

The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut – Lebanon



Annual Report 2005

Prepared by Hussein Ismail, Ed.D.
Director

Annual Report 2005

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1. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf

Board of Administration

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

Dr. Hussein Ismail	Director / Instructor
Mrs. Nadine Badreddine	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 / House Father
Mrs. Guitta Nehmeh	Nursery Teacher
Ms. Wadad Daher	Nursery Assistant-Teacher
Mr. Mohammad Abboud	Science-Mathematic Teacher
Mr. Michel Chamaai	Arabic Literature Teacher
Fr. Raymond Bou Assi	Social, Economic, and English Teacher
Dr. Neeman Isaac	Physics Teacher

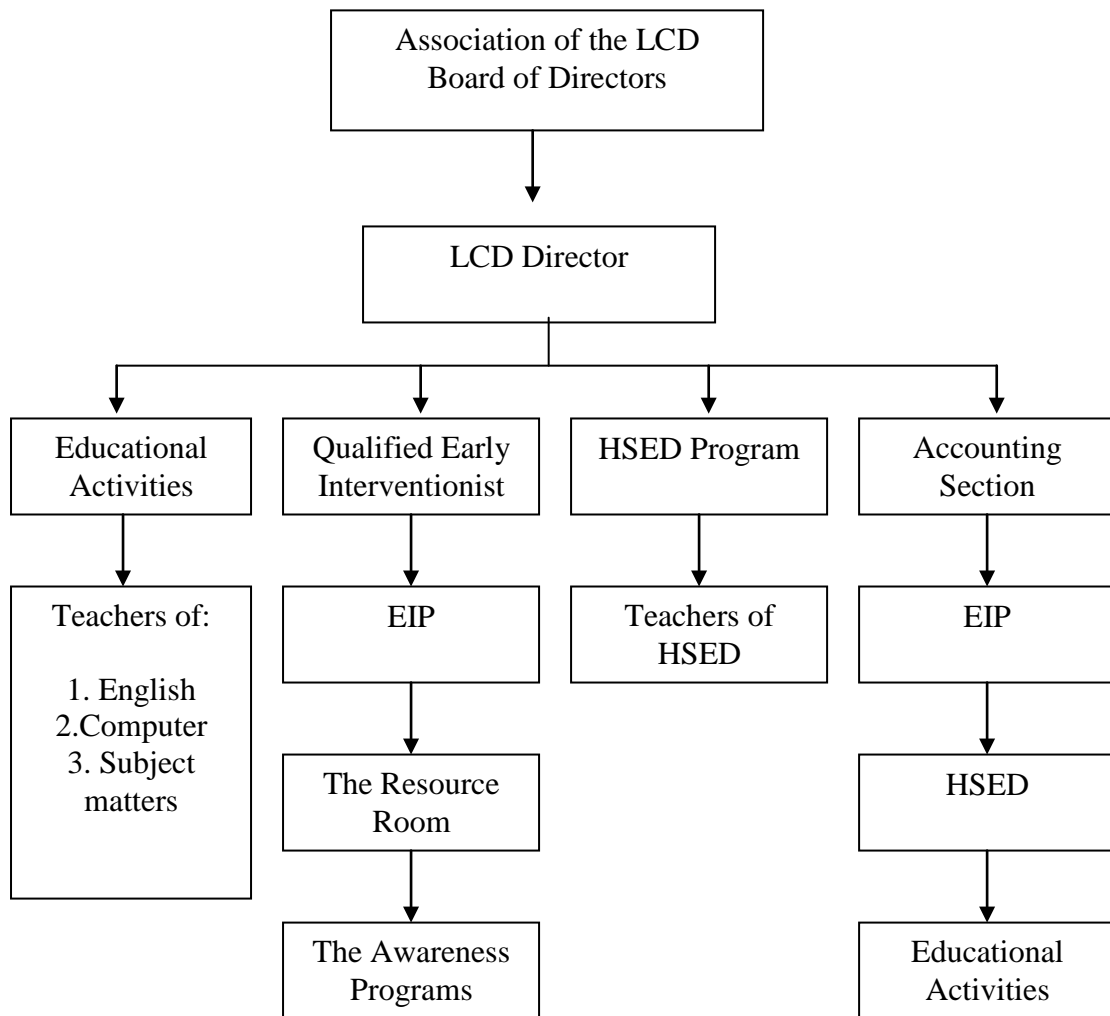
Volunteers

Mr. Mt. Rayan Kouatly	LCD's legal advisor
Ms. Maha Kaddoura	Text Translator
Dr. Kim Abou Chakra	Audiologist - Lecturer
Dr. Raed Mohsen	Psychologist – Family Counselor
Mr. Joseph Zeidan	Hearing-Aid Technician
Maher	Handy man

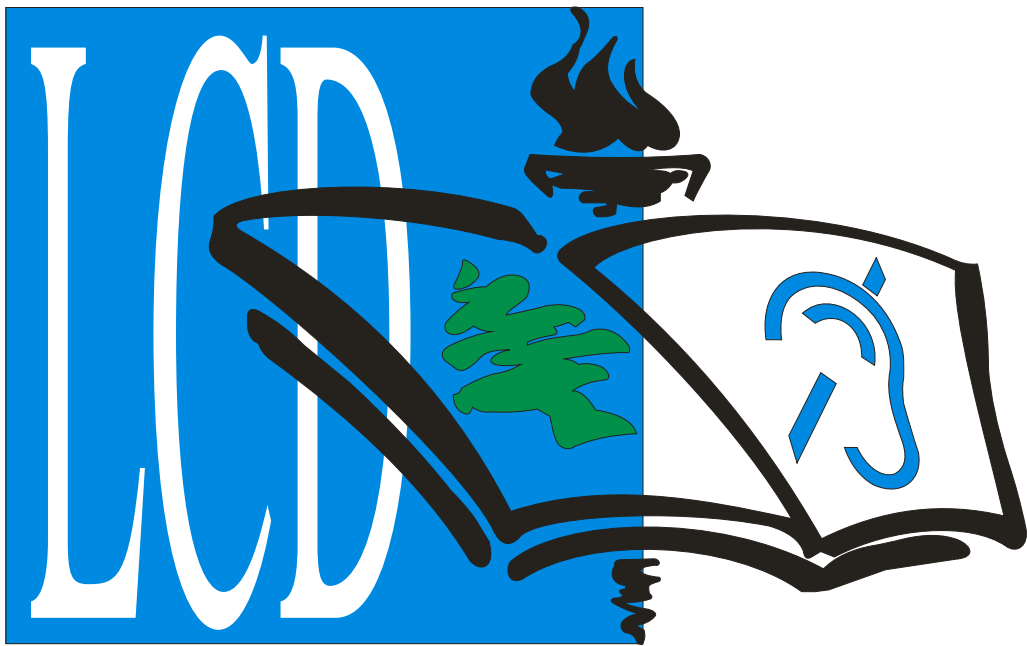
Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut - Lebanon

The Organization Chart of the LCD



The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut – Lebanon



Mission and Activities
2005

3. The Basic data about the LCD

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 Presidential Decree No.: 15798, established 2005
Visiting 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 main purpose of the LCD is to empower the Deaf and widen their horizon mainly through Education. Therefore, there is a great focus on initiating programs, which are non-existent, and which aim to help make a difference in the field of deaf education.

Introduction with Background Information

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 for a better future. This will be the Early Intervention Program for the young deaf children and their families.

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 saw Hussein as the role model for their children, whose academic ceiling in Lebanon was the Brevet level (ninth grade). Therefore they worked on having Hussein receive the “Medal of Deserve” in recognition of his achievement by the President of Lebanon.

This occasion was the initial drive for an eye opening experience to Hussein, where he became aware of the necessity to provide a High School Program for the young ninth graders whom he met at the decoration ceremony, and who later expressed to him their wish to be able to continue their education too. Hussein and some other deaf individuals were given the chance to continue their education abroad, helped by his foster father, the late Rev. A. Andeweg (Father Andy), and the organizations that supported his work and objectives. He felt it was his turn to pass on this possibility to others at any price. This was the conception of the High School Program for the Deaf in Lebanon.

Hussein and his wife, Nadine, knew the difficulties they would face in order to start the major programs, which are the High School Program and the Early Intervention Program. These were the normal difficulties for a starting project, which were overcome gradually due to God’s protection and guidance, and the support of individuals and organizations who believed in their aims. They did not expect other kinds of difficulties, which relate to the mentality, and the lack of awareness, coordination and cooperation. But challenges can only keep them going forward with more determination to realize their aims for a better standard of living for the Deaf through better education.

The programs of the LCD are: (1) The Early Intervention Program, (2) The High School Education for the Deaf, (3) The Educational Activities for the Deaf, (4) The Awareness programs about deafness and deaf people, (5) The Consultations, and (6) The Sign Language Classes, which are detailed as follows:

1. The Early Intervention Program (EIP)

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, objectively. It also helps strengthen their skills in dealing with their child to enhance his/her development generally, and language development specifically, through the mode of communication that suits his/her needs and his/her family's.

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 Course** 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 for an average of twice a week for **Rehabilitation sessions with the therapist** who works with the child, as well as with the family. While the 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. Parents who live at distance benefit from guidance in relation to these lessons through the phone.

Further, 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 deaf 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 deaf 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.

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 Lebanon. This will enable young deaf people to pursue a University

education in their own country and invite schools for the Deaf change their vision for a higher standard of education.

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)
- Brochures on Early Detection where the LCD is working on the implementation of a National Campaign for awareness on Early Detection and the quality of Early Intervention.
- Awareness campaign about Early Intervention, which not even ENT doctors are quite aware of its importance. Some people and most professionals are aware of the term but not the content, where they ignore how comprehensive an EIP should be and the great focus it gives mostly to the family and not only to the child.

5. Consultation

Many families come for consultation especially due to the fact that Hussein is highly regarded in the field of deafness in Lebanon. He is seen as the deaf man who got a doctorate degree in Education and who established an Association for the Deaf and works in many ways to support the Deaf. Therefore also deaf adults come to Hussein for advice. 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 there was reluctance in giving this course since there are so many differences in signing among the Deaf in Lebanon. But in response to the need of parents it was found essential to start a course.

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
Beirut - Lebanon**

4. Statistical Data of the number of beneficiaries during the year 2005

Programs offered at the LCD	Number of Beneficiaries
Early Intervention Program	
Rehabilitation for Deaf Children with their Parents	18 (6 distance follow-up) (3 short term)
The Support Group	8 – 10 families
Lectures for families of deaf children, and other concern (teachers, professionals, etc.)	15 – 20 families of deaf children
Integrated Nursery	13 (3 short term)
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	7 students (at different levels)
Sign Language Class	17 parents and students
Consultation	40 – 50 families of deaf children as well as deaf adults
High School Education for the Deaf	
Third Year	8 students 5 boarders, 3 day-schoolers
Preparatory Year	2 students
Awareness Programs about Deafness	Unspecified; National level

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut - Lebanon

5. Activities of the LCD – the year 2005

Introduction

The year 2005 was a special year despite the sad news of the assassination of the previous Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri, which was followed by explosions and other assassinations. But these sad events have awakened in the Lebanese a great sense of patriotism which was expressed in the march of the over million Lebanese citizens.

The events have affected some of the LCD's activities negatively in means of the Educational Activities for deaf adults. In parallel, the LCD witnessed and experienced many developments regarding its activities, and especially in the renovation and rehabilitation of its premises (the building and the land).

The great news, during this year, was that the Japanese Embassy has accepted our proposal for the support of the specific projects for the LCD, which were the building fixation and rehabilitation (as the outer walls of the LCD's building and the roof had numerous holes traced by the civil war); enlargement of the kitchen, classrooms, and partial Integrated Nursery; Hearing Aid FM systems; playground facilities; installation of the lift; installation of the heating system; a new photocopy machine; and Educational materials for the Integrated Nursery. The signing ceremony took place at the Embassy of Japan between Hussein and the Japanese Ambassador with a promise grant of US\$ 87,658 for the specified projects. After providing the Embassy all the necessary papers together with the invoices, we have received the money in a month time.

Fortunately a piece of land was bought next to the LCD in the year 2004 due to the high exchange rate of Euro to US dollars as a result of the successful campaign project, conducted with dedication by the Wilde Ganzen, in collaboration with the AMT-NL. The land was annexed to the property of the building site, which now make one property. After receiving the money from the Embassy, the project of the playground facilities was initiated, and was finished in a month time during May 2005. It is during the summer time that the work started for the LCD's rehabilitation and fixation, the enlargement of the nursery, classrooms and the kitchen, as well as the installation of the lift, central heating system, in which major projects were completed in September.

Not only the rehabilitation projects were made possible by the Embassy of Japan, but also the generous support of the Wilde Ganzen and the AMT-NL who have helped covered projects which were not provided by the Embassy.

Few years ago, AMT-NL has received a substantial amount of money from the late Mrs. Loes Arriens's family members, to support a specific project. They wished, without giving any sign of imposition, that she would be remembered by assigning her name to one of the activities or rooms. AMT-NL has indicated that the amount which was requested for the Chemistry-Physics Laboratory was exactly the same as they have received from the Arriens's family. After the completion of the Laboratory room, we

have hang a plaque with her name on the door of the Laboratory room—Loes Arriens's Laboratory.

When all the work was finished everyone could finally enjoy the results, from staff to students, parents and children, as well as visitors and neighbors. The premises of the LCD looked fresh, clean and welcoming. The inside looked as nice as the outside, where the garden and the playground added to its beauty.

The students of the High School and the Nursery came back. Also the deaf children and their families came back to the LCD, while during the summer time, therapy sessions took place in a rented place at a nearby shopping-center. Without them all, and the devoted staff, the LCD could not have looked so beautiful and warm.

The Opening Ceremony took place on October 2005, under the patronage of the First Lady of Lebanon, which has given the LCD a positive impact, in terms of awareness about the existence of such programs for the Deaf in Lebanon. There were visitors from the AMT-Nederland among us, which was special.

Johanne van Dijk of the Wilde Ganzen has visited the LCD during November 2005 and has inspected their supported projects, especially the purchase of the building and the land site. In general, she was impressed by what she saw. Her visit was a fruitful one.

Also, the visit of Mrs. Elisabeth Scheele during April 2005 was a blessing for everyone. She has always been a tremendous supporter to the LCD, but everyone loved her, mostly because of her beautiful soul, for her sense of humor, her kindness, and her sharp personality. She had also made a huge financial contribution, together with her son Anton's family, to the LCD's Building Campaign Project, conducted by Wilde Ganzen and AMT-NL. We have been informed that the campaign project was at the risk of failing and that it was saved by the Scheele's family. As a consequence, during her visit, she was pleased to see that the plaque on the floor of the Early Intervention Program, assigned to her name and her son Anton with his wife, Geraldine.

There was once more much gratitude to the many contributors who made the presence of the LCD and its services of quality possible, such as AMT-NL, The Liliane Fonds, The Stichting Paul Tensen, The Albert Schweitzer Fonds, CBM, The Allah Kariem Foundation, Mrs. E. Scheele and her son Anton, other organizations, churches, and individuals, for making the work of the LCD possible.

We certainly feel blessed despite the 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.

In conclusion, we are very grateful to our Lord, the Almighty Father, who has always been guiding, protecting us and giving many blessings to our work for the deaf in the region.

Photos the LCD's development



LCD's Building – *Before* Renovation



LCD's Building – *After* Renovation



New Playground Facilities



Nursery Rhymes



Mrs. Elisabeth Scheele visiting LCD



Hearing Aid fitting, supported by Liliane Fonds



Computer Lessons



Lectures for Parents



Deaf children of EIP

First Lady of Lebanon,
during the Opening
Ceremony



High School Education for the Deaf



Not long ago a revolutionary event took place in Lebanon. For the first time, students of a school for the Deaf presented official Brevet exams (9th grade). Since then, other schools followed and four schools were able to have their students pass these official exams.

Students from these schools are not graduating every year. There is a group graduating every two to three years in each school for the Deaf. The reason is that the level is still not really up to Brevet (ninth grade). The present guidance for the deaf students in the schools for the Deaf is mostly towards the technical field. This is due to many factors, among which is the under-estimation for the deaf in general, the present academic level of the students, etc.

However, the good news is that the schools are starting to consider directing the deaf students towards the academic realm as well. The presence of the High School Program is inviting the schools to reconsider their objectives. While the schools were aiming to simply have their students reach Brevet (ninth grade), with the aim to seek the technical field, they are now trying their best to improve the level of Education, with the aim for the students that they may want to pursue their education in the academic realm.



Early Intervention Program

The year 2005 has witnessed the birth of the awareness campaign for Early Detection. This campaign will continue during the year 2006 due to the delays caused by the political situation in the country.



The Early Intervention Program has faced difficulties which were not expected. As much as these difficulties are few in the face of all the accomplishments in this program, their effect is grand. The difficulties are in relation to the referral of ENT doctors for families of young deaf children to the LCD. Also the year 2005 has witnessed the start of an awareness campaign about EIP, the last activity of which was the

invitation to have a free stand at a congress in order to introduce the EIP of the LCD. Though results were minor, but they surely helped uncover many factors which lead to this lack of referral. The year 2006 should definitely witness changes in this aspect.

Despite the lack of referral, the LCD has the highest number of young children and their families all over Lebanon. Also there is a great satisfaction with the results of the EIP, which started to show clearly.

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 in the presence of a volunteering highly experienced family-counselor. This surely brought them to more 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 chance to be part of the Support

Group and lectures for families, which have helped widen her horizon.

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 2005, 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.



Volunteers

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

Dr. Kim Abou Chakra who is the head of the Audiology Department at the American University Hospital is always ready to give information and advice for the staff and the families of the LCD, for free.

Joseph Zeidan, who is a hearing aid dealer, still helps us for free to adjust the amplification of the hearing aids which are donated to deaf children by the Liliane Fonds and second hand behind the ear hearing aids given through AMT-NL.

Maha still volunteers to translate texts of few pages, whenever there is a need.

Stephanie has joined the group of volunteers to tell stories twice a week to the children of the Nursery.



Dr. Kim giving lessons to our staff members (weekly basis)