



Cochlear Implant Education Center

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

Psychosocial Aspects of Cochlear Implantation



LAURENT CLERC
NATIONAL DEAF EDUCATION CENTER



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Psychosocial Aspects of Cochlear Implantation

Irene Leigh, Professor, Department of Psychology, Gallaudet University

John Christiansen, Professor, Department of Sociology, Gallaudet University, 1977-2009

Irene Leigh and John Christiansen spoke on the psychosocial aspects of cochlear implantation. The highlights of their presentation included the importance of:

- Sharing information with families regarding the psychological considerations of cochlear implantation.
- Looking at how personality, not just the quality of spoken language, significantly impacts positive socialization in the mainstream.
- Acknowledging how research may be biased, reflecting primarily those individuals with positive spoken language and socialization outcomes.
- Noting how parents may not necessarily view their child's quality of life in the same way that the child views it. Parents may perceive that their children are actually doing better than or similar to how the child perceives his/her life related to socializing with others.
- Acknowledging that a cochlear implant is only one of many life factors unique to a child that will impact how they will develop socially.
- Children with cochlear implants having the opportunity to connect with the deaf community as well as to the hearing community so that they have experience in both environments.
- Helping children with cochlear implants to feel accepted and validated as they are, not as a person with something wrong that needs to be fixed.



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



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