

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut – Lebanon

News of the LCD – the year 2008

Introduction

What a blessing it is to hear the praises given to us by families of deaf children, professionals and visitors, about the services offered at the LCD, as well as the setting, and the atmosphere.

It is also a blessing that the people who give us these praises, especially the families, do not read in our eyes about the hardship and challenges we face in order to keep these services going, with the intention of providing the best that we can do for the deaf child and his family.

One of the difficulties, for example, is the fact that there is a continuous change among the staff of the LCD. This change creates a lack of stability, which is without doubt a great challenge. This change is due to different reasons. One is the fact that the LCD is not able to provide good salaries permitting some members, who fit in quite well to settle at the LCD and resist the temptation of accepting much better financial offers somewhere else. Some may leave for marriage plans, immigration, etc., while others may simply not fit in and are not able to adopt our main principle, which is contained in the Bible: *“Do for others what you would like them to do for you”*.

This means that we expect most staff members working at the LCD to have the willingness to serve the children and their families with the same care and devotion as they would serve their own family and loved ones. This may be difficult to accomplish, but nothing is impossible with God in our lives for God.

We are glad to have learned to appreciate the gifts of God and to accept that any difficulties are permitted for a good reason, as long as we walk with Him. We have therefore great appreciation for the reality that while some persons are not able to sacrifice and remain with us for the service of others through the LCD, other persons do. We have among our staff devoted members who are as committed as the founders themselves.

Even if we still struggle on the financial part between being able to respect our financial capacity and try to be fair for the salaries of our staff, and even if we have a yearly deficit, which is miraculously covered every time, there is a simultaneous flow of many other blessings which “we see” taking place at the LCD, through which God confirms to us his presence. This is probably his way to invite us to keep faith and remind us that he “can” and “will” respond to every need according in due time and according to his plan, which may sometimes be the last minute before despair.

The lessons we need to learn from God are many, one of which is to distinguish our will from His will.

This is not an easy lesson, where the will of God may often be in conflict with our human understanding. While some matters are clear and direct, others are vague and uncertain, but God often shows us that patience and reliance on Him pays off; this is a lesson we should all never forget.

This reliance helps us see that besides the challenges which we should lift up to the Lord, the blessings are many which we will share with you in this letter.

The news of the LCD

The Early Intervention Program and the Integrated Nursery

New children come in; old ones leave, keeping in the program forty four children and their families to serve. We witness great developments when the family is actively involved and we feel very sad when a family is not so cooperative with the program, because the child pays the price for the negligence of his family. Luckily, most of our families make great efforts for the best of their child.

A positive example is Wala's family. Wala', one of our EIP children, who is now integrated in a regular school, has hearing peers who are very jealous for not having hearing aids and an FM system like her. There is no doubt that it is the love of Wala's family which gave her such self-confidence, and made her hearing loss have a clear positive effect.



We feel so lucky to be able to share many special stories lived among our children at the Integrated Nursery of the LCD. An example is Ibrahim who is now in a school for the Deaf. Ibrahim had both cognitive and behavioral challenges. Ibrahim, due to the love of the other children in addition to that of his family and teachers, was able to



blossom and become a darling boy, who went to school quite ready to interact with other peers, to learn, and grow. When he started coming to the Nursery, he was quite a-social, but with time, he managed to gain many friends. He even had a temporary girl-friend whom he treated like a real gentleman, preparing the chair for her to sit, and holding hands even when working on material together. This girl friend was usually difficult to please; but who said that miracles do not

exist?

Another story is about a child with developmental delay who was quite stimulated by Tonitta, his friend in the Nursery, who always invites him to do things with her despite of his physical limitations. Now Ahmed a child with hearing loss, aged two, takes care of the new hearing child Franco, when he is crying, and helps comfort him.

It is fascinating to see that hearing children of two-years, talk in good articulated Arabic to their deaf peers, in order to understand them, and switch to French while addressing other hearing peers, etc.

The beautiful stories with the young children are endless; they are some of God's many blessings in life, which make us appreciate our temporary stay here on earth.

The Outreach Program

The year 2008 was the formal initiation of the Outreach Program which was made possible due to the financial contribution of the Albert Schweitzer Fonds and the AMT-NL.



The Outreach Screening Program in the South of Lebanon this year was a blessing for a first initiative; and a well planned project. Partners gathered from Lebanon (the School of Children with Special Needs, American University Hospital, the IRAP School for the Deaf, Dr. Farah the pediatrician, Audio-Conseil, and the Association of Parents of the Deaf), and the LCD, to make the organization, the screening, the testing, the awareness, and the

distribution of the hearing aids, very successful. Thirty hearing aids funded by the Liliane Foundation were offered to young children after the performance of reliable testing and fitting, which help children to have optimal benefit from their hearing aids.

We hope for that following pilot project to be able to find the means to do a long term project. Most partners have already confirmed their willingness to proceed with the project year after year. However, we still need confirmation from others of renewal of their contribution for this project. Also, more funding would be appreciated in order to increase the number of professionals participating the LCD, and cover their essential needs which will help the project to be more effective in the future.



Three paid part time professionals at least are required for the following:

- There is a need for one professional who takes care of the organization and follow up of the project on a yearly basis. From our experience this year, we discovered that organization work requires a great deal of time and effort.

- There is a need to pay a local person who has the skills to find families of children with hearing loss, especially the young children who are often unscreened, and convince the parents to join the screening campaign.
- There is also a need for a part time professional who will do rehabilitation group sessions at least one week-end a month, after the receipt of the hearing aid. This is necessary in order to teach parents basic information on how to enhance their child's development with more stress on providing opportunities for language learning and character building. A mother from our Early Intervention Program will volunteer to join this professional team in order to encourage the rehabilitation process and to hold support group meetings.

A good part of these expenses were covered last year, which we hope will still be covered in the future. We trust that financial means will be provided for us to recruit professionals able to follow this program in an effective way at the right time.

The High School Program



For the first time, the High School Program has three classes running at the same time for all secondary class levels. The atmosphere is very harmonious this year.

New comers are now learning from the older students about what is expected from them at the LCD. Students usually come with not much feeling of responsibility, and are sometimes selfish. It is a blessing to see how they transform during their time at

the LCD and leave for more feeling of responsibility and sharing.

During the past summer, a campaign was successfully completed to allow the LCD to purchase an apartment for boys (Boys' Dorm) which is separate from the girls'. This is less of a headache for everyone especially as it is not culturally acceptable to mix girls and boys together in the same building. We do not need to imagine the other complications of such a mix of young people.

We are therefore very grateful that the Church in St. Gallen, with the collaboration of the Allah Kariem-CH, together with an organization in Holland, AMT-NL, gathered their efforts and were successful to raise the exact amount needed for the purchase of the apartment found; after bargaining with the owner.



Hussein followed the fixation of the apartment and with simple changes transformed the apartment to a much brighter, friendlier and more spacious apartment with an additional room to be used for the supervisor of the boys. The

remainder comprises two bed-rooms, enough to accommodate eight young boys, and a living room which has a nice wide view that reaches the sea.



A volunteer from Switzerland came to the LCD beginning of October 2008. One of the blessings of having her at the LCD was her relationship with the High School students, especially the boarding students and more specifically the young girls with whom she shared the dormitory. She learned Sign Language very quickly and could communicate with them quite easily. Therefore she also able to build a special friendship with

Arzeh, the deaf lady in charge of the dormitory, who invited her almost every weekend to her home in Bekaa Valley, the quiet region which Ruth fell in love with. Ruth's stay at the LCD was no doubt quite a rich experience for the High School students.

In general, we are therefore very grateful for all those who believe in our work and especially for their support and prayers. May God bless you all.

Projects accomplished during 2008

Besides the Outreach Project where hearing aids were provided for needy children, there were other projects which were accomplished during 2008, and are detailed below:

1. Bathroom and Toilets



Since the purchase of the LCD's building, the bathroom in the girls' dormitory, situated on the fourth floor and toilet for boys in the high school section, have not been practical as each facility had only one toilet seat, one basin, and a bath, which can only be used by

one person at a time. Because the number of the girls in the dormitory is growing, we therefore have conducted the renovation and installation work, whereupon there will be 2 toilet seats, 2 basins, and a shower cabinet. The boys' toilet can now accommodate 3 persons at a time. When the toilet project was undergoing, we also saw that it was necessary to renovate the visitors' toilet on the first floor, as it was not in an acceptable condition. This project was conducted during summer 2008, prior to the initiation of the new scholastic year. The staff members and the students were very happy to see their newly renovated bathroom and toilet facilities. We are very grateful that this project was accomplished successfully, thanks to God's guidance.

2. Water Tank

In Lebanon, during the summer time, we are experiencing water shortage problems, as there is not enough pressure for the water to go up to go up to the water-tanks situated on the roof of the LCD's premises which causes running water cut off, and consequently affects our work. Buying water from a water truck was becoming difficult, impractical, and especially too expensive for us.



Therefore, the ultimate solution to this problem was to have an underground water tank, of 18-20 cubic meters square, and when needed, and a water pump would pump the water up to the roof tanks, and provide sufficient running water to all concerned at the LCD.

Liliane Foundation, when informed, immediately took action regarding this matter and primarily funded the construction work of this project, which was situated in a lot, behind the LCD's building. The project was completed in September 2008, after 2 months of work. We are very grateful for their support.

3. Boys' Dorm (Apartment)



As stated somewhere above, we are very fortunate that we are able to purchase an apartment for boys, called the Boys' Dorm, thanks to the generous contribution and the understanding of the Church in St. Gallen (Switzerland) and the AMT Foundation (Holland).

We are very happy and touched that these Foundations took the subject of buying an apartment very seriously and thus were actively involved. As a result, the apartment was bought at the end of August, and was fixed, painted, and furnished during September 2008. The fixation and the furnishing the apartment was supported by the Liliane Foundation. Upon seeing the place ready, welcoming and cozy, we sensed deep joy and satisfaction.

We are very thankful for these Foundations for their support, as they have made the dream of realizing this project possible.

The apartment is within 15 minutes walking distance from the LCD, and is accommodating, during the regular school days, deaf boys who are enrolled in the High School Program. The apartment can also accommodate parents of



deaf children who attend conferences/ workshops during holidays and summer time. It can also be used for visitors, who support our work, during holidays and summer time.

So far, God has been really good to us, giving many blessings, acting as a proof testimony of His existence, love and care to many people.

4. Computer Editing Facilities



In the year 2002, the Embassy of Japan donated to the LCD a computer with editing facilities, in order for us to produce documentaries, short film reports, etc. This computer facility has been faithfully working for more than 7 years, and was creating some problems due to its limited capacity in response to the increase in the editing work at the LCD. Hence it was necessary to update this facility to meet our working needs. Therefore,

we were very grateful that the Embassy of Canada accepted to supply a new computerized editing facility, with its accessories in addition to Educational Materials for the Integrated Nursery and the Early Intervention Program, as well as Books on Deafness for the Resource Room. The project was conducted and executed during November and December 2008.

Please visit our website

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| <p>The Learning Center for the Deaf Beirut - Lebanon Charity Registration No.: AD 89, Est. 2002 P.O. Box 40-211, Baabda, Lebanon T / F 00961-5-954 584</p> | | |
| <p>lcd@lcd-lebanon.org</p> | | <p>"a good start in life for the deaf, for a better future"</p> |
| <p>The Learning Center for the Deaf مركز التعلم للصم</p> | <p>LCD – Beirut - Lebanon</p> <p>Home Introduction The Association Support Contact</p> <p>Early Intervention Program (1) (brief) Early Intervention Program (2) (detailed) Outreach Program Highschool Education Program Educational Activities Program Awareness Programs Consultation Sign Language Classes Speech and Language Therapy Seminars, Training, & Workshops</p> <p>News Events (links) Events (news-feed) Film Documentation of the LCD General Information (PDF) Lebanese Sign Language (link)</p> <p>More Login Email to LCD</p> | |
| <p>Welcome to the Learning Center for the Deaf, Beirut - Lebanon!</p> <p>Our institute provides 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.</p> <p>The team in the LCD 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, how to deal with the deaf and on prevention of hearing loss.</p> <p><i>"Do for others what you would like them to do for you..." Matthew 7:12</i></p> | | |

**Activities of the Learning Center for the Deaf,
through camera lenses
during 2008**



Training Course on Sign Language for the Deaf



Consultation Program



A group of deaf children in the Nursery



A new class of High School Students



Therapy Session with 2 Deaf siblings



Training Course in Cairo, Egypt