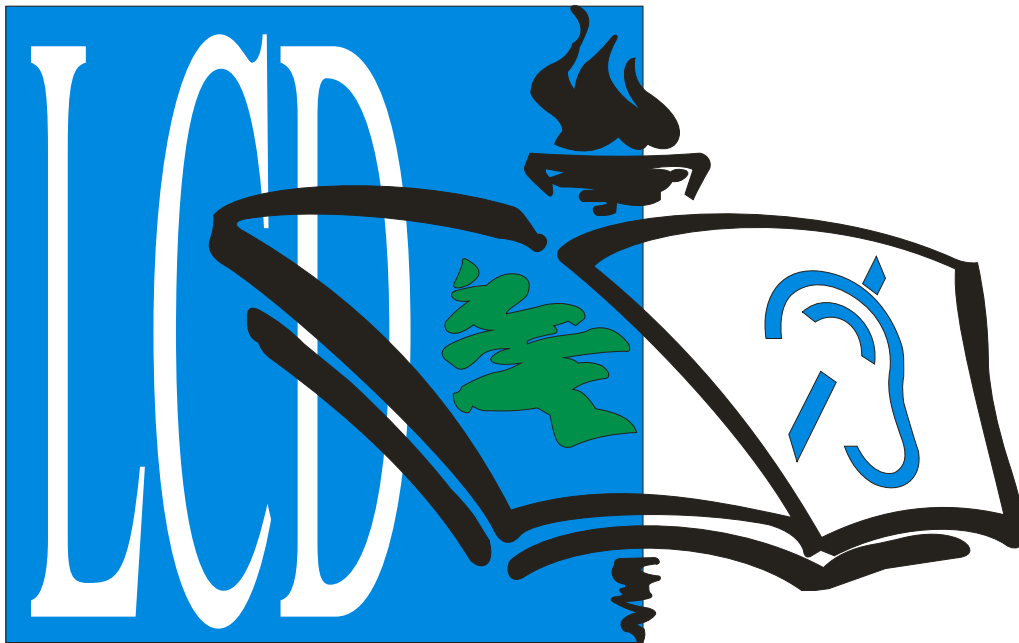
| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mr. Mt. Rayan Kouatly | LCD's legal advisor |
| Ms. Maha Kaddoura | Text Translator |
| Mr. Claude Hayek | Physics Teacher for HSED program |
| Dr. Raed Mohsen | Psychologist |
| Mr. Maher Abed Raboh | Handy-Man |
| Mr. Joseph Zeiden | Hearing-Aid Technician |

Learning Center for the Deaf

The Organization Chart of the LCD



The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut – Lebanon



Mission and Activities
2004

3. The Basic data about the Center

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Name | The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD) |
| Date established | January 2002 |
| Legal status | Charity Registration Number: AD 89, established 2002 with the Lebanese Government |
| Premise address | Sacre Coeur Hospital Crossing, Near Evangelical Church, Baabda – Brazilia |
| Contact person | Hussein Ismail, Ed.D. Director |
| Telephone number | 00961-5-954584 / 00961-3-700584 |
| Fax number | 00961-5-954584 |
| E-mail address | lcd_lebanon@idm.net.lb ; lcd_lebanon@hotmail.com |
| Type of organization | The LCD is non-profit Charitable Service Organization, non-secretarian, and non-governmental association established to promote, facilitate, and empower deaf men and women through education throughout Lebanon |
| Main areas of activity | Educational |

The Mission Statement of the LCD

Purpose

The purpose of the “Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD)” is to provide a quality program to respond to the urgent needs of deaf persons in Lebanon, i.e., physical, emotional, intellectual, and social. However, the LCD’s primary objective is educational with specific emphasis on children, their families, and young adults.

Introduction

The LCD has been established with the dream of providing a proper program for young deaf children and their families, which will enable the deaf child to have a good start in life and a better future.

During a preparatory phase of the programs, Hussein Ismail, who is a deaf man himself, achieved his Doctorate Degree in Educational Administration. The Association of Parents for the Deaf, who saw in Hussein hope for the future of their children, since education for deaf children terminated at the Brevet level (ninth grade), asked the President of Lebanon to decorate Hussein with a “Medal of Deserve” in recognition of his achievement.

The decoration ceremony allowed Hussein to be seen by many of the young deaf people who came from different schools and saw in him a role-model. One of the students, Wissam, told him: “I used to be certain that obtaining Brevet Diploma was the highest goal to reach, but now I ask myself why can’t I become like you, Dr. Hussein?” In fact, Wissam was the reason Hussein felt the responsibility to give young deaf people the chance which he was given by his foster-father the late Rev. A. Andeweg (Father Andy) and the organization that supported him, to reach the same level of Education that he has achieved.

Due to the absence of classes beyond Brevet (High School Program) in the schools for the deaf in Lebanon, Hussein found it necessary to personally establish a special High School setting for the Deaf which will accept students from all the schools for the Deaf who wished to continue in the academic realm. It was a courageous decision, knowing that such an intervention for a High School is much more expensive than that of Primary and Intermediate education. But God is fairer to His children than people and He made this event possible for the deaf young children in Lebanon; and today Wissam, who is currently enrolled in our high-school program, wishes to become a medical doctor. We have no doubt that this will be realized, and we are waiting with anticipation for him to become our family doctor.

Similar challenges have faced the Early Intervention Program. The difficulty was due to the fact that the concept of Early Intervention in Lebanon was thought to be limited to having the child fitted with hearing aids early, and having him go to a speech therapist one to three times a week. No one appeared to wonder what would be the use of the hearing aid if the parents are not taught to check it on a daily basis and are shown how to help the child to make use of a proper listening

environment. Nor did they appear to think to teach the family how to make use of the natural situations at home to provide rich communication, language and listening possibilities. No one considered the fact that families need to deal with their feelings by discussing them with a counselor and by providing them chances to see other families and learning at first hand from their experience. No one thought of the needs of some families to be taught Sign Language to have better communication with their child. No one believed that families deserve to be instructed in subjects such as hearing tests, modes of communication, etc. And finally no one thought the families need to have a reference library to refer to whenever they panic due to all the new matters they have to deal with. All these missing services are an important requisite for a proper Early Intervention Program.

We learned that the best people, who can inform families about the importance of our program and the richness of our services, are not the professionals, but the families themselves. We get thrilled to hear from the families that they feel very good to be at the LCD; while still being professionally treated. The number of families is growing and families are coming to us from a far distance.

The LCD has also recently launched the initiation of a Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program in order to help the families in distant areas, where help is greatly needed because of the neglect of the children which is due to poverty and lack of awareness of many families. This program is moving very slowly due to the fact that the LCD does not have enough employees to do many trips to the distant areas, but again there is faith that everything comes in the right time.

An awareness campaign on the importance of Early Detection will be initiated in the spring of 2005. The campaign became possible after two years of waiting for funding. It will be spread throughout the country encouraging families to detect hearing loss as early as possible. LCD will help inform the families about the steps they need to make in case of suspicion. Once hearing loss is confirmed, the Early Intervention Program at the LCD has many services that can help families from distant areas such as follow up tests, continuous guidance, John Tracy Clinic Correspondence Books which are followed through distance learning, lectures in distant areas, and the support group.

The Integrated Nursery (described elsewhere in this document under the heading of the Early Intervention Program) has been started. The next setting for the Nursery will be a special class for the deaf babies and young children who will later enter schools for the Deaf. The Bilingual/Bicultural Approach will be applied in this part of the Nursery with one deaf teacher who will promote Sign Language and one hearing teacher who will promote the spoken language. This class will be important since the aim of the Nursery is to be a diagnostic Nursery where we can study the best placement for the deaf child.

The ideas for development and improvement in the future are many, such as providing an audiological section, subtitling of videos for families in Arabic, and adding a Sign Language corner for deaf parents, translating important books to

Arabic as such sources are almost non-existent, and providing professional training for the approaches used in therapy, etc.

But looking back, we realize that the support of people who believe in the work of the LCD has already helped realize many accomplishments, which took place during the past three years. Therefore there is no doubt that the LCD will be able to improve existing services and provide other needed ones in due time.

There is a strong feeling that God is surely behind this project because of all that has been provided until now. Buying of the LCD's premises (the building), which is a big proof of His presence in times of financial difficulties world-wide, allowed us to accommodate a number of programs within a loving and caring atmosphere, created by the staff, the students and the families.

The main programs of the LCD are outlined as follows:

1. Early Intervention Program (EIP)

The most important aspect of this program is that it establishes a place that provides objective information, and services on any subject related to the deaf child, for parents who already know or have just discovered that their infant or young child is deaf and consequently feel lost and do not know what to do. Objective information is put at their disposal from educational references and research as well as from personal experiences about the best possible choices for their child. These choices are also reviewed in the context of what is available in Lebanon and what really meets their needs and priorities.

The LCD's role is to provide emotional and cognitive support for parents to overcome their grief and to supply them with all necessary basic information. Therefore, besides continuous guidance (tests needed, whom to contact, schools, etc), the Early Intervention Program offers parents two additional services, which are **1) the Support Group** where families gather in the presence of a qualified and experienced psychologist in the field of deafness, and **2) the Courses** for families of young children with Hearing Impairment where a number of intensive lectures are given to them concerning subjects related to deafness or the young child.

Parents come from distant areas and from closer areas. The ones from closer areas can bring their child once a week, or twice a week when needed for **Rehabilitation sessions with the therapist** who works with the child, as well as with the family. While parents coming from distant areas usually bring their child once a month for evaluation and follow up.

All parents benefit from the **John Tracy Clinic sequential lessons**, which are translated and adapted to the Arab Language and Culture by the LCD with authorization from the clinic. These lessons help parents in a gradual manner to enhance their child's whole development with stress on language development and listening skills. All families are enjoying these lessons because of their

simplicity and their content which is written with a lot of consideration as to the feelings of the family and the abilities of each individual child.

The LCD's **Resource Room** provides intensive information, as well as links through the Internet; so that answers are always available parents' questions related to any subject concerning their child as a child and as a deaf child.

The LCD has initiated a specialized **Integrated Nursery**, Montessori oriented, for hearing and hearing impaired children where both benefit from a very rich environment in all means of development with a special focus on language and activities for the families of both hearing and hearing impaired children to support the growth of the child at home.

The Early Intervention Program supports parents until their child is settled in a proper school that meets his/her needs. These differ from one child to another. But even then parents may still want to benefit from some of our services.

Due to lack of awareness for Early Detection in Lebanon, the LCD is working on a national campaign where brochures will be distributed with simultaneous interviews in the media (TV radio, newspapers, etc). The brochures will be distributed through the clinics of Pediatric Doctors, Nurseries, and especially dispensaries. There is also a contingency plan ready to support all the families who may contact the LCD for information, guidance and support.

2. High School Education for the Deaf (HSED)

As explained earlier, this program is unique in Lebanon, since presently there is no program for further education beyond the Brevet studies (Junior High School), towards Baccalaureate level (Senior High School)—from Grade 10 to 12 - for the Deaf in this country. In recent years, many young deaf adults who have obtained their Brevet diplomas wished, but were unable, to continue their further academic education in Lebanon. Now they can fulfill their dream since the High School opened its doors in October 2004 for eight students from different junior high-schools for the Deaf. This will enable young deaf people to pursue a College or University education in their own country.

3. Educational Activities for the Deaf

This program is designed to promote adult deaf people to learn and improve specific subject matters, such as English language and computer literacy. Educational Activities for the Deaf is also a program of socialization as well as a means to empower the deaf.

4. Awareness programs about deafness and deaf people

This program which has as an objective to promote the image of deaf people incorporates such activities as:

- Talks through the media

- A book about deafness, written by Hussein, which is being distributed to the public for free (by the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Association for the Rights of the Disabled)
- Activities in regular kindergarten settings (experiment, telling a story interacting with a deaf puppet and introducing a deaf adult teaching some signs).
- Brochures on Early Detection is mentioned earlier the LCD is presently working on the implementation of a National Campaign for awareness on Early Detection and the quality of Early Intervention. There is a misconception about Early Intervention by the few people who have heard about EIP that it only considered of sessions with a speech therapist who works directly with the child at an early age, with little or no carry-over at home. Early Intervention should offer much more than simple therapy sessions and the LCD program is structured to rectify this misconception.

5. Consultation

Many families come for consultation especially because the Director, who is deaf and has a doctorate degree in Education, is highly regarded by them. Also deaf adults come for advice since Hussein is also highly regarded by the deaf and was therefore chosen to represent the deaf on the National Council for the Rights of the Deaf within the Lebanese Government. Gatherings of deaf adults take place almost on a monthly basis to socialize and share ideas.

6. Sign Language Classes

Sign Language is not yet officially documented as a language in Lebanon and therefore we were reluctant to give this course since there are so many differences in signing among the Deaf in Lebanon. But in response to the need of parents we found it essential to start with something and explain that it is a representation of the language used by a certain group of deaf people (in relation to deaf schools).

Meanwhile Hussein has joined the scientific committee with Professor Romanous at the University of St. Joseph to develop Lebanese Sign Language, based on studies and researches. It is not simply the development of a dictionary but a longitudinal study of the Lebanese Sign Language which will enable in the future the teaching of this language to anyone who desires to learn it like the deaf students, their families, interpreters, or any interested individual wishing to learn a different language of a different culture.

The Learning Center for the Deaf

4. Statistical Data of the number of beneficiaries during the year 2004

| Programs offered at the LCD | Number of Beneficiaries |
|--|--|
| Early Intervention Program | |
| Rehabilitation for Deaf Children with their Parents | 12 |
| The Support Group | 6 – 10 families |
| Lectures for families of deaf children | 22 families of deaf children |
| Consultation | 50 families approximately |
| Integrated Nursery | 13 |
| The Resource Room | Unspecified; open for all professionals |
| John Tracy Clinic's Correspondence Books for families of deaf children | 10 families |
| Educational Activities for the Deaf | |
| English Classes | 15 students (at different levels) |
| Speech Lessons | 12 persons |
| Sign Language Class | 16 parents and students |
| Consultation | 40 – 50 deaf adults |
| High School Education for the Deaf | |
| Second Year | 7 students 3 boarders, 4 day-schoolers |
| Awareness Programs about Deafness | Unspecified; National level |

The Learning Center for the Deaf

5. Activities of the LCD

Introduction

We thank God for the year 2004, in which we saw many developments regarding the initiation of the LCD and its activities, especially the purchase of the LCD premises (the building and the land).

The Center is blessed since the people working in it today, help spread the atmosphere of a home where everyone is welcome to join the family as long as he/she, like us, does not see working at the LCD as just a job, but rather a mission that everyone believes in and is devoted for.

No words can be sufficed: God has been so good to us, to the Center, and to the deaf who benefit from its services.

The scholastic year started again in September, and we were very happy to welcome the High School students, after they had spent their short summer holidays. We indicate 'short' because within their summer holidays, they have had a 5 weeks summer intensive training course in Arabic and English Literatures, which was necessary to prepare them for the Governmental examination at the end of their studies. However, the Early Intervention Program did not recess; though some families were away for the summer holidays.

The High School Program is well established and the Nursery has been filled with the presence of six new small beautiful children who have added joy to the atmosphere of the Center. One of them is a child with hearing loss. The number of families of children with hearing loss has grown; some of whom come regularly to the Center and some of whom we follow mostly from a distance.

We certainly feel blessed. But, there are still many difficulties facing us in our aim to provide a healthy, complete and rich atmosphere for the Deaf and their families, and we are very grateful for what could be done until now. The truth is that many of our dreams have already come true; therefore we trust that more will be realized for the benefit of the deaf child, and we ask God to take our hands and guide us in every step we take.

A Dream coming true

The initiation of the LCD in the year 2001 was unbelievable in the way things were facilitated to make its start possible. And today, the building campaign is only another proof of God's presence in this project. Yes, the campaign project, conducted by the Wilde Ganzen in Holland, for the purchase of the Building was successful!

Not only the building campaign was successful, but there was more....

The money requested for the LCD's building was in Euro, which was then converted to a US Dollars. The difference in currency rate, not envisaged at the time of inception of the campaign, allowed the LCD to buy the land next to the building for the playground of the High School and the green garden for the Nursery. This land was at the risk of being sold to another source for a housing project which would have created future difficulties for the LCD. Isn't it perfect?



Celebrations

The success of the campaign project to purchase the LCD's building and the land encouraged us to prepare celebrations in honor of the event. Two parties were held, although we had wished that one big party could have taken place. The first one was for the staff members and the students of the High School Program. The students wished to have music and dance; and their wishes were realized. The ceremony started with a prayer of thanks for this incredible event and the evening was a great success. The second evening for the deaf adults was a pleasure with its peaceful and delightful atmosphere created by people who are happy for the existence of the Center.

It is a wonderful feeling of relief, to know that the LCD has settled in one location.

The Integrated Nursery

The Integrated Nursery has finally become a real Nursery. It has now six hearing children and one child with hearing loss. The atmosphere is beautiful and is slowly heading in the direction of the vision set for the Nursery. The children enjoy special activities such as growing plants, music and singing, feeding the chicken, going for a walk, etc.



Elige, the child with hearing loss from the Early Intervention Program, has joined the Nursery this year. The Nursery which has a diagnostic role, is our chance to observe if she can manage in a regular school, which is the wish of her family for her to be with her hearing sister. Elige is showing additional problems to her hearing, which are now under investigation; therefore she may need to go to a special school for the Deaf.

Marisabelle, the first child in the Nursery who is now more than three years old, has joined a pre-school and is doing very well.

Mrs. Guitta is the new nursery teacher. She is starting to perceive the nursery according to the vision set for it. As the number of the children for the Integrated Nursery is steadily growing, Mrs. Guitta couldn't manage all 7 children alone, therefore she was happy to have her new assistant, Ms. Yoland, to help her.

English and Computer Lessons

During October 2003, a group of students have finished their fifth level of the English course and have duly received their certificates of accomplishment. These students



have now a good knowledge of the English language and are able to comprehend conversation and read in English. They are no longer going to continue studying English, but are now starting a course in Computer Literature. Fortunately, we are able to start this course thanks to the generous contribution of Elizabeth Scheele, the foster sister of the late Father Andy, who is deaf herself and who is planning to visit LCD this coming spring. Welcome Elizabeth!

EIP and the Focus on Awareness during the Year 2005

The Early Intervention Program is going in the right direction. When we started this program, the thrust was in the direction of providing good programs and seeking good training, as well as finding a good team for the work. We did well in this means, and we are very satisfied of the way the program is heading and of the services provided for the families. With time and application, a new concern has emerged in relation to the need for awareness about Early Intervention in general and the program at the LCD specifically. In the past, we thought that professionals dealing with families such as ENT doctors were the best people to inform families about the program, but we discovered that this was not true. Such professionals believe that sessions for the child with a speech therapist once or twice a week compromised an early intervention program. Many of these professionals are already committed to sending families to speech therapists, especially when the therapist is in the same hospital. A speech therapists focuses on working directly with the child, while and EIP (Early Intervention Program) embraces the family, and equip its members to work with the child since they are the persons surrounding of the child for most of the time. It also considers the moral back up to the family and educates them in subjects related to their child which will help them make informed decisions for him/her. It is also, for the family, a source of guidance in each step they take, from hearing tests to schooling.



Many families are benefiting from the services of the LCD directly, and many others are benefiting from the consultations and the lectures. Two of our children have moved to a school. One child has joined our integrated Nursery. Each family is receiving services in a different manner and each child is getting different therapy; in respect to the individual need of the child and the family.

Lectures in distant areas and the initiation of the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program

The LCD has started lectures in the rural areas due to the difficulty that some families have to come to Beirut, and the first lecture which took place was in Tripoli, North of Lebanon (about 90km away), and was a great success. Families from institutions for the deaf in the area were invited, as well as families from the Palestinian camps. It was a great learning event as well as great fun both for the families and for us. Two other professionals joined us for the two day lectures. One was an ENT doctor, Dr. Simon Rassi, and the other was a family counselor who guides the Support Group at the LCD once a month. Families are very happy with his presence because of his humorous personality, which is known to them because of his appearance on a television program on a Lebanese station.

The LCD has also initiated the study phase for the CBR program which it plans to apply, in the rural areas of the North of Lebanon. Our visits for the initial preparations allowed us to visit one of our families in the area, which lives in a very miserable condition. The whole family lives in one room during winter. We are very happy that the elder children were finally accepted in a good school.

Hearing Aids from the Stichting Liliane Fonds

A possibility to provide body aids to children from poor families has been provided thanks to the Liliane Fonds in cooperation with Siemens, which helped a number of children who could not have had hearing aids otherwise, to benefit from more hearing than before.



Volunteers

The LCD is blessed to have a number of faithful volunteers. Dr. Raed, the family councilor is still coming once a month for the support Group and the families are enjoying it tremendously.

Joseph still helps us for free to adjust the amplification of the hearing aids which are donated to deaf children by the Liliane Fonds.

Gemma, a psychomotrician helps us in evaluating the condition of our children for free and sets simple programs for our children when they can be helped at LCD through simple activities.

Bassem is a new volunteer helping us with the computer editing-machine, and by so is taking a good load out of our way.

Maha still volunteers to translate texts of few pages, whenever there is a need. We also highly appreciate volunteers who are willing to give a block of time for a project at LCD such as Marianne who came from Holland for this purpose, Henk who took care of the cellar and Berna who took care of our daughters.

High School Education for the Deaf



and further develop this program and allow the young deaf people to finally pursue the ambition of their dreams.

In brief, the High School Education for the Deaf program provides schooling for young deaf people to continue their education from 9th to 12th grade and seven students are currently enrolled in the second year of a four year program. Upon the completion of their education, deaf students can go to university or college to specialize in a specific domain of interest. This program is the only program of its kind currently available in Lebanon.

Therefore, there is a high need to expand

It is thrilling to observe the faces of these young deaf students studying at the High School program, as we could see their inner feeling of joy and satisfaction.

The Support Group

The program of the Support Group, which is part of the Early Intervention Program, was a wonderful and very fruitful idea which allowed the families (mostly mothers) to meet and exchange feelings and experiences. This surely brought them to more self-confidence in themselves and their children. One of the mothers who is also enrolled

in a different program said that she was very happy with the chances that helped widen her horizon, especially with the Support Group and the course for families.

Although the idea of volunteering is not so much practical in Lebanon, we find ourselves very lucky that for the Support Group a professional psychologist, Dr. Raed Mohsen, who has experience in the field of deafness, and who in addition is a known personality due to his show on television, has volunteered to run the Support Group. For the course too, people have volunteered to give the lectures on different subjects.

The Resource Room



regarded as part of the awareness program of the Center.

The Resource Room, which has already been established on a small scale, aims to provide extensive information about issues of deaf people and Deafness, to families, professionals, or even the general public. The Center aims at providing translation of the most important documents to Arabic to enable people who do not know the English language to be scientifically and objectively informed about subjects related to deafness. Therefore it is also

Sign Language Classes

Sign Language classes started in October 2003 due to a great demand arising from the need for some parents to learn Sign Language in order to communicate richly with their children who use Sign Language themselves.

During the year 2004, several concerned individuals have registered to take courses in Sign Language lessons.



The Sign Language classes are part of our awareness program objective since they invite the hearing world into the world of the Deaf.