

The Learning Center for the Deaf

Beirut – Lebanon

1. News of the LCD – the year 2007

Introduction

The war of the summer 2006 was finished, but it also brought with it economical difficulties and internal conflicts, causing the occurrence of many assassinations and car explosions which aimed at killing politicians, but caused the death of many civilians.

The economical situation has deteriorated very badly, creating more social problems than ever before.

One may think that such events must cause a decrease in our desire to serve the Deaf,



since we, as the LCD's family, are among these people who are living under such difficult conditions. Indeed, the living condition in Lebanon is multiplying our responsibilities in supporting the families. If the families are trapped with their many problems; the child lacks expression of care and love. But it is really our faith which is keeping us from collapsing despite the pressures surrounding us.

God is working through us; He is showing his love and compassion for these families and children.

The Team of the LCD

The team of the Learning Center for the Deaf is the guarantee for the sustainability of its good service. We therefore make sure to have the right personnel. The team of the Nursery is a beautiful team. They have a great heart for the children and do not mind all the pressures which the work imposes on them.

The two therapists of the Early Intervention Program left the LCD; two new therapists have joined in. This does not mean that the therapists fit in already. Next to our prayers for the right persons to be with us, every person from the staff has a say about the new members. It is similar to a marriage situation; the family has to approve the new member, in order to have harmony at work, and keep the vision.

The Early Intervention Program

The Early Intervention Program is serving 27 children with hearing loss, including their families.

This program is quite individualized. Each family is helped in a different manner, with respect to their structure, perspective of priorities, and points of strengths and weaknesses.

We try to provide the maximum we can to the family for the best benefit for the child.



Two of our personnel from the Early Intervention Program left; this has caused an interruption in the program. They got married last summer of 2007 and the reason of their leaving is very much related to the economical situation. Speech therapists in Lebanon are able to have much better incomes than working as full timers at a charitable association.



This separation was not easy for the staff of the LCD, but it was even more difficult for the families of deaf children.

Two new Speech Therapists joined the team of the EIP. They picked up the essentials quickly and the program is on the run again with the help of the responsible for the EIP. The EIP needs full timers because of the load of responsibilities that it carries towards the families of children with hearing loss in order to give the child what he deserves. Early Intervention carries for the therapists much more responsibilities than Speech Therapy alone.

Expansion of the Nursery

It seems that our prayers are met whenever there is strong need.

This year, there was a great need to enlarge the Integrated Nursery in order to have three rooms instead of two.

Usually the children of the Nursery were divided to two groups during specific working times, according to levels, and the children with hearing loss joined one of these two groups. Each group gathered in a room which is acoustically isolated from the other room with a door.



Before



After

However the growth of the number of children with hearing loss required the necessity to have a third group and consequently a third room.

This third room is also supposed to spread the noise on three areas instead of two. We are therefore very grateful for **AMT-Netherlands** who accepted to fund the enlargement of the Nursery.

This room was almost finished by the end of the year 2007. It is beautiful, has a view to the garden, and is acoustically more favorable for the group of children with hearing loss.

The Integrated Nursery



The Integrated Nursery has received 6 children with hearing loss. These children and their families follow the Early Intervention Program as well.

This growth in number required the support of a teacher of the Deaf. The teacher is coming for two hours, three times a week to be with them. One of the teachers of the Nursery, Wadad, takes care of the children the rest of the time, individually and in group.

Wadad is delighted to have training with Nadine, which allows her to work professionally with the children with hearing loss and better respond to their needs. The other two teachers are also informed on the way to communicate with the child with hearing loss because the child should not be limited in his communication, to one

teacher. However, the trained teacher is the one who coordinates with the others for his sake.



Unfortunately Nouha, the Deaf teacher who used to come to support us in the bilingual approach, could not come to the LCD anymore due to the situation, mainly. We hope that the situation settles and that she would be able to be with the children again. She used to work with us on a voluntary basis. Meanwhile, we try to compensate for

her absence by putting the children of the Nursery in contact with our High School deaf students and deaf workers.

The expansion of the High School

In October 2007, the High School has officially two classes at the same time. The High School has 3 students at the Second Year level and 10 students at the First Year level. It is also estimated that next scholastic year 2008-2009, there will be a third class.



The first graduating group of students is at University and doing remarkably well.

The Trip to Holland

Our trip to Holland (Hussein and Nadine) the past summer 2007 was very blessed and reinforcing. We visited the organizations which support us continuously; AMT-Holland, the Liliane Fonds, the chairman of

the Albert Schweitzer Fonds, the Wilde Ganzen, etc. We had the pleasure to meet a member of the Albert Schweitzer Foundation who is a dear person to us, and were very happy to visit Elizabeth Scheele, who is a continuous supporter of the LCD and who is the half sister of Hussein's foster father, Father Andeweg.

Hope was our companion since the initiation of the LCD, and our faith found rewards all along the way.

The people we met during our trip helped us keep our hopes high, despite all difficulties surrounding our work.

Albert Schweitzer Foundation and the Outreach Program

The Outreach Program finally found a perfect cooperation.



This project started with mostly failed trials in finding families of children with hearing loss in the rural areas, due to lack of finances.

Finally the Albert Schweitzer Foundation agreed to fund this project. The persistence in trying to bring together all elements necessary for the success of this project, was quite fruitful. There is now a very rich cooperation among different parties who will join this project.

1. The school in Aita Chaab – South of Lebanon, at the border is providing location, staff and a vehicle for transportation.
2. The American University Hospital (AUH) is providing training to our staff for detection of the screening of hearing loss. Children suspected to have hearing loss can be referred by the LCD to the AUH for free, more accurate and valid testing.
3. The Learning Center for the Deaf is providing the administration of this project, a team to do the screening and intervention. The LCD will also provide contact

with families of children with hearing loss who have experienced the importance of Early Intervention.

4. A school for the Deaf, IRAP, will join the LCD in the process of testing in the South.
5. Mr. Joseph Zeidan from *Audio Conseil* has provided a maximal discount in the price of the hearing aids and service which includes the following: 1) *Digital A&M Hearing aid 12PX for profound hearing loss or 12P for severe.* 2) *Earmould* 3) *Set of batteries* 4) *Audiogram and fitting and,* 5) *Follow up and warranty for one year*
6. The Albert Schweitzer Fonds, Holland, has provided a sum of Euro 7,500 to cover expenses for the LCD in relation to this project (staff and other expenses). They have put the stepping stone for the application of this project.
7. The Liliane Fonds, Holland, may cover the cost of 30 hearing aids a year. This is not yet confirmed. In case of a negative answer, the LCD will look for other possibilities to provide hearing aids for the children who are detected to have hearing loss, because the hearing aid is an important element for the benefit of the child.

Training of teachers

While the training of teachers and professionals working in the field of deafness was not among our goals; we agreed to be available for this purpose whenever we had the chance.



In year 2007, we had a three days training of professionals (teachers, social workers, speech therapists, psychomotrician, and the director) working in a school for the Deaf in Sidon (45km south of Beirut). We also had three days training for the use of the John Tracy Clinic lessons which the LCD provided to them.

We also traveled to Cairo for a three days training of teachers of the Deaf from the schools and other professionals working with the Deaf from other areas in Egypt. It was a collaborated work, and a pleasurable experience. There may be a future collaboration to initiate an Early Intervention Program if the situation in Lebanon permits. Presently many professionals avoid coming to Lebanon.

Conferences

The LCD joins several conferences aiming to improve the level of Education and Life for deaf persons.

Therefore the invitation to participate at the Human Rights for Persons with Disabilities in Stockholm, Sweden, was accepted. Dr. Ismail has risen the voice of the Deaf which is rarely present at such conferences. Usually, if there is a representative for the Deaf, it is the parent of a deaf person who attends.

There was a continuous participation in the conferences about Inclusion in Lebanon, with the aim to help shift the perspective of Inclusion in the regular settings, to the Inclusion in the family and community, as a main goal.

The LCD tries to bring attention to the fact that not only the academic performance should be evaluated in regard to the deaf child's success in the regular school but there must be a great consideration to self-image and identity.

The reputation of the LCD

It is a blessing that the LCD, which is a relatively new association, has gained a great reputation in Lebanon and even among some Arab countries.

The LCD is receiving invitations to participate in International conferences, to give trainings in Lebanon and abroad, to be on a foreign TV, etc.

Our prayer is that these participations remain for the good of the deaf child and not for the image of the LCD.

Jawad and Mrs. Maktabi

Among the consultations made at the LCD, we once had the visit of a young man called Jawad and his mother Mrs. Maktabi.



Jawad is a very fine young man; a gentleman, who has some extra challenges in addition to this hearing loss.

Jawad used to stay home like many young deaf people who cannot find themselves in their communities. He was quite unhappy and depressed.

We agreed that Jawad works with us because someone sponsored his salary. Jawad slowly learned to take more and more responsibilities

and is now happily working at the LCD. He is learning to make friends and to be more sociable. He is a lovely young man.

Jawad's mother sensed at the LCD a sincere desire to support Jawad. Being capable she has contributed with a sum of money to the LCD for three consecutive years. God opens the door for the humble and faithful.

Young deaf persons

There is already a group of five young persons who are in the same situation. They are quite depressed and isolated in their family and community.

The LCD does not have a program for these young people. But we now feel the obligation to create a program for them which is between an educational program and a youth club.

God put these young people on our way for a reason. They have no other place to embrace them; they need guidance and possibilities for communication and social interaction. It is a must that we give them a hand within the LCD's capacities. Hopefully, the next annual report will include the news of a developed program for these young people.

Special children



The LCD has received children who have additional problems to hearing loss. Some have neurological problems affecting their balance and speech capacities. One of our children has a developmental delay, who developed beautifully well due to the positive role of her family and her irresistible beautiful and cheerful personality. We have two children with Hydrocephalus, one more severely affected, but a pleasure to have. One child has severe visual loss in addition to his

hearing and another child who has behavioral and mental challenges. All of these children are showing great improvement in their pace of development; only one child did not improve and had to leave us due to great regression in his condition, to the point that he could not sit anymore. We pray for him and his family, and try to keep in touch with them for as much moral support as we can provide.

Amani



Amani is with us for almost a year and a half. She is almost four years old now, and she had received her hearing aids for the first time, about a year ago. Her family came to us while convinced that Amani needed a cochlear implant, as suggested by more than one doctor. From the first visit we observed that Amani seemed to have good residual hearing, and imitated a simple sound quite quickly and easily. We transferred to the mother our opinion that we did not agree to rush for the operation and that we have great hope that Amani can benefit quite well from the hearing aids and intervention. It took a while before the mother was finally convinced that Amani did not need a cochlear implant; it was our word against the doctors'.

Amani is now developing language at a speedy rate, which has comforted the heart of her mother. Amani's family is quite cooperative, especially the mother who is quite curious and creative, always seeking ways to help her daughter and therefore grasping what we teach her with great ease.

The role of the family

The role of the family is of extreme importance in the Early Intervention Program. Most of what young hearing children learn is from the reception of conversations which take place around them, without being addressed to them.



In compensation for this natural process the deaf child needs a clever, well thought and guided approach to enrich his communication, language, knowledge, and personality.

Therefore, it is quite natural that children of families, who are committed, have chances for better achievements.

This was quite observed in our program; we saw the children of committed families grow in a healthy manner despite additional innate

difficulties they may have, while children of families who were not committed, were restrained from compensating for the lack of hearing, despite of the child's readiness to achieve remarkably well.

It is sad, but true. Therefore, we try all means possible to help the family realize the importance of their role.

Finally a website of our own

In the spring 2007, our close friend in Switzerland, Pfr. Achim Menges, has developed a website for the LCD, which gives thorough information about our services and activities, including photos. Upon the completion of the development, the website has been launched, and we received so many good remarks worldwide about it, as the website is easy to browse, clear and presentable.

Heartedly thanks to Pfr. Menges, for making the website possible, of whom we are extremely grateful.

Please visit the website address by typing www.lcd-lebanon.org . Enjoy browsing.

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 lcd@lcd-lebanon.org		 "a good start in life for the deaf, for a better future"
	LCD – Beirut - Lebanon Home Introduction The Association Support Contact	
<p><i>Welcome to the Learning Center for the Deaf, Beirut - Lebanon!</i></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>	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	
	News Events (links) Events (news-feed) Film Documentation of the LCD General Information (pdf) Lebanese Sign Language (link)	
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**Activities of the Learning Center for the Deaf,
through camera lenses
during 2007**



Consultation for the families



Intervention Session



Graduation of teachers for the Deaf



Training Teachers for the Deaf, Cairo, Egypt



Project work for the Integrated Nursery



Graduation Ceremony