



Cochlear Implant Education Center

Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices

Discussion 3: Designing Services and Programs in the Mainstream



LAURENT CLERC
NATIONAL DEAF EDUCATION CENTER



Discussion 3: Designing Services and Programs in the Mainstream

The printing of this publication was supported by federal funding. This publication shall not imply approval or acceptance by the U.S. Department of Education of the findings, conclusions, or recommendations herein. Gallaudet University is an equal opportunity employer/educational institution, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, hearing status, disability, covered veteran status, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, source of income, place of business or residence, pregnancy, childbirth, or any other unlawful basis.

Discussion 3: Designing Services and Programs in the Mainstream

Moderator:

Mary Koch is an auditory education consultant at Boys Town National Research Hospital

Panel Members:

- Susan Russell is supervisor of programs for students who are deaf and hard of hearing Montgomery County, Maryland
- Tina Tingler is an assistant principal at Mantua Elementary School in Fairfax County, Virginia.
- Candi Mascia-Reed is supervisor of school programs for the deaf in Hackensack, New Jersey for Bergen County Special Services, New Jersey.
- Gina A. Oliva, professor in the Department of Physical Education and Recreation at Gallaudet University and author of "Alone in the Mainstream: A Deaf Woman Remembers Public School" (2004). She is currently researching the phenomenon of d/Deaf Camps.
- Sarah Dawson Wainscott, aural habilitation specialist and director of Research and Outreach at Chattering Children. Sarah is also the mother of 4 children; two of her children are deaf and have a cochlear implant.

Discussion:

During the panel discussion, Susan Russell, Tina Tingler, and Candi Mascia Reed described their roles and responsibilities as administrators programming for children with cochlear implants. Gina Oliva discussed her personal experiences in mainstream education. Sarah Wainscott discussed her perspective about working in a private auditory verbal center supporting the spoken language development of diverse children with cochlear implants (including those who use sign language) enrolled in a variety of educational environments.

Susan Russell discussed:

- The continuum of program placements and communication approaches in Montgomery County, Maryland for the approximately 350 students who are deaf and hard of hearing in the county and how their programs include both center-based programs as well as supports to individual students in neighborhood schools. She emphasized that they do not program in a different manner for the 20 % of their students with cochlear implants and instead look at the individual needs of each student.
- The benefit of their long standing center-based total communication program at one school in their county in regard to the supports it provides not only to the deaf and hard of hearing students it serves, but also to the hearing students enrolled there and to the school culture.
- Considerations for interpreters working with children with cochlear implants, including:
 - The importance of including interpreters on the educational planning and implementation team.
 - The importance of interpreters familiarizing themselves with a student's background and functioning with their implant (when was the implant activated, how to know if a

student's equipment is functioning, what is a student's auditory functioning level, what does a student's auditory functioning have to do with how interpreting services are provided).

- The importance of interpreters teaming with teachers in regard to provision of interpreting supports (i.e. listening in noise, listening for complex information).
- The importance of interpreters needing to gauge and assess interpreting strategies in regard to when a student needs interpretation – knowing when to give the student the opportunity to listen to/watch the teacher, and when to fill in what information may have been missed.
- Having a sense of the student's language level and knowing when to rephrase, and when to use other visual supports such as a white board.

Tina Tingler discussed:

- The Fairfax County, Virginia public school program that includes a variety of placement options. She described how their sign based programs include deaf staff and a range of specialists who can sign, and how they have a number of different mainstreaming opportunities (with and without interpreters). She stressed that as decisions are made about placement in the mainstream, they recognize the importance of looking beyond the audiogram and cochlear implant and of looking at the 'whole child.' Regardless of whether students with cochlear implants are in self-contained classrooms or inclusive classrooms, they all have case managers who are Teachers of the Deaf (TOD).
- Some strategies they use in their county to include both spoken language and sign language such as:
 - Co-teaching, where a teacher who has training working with deaf children is paired with a general education teacher.
 - Interpreted stories during read aloud time, where a TOD collaborates with the general education teacher. During this time, reading materials that supplement the curriculum are read aloud in spoken English and signed in ASL through the interpreter. The TOD knows the auditory/language functioning/cognitive levels of each child and adjusts the story level as needed for individual students.
 - After school program inclusive of deaf and hard of hearing children, CODA (Children of Deaf Adults) children and siblings of students in the classroom.
 - Individualized strategies for the use of spoken English with identified students (i.e., phonetic strategies in language arts and personalized lessons provided verbally).
- The use of interpreters in the program (emphasizing the dynamic role of interpreters and the importance of a good fit between the student and the interpreter).

Candi Mascia Reed discussed:

- The components of the program she currently works with under Bergen County Special Services, called Communication Continuum. This is a separate total communication program in their school system to support children from pre-K through 12. (This program was previously part of a larger auditory and oral program in Midland Park, in northern New Jersey.) She discussed the need to reassess their program as the number of children with cochlear implants increased and how they then attracted more children with cochlear implants.
- The considerations for children with cochlear implants which include:
 - Individualization for students in regard to mainstreaming not being based on their implant but on the academic capabilities of each child.
 - Not segregating students based on their use of an implant.


- Use of interpreters in the mainstream for children with implants based on individual child characteristics.

Gina Oliva discussed:

- The importance of children alone in the mainstream having opportunities for interaction with deaf peers through after-school, weekend, and summer programs.
- The importance of parents considering what it is like to grow up with an interpreted education.
- The importance of learning from college students who have started in mainstream environments and later sought out and enjoyed an environment where everyone signs and can readily communicate.
- Her concern of interpreters being used with young children who are not competent in sign and the importance of considering whether this is really effective mainstreaming or the only thing a school district can offer.

Sarah Wainscott discussed:

- The philosophy of the Auditory Verbal program at Chattering Children and how it is inclusive of children who use sign at home and/or in school.
- The objective of Chattering Children to coach families to provide them with tools to facilitate their children's development of auditory and oral skills.
- The goal of Chattering Children to support families of children who use sign in moving along a continuum to a more oral placement in a regular classroom (yet recognizing the importance of developing functional language skills).
- Their services to a range of students and families who may sign including:
 - Families building early foundations in sign, while also working with an AV approach to build auditory/oral skills.
 - Older elementary students in a sign based program that are looking for a program to supplement their auditory/oral development. (i.e., students with cochlear implants in transition to an oral program and late identified and late implanted children from non-English speaking families)
- Children with additional special needs including those who may have the capacity to develop receptive auditory skills yet may be limited in their expressive spoken language due to motor or communication issues.
- Children from culturally Deaf families who have made a decision to choose a cochlear implant for their child yet may not use spoken language at home and are seeking support in developing spoken language skills. Highlighted was the importance of reframing their practice to develop spoken language yet validating the child and family in their use of ASL and the necessity of including strategies that capitalize on the capacity of these children to use their first language in a visual modality to bridge to and build language in the auditory modality.



The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center is comprised of two federally mandated demonstration schools for students from birth through age 21 who are deaf. Located on the campus of Gallaudet University, these schools work in collaboration with a national network of exemplary programs and professionals to identify, research, develop, evaluate, and disseminate innovative curricula, materials, educational strategies, and technologies for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The Clerc Center also provides training and technical assistance to families and programs throughout the United States, and serves as a model individualized educational program, working in close partnership with its students and their families.

Working for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children Throughout the United States



LAURENT CLERC
NATIONAL DEAF EDUCATION CENTER