

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut – Lebanon



Annual Report 2006

Prepared by **Hussein Ismail, Ed.D.**
Director

Annual Report 2006

Content

1. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf (2006)

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

2. Basic Data about the LCD

- The Mission Statement of the LCD
- Purpose
- Introduction with background information
- Programs offered
 - i. The Early Intervention Program
 - ii. The High School Education for the Deaf
 - iii. The Educational Activities for the Deaf
 - iv. Awareness Programs about Deafness
 - v. Consultation
 - vi. Sign Language Classes

3. Statistical Data of the Number of the Beneficiaries

4. News of the Learning Center for the Deaf

News of the LCD – during 2006

- i. Introduction
- ii. High School Education for the Deaf
- iii. Early Intervention Program
- iv. The Story of Elige
- v. The Sign Language Class

1. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf (2006)

Board of Administration	
Chairman of the Board	Mr. Mt. Fouad Nassif
Treasurer	Ms. Nouha Sultan
Secretary	Dr. Hussein Ismail
Members of the Board	Ms. Maha Kaddoura Ms. Caroline Haykal

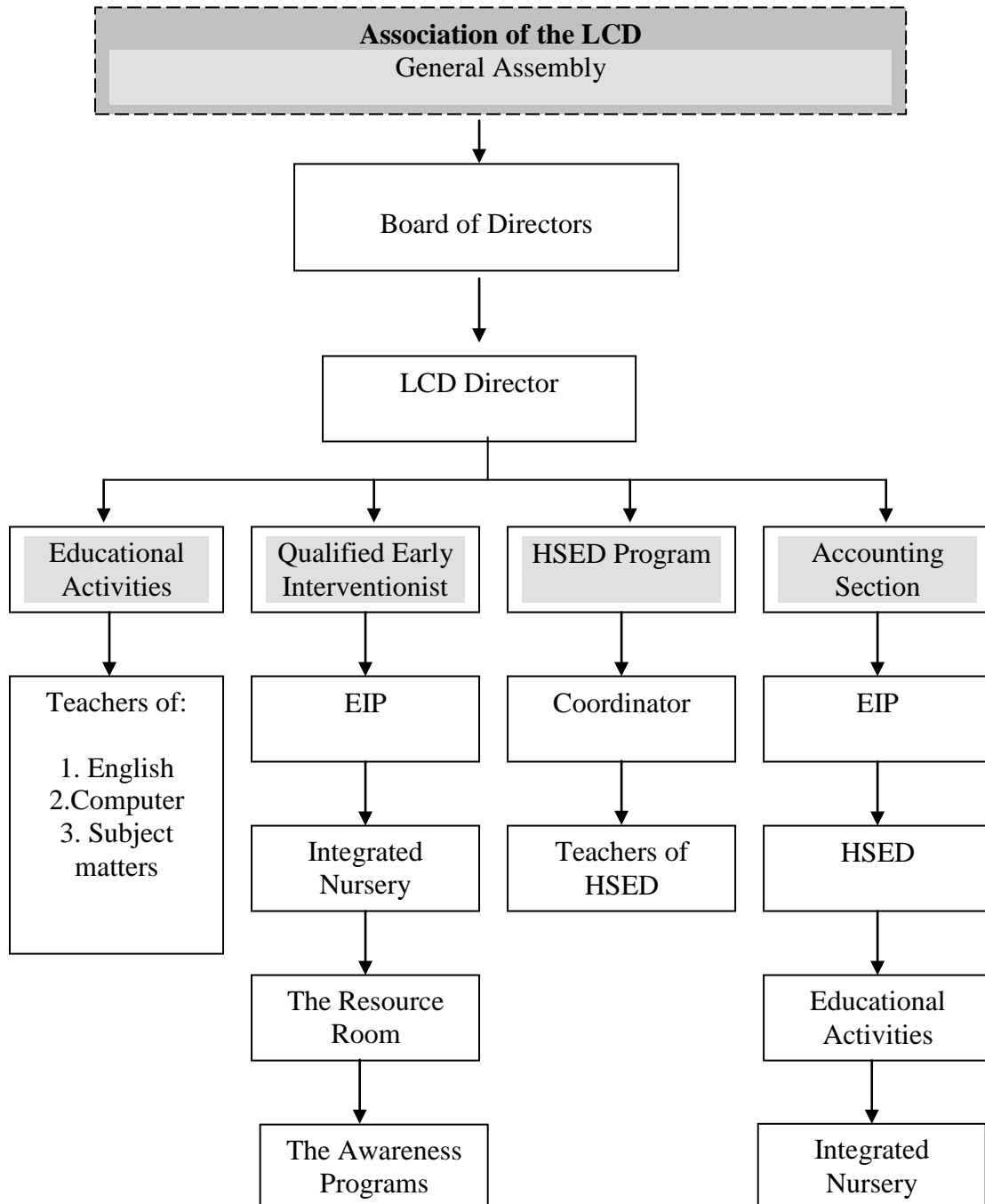
Staff List	
Director / Instructor	Dr. Hussein Ismail
Early Interventionist	Mrs. Nadine Badreddine
Accountant	Mr. Edmond Nassar
Secretary	Mrs. Mary Rizk
Speech Therapist / Assistant EIP specialist	Ms. Sana Richa
Speech and Language Pathologist	Ms. Mirna Mattar
Domestic Helper / House Father	Mr. Elias Bou Mansour
Nursery Teacher	Mrs. Marie-Christine Chediak
Nursery Assistant-Teacher	Ms. Wadad Daher
Biology Teacher	Mr. Mohammad Abboud
Mathematic Teacher	Mr. Mohammad Chami
Chemistry Teacher	Mr. Elias Bou Lahoud
Arabic Literature Teacher	Ms. Raja Hachem
Social, Economic, and English Teacher	Fr. Raymond Bou Assi
Physics Teacher	Dr. Neeman Isaac

Volunteers	
LCD's legal advisor	Mr. Mt. Rayan Kouatly
Audiologist - Lecturer	Dr. Kim Abou Chakra
Psychologist – Family Counselor	Dr. Raed Mohsen
Hearing-Aid Technician	Mr. Joseph Zeidan
Educational Psychologist	Ms. Charlotte Al Khalil, M.A.
Handy man	Mr. Christopher Kyriakos
Assistant	Ms. Karynina Kyriakos

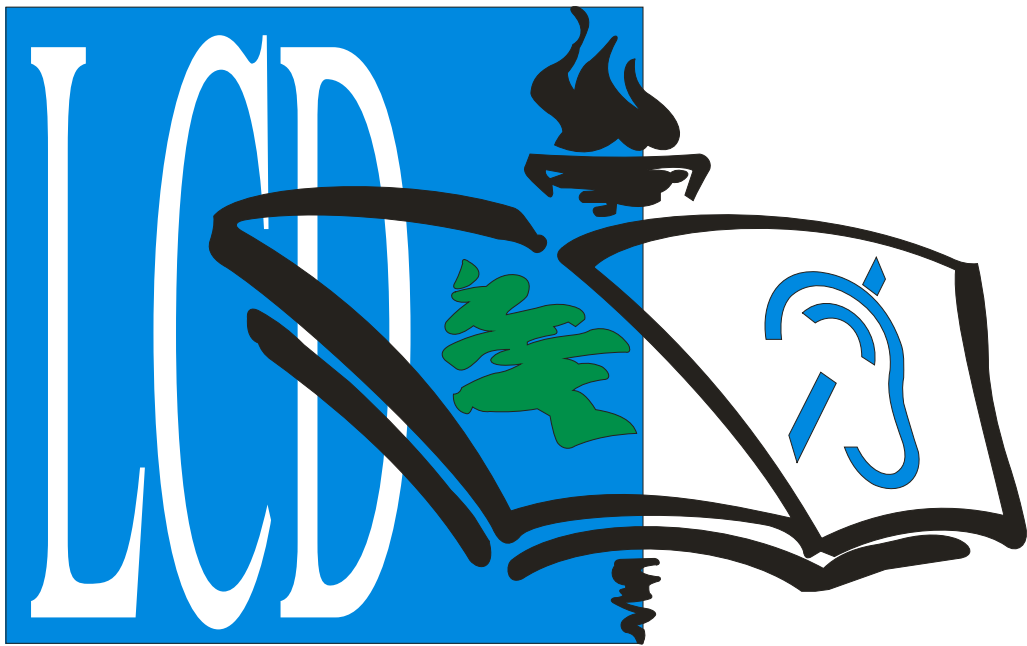
Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut - Lebanon

The Organization Chart of the LCD



The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut – Lebanon



Mission and Activities
2006

2. The Basic data about the LCD

Name	The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD)
Date established	January 2002
Legal status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charity Registration Number: AD 89, established 2002 with the Lebanese Government 2. Presidential Decree No.: 15798, established 2005 3. License # 2/294, 2007 (the Integrated Nursery)
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 purpose of the “Learning Center for the Deaf” 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 center’s primary objective is educational with specific emphasis on children, their families, and young adults.

The team in the center believes in the empowerment of the Deaf in general, including the family of the deaf person. The program therefore also responds to the needs of deaf adults through further education and literacy classes. It reaches out to the world of the hearing with information that helps spread awareness about deafness, and on how to deal with the deaf.

The Project’s Main Objectives (*programs offered*)

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)

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. As testimony, the first students of this program have fortunately passed the Baccalaureate examinations during 2005-2006, and are currently enrolled at their universities.

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.

**The Learning Center for the Deaf
Beirut - Lebanon**

3. Statistical Data of the number of beneficiaries during the year 2006

Programs offered at the LCD	Number of Beneficiaries
Early Intervention Program	
Rehabilitation for Deaf Children with their Parents	25
The Support Group	10 – 12 families
Lectures for families of deaf children, and other concern (teachers, professionals, etc.)	15 – 20 families of deaf children, and some professionals
Workshops (Cochlear Implant Conference)	82
Integrated Nursery	16
The Resource Room	Unspecified; open for all professionals
John Tracy Clinic's Correspondence Books for families of deaf children	14 families
Educational Activities for the Deaf	
English Classes	7 students (at different levels)
Sign Language Class	13 parents and students
Consultation	Over 105 families of deaf children as well as deaf adults
High School Education for the Deaf	
Third Year	8 students 5 boarders, 3 day-schoolers
First Year	3 students all boarders
Awareness Programs about Deafness	Unspecified; National level

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut – Lebanon

5. News of the LCD – the year 2006

The year 2006 was a difficult year in terms of security, safety, and health. The July-war had very negative effects on most of the people. Besides the killing and the destruction of homes and job places, it highly affected the people psychologically. In addition to the fear, which this fierce war brought to the people, it is for them a reminder of wars that seem to never end in Lebanon. The neutral people, who are the majority of the population, seem to always pay the price.

Despite the fact that the LCD is not politically involved, it lived unwillingly the consequences of the war.

Due to life threatening danger, the LCD was closed for a whole month (mid-July till mid-August) for its usual services. But it still played an important humanitarian role, that of sheltering families (43 persons) from the South of Lebanon who did not know where to go, among whom were some of Hussein's family members.

Fortunately, the war ended in the middle of August and with time, we could get back to our normal life; and naturally there was some sad news. Two of our EIP families lost their homes in the suburb of Beirut, and one of them had to move from the "In-House Program" to the "Distant-Program" of the Early Intervention Program (EIP), because their new home is situated much further from the LCD.

Despite all the difficulties, the year 2006 brought with it very good events:

The team of the LCD is slowly becoming one unity in means of devotion, vision, kindness, and love for those we serve and for each other. This is something that makes us all feel blessed and touches the hearts of all who come to the LCD from families and visitors, as well as our hearts.



The EIP program has grown to serve 26 children and their families despite the difficult political situation and the lack of awareness. The quality of this service is something to be proud of too. The team is doing a very humane and professional work which is giving both children and parents a good foundation for the future. Many of our young children, who started early with us, are now talking in sentences with a natural easiness, and are also showing a blossomed personality.

This is for us a proof of the importance of an early start in a quality program.

Not all families cooperate in the same way but many of them do. A few of them do not cooperate much concerning behavior management, but are doing very well by means of helping their child acquire good language skills.

This program is a great blessing for the families of young children and to the children themselves. All are so happy to come to the LCD and benefit from the wide services of the EIP, and in our turn we are so happy to see these families find themselves and the children benefiting so much. We would not have been able to do so without the help of organizations supporting this program, and we are so grateful for Liliane Fonds who is gradually increasing its support as the number of children of the EIP is growing. We could not have made it without this support.

We are also very happy for our little children, as during the summer of 2006, the deaf children of a school for the deaf in Hohenrain, Switzerland, have adopted the educational materials project for our deaf children and hearing children in the Integrated Nursery (please see the photos below). It is so touching that this support comes directly from deaf children themselves, of whom we are very proud and for whom we are very grateful.



The headline news of this year is the success of the High School students in the official (Governmental) examination. The students are now enrolled at Universities, which is happening for the first time in the history of Lebanon. This is something to be really proud of (you and all of us).

The number of consultations is increasing where we receive individuals (parent or deaf person) who feel lost and need guidance and counseling. The number is easily reaching a hundred consultations a year. Some are done through quick consultations while others require much more time and inquiry.

For awareness activities, we had a number of conferences and activities, outside the LCD in cooperation with other organizations. But at the LCD, we organized, as an awareness and fundraising campaign, a 2-days fun-fair (Kermesse). It was the first time we had hosted such an event, and it was a great success as an event. Everybody asked us to repeat this event again this year. We hope to do so, as long as the situation in Lebanon permits.

We also held at the LCD (in the Hall of the Evangelical Church nearby) a big conference on the subject of Cochlear Implantation, which many professionals and parents attended. This was the first time, a conference about Cochlear Implant in Lebanon involved deaf

adults themselves, and a discussion about deaf culture. This brought a new perspective to the subject of Cochlear Implants.



In our previous report, we indicated that the playground facilities had been realized, through the support of the Embassy of Japan, which included the basket-ball court for game competitions between schools for the deaf. During April there was one match between our high school students and deaf students from other schools, and the result was that the LCD nicely won the competition. What a day!

As some of you know, in Lebanon, we still have electricity problems. Sometimes, more than twice a day, the power would go off for some hours. This is quite disturbing for our work; especially that deaf persons could not communicate with each other at dark times. We are very grateful that Prince Walid Bin Talal responded to our request, to install a new fully automatic electrical generator for the LCD.

Among the many visitors we had at the LCD, we had some special deaf friends from Europe, Elisabeth Scheele from Holland and Richard Buehrer from Switzerland. They are wonderful people, who have constantly been supporting the LCD in many ways, especially financially.

Finally we would like to share with you our feelings and belief that the year 2007 looks much brighter than its previous one, especially considering our visions and dreams to be realized and implemented. We very much have in our hearts the Outreach Program, the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR), and the LCD's new branch in the South of Lebanon, as the main focus of the LCD's projection for 2007.

We can assure you that the LCD is now a place with a mission and a vision, to be very proud of.



Therefore, in light of our activities during 2006, we would like to show our 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, AG Bell, CBM, The Allah Kariem Foundation, Mrs. E. Scheele and her son Anton, other organizations, churches, and individuals, for making the work of the LCD realizable.

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 achieved 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.

At the end, we are very grateful to our Lord, and the Almighty Father, who have always been our protectors, guiders, and thus giving many blessings to our work for the deaf in the region.

High School Education for the Deaf



As indicated earlier, the High School program at the LCD is the only program that is provided in Lebanon. Fortunately, seven students who have been enrolled in this program since October 2003, presented their official, governmental examination during June 2006, and have, with our great joy and satisfaction, passed in two phases. It is the first time in the history of Lebanon that deaf students have reached the Baccalaureate level. Many congratulations to the students, their parents, as well as to the teachers

who we are indented to for working with these students for the past 3 years to ensure that they reach their educational objectives.

Most of the students are now enrolled at universities, majoring in their field of expertise. Their dreams are coming true.

We did not hold the graduation ceremony during summer 2006 due to the prevailing situation in Lebanon. However, we will do so, God willing, during summer 2007.



**Activities of the Learning Center for the Deaf,
through camera lenses
during 2006**



Installation of the Electric Generator



Fun-Fair (Kermesse) activities



A school-trip to Baalbeck



Basketball competition



Mother and a child at the LCD



Awareness about deafness in a regular school

The Early Intervention Program – 2006 (Submitted by Sana Richa)



To our great joy, the number of children in the EIP program has considerably grown in number during the past year. This is an important proof of the confidence that the families around us and the professionals, in this field, are having in us.

The lectures for the parents of hearing impaired children were held monthly throughout the year. This has given us the opportunity to work with other professionals as well as parents of deaf

children and deaf individuals who shared with us their knowledge or experiences to the benefit of other families. We are thankful for their time, efforts and loving presence. Those regular meetings were also an occasion for parents to meet together and learn about the Early Intervention Program of the LCD. That is how we welcomed a new family from the Bekaa Valley into our EIP this year.



Another event was the cochlear implant that Ali, one of our children received, as he was not befitting from his hearing aids. He is now progressing well auditorily and beginning to make use of his first sounds and words.

The most difficult, painful, and stressful period of the year was indeed during the war of July 2006. Our families were largely affected by its consequences, in emotional or material ways. Some of

them lost their houses or members of their family; others had to leave their places of residence and traveled to distant areas where they could be safe. The unstable conditions and the lack of security affected the children's behavior which showed anxiety, stress and

lack of discipline. Fortunately, for some people, it was an opportunity to improve social skills through contact with a number of different children. It was important for us to keep in contact with all the families by phone whenever it was possible. Moral support, some advice or material aid was of great help to them.



The story of one of our EIP's children, Elige (Submitted by Sana Richa)



Elige's family enrolled in the EIP at the LCD in January 2004. She was then 2 years and 7 months old and had just been fitted with hearing aids. The etiology of her hearing loss was the result of the administration of ototoxic medication due to neonatal complications.

Initially, she appeared to be a lively child who was interacting well in therapy. However, her progress through time showed that Elige was evolving at her own special rate. The consultation with

other specialists (psychologist, psychomotrician, and physician) confirmed a developmental delay which was affecting many aspects: the cognitive skills as well as the linguistic, motor and social abilities.

The year (2004) that Elige spent at the Integrated Nursery of the LCD has helped her considerably to develop social and emotional skills, as well as improving her linguistic and cognitive capacities. Her first words soon started to emerge and she had better language comprehension in context. But the most important thing is that she had acquired rich communicational skills which she was using in a very natural and effective ways (i.e.: jargoning and gestures with rich vocal inflections and facial mimics).



Meanwhile, we were reviewing, together with Elige's parents, the different opportunities of schooling that would be appropriate to her educational needs. The choice was made for a school for the Deaf. When Elige first went to school in October 2005, she had started to combine 2 to 3 words.

Elige is now 5 years and 8 months old. At school, she has learnt to improve her pre-writing skills and start to read. Her

language and pragmatic skills have considerably evolved: you can now have a beautiful conversation with Elige, enjoying listening to her sentences and observing her rich body language.

Elige's family is still part of our EIP through which we continue to support and monitor her evolution. Her shining eyes still charm us, and will also surely charm you...

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 enabled them to have more confidence in themselves and their children. Many mothers who are also enrolled in different programs of other institutions said that they were very happy with the chance to be part of the

Support Group and lectures for families, which have helped widen their horizons.

Sign Language Classes



Sign Language classes were initiated due to a great demand from some parents to learn Sign Language in order to communicate richly with their children who use Sign Language themselves.

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